

Heritage Overlay No.: 029
Citation No.: 037
Place: Former 'Yangardook' Cottage, 575-685 Gisborne–Melton Road

Other Names of Place: N/A
Location: 575-685 Gisborne-Melton Road, Toolern Vale (CA 47, Parish of Yangardook)
Critical Dates: Construction: unknown (c.1860s); Restoration: 1970s.
Existing Heritage Listings: 'Place of Interest' (Rural Heritage Study)¹
Recommended Level of Significance: LOCAL



Statement of Significance:

The former *Yangardook* Cottage, 575-685 Gisborne Melton Road, Toolern Vale, is significant as a rare stone cottage surviving from the first farming period in the Shire, and of the Scottish enclave in Toolern Vale in this period. The cottage, built c.1860s, is the major contributory element of an early and attractive cultural landscape of high significance to both the pastoral and farming histories of the Shire. The place is now situated near a large new house and

¹ Johnston, C, 'Rural Heritage Study: Western Region of Melbourne' (Context Pty Ltd, Melbourne Western Region Inc, 1994), Site M25, pp.35, 175-6

ornamental lake, which provide an interesting contrast to the restored small cottage, which represents a comfortable farming lifestyle in pioneering times

The former *Yangardook* Cottage, 575-685 Gisborne Melton Road, Toolern Vale, is architecturally significant at the Local level (AHC D2). Although partially reconstructed, the cottage demonstrates original design qualities of a Victorian vernacular style. These qualities include the hipped roof form, squared coursed bluestone wall construction and the window and door openings. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the single storey height, modest scale, symmetrical arrangement of the windows and door on the main façade, timber framed multi-paned double hung windows and the corrugated profile sheet metal roof cladding.

The former *Yangardook* Cottage, 575-685 Gisborne Melton Road, Toolern Vale, is historically significant at the Local level (AHC A4, B2, D2). It is situated in the vicinity of an important early 1840s outstation of the *Green Hills* pastoral station, at that time the largest and most developed in the Shire. The hills of this area, stretching to Gisborne and towards Sunbury, are also of wider significance in the history of Victoria's settlement, as the meeting place of the two streams of Port Phillip's European settlers, the 'overstraiters' from Tasmanian and the 'overlanders' from New South Wales. This upper Toolern Creek valley, between Bensons Road and Toolern Vale, subsequently became a rich part of the farming history of the Shire. The place is the major contributor to a cultural landscape that contains a concentration of early farm dwellings and structures (including dry stone walls), now mainly ruinous due to bushfires and the passage of time, and views from Gisborne-Melton Road over the rich farmlands and attractive valley to the ranges and plains beyond.

The ruin is also a now-scarce relic of the 'first farming' period of the Shire, which date to the creation of farms purchased from the Crown in the 1850s, rather than the later the Selection Acts, or created in the break-up of the large pastoral estates in the early twentieth century. It is one of only four known reasonably intact stone farming cottages remaining in the Shire. It also testifies to the prominence of Scottish settlers in the farming history of the Shire, particularly in early Toolern Vale. It was built by Peter McDonald, a leading member of the large Scottish community in the Shire, and a forebear of numerous large and prominent Melton families, including the Robinsons, Raleighs, and McIntoshs. It is also associated with the McIntosh family, which acquired the property after McDonald's death in 1888.

The former *Yangardook* Cottage, 575-685 Gisborne Melton Road, Toolern Vale, is socially significant at the Local level (AHC G1). It was identified as a place of heritage significance to the local community in a community forum held as part of this heritage study.

Overall, the former *Yangardook* Cottage, 575-685 Gisborne Melton Road, Toolern Vale, is of LOCAL significance.