

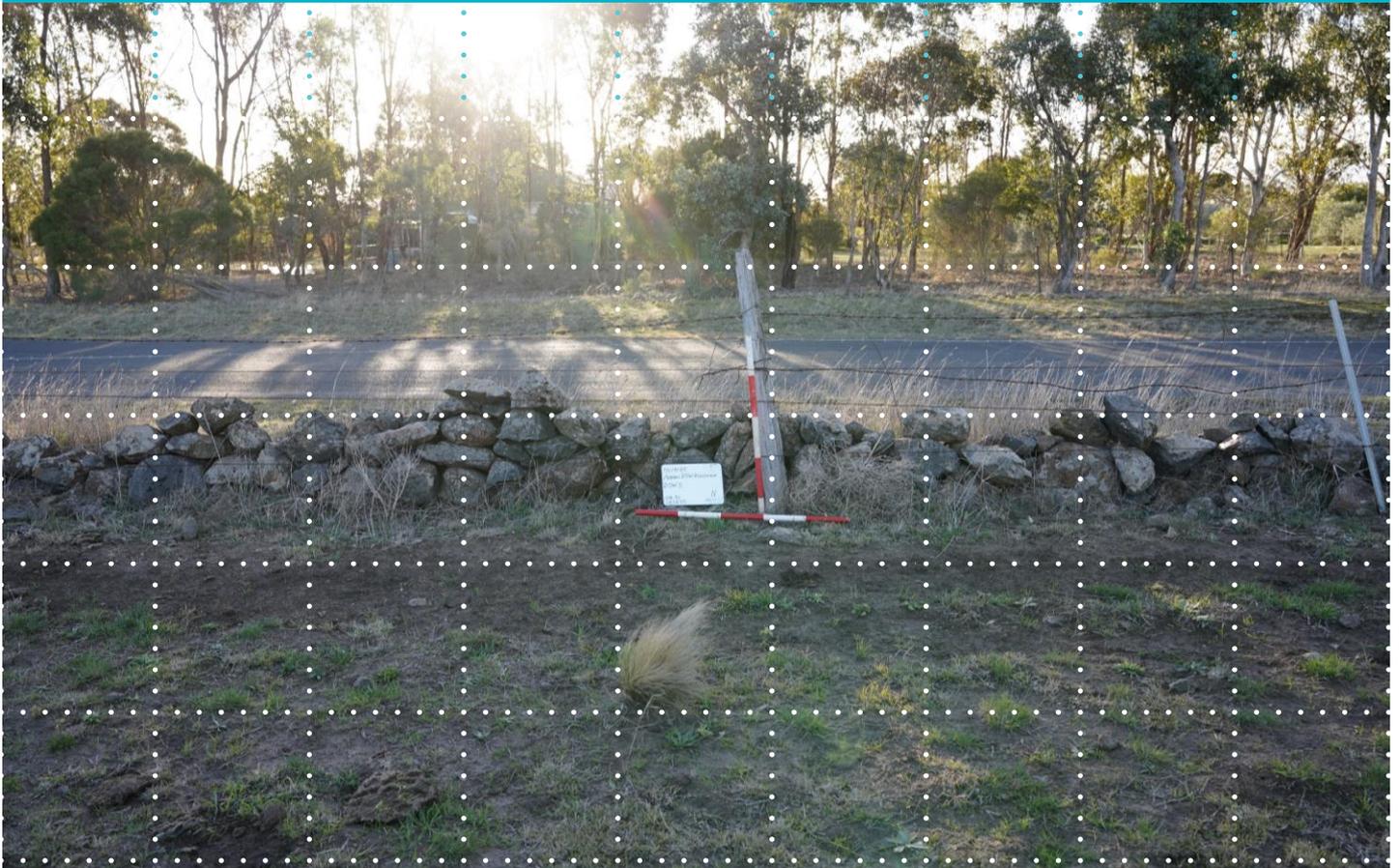
Final Report

Dry Stone Wall Assessment and Management Plan, Merrimu Precinct Structural Plan (PSP), Victoria

Client

Bacchus Marsh Developments Pty Ltd

13 October 2025



Ecology and Heritage Partners Pty Ltd

Author

Ryan Buhagiar and Dylan Branda-Pawlaczyk

Cover Photo: Western Surface of Dry Stone Wall 3 on Bences Road, Merrimu, Victoria
(Photo by Ecology and Heritage Partners Pty Ltd)

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ABBREVIATIONS

See Glossary (Appendix 2) for explanation of some of these terms.

Acronym	Description
AHHA	Aboriginal and Historical Heritage Assessment
CHL	Commonwealth Heritage List
CMA	Catchment Management Authority
DCCEEW	Department of the Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Commonwealth)
DSW	Dry Stone Wall
DSWMP	Dry Stone Wall Management Plan
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
HA	Heritage Advisor
HV	Heritage Victoria
PSP	Precinct Structure Plan
SLV	State Library of Victoria
VHI	Victorian Heritage Inventory
VHR	Victorian Heritage Register
VPA	Victoria Planning Authority

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	2
1.1	Background.....	2
1.2	Scope of Works – Dry Stone Wall Assessment.....	2
1.2.1	Desktop Assessment.....	2
1.2.2	Fieldwork.....	3
1.2.3	Cadastral Details of the Study Area.....	4
2	STUDY AREA	9
2.1	Proposed Development.....	9
2.2	Name of Heritage Advisor.....	9
2.3	Name of Client.....	9
2.4	Heritage Legislation.....	9
2.5	Local Council.....	9
2.6	Report Review and Distribution.....	10
3	HISTORICAL CONTEXTS	13
3.1	Historical.....	13
3.1.2	Fencing Specifications.....	14
3.2	Brief History.....	15
3.2.1	Regional and Local.....	15
3.2.2	Air Photo Interpretation.....	18
3.2.3	Historical Heritage Places in the Study Area.....	18
4	DATABASE SEARCHES	19
4.1	Victorian Heritage Register.....	19
4.2	Victorian Heritage Inventory.....	19
4.3	Merrimu Precinct Structure Plan.....	19
4.3.1	Heritage Overlay.....	19
4.3.2	Precinct Structure Plan.....	21
5	FIELD ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY	31
5.1	Methodology.....	31
5.1.1	Construction Technique.....	31

5.1.2	Impacts or Potential Impacts	33
5.2	Limitations of the Survey	33
6	DRY STONE WALLS.....	34
6.1	Property 16	34
6.1.1	DSW4	34
6.2	Property 1 – 2621 Gisborne Road, Merrimu (DSW1).....	35
6.2.1	DSW1	35
6.2.2	DSW2	37
6.3	Property 3 – 146 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340 (DSW3).....	38
6.3.1	DSW3	38
6.4	Property 4 – 2677 Gisborne Road, Merrimu 3340 (Potential DSW).....	40
6.4.1	Potential DSW Segment A.....	40
6.4.2	Potential DSW Segment B.....	42
6.5	Property 14 – 345 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340 (DSW5).....	44
6.5.1	DSW5	44
6.6	Property 9 – 332 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340 (DSW6).....	46
6.6.1	DSW6	46
6.7	Comparative Analysis and Assessment Conclusion.....	48
7	ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	53
7.1	Previous Assessment of Significance.....	53
7.2	Significance Criteria	53
7.2.1	Summary of Significance.....	54
8	STATUTORY MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS	55
8.1	Moorabool Planning Scheme	55
8.2	Rural Conservation Zone.....	55
9	MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	56
9.1	Specific Management Recommendations	56
9.1.1	Retention or Removal of Existing Dry Stone Walls.....	56
9.2	Conservation/Management Policies	56
9.2.1	Potential Impacts	57
9.2.2	Working Close to the Retained Wall	57

9.2.3	Removal Technique.....	57
9.3	Other Issues	58
9.3.1	Safety	58
9.3.2	Standards of Construction	58
9.3.3	Scheduling of Rehabilitation/Reconstruction Works	59
APPENDICES.....		60
REFERENCES.....		66

Appendices

Appendix 1: Heritage Legislation	61
Appendix 2: Glossary.....	64

Tables

Table 1: Cadastral Details of the Study Area	4
Table 2: Historical Reports Relevant to the Study Area	23
Table 3: Criteria Used for Assessing Construction Technique (from Vines 1990)	31
Table 4: Criteria Used for Preservation Assessment	32
Table 5: Construction Details – 2621 Gisborne Road, Merrimu (DSW1).....	35
Table 6: Construction Details – 2621 Gisborne Road, Merrimu (DSW2).....	37
Table 7: Construction Details – 146 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340 (DSW3).....	38
Table 8: Construction Details – 2677 Gisborne Road, Merrimu 3340 (Potential DSW)	40
Table 9: Construction Details – 2677 Gisborne Road, Merrimu 3340 (Potential DSW)	42
Table 10: Construction Details – 345 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340 (DSW5).....	44
Table 11: Construction Details – 332 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340 (DSW6).....	46
Table 12: DSW Management Recommendations (Retention/Removal)	56

Figures

Figure 1: Historic photograph of Manor House (Source: Victorian Heritage Database 2019)	16
Figure 2: Photograph of Lake Merrimu, Victoria by the State Rivers Water Supply Commission 1968 (Source: SLV 2019)	18

Plates

Plate 1: View of DSW4 facing east, AHHA (Minos et al. 2020)	34
Plate 2: View of DSW facing northeast, AHHA (Minos et al. 2020)	34
Plate 3: DSW1 looking north showing the width of the wall and its proximity to a fence line (I. Ostericher 2025)	36
Plate 4: DSW1 looking east showing vegetation growing near it (I. Ostericher 2025)	36
Plate 5: DSW1 looking north showing the condition of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	36
Plate 6: DSW1 looking south showing the proximity of the stone wall to the wooden and star picket fence lines (I. Ostericher 2025)	36
Plate 7: DSW1 showing the extent of the wall moving north (I. Ostericher 2025)	36
Plate 8: Looking west showing the extent of DSW2 (I. Ostericher 2025)	37
Plate 9: Looking north-west from the east end of DSW2 (I. Ostericher 2025)	37
Plate 10: DSW 3 looking east showing a representation of most of the wall's condition (I. Ostericher 2025)	39
Plate 11: DSW 3 looking east showing some of the vegetation growing amongst the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	39
Plate 12: DSW 3 looking east showing one of the most intact sections of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	39
Plate 13: DSW 3 looking northwest showing the length and extent of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	39
Plate 14: DSW 3 looking east showing a tree growing in the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	39
Plate 15: DSW 3 looking east showing and interaction of a gate and barbed wire fencing (I. Ostericher 2025)	39
Plate 16: Potential DSW segment A looking west along the extent of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	41
Plate 17: Potential DSW looking south showing a tree growing within the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	41
Plate 18: Potential DSW looking south showing nearby vegetation growing nearby and distance from modern fence line (I. Ostericher 2025)	41
Plate 19: Potential DSW looking south showing the end of wall meeting a gate (I. Ostericher 2025)	41
Plate 20: Potential DSW looking west section B looking west along the extent of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	43
Plate 21: Potential DSW looking south showing one of the best-preserved sections of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	43
Plate 22: Potential DSW looking south showing the various vegetation growing in and amongst the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	43
Plate 23: Potential DSW looking south showing the end of the wall marked by a large tree stump (I. Ostericher 2025)	43
Plate 24: DSW5 looking east showing the condition of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	45

Plate 25: DSW5 looking east showing the vegetation growing around the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	45
Plate 26: DSW5 looking east showing a tree growing within the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	45
Plate 27: DSW5 looking northeast showing the extent of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	45
Plate 28: DSW6 looking north showing the extent of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025).....	47
Plate 29: DSW6 looking west showing wooden posts and barbed wire amongst the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	47
Plate 30: DSW6 looking west showing a better-preserved section of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025).....	47
Plate 31: DSW6 looking southwest showing the vegetation growing in the wall (I. Ostericher 2025).....	47
Plate 32: DSW6 looking west showing a sparse section of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)	47
Plate 33: DSW6 looking west showing one of the collapsed sections of the wall with a wooden post (I. Ostericher 2025)	47

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

As part of the Merrimu Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) process, an Aboriginal and Historical Heritage Assessment (AHHA) was conducted by Ecology and Heritage Partners (Minos et al. 2020). The AHHA identified seven potential Dry Stone Walls (DSW) across the PSP area. It was established in the report that these DSW were generally in a dilapidated condition, and did not afford protection at a state level. It was recommended to conduct further historical archaeological investigation and consult with the Moorabool City Council to determine any requirements at a local level.

Another AHHA was completed by Ecology and Heritage Partners (Francis 2020) but did not identify any DSWs. Prior to these reports, a desktop AHHA was completed by Ecology and Heritage Partners as part of the PSP (Toohey et al. 2018) which determined that dry stone walls were unlikely to occur in the study area due to the lack of recorded sites in the search area.

The seven potential DSWs identified are at 2621 Gisborne Road, 2677 Gisborne Road, 146 Bences Road, 289 Bences Road, 332 Bences Road, and 345 Bences Road Merrimu 3340, Victoria (Table 1).

As several years have passed since the commissioning of the earlier AHHA and to inform the PSP process, this secondary assessment provides a revised assessment of all potential DSWs on those properties and provide management recommendations for removal or retention prior for PSP and subsequent development purposes.

1.2 Scope of Works – Dry Stone Wall Assessment

Ecology and Heritage Partners Pty Ltd was commissioned by Bacchus Marsh Developments Pty Ltd (BMD/Client) on behalf of the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) and the Moorabool Shire Council (Council) to provide an assessment of the walls at 2621 Gisborne Road, 2677 Gisborne Road, 146 Bences Road, 289 Bences Road, 332 Bences Road, 345 Bences Road Merrimu 3340, Victoria and, if required, a Dry Stone Wall Management Plan.

The project brief is as follows:

1.2.1 Desktop Assessment

An up-to-date review of the relevant heritage databases and literature will be undertaken, including:

- Review the previous AHHA reports (Toohey et al. 2018, Green and Fidge 2020; Francis et al. 2020, Minos et al. 2020) in relation to the study area;
- Review the Merrimu PSP in relation to planned impacts to DSWs
- Review Council Planning Scheme requirements in relation to DSWs (e.g. cl.52.33);
- Victorian statutory heritage databases including:

- Victorian Heritage Register and Inventory (VHR and VHI), administered by Heritage Victoria; and
- Local Government Heritage Overlays;
- The Australian Government’s Protected Matters Search Tool for places listed on the National Heritage List (NHL), Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL);
- Various non-statutory heritage registers, for contributory information, including:
 - Register of the National Estate (RNE);
 - National Trust Register (NTR); and
 - Victorian War Heritage Inventory (VWHI).
- Recent aerial photography;
- Any relevant available literature (e.g., Council Heritage Studies and any relevant Dry Stone Wall studies), legislation and policies; and
- A brief review of the land use of the subject site.

1.2.2 Fieldwork

A site investigation was conducted by two qualified archaeologists/heritage advisors to visually assess the walls and their condition/integrity and provide a basic description of the walls’ features. At a minimum, the following information were recorded:

- The location, nature and extent of the walls;
- Maps or plans showing:
 - north point and study area boundaries;
 - the location of any unusual features of the wall;
 - location where photographs were taken, and the direction from which they were taken.

1.2.3 Cadastral Details of the Study Area

Table 1: Cadastral Details of the Study Area

Lot	Title Plan	Address	LGA
1	TP171618	34 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	Moorabool
1	TP440059		
1	LP86344	47 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
4A	PP3095	48 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
2	LP124024	146 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
1	PS823786	152 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
16	PP3095	235 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
16A	PP3095		
1	LP125141	268 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
E~18	PP3095	289 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
1	PS724532	295 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
2	PS724532	319 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
2	LP125141	332 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
2	LP139808	345 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
1	PS647445	367 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
2	PS432900	372 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
1	PS724533	376 Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
2	PS724533	376a Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
RES1	LP218123	Bences Road Merrimu 3340	
RES2	LP218123		
RES3	LP218123		
1	PS346738		
S2	PS346738		
2	PS823786		
1	TP961174		
1	TP816181	Buckleys Road Merrimu 3340	
1	TP958042		
63	PS420001	2 Davies Court Merrimu 3340	
59	PS420001	5 Davies Court Merrimu 3340	
60	PS420001	11 Davies Court Merrimu 3340	
8	LP218123	81 Dodemaide Circuit Merrimu 3340	
9	LP218123	85 Dodemaide Circuit Merrimu 3340	
65	PS420001	9 Drysdale Court Merrimu 3340	

Lot	Title Plan	Address	LGA
6	PS318904	15 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	Moorabool
6	PS318904		
7	PS318904		
20	PS318904	81 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
19	PS318904	107 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
18	PS318904	109 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
17	PS318904	136 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
139	PS504907	140 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
140	PS504907	144 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
141	PS504907	148 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
142	PS504907	154 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
143	PS504907	160 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
144	PS504907	166 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
83	PS420001	180 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
145	PS504909	181 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
146	PS504909	187 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
82	PS420001	188 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
147	PS504909	195 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
148	PS504909	203 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
81	PS420001	208 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
149	PS504909	217 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
127	PS504911	223 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
64	PS420001	226 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
128	PS504911	227 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
129	PS504911	233 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
130	PS504911	239 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
105	PS420001	245 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
106	PS420001	251 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
107	PS420001	257 Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
109	PS420001	Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	
RES1	PS420001		
RES16	PS420001		
RES17	PS420001		
RES2	PS420001		
RES3	PS420001		
S2	PS420001		

Lot	Title Plan	Address	LGA
S3	PS420001	Flanagans Drive Merrimu 3340	Moorabool
S4	PS420001		
S6	PS420001		
S7	PS420001		
1	PS724534	2621 Gisborne Road Merrimu 3340	
1	TP578035	2677 Gisborne Road Merrimu 3340	
1	LP124024	Gisborne Road Merrimu 3340	
1	PS541145		
2	PS541145		
2	PS724534		
1	TP584365		
1	TP972084		
2	TP972084		
3	TP972084		
4	TP972084		
4	LP118179		
5	LP118179	21 Lerderderg Park Road Merrimu 3340	
1	TP169913	69 Lerderderg Park Road Merrimu 3340	
1	TP222074		
2	TP222074		
1	LP78260	119 Lerderderg Park Road Merrimu 3340	
5B	LP6880	210 Lerderderg Park Road Merrimu 3340	
1	TP97591		
1	PS411883	226 Lerderderg Park Road Merrimu 3340	
1	PS432900	250 Lerderderg Park Road Merrimu 3340	
1	TP111405	Lerderderg Park Road Merrimu 3340	
1	TP97760		
101	PS420001	13 Lindsay Avenue Merrimu 3340	
100	PS420001	17 Lindsay Avenue Merrimu 3340	
99	PS420001	25 Lindsay Avenue Merrimu 3340	
98	PS420001	27 Lindsay Avenue Merrimu 3340	
6A	PP3095	Long Forest Road Long Forest 3340	
2	PS306123	5 Mckenzie Court Merrimu 3340	
4	PS306123	8 Mckenzie Court Merrimu 3340	
3	PS306123	10 Mckenzie Court Merrimu 3340	
1	PS306123	17 Mckenzie Court Merrimu 3340	

Lot	Title Plan	Address	LGA
6	PS308914	19 Mckenzie Court Merrimu 3340	Moorabool
7	PS308914	21 Mckenzie Court Merrimu 3340	
8	PS308914	23 Mckenzie Court Merrimu 3340	
44B	PP5025	48 Oconnell Road Merrimu 3340	
1A	LP6880	50 Oconnell Road Merrimu 3340	
1	PS313007	53 Oconnell Road Merrimu 3340	
2	PS313007	55 Oconnell Road Merrimu 3340	
1	TP14574	85 Oconnell Road Merrimu 3340	
1	TP957892	95 Oconnell Road Merrimu 3340	
2	LP78260	100 Oconnell Road Merrimu 3340	
1	TP419506	113 Oconnell Road Merrimu 3340	
2	TP419506		
1	TP191958	136 Oconnell Road Merrimu 3340	
1	TP408175	139 Oconnell Road Merrimu 3340	
2	TP408175		
1	PS540095	55 Possumtail Run Merrimu 3340	
2	PS647445	58 Possumtail Run Merrimu 3340	
2	PS540095	67 Possumtail Run Merrimu 3340	
3	PS540095	79 Possumtail Run Merrimu 3340	
4	PS540095	87 Possumtail Run Merrimu 3340	
5	PS540095	95 Possumtail Run Merrimu 3340	
6	PS540095	103 Possumtail Run Merrimu 3340	
7	PS540095	111 Possumtail Run Merrimu 3340	
8	PS540095	125 Possumtail Run Merrimu 3340	
9	PS540095	129 Possumtail Run Merrimu 3340	
2004	PP3095	Possumtail Run Merrimu 3340	
16	PS318904	5 Streeton Drive Merrimu 3340	
9	PS318904	8 Streeton Drive Merrimu 3340	
10	PS318904	30 Streeton Drive Merrimu 3340	
15	PS318904	31 Streeton Drive Merrimu 3340	
14	PS318904	43 Streeton Drive Merrimu 3340	
11	PS318904	46 Streeton Drive Merrimu 3340	
13	PS318904	51 Streeton Drive Merrimu 3340	
12	PS318904	52 Streeton Drive Merrimu 3340	
1	PS902446		
8	PS318904	Streeton Drive Merrimu 3340	

Lot	Title Plan	Address	LGA
RES2	PS318904	Streeton Drive Merrimu 3340	Moorabool
RES3	PS318904		
RES4	PS318904		
22	PS318904	Tipperary Flats Merrimu 3340	
23	PS318904		
2	PS902446		
97	PS420001	3 Tucker Court Merrimu 3340	
92	PS420001	4 Tucker Court Merrimu 3340	
93	PS420001	14 Tucker Court Merrimu 3340	
96	PS420001	17 Tucker Court Merrimu 3340	
94	PS420001	24 Tucker Court Merrimu 3340	
95	PS420001	25 Tucker Court Merrimu 3340	
2	PS308225	9 Wells Road Merrimu 3340	
5	PS306123	16 Wells Road Merrimu 3340	
1	PS308225	19 Wells Road Merrimu 3340	
3	LP118179	39 Wells Road Merrimu 3340	
1	LP118179	54 Wells Road Merrimu 3340	
2	LP118179	55 Wells Road Merrimu 3340	

2 STUDY AREA

While the study area encompassed the entirety of the Merrimu PSP, this dry stone walls work is on those walls discovered in the previous AHHAs.

2.1 Proposed Development

BMD was requested by Moorabool Shire Council to conduct a Dry Stone Wall Assessment which is to also include the management recommendations of any confirmed dry stone walls identified from the previous AHHAs (Toohey et al. 2018, Green and Fidge 2020; Francis et al. 2020, Minos et al. 2020).

The activity within the PSP is primarily subdivisions for mixed use development, including schools, wetlands, and commercial and community centres with various roads and multiple public open spaces.

2.2 Name of Heritage Advisor

The Heritage Advisor for this assessment and author of this report is Ryan Buhagiar (Consultant Archaeologist/Heritage Advisor). The quality assurance review was undertaken by Meredith Filihia (Associate Heritage Advisor/Technical Lead/Senior Archaeologist). The field work was undertaken by Ian Ostericher, Oscar Balla and Dylan Branda-Pawlaczyk (Archaeologists). Mapping was provided by Monique Elsley (GIS Coordinator) and Diana Valaderez (GIS Officer).

2.3 Name of Client

This report has been commissioned by Bacchus Marsh Developments Pty Ltd for and on behalf of the VPA and Council to inform the Merrimu PSP process.

2.4 Heritage Legislation

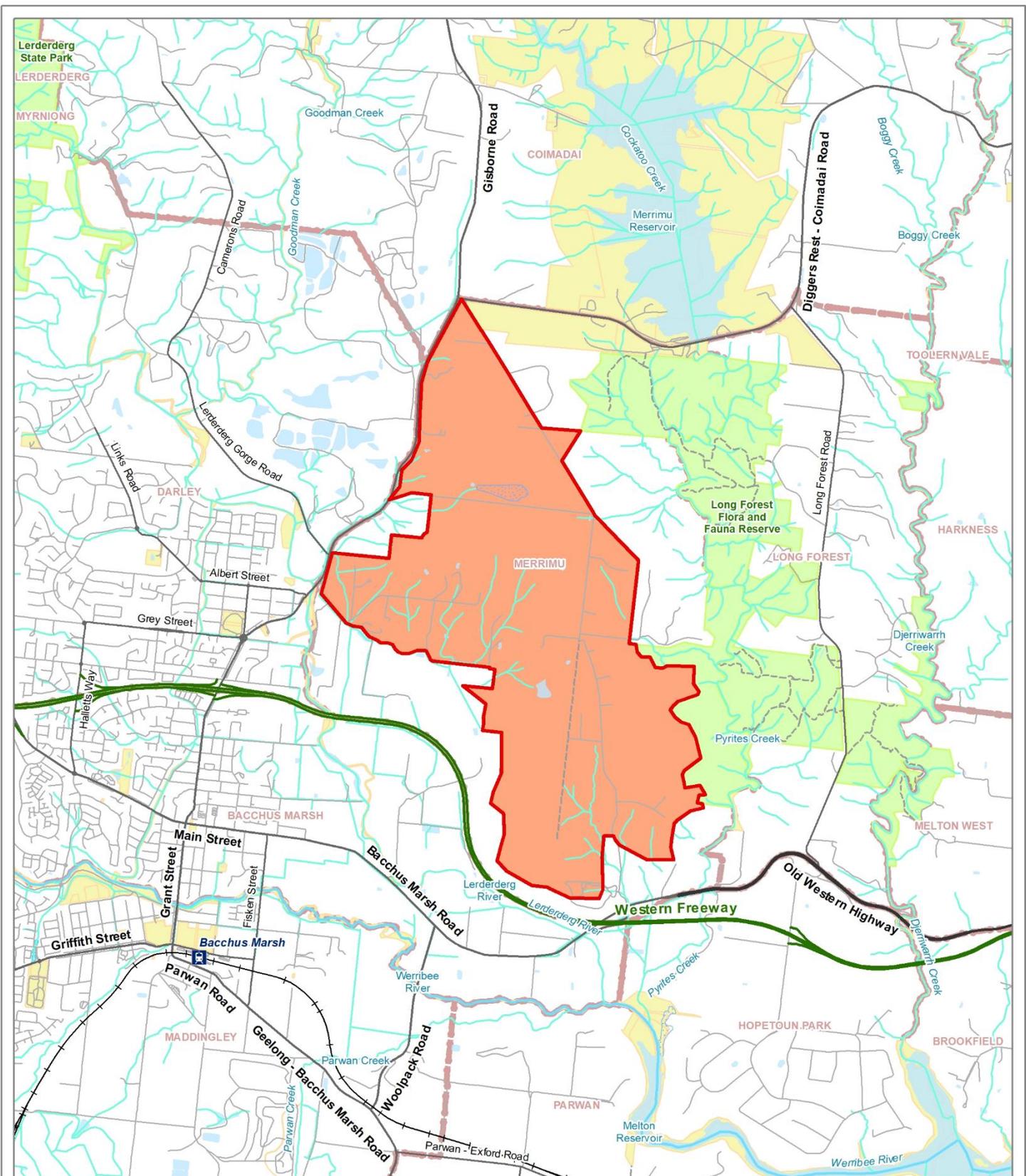
An overview of the Victorian *Heritage Act 1995*, the Victorian *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* is included in Appendix 1.

2.5 Local Council

The study area is located in the Moorabool Shire Council and is therefore governed by the Moorabool Planning Scheme. Planning schemes set out policies and provisions for the use, development, and protection of land. The Heritage Overlay (HO) of a planning scheme lists items of local heritage significance. Items listed on the VHR or VHI are automatically listed on the HO, but not necessarily vice versa. Items listed on the HO generally require a Permit from the local council to disturb the site.

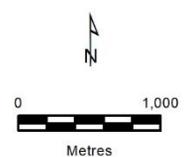
2.6 Report Review and Distribution

Copies of this report will be lodged with Bacchus Marsh Developments Pty Ltd, the VPA and Council for their use to inform the PSP process.



Map 1
Location of Study Area
 Dry Stone Wall Assessment
 for the Merrimu Precinct
 Structural Plan (PSP)

Legend	
	Study
	Railway
	Freeway
	Highway
	Arterial road
	Collector road
	Local or minor road
	Track
	Minor watercourse
	Major watercourse
	Permanent waterbody
	Land subject to inundation
	Wetland/swamp
	Parks and reserves
	Crown land
	Localities

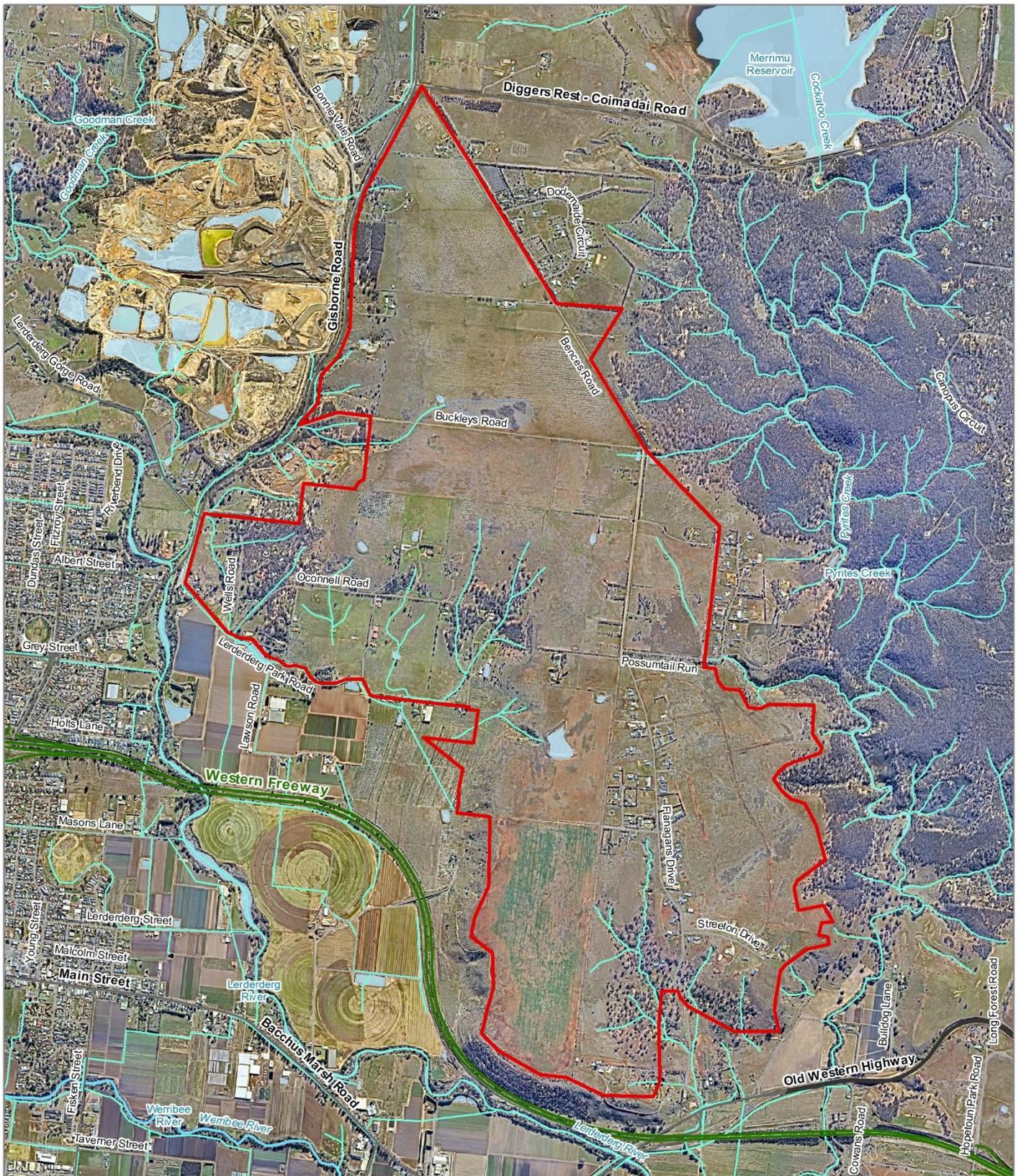


Local Government: Moorabool Shire
 25k Mapsheet: Lerderderg 7722-1-2
 Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55
 Map Scale: 1:50,000

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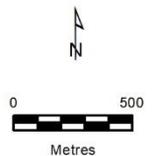


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Map 2
Extent of the Study Area
 Dry Stone Wall Assessment
 for the Merrimu Precinct
 Structural Plan (PSP)

Legend
 Study Area



Local Government: Moorabool Shire
 25k Mapsheet: Lerderderg 7722-1-2
 Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55
 Map Scale: 1:30,000

Base data source: Victoria State Government. Disclaimer: the State of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication and any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the State of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omissions in the information.



3 HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

The desktop assessment includes research into information relating to the practice of DSW construction in a regional context and associated with the study area.

3.1 Historical Background

The section reviews the historical context of the study area and includes an examination of historical and ethnohistorical sources regarding previously recorded DSWs near to the study area. This section also briefly reviews the history of dry stone walling as a common fencing type in parts of rural Victoria.

3.1.1 Dry Stone Walling Around Melbourne and the Western Districts of Victoria

Due to their enormous size, most of the land claimed for the early pastoral runs was poorly defined with boundaries often following natural features such as creeks and lakes or were simply marked by plough lines or blazed trees (Paynter et al. 2004: 6) or by wooden hurdle type fencing (McLellan 1989). Boundaries became more defined during the 1850s following survey by the colonial government.

Initially, settlers employed shepherds to manage their flocks. The shepherds lived in small huts scattered around the properties. Flocks were moved to take advantage of suitable feed and were penned each night (Holdsworth et al. 2011a). Although the runs were not freehold tenure, they were purchased by the squatters and semi-permanent buildings were erected. After a pastoral run had been occupied for five years, a Pre-Emptive Right was granted, giving the squatter 640 acres on which, a residence was usually constructed. These buildings were often the first areas to be fenced off. During the 1850s, the government sought to provide land for smaller farmers and many of the large squatting runs were subdivided and sold off. Much of the pastoral land was purchased by the wealthy squatters.

With greater security of tenure for the pastoralists, together the arrival of the gold rush that saw many shepherds leave the land to try their luck, labour for stock management became expensive. This created the need for fencing to manage stock and to form markers to define property boundaries (Holdsworth et al. 2011a). According to Pickard (2007) the transition from managing sheep with shepherds to allowing flocks to roam in fenced paddocks is one of the most important technological revolutions in Australian pastoral development. The introduction of fencing was a result of the increase in labour expense; capital outlay on fencing was more cost-effective and pastoralists realised that the new fencing technology could give them higher profits (Pickard 2008). Under the Land Act 1862, which allowed for the selection of blocks for purchase, there was a requirement to 'improve' the land by cultivation, establishment of a residence or by fencing. In nineteenth century, rural Victoria, the most common forms of fencing included dry stone walls, post and rail, hedges, ditches or combinations of the above. The use of wire became more widespread in later years due to its low cost and perceived aesthetics, due to it being largely invisible (Paynter et al. 2004). The use of wire rose exponentially during the 'boom' years between 1861 and the 1890s, especially after the mid-1880s when wire imports increased resulting in lower costs (Pickard 2010).

In regions where there was a plentiful supply of stone, as in much of the Western District, dry stone walls were erected. Western Victoria is characterised by extensive volcanic plains covering an area from western Melbourne to Millicent in South Australia. The landforms of the Victorian Volcanic Plains are characterised by stony rises and extensive screes of surface volcanic rock. Costs for erecting these walls were comparable to other fencing technologies. In addition to the primary function of stock separation and/or boundary definition, dry stone walling provided a secondary benefit by requiring the removal of stone from paddocks and providing a convenient and useful way of storing the collected stone.

3.1.2 Fencing Specifications

The *Fences Statute 1874* provided specifications for the construction of dry stone walls (*Bendigo Advertiser* 4 February 1874). In Victoria a standard dry stone field fence, traditionally known as a ‘five-quarter’, stood 3’ 9” (1,143 mm) to the top course, upon which cope stones were often laid. The specifications required cope stones should only extend a further 12”, giving a total wall height to 4’ 9” (1,448 mm). The specifications also required that the wall should be 2’ 0” (610 mm) wide at the base and 15” (381 mm) wide at the top course.

Sometimes added height was required to provide more functionality depending on the purpose of the fence (e.g., changing stocking patterns from sheep to cattle requiring higher fencing). In areas where stone was less abundant, post and wire or post and rails were added to the top of the wall in place of cope stones. In later years, posts and wire netting was added to fences for greater efficiency, particularly in containing rabbits. In some areas, trenches were dug, and the walls commenced below ground level to hinder rabbits burrowing (Paynter et al. 2004: 7).

McLellan (1989) describes the walling in the following terms:

The craftsmen or ‘cowans’ as they were sometimes known, would lay two rows of stone about three feet apart, filling the centre with smaller stones and rubble. Courses were added, the two single walls tapering inwards towards the top where the width would be one foot to eighteen inches. Large stones were laid across the top of the wall to bind the two sides together and to provide weight to settle the stones. Top stones laid flat were called capping stones or coping stones. Each stone was handled once only, ‘there being a place for every stone’. Breaking or chipping stones to make them fit was seriously frowned upon, although each stone is given a judicious tap with a small hammer to make it settle. The rate of progress varied between half-a-chain to a chain a day, depending on the style of wall and whether ground trenching was required by the owner.

Dry stone walls can be either a ‘single wall’ or a ‘double wall’. Single walls are constructed to the width of a single rock (known as ‘building stones’) so that the same rock is visible on both sides of the wall. Double walls are constructed using two single walls (known as ‘doubling’), tapering towards each other at the top, with the void between packed with smaller rocks and rubble (known as ‘hearting’). Smaller gaps between building stones, particularly in doubling, is filled using smaller stones (known as ‘plugging’) to create a neat, aesthetic and more stable wall face.

Marshal et al. (2004) summarises the characteristics of Victorian dry stone walls as follows:

- They are constructed through the careful placement of rocks without using any cementing or other binding substances;

- They are invariably built from local sources of stone, either quarried or unquarried;
- Unquarried sources of stone are generally located in the surrounding area as basalt floaters on the surfaces of paddocks;
- Walls generally taper in shape and have wide bases;
- Walls can vary in terms of style, structure and technique of construction; and
- Walls can include a combination of other materials or additions which can either be added on after the construction of the wall or be contemporaneous to the time of construction.

Distinct regional differences in style emerged due to differences in stone qualities (e.g. degree of vesicles; angular vs rounded fieldstone), the underlying soil profile, the purpose of the wall, and the training, skills and personal tastes of the builder. Walls in Victoria's Western District are primarily all-stone walls that are typically 1.2 to 1.5 m in height, with regular coursing and usually distinct cope and through stones. The stone tends to be highly vesicular and angular creating a rough surface that allows stones to interlock allowing tightly fitting regular courses and a smooth-faced finish. By comparison, the walls in the plains north and west of Melbourne form a very distinct regional style, which differs markedly from the Western District walls and those interstate (Vines 1995). The style is characterised by the local rounded or smooth-weathered, basalt fieldstone of variable size, which is unsuited to regular coursing or close-fitting and plugging is relatively rare. Composite walls, using a low stone wall (usually between 600-900 mm height) supplemented by a post and wire or post and rail fence, are common in the basalt plains around Melbourne.

3.2 Brief History

3.2.1 Regional and Local

The landscape of the volcanic plains west of Melbourne was regularly mentioned in the early explorations of Port Phillip. In 1802 Grimes' party passed through with the following description of the area:

"From the top of the hills the country on all sides presented an open grassy plain without timber – as far as the eye could reach" (Grimes 1802 in Shillinglaw 1878).

The first European person to the Melbourne area was John Batman, who, as a commanding member of the Port Phillip Association, travelled to Victoria in 1835 and traversed the Port Phillip region. The Batman Treaty was signed by Batman and Aboriginal Elders of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Tribe on June 6, 1835, and Europeans subsequently began to settle along the banks of the Yarra River. Soon after, small settlements had spread to the west of Port Philip Bay towards the Bacchus Marsh area (State Library Victoria 2019).

The first European settler to arrive in the Bacchus Marsh area was Kenneth Scobie Clarke in 1836, who was a British migrant and the manager of a Tasmanian land company. Bacchus Marsh derived its name in 1839 when Clarke made an agreement with local landowner, Captain William Henry Bacchus, in which Clarke's pastoral run would not intrude onto the Captain's land; therefore, the area beyond the Clarke's property was named "Bacchus Marsh" (Victorian Places 2018). The Captain's pastoral run included the now registered Manor House (VHR H0264) (Figure 1). William Bacchus established his estate in the centre of present-day Bacchus Marsh,

which comprised a 14,080-acre pastoral run. The pastoral run is survived today by the Captain's estate and is listed with Victorian Heritage Database as VHR H0264.



Figure 1: Historic photograph of Manor House (Source: Victorian Heritage Database 2019)

In March 1839, the Crown Land Occupation Act of 1836 was amended to allow licenced permit grazing and as a result, more pastoralists moved into the area. Between 1840–1841 the “Speeds,” “Bullengarook” and “Glenmore” pastoral runs were also established in the region (Peterson and Catrice 1995). When land was made available for sale in 1842 a portion of allotments were reserved for retired military and naval personnel. Two sections of Bacchus’ pastoral run were claimed by former British military captain Alexander McCrae, who held a number of prominent positions in the community. Peter Inglis, John Lindsay, and George Brunswick Smith, all considered pioneers of the Bacchus Marsh region, also made claim to portions of Bacchus’s run (Peterson and Catrice 1995).

By 1840, the township that is now Bacchus Marsh had been surveyed and in 1842, land was made available for purchase on the banks of the Lerderderg (Darley) and the Werribee Rivers. Given the central location of Bacchus Marsh between Melbourne and Ballarat, the settlement became a major stopover point in the 1850’s for workers travelling between Melbourne and the Ballarat goldfields. Three schools were opened in 1851, including an Anglican and Catholic school; however, the latter two were closed in 1864 and 1874 respectively. Bacchus Marsh was declared a Shire on 23 January 1871 and by the 1850’s, the town had acquired two flour mills, a brewery, agricultural society, mechanics institute, quarries and Presbyterian, Anglican, and Catholic

churches. Due to the steep landform of the region, Bacchus Marsh was not connected to Melbourne and Ballarat via railway until the late 1880's, and consequently this restricted the local agricultural industries to local markets (Victorian Places 2018). However, the Melton railway was extended to Ballan between 1886 and 1889 which supported the growth and expansion of Bacchus Marsh, as did the formation of the Bacchus Marsh Irrigation and Water Supply Trust in the late 1880's (Victorian Places 2018).

The parish of Merrimu lies immediately north-east of Bacchus Marsh and was put open for selection in the early 1840s (Trove 2022a) within a decade of the establishment of Melbourne. By 1878, most of the allotments in the parish were occupied. According to historic Parish Plans of Merrimu, by 1878 the Activity Area was owned by A. R. Porter, S. A. Partridge & J. C. Kennedy, Thos Cain, A. D. Porter, and Jon Courtis.

Also, in 1842, portions of "special country land" were made available for purchase. These lots were considered suitable for cultivation or farming, and land went to auction in lots of 20–320 acres for a minimum price of one pound per acre. Crop farming (such as wheat and other grains) predominately took place on the large portion of river flats to the north of the Werribee River. The discovery of gold in nearby Ballarat generated population growth and fuelled the economy of Bacchus Marsh, and following this wheat, oat and barley crops in the region increased by 341 percent and peaked in the 1870's, with local farmers producing oats, barley, wheat, potatoes, beets, peas, and mangles (Peterson and Catrice 1995). The expansion of cultivation in the area subsequently generated population growth and demand for more utilities and services. More homesteads and their associated buildings (such as dairies, sheds, stables, and labourers' quarters) appeared, dams were constructed, and more roads and services were established in the area (Peterson and Catrice 1995).

However, following the World War II Bacchus Marsh saw a decline in the dairy industry, predominately owing to an increase on the price of butterfat which caused the closure of the Bacchus Marsh Dairymen's Association factory. Because of this, orchardists and market gardeners moved into the area and fruit and vegetable production became a dominant industry (Peterson and Catrice 1995).

Various mining ventures were attempted in the Bacchus Marsh region from the 1850s, including gold, antimony, brown coal, lime, and sandstone. Many of these industries were unsuccessful however, several sand and stone quarries continue to operate in the Bacchus Marsh region today as well as a small brown coal operation. In May of 1994, Bacchus Marsh Shire, Ballan Shire and parts of Bungaree and Buninyong Shires merged to form Moorabool Shire. According to the 2021 Census, Bacchus Marsh supports a population of 24,717 people and is now the largest settlement in the Moorabool Shire (Victorian Places 2025; Australian Bureau of Statistics 2025).

A school had been established by 1899 (Trove 2022b), which by that time had "met a want in the township" (Trove 2022c) The parish of Merrimu is presently considered a suburban extension of Bacchus Marsh.

The Merrimu Reservoir situated to the 10 km north east of Bacchus Marsh and approximately 2.5 km east of the Activity Area was constructed in three stages from 1969 to 1986 and has a capacity of about 32,000 Megalitres (ML). The reservoir was a small natural catchment area known as Lake Merrimu (Figure 2), but to supplement its storage ability, two small diversion weirs and two tunnels from neighbouring catchments were built. These works and the subsequent raising of the reservoir embankment form the three main stages of the Merrimu Reservoir construction (Southern Rural Water 2025).



Figure 2: Photograph of Lake Merrimu, Victoria by the State Rivers Water Supply Commission 1968 (Source: SLV 2019)

The local area was subdivided into variously sized parcels, and the study areas containing DSW fall within parcels were owned by A. R. Porter, S. A. Partridge & J. C. Kennedy, Thos Cain, J. Winterford, Hodgson & Others and Mark Cromwell (Spreadborough and Anderson 1983).

3.2.2 Air Photo Interpretation

Examination of recent aerial photos corroborates documentary evidence that the area has been used for pastoral and agricultural purposes, with a number of residential dwellings. It is known that much of this area was used for dairy farming until recently. Aerial photos also show the characteristics of this agricultural landscape with stone walls being some of the most prominent. Currently the area is mostly used for pastoral agriculture.

3.2.3 Historical Heritage Places in the Study Area

There are no VHI sites located within or immediately adjacent to the study area, but there is one heritage place in study area that is included within the Moorabool Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay: HO180, Dwelling (former Djerriwarrh State School/Djerriwarrh Creek School) at 21 Lerderderg Park Road.

4 DATABASE SEARCHES

A review of the various relevant databases was conducted, including the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR), Victorian Heritage Inventory (VHI) and Heritage Overlay to the Moorabool Planning Scheme (HO). The following section provides an overview of the relevant registrations.

4.1 Victorian Heritage Register

The VHR lists the places, objects and shipwrecks of State significance which are protected under the *Heritage Act 2017*.

HO180 – Dwelling (former Djerriwarrh State School / Djerriwarrh Creek School) is included in the study area.

4.2 Victorian Heritage Inventory

The *Heritage Act 2017* also protects all non-Aboriginal (historical) archaeological sites in the State. If an archaeological site is not of State significance but has archaeological value, it is usually listed on the Victorian Heritage Inventory (VHI).

There are no VHI sites, individual DSWs or DSW precincts located within or immediately adjacent to the study area.

4.3 Merrimu Precinct Structure Plan

4.3.1 Heritage Overlay

Historical heritage items and places that are not considered to be of State significance but are of local heritage significance may be included in a Heritage Overlay (HO) of the relevant municipal planning scheme.

A review of the HO Schedule for the Merrimu area shows that there is one heritage place listed within the study area and an additional five listed in Merrimu. No specific DSWs or DSW precincts are listed.

HO180 – Dwelling (former Djerriwarrh State School / Djerriwarrh Creek School)

The former Djerriwarrh State School at 21 Lerderberg Park Road, Merrimu is included within the perimeter of the current study area and is of local historical significance as an important remaining public building indicating the former existence of a settlement at Djerriwarrh. No other civic buildings remain to indicate that a more populous settlement was located near the Djerriwarrh Creek. The former Djerriwarrh Creek School successfully operated from 1875 until 1931 at a site on the crest of Anthony's Cutting. It is of historical significance for its associations with educational developments in the Bacchus Marsh area.

The former Djerriwarrh State School is of aesthetic significance as a relatively intact example of a Standard Education Department 40-type schoolroom designed to accommodate 40 pupils. Features to note from the former school use include the main gable roofed schoolroom, 12-pane double hung sash window, entry door, and weatherboard cladding.

Included in the Moorabool Heritage Overlay within Merrimu, but just outside the study area specified in this assessment are the following heritage Places:

HO10 – Former Leahy’s Residence

Initially constructed as a residence and then converted to a hotel to take advantage of the passing trade of the goldfields is able to provide valuable information. This is a rare example of an extant gold rush hotel. Leahy's former residence is also important because of the likelihood that it is a surviving example of an 1840s building, rare within the state of Victoria. Leahy's former residence is valuable too because it is able to provide a continuum analogous with that of the state, in relation to not only the changing usage of the building, but also its relationship to such as the Irish enclave which existed in the area and the industries such as that of flour and saw milling, and cheese manufacturing, which were located within its vicinity.

HO16 – Hopetoun Cemetery

The Hopetoun Catholic Cemetery is situated in a rural setting approximately 4km to the east of Bacchus Marsh, at the foot of a slope overlooking the junction of the Werribee and Lerderderg Rivers. It is about 0.4 hectares in area and situated within an irregularly shaped four-sided block. The cemetery is fenced with a post-and-rail fence rebuilt in 2002-2003.

The site was established on land donated by Messrs Leahy, Egan, and Egan in 1850, to the Roman Catholic Church for the erection of a chapel/school. The chapel known as the Church of St Laurence O'Toole was made of locally produced hand-made bricks, the foundation stone laid by Bishop Goold on October 16th, 1850. Used as both a house of worship and school by the Irish immigrants who settled the area it served first as the Hopetoun Catholic Denominational School (1851-1861), then later as Merrimu Common School No. 988 (1869-1874) finally closing in 1874. The building survived until c1876 and was then demolished. The chapel/school remains can be seen as stone footing and brick scatters that remain in situ in the centre in the cemetery.

The Hopetoun Cemetery is historically important as the earliest known Catholic cemetery in rural Victoria. The Cemetery represents a complex and multi layered site and is important for the visible evidence it demonstrates of a pre-goldrush European settlement, particularly relating to the Irish farming community, reflected in the cemetery grounds and the ruins of the schoolhouse/chapel. The Hopetoun Catholic Cemetery is important for its archaeological potential to illuminate the pre-goldrush period settlement of regional Victoria. Hand-made brick and stone scatters relating to the construction of the chapel/school and the presence of metal, glass, and ceramic artefacts including fragments of writing slate demonstrate the site's archaeological value reflecting the range of different activities represented at the site. The site demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the early Irish Catholic farming community which existed in the area as well as the conditions of this period.

HO147 – Former W Symington House and Symington’s Brewery Industrial Archaeological Site

The former Symington House and Brewery at 705 Bacchus Marsh Road, Bacchus Marsh is of local historical significance for its association with the early settlement and development of industry in the area. The house and brewery buildings built by local figure William Symington in c. 1858-62 are the representative embodiment of the industrial process of brewing. The surviving brewery elements are of significance for their potential to yield important archaeological information. The site is also of historical significance for its associations with William Symington, a local pioneer.

The former Symington House and Brewery at 705 Bacchus Marsh Road, Bacchus Marsh is of local aesthetic significance as a representative and early surviving example of pioneer settler's residence and associated brewery. The remains of the brewery include two chimneys, a malt house, and half cellar/store. These remains, as well as the associated dwelling are of aesthetic significance for demonstrating the typical components of an early brewing site.

HO178 – Bacchus Marsh-Gisborne Road Bridge

This site displays surviving elements of the former Bacchus Marsh-Gisborne Road bridge with masonry embankments of the present bridge and a masonry weir over the Lerderderg River. Its local significance is due to its influence on the development of other places north of the site, and the architectural significance as a representative of bridge and weir construction technology of its time.

Various remnant elements of the former timber road bridge are present over the Lerderderg River and former weir, as well as masonry embankments of the current bridge. There are three piers from the former bridge consisting of rocks set in concrete. In these remain post holes: one has two holes, the central one with six holes and the eastern one has one hole. The former highway alignment is discernible, south of ref 312. The weir now breached is constructed of pebble boulders, and the adjoining present bridge's embankments and central pier are constructed of stone rubble.

HO179 – Farmhouse “Lerderderg Park”, concrete silo and water take stand.

The Farm Complex at 20 Lerderderg Park Road, Merrimu is of local historical significance for its associations with the racehorse industry and as part of the Lerderderg Park property. In 1891, Thomas Cain sold this property to Wallace. Wallace farmed the property, which he named Lerderderg Park. At the turn of the century, Wallace sold Lerderderg Park to C. W. Macarthur who used it for the agistment of racehorses. In 1909, the property was then sold to John Mills, the owner of the famous Melbourne Cup winner, Carbine. The present farmhouse was erected in the 1920s for John Mills, designed by his son. The property is of historical significance for its demonstration of a 1920s property developed for wealthy and prominent owners.

The Farm Complex at 20 Lerderderg Park Road, Merrimu is of aesthetic significance for its 1920s large brick Californian Bungalow farmhouse. Features of importance include the main gable roof with minor gables extending from the main roof, veranda on three sides with square section piers splaying to brick pedestals, decorated gable ends with shingles and vents, exposed rafters to the eaves, tall, tapered chimneys with wide, flat capping, roughcast finish to the walls over dado height with face brickwork below, and quadruple timber framed casement windows. The water tower and silo contribute to the aesthetic significance of the farm setting around the house.

The Farm Complex at 20 Lerderderg Park Road, Merrimu is of scientific significance for the water tower and silo on the property, which are rare early examples of slip form concrete construction. The structures have roughcast render over the corduroy grooved concrete.

4.3.2 Precinct Structure Plan

The Merrimu Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) is a long-term plan for urban development for the land in Merrimu. The PSP area is located northeast of Bacchus Marsh town centre approximately 46 north-west of Melbourne and covers an area of approximately 1,016 hectares.

The precinct is currently comprised of agricultural land uses, nature reserves and established rural residential development. Long Forest Reserve defines Merrimu PSP's eastern boundary, and to the western boundary there are various quarries.

4.3.2.1 Heritage Study

Moorabool Shire Council has prepared a shire-wide heritage study, which includes an overview of dry stone walling across the LGA (Peterson and Catrice 1995). More recently, an updated heritage study was prepared by Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd and Architect and Heritage Consultant (Rowe and Jacobs 2010), with discussion on potential dry stone walls within West Moorabool Shire that require further assessment, however, none fall within the Merrimu PSP. Unlike the Melton and Wyndham City Councils, Moorabool Shire Council have not yet commissioned a shire-wide Dry Stone Wall study. The closest Dry Stone Wall located near the Merrimu PSP is the Dry Stone Wall located on the corner of Geelong-Bacchus Marsh Road and Swamp Road in Balliang (HO134).

4.3.2.2 Archaeological and Heritage Assessments

The study area has previously been assessed for its Aboriginal and historical heritage values by Ecology and Heritage Partners (Minos et al. 2020, Green and Fidge 2020) as part of AHHA reports for the Merrimu Precinct Structure Plan (PSP). Several historical features were identified during the assessments including several potential DSWs across the PSP area (Map 3 series). However, descriptions of individual walls were not included. Minos et al (2020) wrote on the Implications for the Project, stating:

While at the time of the preparation of this AHHA there are no statutory implications with regards to dry stone walls within the current study area; if the future proposed development has the potential to impact dry stone walls, further consultation with Moorabool Shire Council is recommended.

Additionally, Recommendation 3 of the AHHA stated:

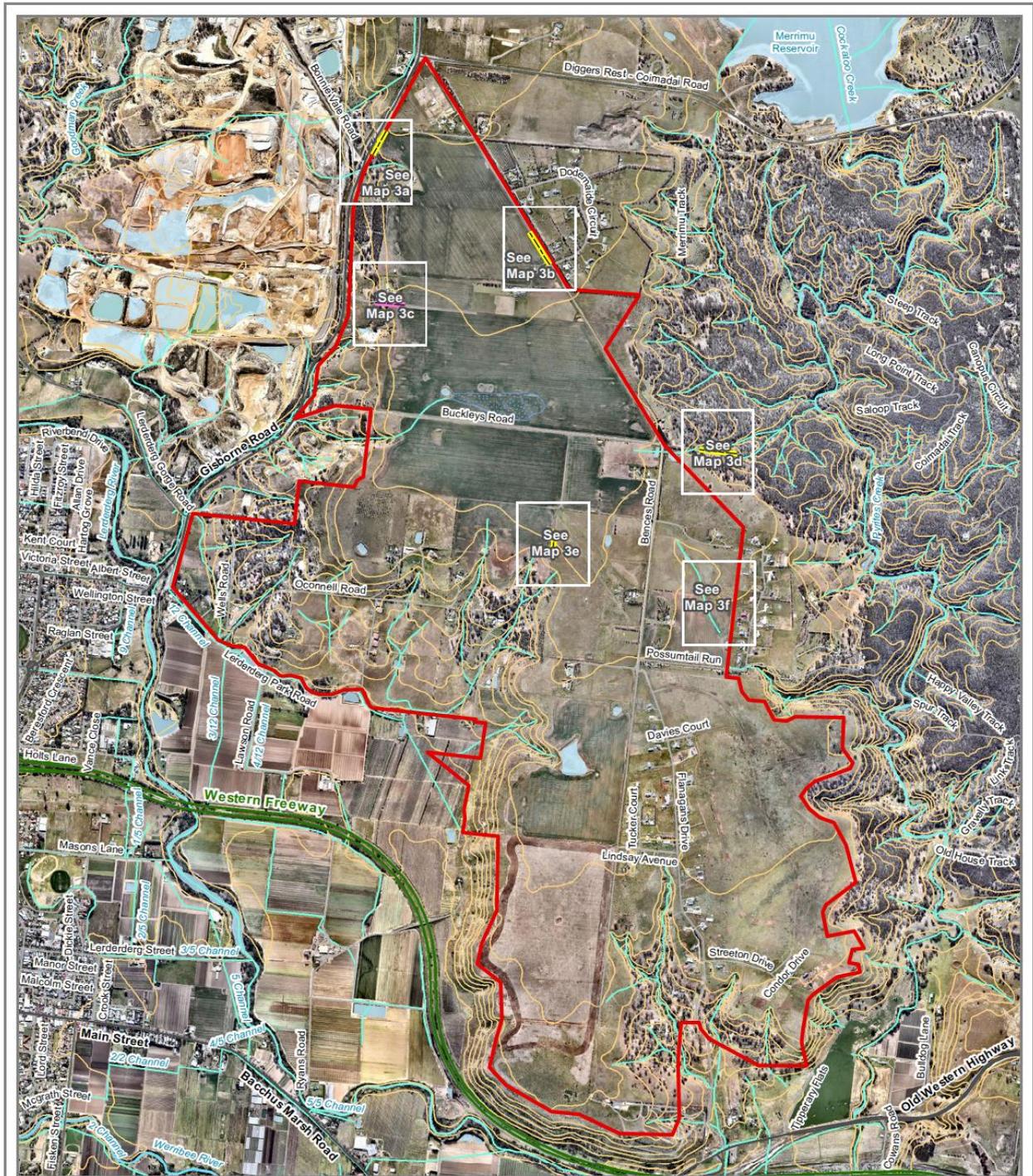
With regard to dry stone walls, there is currently no local policy in the Moorabool Planning Scheme to address dry stone walls. The requirements of Clause 52.37 apply only to land specified in the Schedule to this provision. Given that currently no land is specified in the Schedule to Clause 52.37, the requirements of this provision do not apply to the study area.

Green and Fidge (2020) noted that although none were recorded in their extended study area, it remains reasonably possible that remnants of dry stone walls may be present.

A summary of reports on dry stone walling of the Shire of Moorabool appears below (Table 2).

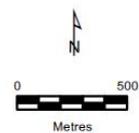
Table 2: Historical Reports Relevant to the Study Area

Author, Date & Title	Location	Description
Minos R., Buckingham F., & Bartsch I., 2020, Bacchus Marsh Urban Growth Framework Precinct Structural Plan, Merrimu, Victoria.	Merrimu PSP, Shire of Moorabool	Aboriginal and Historical Heritage Assessment
Peterson R., & Catrice D., 1995, Bacchus Marsh Heritage Study	Bacchus Marsh, Shire of Moorabool	Heritage Study
Ward A., 1996, Heritage Review for Moorabool Shire	Moorabool Shire	Heritage Study and Review
Rowe D., & Jacobs W., 2010, West Moorabool Shire Heritage Study Stage 1.	Moorabool Shire	Heritage Study
Rowe D., & Jacobs W., 2016, West Moorabool heritage Study 2A Thematic History (Volume 2)	Moorabool Shire	Heritage Study



Map 3 Overview
Previously Identified
Potential Dry Stone Walls
in the Study Area
Dry Stone Wall Assessment
for the Merrimu Precinct
Structural Plan (PSP)

- Legend**
- Study Area
 - Contour (10m)
 - Dry Stone Wall
 - Potential Deconstructed Dry Stone Wall



Local Government: Moorabool Shire
25k Mapsheet: Lerderderg 7722-1-2
Coordinate System: MGA Zone 55 (GDA94)
Map Scale: 1:27,900

ViolaMap Data: The State of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication and any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the State of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omissions in the information.



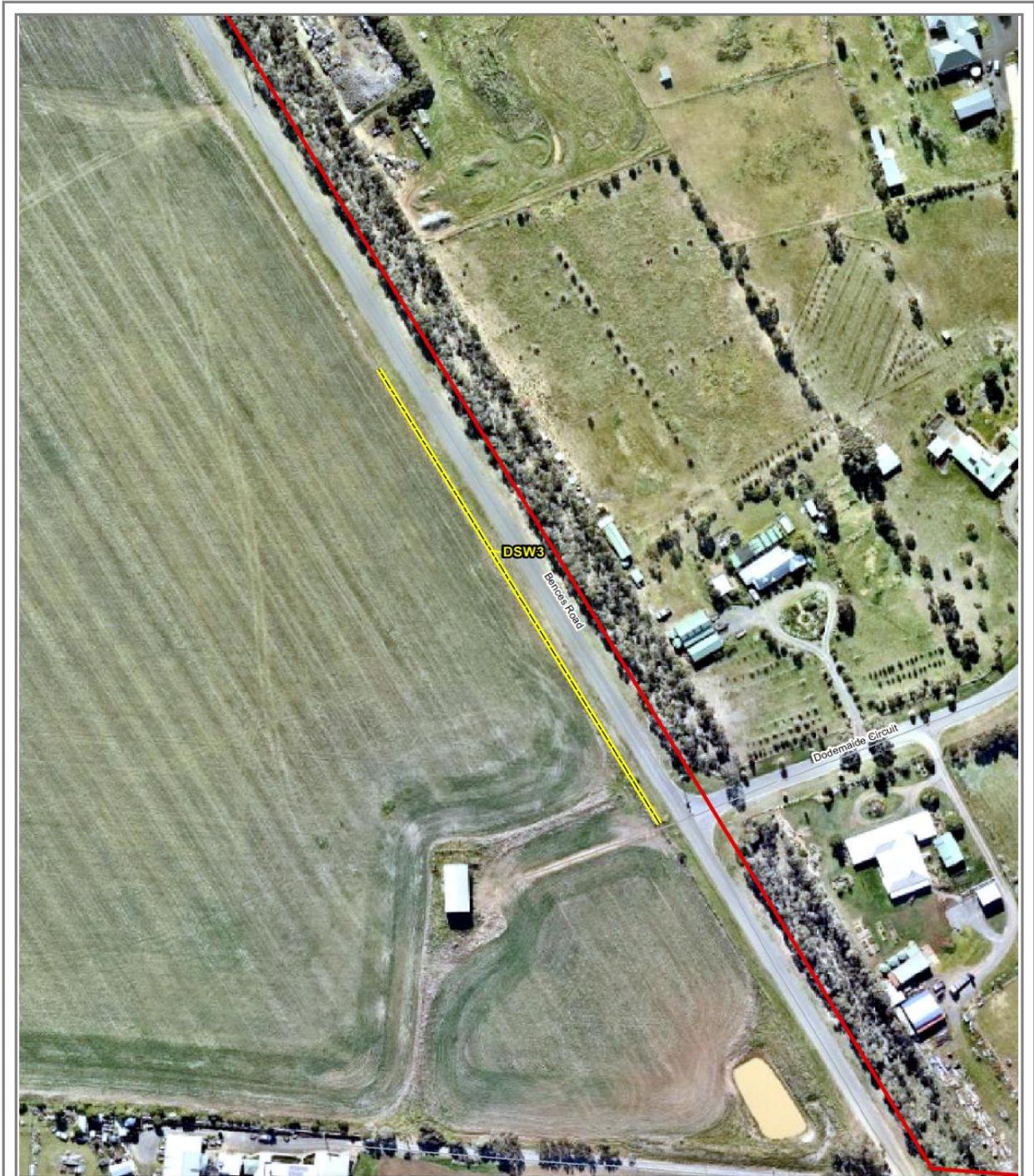
Map 3a
Previously Identified Potential Dry Stone Walls in the Study Area
Dry Stone Wall Assessment for the Merrimu Precinct Structural Plan (PSP)

- Legend**
- Study Area
 - Contour (10m)
 - Dry Stone Wall



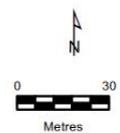
Local Government: Moorabool Shire
25k Mapsheet: Lerdergerg 7722-1-2
Coordinate System: MGA Zone 55 (GDA94)
Map Scale: 1:2,000

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Map 3b
Previously Identified Potential Dry Stone Walls in the Study Area
Dry Stone Wall Assessment for the Merrimu Precinct Structural Plan (PSP)

Legend
 Study Area
 Dry Stone Wall



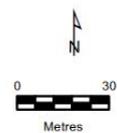
Local Government: Moorabool Shire
 25k Mapsheet: Lerderberg 7722-1-2
 Coordinate System: MGA Zone 55 (GDA94)
 Map Scale: 1:2,000

ViDMap Data: The State of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication and any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the State of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omissions in the information.



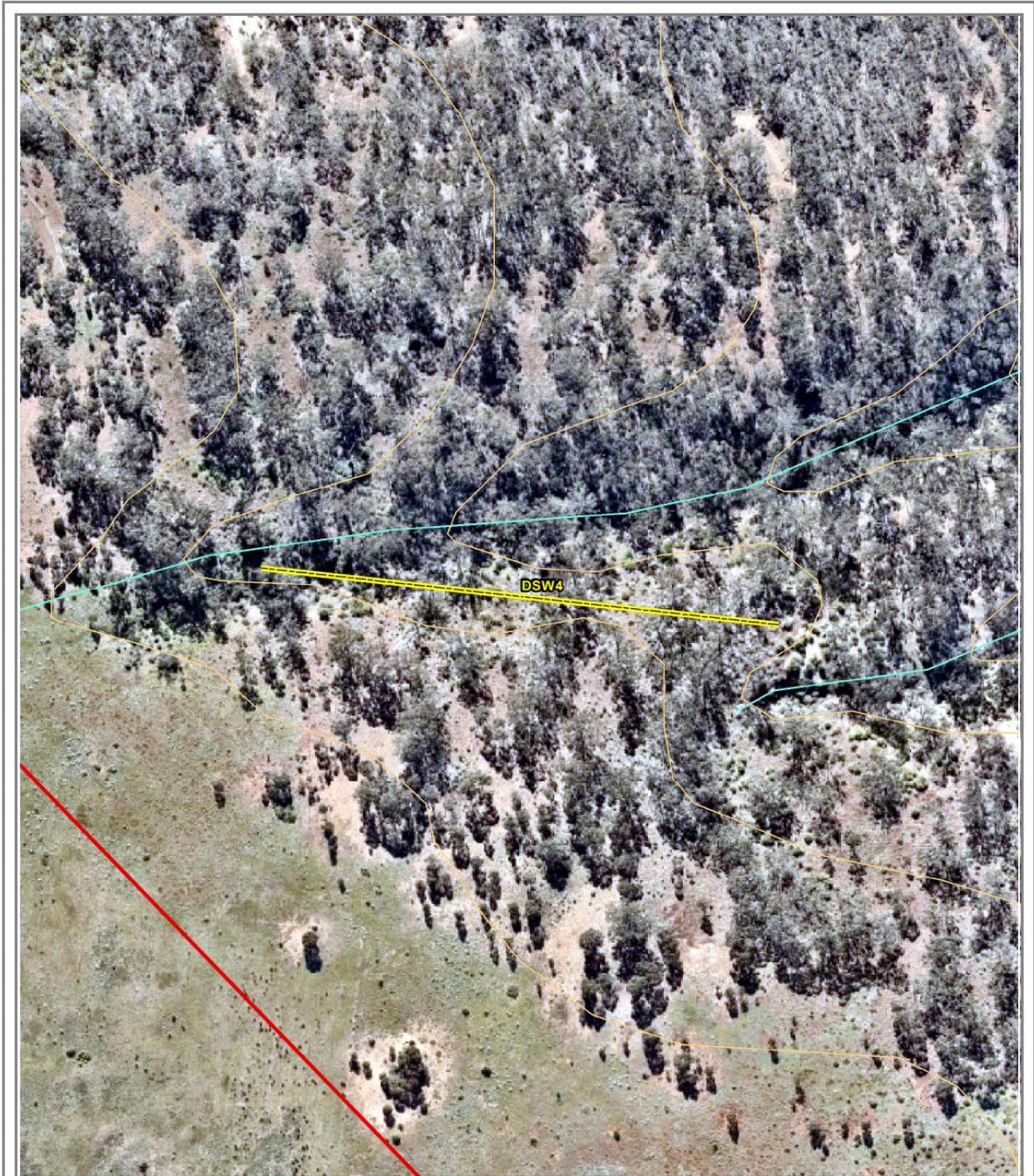
Map 3c
Previously Identified Potential Dry Stone Walls in the Study Area
Dry Stone Wall Assessment for the Merrimu Precinct Structural Plan (PSP)

- Legend**
- Study Area
 - Contour (10m)
 - Potential Deconstructed Dry Stone Wall



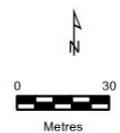
Local Government: Moorabool Shire
25k Mapsheet: Lerderberg 7722-1-2
Coordinate System: MGA Zone 55 (GDA94)
Map Scale: 1:2,000

ViGMap Data: The State of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication and any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the State of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omissions in the information.



Map 3d
Previously Identified Potential Dry Stone Walls in the Study Area
Dry Stone Wall Assessment for the Merrimu Precinct Structural Plan (PSP)

- Legend**
- Study Area
 - Contour (10m)
 - Dry Stone Wall



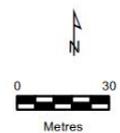
Local Government: Moorabool Shire
25k Mapsheet: Lerderberg 7722-1-2
Coordinate System: MGA Zone 55 (GDA94)
Map Scale: 1:2,000

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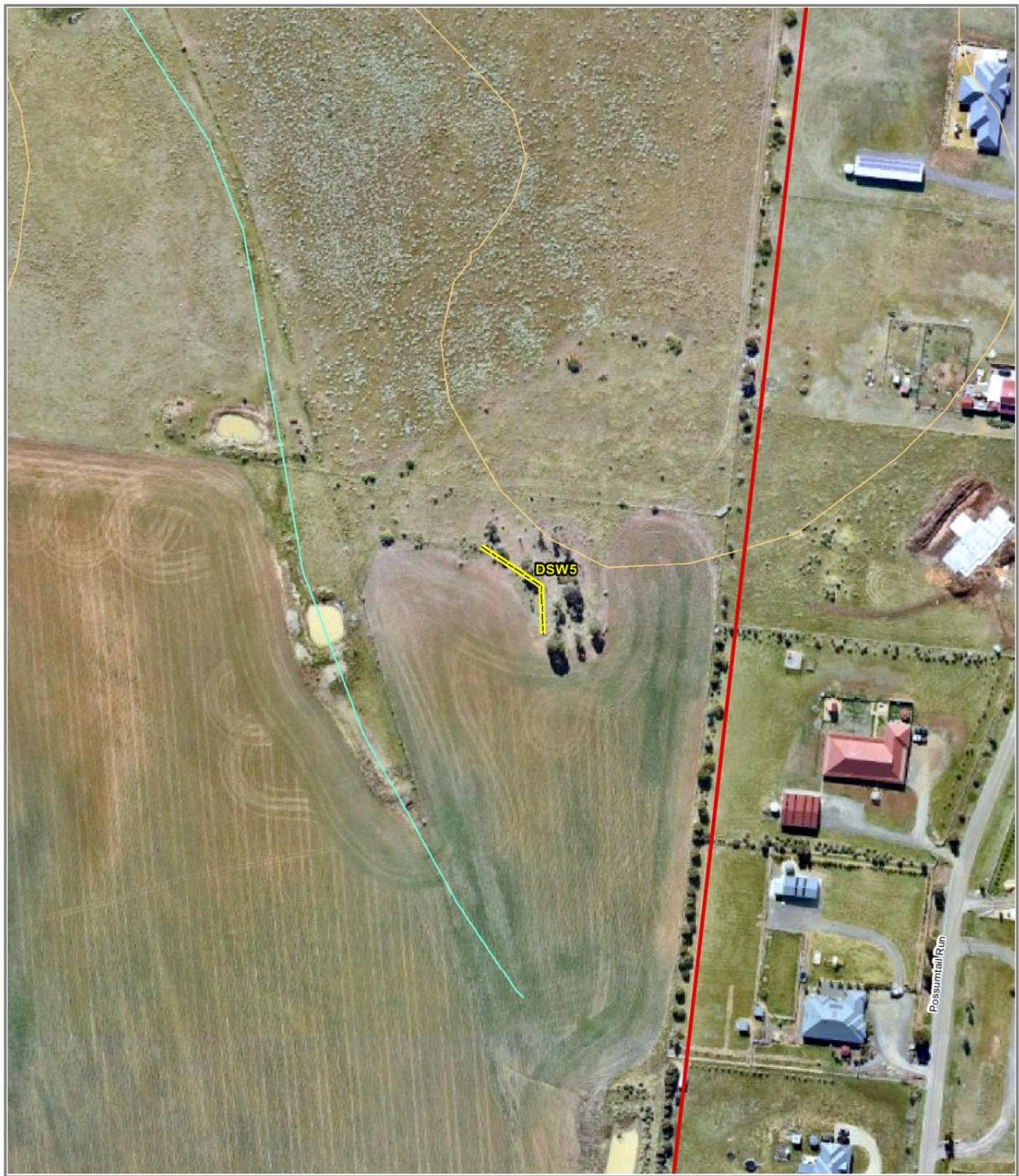
Map 3e
Previously Identified Potential Dry Stone Walls in the Study Area
Dry Stone Wall Assessment for the Merrimu Precinct Structural Plan (PSP)

- Legend**
- Study Area
 - Contour (10m)
 - Dry Stone Wall



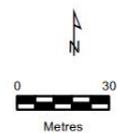
Local Government: Moorabool Shire
25k Mapsheet: Lerderberg 7722-1-2
Coordinate System: MGA Zone 55 (GDA94)
Map Scale: 1:2,000

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Map 3f
Previously Identified Potential Dry Stone Walls in the Study Area
Dry Stone Wall Assessment for the Merrimu Precinct Structural Plan (PSP)

- Legend**
- Study Area
 - Contour (10m)
 - Dry Stone Wall



Local Government: Moorabool Shire
25k Mapsheet: Lerderberg 7722-1-2
Coordinate System: MGA Zone 55 (GDA94)
Map Scale: 1:2,000

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5 FIELD ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the methodology used to record the dry stone wall, the result of the recording and the limitations of the recording. The investigation included an investigation of sections and portions of the wall for use as a baseline for assessing post-development impacts.

These particular DSWs had previously been inspected between 09 January to 09 February 2018 by Rachael Minos (Senior Archaeologist/Heritage Advisor), Ilona Bartsch, Elizabeth Toohey, Louise Glasson (Heritage Advisors) and Michelle Monga (Archaeologist), with the current inspection providing an update of the condition of the DSW as of July 2025 as well as any other previously unrecorded information related to the current and future heritage values of the walls.

The study area and its potential DSWs was inspected on 24 and 26 June 2025 by Ian Ostericher (Heritage Advisor/Archaeologist), Oscar Balla and Dylan Branda-Pawlaczyk (Archaeologists).

5.1 Methodology

Start and end points for all potential DSWs were recorded using differential global positioning system (dGPS) to record the extent of the walls across the road frontage of 2621 Gisborne Road, 146 Bences Road and within 2621 Gisborne Road, 2677 Gisborne Road, 289 Bences Road, 332 Bences Road, and 345 Bences Road, Merrimu, Victoria.

Details were taken of the fence type, dimensions and construction. The wall construction type, if applicable, was recorded for each portion using the nomenclature adapted from terminology used in Vines (1990) and Pickard (2009). The dimensions of the wall (width at base and cope, and the wall height) were recorded.

Photographs were taken for each wall, being every five metres along DSW3 and DSW5 and at every change in condition in other potential DSWs. In addition, notes were made on perceived impacts to the wall and on any breaches or change in condition since the earlier assessment. Previously identified potential DSW4 was not reinspected as this is outside of the PSP area.

5.1.1 Construction Technique

Notes were taken regarding the general appearance and the techniques used to construct the wall ('refinedness'). The criteria used by Vines (1990) were used to assess this aspect (Table 3). As part of that assessment, notes were taken to determine the degree to which each section demonstrates the different attributes of dry stone wall construction.

Table 3: Criteria Used for Assessing Construction Technique (from Vines 1990)

Technique	Description
Unrefined	The wall is simply a piling of stones intended to act as a supplement to other fencing material, but which does not show evidence of skilful construction. Throughstones are absent, coping is irregular or non-existent, there is no plugging and often no evidence of double walling, hearting, courses of sorted stone. These walls have probably been built by farmers untrained in wall building techniques.

Technique	Description
Technically Competent	The walls demonstrate basic aspects of dry stone wall construction but do not have the refinements of the better walls. Double walling with hearting and coping with throughs in the taller walls are always evident, but appearance was a secondary consideration. Therefore, an uneven batter prevails and plugging is restricted to eliminating larger gaps and securing stones which may not be seated evenly. Professional wallers were almost certainly employed and, as they would have been required to work speedily, the lack of refinement could be explained in terms of economic construction.
Refined Technique	The basic construction techniques are combined with refinements to produce a wall that is decorative as well as functional. Coping stones are more carefully selected to create an even and more balanced effect. Plugging may be extensive depending on the available material but, where small stone is lacking, refinement is evident in more careful placement of stone to minimize gaps in the wall. These walls tend to be higher and associated with homesteads or other dwellings. They must have been built by skilled professional wallers and it is possible that stone masons versed in house construction were responsible for some walls.
Specialist Technique	Demonstrates specialist or unusual construction techniques designed for a particular function or aesthetic effect. For example, the split paling cope of the Western District walls or the sloping courses of "Greystones".

Within each wall, notes were taken on the degree of preservation (condition) using criteria that was adapted from Vines (1990). Those criteria are shown in Table 4. As part of that assessment, the number of extant stone courses in the dry stone wall was recorded and it was noted whether the wall appears to be original or rebuilt. Original walls usually have consistent colouring created by weathering and a layer of moss or lichen growth; rebuilt walls usually lack a moss or lichen coating (Vines 1990: 32).

Table 4: Criteria Used for Preservation Assessment

Intactness	Meaning
Intact	The wall appears to be intact with little sign of stone loss/collapse. For a double wall, the wall is structurally sound with ample evidence of hearting, plugging and coping stones. Its associated fence (if relevant) is intact with the posts and wires in good condition; whilst some decay may be evident, the fence is still strong, upright, and not broken.
Largely Intact	The majority of the wall (>75%) appears to be intact (as above) with little sign of stone loss/collapse and/or damage/decay to the fence to the fence. Small sections (<25%) may have suffered some damage, collapse, or theft of stone. The associated fence is generally still functional.
Partially Intact	Approximately 25-75% of the wall appears to be intact (as above), but large sections have suffered damage, collapse, or theft. There may only be 1-2 courses of stone remaining. The associated fence may still be upright but is showing marked decay and wires are generally highly rusted or broken.
Mostly Collapsed / Highly Impacted	There is very little (<25%) of the wall left intact; there may be only a single course of stone remaining or stone may be scattered nearby. The associated fence (if applicable) is highly decayed and/or broken.
Not Extant / Destroyed	There is no longer any evidence of the dry stone wall in place.

5.1.2 Impacts or Potential Impacts

The presence of potentially harmful influences, e.g. the presence of existing drainage ditches, trenching for utilities (e.g. Telstra cabling) and the presence of trees whose roots may have potential to impact the wall, were also recorded.

5.2 Limitations of the Survey

Recording was limited to representative sub-sections of the wall; although photographs were taken for each five-metre interval of DSW1, DSW3, DSW5, DSW6 and the potential DSW and where permissible along DSW2, and so no attempt was made to make detailed recording of the entire length of both sides of the walls as for archival-type recording.

The wall was recorded “as is, where is” and no attempt was made to uncover the wall where it was covered by either soil or vegetation, except at representative parts of the wall or in portions of the wall of exceptionally poor or well-preserved quality relative to the rest of the wall. The overall extent of the walls, as shown in the Map 3 series and Map 4 series are based on data taken with dGPS, which was digitally corrected and measured using ArcPAD GIS software. Scaled drawings of the walls were not taken.

6 DRY STONE WALLS

The study area contains several stone walls and features previously identified but not investigated during the preparation of the AHHA (Minos et al. 2020) (Map 3). The most prominent of the walls is DSW3, being the most intact and likely to be an historical DSW. The results of the assessment were recorded in table format and are summarised below.

6.1 Property 16

6.1.1 DSW₄

DSW₄ appeared to be in poor condition in the standard assessment of the previous AHHA (Minos et al. 2020). It was not required to be assessed as it was located outside the Merrimu PSP and within a national park.



Plate 1: View of DSW₄ facing east, AHHA (Minos et al. 2020)

6.2 Property 1 – 2621 Gisborne Road, Merrimu (DSW₁)

6.2.1 DSW₁

DSW₁ is in poor condition appearing to be non-extant. It runs along a wooden post and wire fence line, with the north most section bounded with metal star pickets and stringline. There is no presence of foundation stones, and, like DSW₂, it has been claimed to be constructed by the previous landowners/current tenants and after 1941. It was claimed to be constructed by the previous landowners (current owner of adjoining land) using tools and machinery to clear their paddocks of stone (Sophie Sapurmas, personal communication, 24 June 2025).

We do not recommend retention.

Table 5: Construction Details – 2621 Gisborne Road, Merrimu (DSW₁)

Segment	DSW ₁							
Wall Type	Indeterminate							
Construction Technique	Indeterminate							
Condition	Poor							
Intactness	Non extant							
Wall Dimensions:	Length:	Indeterminate	Base:	1,200 mm	Cope (Top):	N/A	Height:	450 mm
Courses	N/A							
Stone Grading	N/A							
Plugging	Absent							
Hearting	Absent							
Cope Stones	Absent							
Through Stones	Absent							
Foundations	Absent							
Posts	N/A							
Wires	N/A							



Plate 3: DSW1 looking north showing the width of the wall and its proximity to a fence line (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 4: DSW1 looking east showing vegetation growing near it (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 5: DSW1 looking north showing the condition of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 6: DSW1 looking south showing the proximity of the stone wall to the wooden and star picket fence lines (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 7: DSW1 showing the extent of the wall moving north (I. Ostericher 2025)

6.2.2 DSW₂

DSW₂ is in poor condition and is not an historical DSW. The wall moves in a curved direction, moving west then south towards a nearby shed and along a concrete driveway. This feature was built by the current landowner and occupant for the purpose of a cactus garden (Sophie Sapurmas, personal communication, 24 June 2025).

We do not recommend retention.

Table 6: Construction Details – 2621 Gisborne Road, Merrimu (DSW₂)

Segment	DSW ₂							
Wall Type	Indeterminate							
Construction Technique	Indeterminate							
Condition	Poor							
Intactness	Non extant							
Wall Dimensions:	Length:	N/A	Base:	1,000 mm	Cope (Top):	N/A	Height:	450 mm
Courses	N/A							
Stone Grading	N/A							
Plugging	Absent							
Hearting	Absent							
Cope Stones	Absent							
Through Stones	Absent							
Foundations	Absent							
Posts	Absent							
Wires	Absent							



Plate 8: Looking west showing the extent of DSW₂ (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 9: Looking north-west from the east end of DSW₂ (I. Ostericher 2025)

6.3 Property 3 – 146 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340 (DSW₃)

6.3.1 DSW₃

DSW 3 is in fair condition, being relatively intact but with collapsed parts. It has a solid base course, with about three courses at the highest sections of the wall. The foundations are present in a small number of locations along the wall. The DSW runs north to south, and each end leads out suggesting that the wall extended longer than it currently stands.

The condition and management of DSW₃ is to be discussed with the Council. As the most intact example of dry stone walls within the PSP, we recommend this wall be retained pending Council approval and in line with other local government areas north and west of Melbourne with similar historical heritage.

Table 7: Construction Details – 146 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340 (DSW₃)

Segment	DSW ₃							
Wall Type	Post and Wire Single							
Construction Technique	Unrefined							
Condition	Fair to poor							
Intactness	Partially collapsed							
Wall Dimensions:	Length:	210 m	Base:	1,000 mm	Cope (Top):	N/A	Height:	800 mm
Courses	3							
Stone Grading	Present							
Plugging	Absent							
Hearting	Absent							
Cope Stones	Absent							
Through Stones	Absent							
Foundations	Present							
Posts	Star pickets and split wood							
Wires	Barbed wire strands x 3, square fence wiring							



Plate 10: DSW 3 looking east showing a representation of most of the wall's condition (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 11: DSW 3 looking east showing some of the vegetation growing amongst the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 12: DSW 3 looking east showing one of the most intact sections of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 13: DSW 3 looking northwest showing the length and extent of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 14: DSW 3 looking east showing a tree growing in the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 15: DSW 3 looking east showing and interaction of a gate and barbed wire fencing (I. Ostericher 2025)

6.4 Property 4 – 2677 Gisborne Road, Merrimu 3340 (Potential DSW)

6.4.1 Potential DSW Segment A

There is a dismantled stone structure with minimal potential to be a DSW in Property 4. If it was ever a DSW, it is in poor condition, being completely collapsed. It is unlikely to be historical as there is no clear structure to the potential wall. The previous landowner and current tenant of the property claims that the rocks were pushed with a tractor and plough to remove the rocks from the paddock for livestock or crops (Michael Love, pers. Comm 26 June 2025) and is therefore not a dry stone wall and cannot be recommended for retention.

Table 8: Construction Details – 2677 Gisborne Road, Merrimu 3340 (Potential DSW)

Segment	Potential DSWA							
Wall Type	Indeterminate							
Construction Technique	Indeterminate							
Condition	Poor							
Intactness	Non extant, highly degraded							
Wall Dimensions:	Length:	< 30 m	Base:	1,000 mm	Cope (Top):	N/A	Max. Height:	200 mm
Courses	N/A							
Stone Grading	N/A							
Plugging	Absent							
Hearting	Absent							
Cope Stones	Absent							
Through Stones	Absent							
Foundations	Absent							
Posts	Absent							
Wires	Absent							



Plate 16: Potential DSW segment A looking west along the extent of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 17: Potential DSW looking south showing a tree growing within the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 18: Potential DSW looking south showing nearby vegetation growing nearby and distance from modern fence line (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 19: Potential DSW looking south showing the end of wall meeting a gate (I. Ostericher 2025)

6.4.2 Potential DSW Segment B

This western section of the apparent stone alignment and potential DSW is within the main property and may be historical. The wall is in poor condition, appearing to be completely collapsed. There is no presence of foundation stones, however it does approximately follow the fence line. The previous landowner and current tenant noted that the fence line moved over a meter and could further suggest that the DSW predates their occupancy and could be historical, although there is a greater likelihood that the stones are merely the result of land-clearing activities that have pushed stones to the edges of the paddock where they remain.

We do not recommend retention.

Table 9: Construction Details – 2677 Gisborne Road, Merrimu 3340 (Potential DSW)

Segment	Potential DSWB							
Wall Type	Indeterminate							
Construction Technique	Indeterminate							
Condition	Poor							
Intactness	Non extant							
Wall Dimensions:	Length:	< 20 m	Base:	1,000 mm	Cope (Top):	N/A	Max. Height:	200 m
Courses	N/A							
Stone Grading	N/A							
Plugging	Absent							
Hearting	Absent							
Cope Stones	Absent							
Through Stones	Absent							
Foundations	Absent							
Posts	Absent							
Wires	Absent							



Plate 20: Potential DSW looking west section B looking west along the extent of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 21: Potential DSW looking south showing one of the best-preserved sections of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 22: Potential DSW looking south showing the various vegetation growing in and amongst the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 23: Potential DSW looking south showing the end of the wall marked by a large tree stump (I. Ostericher 2025)

6.5 Property 14 – 345 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340 (DSW5)

6.5.1 DSW5

DSW5 is in very poor condition, appearing completely collapsed. The DSW is unlikely to be historical as most of the rocks are simply piled up with no indication of foundations or particular construction technique.

We do not recommend retention.

Table 10: Construction Details – 345 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340 (DSW5)

Segment	DSW5							
Wall Type	Indeterminate							
Construction Technique	Indeterminant							
Condition	Poor							
Intactness	Non extant							
Wall Dimensions:	Length:	< 20 m	Base:	1,000 mm	Cope (Top):	N/A	Max. Height:	600 mm
Courses	N/A							
Stone Grading	N/A							
Plugging	Absent							
Hearting	Absent							
Cope Stones	Absent							
Through Stones	Absent							
Foundations	Absent							
Posts	Absent							
Wires	Absent							

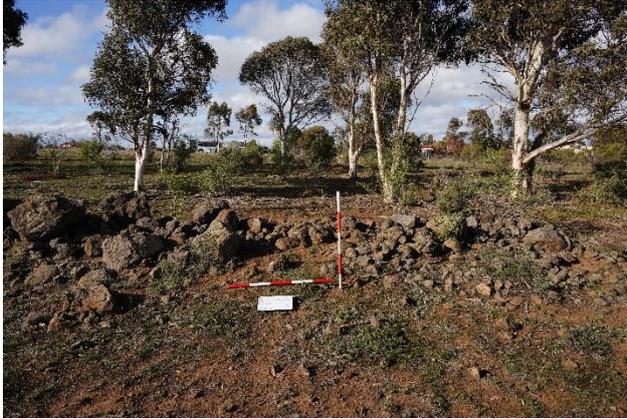


Plate 24: DSW5 looking east showing the condition of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 25: DSW5 looking east showing the vegetation growing around the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 26: DSW5 looking east showing a tree growing within the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 27: DSW5 looking northeast showing the extent of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)

6.6 Property 9 – 332 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340 (DSW6)

6.6.1 DSW6

DSW6 is in poor condition, appearing completely collapsed. While the DSW has little evidence of a structure, it has some potential to be historical. It has an unknown age, however, there is presence of a wooden post among the stones with wires and wire fences on the southernmost end of the DSW. The current alignment of DSW6 is possibly a previous boundary wall between lots 9 and 8 that has been deconstructed to make way for the current post and wire fencing.

We do not recommend retention.

Table 11: Construction Details – 332 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340 (DSW6)

Segment	DSW6							
Wall Type	Indeterminate							
Construction Technique	Indeterminant							
Condition	Poor							
Intactness	N/A							
Wall Dimensions:	Length:	c. 240 m	Base:	1,000 mm	Cope (Top):	N/A	Max. Height:	1,100 mm
Courses	N/A							
Stone Grading	N/A							
Plugging	Absent							
Hearting	Absent							
Cope Stones	Absent							
Through Stones	Absent							
Foundations	Absent							
Posts	Present, collapsed or places amongst the stones							
Wires	Present, rusted and rolled up on top of stones							



Plate 28: DSW6 looking north showing the extent of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 29: DSW6 looking west showing wooden posts and barbed wire amongst the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 30: DSW6 looking west showing a better-preserved section of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 31: DSW6 looking southwest showing the vegetation growing in the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 32: DSW6 looking west showing a sparse section of the wall (I. Ostericher 2025)



Plate 33: DSW6 looking west showing one of the collapsed sections of the wall with a wooden post (I. Ostericher 2025)

6.7 Comparative Analysis and Assessment Conclusion

The DSWs in Property 1 (DSW1 and DSW2) were both recorded as in poor condition with virtually no intactness. Both were also claimed to be stones and boulders that were recently cleared from the nearby paddock by the previous landowner and current tenants of the property. DSW2 was stated to have been a boundary for a cactus garden built in the last 30 to 40 years. Neither DSW1 or DSW2 are of historical significance and require no management conditions with respect to the Merrimu PSP.

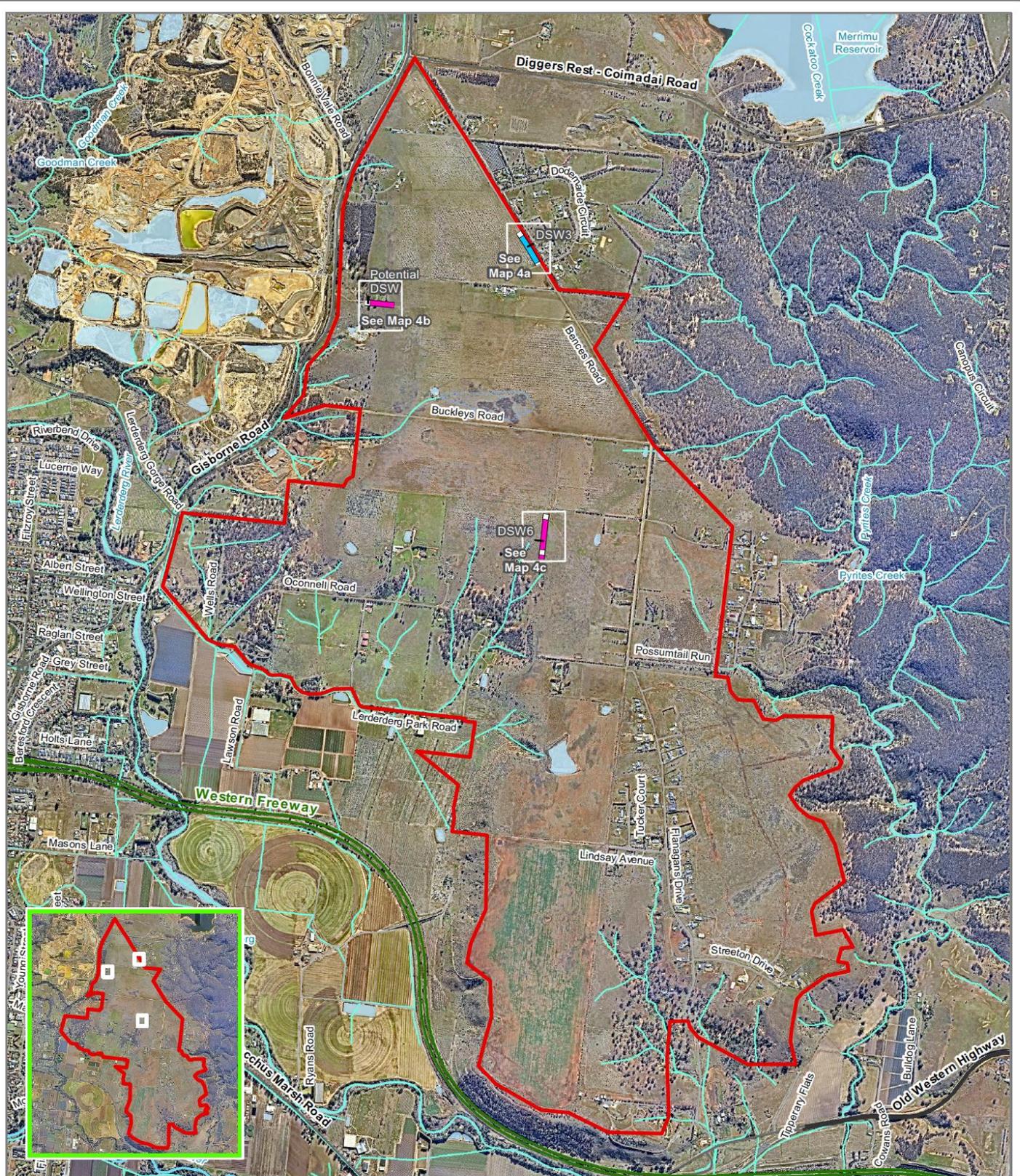
The DSW in Property 3 (DSW3) (Map 4 and Map4a) was recorded as in poor condition and mostly collapsed. There was some evidence of coursings and foundation stones of DSW3, and it is likely to be historically significant. The DSW also displayed evidence that the ends of the wall extended further in length, with rocks petering out past its extent.

DSW5 has a curved alignment with no apparent intentional construction and most likely represents recent paddock clearance by machine, with trashed plastic, metal, wire, and wood laying amongst the rocks.

The potential DSW within Property 4 (Map 4 and Map 4b) was observed and recorded. The DSW was recorded as in poor condition and non-extant intactness. Like DSW1 and DSW2, it was claimed by the previous landowner and current tenant to have been created in the last 30 to 40 years due to stone clearing from the paddock and pushed to the fence line.

DSW6 (Map 4 and Map 4c) is completely deconstructed and appears to have been removed from its original location several meters east in order to install a modern post and wire fence. No structural intactness is present.

In summary, only DSW3 has sufficient intactness and historical significance to consider retention and/or reconstruction subject to additional consultation with Moorabool Shire Council.



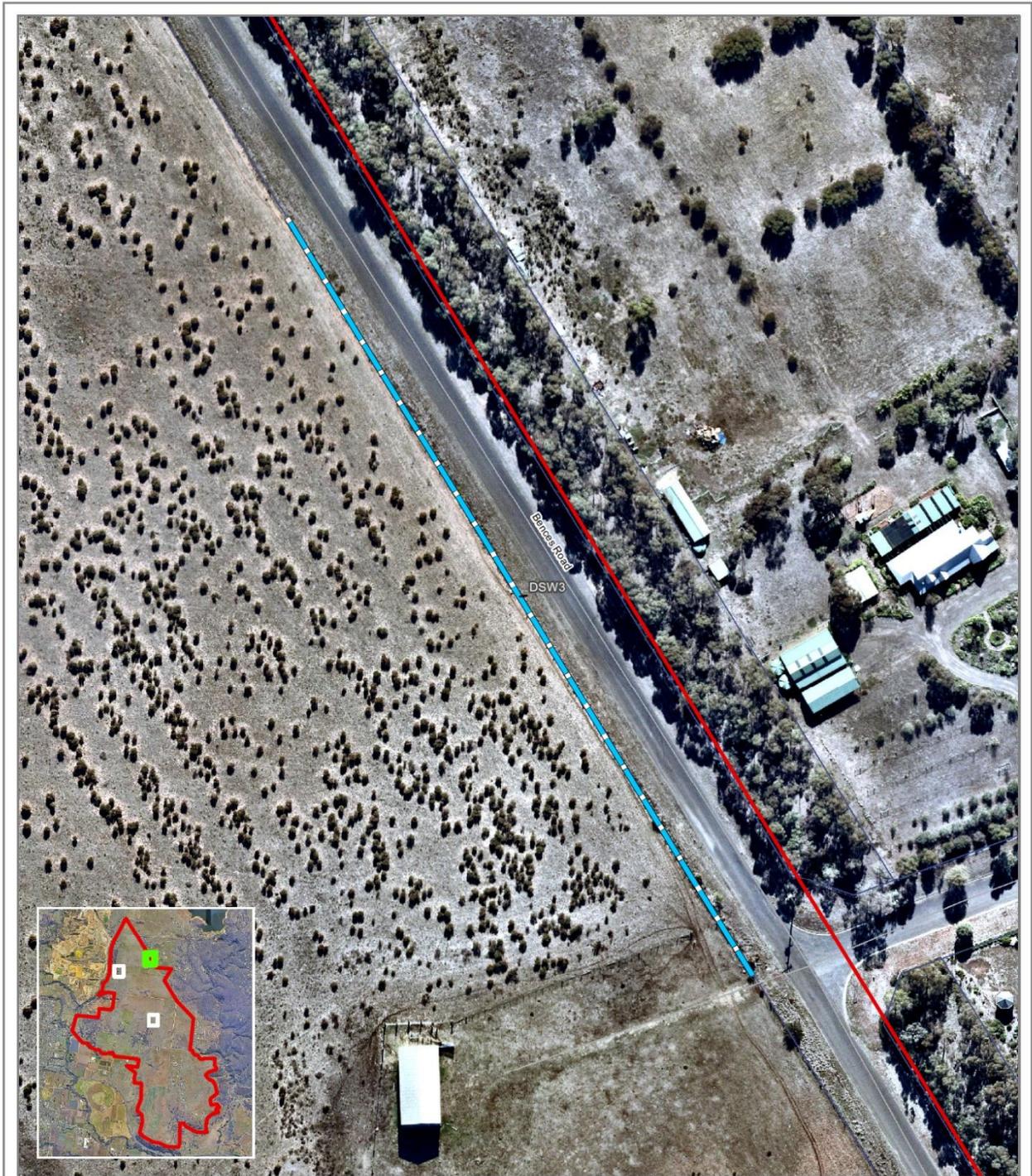
Map 4 Overview
Dry Stone Walls in the Study Area
Dry Stone Wall Assessment for the Merrimu Precinct Structural Plan (PSP)

- Legend**
- Study Area
 - Dry Stone Wall - for possible retention
 - Dry Stone Wall - not for retention



Local Government: Moorabool Shire
 25k Mapsheet: Lerderberg 7722-1-2
 Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55
 Map Scale: 1:28,000

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Map 4a
Dry Stone Walls in the Study Area
Dry Stone Wall Assessment for the Merrimu Precinct Structural Plan (PSP)

- Legend**
- Study Area
 - Dry Stone Wall - for possible retention



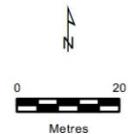
Local Government: Moorabool Shire
25k Mapsheet: Lerderderg 7722-1-2
Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55
Map Scale: 1:1,200

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Map 4b
Dry Stone Walls in the Study Area
Dry Stone Wall Assessment for the Merrimu Precinct Structural Plan (PSP)

- Legend**
- Study Area
 - Dry Stone Wall - not for retention



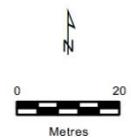
Local Government: Moorabool Shire
25k Mapsheet: Lerderberg 7722-1-2
Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55
Map Scale: 1:1,200

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Map 4c
Dry Stone Walls in the Study Area
Dry Stone Wall Assessment for the Merrimu Precinct Structural Plan (PSP)

- Legend**
- Study Area
 - Dry Stone Wall - not for retention



Local Government: Moorabool Shire
 25k Mapsheet: Lerderberg 7722-1-2
 Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55
 Map Scale: 1:1,200

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7 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

7.1 Previous Assessment of Significance

The previous AHHA (Minos et al. 2020) that identified the DSWs located within the study area noted that consultation with Heritage Victoria regarding the requirements for registration on the Heritage Inventory highlighted that these DSWs were in a generally dilapidated condition and did not afford protection at a state level. The previous AHHA (Minos et al 2020) also noted that consultation with the Moorabool Shire Council was required to determine the management of the DSWs in the study area.

7.2 Significance Criteria

A Statement of Significance describes what is important about a site and is an evaluation of its cultural heritage significance. Statements of Significance are assessed in accordance with the ICOMOS Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS 1999) against the following six categories:

- *Aesthetic significance.* Dry stone walls are often iconic features of the landscape and, for many people, are aesthetically pleasing, particularly walls that have high levels of structural integrity and/or technical competence or refinement. They often accentuate changes in local elevation and provide a point of focus in a broader rural landscape. The ongoing aging and patination of the walls, together with lichen growth and the provision of wildlife habitat also adds aesthetic appeal.
- *Archaeological significance.* Although the walls are an expression of ‘material culture’ using the broader definition of archaeology, Heritage Victoria no longer considers dry stone walls to be archaeological features as they rarely contain subsurface archaeological deposits. Walls that were previously listed on the Victorian Heritage Inventory (a register of archaeological places under the *Heritage Act 1995*) have, almost without exception, been delisted.
- *Architectural significance.* The walls in the study area are not considered to have any architectural significance.
- *Historical significance.* Dry stone walls are often associated with historical persons or properties. With construction of walls often occurring in the 1850s and 1860s, they were often constructed by squatters during the early pastoral era or are representative of Closer Settlement land patterning following introduction of the various Lands Acts during the mid-19th century. They are representative of both continuity and change in farming practices over a period of more than 160 years. The walls are usually built in areas of basaltic flow where stone is located close to the surface. These areas are finite around Melbourne and the extent of remaining walls is continuing to decrease as demand for development on the Melbourne urban-rural fringe increases. The walls are not considered to be representative of any particular historical person.

- *Scientific significance.* The scientific or research potential of the walls will depend on its level of rarity, quality or representativeness, and the degree to which they may contribute further substantial information (Australia ICOMOS 1999). The walls in the study area appear to be typical of the kinds of walls found throughout the Wollert area. Although segments of DSW3 are in fair condition or demonstrate technical competence in wall construction, the extent of these examples in the study area is limited; the majority of walls are in poor condition and are not considered to be particularly fine representative samples of their type. Beyond the information presented in this report, the walls are unlikely to provide further substantial scientific information.
- *Social or spiritual significance.* The walls may have a high degree of social significance to the people of Merrimu as a tangible link with the area's rural past. However, the extent of social significance cannot be determined at this stage and is beyond the scope of this report. The stabilisation and continued presence of the walls fronting Bences Road ensures the social significance will endure. The walls are unlikely to hold any spiritual significance at local or State level.

7.2.1 Summary of Significance

The walls in the study area have only limited historical significance at the local level, mainly as a contributor to the history of pastoralism and farming across the broader landscape, rather than for their individual characteristics or association with notable historical activities or figures. Likewise, although one of the walls have some aesthetic qualities, this is contributory to the broader rural landscape, which is currently undergoing massive change from urban development. The walls themselves are not considered to have archaeological value, and their broader scientific value is also limited due to their general poor condition and integrity. The construction style is typical of walls in the area and offers no substantial opportunities for further scientific research.

8 STATUTORY MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

8.1 Moorabool Planning Scheme

Requirements for DSW management under the Moorabool Planning Scheme are set out under cl.52.33:

A permit is required to demolish, remove or alter a dry stone wall constructed before 1940 on land specified in the schedule to this provision. This does not apply to:

- *Dry stone structures other than walls and fences.*
- *The demolition or removal of a section of a dry stone wall to install a gate.*
- *The reconstruction of damaged or collapsing walls which are undertaken to the same specifications and using the same materials as the existing walls*

The Schedule specifies *all* land within the LGA.

8.2 Rural Conservation Zone

Most of the land in the study area is located within the Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ), however there is no legislation regarding the management of dry-stone walls.

9 MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides the recommendations made in relation to mitigation of impacts to the walls.

9.1 Specific Management Recommendations

9.1.1 Retention or Removal of Existing Dry Stone Walls

There is one partially intact DSW within the study area and two deconstructed potential dry stone walls (DSW6 and Potential DSW Segment B). It is likely that most will be affected and partially or entirely removed to accommodate the development plan under the PSP. Table 12 below sets forth the management recommendations for the features investigated during this study. Map 4 series displays the features which have potential historical significance and their management recommendations.

Table 12: DSW Management Recommendations (Retention/Removal)

Wall Segment	DSW Management Recommendations
DSW1 2621 Gisborne Road, Merrimu 3340	DSW1 is located on the western boundary of the study area, and is not included in the Heritage Overlay DSW1 is not of historical value as it was constructed by the previous landowner using a tractor in order to clear the paddock. Management recommendation – removal
DSW2 2621 Gisborne Road, Merrimu 3340	DSW2 is located within property 1, and is not included in the Heritage Overlay DSW2 is not of historical value, as it was created by the previous landowner for the purpose of a cactus garden. Management recommendation – removal
DSW3 146 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340	DSW3 is located along the eastern boundary of the study area, and is not included in the Heritage Overlay Management recommendation – for potential retention pending Council consultation
DSW5 345 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340	DSW5 is located within property 14, and is not included in the Heritage Overlay The conclusion of this assessment is that DSW5 is of no historical value as it is in poor condition and appears to relate to recent paddock clearing activities. Management recommendation – removal
DSW6 332 Bences Road, Merrimu 3340	DSW6 is located within property 9 along the western boundary of the property and is not included in the Heritage Overlay The conclusion of this assessment is that DSW6 is of no historical value as it is in poor condition appearing to have been completely deconstructed and displaced. Management recommendation – removal
Potential DSW Segment B 2677 Gisborne Road, Merrimu 3340	The potential DSW is located within property 4, along the southern boundary of the property, and is not included in the Heritage Overlay Management recommendation – removal

9.2 Conservation/Management Policies

Management policies and aligned conservation strategies are determined by the types of potential impact to the walls.

9.2.1 Potential Impacts

It is envisaged that there are two principal agents of negative impact that may occur:

- Direct impact to walls or wall sections being retained in the study area from either machine or personnel (e.g. wall collapse resulting from the excavator arm or bucket inadvertently striking the wall, or collapse as a result of construction personnel or members of the public climbing on looser parts of the stone wall or leaning against unstable and fragile wooden fence posts); and
- Vibration impact to walls resulting from mechanical excavation near the wall dislodging either loose stones or post and wire fence components.

Vibration impacts caused by higher impact and deep ground-disturbing construction may normally be reduced by maintaining a minimum distance of five metres from the wall to act as a buffer. However, the location of the wall in a road reserve with existing and new roads located either side mean that activities will inevitably occur within five metres of the walls. A reduced buffer means that there is a much higher potential for impact (direct and/or vibration) than would normally be the case. In addition to this, the poor construction quality and haphazard placement of stones in some sections, together with deteriorating fence components, means that potential for impact is increased further still and so several management measures must be undertaken.

9.2.2 Working Close to the Retained Wall

Depending on the structural integrity of the wall, dry stone walls may be inadvertently subject to either direct or indirect impacts (see Section 9.2.1 above). Positive action and proactive care should be taken to avoid or minimise the potential for impact.

Actions that may be taken include:

- Conducting a pre-construction briefing on the importance of dry stone walls to all construction personnel and the need for care operating in close proximity to the wall.
- Where the buffer between works by machinery is less than 2 m, it may be considered necessary to erect a temporary fence on both sides of the wall to limit direct impact.
- Where a temporary safety fence is not erected, briefing excavator/backhoe operators to take precaution that the excavator arm does not swing closer than 1.5 m to the wall.
- Instructing all construction personnel not to stand, sit or lean on any of the wall components during the activity.
- Not discarding any construction or security material or any other rubbish (including broken concrete slabs, cyclone mesh fencing, wire or flagging) by any of the wall components, taking care to ensure that no foreign material becomes embedded in the wall's structure.

9.2.3 Removal Technique

The walls scheduled to be removed may be dismantled by machine, although some care should be taken to avoid scraping off old lichen growth. All stones removed from the walls should be stockpiled in a suitable location nearby and fenced to prevent stone theft; the stones should be stockpiled with care to ensure the

lichen rests uppermost. These stones should be used to consolidate any wall heads and repair any sections (of the wall to be retained) damaged during the years preceding this revised report and/or construction (if necessary).

Any stones that are not utilised in dry stone wall remediation works may be used for other decorative purposes within (in order of priority) the parcel, the immediate area or the wider precinct (e.g. as an estate entryway or as part of stone walls in public open spaces or reserves). Where stockpiled stones will not be used for estate development works, the Council should be contacted to discuss whether it is appropriate for Council to take responsibility for the stones (e.g. for other dry stone wall remediation projects either in the PSP or in the wider Moorabool LGA). The removal of any excess or unused stone offsite is only to be considered as a last resort and only with explicit Council approval.

9.3 Other Issues

Other management issues in the management of the wall involve safety and standards of construction.

9.3.1 Safety

Working in close proximity to the walls, there is potential for safety issues for construction personnel. This is likely to be from two sources:

- *Tripping hazard*: in some areas the wall has partially collapsed, and stones may be lying on the ground on the outer (road) side of the wall. In many areas long grass and weeds may obscure these stones and construction personnel may inadvertently trip over the stones causing injury.
- *Vibration* from mechanical trenching and/or backfilling works may dislodge loose stones from the wall and strike construction personnel standing in proximity.

Higher impact construction activities (e.g. mechanical excavation or trenching) in the vicinity of the walls should be conducted so that potential injury to construction personnel is minimised. Personnel involved in lower impact activities (e.g. the laying of concrete for footpaths or planting in landscape buffers) should wear appropriate personal protective equipment and be briefed about the hazards of loose stones while working alongside dry stone walls. It is recommended that construction personnel do not enter the space within 5 m of a wall or within 5-10 m of a working excavator as far as practicable.

9.3.2 Standards of Construction

The walls are generally of a technically unrefined construction style, with little evidence of technical competence in the walls' construction. Whilst the current walls were probably built and then often rebuilt by local farmers unskilled in dry stone wall construction, it is recommended that, for any repairs to the walls caused by damage during the construction works or for construction of new representative walls in the conservation areas, a professional dry stone waller must be engaged to bring into effect the repairs and construction.

Any reconstruction should use typical round fieldstones that are endemic to the local area. It is critical that any wall ends are professionally repaired to ensure stability of the whole structure. Repairs to or

reconstruction of fence posts and droppers should involve the use of split or square-sawn hardwood posts, rather than modern chemically treated rounded logs. Any post and wire elements should be retained or reinstated, although barbed wire may not be advisable due to the wall's location in public open spaces. The National Trust provides a guide to the identification, conservation and restoration of historic fences, gates and dry stone walls c.1840-1925 (Peterson 1988), which as such includes DSW3, and reiterates the retention of as much of the original material as possible and replacing only what is absolutely necessary.

9.3.3 Scheduling of Rehabilitation/Reconstruction Works

Repairs to any walls (if required) and/or construction of any new representative walls should only commence after completion of the development works in the vicinity of the wall are completed.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Heritage Legislation

A1.1 Heritage Act 2017 (Victoria)

The Victorian *Heritage Act 2017* (“the Act”) is administered by Heritage Victoria (HV) and is the Victorian Government's key piece of cultural heritage legislation. The Act replaced the *Heritage Act 1995* and earlier acts.

The Act identifies, protects and conserves cultural heritage of significance to the State of Victoria, including:

- historical archaeological sites and artefacts;
- historical buildings, structures and precincts;
- gardens, trees and cemeteries;
- cultural landscapes;
- shipwrecks and artefacts; and
- significant objects.

These places or objects have cultural significance if they have aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, cultural, historical, scientific or social value. The Act does not include places or objects associated solely with Aboriginal tradition. These are protected by the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

The Heritage Register

The Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) lists the State's most significant heritage places and objects. These can be searched on the Victorian Heritage Database (VHD).

The Heritage Council determines what places and objects are included and only those places and objects of outstanding significance are added. The process for adding a place or object is a considered one.

A place or object cannot be added to the Register before the Heritage Council seeks the views of the owner. If a heritage place or object is recommended to the Register, then owners are given a report that includes a statement of cultural heritage significance, a proposed extent of registration, and any proposed activities that may not require a permit.

A heritage object can include furniture, shipwreck artefacts, archaeological artefacts, equipment, transport vehicles, and articles of everyday use that contribute to an understanding of Victoria's history. Objects can be registered in association with heritage places, or in their own right.

The Heritage Inventory

Under Section 117 and Section 118 of the *Heritage Act 2017*, the Heritage Inventory records all historical archaeological sites other than those determined by the Executive Director to have low archaeological value, all approved archaeological sites and all sites already included in the Heritage Inventory under the *Heritage Act 1995*.

Under Section 123 of the *Heritage Act 2017*, it is an offence to deface, damage or otherwise interfere with an archaeological site or carry out an act that is likely to endanger an archaeological site or artefact, irrespective of whether it is listed on the Heritage Inventory or Heritage Register.

Under Section 124 of the *Heritage Act 2017*, consent from Heritage Victoria is required if a person wishes to:

- a) excavate or uncover a site recorded in the Heritage Inventory or otherwise reported to the Executive Director;
- b) damage or disturb a site recorded in the Heritage Inventory or otherwise reported to the Executive Director;
- c) damage or disturb an archaeological artefact, including for the purposes of study, conservation or exhibition;
- d) possess an archaeological artefact for the purposes of sale; or
- e) to buy or sell an archaeological artefact.

Any application for a consent to the Executive Director must be accompanied by the prescribed fee. Various classes of works apply to the application fees. Under Section 125 of the Act, a person must comply with the terms and conditions contained in a consent issued under Section 124, with penalties in contravention of those terms and conditions totalling, in the case of a natural person, 240 penalty units, and in the case of a body corporate, 480 penalty units. Under Section 216 of the Act, the Heritage Council, the Executive Director, the Director of Public Prosecutions or any other person may bring proceedings in the Supreme Court for an order to remedy or restrain a contravention of the Act.

Up until late 2009, Heritage Victoria had a 'D' classification for places that are considered to have low historical or scientific significance. These sites are listed on the Victorian Heritage Inventory but are not subject to statutory protection, therefore there is no requirement to obtain a Consent to Disturb or destroy these sites. Heritage Victoria has requested that a letter be sent to them informing them if 'D' listed sites or places are destroyed to maintain records of these destroyed sites. Under Section 119 of the *Heritage Act 2017*, removal of sites from the Heritage Inventory is at the discretion of the Executive Director if they determine a site has low archaeological value, if the inclusion of the site is no longer necessary or if the site is not an archaeological site.

A1.2 *Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Victoria)*

All municipalities in Victoria are covered by land use planning controls which are prepared and administered by state and local government authorities. The legislation governing such controls is the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. Places of significance to a locality can be listed on a local planning scheme and protected by a Heritage Overlay (or other overlay where appropriate). Places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance are not often included on local government planning schemes.

A1.3 *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth)*

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* ("EPBC Act") provides a national framework for the protection of heritage and the environment and the conservation of biodiversity. The EPBC Act is administered by the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). The Australian Heritage Council assesses whether or not a nominated place is appropriate for listing on either the National or Commonwealth Heritage Lists and makes a recommendation to the Minister on that basis. The Minister for the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts makes the final decision on listing. DCCEEW also administers the Register of the National Estate.

The objectives of the EPBC Act are:

- To provide for the protection of the environment, especially those aspects of the environment that are matters of national environmental significance;
- To promote ecologically sustainable development through the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of natural resources;
- To promote the conservation of biodiversity;
- To provide for the protection and conservation of heritage;
- To promote a cooperative approach to the protection and management of the environment involving governments, the community, land-holders and Indigenous peoples;
- To assist in the cooperative implementation of Australia's international environmental responsibilities;
- To recognise the role of Indigenous people in the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of Australia's biodiversity; and
- To promote the use of Indigenous peoples' knowledge of biodiversity with the involvement of, and in cooperation with, the owners of the knowledge.

Appendix 2: Glossary

Items highlighted in *bold italics* in the definition are defined elsewhere in the glossary.

Adapted from Vines (1990); Paynter (2002: 51), Black and Miller (1995: 101) and Pickard (2009).

Acronym	Meaning
Batter	the inward taper of the wall from base to top.
Building stone	The facing stone that forms the outside of the wall; cf. <i>plugging, through stones, coping stones</i> .
Chain	a traditional unit of measurement of 22 yards or about 20 m.
Clearance or consumption wall	a very thick section of wall built primarily to consume stone cleared from the fields.
Cap stone	see <i>coping stones</i> .
Cope/Coping	see <i>coping stones</i> .
Coping stones	large stones placed along the top of a wall to provide stability to the structure.
Course	stones that are levelled to make a regular line.
Doubling or double walling	wall construction with two parallel walls of stone filled with small stone and rubble between (<i>hearting</i>); cf. <i>singling</i> .
Dropper	a light vertical component supported by the line wires in a post-and wire fence, and not embedded in the ground. They serve several functions: to keep the wires spaced, to provide a visible signal that a fence exists, and to minimise the use of posts, saving costs. Droppers come in various cross-sections and shapes, made of folded sheet metal, formed wire, or wood (either sawn, split or round), and wire twitches (or braces/laces).
Dry stone wall	a stone wall that has been constructed without mortar (or other such binding material between the stones).
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. The Victorian State Government department, of which <i>HV</i> is a part, responsible for management of historical cultural heritage in Victoria.
End Assemblies	a combination of two or more <i>strainer posts</i> reinforced with horizontal braces and sloping struts, designed to provide a solid anchor for the strain and for gates and corners. These now replace the use of single strainer posts.
Face	Vertical or <i>battered</i> outside surface of a wall.
Fence	generic term for a barrier including post and rail, wire, and dry stone walls.
Fill	see <i>hearting</i> .
Footings	see <i>foundation</i> .
Foundation	the first layer of stone at the base of the wall, often set in an excavated trench.
Gap	A breach in a dry stone wall due to defect or damage.
Head	the smooth, vertical end of a wall or section of wall.
Hearting	small stone and rubble used to fill the cavity between the two outside surfaces of <i>double walling</i> .
HV	Heritage Victoria. A division of <i>DELWP</i> responsible for management of historical heritage in Victoria.

Acronym	Meaning
Lintel	A stone slab placed over an opening (e.g. <i>smoot</i>) to bridge it and support the structure above.
Pinning	See plugging .
Plugging	Small stones used to fill the gaps in the outside surface of a wall; sometimes deliberately broken to fit.
Post	A vertical rigid fence component used to support fence wires, rails, woven wire or netting, etc. The essential features are rigidity, verticality, and being firmly embedded in the ground; cf strainer post .
Post and wire Fence	A fence where the dominant horizontal components are wire (either plain or barbed), but not netting or prefabricated/fabricated/woven fencing. The wires may run through holes in the posts or be attached using a range of staples and ties. Commonly referred to as a 'wire fence.'
Singling	A wall that has a width of a single rock; i.e. one rock is visible on both sides of the wall and gaps between courses or building stones may be 'see-through'; cf. Doubling .
Star Picket	The most common steel post used in Australia, featuring a 120° separation of the three webs, giving a star-like cross section.
Strainer Post	A large post deeply embedded in the ground to which the wires are anchored. When the fence is trained, most of the tension is taken by the strainer post. Generally replaced with end assemblies in modern fences.
Throughstone	A long stone placed through the wall from one side to the other to tie the sides of double walling together.
Top stones	See coping stones .
VHI	Victorian Heritage Inventory . A register of places and objects in Victoria identified as historical archaeological sites, areas or artefacts, and all private collections of artefacts, maintained by HV . Sites listed on the VHI are not of State significance but are usually of regional or local significance. Listing on the VHR provides statutory protection for that a site, except in the case where a site has been "D-listed".
VHR	Victorian Heritage Register . A register of the State's most significant heritage places and objects, maintained by HV . Listing on the VHR provides statutory protection for that a site.
Wall head	The vertical end of a wall created where large stones are alternated into and along the wall to provide stability.
Wedge	A small stone placed under or behind a stone to position it securely.

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