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## Braybrook Shire Hall site



1601 - Brimbank City Council  
Post-contact Cultural  
Heritage Study 2000



Site 127 - Braybrook Shire  
Hall site (2).jpg



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Hall site.jpg

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### Location

Ballarat Road, DEER PARK VIC 3023 - Property No 127

### Municipality

BRIMBANK CITY

### Level of significance

Incl in HO area contributory

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO128

### Heritage Listing

Brimbank City

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 1, 2000

#### Individual place statement of significance::

The site of the former Braybrook Shire hall is of local archaeological significance for its potential to reveal evidence of the beginnings of municipal government in the City of Brimbank. This site is historically significant as the area which was once the local government centre of Braybrook Shire, which for many years (1871-1916) covered a large area from Maidstone, Braybrook and Maribyrnong to Rockbank and Toolern Creek at Melton. Although the bluestone shire hall, built here in 1886, no longer exists, the site is worthy of archaeological

investigation.

**Precinct statement of significance::**

The ICI Residential Heritage Area is of State historical and architectural significance as a rare and distinctive company township and for its association with the nineteenth century origins and twentieth century expansion of the former Nobel (later ICIANZ, now ORICA) factory which became the major private manufacturer of explosives and munitions in Australia.

The estate, initiated by Leathercloth Pty. Ltd., (a subsidiary of Nobel) is one of a number of company sponsored housing schemes in the Brimbank municipality and reflects a pattern of development where nationally important industries established in green-fields sites beyond the urban fringe and so needed to provide accommodation and other facilities for workers. The inclusion of the recreation reserve in the precinct and the adjacent separately listed Deer Park Hall, and Hunt Club Hotel (a former ICI training centre) further demonstrate the company role in local planning and development.

The precinct is significant for its association with the largest explosives, chemicals and plastics manufacturer in Australia, originally established here under the importer Jones Scott and Co in the 19th century, and then becoming the Australian Lithofractor Company (Krebs Patent), a rival to Nobel's dynamite patent, and in production in Australia only a couple of years after Nobel's Ardeer factory was opened. It later merged with the Nobel company and then became ICIANZ before the most recent change to ORICA.

This important industry played a major role in mining through the development of progressively more efficient and safer explosives. It also contributed to wartime production in ammunition, initiators and in World War Two, the development of synthetic ammonia production and construction of the Defence Explosives Annex No 5 (later the Albion Explosives Factory). The Leathercloth plant was influential in the development of synthetic materials for the motor industry including vinyl seat fabrics and hoods, and has continued to play an important role in synthetic fabrics.

The houses in Station Road, Ballarat Road, Hume Street and Hyde Street reflect a sequence of development in their distinctive styles and forms, reflecting the colonial origins of the company in their Indian Bungalow forms as well as giving insight to the social and economic status of their proposed occupants with the larger and more elaborate houses intended for factory managers. The inclusion of concrete houses in the estate also points to the innovation in building in the later period, possibly as a response to war-time material shortages.

The recreation reserve and contemporary (but altered) pavilion are significant in demonstrating the role of the company in providing community services to their workers, and as evidence of the urban design and landscape approaches to company housing in the period.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Brimbank - Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study, G. Vines, 2000;
Construction dates	1885,
Hermes Number	105943
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

### Description

The original shire hall was a classically-derived building of typical 'Boom' period style, with a parapet wall to the front and corrugated iron roof. Constructed in brick, on bluestone foundations and rendered, it had a central pediment over arched entrance, flanked on each side by semicircular paired windows, and rusticated quoins. It was demolished in the early 1930s and the site ceased to be used for any purpose, although the treed, sheltered spot on the creek bank may have been an informal wayside stop for road traffic. As it stands today, there is little to see of the hall site. Some hand-made bricks are scattered on the surface towards the creek and a small area of bluestone footings were visible for a time before being obscured by recent dumping. Considerable domestic artefacts can be found (for example, ceramics, bottle glass). However, this material may be the result of dumping rather than being contemporary with the occupation of the hall.

### Physical Conditions

The building is demolished. Archaeological remains may survive and are indicated by some hand-made bricks scattered on the banks of Kororoit Creek. Dumping of rubbish and fill has obscured the site.

### Historical Australian Themes

7 Governing

7.2 Developing institutions of self-government and democracy

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*