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# BERWICK BRICK DRAINAGE FEATURE

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## Location

CLYDE ROAD BERWICK, CASEY CITY

## Municipality

CASEY CITY

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7921-0118

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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### Interpretation of Site

The brick feature is generally two bricks in depth, apart from areas where bullnose bricks are overlain on top, and approximately 0.8- 0.9 m wide (west to east). Bullnose bricks are present in three areas and are possibly associated with prior property access areas (Figure 3). The bullnose bricks, were present in situ in two areas, overlying the brick feature for approximately 4 m along its north-south linear alignment. The bullnose bricks are set back approximately 40 cm from the western (road) edge of the brick feature. The bricks are of Northcote manufacture, and indicate a terminus post quem of 1882 and terminus ante quem of 1960 when Northcote brickworks was operating. It appears that the brick feature is likely to comprise part of a prior drainage system associated with the margin between the pedestrian path and Clyde Road, given its location 0.5 m below the current ground surface in a road reserve area. The presence of disused metal (iron-alloy) water pipes below the brick feature where it occurs in the road reserve and underneath the road further indicates that the brick feature is associated with a prior drainage system along Clyde Road.

Archaeological Significance	The brick feature is considered of local significance as an example of late nineteenth/early twentieth century civil infrastructure associated with the Shire of Berwick. It is neatly constructed of Northcote bricks. Following recent roadworks its subsurface deposit remains approximately 50% intact and in situ along its alignment where it occurs on the east road margin between Adams and Langmore Lanes.
Historical Significance	The site has local significance as an example of civic infrastructure associated with the early settlement and development of Berwick.
Hermes Number	194869
Property Number	

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## History

Berwick Road Board was initially formed in 1862 and in 1868 became the Shire of Berwick. Many early roads were severely damaged by floods and with funds from rates and government grants difficult to procure, in 1881 the Shire borrowed six thousand pounds for capital works. During the early 1890s in a period of financial difficulties associated with the depression of that period, the Shire concentrated on continuing public works of a permanent nature, with any unavoidable fiscal cuts focused on maintenance. At this time the government provided subsidies to the Shire to provide work for the unemployed. In contrast, by the time of the 1930s depression the financial position of the Shire was insecure and all works were suspended (Berwick-Pakenham Historical Society 1982: 19-27).

By the end of the nineteenth century dirt roads in the Berwick area had been improved, with fords and bush tracks replaced with bridges and metalled roads. Prior to this the Berwick Shire Council minutes of 1899 recorded that the condition of the Clyde Road was such that 'the Berwick Riding members, accompanied by the Clerk of Works, with a sledgehammer, go down Clyde Road and break up some of the granite boulders therein' (Berwick-Pakenham Historical Society 1982:34-35). This indicates that improvements to Clyde Road, Berwick were likely undertaken in the late nineteenth! early twentieth century, either prior to the 1930s depression or during the inter-war years.

The major development of early Berwick centred on the late nineteenth century prior

to the depression of the 1890s with High Street the main focus of the township. The Mechanics Institute was initially established in 1862 with a new building constructed later in 1878. Christ Church and Berwick Primary School (No. 40) were constructed in 1876 and 1870 respectively. In 1877, the Berwick Inn (formerly the Border Hotel - established 1857) was extended and developed. Paternoster's brick store and the former Post Office and Court House were constructed in 1885 at High Street. Clyde Road and Langmore Lane were subject to development during this period with residences at 11 Clyde Road and 9 Langmore Lane built in the 1880s. 'Kingussie' at 42 Langmore Lane and the doctor's surgery and residence at 26-30 Langmore Lane were constructed in 1895 (Context 1 993:322-369). The development of the area in the late nineteenth century suggests that road and street frontage improvements would have been undertaken during this period or shortly after.

The bricks (including the bullnose bricks) carry the 'North cote' brickworks name and indicate a *terminus post quem* of 1882 and *terminus ante quem* of 1960 when Northcote brickworks was operating. During the 1890s depression brick prices tumbled and the sale of stockpiles of bricks kept the company afloat with a greatly reduced workforce. Following this, brick production and sales again increased and by the 1920s the company was enjoying record profits. The 1930 depression affected the brickworks with production once again scaled down to match a reduced market. The brickworks closed down for extended periods and recovery was slow. mid twentieth century saw mergers with other brickworks leading to the formation of the Austral Brick Company in 1962 (Darebin Historical Encyclopaedia accessed 12 March 2013).

Images 1 and 2 below show views of Berwick c.1908 and 1920-1954 and what appears to be a brick edged margin between the pedestrian path/road reserve and the road. These images illustrate that Berwick High Street and The Boulevard had, from at least the early twentieth century, a road system set lower than the adjoining paths/road reserve and distinguished by a (brick) border.

The images in conjunction with historical records of the development of Berwick and the production of Northcote bricks, as well as the brick fabric and manufacturing technique, indicate that the brick feature uncovered during recent road works at Clyde Road, Berwick date to the late nineteenth/early twentieth century (1890s-1920s).

*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/>*