

MT LOFTY LANDSCAPE

-		Place No.	284								
ADDRESS	- Lower Homestead Road Wonga Park	Last Update									
DESCRIPTION	<p>Mt Lofty is a local landmark, and views of Mt Lofty can be obtained from nearby hills. One view is from Yarra Brae. The Mt Lofty property is owned by Melbourne Water, and is not open to the public. Access has not been sought during this study. It may contain the site of the Bruce homestead.</p> <p>The view from the peak, across the Yarra valley and gorge, illustrates the geological history of the Yarra Valley.[1]</p> <p>Lower Homestead Road, the access to Mt Lofty, crosses a pastoral landscape which reflects the historical development of the locality. Lower Homestead Road is enclosed by avenues of pines and cypresses, and the adjoining landscape is crossed by other pine and cypress windbreaks.</p> <table><tr><td>Condition</td><td>Good</td><td>Integrity</td><td>Intact</td></tr><tr><td>Threats</td><td>None apparent</td><td>Key elements</td><td></td></tr></table> <p>Designer</p>			Condition	Good	Integrity	Intact	Threats	None apparent	Key elements	
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HISTORY	<p>Historically, Lower Homestead and Stephen Roads cross a pastoral landscape which an early map described as “steep ranges”. [2] By 1854, it formed part of 274 acres in Crown Allotment 7B leased by David Bruce. In 1875 David Bruce, farmer, was lessee still. Bruce contributed towards the establishment in 1868 of School No. 958 at nearby Brushy Creek. One of his children attended the school in 1876.[3]</p> <p>A search of Lillydale Shire rate records failed to discover the nature of the structures on Bruce’s property. The first surviving rate book listed David Bruce, farmer, as holding freehold of Section 7. Parish of Warrandyte, 166 acres of good soil, with a valuation of 30 pounds. By 1874, Alexander Bruce was listed as owner and David Bruce as lessee. In addition, David Bruce leased from the Crown a further 285 acres in the Parish of Warrandyte. The situation did not change until 1876-1877, when Annie Bruce leased the 274 acres in Crown Allotment 7B, the site of the Mt. Lofty property.[4]</p> <p>In the 1890s, Bruce’s property was owned by the National Mutual Assurance Society and from c1906 by Captain Arthur E.T. Payne, grazier. Payne developed the property which then consisted of grazing land and uncleared bush and scrub. He established a model farm, Yarra View, on land to the east of Homestead Road. His house site and much of this farm is outside the present boundaries of the City of Manningham (see Lakeview Nurseries - stables).</p> <p>This property, owned since the 1990s by Melbourne Water, has landscape value for its views of Mt. Lofty, a local landmark; for its views from Mt. Lofty; and significant views from Homestead and Stephen Roads of excellent stretches of riverfront vegetation (some of it indigenous) along the Yarra River.</p> <p>This bushland with its associated river environment has been identified as “highly significant”. This study related to the proposed construction of reservoirs at Yarra Brae and on the Sugarloaf Creek to provide an additional water supply for metropolitan Melbourne.[5] One outcome was the construction of the present Winneke Dam.</p> <p>The report described the Wonga Park landscape, “so close to Melbourne,” as “an ‘island’ of native bushland surrounded by improved grassland with small areas of native bushland scattered throughout the more undulating areas”. [6]</p> <p>The 1974 report particularly noted areas of indigenous vegetation along the river banks of the Yarra near Homestead Road, Wonga Park; rapids near Wonga Park; and the rock face on the Yarra River Gorge near Wonga Park. It was said that “these rock faces and the vegetation associated with them (had) a marked effect on the aesthetic appeal of the Yarra River in this area”. [7]</p>										

It was recommended that these river frontages should remain in public ownership. Significant landscape features in the vicinity of Mt. Lofty were identified on a map which indicated significant short views to the Yarra River from Homestead and Stephen Roads.[8]

Creation Date -

Change Dates

Associations

Local Themes

1.04 - Historic planted landscapes

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Mt. Lofty landscape has regional significance for the views to and from Mt. Lofty, a district landmark; for views from the peak illustrating the geological history of the Upper Yarra Valley; for important views of riverfront vegetation along the Yarra River near Homestead and Stephen Roads; and a view of the Yarra River Rapids and the rock face near the Yarra River Gorge near Wonga Park. The natural river landscapes are set within an historic pastoral landscape of open paddocks and mature pine and cypress windbreaks (this landscape extending across into the Shire of Yarra Ranges). The area has local historical significance for its associations with early pastoral development from the 1850s. (Criterion A4, E1]

LEVEL

RECOMMENDATIONS

Heritage Register Listings

Register	Reference	Zoning	Status
None Specified			

Extent

Heritage Schedule

External Paint Controls:	On VHR:	VHR Ref No:
Internal Alteration Controls:	Prohibited Uses:	
Tree Controls:	Aboriginal Heritage Place:	
Outbuildings or Fences:	Incorporated Plan:	Incorporated Plan Details
Description:		

Conservation Management

Extra Research

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [1] Workshop Place 25 & 26.
- [2] Parish of Warrandyte. W27.
- [3] Border Country, pp.12, 19, 23.
- [4] Shire of Lillydale RB 1872-73. No. 13; 1874 (Dec.). No. 16; 1876-77. No. 330.
- [5] Report on Yarra Brae-Sugarloaf Environmental Study, MMBW, April 1974.
- [6] 1974 Report, p. 4-21.
- [7] 1974 Report. pp. 4-19, 4-10, 4-13, 4-11.
- [8] 1974 Report, p. 4-17, Fig. 7.2.