

CITY OF DONCASTER & TEMPLESTOWE HERITAGE STUDY.

3 & 5 SLOANS STREET, WARRANDYTE.¹ A17.

HISTORY : In 1934, an accident occurred at a private quarry on Bill Hussey's property in Husseys Lane, Warrandyte South where two sustenance workers, Walter Black and William Shea were killed when gravel slipped onto them. They were each survived by a widow and five and nine children respectively.

After a public meeting in Warrandyte, despite the effect of the Great Depression, an appeal raised money to build two houses, each on $\frac{1}{2}$ acre of land. Much of the timber used was secondhand and donated by the local people. The house occupied by Black's family was burnt down in the 1939 bush fire. The house was rebuilt by the Trust in 1939, for a tender of £376.18.6. and Mrs Black re-occupied.

Since the families had moved on by 1986, the Warrandyte Quarry Disaster Trust has rented the houses. No.3 has been used by local welfare group, Assisi House as emergency housing. No.5 was used by Warrandyte CFA for training.²

It was relatively intact in September 1991 when photographed, but has since been removed.

VISUAL DESCRIPTION : No.3 is a timber house, with a wide hip-roof over an inset verandah facing Webb Street, lined with a cypress hedge. No.5 is a rectangular timber house, with a wide low-pitch gable facing the street. There is a vent in the gable and a brick chimney.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS : Because of its historic humanitarian purpose, not directly comparable to other simple timber bungalows, which are relatively frequent in Warrandyte.

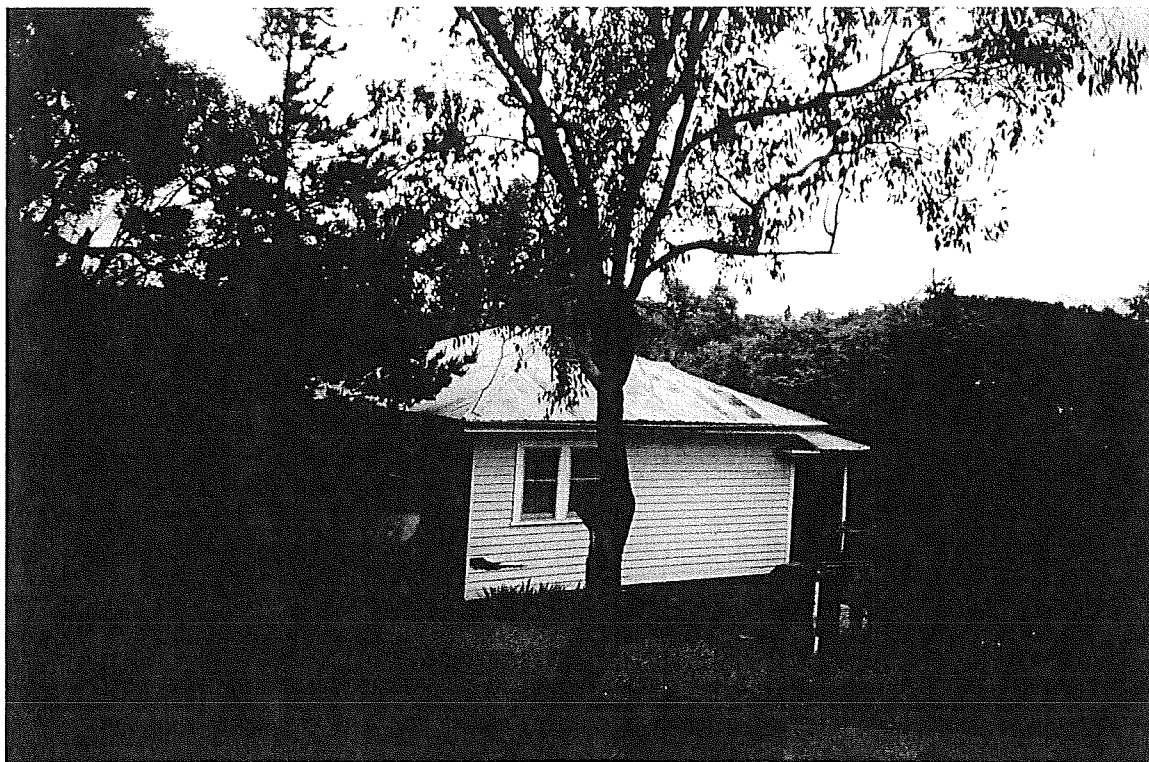
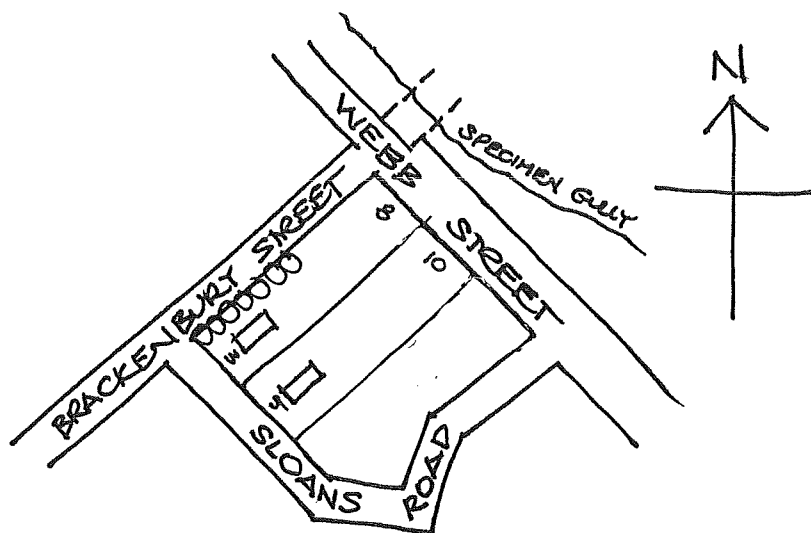
SIGNIFICANCE : This site is of local historical significance as the result of a major humanitarian community effort in Warrandyte in 1934 to support the families of two men killed in a quarry disaster with new houses. This gesture is perhaps characteristic of a place which has always responded to support the victims of disaster.

INTACTNESS : Good.

CONDITION & THREATS : Poor, with threat of demolition for redevelopment to commence in June or July 1993.

REFERENCES : 1. Note : both nos.3 & 5 Sloans Road and nos.8 & 10 Webb Street appear to have been used as addresses for the houses (see plan). 2. David Wyman "Houses get go-ahead", Warrandyte Diary, February 1993.

Bruce Bence, Quarry Disaster. Warrandyte, 27 June 1934 (Warrandyte Historical Society), Warrandyte, January 1993, describes the disaster in detail, sourced from contemporary newspaper reports, Coroner's Court records, Trust files and interviews.



3 SLOANS ROAD, WARRANDYTE.

Houses get go-ahead

By DAVID WYMAN

Construction of four public houses on the quarry disaster cottages site in Webb Street is now expected to begin in June-July this year.

The Quarry Disaster Trustees have signed a joint partnership agreement with the Department of Planning and Housing to construct and administer four three-bedroom houses on the one-acre site. But it has taken over three years to obtain the agreement and architects' plans for the houses.

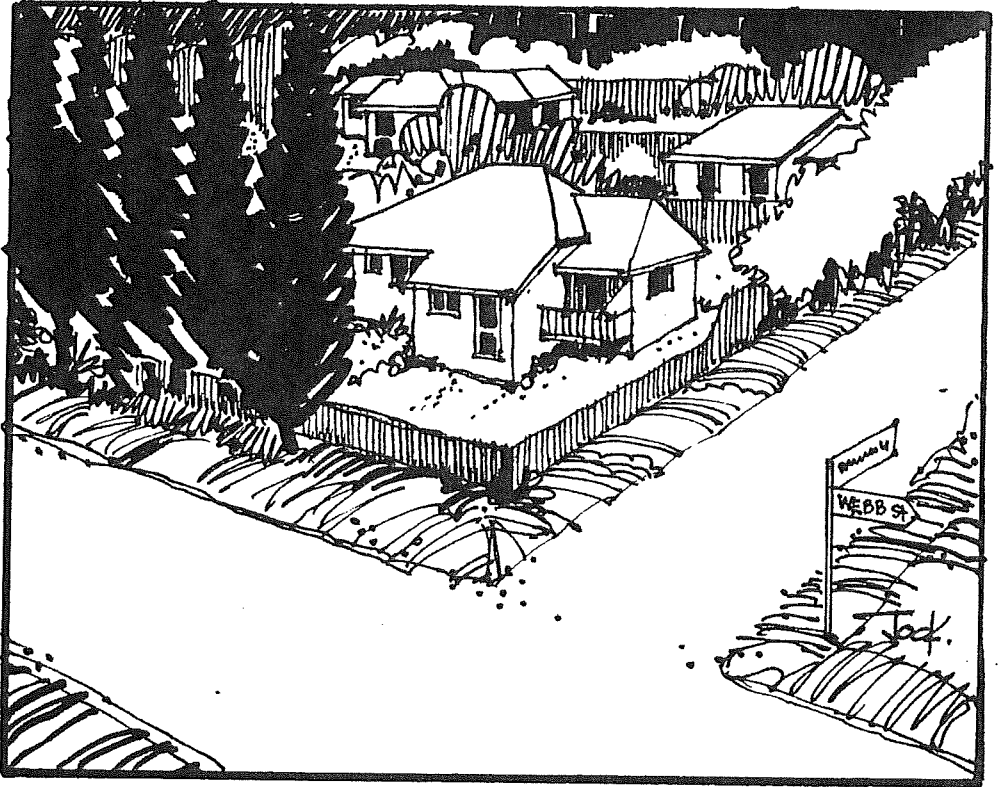
Sewerage and stormwater drainage services are now being connected to the site, which is bounded by Webb and Brackenbury Streets and Sloans Road.

Originally, the site was used to construct two cottages for the families of two men killed in a quarry accident in Husseys Lane in 1934. The men were working for sustenance in a quarry on private property when a large quantity of gravel slipped, overwhelming them. They were each survived by a wife and five children.

A public meeting in Warrandyte resulted in an appeal for money and materials to build two houses in Webb Street. The families moved on as the children grew up and the Warrandyte Quarry Disaster Trust has rented out the houses.

One house remains now and is used by a local community welfare group, Assisi House, for emergency housing. The other house, in derelict condition, was used by the local fire brigade for training exercises. Ultimately, the brigades burned down the house and removed the debris.

The architects' plans show four individual houses with different elevations. Each has metal roofing and brick veneer walls. Each has family and living rooms, garden shed and a small area of decking.



Our artist's impression of the new public housing in Webb Street.

Plans show the fencing to be "selected colourbond finish" in Sloans Road and Brackenbury Street, and a "capped paling fence" dividing the houses and presumably running along Webb Street. However, the *Diary* has been assured by a trustee, Peter Harkin, that all fencing will be 900mm high colourbonded wire mesh.

Peter Harkin said that the trustees "had some input at the design stage to ensure we didn't get something out of character with Warrandyte".

The project will be managed by the Department of Planning

and Housing zone office at Box Hill. The land has been leased to the department by the trustees for 55 years at a rental of \$1 a year.

The Quarry Disaster Trustees will appoint a local committee to nominate tenants for 50 per cent of the housing. The department will nominate the other 50 per cent of tenants. All prospective tenants, however, will have to meet the department's eligibility criteria in assets and income.

The trustees are considering giving the cluster of four houses a name—such as "Quarry Disas-

ter Memorial Houses"—to preserve the history of the site. The quarry disaster was tragic and made front page news in Melbourne newspapers.

Meanwhile, the Warrandyte Disaster Trust Fund, comprising the balance of monies from the original appeal and subsequent income, is invested and yields an annual income which is distributed to a local charity, chosen by the trustees.

The first distribution of \$1500 was made to the Warrandyte Food Bank prior to Christmas. The bank provides food for local needy individuals and families.