

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Name Riverslea
Address 485 North Redesdale Road REDESDALE **Grading** 2008 Local
Building Type House
Assessment by Context Pty Ltd



Recommended Heritage Protection VHR No HI No PS Yes

Architectural Style Victorian Period (1851-1901)
Georgian

Maker / Builder Unknown

Integrity

Altered

History and Historical Context

History of the Shire of Metcalfe

Note: The following history is a series of excerpts from *Twigg, K. and Jacobs, W (1994) Shire of Metcalfe Heritage Study Volume 1 Environmental History, Ballarat.*

The land around the former Shires of Strathfieldsaye and McIvor had a long history prior to the arrival of Europeans. The Jaara Jaara people are the original inhabitants of the area.

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

The area around Port Phillip was explored by Sir Thomas Mitchell, the Surveyor General of New South Wales, and a large party in 1836, on the homeward leg of a journey to Portland Bay. Impressed by what he perceived as the bounty of the land, Mitchell named the area Australia Felix.

Less than a year after Mitchell's return to Sydney with glowing reports of the stocking capabilities of the land in the south, the first overlanders arrived in the district and soon thereafter laid claim to the rich basaltic plains of the Campaspe and Coliban Rivers. The pastoral occupation of the Shire was completed by 1843 and the process of shaping the landscape to fit the demands of white settlement gathered pace.

Over the next decade many of the earliest pastoral runs were subdivided; Bowman's Run, for instance, was split in two to form Stratford Lodge and Sutton Grange [1]. It was also a period of improvements around homesteads.

During the 1850s the pressure of supplying sufficient food to the newly discovered gold diggings and the growing demand for land by miners led to the survey and sale of large areas of land in proximity to the gold fields.[2] At the time of the first land sales in the 1850s there were no restrictions on the amount of land an individual could buy and most squatters managed to purchase between 3,000 and 6,000 acres of the old leasehold. However the land sales also attracted wealthy entrepreneurs and successful miners. At Stratford Lodge almost the entire leasehold was offered for sale and between 1856 and 1857, William Degraives, successful flour miller and William Williamson created something of a stir by buying between 12000 and 13000 acres each.

In September 1851 the Mount Alexander gold rush exploded after a small notice in the Argus announced a discovery in the Mount Alexander Ranges. Serle has suggested the Alexander rush set the standard for all subsequent rushes and argues that at no other gold field was gold spread so shallowly and liberally over such a large area.[3] The temporary nature of many early gold rush workings is witnessed by isolated ruins or a cluster of buildings which once formed a small settlement. By contrast the townships which survive from this period still retain the layout, the commercial street design and many of the residences and solid public buildings of their gold field origins.

By the late 1850s it was clear that road making was needed and it was agreed that the responsibility for works should be given to each local district. The Metcalfe Roads board was proclaimed on 14 August 1860 and wasted little time in seeking money for road construction. At its first meeting it was moved that the Board 'with as little delay as possible.obtain a portion of the government grant for the present year.'[4] Rates were also levied on residents and by 1865 this must have amounted to over £1000 for this level had to be reached before a district could be proclaimed a Shire. The Shire was proclaimed in July 1865 and at this time its area was substantially increased by the voluntary addition of Elphinstone, West Faraday, Harcourt and Barkers Creek.

A seventeen mile branch line was opened to Redesdale in 1891 leaving the Melbourne-Mount Alexander and Murray River Railway at Redesdale Junction to the north of Kyneton, and then continuing through the stations of Green Hill, Edgecombe, East Metcalfe , Emberton and Barfold before terminating at Redesdale . The stations consisted of little more than a tin shed and a water tank but they rapidly became a focal point for the surrounding communities.

History of Redesdale

The first scattered buildings of the township of Redesdale grew up near Monro's Crossing (Campaspe River) on the Kyneton Heathcote Road, catering to miners en route to the Heathcote old fields. During the early 1860s telegraph coaches followed this route daily carrying mail between the gold fields and Kyneton. Nevertheless, Redesdale was scarcely considered a place of significance and when Mr Bain suggested making a road to Redesdale in 1860 there was much amusement with someone responding he might as well make a road to the moon.[5]

More extensive settlement of the area in the 1860s by the Catholic settlers prompted the survey of the Redesdale

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Township and the sale of the first township blocks in 1871. Building work was characterized by the use of bluestone and by 1870 the main road boasted a police station, hotel, a Catholic Church, a post office, a bakery, a drapery and butchery with slaughter yards out the back.

During this period Redesdale established itself as a solid agricultural township. After the construction of a branch line railway in 1891 the township became an important railhead.

History of *Riverslea*, 485 North Redesdale Road, Redesdale

The house at Riverslea was built circa 1874. The land was owned by Michael Lawless as early as 1866. By 1868, John Noonan was residing at Redesdale and acquired land under Section 42 of the 1865 Land Act. It is believed that John Noonan, also known as Jack, married Michael Lawless' daughter and part of Lawless' property passed to them. In 1874, John Noonan was rated for a house and 217 acres at Redesdale. [6]

Jack Noonan died some time between 1896 and 1901. The property was subsequently divided between his large family and continued to be farmed by them. During the Second World War, a number of Italian prisoners of war worked in the Shire and the wall in front of the Noonan house was rebuilt using Italian labour.[7]

[1] Randell, J. O. (1982), *Pastoral settlement in northern Victoria, Vol. 2: The Campaspe District*, Chandos, Burwood, p.138

[2] Powell, J.M. (1970) *The public lands of Australia Felix; settlement and land appraisal in Victoria 1834-91 with special reference to the Western Plains* Melbourne, New York, Oxford University Press, p .67

[3] Serle (1963), *The Golden Age, A History of the Colony of Victoria 1851-1861*, University of Melbourne, p. 23.

[4] Metcalfe Roads Board Minutes, 10 September 1860

[5] *Taradale Express*, 16 December 1871

[6] Twigg, Karen & Jacobs, Wendy (1994), *Shire of Metcalfe Heritage Study*, Ballarat, Victoria, p. 108.

[7] Twigg, Karen & Jacobs, Wendy (1994), p. 108.

References

Powell, J.M. (1970) *The public lands of Australia Felix; settlement and land appraisal in Victoria 1834-91 with special reference to the Western Plains* Melbourne, New York, Oxford University Press.

Randell, J. O. (1985). *McIvor: A History of the Shire and the Township of Heathcote*, Shire of McIvor.

Randell, J. O. (1982), *Pastoral settlement in northern Victoria, Vol. 2: The Campaspe District*, Chandos, Burwood.

Serle (1963), *The Golden Age in Twigg*, Karen & Jacobs, Wendy (1994), *Shire of Metcalfe Heritage Study*, Ballarat, Victoria

Twigg, Karen & Jacobs, Wendy (1994), *Shire of Metcalfe Heritage Study*, Ballarat, Victoria.

Relevant Historical Australian Themes

4 Transforming the land

4.4 Farming

Description

Physical Description

The house *Riverslea* at 485 North Redesdale Road consists of two bluestone hipped roof buildings now joined together with a linking building, and a large modern extension built with a fake stone cladding. Although the stone has been painted, it is possible to distinguish the old stone pattern from the new. Although there are a number of bluestone houses of this type in the Redesdale, Mia Mia and Kimbolton localities, this house is highly unusual in that it features a door pediment and pilasters of stone ashlar around the front door. The high quality of the stone masonry is unlike many comparable buildings which employ more random rubble or field stone in their walls. Other features of the house are fairly typical of the period, although the door and window joinery has been replaced with modern equivalents. The chimneys are of bluestone and have moulded cornices which also appear to be of stone.

The new extension is complementary in form to the original two buildings. There is a circular bluestone well at the side of the house with a modern galvanized iron roof, and a further outbuilding of cement sheet cladding which is not of interest. The front of the site has an extensive stone wall that has been in part rebuilt. Some parts of the wall away from the house have deteriorated. The wall is of field stone and is laid without mortar in the tradition of drystone walling found in several areas including Axedale and Mia Mia.

Physical Condition

Good

Conservation Policy

Replacement of door and window joinery based on historical evidence would enhance this building.

Comparative Analysis

The detailing of stone work at *Riverslea* is distinctive and it is without direct comparison in the study area.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

Riverslea, including the bluestone buildings of 1874 comprising the house, outbuilding (now joined to the main house), well and the stone wall are significant. The cement sheet outbuilding and the modern extension to the house are not significant.

How is it significant?

The house *Riverslea* is of local aesthetic significance to the City of Greater Bendigo.

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Why is it significant?

Riverslea of 1874 is a fine example of the stonemasons art. Although generally of similar form to a number of stone houses, *Riverslea* has a pediment and pilasters executed in ashlar stone around the front door. Bluestone details such as this are rare in the study area and the house is testament to the particular design and craftsmanship of the stonemason. The drystone wall adds to the setting of this house and is a good example of the stonemasons craft. The well is also of bluestone and few of these have been located in the study area. *Criterion E*

Assessment Against Criteria

HERCON CRITERIA

Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history. *Criterion A*

Possession of uncommon rare or endangers aspects of our cultural or natural history. *Criterion B*

Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history. *Criterion C*

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments. *Criterion D*

Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics. *Criterion E*

Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period. *Criterion F*

Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of the continuing and developing cultural traditions. *Criterion G*

Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history. *Criterion H*

Recommendations 2008

External Paint Controls

No

Internal Alteration Controls

No

Tree Controls

No

Fences & Outbuildings

Yes

Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted

No

Incorporated Plan

Yes

Aboriginal Heritage Place

No

Other Recommendations

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

It is recommended that the houses at 485 North Redesdale Road, Redesdale be added as an individual place to the Heritage Overlay of the Greater Bendigo City Planning Scheme with the schedule entry as shown. The extent of registration is the whole of the property as defined by the title boundaries. The recommended Incorporated Plan is the 'Permit Exemption Incorporated Plan - Former Shires of McIvor and Strathfieldsaye.'

This information is provided for guidance only and does not supersede official documents, particularly the planning scheme. Planning controls should be verified by checking the relevant municipal planning scheme.