

City of Greater Bendigo: Marong Heritage Study Mining Sites

JIB HORSE GULLY ALLUVIAL WORKINGS

Other Names

Location Parcel No. P127161, State Forest, 100 metres south-west of junction of Black Horse Track and Whipstick Road, Jib Horse Gully, Whipstick

Map Reference Epsom 1:25,000 - BV557.378

Victorian Heritage Register No

National Estate Register No

Planning Scheme No



Description On the side of a shallow hill, about 40 metres south-west of the junction of Whipstick Road and Black Horse Gully Track, beyond some shallow alluvial workings, there are the remains of a puddling machine. The inner mound is somewhat eroded, but the sides of the puddling trench are still relatively sheer. The puddling machine has a diameter of 22 feet. 20 metres west of the puddling machine is a 50 metre long low embankment which forms the downstream wall of a shallow dam. East of the puddling machine there is an intact mound of wash. The outlet channel from the machine runs south to a deposit of clayey slum.

History Period of activity: unknown

Thematic Context Mining

Comparative Examples This site is one of a number of shallow alluvial workings identified within the study area. Some of the other equally significant early sites are: Myers Flat (1852), Fiddler's Green (1852), One-Eye Gully (1852), Peter the Great (right hand branch)(1856) and Shallow Diggings (1858).

Within the study area at least sixteen puddling machine sites have been identified. These are: Peter the Great Gully (right hand branch)(by 1856?), Iron's Dam (2)(1858), Fiddlers Green (by 1879), Marong Deep Lead (1905), Jib Horse Gully (22 feet)(after 1930?), Old Tom Reef (20 feet)(after 1930), Phillips Gully (2)(after 1930?), Peter the Great Gully (left hand branch)(4)(after 1930?), Splitter's Gully (2)(22 feet)(after 1930?) and White Jacket Gully.

Nineteenth century puddling machines are extremely rare and their provenance cannot usually be confirmed from such documentary evidence as has normally survived about mining in Victoria. The only site within the study area where this has been possible is at Iron's Dam, but then only by a process of elimination. That is, from documentary evidence, it is known that there were two puddling machines in the vicinity of the dam in 1858. The remains of two, and only two, puddling machines were identified at the site in 1992, so these must be the original ones..Whilst there are puddling machines at other sites (for example, Peter the Great (by 1856), Old Tom Reef (by 1857) and Splitter's Gully (by 1865) these are either associated with later phases of mining (reef workings or hydraulic sluicing) and/or do not exhibit extensive weathering and therefore, on these grounds, they cannot be regarded unequivocally as nineteenth century artefacts.

No documentary records have been found for any puddling machines constructed in the nineteenth century, which had an outer diameter of 22 feet.

There is one example recorded where the diameter was 20 feet, but this was an exception; the average being much closer to 16 feet [1.180-186]. If the puddling machine at this site was constructed in the nineteenth century then its size was highly unusual (perhaps indicating a regional variation), or it was not constructed in the nineteenth century. If the latter, then it is quite likely it was constructed in the period between 1931 and 1936 when it is known there were over a thousand men engaged in any one year in alluvial mining in the Bendigo district.

The sides of the puddling trench at this machine are no less sheer than those for the puddling machine on the Old Tom Reef, which is thought to have been built no earlier than 1930.

Statement of Significance The site contains a rare example of a puddling machine in an excellent state of preservation (puddling machine, dam and bank of wash and slum)(criterion B), probably associated with mining activities during the depression years and therefore has the potential to educate and illustrate an aspect of Victoria's cultural heritage (criterion C).

Level of Significance Local

Recommendation The site should be protected under the heritage overlay of the Great Bendigo Planning Scheme and in accordance with the general principles of the conservation policy for mining sites.

Heritage Boundaries The site is bounded on the east by Whipstick Road, on the north by Black Horse Gully Track, on the west by the Raywood Channel water race and extends due south from Black Horse Gully Track for a distance of 150 metres.

References 1. P. Milner, "Mining machinery installations in Victoria: 1857-1939." A classification according to type and size." Technology Report, Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, University of Melbourne, No.TR089/12, March 1989, xxiipp, 383pp.
2. Reports of the Mining Surveyors and Mining Registrars, Sandhurst mining district, Eaglehawk subdivision.

Notes Black Horse Gully Track is the title given to an otherwise unnamed track running west from Whipstick Road along the northern boundary of the site.

Assessed by David Bannear in February 1992 and reviewed by Peter Milner in June 1998

Chronology 09.1864 □ Gum Tree Flat: 20 miners at work. [2.37-40]
□ 12.1864 □ Gum Tree Flat: 20 miners at work. [2.39-42]
□ 03.1865 □ Gum Tree Flat: 30 miners at work. [2.42-44]
□ 06.1865 □ Gum Tree Flat: 10 miners at work. [2.43-44]