

SEAFORTH INN SITE

Location

SINGAPORE PENINSULA, WILSONS PROMONTORY NATIONAL PARK WILSONS PROMONTORY, SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Municipality

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8120-0027

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

The location of the Seaforth Township has now been confirmed with the identification of the township and the Seaforth Inn archaeological sites. The Seaforth Inn site has high archaeological significance as the archaeological material present on the surface serves to identify the location of the building which was one of the only known buildings to have stood in the township.

The Seaforth Inn site has high historical significance due to its association with the planned township of Seaforth. The artefacts found at this location suggest this was the site of a domestic and/or commercial structure, and the only known built structure recorded as having existed in this area of the Singapore Peninsula was the Seaforth Inn.

The Seaforth Inn has high archaeological significance because even though the inn was removed and relocated, there remains the potential for archaeological material to survive. Artefact preservation ranges from poor to good condition, with evidence of fire represented by the burnt timber posts, but several diagnostic features are still present in the glass fragments which can further identify the period represented by this place.

The Seaforth Inn has high historical significance due to its association with the brief but important attempt to establish a permanent settlement on the north western region of Wilsons Promontory, this being the proposed township of Seaforth. The period served as the interim period between two equally important stages in the Prom's

history, the pastoral era and the establishment of the National Park. The site is also important because it represents the only building known for certain to have existed at Seaforth.

Interpretation of Site	The glass and ceramic fragments found indicate the site had a domestic and/or commercial function. A bottle glass fragment with "Nuttall N & Co" dates from 1872-1913, which encompasses the operating period of the Seaforth Inn.
Archaeological Significance	The site has high archaeological significance. Although the Seaforth inn was removed and relocated, there remains the potential to uncover further archeological material to identify the nature and location of any structures that once stood on the site, and determine whether the hotel can be positively identified through the existing artefacts. Site preservation ranges from poor in the case of burnt timber posts, to good with some glass fragments retaining diagnostic features. The site has a high potential to add to the little information already known about the Seaforth Inn from historical records.
Historical Significance	The site has high historical significance as it represents the settlement and brief town planning phase of Wilsons promontory's history and specifically the Singapore Peninsula, and also represents the only town to have been located on the Prom itself.
Hermes Number	124437
Property Number	

History

Following the Victorian land boom of the mid to late 1880s when land subdivision and crown land sales increased, Albert James Smith of Port Albert took up three leases in the northern end of Wilsons Promontory in 1887, with one lease to be used as a hotel site. In 1888 it was decided that the area was suitable for a new tourist town and in 1889 the area was gazetted as the Township of Mount Singapore, later renamed Seaforth (McKellar 1993: 3).

The town was surveyed by George Black in October 1891 and 316 allotments were marked out, but of the 38 put up for sale, only 20 sold, and it does not appear that any of the Melbourne-based purchasers actually took up residence in the town, although a post office is reputed to have been in operation for a short time (McKellar 1993: 3,5).

Smith built the Seaforth Inn on The Esplanade, which ran along the beach parallel to LaTrobe, Singapore and Hunter Streets, which were named after local landmarks and historical and contemporary Victorian figures, as were many of the other streets in Seaforth. Smith had hoped to purchase the freehold on his hotel block, but he was outbid and his leases were cancelled.

Smith then relocated the hotel by barge to Port Welshpool at some point in 1893, where it still stands. It was first used as a store, and was run by Mrs Ellis, the daughter of Albert Smith, and was later used as a post office and place of residence for the post mistress (McKellar 1993:5).

Much of the surveyed township was included in the Wilsons Promontory National Park when it opened in 1905, and all but two allotments were re-purchased by the Crown in 1910. In 1928, the remaining 144 acres of Seaforth were absorbed into the National Park (Garnett 2009: 31).

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/>