

**GREATER GEELONG OUTER AREAS HERITAGE STUDY: STAGE 2**

<b>Existing Use/Type</b> Agricultural	<b>Key Dates</b> Original 1922-23	<b>Site Address</b> Street/Site Name Barwon Heads Road
<b>Survey Date</b> 17/07/1998	<b>Cons Man Plan</b>	<b>No.</b> 1732
		<b>Town/Suburb</b> Connewarre
		<b>Postcode</b> 3227
<b>Recorded By</b> David Rowe		<b>Current Site Name</b> Diesel Engine - Asparagus Farm
		<b>Precinct Name</b>



**Heritage Status**

**Register of the National Estate**  
Database No.  File No.

**Victorian Heritage Register**

**Planning Scheme:**  
C.G.G.  HO1707

**Heritage Inventory (Archaeological)**

**National Trust Register:**

**Other:**

**Recommended Heritage Listings**

Victorian Heritage Register  
 Victorian Heritage Inventory  
 Register of the National Estate  
 HO City of Greater Geelong

**Heritage Study Degrees of Significance**

A H C Assessment Criteria	Significance Level
Aesthetic value <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Historic value A.4 <input type="text"/>	Regional <input type="text"/>
Scientific value F.1 <input type="text"/>	State <input type="text"/>
Social value G.1 <input type="text"/>	Regional <input type="text"/>
<b>Overall Significance Level</b>	<b>Regional</b>

**Condition of the fabric**

Excellent  
 Good  
 Fair  
 Poor  
 Ruinous  
 Unexposed

**Integrity of the site**

Excellent  
 Good  
 Fair  
 Poor  
 Partially excavated  
 Fully excavated

# GREATER GEELONG OUTER AREAS HERITAGE STUDY: STAGE 2

TECHNICAL SHEET

Precinct Name

**Site Plan/Location Sketch (not to scale)**

**Site Address**

No.  Street/Site Name

Town/Suburb  Postcode

Site Name

**Australian Map Grid Co-ordinates**

E 277700km N 5759900km

Map

Scale

Ownership

**Cadastral Location**

County

Parish

Allotment

Block

**Types of Sites**

- |                                       |                                       |   |                                     |                                  |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> monument     | <input type="checkbox"/> recreational | <input type="checkbox"/> residential    | <input type="checkbox"/> aviation   | <input type="checkbox"/> gate    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> building      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> industrial   | <input type="checkbox"/> public       | <input type="checkbox"/> infrastructure | <input type="checkbox"/> relic/ruin | <input type="checkbox"/> tree(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> religious            | <input type="checkbox"/> educational   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> agricultural | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial   | <input type="checkbox"/> maritime       | <input type="checkbox"/> fence      | <input type="checkbox"/> garden  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> machinery | <input type="checkbox"/> miscellaneous |

**Historical Themes**

Heritage Study Theme	AHC Theme No.	Heritage Study Theme	AHC Theme No.
Early settlement	<input type="text"/>	Industry	<input type="text" value="inFarming"/>
Maritime	<input type="text"/>	Community Life	<input type="text"/>
Tourism	<input type="text"/>	Urbanization	<input type="text"/>
Transport	<input type="text"/>	Landscapes	<input type="text" value="lpsWaterways"/>
Townships	<input type="text"/>	Miscellaneous	<input type="text"/>

**Significant Architectural Features**

- Original Materials
- Original Chimneys
- Wall Decoration
- Verandah Structure
- Verandah Decoration
- Original Parapet
- Other Prominent Elevations
- Appropriate Fence
- Early Garden

Roof

Openings

Decoration

Finish

Stylistic Character

**Present Threats**

- Human; mining
- Human; visitor erosion
- Human; vandalism
- Human; development
- Human; conservation/maintenance
- Human; stock
- Natural Forces; erosion
- Natural Forces; vegetation
- Not threatened

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# GREATER GEELONG OUTER AREAS HERITAGE STUDY: STAGE 2

Site Address	No.	Street/Site Name	Town/Suburb	Postcode
	1732	Barwon Heads Road	Connewarre	3227
			<b>Site Name</b>	Diesel Engine - Asparagus Farm
<b>Description</b>				
<p>An Alexander Shanks &amp; Son Ltd ( engineers, Arbroath and London) diesel engine that once pumped water from the freshwater lagoon (that formed part of the Murtna Ghurt Swamp) is located within a galvanised corrugated iron interwar vernacular pump house, characterised by a gable roof form. The shed consists of a timber structural frame and has remnants of timber framed windows and doors to three sides. The fourth side has a long, narrow projecting wing which formed part of the pumping operations.</p>				
<b>History</b>				
<p>The Alexander Shanks &amp; Son diesel engine within the corrugated iron shed at "Tomara", Barwon Heads Road, is situated on land that appears to have originally formed part of the pre-emptive right of John McVean from 1854.<sup>1</sup> By 1898-99, Henry Challis owned 30 acres of this land and had a house on lot C, section 23.<sup>2</sup> Henry Challis was a market gardener, and by 1904-05, he and his son Harry owned a further 35 acres, bringing their total landholdings to 65 acres.<sup>2</sup> By 1909-10, the land was owned by another relative, Edwin Collins, who also owned all or part of the Murtna Ghurt Swamp.<sup>2</sup> In 1910-11, Challis sold the property to Walter Higgins, bulb merchant, and with neighbouring land he already owned, the total acreage of the property reached 88 acres.<sup>2</sup> In 1921-22, Higgins purchased additional land, and his holdings totalled 122 acres at this time.<sup>2</sup> Soon after, the farm was purchased by A.M. Robinson of Melbourne for £7600. Robinson appears to have acted for the Australian Jam Company (AJC), and the landholdings were increased to 404 acres.<sup>2,3</sup> It was leased to Messrs Neilson and Neilson of Geelong before George and Walter Foster, asparagus farmers took over the management of the property in 1922-23.<sup>2</sup> It may have been at this time that the pump house was constructed and the engine installed. Part of the Murtna Ghurt swamp was used to provide freshwater that was pumped by the Alexander Shanks &amp; Son Ltd. engine, reticulating water throughout a grid of hundreds of underground concrete pipes to water the asparagus.<sup>4</sup> ... continued under Comparative Listings ...</p>				
<b>Heritage Precinct: Significant Urban Character Features visually connected to this place</b> <i>(this section is only applicable to places in precincts)</i>				
				<b>Precinct Name</b> <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/>
<b>Neighbouring Buildings</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Similar Types <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Bulk/Form			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Similar Styles <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Architectural Detailing			
<b>Urban Design</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Similar Construction Dates <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Materials & Finishes			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Set Backs <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Fence Designs & Locations			
<b>Landscaping</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant Historical Development <input type="checkbox"/> Original Paving			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant Urban Focii <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Allotment Sizes			
<input type="checkbox"/> Significant Views <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Street Furniture				
<input type="checkbox"/> Original Kerbing				
<input type="checkbox"/> Treelines <input type="checkbox"/> Public Gardens <input type="checkbox"/> Median Strips <input type="checkbox"/> Nature Strips				

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# GREATER GEELONG OUTER AREAS HERITAGE STUDY: STAGE 2

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

<b>Site Address</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Street/Site Name</b>	<b>Town/Suburb</b>	<b>Postcode</b>
	1732	Barwon Heads Road	Connewarre	3227
	<b>Site Name</b> Diesel Engine - Asparagus Farm			

## Comparative Listings

... History continued ...

From the 1920s, the asparagus farm employed 3 teams of 6 to 8 men during the peak cutting season in November-December.<sup>3</sup> These farm hands remained employed by AJC as fruit pickers in Shepparton.<sup>3</sup> The artist Sidney Nolan was employed for one season picking asparagus.<sup>3</sup> Bundles of asparagus were packed into banana boxes and trucked each day to Melbourne for canning.<sup>3</sup> At the end of a season, the mounds of asparagus were ploughed while seaweed was collected from the beach and used as mulch.<sup>3</sup> During the war, the farm employed local women.<sup>3</sup> A mobile horse drawn toilet followed the women about the property.<sup>3</sup> By 1943-44, Keith Foster was the manager of the farm which consisted of 617 acres.<sup>2</sup> It appears that after the Second World War the farm was sold following a court order about a dispute concerning the ownership of the farm.<sup>4</sup> By the 1970s?, it became known as "Tomara", owned by Mr Ian McNaughton.

## Statement of Cultural Significance

The Alexander Shanks & Son diesel engine and pump house at "Tomara", 1732-1770 Barwon Heads Road, is a **historically** significant at a **REGIONAL** level. It is associated with the asparagus farm operated by George and Walter Foster for the Australian Jam Company from the early 1920s.

The pump house at "Tomara", 1732-1770 Barwon Heads Road, is **socially** significant at a **REGIONAL** level. It represents part of the operations of the former asparagus farm no longer in use, yet still recognised by the community for these associations.

The Alexander Shanks & Son diesel engine at "Tomara", 1732-1770 Barwon Heads Road, is **scientifically** significant at a **STATE** level. The engine is a legacy of the technological process developed for reticulating water throughout a network of underground concrete pipes, as part of the asparagus farming operations.

Overall, the pump house at "Tomara", 1732-1770 Barwon Heads Road, is of **REGIONAL** significance.

## References

1. Parish Plan of Connewarre, 1903, Geelong Historical Records Centre.
2. Shire of South Barwon Rate Books, 1898-99, 1899-1900, 1900-01, 1904-04, 1909-10, 1910-11, 1911-12, 1914-15, 1915-16, 1916-17, 1919-20, 1921-22, 1922-23, 1923-24, 1924-25, 1925-26, 1926-27, 1930-31, 1936-37, 1943-44.
3. Interview by Cheryl Timbury with Cobden Martin, former employee of the AJC asparagus farm between 1938-42, on 5 July, 1999.
4. Oral information from Doug Hocking, current owner, 1998.