

O'HALLORAN & HARE FARMHOUSE SITE

Mathison Park, Lake Hyland

Place No. 282

ADDRESS Mackeys Road
Churchill

Last Update 25/03/2005

HO No.

DESCRIPTION The site of the O'Halloran and Hare farmhouses is situated within Mathison Park at the southern end of Lake Hyland. The property contains the ruins of buildings, wells and trees associated with the settlement and development of this property by the O'Halloran and Hare families from c.1870-1950, which include:

- The ruinous remains of the c.1920 Hare farmhouse. This comprises concrete walls that appear to have been created in situ and built up in layers using timber framework and locally collected randomly-sized stone rubble aggregate with assorted steelwork for reinforcement (now visible in places such as pipes, angles, saw, fencing wire etc.. Timber cast in for fixing plates such as skirtings. There are large window openings and an arched back verandah. At the rear is a concrete water tank and stand,
- The ruined slab footings of the former dairy/milking shed and a pile of rubble.
- Two partly destroyed wells constructed of brick and concrete render. The O'Halloran well has an internal diameter of 2.5m and begins to form the dome at around 0.75m below ground. The dairy well has an internal diameter of 1.65m and the brickwork begins to form the dome roof at about 0.3m below ground. The original domes are missing from the top of both.
- Significant vegetation includes an Italian Cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens?*) at the front of the ruined Hare farmhouse, a Peppercorn (*Schinus molle* var. *areira*) at the south-west corner of house ruins (which is reputed to have been planted by O'Halloran) and the remains of an orchard including 3 plums, (and others probably seedlings), 6 pear trees, and one quince.

The perimeter of the property is planted with more recent Australian natives, which are presumably related to the more recent development of this area as a public park. This has also included the installation of interpretive signage.

Condition Ruinous

Integrity Ruinous

Threats

Key elements Buildings
Ruins/remnants
Tree/s

Designer

Builder

HISTORY

In 1876 Thomas O'Halloran selected 210 acres (85 hectares) and on the northern part of this land (in the area that now forms part of Mathison Park) he built a house of log and bark construction. This was replaced c.1880s by another more substantial home, probably of weatherboard construction and a semi-underground tank. The tank was constructed from Morwell bricks and was fed by rain from the roof of the homestead, which drained into the tank reputedly via a clay stormwater pipe that connected to the house's downpipe. A hand pump was mounted on the north side of the tank and connected to the tank below water level. Water was pumped into a hand held bucket and carried in to the kitchen where it was used for drinking, washing and cooking.

Robert Hare from Gormandale appears to have leased the property from 1919, before purchasing it in 1924. His wife Cora had recently died leaving him with four children. They took up residence in the O'Halloran house for a time while they built themselves a new concrete house c.1925. Locals believe the sand for the concrete was shovelled from the creek and stone was dug from the ground nearby. His son Cyril Hare acquired the property in 1948, Around 1950, Bill Dobbins leased and then purchased the northern section in 1957. Soon after, Dobbins installed an electric pump to transfer water from O'Halloran's tank to a new above-ground concrete tank at the rear of c.1925 Hare farmhouse.

The Housing Commission of Victoria compulsorily acquired the property in 1963. Hare's farmhouse was last occupied by tenants in 1968. The O'Halloran tank continued to be used up

until 1965. In the late 1960s it was partially destroyed as it was thought to have become unsafe.

The property was used as a dairy farm and a dairy was constructed along with a water tank or cistern of its own by the early 1900s. This tank was used to provide water to wash the dairy and equipment. A wood and briquette fired heater heated the water for washing. The dairy and other farm buildings were destroyed by fire in 1965.

In recent times, the site surrounding the farmhouse ruins has been developed as a public park known as 'Mathison Park'. It was named in honour of WK Mathison who served as Shire Secretary from 1947 to 1962 at a time when significant development associated with the State Electricity Commission was occurring within the Shire. As part of the park development, some interpretive material has been installed at the site, which provides a history of the site and describes the surviving elements.

Creation Date c.1880, 1918

Change Dates

Associations

Local Themes

Thomas O'Halloran, Robert Hare, WK M

2 Settling the land: Layers of settlement
2.2 Selection

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

What is significant?

The O'Halloran & Hare farmhouse site, now situated within Mathison Park, Churchill comprises the ruins of buildings, wells and remnant trees associated with the use of this land as a farm by the O'Halloran and O'Hare families between c.1880 and 1960.

How is it significant?

The O'Halloran & O'Hare farmhouse site is of local historic significance to Latrobe City.

Why is it significant?

The O'Halloran & O'Hare farmhouse site is of local historic significance for its associations with the early settlement of the Hazelwood area during the selection era in the late nineteenth century. It illustrates how farms were developed and is of particular interest for the surviving domed wells, which are rare examples within the study area. (RNE criteria A.4, B.2, D.2, H.1)

LEVEL

Local significance

RECOMMENDATIONS

Heritage Register Listings

Register	Reference	Zoning	Status
Latrobe Planning Scheme	HO		Recommended

Extent To the extent of the ruined farmhouse, dairy, two underground tanks and early trees as described in this citation and surrounding land to a minimum of 2m around each item. The whole of the property as defined by the Title boundaries.

Heritage Schedule

External Paint Controls:	No	On VHR:	No	VHR Ref No:	No
Internal Alteration Controls:	No	Prohibited Uses:	No		
Tree Controls:	Yes	Aboriginal Heritage Place:	No		
Outbuildings or Fences:	No	Incorporated Plan:	-	Incorporated Plan Details	
Description:	None specified			None specified	

Conservation Management

In order to conserve the heritage significance of this place, it is recommended that the following objectives be given priority in the future development or management of the place:

1. Conserve the fabric, which is identified as contributing to the significance of the place. This includes above ground fabric as well as any archaeological remains.

2. Discourage the demolition of significant or contributory buildings unless the demolition is only of part of the building and it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the responsible authority that, as appropriate:

- The fabric to be removed is not significant, or
- The fabric to be removed is not of primary significance and its removal will not adversely affect the significance of the place, or
- It will assist in the long term conservation of the place, or
- In the case of an industrial heritage place, it will facilitate the historic use of the place and will not result in the loss of fabric considered to be primary significance.

Note: The poor condition or low integrity of a heritage place should not be used as justification for its demolition, particularly if it appears the condition of the heritage place has deliberately been allowed to deteriorate.

3. Conserve significant plantings on the property, and maintain a visual relationship between the plantings and the significant buildings on the property.

4. Ensure that the siting and design of new development does not overwhelm the historic setting of the building and the site as a whole by becoming a dominant element or by interfering with key views to and from the site.

5. Encourage any new development on the property to relate and be complementary in form, scale and materials to the significant buildings and other elements, but be clearly contemporary in design.

6. Retain views of significant building(s) and plantings from the street.

7. In the case of subdivision of the property, encourage the retention of the significant buildings, trees and related elements on one lot.

NOTE:

While every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this citation is accurate, it is possible that more detailed investigation may reveal further information about the significance of the place. For example, in most cases an internal inspection was not made of buildings at the time of initial assessment. In the time since the place was first assessed it is also possible that the condition of buildings or trees may have changed.

It is therefore desirable that the information contained in this citation should be reviewed at the time that it is proposed to make changes to the property. This would likely require a more detailed assessment of any significant or contributory element that is affected by any proposed buildings or works. Once this more detailed assessment has been made, a review of the significance of the place should be carried out by Council's Heritage Adviser or an appropriately qualified professional.

Extra Research None specified

BIBLIOGRAPHY Context Pty Ltd, (2005), Latrobe City Heritage Study, Latrobe City Council, Traralgon