

Heritage Overlay No.: 103
Citation No.: 288
Place: **Farm Dairy & Trees, 30 & 35
Hickey Road, Exford**

Other Names of Place: N/A
Location: House site: 30 Hickey Road, Exford (Lot 8 LP 92043); Shed: 35 Hickey Road, Exford 3338 (Lot 4 LP 92043)
Critical Dates:c. 1895-96
Existing Heritage Listings: 'Local Interest' (Rural Heritage Study)¹
Recommended Level of Significance: LOCAL



Statement of Significance:

The former Hickey Farm at 30 & 35 Hickey Road, Exford, is significant as a late nineteenth / twentieth century small farm property with an intact example of a Late Victorian styled milking shed on the opposite side of the road. Built in the mid 1890s, the building is key evidence of the development of dairy farming at the end of the nineteenth century, the progressive stance taken by Harry Werribee Staughton in developing share farming in the 1890s, and the Exford Closer Settlement Estate of 1907. On the opposite side of the road are peppercorn trees which are associated with the Late Victorian house of the Hickey farm.

¹ Johnston, C, 'Rural Heritage Study: Western Region of Melbourne' (Context Pty Ltd, Melbourne Western Region Inc, 1994), Site M8, pp.34, 117, 120, 121

The milking shed at 35 Hickey Road, is architecturally significant at a LOCAL level (AHC D2). It demonstrates original design qualities of a Late Victorian vernacular style. These qualities include the gable roof form clad in galvanised corrugated steel and the horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the projecting structure within the site and the small opening in the gable end that faces the road. The flanking mature peppercorn trees also contribute to the setting of the place.

The former Hickey Farm at 30 & 35 Hickey Road, Exford is historically significant at a LOCAL level (AHC A4, B2, D2). The two sites contribute an unusual and evocatively rural visual character to Hickey Road, expressive of the small farming era at the turn of the twentieth century. These historically and visually related sites, constitute unique evidence of the break-up of the large pastoral estates in the Shire of Melton at the turn of the twentieth century, which was a major turning point in the history of Melton. In particular they represent the late-nineteenth century revolution in the dairy industry, the progressive approach of Harry Werribee Staughton to changing political and economic circumstances, and the role of government legislators in facilitating small farm ownership through the Exford Closer Settlement Estate. The Hickey milking shed and associated farm plantings constitute a rare surviving dairy farm of the eleven built by Harry Werribee Staughton as part of his complete change from sheep grazing to share farming on *Exford* from the mid 1890s. The property is also a now-scarce remaining original farm associated with the Exford Closer Settlement Estate, one of the most prominent of the Victorian Closer Settlement Board's early estates.

The farm is also significant for its association with the Hickey family, who subsequently farmed a large part of the Exford Estate, from the Melton Weir in the north to near Exford Road in the south.

Overall, the former Hickey Farm at 30 & 35 Hickey Road, Exford is of LOCAL significance.