Rural Ararat Heritage Study

Volume 3.
*Heritage Place
and Precinct Citations
Section 2*

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1.0   Rural Ararat Heritage Study Executive Summary

1.1   Introduction

The Rural Ararat Heritage Study was commissioned by the Ararat Rural City Council in two stages between 2011 and 2016. The study area for the heritage study was that area of the municipality of Ararat Rural City not included in the 1994 City of Ararat Heritage Study.

Dr Robyn Ballinger of History in the Making was commissioned as the lead consultant for both stages of the Study. Project team members were Samanatha Westbrooke, Heritage Architect, Tom Henty, photographer and fieldworker, and Eleanor Hambleton, who undertook data entry.

A steering committee was established to guide the study.

1.2   Project objectives

The objectives of the Rural Ararat Heritage Study Stage 1 were to:

- prepare a Thematic Environmental History of post-contact settlement and development of the study area;

- identify all post-contact places of potential cultural significance in the study area; and

- estimate the resources required to appropriately research, document and assess those post-contact places of potential cultural significance that were considered worthy of future conservation and to complete Stage 2 of the project.

The objectives of the Rural Ararat Heritage Study Stage 2 were to:

- assess and document the places of post-contact cultural significance identified as being worthy of future conservation in Stage 1 of the project;

- enter this information into the HERMES database to be provided to the client;

- review and finalise the Thematic Environmental History; and

- make recommendations for the conservation of the municipality's cultural heritage.

1.3   Assessment of cultural significance

The values used in the identification and assessment of places of cultural significance were historic, scientific, aesthetic, social and spiritual values as articulated in the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter*. Detailed assessment for heritage places in the study area was developed against key themes articulated in the Thematic Environmental History and the HERCON criteria. Thresholds applied included 'State Significance' and 'Local Significance'.

1.4   Community consultation

Community consultation formed an integral part of the Heritage Study, with consultants facilitating and attending community meetings; working with local historical societies; organising fieldtrips with residents to identify places of heritage interest; inviting feedback on the Thematic Environmental History from community members; seeking input into priority places for assessment in Stage 2; and incorporating community feedback on place and precinct citations into the Study. The community engagement program was vital to documenting the municipality's unique history and heritage.

1.5   **Study results**

1.5.1   Individual places

The following table provides a summary of the key findings and recommendations for the 103 individual places assessed in Stage 2.

Recommendation	Number of places
Recommended for inclusion in the Ararat Planning Scheme	103 places
Recommended that assessment documentation for places already in the Heritage Overlay be incorporated in the Ararat Planning Scheme	2 places
Recommended for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Inventory	5 places

1.5.2   Heritage precincts

A total of 3 heritage precincts in Willaura were identified, assessed and documented in Stage 2 and recommended for the Heritage Overlay.

1.6   **Recommendations**

1.6.1   Adoption of the Rural Ararat Heritage Study

It is recommended that Ararat Rural City Council adopt the Rural Ararat Heritage Study.

1.6.2   Statutory protection

It is recommended that the individual places identified, assessed and documented in the Rural Ararat Heritage Study be included in or nominated for the following statutory registers:

• 103 places (outside of heritage precincts) recommended for inclusion in the Planning Scheme.

• 5 places recommended for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Inventory.

It is recommended that assessment documentation for 2 places already in the Heritage Overlay of the Planning Scheme be adopted.

It is recommended that the 3 precincts identified, assessed and documented in Willaura be included in the Planning Scheme.

It is recommended that an amendment to the Planning Scheme that makes changes and/or additions to the Heritage Overlay to incorporate the recommended places and precincts, as well as assessment documentation provided for places already in the Heritage Overlay, be prepared and implemented as soon as practicable.

It is recommended that the specific heritage policies and objectives detailed for the recommended heritage precincts (Heritage Overlay Areas) be implemented by Ararat Rural City Council.

1.6.3   Public awareness program

It is recommended that Ararat Rural City Council consider ways to promote the rich and diverse heritage values of the municipality.

It is recommended that Ararat Rural City Council consider ways to provide assistance and advice to property owners affected by the amendment to the Planning Scheme.

1.6.4 Heritage Strategy

It is recommended that Ararat Rural City Council prepare a four-year Heritage Strategy as per Heritage Victoria's information guide titled *Local Government Heritage Strategies*.

1.6.5 Further work

It is recommended that Ararat Rural City Council:

- reviews the 8 historical archaeological sites identified in the Heritage Study;

- reviews the places already listed in the Heritage Overlay of the Ararat Planning Scheme to ensure they have the required level of documentation; and

- continues the process of assessment according to the priority place lists provided in Stage 1.

1.7 Study format

The Rural Ararat Heritage Study comprises four volumes, introduced by the Executive Summary:

- Volume 1 Key Findings and Recommendations;

- Volume 2 Heritage Precinct Policies;

- Volume 3 Heritage Place and Precinct Citations. This volume is divided into three sections: Section 1 - Citations for places recommended for the Planning Scheme; Section 2 - Citations for places already on the Planning Scheme; and Section 3 - Citations for Heritage Precincts; and

- Volume 4 the Thematic Environmental History.

2.0   Introduction to Heritage Place and Precinct Citations Report

The Heritage Place and Precincts Citations report is divided into three sections:

- Section 1 – Citations for places recommended for the Ararat Planning Scheme, including places recommended for the Victorian Heritage Register and Victorian Heritage Inventory;

- Section 2 - Citations for places already on the Ararat Planning Scheme; and

- Section 3 – Citations for Heritage Precincts.

2.1   Section 1 – Citations for places recommended for the Ararat Planning Scheme, including places recommended for the Victorian Heritage Inventory

The table below provides an index by township/district to Section 1. (HO=Heritage Overlay; VHI=Victorian Heritage Inventory)

Place name	Address	Tship/district	Recommendations	Section 1 page no.
Buangor Railway Station and Railway House	Railway Reserve Buangor Road and 19 Buangor Road	Buangor	HO	1
Former Buangor Public Hall	52 Challicum Road	Buangor	HO	10
'Yerabin' Farm Homestead and Canary Island Palms	388 Charleycombe Road	Buangor	HO	16
'Buangor Park' Farm Complex	25 Dip Road	Buangor	HO & VHI	23
Bluestone Ford Over Charleycombe Creek	Dip Road	Buangor	HO	33
Buangor Store Complex	19 Main Street	Buangor	HO	40
'Challicum South' Farm Complex and Cypress Tree Avenue	199 Webbs Road	Buangor	HO	46
Avenue of Honour	Western Highway	Buangor	HO	55
Road Bridge over Denicull Creek	Denicull Creek-Moyston Road	Cathcart	HO	61
Cathcart Cemetery	Phillips Flat Road	Cathcart	HO	64
'Callemondah' Farm Complex and Cypress Trees	327 Tatyoon North Road	Dobie	HO	72
'Kooringa' Farm Complex	342 Tattyoon North Road	Dobie	HO	80
Church of St Mark Anglican and Uniting Church, Bell, Memorial Gates and Trees	20 Green Street	Elmhurst	HO	90

Place name	Address	Tship/district	Recommendations	Section 1 page no.
Tree Avenues	Hotel Street and High Street	Elmhurst	HO	97
Elmhurst Mechanics' Institute	34 High Street	Elmhurst	HO	103
Elmhurst Store, Residence, Outbuildings and Oak Tree	66 High Street	Elmhurst	HO	110
Former CBC Bank and Residence	71 High Street	Elmhurst	HO	116
J. Strain Butcher Store	76 High Street	Elmhurst	HO	122
'Fintry' Farm Outbuildings Complex	1554 Back Bolac Road	Lake Bolac	HO	128
Former Lake Boloke Station	1979 Glenelg Highway	Lake Bolac	HO & VHI	139
Lake Bolac General Store, Bulk Store and Pepper Trees	2124 Glenelg Highway	Lake Bolac	HO	152
Lake Bolac Hotel, Stables and Elm Tree	2127 Glenelg Highway	Lake Bolac	HO	160
Bluestone Residence	2151 Glenelg Highway	Lake Bolac	HO	170
Scots Uniting Church, Sunday School Hall, Fence, Gate and Stone Pine	139 Montgomery Street	Lake Bolac	HO	178
Bluestone Residence	149 Montgomery Street	Lake Bolac	HO	187
Bluestone Residence, Stables and Blacksmith	161 Montgomery Street	Lake Bolac	HO	195
Lake Bolac Memorial Hall, War Memorials and Pepper Trees	172 Montgomery Street	Lake Bolac	HO	203
Bluestone Residence	199 Montgomery Street	Lake Bolac	HO	212
Former Lake Bolac State School No. 854, Teacher's Residence and Kurrajong and Pepper Trees	205-211 Montgomery Street	Lake Bolac	HO	220
Lake Bolac Flax Mill Remains	South Beach Road	Lake Bolac	HO & VHI	229
Former Lake Bolac Flax Mill Shed	Frontage Street	Lake Bolac	HO	229

Place name	Address	Tship/district	Recommendations	Section 1 page no.
Avenue of Honour	Mortlake-Ararat Road	Maroona	HO	239
Maroona Railway Complex	Railway Reserve, Mortlake-Ararat Road	Maroona	HO	245
Former Maroona Railway Station Master's House	7344 Mortlake-Ararat Road	Maroona	HO	245
Former Mininera Post Office, Store and Associated Residence	1-5 George Street	Mininera	HO	254
Mininera Railway Complex	George Street	Mininera	HO	262
Mount Cole Reservoir	Reservoir Road	Mount Cole	HO	271
Avenue of Honour	Ararat-Halls Gap Road	Moyston	HO	276
Moyston Hall and War Memorial	12 Brooke Street	Moyston	HO	283
Residence and Former Store	18 Brooke Street	Moyston	HO	292
'Stonehurst' Farmhouse	19 Decker Road	Moyston	HO	299
Moyston Cemetery	15 Moyston Cemetery Road	Moyston	HO	306
Moyston Christ Church and Pines	14 Moyston-Dunkeld Road	Moyston	HO	314
Barton Station Shearing Shed	531 Moyston-Dunkeld Road	Moyston	HO	322
Former Moyston Reservoir	Old Moyston Reservoir Road	Moyston	HO	329
Former Moyston Presbyterian Church	14 Presbyterian Church Road	Moyston	HO	336
Stone outbuildings	864 Rocky Point Road	Moyston	HO	343
'Mt Hamilton' Farm Outbuildings Complex	Woorndoo-Streatham Road	Nerrin Nerrin	HO	351
Former Nerrin Nerrin Public Hall	Woorndoo-Streatham Road	Nerrin Nerrin	HO	360
'Springfield Hill' Farm Complex and Hedge	172 Rhymney Road	Norval	HO	367
Dare's Culvert Over Unnamed Creek	Salvation Gully Road	Norval	HO	375
Spring Lead Cemetery	Spring Lead Road	Norval	HO	379
'St Day's' Residence	3285 Ararat-Halls Gap Road	Pomonal	HO	387

Place name	Address	Tship/district	Recommendations	Section 1 page no.
'Fernside' Residence	Librarian Road	Pomonal	HO	394
Tobacco Kiln	163 Springwood Hill Road	Pomonal	HO	401
Tobacco Kiln	3444 Ararat-Halls Gap Road	Pomonal	HO	401
'Adair' Residence	220 Cherry Tree Road	Pomonal	HO	408
Tunnel and Pumphouse Remains, Stawell Water Supply System	Tunnel Road	Pomonal	HO & VHI	415
Oak Trees	639 Tunnel Road	Pomonal	HO	419
Pura Pura Public Hall	Darlington-Carranballac Road	Pura Pura	HO	425
Pura Pura Railway Station, Pines and Sugar Gums	Nerrin Nerrin-Pura Pura Road	Pura Pura	HO	433
Stone Wine Cellar	857 Moyston-Great Western Road	Rhymney	HO	442
Brick Farmhouse and Canary Island Palm	Pentland Creek Road	Rhymney	HO	450
Stone Residence	149 Pentland Creek Road	Rhymney	HO	458
Brick Farmhouse and Hedge	69 Pentland Creek Road	Rhymney	HO	465
Rocky Point Hall and Pines	730 Moyston-Rocky Point Road	Rocky Point	HO	473
Former Inn and Pines	6869 Mortlake-Ararat Road	Rossbridge	HO	480
Streatham Memorial Hall	30 Campbell Street	Streatham	HO	486
Former Streatham State School No. 844 Teacher's Residence	31 Campbell Street	Streatham	HO	494
St Columbas Catholic Memorial Church	50 Campbell Street	Streatham	HO	501
'Bowmont' Farm Complex and Canary Island Palms	1331 Helendoite Road	Tattyoon	HO	509
'Yeronga' Residence, Garage and Trees	900 Helendoite Road	Tatyoon	HO	517
Avenue of Honour	Tatyoon Road	Tatyoon	HO	523
Tatyoon Railway Station Complex	Tatyoon Road	Tatyoon	HO	529
Water Tower	Tatyoon Road	Tatyoon	HO	537

Place name	Address	Tship/district	Recommendations	Section 1 page no.
Tatyoon Hall	2712 Tatyoon Road	Tatyoon	HO	543
Water Tank	Travellers Rest Reserve on Fiery Creek, Mount William Road	Tatyoon	HO	549
Warrak Recreation Reserve	1245 Buangor-Ben Nevis Road	Warrak	HO	557
Warrak Hall and War Memorial	1673 Warrak Road	Warrak	HO	564
Warrak Uniting Church	1688 Warrak Road	Warrak	HO	571
Former Warrak State School No. 834 and Former Tatyoon State School No. 1812	1663 Warrak Road	Warrak	HO	577
Langi Ghiran Reservoir	Reservoir Track	Warrak	HO	271
Westmere Hall, War Memorial and Gates	914 Glenelg Highway	Westmere	HO	584
St Johns Anglican Church	916 Glenelg Highway	Westmere	HO	592
Westmere Railway Station Complex	Holdsworth Lane	Westmere	HO	599
Former Westmere State School No. 3833 and Teacher's Residence	18-28 School Road	Westmere	HO	608
Former St Andrews Presbyterian Church, Sunday School Hall, Fence and Pines	38 School Road	Westmere	HO	616
Cast Iron Milepost	Chatsworth-Wickliffe Road	Wickliffe	HO	623
'Berrambool' Farm Complex	1009 Wickliffe-Chatsworth Road	Wickliffe	HO & VHI	631
Residence	27 Frith Street	Wickliffe	HO	643
Bluestone Bridge Remains Over Hopkins River	Glenelg Highway	Wickliffe	HO	650
Western Hotel and Bluestone Stables	62 Walker Street	Wickliffe	HO	657
Residence	18 Walker Street	Wickliffe	HO	664
Former Store	34 Walker Street	Wickliffe	HO	671
St Patricks Catholic Church	24-26 Ayrey Street	Willaura	HO	678

Place name	Address	Tship/district	Recommendations	Section 1 page no.
'Wongalee' Residence, Pines and Canary Island Palm	334 Back Bolac Road	Willaura	HO	688
Edgarley Bridge over Hopkins River	Delacombe Way	Willaura	HO	698
Willaura District Hospital, Gates and Trees	21 Delacombe Way	Willaura	HO	707
Agricultural and Horticultural Show Pavilion and Oak Tree	7 Delacombe Way	Willaura	HO	718
'Yooranalee' Farm Complex and Oaks	831 Edgarley Estate Road	Willaura	HO	728
Willaura Memorial Hall	Main Street	Willaura	HO	740
Willaura Post Office	84 Main Street	Willaura	HO	750
Former Bluestone Hotel	718 Maroona-Glenthompson Road	Willaura	HO	760
Willaura Uniting Church	6 Warranooke Street	Willaura	HO	768
Willaura Railway Station Complex	Wickliffe-Willaura Road	Willaura	HO	779
Former Yalla Y Poora State School No. 4756	1922 Yalla Y Poora Road	Yalla Y Poora	HO	791

2.2   **Section 2 – Citations for places already on the Ararat Planning Scheme**

The table below provides an index by township/district to Section 2.

HO no.	Place name	Address	Tship/dist	Section 2 page no.
HO136	Yarram Park	2994 Moyston-Dunkeld Road	Willaura	1
HO128	Willaura Railway Station Complex	Wickliffe-Willaura Road	Willaura	10

2.3   **Section 3 – Citations for Heritage Precincts recommended for the Ararat Planning Scheme**

The table below provides an index to Section 3.

Precinct name	Precinct Address	Section 3 page no.
Willaura Anglican Church Heritage Precinct	14-20 Delacombe Way, Willaura	1
Willaura Main Street Residential Heritage Precinct	96-110 Main Street, Willaura	14
Willaura Town Centre Heritage Precinct	40-78 Main Street and 49-65 Main Street, Willaura	30

| **Name** | Yarram Park Farm Complex | | |
| **Address** | 2994 Moyston-Dunkeld Road WILLAURA | **Significance Level** | Local |

Place Type	Pastoralism
Citation Date	2015
Assessment by	Robyn Ballinger and Samantha Westbrooke

| **Recommended Heritage Protection** | **VHR** No **HI** No **PS** Yes |

History and Historical Context

Contextual history:

The Willaura district is located on the traditional lands of the Tjapwurong Aboriginal peoples.[1]

Governor of New South Wales, Sir Richard Bourke, instructed Surveyor General Thomas Mitchell to finish tracing the course of the Darling River to the Murray River, to survey the Murray to its junction with the Murrumbidgee River, and then to follow the southern bank of the Murray back to the settled parts of New South Wales. After crossing the Murray River near present-day Boundary Bend, Mitchell ignored his official instructions and explored instead the northern and western areas of the Port Phillip District (later the Colony of Victoria), a region he titled 'Australia Felix'.

Mitchell travelled through what was to become the municipality of Ararat Rural City in July and September 1836. On the return to Sydney, Mitchell's expedition made camp on 19 September 1836 to the west of a hill Mitchell named Mount Stavely. Mitchell named the Hopkins River on the same day. The expedition set up camp on 20 September, south of today's Willaura, at the eastern end of a line of 50 salt lakes, which Mitchell called Cockajemmy Lakes.[2]

Mitchell's exploratory expedition through the area is marked by the names he gave to the country and by a cairn on the Willaura-Wickliffe Road erected by the Willaura and District Historical Society and unveiled in 1986.

From 1834, squatters in the Port Phillip District (later the colony of Victoria) took up large tracts of Crown land (public land) to graze mainly sheep. In 1837, in an effort to control illegal pastoral expansion, Governor Richard Bourke introduced the *Crown Lands Occupation Act*, which disallowed depasturing of lands beyond the 'limits of location' (defined by the Nineteen Counties centred around Sydney) unless they were taken up under an annual lease or licence costing £10. In addition, the Act imposed penalties for the illegal occupation of land. Squatter licenses, however, were not granted until July 1838 when the first full-time Commissioner of Crown Lands was appointed.

Place history:

This history of Yarram Park is an edited version of the history included in a citation developed for the property by Michael Taylor and Peter Mills.

Squatters Robert Muirhead and Edward Parker were the first licensees of the Yarram Yarram run, in what was to become the Willaura district, from 1844 to 1855. The run of 32,000 acres was estimated to carry 13,000 sheep. From 1855, Muirhead held the run on his own until his death in 1862. In 1856 the Yarram Yarram (or Yairam Yairam) run was carrying 13,130 sheep, 256 cattle and 10 horses. In 1857, Muirhead retired to his mansion, Osborne House, in Geelong.[3]

An Order in Council passed in 1847 divided land in the Port Phillip District into settled, intermediate and unsettled areas, with pastoral leases of one, eight and fourteen years respectively. However, because of the discovery of gold, instead of the promised fourteen-year leases, yearly tenure only was approved by an Order in Council in 1850. The 1847 Order also allowed the take up of pre-emptive rights (the right to purchase up to 640 acres of the run at £1 per acre) to those in occupation. As a consequence of the Order, Robert Muirhead purchased the pre-emptive right to Yarram Yarram on 25 March 1862.[4]

After his death on 15 March 1862, the run was taken over by Muirhead's nephews, John and Alexander Muirhead.[5]

Brothers James, John and Thomas Robertson took over the run in February 1864 and managed it until its license was cancelled in 1873 under the 1869 *Land Act*.[6] Earlier in 1862, a *Land Act* had been introduced to break up large holdings into smaller allotments for farms. As a consequence, much of the land originally comprising the Yarram Yarram run and its surrounds was declared Agricultural Areas and opened up for selection. In the next ten to fifteen years, through various means, including dummying, the Robertsons obtained freehold of almost the entire area of the original Yarram Yarram run.[7]

John Robertson sold Yarram Yarram to Edward J Simmons in 1886. By the time of the sale of the property, it appears that John Robertson was the sole owner of the 25,000 acres of freehold land that then made up Yarram Yarram.[8] With the wealth gained from investments in Stawell gold mining companies, Simmons purchased and successfully ran a number of other grazing properties.

Yarram Yarram was renamed Yarram Park during Simmons's ownership. Use of this title first appeared in newspapers in accounts of wool sales in December 1891.[9] The quality of the wool from Yarram Park was considered as among the highest in the world. At the 1902 spring show of the Ararat Agricultural Society, Simmons took the championship for rams and ewes.[10]

Simmons sold Yarram Park to his son-in-law George Hobbs, also from Stawell, in late 1905 or early 1906.[11] Hobbs too was an investor in Stawell mining, being one of the principal owners of the Magdala-cum-Moonlight mine. Hobbs

immediately engaged a manager, Adam Linton, and soon sold the property to John J Duncan in 1907.[12] The estate had been earlier offered for sale by Hobbs to the Closer Settlement Board, which had inspected the property before Duncan's purchase, but Hobbs's asking price was too high.[13]

Sir John James Duncan, born in Scotland in 1845, was a South Australian pastoralist and member of parliament. He owned South Australian stations including Hughes Park near Watervale and Gum Creek near Burra, as well as grazing leases as far north as Lake Eyre.[14] Duncan made improvements to Yarram Park to the value of £5000, including the building of a six-room brick overseer's cottage (extant) on the site of an earlier homestead, the brick men's quarters (not extant) and 'timbered paddocks'.[15]

Following closer settlement initiatives established by the Victorian government from the early 1900s, in 1910 Duncan undertook a major subdivision of the property, then 26,224 acres in extent. Yarram Park was subdivided for sale into 55 lots varying in size from 152 to 1,272 acres. Presumably the latter included the homestead block.[16] Ultimately the sales totalled only around 3,650 acres. When Duncan died in 1913, the property comprised 22,572 acres in extent with a mortgage on another 236 acres, and was carrying 15,673 sheep, 105 cattle, 41 horses and 3 pigs. The property, including livestock and farming implements etc., was valued at just over £75,000.[17] Yarram Park retained the dimensions of its squatting run origins, a feature which would ensure its continuing ownership by wealthy pastoralists.

After Duncan died in 1913 his executors put the property up for sale in two lots, the homestead block of 19,479 acres, and another discrete block of 3,329 acres of 'wheat lands', 278 acres of which were leased at £12 6d per acre. The Yarram Park wool clip was described as 'one of the favourites of the favourite brands of the Geelong market'. While none of the grazing land was as yet improved, the advertisement indicated that the swamps on the southern part of the property, which to date had been looked upon as having the least carrying capacity, might be drained to provide crops of rape and lucerne.[18]

In late 1913 Yarram Park was sold to Francis Edward Cobbold, a prominent Queensland pastoralist, who undertook extensive works at Yarram Park.[19] At the time of Cobbold's purchase, Yarram Park was carrying 13,071 sheep, 118 cattle and 41 horses,[20] and the property was divided into 23 paddocks. Four-fifths of the property, which was open undulating and flat red-gum country, was devoted to grazing. The 'all-round' carrying capacity was said to be one sheep to 1.5 acres. Around 1,200 acres of land on the open plains to the east of the property was leased out for wheat-growing for three year periods, one of fallow and two of cropping. It appears that the remainder of land, which had previously been cultivated, was being brought back to grass.[21]

Cobbold sold Yarram Park to his nephews the Cain brothers, Walter, William and Robert, in early 1915.[22]

In ca.1923 the partnership of the Cain brothers was dissolved, and as a result Yarram Park was put up for sale. It appears that Walter C Cain bought the property. In 1932, 13,000 to 15,000 sheep were being shorn on ten machines in the woolshed at Yarram Park.[23]

Walter Cain moved to Melbourne ca.1948, and was found drowned in the Yarra at Toorak in 1949. In his will he bequeathed Arthur Streeton's oil painting 'The Land of the Golden Fleece' to the National Gallery.[24] It is generally agreed that, although Willaura is written as a location on the painting, it was painted on a visit to the Cains at Yarram Park in 1926.

The newly registered Western District Pastoral Company purchased Yarram Park in 1948.[25] The company was owned by the Baillieu family, the Melbourne finance and grazing dynasty. At the time of purchase, the property was said to be in a run-down condition: pastures were unimproved, there was no storage of fodder, and the water supply was inadequate.[26]

Moves were soon made to establish a Hereford stud with Hereford cattle obtained from Eynesbury station (Melton) in

1950 and from Colly Creek (NSW) in 1952.[27] A merino stud was established in 1957. Pastures were improved and fodder grown and stored. As a large property with increasingly intensive farming taking place, staff numbers increased, and it became necessary to construct a number of staff houses in the vicinity of the homestead. Compared to the pre-1950s, the sheep carrying capacity increased around six-fold.

Currently Yarram Park runs 26,000 fine-medium wool merinos, 2,100 cattle, and grows 1,500 hectares of oil seed and cereal crops.[28]

Yarram Park homestead history:

While many of the long-established squatting families of western Victoria built substantial homesteads after the 1847 Order in Council enabled the purchase of 640 acres on runs, neither Robert Muirhead or the Robertson brothers established a permanent base at Yarram Yarram and so a homestead of any consequence was not established.

A ca.1900 photograph from a series held by the current owners of Yarram Park shows a group of small buildings surrounded by a picket fence in the position of the overseer's cottage that was built between 1907 and 1913. These buildings are likely to be the homestead group surviving from the Robertson era and provide evidence that the early homestead was clearly a humble affair.

During his ownership of Yarram Park over twenty years from 1886 to 1906, Edward J Simmons made substantial improvements to the station, including the construction of a new woolshed at the foot of the rise where the homestead stood. Simmons also had a 'town house', believed to have been designed by Robert McMurtie, constructed on the property in 1893. It was 'a replica of one which took his fancy, in South Yarra or some other Melbourne suburb'.[29]

Under the ownership of John James Duncan, a 1910 newspaper advertisement for the Yarram Park subdivision sale read:

The homestead is an ideal country home. It is a fine brick structure, cemented, containing 12 rooms (plastered throughout); hot and cold water laid through the house, servants quarters, dairy, fruit and vegetable gardens. About 200 yards distant from homestead are two extensive stables, overseer's cottage of six rooms, recently built; men's hut of brick, to accommodate 15 shearers; machine shed, woolshed fitted with machines and Ferrier press. The whole of the improvements are in perfect order, the buildings being of quite recent date.[30]

In 1913, the homestead area was described as having an 'ornamental' garden in addition to the fruit and vegetable gardens.[31]

When Francis Edward Cobbold acquired the property in late 1913, he undertook extensive works at Yarram Park, including an 'enlargement in brick' to the homestead, which was built by a Mr C. Phillips. The additions were nearing completion by August 1914, and included 'a complete water and lighting system', a number of rooms and a large garage, the latter because Cobbold was an enthusiastic motorist.[32] The brick garage is extant. The extra rooms are likely those in the pavilion on the southwest corner of the homestead. These additions probably also included the extant laundry building, and the large bay window on the west side of homestead, which provides clear views of Mt Abrupt. The bay window is not visible in the ca.1900 photographs of the homestead, but it is also possible that it was built during the Duncan ownership. Cobbold also created a large reservoir to supply the homestead and gardens.[33] This is probably the dam in the northeast corner of the pre-emptive right block.

The Cain brothers made a number of improvements to Yarram Park after they purchased the property in 1915, including landscaping the homestead area. Their additions included 'a long avenue of English and indigenous trees to improve the approach from the high road'.[34] This is the existing avenue which is comprised of two main parts: an avenue of sugar gums leading west from the entrance off the Dunkeld-Moyston Road, and the avenue of elms which connects the sugar

gum avenue to the turning-circle of the homestead garden.

By 1917, a newspaper article about the property advised that none of the buildings from the Robertson occupation remained standing, but that the site of the 'old homestead' had been utilised for the six-room overseer's cottage built by John Duncan ca.1910.[35]

An advertisement for the sale of Yarram Park in a Queensland newspaper in 1923 described the features of the property at the time:

Commodious brick homestead, with every modern convenience; flower and vegetable garden and orchard, electric light, sewered, telephone (continuous service), hot and cold water laid on, brick men's quarters, fine brick overseer's residence, brick garage, stables, engine-shed, implement shed, buggy-shed, chaff house, boundary rider's cottage, first class woolshed of 12 stands, three sets of drafting yards and concrete sheep dip, horse and cattle yards .

At the time, the domestic water supply was supplied from 'a large underground well' by a windmill to three 200-gallon overhead tanks. Additional domestic and garden supply was from a 6000-gallon overhead tank filled by windmill from a large excavated tank.[36] The underground tank is probably that still covered by a rendered brick dome at the southwest end of the homestead. The small tanks were probably mounted on the extant steel and timber stand visible in the rear courtyard of the homestead, and the large tank was probably either carried on, or in the position of, the steel-framed stand in the oak grove to the east of the homestead.

[1] Aboriginal clan boundaries are taken from Ian Clark in *Historic Places Special Investigation South-Western Victoria Descriptive Report*, (Melbourne, Vic.: Land Conservation Council, January 1996), 25. These are generalised descriptions only and bear no relation to current Native Title Claim boundaries. Aboriginal clan names are those used by present-day Traditional Owner groups.

[2] *The Major Mitchell Trail: Exploring Australia Felix*, (Melbourne, Vic.: Department Conservation and Environment, 1990).

[3] Spreadborough and Anderson, *Victorian Squatters*, 146; R. V. and Kenyon Billis, A. S., *Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip* (Melbourne: Stockland Press, 1974), 117-18.

[4] Watgania Parish Plan. *The Age*, 30 April 1956, 5.

[5] Will of Robert Muirhead, PROV, VPRS 7591/P1, Unit 15.

[6] Spreadborough and Anderson, *Victorian Squatters*, 146; Billis, *Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip*, 117-18.

[7] Watgania and Parrie Yalloak Parish Plans.

[8] *The Argus*, 2 July 1886, 4.

[9] *Geelong Advertiser*, 3 December 1891, 4.

[10] *The Australasian*, 22 December 1894, 11. *The Australasian*, 4 October 1902, 12.

[11] *Horsham Times*, 13 February 1906, 3.

[12] *Horsham Times*, 13 February 1906, 3; 20 February 1906, 4. *The Australasian*, 20 October 1917, 4.

[13] *Camperdown Chronicle*, 19 March 1907, 4. *The Argus*, 24 June 1907, 8.

[14] Molly Huxley, 'Duncan, Sir John James (1845-1913)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Australian National University. Available http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/duncan-sir-john-james-1171/text5273. Accessed 12 October 2014.

[15] *The Australasian*, 20 October 1917, 4.

[16] *Horsham Times*, 18 October 1910, 6. *The Australasian*, 22 October 1910, 60.

[17] John J Duncan's will and probate papers. PROV, VPRS 28/P3/132/607, Unit 421.

[18] *The Australasian,* 15 November 1913, 1197. *Horsham Times*, 5 December 1913, 4.

[19] *The Australasian*, 20 October 1917, 4. *Horsham Times*, 3 February 1914, 6.

[20] *The Argus*, 27 December 1913, 7.

[21] *The Australasian*, 20 October 1917, 4. *Hamilton Spectator*, 6 February 1914, 5.

[22] *The Australasian*, 20 October 1917, 4. *The Argus*, 24 January 1936, 6.

[23] *Australian Worker,* 9 November 1932, 20.

[24] *The Argus,* 30 November 1949, 8.

[25] *The Argus*, 28 May 1948, 2.

[26] Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 65.

[27] *The Farmer and Settler (Sydney)*, 20 January 1950, 8.

[28] Yarram Park website. Available http://www.yarrampark.com/yarram-park-history/ Accessed 12 October 2014.

[29] *The Australasian*, 20 October 1917, 4.

[30] *Horsham Times*, 18 October 1910, 6. *The Australasian*, 22 October 1910, 60.

[31] *The Australasian,* 15 November 1913, 1197. *Horsham Times*, 5 December 1913, 4.

[32] *Ararat Chronicle and Willaura and Lake Bolac Districts Recorder*, 4 March 1914, 2; 5 August 1914, 2.

[33] *The Australasian*, 20 October 1917, 4.

[34] *The Australasian*, 20 October 1917, 4.

[35] *The Australasian*, 20 October 1917, 4.

[36] *The Queenslander*, 27 October 1923, 17.

Description

Physical Description

This description of Yarram Park is from a citation developed for the property by Michael Taylor and Peter Mills.

The 1893 homestead, originally of twelve rooms, is largely intact, with few external alterations and minor external additions. The building is designed and decorated in a Victorian style, combining elements of the Victorian Italianate style in the masonry and eaves with Victorian Filigree style in the front verandah.

The single-storey homestead is brick with ruled-ashlar rendering externally. The roof over the front rooms is broken-backed, behind which are two hipped pavilions on an east-west axis over the other main rooms. A bay window on the west, which gives views to Mt Abrupt, was probably constructed ca 1914 during the Cobbold additions.

The roofs are clad in slate with a single band at mid-line in a lighter colour. Photos ca 1900 indicate that ridge ends were originally decorated with metal finials. The top of the wall features a frieze of rendered vermiculated panels and rosettes, separated by paired timber brackets. The soffit is pierced with cross-shaped decorative fretwork.

The front facade features bay windows either side of the main entrance, the walls of which are continued up above the verandah and crowned with faceted roofs. Window openings feature Italianate stilted segmental-arch mouldings, linked between windows by a string-course moulding.

The front and half-side verandahs are supported on cast-iron posts with iron lace decoration. The skillion verandah features a small central gable that hints at Queen Anne style. The verandah is paved with tessellated tiles with deep slate bull-nosed edging. This slate is also applied to the flaring entry steps and side steps. Two urns that once graced the end plinths of the sidewalls of the steps remain on the property.

Two hip-roofed wings at the rear enclose an informal rear courtyard. These wings are minimally decorated. The eastern wing was probably the staff quarters and features a small cellar at the south end. The western wing housed the kitchen and pantry, and possibly the farm office. Another pavilion to the south of this wing probably dates from the Cobbold additions ca 1914. A small separate pavilion to the south of this addition probably dates from the same works and may have been a laundry.

There was probably an original narrow verandah on three sides of the rear courtyard. This is evidenced by the original corbelled masonry on the west side wall which carries a timber lintel for the verandah roof, with that timber in turn showing the same detailing as other external timbers of the 1893 homestead. Although some early fabric in this area has been lost or is now concealed, it is likely that this was an open verandah with a raised floor, possibly of timber, on a masonry plinth with three sets of steps as approaches. The steps approaching the verandah floor at the rear of the main body of the house feature similar slate treads to the front-entry steps. It is most likely that this was an open functional verandah, as evidenced by the exterior-wall detailing of the doors (including bluestone thresholds) and windows of the masonry wall behind. This verandah was later enclosed with fixed glazing on slender hardwood mullions, with original heavy posts removed, indicating origins in the post-World War Two period. The raised steel and timber platform for water tanks on the west side of the courtyard was probably constructed during the Cobbold occupancy ca 1914.

The existing avenue of trees comprises two main parts: an avenue of sugar gums leading west from the entrance off the Dunkeld-Moyston Road, and an avenue of elms which connects the sugar gum avenue to the turning-circle of the homestead garden. Little trace of the early ornamental gardens remains, and the current garden is heavily simplified.

A number of outbuildings exist in paddocks adjacent to the homestead.

Physical Condition

The homestead was in good condition in December 2014.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

Yarram Park Farm Complex, located at 2994 Moyston-Dunkeld Road, Willaura. The original location, form, materials and details of the 1893 homestead, including additions to the homestead up to 1914 (including the garage), outbuildings, and elm and sugar gum avenues are integral to the significance of the place.

How is it significant?

Yarram Park Farm Complex, 2994 Moyston-Dunkeld Road, Willaura is of local historic and aesthetic significance to Ararat Rural City Council.

Why is it significant?

Yarram Park Farm Complex is of historic significance as a remnant of the original Yarram Yarram run taken up by squatters Robert Muirhead and Edward Parker in 1844. Brothers James, John and Thomas Robertson took over the run in February 1864 and obtaining freehold after the 1869 *Land Act*. John Robertson sold Yarram Yarram to Edward J Simmons in 1886. Yarram Yarram was renamed Yarram Park during Simmons's ownership and it was in 1893, during his ownership between 1886 and 1903, that the homestead was erected. The property is of significance as an important and prosperous grazing property in the district, associated with a number of pioneers and prominent landholders. The homestead is significant for its associations with Edward J. Simmons who gained his wealth from investments in Stawell gold mining companies and purchased and successfully ran a number of other grazing properties. The property is also important for its associations with Sir John James Duncan, who was born in Scotland in 1845 and was a South Australian pastoralist and member of parliament. He owned South Australian stations including Hughes Park near Watervale and Gum Creek near Burra, as well as grazing leases as far north as Lake Eyre. Duncan purchased the property in 1907 and owned it up until his death in 1913. (Criteria A & H)

Yarram Park homestead is of aesthetic significance as an excellent intact example of a Victorian style villa combining elements of the Victorian Italianate style in the masonry and eaves with Victorian Filigree style in the front verandah. Key features of the building include the ruled ashlar finish of the external render, bay windows, window openings feature Italianate stilted segmental-arch mouldings, linked between windows by a string-course moulding, verandahs with cast-iron posts and iron lace decoration, tessellated tiled verandah floors, and brackets and moulding under the eaves. The elm and sugar gum avenues contribute to the setting of the property. (Criteria D & E)

Recommendations 2015

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	Yes sugar gum and elm tree avenues
Fences & Outbuildings	Yes outbuildings including garage
Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted	Yes
Incorporated Plan	-
Aboriginal Heritage Place	Yes

Name	Willaura Railway Station Complex		
Address	Wickliffe-Willaura Road WILLAURA	**Significance Level**	Local

Place Type	Railway Platform/ Station,Other - Transport - Rail,Silo
Citation Date	2015
Assessment by	Robyn Ballinger and Samantha Westbrooke

Recommended Heritage Protection	**VHR** No **HI** No **PS** Yes

History and Historical Context

Contextual history:

Willaura is located on the traditional lands of the Tjapwurong Aboriginal peoples.[1]

Governor of New South Wales, Sir Richard Bourke, instructed Surveyor General Thomas Mitchell to finish tracing the course of the Darling River to the Murray River, to survey the Murray to its junction with the Murrumbidgee River, and then to follow the southern bank of the Murray back to the settled parts of New South Wales. After crossing the Murray River near present-day Boundary Bend, Mitchell ignored his official instructions and explored instead the northern and western areas of the Port Phillip District (later the Colony of Victoria), a region he titled 'Australia Felix'.

Mitchell travelled through what was to become the municipality of Ararat Rural City in July and September 1836. On the return to Sydney, Mitchell's expedition made camp on 19 September 1836 to the west of a hill Mitchell named Mount

Stavely. Mitchell named the Hopkins River on the same day. The expedition set up camp on 20 September, south of today's Willaura, at the eastern end of a line of 50 salt lakes, which Mitchell called Cockajemmy Lakes.[2]

Mitchell's exploratory expedition through the area is marked by the names he gave to the country and by a cairn on the Willaura-Wickliffe Road erected by the Willaura and District Historical Society and unveiled in 1986.

As in other parts of the Port Phillip District, squatters took up large tracts of Crown land (public land) in the area to graze mainly sheep from 1837.[3] The first squatters came from Van Diemen's land via Geelong and Portland Bay, which was occupied by the Henty family in 1834. Soon after overlanders from north of the Murray River arrived. This second wave of squatters was attracted by favorable newspaper reports of Mitchell's 'Australia Felix'. It has been estimated that two-thirds of the pioneer settlers in Western Victoria were from Scotland; nearly all were Lowland farmers.[4]

The two major runs in what was to become known as the Wickliffe Road (Willaura) district were Mount William, 38,000 acres taken up by Thomas Chirnside in 1842; and Greenvale, 56,880 acres taken up by Robert Adams in 1843.[5] These runs contributed to the establishment of a significant wool growing industry in the district.

The Duffy *Land Act*, passed in June 1862, put aside ten million acres of land in designated 'agricultural areas', which were surveyed into 40-640 acre allotments. Over 1,888,000 acres in the Colony of Victoria were alienated under the 1862 Act,[6] but mostly into the hands of the squatters. Approximately 250,000 acres between Ararat, Streatham and Wickliffe, and 107,500 acres between Fiery Creek and the Hopkins River, were made available in 1862.[7] Allotments were taken up in the district of what was to become Wickliffe Road (Willaura).

The Ararat-Dunkeld section of the Ararat-Portland railway line opened in 1877 with a railway station at Wickliffe Road (Willaura). The Wickcliffe Road Railway Station Post Office opened in January 1878.[8] One of the first businesses established in the Wickliffe Road settlement was the Junction Hotel, opened in 1878. The inhabitants of the Wickliffe Road district petitioned for a school in August 1879. However a school was not opened until June 1885, when Wickliffe Road State School No. 2662 started part-time operation with Watgania State School No. 1384.[9]

Salt for stock was extracted by Henry Wileman from the Cockajemmy lakes south of present-day Willaura from 1866 to 1889. By 1883, two salt factories had been established. So large was the working population at the lakes, a school was petitioned for in 1885. The Biggins family took over the industry in 1889 and operated it through until the 1980s.[10]

In 1883, the Wickliffe Road settlement, on the Ararat-Portland railway line, had a population of 30, two salt factories to the south, a hotel, a part-time school, a store, a few cottages, and a railway station. In 1890, Wickliffe Road State School had 55 pupils in attendance.

With the advent of share farming from 1897 on Mount William and Edgarley, rapid progress was made in the district. The Wickliffe Road State School was enlarged to about three times its original size and the Colonial Bank opened a branch in the township.

In 1900 there was a large rush to the Grampians area, south of Mount William, to what became known as the Mafeking rush. The rush to Mafeking was short lived, and buildings established in the township were moved to other locations. The Willaura Hobby Boutique in Willaura, for instance, was moved from Mafeking, and the hotel at Mafeking was moved to a farm near Willaura and used as a private residence.[11] In 1901, the population of Willaura consisted of four families belonging to two railway gatekeepers, the stationmaster and the schoolmaster.[12]

By the 1890s, children of selectors in the Colony of Victoria wanting to take up farming were left with only the Mallee country. As a consequence, pressure was applied to the government to make existing large land-holdings available as small farms. Planning for the 1904 *Closer Settlement Act* provided further impetus for the owners of large pastoral properties in the municipality to introduce their own closer settlement schemes. The owners of the Mount William run

made 100 to 300-acre blocks for cultivation available to share and tenant farmers in 1897, with a further 18,000 acres released in 1902. The owners of Greenvale offered tenant farmers three-year leases.[13] In addition, Thomas Millear advertised land for sharefarming on Edgarley (a subdivision of Greenvale) in 1899, and by 1910 there were 23 tenant farmers on the property.[14]

Arthur Murphy, an Ararat businessman, operated as an agent for the owners of pastoral properties. Murphy subdivided a number of properties in the Lake Bolac and Wickliffe Road districts in the early 1900s for the owners, and recruited settlers from the northern districts of the Colony of Victoria with experience in wheat farming to take up the land.[15] In 1902, Murphy sold 16,000 acres of Greenvale and subdivided it into allotments of about 320 acres. Some of the land adjoined the Wickcliffe Road Railway Station. In June of the same year, Murphy sold another 9,000 acres of Greenvale for Charles Ayrey, who had purchased the land with a view to subdivision. This land included a township site, which was later named Willaura, close to the Wickliffe Road Railway Station.[16] As part of this development, land situated opposite the Wicklliffe Road railway station was subdivided into township blocks. Buyers from Melbourne, Bendigo and the Wimmera paid up to Â£45 for one quarter of an acre facing the railway reserve.[17] Before the end of the month, builders were erecting shops and houses. Ayrey wanted to name the town after himself, but this never eventuated.[18]

By 1903, 75,000 acres of former grazing land in the Lake Bolac-Willaura district had been brought under cultivation[19] locating Wickliffe Road township at the centre of a substantial wheat-growing district.

Wickliffe Road township was renamed Willaura on 1 August 1905 and a police station was established in the township in 1906.

The newspaper, the *Willaura Farmer*, commenced operation on 1 June 19 1906, and described Willaura at that time: 'It includes the Junction Hotel, Incledon's coffee palace, dining rooms, three blacksmith's establishments, two fruiterers [and] three general stores'.[20]

The sale of Mount William estate in October 1906 resulted in further subdivision with farms sold at between Â£6-Â£7 an acre. Thomas Wileman also subdivided his land to the north of Warranooke Street, Willaura, into quarter acre lots and sold the blocks in the period 1906-08. Land sales and leasing of land to farmers in the district transformed Wickliffe Road into a busy township.

Willaura was described by the *Willaura Farmer* on 1 June 1907:

Business houses which have been erected during the past twelve months include a general store, a baker's shop, a butcher's shop, a bootmaker's shop, two fruit palaces, two millinery and dressmaking establishments, two machinery depots, and a fertiliser shed. This, it must be admitted, is a wonderful record for a township which in 1900 was comprised of five families.During the past year Willaura has gained a new post office.The Railway Department has not been slow to recognise Willaura's progress.A new shunting line and siding for wheat stacking has been established to cope with the increased grain traffic.A police station is now in course of erection, and the time is not far distant when the police court will be held locally.Saleyards were established locally during the year, and stock sales are now conducted regularly in the town.The drainage of the town has been sadly neglected, and a windmill has been erected presumably to annoy the townspeople. The drainage question is still demanding the attention of the Shire Council, which is being spurred into action by the Public Health Department at the instance of the Progress Association.[21]

A horseracing club was formed in 1907. As the township was located near a large swamp, drainage in the town posed an ongoing problem.

Gold mining was taken up on a small scale in the Willaura district at Half Way Gully in July 1906. Miners cut through a sandstone bar on the Hopkins River to divert water for the washing and sluicing of gold.[22] The Kiora Gold Mining Company was formed in 1907, and in 1914, after Willaura district residents petitioned the Minister for Mines, the

Director of the Geological Survey visited the area to report on the advisability of testing for gold leads. It seems little prospecting activity took place after his visit.[23]

In 1909, eighty allotments were made available by the sale of ten acres of Thomas Wileman's land on the north side of the township. The sale realised £864 10/, or an average of £54 per acre.[24]

Field trials of H V McKay farm equipment were held in the Willaura and Westmere districts from 1907 until 1953, including, in 1907, trials of the Sunshine Push Harvester, so called because the machine was pushed by eight horses attached to the rear.[25]

The Millear family donated farming land for a recreation reserve. In 1910, a committee placed a notice in the *Willaura Farmer* calling for designs for a reserve including tennis courts, cricket, football and sports ground with grandstand and tree plantings.[26] By 1911, the township included two banks, police station, courthouse and a weekly newspaper.[27] Willaura Township was proclaimed in 1912.[28] A golf course opened in 1913.

After fires in 1912 and 1916 burnt down buildings in Willaura, residents formed a fire brigade to protect the township.

Approximately 90 returned soldiers from World War One took up portions of five estates in the municipality. The largest settlement was on the Narrapumelap and Cowaugh estate, where 14,000 acres were divided into 37 farms, including land in the Willaura district on Back Bolac Road. However, because of the small size of allotments allocated, less than 50 per cent of the original soldier settlers made a success of their farms.[29]

Farmers and graziers in the area were well placed to take advantage of the economic boom conditions of post World War One. By the 1920s, crop rotation techniques, the use of superphosphate and the introduction of improved wheat varieties facilitated a marked increase in wheat yields in the district.[30] In addition, wheat was cultivated on an extensive scale with tractors and the motorised header-harvester - a machine that was able to reap a crop before it was fully ripe, harvest a knocked down crop, and separate straw and grain. Wool also reached high prices in the 1920s. Wool from Yalla-y-Poora, for instance, made a world record of 51s. ½ d. in 1924, which stood as an Australasian record for twenty years.[31]

The *Willaura Sun* newspaper closed in 1921. Premises to house the Willaura fire station were constructed next to the post office in 1922. The Willaura Bush Fire Brigade was formed in 1933. From 1938, Dr Cyril Checchi, who had arrived in Willaura in 1920, led a movement to get a water supply for the township, which at that stage relied on dams and rainwater tanks. A bush nursing hospital was opened at Willaura in 1935. Electric light was connected to the township in 1938. On January 14 1944, a fire from the Grampians travelled towards Glenthompson and Lake Bolac. Three homesteads and 8,000 sheep were lost in the Willaura police district in the blaze.[32]

For the most part closer settlement as an active government policy was wound down from 1938, however another phase of soldier settlement commenced after World War Two. In the municipality, because of larger blocks and more intensive support and training, this scheme was more successful than that which followed World War One. Soldier settlement was facilitated with the assistance of Returned Sailors' Soldiers' and Airmens Imperial Leagues (RSSAILAs). The Willaura RSSAILA Sub-Branch submitted a list of properties totalling 25,600 acres that it deemed suitable for settlement, including land on Edgarley, Narrapumelap, Yarram Park and Toora. It was also noted that homesteads at Berrambool, Narrapumelap and Burumbeep stood vacant.[33] Subsequently, 120 former servicemen settled on 80,000 acres excised from eight large properties in the Willaura-Streatham-Wickliffe area: Burrumbeep, Narrapumelap, Berrambool, Yalla-y-Poora, Blythvale, Edgarley, Nerrin Nerrin and Bushy Creek, where they mostly took up grazing and mixed farming.[34] In addition, a portion of the Edgarley, 5,101 acres near the Willaura township, was subdivided in 1946 into eight allotments. The land was described as suitable for sheep grazing, mixed farming and cereal growing by the Soldier Settlement Commission.[35] A Soldier Settlement office was established in Willaura to facilitate the settlement. Berrambool, Narrapumelap and Burumbeep homesteads provided temporary housing for settler families whilst other

housing was constructed. Today, plaques mark soldier settlement estates at Berrambool, Edgarley, Burrumbeep, Trawalla South and Nerrin Nerrin.

The phase of soldier settlement corresponded with good seasons, the post World War Two economic boom, and, from 1940, 'ley' farming (where crop planting is alternated with a forage legume for grazing, such as clover), which greatly increased wool production and wheat yields per acre.[36] This era brought significant wealth and growth to Willaura. The Moyston-Willaura Road became known locally as 'Toorak Road' because of the substantial homes and farms established there during this period.[37] With the economic boom and growth in district population following World War Two, a number of projects were undertaken in Willaura: a reticulated water supply was established in 1949; the Country Fire Authority built a new fire station in 1956; the Willaura Memorial Hall opened in 1957, and new classrooms, staffroom and office were constructed at Willaura State School in the same year, with another classroom added in 1964.[38] An Infant Welfare Centre opened in 1959. A scout hall was built in the early 1960s.

Tamara Beggs and Malcolm Fraser, later Prime Minister of Australia, were married at the All Saints Anglican Church in Willaura in 1956.

In the 1962-63 season, wheat deliveries at silos at Tatyoon measured 271,711 bushels; at Westmere 408,584 bushels; and at Willaura 350,218 bushels.

The construction of a six million gallon service basin, named the Checchi Reservoir, was undertaken in 1962 to improve water supplies to Willaura and other townships. A swimming pool opened in 1965. Willaura was connected to sewerage in 1966. Housing Commission Elderly Citizen flats were erected in 1973.[39]

Major extensions to the hospital were undertaken in 1976 and the nursing hostel was built in 1994.

Fires occurred in the Grampians in 2006, when 26 homes, 129,000 hectares of land, thousands of stock and fences were burnt. Begun by a lightning strike on 19 January 2006, on 22 January the fire spread rapidly in a southerly direction towards Dunkeld, reaching the outskirts of Willaura before a strong wind took the fire back in a northward direction, affecting a number of small communities along the eastern side of the Grampians. A man and his son died between Moyston and Pomonal when they were caught in the fire. A memorial has been erected near the place they died. In Willaura, the cenotaph was refurbished in memory of the 2006 fire.

In recent years, Grain Corp has established grain bunker facilities at Willaura.

Aggregation of farms into larger holdings from the 1960s has resulted in an ongoing reduction of population in the district. With the removal from Willaura of major employers such as the PMG, the railways, and the Ararat Shire depot from the 1970s, this trend has continued. Today cropping and wool growing are still the district's mainstays, and while many of the town's shops and former businesses have closed, there remains a strong community and a range of essential services.[40]

Place history:

The construction of railway lines in the Colony of Victoria for the most part followed the spread of settlement, with the first railway lines built with private capital. Surveyor General, Captain Andrew Clarke, was authorised to undertake surveys for railways throughout the central portion of the colony in the 1850s. By the end of 1855, sixteen survey parties had completed surveys for lines, including the Main Trunk Lines from Melbourne to the Murray River at Echuca, opened in 1864, and Geelong to Ballarat, opened in 1862. The building of railway lines led to the establishment of commercial ventures such as sawmilling, brickmaking, quarrying and specialist foundries.[1]

After the heavy expenditure of the construction of the main lines, railway building resumed in the 1870s with lower and cheaper standards. Earlier in 1862 the Ararat council had requested a government survey of a railway line from Ballarat to Ararat. But it was not until 1869 that Thomas Higginbotham, Engineer-in-Chief of Victorian Railways, submitted a series of proposals to provide railway links to towns in western Victoria to cater for increasing populations and wheat yields. The routes were: the 'Black Line', from Geelong to Colac, Terang and Hamilton; the 'Green Line', from a point mid way along the line between Geelong and Ballarat to Skipton and Hamilton; the 'Pink Line', an extension of the Ballarat line to Ararat, then to Hamilton; and the 'Blue Line', from Castlemaine to Maryborough, Avoca, Ararat and Hamilton.[2] The Pink Line was approved in 1871, and the Ballarat to Ararat line subsequently opened in 1875.

Tenders for the railway line from Ararat to the seaboard at Portland were called on 13 October 1875 for 66 miles of railway line. Overend and Robb successfully tendered with a price of Â£354,653 and the work commenced from Ararat with 526 men in February 1876. The Ararat-Portland railway was officially opened to traffic on 24 April 1877. As part of the Ararat-Portland railway line, a siding was opened at the township of Wickliffe Road. About midway between the Wickliffe Road and Greenvale (now Stavely) sidings, a branch line diverged to the south and went to ballast pits that were used during the construction of the line.[3]

The Wickliffe Road passenger station and outbuildings were constructed by contractor Ainsworth Harrison at a cost of Â£950 3s 9d. in 1877.[4] Built of brick, the station was adapted from a design developed for the 1864 Elmore Railway Station on the Echuca line. The station building comprised an office, a parcels office, a booking hall, general waiting room, a ladies waiting room (including a toilet) and stationmaster's quarters at the southern end. The goods platform, on the east side of the railway line, included two goods sheds to provide for the high level of wool traffic.[5]

In 1881, contractors Pritchard and Blackwood erected a goods shed at Wickliffe Road at a cost of Â£206 17s 4d.[6]

In 1900, Premier of Victoria Thomas Bent issued free railway passes to the unemployed of Melbourne to join the rush at the newly discovered Mafeking goldfield, thirteen miles from Wickliffe Road. Thousands of men arrived at the Wickliffe Road railway station from where they made their way to the diggings across the wheat crops of sharefarmers on the Mount William run.[7]

The name of the railway station was changed from Wickliffe Road to Willaura on 1 August 1905.

Between June 1902 and June 1907, railway wheat freight at Willaura increased 200 per cent to 12,364 tons of grain with revenue of Â£8933 in 1907.[8] Railway Commissioner Tait recognised Willaura as 'one of if not the leading wheat station in the state'. In 1906 he promised a new stationmaster's residence, crane and wheat siding to deal with the increased wheat yields.[9] The goods platform was subsequently increased to a length of approximately 400 feet.[10]

Willaura railway station was described by the *Willaura Farmer* on 1 June 1907:

The Railway Department has not been slow to recognise Willaura's progress.A new shunting line and siding for wheat stacking has been established to cope with the increased grain traffic.The department has given further evidence of its firm belief in the stability of the district by erecting a new and commodious dwelling for the stationmaster, and will shortly convert the old residence into an up-to-date railway station.[11]

The replacement stationmaster's quarters was a residence constructed of two former gatehouses placed front-to-front and joined by a passage. To this was added an additional room to form a separate kitchen.[12]

In October 1907, it was reported that 'the revenue received at the Willaura railway station from all sources during each of the past two years amounted to slightly over Â£15,000. Prior to the advent of the farmer six years ago the railway revenue for a year totalled about Â£800.'[13] The *Horsham Times* reported that:

The cutting up of the big estate around Willaura.has transformed a wayside station into a busy country town.The subdivision of the large pastoral areas into small wheat growing blocks has had a great effect on traffic at the railway station.[14]

In October 1908, it was proposed to build a co-operative farmers' grain storage shed adjacent to the railway line in Willaura.[15] In 1909, passenger, goods and livestock traffic increased considerably.[16] In 1910, Willaura was the second largest wheat receival centre in the western half of the state, with 212,000 bags delivered in that year.[17]

After the Gheringhap to Maroona railway line opened on 8 August 1913, wheat traffic at Willaura dropped considerably, but Willaura, nonetheless, continued to maintain a significant portion of the traffic. By 1918, the Willaura Railway Station Complex on the west side of the line consisted of station buildings, a weighbridge, the stationmaster's residence, passenger platform, a carriage dock (a facility provided at railway stations for people who wished to take their own horse drawn vehicle on a flat wagon attached to the train), two grain sheds, 14 sites for stick sheds (that were made of hessian sacking walls and corrugated iron roofs supported by saplings) for the storage of bagged wheat, and a crane. On the east side of the railway line were stockyards, a goods platform and two goods sheds.[18]

The Victorian Grain Elevators Board, established in 1935, introduced bulk-handling facilities for wheat; in the 1939-40 season the Board commenced operations as the sole bulk handler of wheat. Concrete silos and weighbridges were erected at railway stations from 1938, followed by steel silos constructed by the Grain Elevators Board to handle the bumper crops of the 1950s and 1960s.

Willaura received one of the first 81 concrete silos erected by the Grain Elevators Board, with work commencing on a three-cell Geelong type concrete silo in December 1939. By January 1940, the concrete foundations below ground level were completed and the silo was finished in March of that year. The silo complex incorporated an 'A' type elevator with a capacity of 65,000 bushels. The original power unit was a 35 HP Kelly and Lewis crude oil engine, which drove the elevator belts to give the capacity of 60 tons per hour. The completed silo and earthworks cost Â£4560.[19]

Because of the increasing use of the motor truck on the transport scene from the 1920s, by the 1940s little funding for capital improvements was allocated to the railway system. As a result, rail transport was used less frequently.

The weighbridge in use in Willaura prior to 1952 (located in front of the former butcher shop in Main Street) was controlled by the Ararat Shire and served the silo during the harvest period. The Grain Elevators Board established its own weighbridge in 1952. In 1963 an all steel Ascom silo complex was built adjacent to the concrete silo giving an extra capacity of 2000 tons for each bin with elevating gear capable of lifting 100 tonnes per hour. Another grain shed was erected in the late 1950s - early 1960s. The Grain Elevators Board estimated that the silo-shed complex intake between 1940-41 and 1982-83 (except for the 1967-68 drought) was on average 160,000-234,000 bushels of wheat per year.[20]

Bulk handling of oats commenced in Victoria in 1962 and a number of oats storage sheds were built across Victoria, including a gable roof storage shed with a capacity of 1600 tonnes at Willaura constructed by the Victorian Oat Pool in 1964.[21]

The depopulation of rural areas in conjunction with the development of roads resulted in a decrease in railway domination, leading inevitably to the withdrawal of passenger services and the curtailment of whole sections of line. Following Henry Bland's watershed *Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Victorian Land Transport System* of 1971-72, a severe reduction in rail services in rural areas was implemented. Eventually much of the infrastructure required to provide a traditional rail transport system in the Shire of Ararat was closed down.

At Willaura, the railway passenger service was closed officially on 12 September 1981 and passengers are now transported by coaches. The goods yard, apart from the grain sidings, was removed in 1986.

In 2001, a large bunker system for wheat and canola with a capacity of 80,000 tonnes was established on the Willaura-Wickliffe Road. This is now the main storage area for grain, although the silos remain in use.[22]

Today the Willaura Railway Station Complex consists of the original 1877 station building (now vacant), a store, platforms on the east and west of the line, the silo complex, the oats' shed, two fertiliser sheds and the weighbridge. It is believed that the stationmaster's residence was removed to 2 Station Street, Willaura, and remains in that location today.

Contextual history footnotes

[1] Aboriginal clan boundaries are taken from Ian Clark in *Historic Places Special Investigation South-Western Victoria Descriptive Report*, (Melbourne, Vic.: Land Conservation Council, January 1996), 25. These are generalised descriptions only and bear no relation to current Native Title Claim boundaries. Aboriginal clan names are those used by present-day Traditional Owner groups.

[2] *The Major Mitchell Trail: Exploring Australia Felix*, (Melbourne, Vic.: Department Conservation and Environment, 1990).

[3] The term 'squatter' first applied to those pastoralists who took illegal possession of land before depasturing licences were introduced in 1836. Its meaning was broadened in later years to refer more generally to those who undertook sheep and cattle grazing under license on large tracts of land.

[4] Margaret Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday: A Social History of the Western District of Victoria, 1834-1890* (Melbourne, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1962), 14, 36-9.

[5] The exact years of the first take up of the runs in the Port Phillip District is difficult to ascertain. Run details in the table provided are drawn from Lorna L. Banfield, *Like the Ark...The Story of Ararat* (Melbourne, Vic.: F. W. Cheshire, 1955), Robert Spreadborough and Hugh Anderson, eds., *Victorian Squatters* (Ascot Vale, Vic.: Red Rooster Press, 1983).

[6] Stephen Roberts, *History of Australian Land Settlement* (South Melbourne, Vic.: Macmillan, 1968), 257.

[7] Banfield, *Like the Ark...The Story of Ararat*, 105-7.

[8] "Gazette Notices." *Alexandra and Yea Standard, Gobur, Thornton and Acheron Express*, 12 January 1878, 3.

[9] William Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985* (Willaura, Vic.: Willaura School Centenary Committee, 1985), 10, 15.

[10] Ibid., 72-3.

[11] Information from Ararat Rural City Heritage Study Stage 1 Community Meeting, Willaura, 30 May 2012.

[12] Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 74.

[13] Banfield, *Like the Ark...The Story of Ararat*, 125.

[14] Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 67.

[15] Lorna L. Banfield, "Moyston Mechanics Institute Papers, 1859-1932." Manuscripts MS 8529 Box 993/4: State

Library of Victoria.

[16] "Closer Settlement-Successful Private Enterprise." *Western Star and Roma Advertiser*, 21 November 1903, 4.

[17] , *The Argus*, 24 May 1902, 3.

[18] Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 74.

[19] Banfield, *Like the Ark...The Story of Ararat*, 126-7.

[20] Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 62,76.

[21] Cited in Ibid., 76.

[22] *History of Wickliffe Reprinted by the Lake Bolac and District Historical Society*, (n.p., n.d.).

[23] Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 93-6.

[24] "Land and Property Sales In the Country ", *The Argus*, 14 May 1909, 8.

[25] Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 8.

[26] Ibid., 235.

[27] Lorna Lamont Banfield, *Green Pastures and Gold: A History of Ararat* (Canterbury, Victoria: Mullaya, 1974), 99.

[28] "Victoria Government Gazette". no. 18, 31 January 1912.

[29] Banfield, *Like the Ark...The Story of Ararat*, 130.

[30] Monica Keneley, "The Impact of Agricultural Intensification on the Pastoral Economy of the Western District of Victoria, 1890-1930," *The Electronic Journal of Australian and New Zealand History* (1 November 1999), www.jcu.edu.au/aff/history/pdf/keneley.pdf.

[31] Banfield, *Like the Ark...The Story of Ararat*, 131-2.

[32] Lorna L. Banfield and John McKenzie, *Shire of Ararat 1864-1994. The Centenary Years 1864-1964 / Lorna L. Banfield. The Final Thirty Years 1964-1994* (Ararat, Vic.: Shire of Ararat, 1995), 30.

[33] Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 143.

[34] Banfield, *Like the Ark...The Story of Ararat*, 130.

[35] Subdivision of Portion of 'Edgarley' Estate Parishes of Kiora and Willaura County of Ripon, Victoria Soldier Settlement Commission, 1948? in "Millear Family Papers." Manuscripts MS MC 7 DR 3: State Library of Victoria.

[36] Banfield, *Like the Ark...The Story of Ararat*, 136.

[37] Information from Ararat Rural City Heritage Study Stage 1 Community Meeting, Willaura, 30 May 2012.

[38] Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 25.

[39] Banfield and McKenzie, *Shire of Ararat 1864-1994. The Centenary Years 1864-1964 / Lorna L. Banfield. The Final Thirty Years 1964-1994*, 84.

[40] *Rural Townships*, (Ararat Rural City Council, [cited 3 September 2013]); available from http://community-recreation.ararat.vic.gov.au/townships/index/town/10

Place history footnotes

[1] Jane Lennon, *Our Inheritance: Historic Places on Public Land in Victoria* (Melbourne, Vic.: Department of Conservation and Environment, 1992), 28.

[2] Lorna L. Banfield et al., *The Ararat Railway Centenary: A History of the Ballarat to Ararat Railway and Lineside Guide* (Melbourne: Australian Railway Historical Society, Victorian Division, 1975), 4-5.

[3] Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 97.

[4] "Successful Tenders." *The Argus*, 3 March 1877, 6.

[5] Information provided by Ian Jenkin, Australian Railway Historical Association Victoria Division, October 2013.

[6] "Victorian Government Gazette". Vol 60, 30 June 1881, 1857.

[7] Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 61. *Mafeking and Mount Wiliam Gold Rush*, (Ararat, Vic.: Ararat and District Historical Society, 1964).

[8] *Willaura Farmer*, 20 September 1907, cited in Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 99.

[9] Ibid., 98.

[10] Information provided by Jenkin, Australian Railway Historical Association Victoria Division.

[11] Cited in Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 76.

[12] Information provided by Jenkin, Australian Railway Historical Association Victoria Division.

[13] "Western Plains Development." *Camperdown Chronicle*, 15 October 1907, 1.

[14] "General News." *Horsham Times*, 7 August 1908, 8.

[15] Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*.

[16] Information provided by Jenkin, Australian Railway Historical Association Victoria Division.

[17] Signage information provided by Heather Fleming. Heather Fleming, Personal Communication, 6 November 2013.

[18] Information provided by Jenkin, Australian Railway Historical Association Victoria Division.

[19] Goeman et al., *The History of Willaura and District 1835-1985*, 91-2, 100.

[20] Ibid., 91-2.

[21] Ibid., 100.

[22] Signage information provided by Heather Fleming.

Description

Physical Description

The Willaura Railway Station Complex comprises a rendered brick railway station building, a passenger platform and a goods platform, a silo complex, a store, fertiliser shed, a weigh bridge and office, and a steel grain store.

The Railway Station Building and passenger platform are located on the west side of the tracks adjacent to the main street of Willaura. The passenger platform has a brick retaining wall with a bluestone edge capping stone. The station building is brick with a smooth render finish. The building has a slate clad hipped roof and three rendered chimneys with cornices. The rear elevation of the station building facing Main Street contains a skillion roofed wing at either end. The southern wing is larger than the northern wing and they both have a timber framed double hung window to the street elevation. The roofs to these skillion wings are clad in corrugated iron and they both have low side parapets with brick corbelling to the exposed ends. On the platform elevation is a hipped verandah clad in corrugated iron with round cast iron posts and curved brackets. There are three single doors and three single windows to the platform elevation of the building. The windows have bluestone sills. The Avery parcel/goods scale is in situ on the passenger platform.

To the south of the station building is a small gable roofed store with a corrugated iron roof and new metal sheet cladding to the exterior. The interior has vertical timber lining, which would have also originally been the exterior finish. This is a rare surviving example of such a building.

Although the goods platform is on the east side of the tracks, the grain and goods buildings are on the west side of the track further south of the station building. There is a grain store with a gable roof clad in metal sheet and a steel frame to the outside and metal sheet lining to the inside of the frame. There are also two steel silos with conical roofs with a corrugated iron clad grain elevator located in between and a tall concrete silo made up of three cylindrical cells with a rectangular link between. The corrugated iron clad grain elevator sits on top of the structure. This is a Grain Elevators Board three-cell Geelong type silo.

Further south of these silos is a long corrugated iron clad fertilizer store with a gable roof also clad in galvanised corrugated iron. This shed has large double doors at both ends.

Located between the station building and grain complex is the weighbridge and office. This is located closer to the Main Street adjacent between the Main Street and the service road leading to the grain store and solos. The weighbridge has a concrete base with iron plate deck and the small square office has a gable roof clad in corrugated iron sheet. The walls of the weighbridge office are also clad in corrugated iron and there is a single door on one side elevation and a timber framed casement window facing the weighbridge.

Physical Condition

The complex was in good condition in November 2013.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Willaura Railway Station Complex consisting of the 1877 station building, store, passenger platform, silos, passenger platform, weighbridge and office, oats shed and fertiliser store, The location and original form, materials and details of these features are integral to the significance of the place.

How is it significant?

The Willaura Railway Station Complex located on Wickcliffe-Willaura Road, Willaura is of local historical and aesthetic significance to Ararat Rural City Council.

Why is it significant?

The Willaura Railway Station Complex is of historical significance to Ararat Rural City Council for its ability to demonstrate the construction of the Ararat to Portland Railway line in 1877. The Wickliffe Road passenger station and outbuildings were constructed by contractor Ainsworth Harrison in 1877 and the line was officially opened to traffic in April 1877. The platform store building, although re-clad on the exterior, is a rare surviving example of a 1870s small railway store constructed with vertical timber boards. The grain handling infrastructure including the silos, weighbridge and office, fertiliser shed and oats storage shed demonstrates the importance of the railways to the grain industry prior to the development and preference for road transport. The concrete silo erected at the station in 1940 demonstrates the establishment of the Victorian Grain Elevators Board in 1935, which introduced bulk-handling facilities for wheat to railway stations. The steel silos installed at the station to accommodate surplus grain demonstrate the bumper grain crops experienced in the 1950s and 1960s. The oats storage shed constructed by the Victorian Oat Pool in 1964 demonstrates the commencement of bulk handling of oats n Victoria in 1962. (Criteria A & B)

The Willaura Railway Station Complex is aesthetically significant as a collection of railway station and rail bulk grain handling infrastructure illustrating the components, appearance and design of a rural railway station servicing a grain farming district and spanning from the late nineteenth century to the mid twentieth century. The individual components such as the 1877 station building with its cast iron verandah posts and brackets, the oats shed with its exposed structure, silos and weighbridge and office are substantially intact and exhibit principal characteristics of their building types and age. These characteristics include the building placement, overall form, scale, materials, opening types and placement and detailing. (Criterion D)

Recommendations 2015

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Fences & Outbuildings	No
Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted	Yes
Incorporated Plan	-
Aboriginal Heritage Place	No