

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Name RIVERBEND farm and outbuildings
Address 2306 Kyneton-Redesdale Road REDESDALE **Grading** 2008 Local
Building Type Homestead Complex
Assessment by Context Pty Ltd



Recommended Heritage Protection VHR No HI No PS Yes

Architectural Style Victorian Period (1851-1901)
Vernacular

Maker / Builder Unknown

Integrity

High

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 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

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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 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.

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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 Riverbend, 2306 Kyneton-Redesdale Road, Redesdale

Crown Allotment 54 in the Parish of Redesdale and the County of Dalhousie was issued as a Crown grant to Robert Taylor on the 21st April 1863. The elimination of squatting rights had recently opened much of the land in the area to farmers seeking smaller claims, and Taylor's 117 acre acquisition was one such allotment. Taylor was one of the earlier farmers operating in the district. The block abutted a bend in the Campaspe River on its western boundary and was undoubtedly sought for its prime location. Taylor's was assumedly a farming estate, given its size. Titles records note that Taylor resided at 'Green Hill' near Kyneton, which was probably another pastoral station.[6] Taylor may have acquired the land near Redesdale as something of an investment property, or leased it to another farmer. Taylor also purchased several nearby blocks, including parts of the adjacent Crown Allotment 53.[7]

Nevertheless, Taylor did not hold the property for long and by 1866 had sold it to Lawrence Connell. Connell was also a farmer, whose family was well established in the Redesdale district. Connell mortgaged the property to John Ignatius Bleasdale and Samuel Bush soon after he bought it. Mortgage was often a means through which farmers acquired the capital to undertake construction on or development of their land, and this may have been Connell's motivation.

The following year, Connell sold the land to Edward Gamble. Gamble's land extended from the curve in the government road to the bend in the river, and was known by a series of different names over the years. Bill Rowe remembers it as 'Gamble's Paddock' or 'Summerhill'. [8] By 1870, Gamble had purchased a further 114 acres in the Redesdale area, and was in the process of acquiring a further 100 from the Crown. He is recorded as the owner of a house in 1874[9], but the details of the building this refers to are unknown.

Edward Gamble owned the land until his death in 1911. It was officially transferred to his heirs, widow and two (presumed) sons, on 30th July 1920.[10]

[1] Certificate of Title, Vol. 24, Fol. 643.

[2] Land Victoria, Plan of the Parish of Redesdale, October 1888.

[3] Rowe, Bill (1989), *Redesdale: Yesterday and Today My Last Hurrah*, the Author, Redesdale, Victoria, p. 123.

[4] Twigg, Karen & Jacobs, Wendy (1994), *Shire of Metcalfe Heritage Study*, Ballarat, Victoria, p. 88.

[5] Certificates of Title, Vol. 24 Fol. 643; Vol. 167 Fol. 277; Vol. 215 Fol. 953.

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

[7] 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*, Oxford University Press, New York, p .67

[8] Serle, Geoffery (1963), *The Golden Age: A history of the colony of Victoria 1851 - 1861*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, p. 23

[9] Metcalfe Roads Board Minutes, 10 September 1860

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[10] *Taradale Express*, 16 December 1871

References

Primary Sources

Metcalf Roads Board Minutes, 10 September 1860

Taradale Express, 16 December 1871

Land Victoria, Plan of the Parish of Redesdale, October 1888.

Certificates of Title

Secondary Sources

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*, Oxford University Press, New York.

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Description

Physical Description

The setting of Riverbend is picturesque, on a slope set well back from the road and framed by mature trees. It stands slightly apart from the group of other buildings and is skylined on the hill. There are also a number of other farm buildings in proximity that are not of interest.

Riverbend is likely to have been built c.1870. Several architectural features including the higher pitch of the roof, the fine glazing bars, small fanlight over the front door indicate a quite early date of construction. It appears that there was never a verandah constructed to the front of this house. The bluestone walls are snecked and coursed and the brick chimneys have corbelled mouldings with dentillations. There are single pieces of rough cut stone used as lintels and sills to the wall openings.

Beneath the existing corrugated iron sheeting are the remains of a timber shingle roof. The house, although vacant and in poor condition, retains many original features including timber fire surrounds, picture rails, hard plaster as an internal finish, timber ceilings, window frames and sashes and the front door. The rear of the building has been built in two parts with two types of stonework evident. One side is in good condition whilst the other is almost ruinous with the rubble stone walls deteriorating through lack of proper roofing.

The site contains an old orchard, a large cypress tree and a brick well. There is evidence of other stone buildings or of fallen material from the house as there are piles of stone and brick scattered about the site.

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Physical Condition

Poor

Conservation Policy

The following specific conservation actions are recommended, should the opportunity arise:

- Securing the house against the weather including reinstatement of the front door and replacing broken panes of glass, renewing guttering and installing stormwater drainage would conserve this property.
- The roof and stonework should be repaired at the rear of the house..

Comparative Analysis

There are a number of comparable bluestone farm houses in the Redesdale and Mia Mia area however Riverbend retains many original features and is more intact than many, despite some of the house being in poor condition .

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The property Riverbend at 2306 Kyneton Redesdale Road, including the bluestone house of c.1870, remnant orchard, mature cypress tree and brick well is significant. The newer house on site is not of significance.

How is it significant?

The property at 2306 Kyneton Redesdale Road is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Greater Bendigo.

Why is it significant?

Riverbend, variously named Gamble's Paddock or Summerhill was constructed c.1870 by Edward Gamble and remained in the same family for over 50 years. Edward Gamble owned the land until his death in 1911 when it was officially transferred to his heirs in 1920. *Criterion A*

The house at 2306 Kyneton Redesdale Road aesthetically significant as a well crafted stone house with snecked and coursed bluestone walls, Riverbend retains many original details such as fine glazing bars in the multi-paned windows, plaster, timber shingles, mantle pieces and original front door (although this is removed from its fixings). The setting is significant with a remnant orchard, mature cypress tree and brick well that provide tangible evidence of the daily life of the early residents. *Criterion D*

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Recommendations 2008

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	Yes
Fences & Outbuildings	Yes stone cottage
Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted	Yes
Incorporated Plan	Yes
Aboriginal Heritage Place	No

Other Recommendations

It is recommended that 'Riverbend' at 2306 Kyneton Redesdale Road, Redesdale be added as an individual place to the Heritage Overlay of the City of Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme with the schedule entry as shown below. The extent of registration is to be defined by a map. The recommended Incorporated Plan is the 'Permit Exemption Incorporated Plan - Former Shires of McIvor and Strathfieldsaye.'