
BORRELL'S HOMESTEAD RUINS AND MARKET GARDEN SITE

Location

745 OLD CALDER HIGHWAY KEILOR EAST, BRIMBANK CITY

Municipality

BRIMBANK CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7822-2288

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO97

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Archaeological Significance

Despite the demolition of the majority of the former house and its accompanying outbuildings, the terrace has not been subject to significant disturbance and therefore possesses a high potential for archaeological evidence of the buildings and for domestic and agricultural artifacts.

Historical Significance

Borrells farm is of historical significance as a remnant of the once prolific orcharding industry in Keilor.

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| Interpretation of Site | <p>Within the site, a small plateau adjacent to the Old Calder Highway contains a single ruin of an early bluestone and brick building, which was adapted for domestic use and later formed a portion of a larger house. Having formerly had about eleven rooms, the timber sections and outbuildings were demolished by the MMBW in the 1980s following fires and vandalism. The ruin is presently fenced off in cyclone fencing, and the areas of the outbuildings appear to have been top-soiled. However, artefacts including glass and ceramic fragments relating to domestic activity can be seen on the surface.</p> <p>A possible stone plinth may mark an entrance gate onto the access road to the north, alongside which erosion of the bank on which the current tarmac path is laid reveals an earlier roadway in the section.</p> <p>The wider site comprises the land parcel around the plateau between the Old Calder Highway and the Maribyrnong River (known as Gumms Corner). This was used for orchards by the Cahills, and then provided the flat alluvial ground required for Borrell's favoured technique of furrow irrigation.</p> |
| Other Names | CAHILL FARMSTEAD, BRIMBANK PARK, |
| Hermes Number | 124592 |
| Property Number | |

History

By 1857 Thomas Cahill owned seven and a half acres near the Keilor Bridge on which he established a prosperous small farm. When he died in 1879 his wife Eliza continued the farm until her death in 1885 after which their son Denis developed the farm as an orchard, relying on the rich river soil and convenient water of the Maribyrnong River for irrigation. The orchard passed through the ownership of the Goudie family and the Dodd's of Brimbank Farm to the south before the Spanish immigrant Jose Borrell acquired the site in 1917, to which he had added an adjacent 9 acres by 1921. Borrell employed 'Spanish methods' of manuring, irrigating, cultivation and levelling which were subject to constant experiment and improvement to increase the yields of vegetables. The land remained in the ownership of the Borrell family until 1983 when it was purchased by the MMBW and incorporated into Brimbank Park at which point most of the orchard trees were removed. The buildings became vacant, and subsequent vandalism and demolition has led to the present surviving fragment.

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/>