

Heritage Overlay No.: 114
Citation No.: 391
Place: ‘Rocklands’ Homestead & Farm,
619-653 Hopkins Road

Other Names of Place: Hopkins Homestead and Farm Complex
Location: 619-653 Hopkins Road, Truganina (Lot 1 PS
512501)
Critical Dates: c.late 1850s
Existing Heritage Listings: ‘Place of Interest’ (Rural Heritage Study)¹
Recommended Level of Significance: LOCAL



Statement of Significance:

Rocklands Homestead, 619-653 Hopkins Road, Truganina, is significant for its moderately intact Victorian styled main house and rural setting defined by the nineteenth /early twentieth century dry stone walls, stands of gum and cypress trees and nearby dam that is visually connected to the main house. Although the house has been altered, the early additions at the

¹ Johnston, Chris (Context P/L), ‘Rural Heritage Study: Western Region of Melbourne’ (Melbourne Western Region, 1994), p.200 (W69)

rear also contribute to the significance of the place as they provide an understanding of the evolution of the house over time. Built in the late 1850s for William Hopkins, and still owned by the Hopkins family, the house is most substantial of the few dwellings that remain as testimony to the small nineteenth century farming community in the Derrimut – Truganina plains area.

The main house at *Rocklands*, 619-653 Hopkins Road, is architecturally significant at a LOCAL level (AHC D.2). Although the verandah has been altered/introduced, the house still demonstrates original and early design qualities of a Victorian style. These qualities include the earliest section of the house with its double hipped (M) roof form clad in slate tiles, bluestone wall construction (but not the overpainting), painted brick chimneys, timber framed entrance doorway with sidelights and highlights, and the timber framed double hung windows. The timber sunroom on the south wall of the house, also contributes to the architectural significance of the house, particularly its hipped roof form clad in galvanised corrugated steel and the horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding. The rear cottage, with kitchen and dining room, further contributes to the architectural significance of the place. In particular, the simple gable roof form clad in galvanised corrugated steel, horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding, timber framed double hung four paned windows with bracketed timber hoods above, painted brick chimney at the side, and the narrow eaves are those early design qualities that contribute to an understanding of the architectural evolution of the main house. The fine complex of dry stone walls near the homestead, outbuildings and farm sheds, stands of gum, garden surrounds and the visual connections to the dam and surrounding farm land also contribute to the significant setting of the place.

Rocklands, 619-653 Hopkins Road, is historically significant at a LOCAL level (AHC A4, B2, H1). It is the most substantial of the few early farming-era dwellings (all built of stone) that remain in that part of the Shire south of the Western Highway and east of the Werribee River. It represents the Hopkins family's ability and fortune in surviving droughts and wretched seasons such as those of the 1860s, and the 1969 Truganina bushfire, which destroyed 45 houses nearby. Its evocative name is accentuated by the extensive complex of substantial all-stone dry-stone walls that comprise paddock fencing and stockyards around the homestead. The low rainfall of the Derrimut – Truganina plains area is expressed in the gaunt homestead garden, in which stunted cypresses, succulents and a thriving saltbush hedge (*Rhagodia spinescens*) are the primary surviving historical plants. The saltbush hedge, brought back from inland Australia in the early twentieth century, is very significant as an example of the use of a drought tolerant native species at a time well before the late twentieth century when these became popular, and in a period when most settlers planted the familiar introduced species, including drought tolerant plants from South Africa. The historical importance of water in the district is also expressed in the small dry-stone wall lined dam situated in front of the homestead. This finely constructed dam is an exceptional representation of the shallow dams, lined and built up with fieldstone (and less commonly roughly squared stone), across shallow drainage lines in the Melton plains areas. The homestead and farm complex is also significant for its ongoing association with the Hopkins family after which Hopkins Road was named. William Hopkins senior, William Hopkins junior, and Robert Duncan Hopkins were all councillors of the Shire of Braybrook, RD Hopkins being President at the time of Federation.

Overall, *Rocklands* Homestead at 619-653 Hopkins Road is of LOCAL significance.

Description:

Consultants: David Moloney, David Rowe, Pamela Jellie (2006) Sera Jane Peters (2007) Sera Jane Peters (2008)

Rocklands Homestead, 619-653 Hopkins Road, Truganina, has a rural farm setting distinguished by the stands of gums and particularly by the dry stone walls and dam that is visually connected to the main house.

The main house at *Rocklands* consists of four single storey sections. The earliest section is the painted bluestone Victorian styled house characterised by a double hipped (M) roof form. These roof forms are clad in early slate tiles. The encircling verandah appears to have replaced an earlier verandah, with the existing verandah forming a broken back profile with the main slate roof, rather than springing from under the narrow eaves. The verandah is supported by timber posts on introduced painted masonry pedestals.

Early features include the painted brick chimneys, timber framed entrance doorway with sidelights and highlights, and the timber framed double hung windows.

At the rear to the side is a small hipped-roof, sunroom addition. It has galvanised corrugated steel roof cladding, horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding and a bank of introduced timber framed windows.

Attached to the sunroom is a small gabled cottage, which houses the kitchen and dining room. This roof is also clad in galvanised corrugated steel, with the walls constructed in horizontal timber weatherboards. There are narrow eaves. Two symmetrically located timber framed double hung four paned windows with bracketed timber window hoods above, are an early feature of a side façade. There is an early central doorway with an introduced timber and glazed door and parapeted timber porch.

The farm complex also includes an exceptional complex of substantial and extensive all-stone dry stone wall cattle, sheep and horse yards (c.1.5 metres high), with associated milking shed, stables & farm outbuildings.

In the dry stone walled enclosure behind the house were kept horses and dairy cows. The shed to the north of the enclosure has a stone floor, bails and wooden doors. The dry stone walls enclose the yard and form the wall of one of the sheds, which was a stable. At the front of the house is a dry stone walled sheep enclosure which once had a shearing shed.

Although some of the walls were apparently rebuilt, with lesser skill, after the 1930s depression, they are solidly constructed on original foundations, and some have edged copings. There are some huge stones at the bases of some of the walls. There is a very old peppercorn tree beside a rear wall. Lower dry stone paddock walls beyond the homestead precinct also contribute to an understanding of the nineteenth century farming history of the place.

In front of the house is a very early, finely built and remarkably intact stock dam, c.3 metres deep and c.25 metres long. It has cobbled or pitched stone paving on a gently inclined ramped at the south end. Its embankment includes double tiers of dry stone walling, quite steeply set, on the west and east sides, with lower courses roughly 'squared'. The paved stock entrance is at the south end of the horseshoe shaped structure.

The garden is indicative of the extreme low rainfall of area. Apart from occasional ornamental shrubs, The Hopkins' didn't plant a garden, as it was too dry. There is a cypress near the south wall of the house, and others to the east and the only other mature trees are the shelter planting of eucalypts around the homestead garden fenceline. It is telling that the very old saltbush (*Rhagodia spinescens*) hedge, apparently brought back from an Australia inland trip by a family

member in the early years of the twentieth century, is the most successful planting in the garden.

This spare garden is typical of the district, in which peppercorns, succulents and eucalypts are the most successful species; the stunted specimens of old pine trees sometimes encountered along the north side of Boundary Road (presumably planted by the former Braybrook Shire), also underline the dry and gaunt nature of the district.

To the north of the house was a well or underground tank that was filled-in in the 1940s.

History:

William Hopkins married Catherine Currie in Kilmarnock, Scotland on 2nd June 1851, after which the couple sailed for Australia, arriving at Gawler town (South Australia) later in the year.² The extended family then moved around different parts of Victoria and Tasmania. One cousin settled in Sale, a second (after whom the Hopkins River is thought to have been named) went to Warrnambool, while cousin Robert moved to Boundary Road. In 1856 William and Catherine brought their young family to the present property, part of Crown Allotment 2, Section 1, Parish of Derrimut, purchased from the Crown in May 1854 by WS Durie.³ William conducted a dairy farm.⁴ The Hopkins' were the only Presbyterian family in the locality then known as 'Derrimut' – later Truganina – in which Wesleyans, Episcopaleans, and Baptists predominated. It was a pocket of smaller holdings isolated from Rockbank in the north by WJT Clarke's vast Rockbank estate, to the north-east lay Morton and Leech's *Mount Derrimut* station. It was connected to the west and east by Boundary Road.⁵

The local school records show that in 1866 the Hopkins' had five children enrolled in the local school: William, aged 13 (born in Adelaide); Robert, aged 11 (born in South Melbourne's 'Canvass Town'); Margaret, aged 8, Elizabeth, aged 6, and Catherine, aged 3. As with many local communities in the early days, the Derrimut community was in dispute about the best location for the local school, with the different camps lodging hand-drawn maps of the location of dwellings of children who attended the school. The school committee was split, with four members representing the southern interests, and five representing families in the Parish of Derrimut. William Hopkins was in the camp of the latter. The dispute escalated dramatically when the Hopkins camp moved the school to their preferred site (rather than the site selected in Truganina by the southern interests) in the middle of the night. The southern camp was furious, describing the settled Wesleyan and Episcopalean families of Derrimut as ruffians. A correspondent complained particularly of the behaviour of William Hopkins at a meeting. He had 'interrupted the proceedings in a most violent manner, using towards your correspondent the most vile and filthy language as could not be repeated'. Receiving no support from the chairman, the complainant left the meeting. By 1871 the vocal Hopkins was a Councillor of the Shire of Braybrook.⁶

² Unless otherwise stated, Hopkins family history is derived from personal conversations with Mrs Wendy Bitans, 13/2/2002, 14/3/2002.

³ Parish Plan, Parish of Derrimut

⁴ Sutherland, A. *Victoria and Its Metropolis*, (McKarron Bird, Melbourne, 1888), p.427

⁵ Ford, Olwen, 'Voices From Below: Family, School and Community in the Braybrook Plains 1854-1892' (M.Ed Thesis, University of Melbourne, 1993), pp.222, 234

⁶ Ford, *op cit*, pp.222, 230

Consultants: David Moloney, David Rowe, Pamela Jellie (2006) Sera Jane Peters (2007) Sera Jane Peters (2008)

The 1860s marked a turning point for farming in the district, with many small farmers failing and leaving from this time. The boom prices of the gold-rush had collapsed, the good early yields had quickly exhausted the poor soils, and the crops were infested with rust and caterpillars, and decimated by drought. The advent of pleuro-pneumonia in cattle was devastating for those who relied on their dairy produce. And wheat was now imported into Melbourne, both from overseas and from the new lands being opened in northern Victoria. The peak acreage under crop in the district from Bacchus Marsh to Craigieburn (including Melton), occurred in 1859. This figure was halved by 1864, and a further slight decline occurred during the next two decades.⁷

The report of the West Bourke agricultural inspector in 1862-63 noted the continued drought, and the advent of ‘that dreadful disease, pluro-pneumonia.’ This had ruined some industrious families, and was causing many dairymen to turn their attention to sheep dealing.⁸ Memories of Melton Shire farmers John Chandler and Anders Hjorth both record the loss of heifers on local farmers commons (usually just unalienated crown land) to pleuro-pneumonia.⁹ While in 1863-64 pleuro-pneumonia was not so virulent according to the inspector, he noted that he had recently ‘met a gentleman from Derrimut who informed me that he had lost 27 of his best milkers’ to the disease.¹⁰ Grain cropping farmers were devastated by ‘rust and the caterpillar’ in the 1863-64 season.¹¹

The exceptional drought continued through the 1865-66 season: ‘... most disastrously felt over the whole line of the plain country, extending from Essendon to the Djerriwarrh Creek.’ There was still the occasional loss of cattle in the district to pleuro-pneumonia. The hoped-for advantages of the ‘commonages’ to dairy farmers had been disappointed, as they were always overstocked during the growing months, and in drought the ‘wretched cattle’ must die of starvation, said the agricultural inspector.¹² In the Truganina - Derrimut area, which has the lowest average annual rainfall in the Port Phillip district (18 inches), only 11 inches of rain fell in each of the years 1867 and 1868.¹³

The drought of the 1860s caused the failure of many small settlers, and the merging of their quarter mile lands into larger holdings.¹⁴ Olwen Ford’s detailed study of the South Derrimut district shows that in 1866 there had been 40 families with schoolchildren in the district. Six families were lost to the district in 1868-69, and by 1871 there were only twelve farming families, and one labourer, with children in the school.¹⁵

The Hopkins’ continued to add to the property, and swapped land with neighbours. By the early 1870s William had increased his holding to 387 acres of land, described as being situated in a ‘peculiar manner, that is to say, in various blocks and not those adjoining each other.’

⁷ Peel, L, *Rural Industry in the Port Phillip Region, 1835-1880*, (MUP, 1974), p.90.

⁸ Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1864, p.94

⁹ Chandler, J (M Cannon), *Forty Years in the Wilderness* (Loch Haven, Arthurs Seat, 1990), p.175; ‘Recollections of Melton 1861-67’, by Anders Hjorth, reproduced in the MDHS News Sheet, April 2001

¹⁰ Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1864-65, Vol.3, p.93.

¹¹ *ibid* The dry lands that were soon to be opened for selection on the lower Goulburn and the Wimmera were not affected by rust, and consequently wheat growing soon moved north from the 1850s farming areas such as Port Phillip and Kyneton.

¹² Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1867, Vol.3, 1st Session, pp.83-84.

¹³ Green, *op cit*, pp.3-4, 7

¹⁴ *ibid*

¹⁵ Ford, *op cit*, pp.223, 225, 234

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Three of the blocks were situated amongst WJT Clarke's holdings.¹⁶ By the 1880s the farm, under the management of William Hopkins junior and his brother Robert, had replaced dairying with hay growing and grazing.¹⁷ The combination of hay and sheep was one of the movements in local farming in the late nineteenth century.¹⁸ Although dairying would also make a general revival at a later stage, the pleuro-pneumonia outbreak of the late 1860s could be expected to have contributed to the shift at the Hopkins' farm. Indian horse-dealers were apparently also a good buyer of the district's hay at that time.¹⁹ In the early twentieth 'general farming and grazing' was being conducted on the property.²⁰

The family was immersed in the 'South Derrimut' - 'Truganina' community. His brother Robert Duncan Hopkins married a Miller (of Millers Road Altona); it was Robert who inherited the homestead property. In the early 1880s elder brother William, a justice of the peace, followed his father's footsteps in being elected a member of the Braybrook Shire Council.²¹ Robert Duncan Hopkins, who obtained possession of the *Rocklands* property, followed his father in being both a member of the school Board of Advice, and a Councillor of the Shire of Braybrook; he was President of the Shire at the time of Federation.²²

The Hopkins family is well represented in historical photographs of Truganina annual picnics. Local records show Robert Hopkins, a cousin from Boundary Road, as runner-up in both the 'Slow Bicycle Race', and Obstacle Race held at the Truganina Debating Society's 1904 picnic. R Hopkins, with JP Robinson, was elected first President of the Truganina Progress Association in 1924. In 1926 he was appointed a Trustee of the new Truganina recreation ground. In 1933, at a ball held to mark the Silver Anniversary of the opening of the Truganina Hall (Mechanics Hall), Robert Hopkins was presented with an illuminated address as a token of appreciation of his 25 years as Secretary to the Hall committee. With Henry Robinson, Robert Hopkins also initiated the Truganina tradition of the 'Ladies Night', in which men provided entertainment and catering as a gesture of thanks for the work of the local women at all public functions in the area.²³ Robert Duncan Hopkins had the first tractor in the district.

In January 1969, on the same days as the (separate) Lara fire that killed five people, a fire started on Boundary Road and quickly burnt east and south. Many of the local fire brigade out fighting the Lara fire returned to find their own houses burnt. Forty five houses were destroyed by the 'Truganina' fire that day, as well as the Truganina school and hall.²⁴ While the stone house of their neighbour to the west was lost to the fire, and *Tibbermore*, the nearby house on their south side, was charred, *Rocklands* survived.²⁵

¹⁶ Ford, *op cit*, p.222, citing William Hopkins' 1881 probate papers. He had also acquired 114 acres in the Parish of Truganina.

¹⁷ Sutherland, *loc cit*

¹⁸ Sutherland, *op cit*, p.419-439

¹⁹ Green, GF, 'A History of Truganina' (unpublished typescript, 1935), p.4

²⁰ Albert Evans, 'From the Early Settlers to the 1969 Fires' (unpublished manuscript), p.5

²¹ Sutherland, *op cit*, p.427

²² Evans, *loc cit*; Bitans, *op cit*, 13/2/2002; Green, *op cit*, p.7

²³ Green, *op cit*, pp.10-14

²⁴ Bitans, *op cit*

²⁵ Evans, *op cit*, p.5 ; The overgrown ruins of the stone house to the west survive. It was owned by Patrick and Mary Anne Killen and family from at least c.1870 to 1890s, and then Bob Patterson; there are memories of the Hopkins' family visiting the Pattersons to play cards (Shire Map Series, 1892, Parish of Derrimut; Ford, *op cit*, p.233

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The exact date of the present bluestone house is unknown to the family, but is thought to be early. Family history is that the first house was of wattle and daub. William brought a stonemason from Scotland to build the house (his second job was a house on nearby Doherty's Road). In 1881 the house was described as a bluestone house of four rooms with wooden stables.²⁶ The family lore is that stone for the house was taken from a hotel (or shanty) that had been built to cater for goldfields traffic along Middle Road.²⁷ (This is supported by a photograph in the possession of the family which shows the house, just finished, with numbering on each bluestone block, indicating that the property had been relocated from a previous site and reconstructed.) If this is so, better quality quarried stone was probably also obtained from elsewhere for dressing by the stonemason. The archaeological remains of the hotel (several depressions, with evidence of stone foundations and stairs, in which crockery and other artefacts have been found, cobble paving) are situated in a paddock on the opposite side of Hopkins Road, on a property which is thought to have been owned by the Hopkins family since the early 1850s

Robert Duncan Hopkins' wife, a 'city' lady (of the Miller family of Millers Road Altona), was responsible for the rear addition to the house, the timber kitchen, to which a sunroom has been added in more recent years.

The Derrimut-Truganina plain is the driest place in the Port Phillip region. Until such time as underground tanks and dams could be sunk, the residents of the Truganina area had to carry water from the Werribee River.²⁸ It could reasonably be assumed that it was very early in his occupation that Hopkins built the small dam near the homestead, located to take advantage of a shallow drainage line which crosses in front of the property. It is an extremely good expression of the necessity for farmers to harvest water in the plains area. It is also an excellent example of the shallow dams built in the plains areas, where the shallow soil (high bedrock) generally prevented deep excavation for paddock tanks, and so fieldstone was used to build up walls on shallow drainage lines. Its well-constructed dry-stone wall; if c.3 metres deep as estimated, it would however be atypical deep of the district. Its quality of construction, and depth, may have played a part in the success of the Hopkins farm at times when many neighbours were failing.

This dam appears very similar to the description and plan of a 'pond' provided in an 1857 edition of a British encyclopaedia, a variant of the conventional English paved stock pond:

*'It consists in employing the horse-shoe form as the ground plan of the excavation, and cutting all the sides steep, or at an angle of 45 or 50 degrees, except the part answering to the heel of the shoe, which is well gravelled or paved, as the only entrance for the cattle. The excavated earth serves to raise the high side of the pond, which is generally guarded by a fence, or a few trees.'*²⁹

The Hopkins dam varies only in the addition of dry stone walling for the steep sides of the construction.

²⁶ Ford, *op cit*, p.222, citing probate papers.

²⁷ It is possible that Middle Road was one of the many informal routes taken in the early goldrush days before official roads (tracks) were properly formed. It would have provided a route from the west of Melbourne away from the swampy Western Highway route, not in common use until several decades later. Local lore is that there are two graves dating to the goldrush days beside the road, one near Hopkins Road, the other (a 12 year old girl) some 1.5 kilometres east. Their exact locations were known to the previous generation of locals. Ruts were once visible in the road.

²⁸ Green, *op cit*, p3

²⁹ Loudon, JC, *Encyclopaedia of Agriculture* (London, Brown Green Longman's & Roberts, 1857), p.735.

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The garden is of considerable interest. Apart from recent eucalyptus shelter planting around the homestead wall, and a venerable peppercorn tree at the rear, the only mature plantings are one stunted (perhaps dying) cypress east of the homestead, and a saltbush hedge in front of the homestead. Hopkins family lore is that the saltbush was brought back (together with a piece of quartz with an embedded opal) from Central Australia by Wendy Bitans' great-uncle Bill Hopkins, probably in the early years of the twentieth century.³⁰ The species of saltbush, as identified by the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, *Rhagodia spinescens*, occurs in all Australian states. In Victoria however it is indigenous to the north-east, so its remarkable health in Melton is another confirmation of the dry climate of the district. The hedge is very significant as an example of the use of a drought tolerant native species at a time when most settlers planted the familiar introduced plants, including drought tolerant plants from South Africa. The use of grey foliage plants in Australian gardens did not really commence more generally until the 1970s and 80s.

The farm is also notable for its complex of dry stone walls, as stockyards and paddock walls. The present owner, Wendys Bitans, a descendant of William Hopkins, advises that the walls were substantially affected in the 1930s depression, when her father allowed many to be taken apart by rabbiters facing starvation. They were afterwards rebuilt, but not with the professional craft of the originals.³¹

Thematic Context / Comparative Analysis:

Shire of Melton Historical Themes: 'Farming', 'Water', 'Community'.

Comparable Places in Melton:

Historical Comparisons:

There are very few early homesteads or farm complexes surviving in the large portion of the Shire south of the Western Highway and east of the Werribee River. The most historically comparable is the McNaughton's *Tibbermore* (Place No.392) immediately adjacent (south side), although this only retains a small bluestone rear portion, to which has been added a substantial weatherboard Federation main building. *Tibbermore* was grazed by the destructive 1969 Truganina fire, charring from which is still evident in its timber component.

Evansdale (Place No.327) on Boundary Road is another historically important 'first farming' farm complex in the area, which is also still in the ownership of its founders. It comprises two bluestone buildings, that are thought to have been the first and second of the Evans' houses. These are vernacular, and now quite fragile buildings. There is also a turn of the century weatherboard house (similarly unoccupied) and a modern brick house in the complex. *Evansdale* also contains dry stone wall stock yards, and an old oak tree, in the farm complex.

Other former bluestone houses in the area have all been lost. These include those established by the Killens, nearby and to the west of *Rocklands* (Place No.323), which was destroyed in the 1969 fire, and other demolished places, such as the former Kerr

³⁰ Wendy Bitans, personal conversation, 4/2/2006

³¹ Further information on the original walls might be found in PROV 'Torrens Application' file 31642. *Consultants: David Moloney, David Rowe, Pamela Jellie (2006) Sera Jane Peters (2007) Sera Jane Peters (2008)*

farmhouse (Place No.359), the former Moloney farmhouse (Place No.292), and the former Scarborough farmhouse (Place No.293). Sites of smaller stone cottages, such as Jimmy Woods' shepherd's cottage, or that of 'Old Mother Jessop' (who would fight any man) are known. A few other stone or part-stone cottages homesteads survive nearby in the Wyndham and Brimbank Shires.

Architectural Comparisons:

Rocklands Homestead is a representative example of a nineteenth century homestead in the Melton Shire. Other comparable examples are as follows:

- *Strathtulloh* homestead, Greigs Road, Melton South (Place No.286). This property was established in 1840, although the existing homestead was not built until c.1869. It shares similar Victorian design qualities as *Rocklands*, as noted in the broad hipped roof form, rendered chimneys, single storey appearance and encircling verandah. *Strathtulloh* is also constructed of random coursed bluestone, which remains unpainted. There is also an early kitchen that forms part of the significant building fabric. This homestead is included on the Victorian Heritage Register.
- *Eynesbury* homestead, Eynesbury Road, Melton South (Place No.281). The original section of the homestead was built in the early 1870s. Unlike *Rocklands*, this Victorian styled dwelling is two storey and is Colonial Georgian in appearance, having been constructed of bluestone. Like *Rocklands*, the building has experienced additions, including the single storeyed bay windowed side wings that date from the 1880s and probably the concave verandah. This homestead is included on the Victorian Heritage Register.
- *Exford* homestead, 255 Exford Road, Melton South (Place No.269). The central portion of this homestead possibly represents the earliest surviving homestead building in the Melton Shire, having been constructed in c.1843 of pise. Unlike *Rocklands*, *Exford* is design in what has been termed a Colonial Gothic style, a rare style in the Melton Shire. The building has an elongated hipped roof form with projecting dormer windows, together with a number of additions. This homestead is included on the Victorian Heritage Register.
- *Glencoe* homestead, 416 Blackhill Road (Place No.005). Built in c.1860s-70s, this dwelling features a similar broad hipped roof form as *Rocklands*, although the main roof terminates into a broken back encircling verandah (the concept of the encircling verandah being similar to *Rocklands*). The roof is adorned by rendered masonry chimneys with multi-corbelled tops – the whole designed in a similar Victorian style. Like *Rocklands*, *Glencoe* is constructed of coursed squared rubble bluestone.
- *Rocklands* homestead, 211 Mount Aitken Road, Aitkens Gap (Place No.286). Built in the late 1850s, this dwelling has a similar Victorian stylistic appearance *Rocklands*, Hopkins Road. The hipped roof form is clad in galvanised corrugated steel and there is a projecting pitched roof addition at the rear. Overall, the homestead appears to be of higher integrity than *Rocklands*, Hopkins Road. There are paired timber eaves brackets and unusual label moulds above the windows and doors.
- *The Willows*, Nixon & McKenzie Roads, Melton. This Victorian styled homestead was built in the mid 1850s in a rendered random rubble wall construction and with

unusual sturdy projecting rendered buttresses. The hipped roof forms (the rear smaller hip having been added at an early time) are familiar with *Rocklands*, although the roof cladding has been introduced. The concept of the encircling post supported verandah is also similar, and like *Rocklands*, it appears to be a reconstruction.

Condition:

Main House - good

Integrity:

Main House – moderately intact

Recommendations:

Recommended for inclusion in the Melton Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay.

Recommended Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls:

External Paint Controls:	<i>Yes – main house</i>
Internal Alteration Controls:	<i>No</i>
Tree Controls:	<i>Yes: One Cypress tree on east side of house, Eucalypts along garden walls and saltbush to front of homestead.</i>
Outbuildings and/or Fences:	<i>Yes: All dry stone walls, and stockyard/enclosures associated with homestead; and dry stone dam in front of homestead.</i>

Other Recommendations:

- Opportunities are available to reconstruct the encircling verandah on the original hipped roof section of the house, using any available photographic evidence.



Part of the dry stone wall dam, with cobbled ramp, in front of homestead.



Part of the dry stone wall stockyard complex near the homestead.