

CENTRAL DEBORAH GOLD MINE



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1 central deborah gold db
june1999



2025, air powered drill
shanker & sharpener



2024, Bayne patent stretcher



2024, Acetylene gas producer



2024, winder.



2024. Thompson electric air
compressor



image039



image002



2024. Cornish boiler



2024, carbide gas drums



2024, dirty change room.



2024, clean change room.



2024, mine manager's office



2024, first aid room



2024, mine manager's garage and carpenter's shop, ore bins & poppet head



2024, carbide light room



2024, Cornish boiler viewed from the stoke hold



2024, original mine shaft under poppet head



2024, timber trolley in stoke hold



2024, timber trolley.



2025, boiler house interior



2025, Ingersoll Rand air compressor



2025, winder house



2025, air receiver



2019. Google street view of mine entrance with tram shelter



2024, static display with non-original machinery



2024, gold treatment area



Central Deborah Gold Mine interior views



2024, blacksmith's shop



2025, landscaping and trestleway in the east of the site.



2024, crushing battery (non-original)



AREAS OF SENSITIVITY DIAGRAM (relates to the specific permit exemptions)

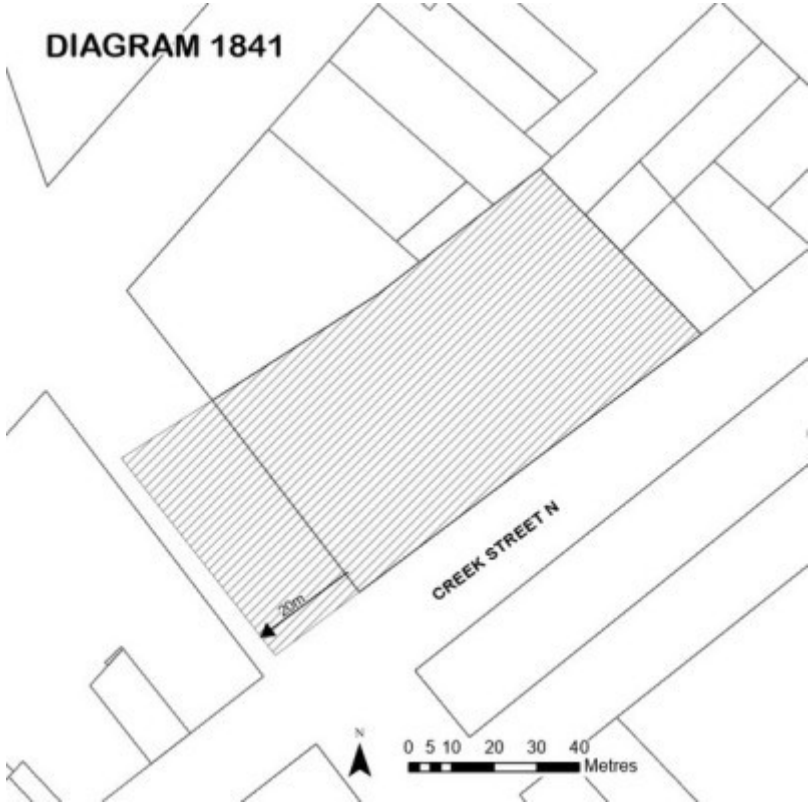


Diagram 1841 with meaurement

Location

76 VIOLET STREET BENDIGO, GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Municipality

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1841

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO286

VHR Registration

November 18, 1999

Amendment to Registration

August 21, 2025

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 21, 2025

The Central Deborah Gold Mine is located on the land of the Dja Dja Wurrung people.

What is significant?

The Central Deborah Gold Mine was developed from 1939 and operated as a working mine until 1954. The mine was one of a minority that continued to function during the Second World War. In 1939 the mine boasted a small timber poppet head, boiler steam winch, compressor, blacksmith shop, store, change rooms, and offices. Between 1945-46 the company upgraded the mine with extensions to sheds and the installation of new steam machinery, electric air compressor, steel poppet head, and ore bins.

How is it significant?

The Central Deborah Gold Mine is of historical, archaeological, and architectural significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion C

Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion D

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects

Why is it significant?

The Central Deborah Gold Mine is historically significant for its ability to demonstrate the tangible and important links to twentieth century quartz mining. It is of outstanding historical significance as the last intact and working example of the 5,500 quartz mines that won Bendigo widespread fame as a gold mining centre. At one time Bendigo had the world's deepest shafts. Of particular importance are original buildings, fittings and mining machinery that document the mine's character from 1939 to 1954.

(Criterion A)

The Central Deborah Gold Mine is archaeologically significant for its ability and potential to illustrate important aspects of early twentieth century mining. The physical evidence at the site has excellent interpretative value and the ability to answer archaeological research questions.

(Criterion C)

The Central Deborah Gold Mine is significant as a notable and fine example of the class of twentieth century quartz mine. The working machinery—including a Cornish boiler, winding engine and two compressors—comprise one of the few publicly accessible and in situ collections in the State. Central Deborah Company Gold Mine is now a popular tourist mine and a living part of the story of gold mining in Australia. Its historic mining equipment is still functional, and several levels underground are accessible to visitors.

(Criterion D)

Permit Exemptions

General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must [notify](#) the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

Specific Exemptions:

Note: The areas of sensitivity diagram represents the sensitivity to change of different areas at the Central Deborah Gold Mine. The yellow area of lesser sensitivity does not contain heritage fabric. These buildings were introduced during the place's time as a tourist mine. The areas of sensitivity diagram applies to above ground buildings and structures only.

Area of lesser sensitivity:

1. All internal works to and demolition of buildings and structures within the area of lesser sensitivity, excluding any works to the 1980s trestle way, providing there is no impact on surrounding buildings.

Area of greater sensitivity:

2. All internal works to the addition to the boiler house (dating from the site's use as a tourist mine)
3. All internal works to the entrance building (dating from the site's use as a tourist mine)
4. Repair, maintenance, upgrade and renewal of the 1980s trestleway
5. Like for like repair and maintenance of the Alimak tunnel area
6. Like for like repair and maintenance of the artificial creek.

Construction dates	1939,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place, Registered archaeological place, Registered object integral to a registered place,
Hermes Number	5996
Property Number	

History

Bendigo Flat

The Central Deborah Gold mine is situated in an area that was known as Bendigo Flat. The first mining operations in the area commenced under an alluvial lease, granted in 1867. As early as 1869, quartz miners were working a claim known as the Great Central in this same area. It was worked haphazardly and by 1872, another company had sunk a shaft to a depth of 42 feet (12.8 metres).

Approximately 30 years elapsed before any renewed mining took place. The Londonderry Company came to hold a section of the Deborah Reef. The Londonderry West Shaft was sunk in 1911, which was to become the Central Deborah Gold Mining Company's shaft. After the Londonderry Company became part of the South Garden Gully United Company, later to be amalgamated with 34 other companies into the Bendigo Amalgamated Goldfields (BAG), no further progress was made at this site, which became a rubbish tip.

By 1926, gold mining output had fallen dramatically. Responding to a 1931 report about the decline of the Bendigo Goldfield, the Government provided financial assistance to three Bendigo mines to revive the gold mining operations. In 1934, a restructured Monument Hill Consolidated Company reopened the Londonderry West Shaft, renaming it the Central Deborah. After another restructure, two companies were formed being the New Monument Hill and the Central Deborah Gold Mining Companies.

The Central Deborah Gold Mining Company

In September 1939 the Central Deborah Company was formally registered. The capital was comprised of £30,000 in shares of 10 shillings each. By November 1939, the Central Deborah shaft was being sunk at a rate of

three metres a fortnight and was timbered with locally supplied Red Gum. At this time, work was also proceeding for the erection of plant.

Most of the plant and some of the buildings at the Central Deborah Gold Mine were purchased and repurposed from other mines. Some buildings were purchased from the White Horse Mine at Chewton and re-erected as the carbide light room and storeroom next to the blacksmith's shop. The changerooms came from the Nell Gwynne Mine in Bendigo.

The plant was purchased from the Central Wattle Gully Mine at Chewton and included the poppet head, compressor & boiler. When this compressor proved inadequate, it was replaced with the present-day green Ingersoll Rand AA2 model which is a straight-line, two-stage, steam-driven air compressor.

The Second World War had a devastating impact on mining in Bendigo. Of the 37 mines operating in 1940, only four remained in operation by 1945, all of which were on the Deborah reef. Even though the Central Deborah didn't close, the effects of the war were still felt through labour shortages, which caused an irregular output for crushing and therefore less revenue.

The 1945 plant

In 1945 the Central Deborah Gold Mine underwent a plant reconstruction. This expansion would allow the Central Deborah to deepen its shaft and seek the reef structure successfully worked elsewhere on the Deborah reef. A steel poppet head was erected over the 1939 wooden one, and three metres of height was trimmed off each of the legs to fit it on site. This poppet head was manufactured in 1905 by A Roberts & Sons, a Bendigo firm, for the Catherine Reef United Company's mine in Eaglehawk. Prior to being erected at the Central Deborah Gold Mine it was used by the New Red White and Blue Consolidated Company.

Prior to the 1945 plant reconstruction, the Central Deborah Gold Mine used a green Ingersoll Rand steam driven air compressor for the steady supply of compressed air to the site. It was manufactured around 1912 and installed on site in February 1941. It was purchased from the second-hand machinery merchants Seward & Sons of South Melbourne in December 1940. The compressor could run up to six rock drills simultaneously and was used up until 1947 when it was replaced by the Thompson electric air compressor.

The Thompson compressor was commissioned in 1945 from the Thompsons Engineering & Pipe Company of Castlemaine. The compressor was installed on site as early as December 1945, but it sat idle for 18 months awaiting electrical components. In 1947, the electric motor was delivered but still not operational due to delays caused by an engineering strike. In April 1947, all necessary parts were on site, but the power transformer caused voltage drops, resulting in blackouts and dimming lights to nearby houses. The State Electricity Commission subsequently banned use of the compressor until adjustments could be made. These modifications were made in 1947, and in August the Thompsons compressor finally commenced operation. At this time, the Ingersoll Rand compressor was maintained as a standby unit. As a result, the Ingersoll Rand compressor (alongside the boiler and stoke hold) are the only remains of the mine's original (pre-1945) engine house.

During this period many of the buildings were also upgraded or expanded. The Blacksmith's shop was doubled in size, making room for a second forge and the installation of two brick chimneys to each forge. The first aid room was added during the 1945 alterations as by law, any mine employing over a given number of miners had to provide a first aid room. The mine manager's garage, carpenter's shop, and the extensions to the original ore bins were also added at this time.

The final depth of the mine was 422.6 metres, attained in September 1949 and the final level, number 17, was cut at 410.8 metres. The Central Deborah Gold Mine produced 928.8kg of gold from its opening in 1939 until November 1954, when underground mining ceased.

Tourist attraction from 1970s

Four years after the closure of the last two mines on the Deborah reef, the conversation began about retaining a complete mine. The mine was purchased by the Bendigo City Council in 1970, and the Bendigo Trust gradually restored the mine for use as a heritage attraction. In 2025, the Central Deborah Gold Mine is open to visitors as a popular tourist attraction. The well-preserved site offers the opportunity to learn about the history and development of gold mining in Bendigo. Underground tours to the second level of the mine highlight the conditions of underground mining and demonstrate how gold was unearthed at the Central Deborah. Above ground, displays, models and artifacts explain the history of mining from the very beginning of Bendigo.

Selected bibliography

Chambers, J. 1951. *Central Deborah Cold Mining Co. N. L. Bendigo*.

Lerk, James. 1993. *Bendigo's Central Deborah Gold Mine and its Era*. The Bendigo Trust.

Kaufman, Rob. 2006. *Revised Conservation Management Plan Central Deborah Gold Mine*. Prepared for the Bendigo Trust.

Hill, Gary and E. M. Doling. 2013. *Central Deborah Gold Mine Collection Significance Assessment*. Prepared for the Bendigo Trust.

Extent of Registration

Heritage Act 2017

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the **Heritage Act 2017**, I give notice under section 53 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by modifying a place in the Heritage Register:

Number: H1841

Category: Registered Place, Registered Objects Integral to a Registered Place and Registered Archaeological Place

Place: Central Deborah Gold Mine

Location: 76 Violet Street, Bendigo

Municipality: Greater Bendigo City

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 1841 encompassing all of Crown Allotment 19 Section 130C at Bendigo Parish of Sandhurst and the road reserve of Violet Street to the extent of 25m from the South West side of the title boundary, and the following objects integral:

1. Air-powered drill shank and sharpener
2. Compressed-air drill steel hammer
3. Hand tools
4. 4 x Bayne patent mining stretchers
5. 1 x Carbide gas generator
6. 4 x Carbide drums
7. Fire box tools
8. Timber trolley
9. Winder
10. Thompsons electric air compressor
11. Ingersoll Rand steam air compressor
12. Cornish boiler

21 August 2025

STEVEN AVERY

Executive Director

[General Government Gazette G 34 21 August 2025]

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/>