

# ELDORADO TOWNSHIP

## Location

MAIN STREET ELDORADO, WANGARATTA RURAL CITY

## Municipality

WANGARATTA RURAL CITY

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8225-0136

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Interpretation of Site	The town of El Dorado represents a complex of domestic and industrial structures linked to the Ovens goldrush and later mining of tin. Many of the extant buildings are built on earlier mining structures or the latter have been demolished and left as empty paddocks. Almost all the paces identified by signposts have archaeological potential but in particular, Schuppe's Bakery, and the location of El Dorado's former store and bankhouse in Mackay Street.
Archaeological Significance	El Dorado is of high significance archaeologically, due to the range of potential and extant sites throughout the whole township, covering a continuum of mining eras. Further assessment of the area, including detailed survey and excavation of some of the more significant places within the town - most already marked by the Shire and the El Dorado Museum - has the potential to address a range of questions regarding the development of the town, commerce and social issues that cannot be answered via documentation alone.
Historical Significance	The town of El Dorado is significant as a result of its association with the rush to the north-goldfields and unique in Victoria perhaps as a town with a 100 year history of company mining; starting with gold followed by tin mining.
Hermes Number	162324

## History

1850s to 1955 main, both gold and tin mining.

El Dorado was initially part of a pastoral station (El Dorado). Gold was initially identified in 1854 but not in payable quantities until 1857 with the Kneebone South or Kneebone No. 2 shafts (Buchan 2001: 3). A township was forming around this time on land known as Ed Dorado Flat and other mining companies were established including the McEvoy Company and The Great Extended El Dorado Gold and Tin Mining Company (projected) in 1859.

The township of El Dorado was initially fairly inconsequential with primarily calico tents and rough timber and bark cottages. As the prosperity of the goldrush continued greater investment was made into residential housing and commercial buildings. (Attached Buchan 2001: 24-25 map of 1861 and 34-25 Plan of town). Overtime these buildings were also replaced with finer structures some of which still remain, outlying structures and buildings however would have been impacted by the expansion of mining with some shafts sunk just a couple of streets away from the main street. The prosperity of the town was tied to that of the mining and each suffered with the rises and falls of the industry. With the closure of the Cooks Dredge in 1954 many business struggled to survive and resulted in many closures as the population moved to more prosperous areas. In time, the empty buildings were demolished. Buchan estimated in 2001 that between 48 and 60 original houses had been pulled down since the 1940s and that newer residences had been constructed (2001:26). Among the replacements was the present El Dorado Store that lies on the same site as the earlier stores.

*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/>*