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# SURFACE HILL

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## Location

SURFACE HILL HISTORIC AREA AND OFF SEBASTOPOL-SMYTHESDALE ROAD SMYTHESDALE,  
GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

## Municipality

GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7622-0041

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 28, 2005

The Surface Hill Hydraulic Gold Sluicing Pit consists of a large excavation containing a network of pebble dumps, tail races and drainage adits. Water for sluicing would have been delivered to the site by water races and then directed at the gold bearing deposits. The technology was introduced into Victoria in about 1855. The main period for hydraulic sluicing at Surface Hill was the 1870s.

The Surface Hill Hydraulic Gold Sluicing Pit is of historical, archaeological and scientific importance to the State of Victoria.

The Surface Hill Hydraulic Gold Sluicing Pit is historically and scientifically important as a characteristic and well preserved example of an early form of gold mining. Gold mining sites are of crucial importance for the pivotal role they have played since 1851 in the development of Victoria.

Hydraulic sluicing of alluvial gold deposits is an important key ingredient in an understanding of gold mining technology as it was employed in country where water was plentiful and perennial.

The Surface Hill Hydraulic Gold Sluicing Pit is archaeologically important for its potential to yield artefacts and evidence which will be able to provide significant information about the cultural history of gold mining and the gold seekers themselves.

[Source: Victorian Heritage Register.]

Hermes Number 12037

Property Number

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## History

Contextual History:History of Place:

Heritage Inventory History of Site:

01.1860: at Surfacing Hill, Mr. Lock was preparing for a similar experiment to that being undertaken by the Black Hill Puddling and Sluicing Co.

03.07.1875: Mr. Bowden and his party of 16 men had constructed fluming to give them an extra sluice head of water. Surface Hill was being mined at this time. The ground was 16 feet deep and a report how the dangerous pillars of earth left from the old workings had to be felled.

to 1880's: surfacing and sluicing of the hills was undertaken during the months of the year when rainfall provided sufficient water; sluicing was the main form of alluvial mining at this time and good rainfall had meant that it continued for nine months in the Smythesdale District during 1888.

1890's: Sluicing of the hills and along the creeks continued during the 1890's and when water was available parties were active at Black Hill, Scarsdale and at Watson's Hill and Fraser's Hill, Smythesdale.

*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/>*