
BERRY CONSOLS EXTENDED

Location

865 CRESWICK-LAWRENCE ROAD LAWRENCE, HEPBURN SHIRE

Municipality

HEPBURN SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7623-0016

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO949

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 17, 2005

The State's richest deep alluvial gold lead system, known as the Berry Lead System, runs north from Creswick, slightly to the west of Smeaton. Mining of the lead system took place from the 1870s until the early 1900s. The Berry Consols Extended Company was floated in 1881. The company mined unprofitably until 1897 by which time investors had paid £75,500 in calls. For the next decade the company was one of the field's leading gold producers and during the early 1900s was its flagship. In 1903 the mine was employing the bulk of the district's miners (160 out of a total force of 180) and was responsible for the introducing electric lighting and locomotives for underground mining. The mine closed in 1907 having produced 100,727 ounces of gold making it the field's fifth largest gold producer.

The Berry Consols Extended Deep Lead Gold Mine is of historical, archaeological and scientific importance to the State of Victoria.

The Berry Consols Extended Deep Lead Gold Mine is historically and scientifically important as a characteristic example of an important form of gold mining. Gold mining sites are of crucial importance for the pivotal role they

have played since 1851 in the development of Victoria. As well as being a significant producer of Victoria's nineteenth century wealth, deep lead mining, with its intensive use of machinery, played an important role in the development of Victorian manufacturing industry. The Berry Consols Extended Deep Lead Gold Mine is important for its manifestation of this facet of gold mining.

Deep lead mining involved massive underground operations resulting in, among other things, large dumps of mullock, pebbles and slimes forming around the surface mining plant. Post-mining quarrying activities have badly disturbed (sometimes completely removed) the surface dumps. Berry Consols Extended Deep Lead Gold Mine is now unique in that it still retains its various heaps, relatively untouched and in their original condition. This makes the site the best place in the State to appreciate, through the nature and magnitude of the heaps, the scale of the underground operations.

The Berry Consols Extended Deep Lead Gold Mine is scientifically important for its potential to yield artefacts and evidence which will be able to provide significant information about the technological history of gold mining.

[Source: Victorian Heritage Register]

Hermes Number 7067

Property Number

History

Heritage Inventory History of Site: The following history was extracted from The Berry Deep Leads: an historical assessment, CF&L, October 1986, Charles Fahey. The Berry Consols Extended Company was floated in 1881. The company struck water difficulties soon after commencing work and by the mid 1880s had, as a result, suspended operations. More capital was sought and in 1889 the company recommenced work. The first gold returns for the company were in 1897, by which time shareholders had paid £75,500 in calls. For the next decade the Berry Consols Extended was one of the premier mines on the Berry Leads. Technologically the mine was important for its introduction of electricity in 1902 and for the adoption of electric locomotives in its drives. In 1903 the mine employed 180 of the field's 160 miners, and a further 70 men were engaged in supplying laths and firewood. The mine closed in August 1908. By the end of 1907, the total gold yield for the mine was 100,727 ounces and dividends were £69,000. However, shareholders had contributed £84,666. Machinery Information taken from The Significance of some Mining Machinery Sites in the Creswick Division 1859-1927, Technology Report TR-88/1, P. Milner, March 1988: 1891 - Lonie and Dingle 14 inch by 26 inch by 52 inch tandem compound steam pumping engine (first started in December 1889) 2 Galloway tube boilers, 26ft x 6½ft, 75lbs per square inch pressure 16 inch plunger lift (212 feet) and 16.5 inch draw lift (40 feet), both operating 9.5-10 stokes per minute. 1903 - Electric haulage underground substituted for horse traction during the year. 1905 - main pump rods broken due to age and rot; new pumping engine and new pump rods placed in both compartments of the shaft. New steam pumping engine erected. August 1908 3 x steel Cornish flue boilers 26ft x 6½ft 2 x iron Cornish flue boilers 26ft x 6½ft 15 inch x 26 inch compound steam engine Condenser 26 inch horizontal steam engine 20 inch double cylinder steam winding engine 12 inch single cylinder steam engine driving electric dynamo and mortar 12 inch single cylinder driving capstan 2 x vertical steam engines driving Roots blowers 7 inch single cylinder steam engine driving 5-head battery 16 inch single cylinder steam engine driving puddlers 2 x 16 inch plunger pumps and draw lift, pumping 19 million gallons per month Significance The Berry Consols Extended mine was the fifth gold producer on the Berry deep Leads. Although a major producer of gold the problem with water reduced its profitability, and the mine was run at a loss. Between 1902 and 1905 it was the leading mine of the field, and in those mines made substantial developments in the use of electric lighting and locomotives.

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/>