
SUNBURY INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL FARM COMPOUND SITE

Location

CIRCULAR DRIVE SUNBURY, HUME CITY

Municipality

HUME CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7822-0099

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO38

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 6, 2010

Data has been updated as a result of the Outer Western Metro Project, Context, March 2010.

The site comprises a main farmyard of bluestone setts which is overlooked by a large extant bluestone barn of approximately 30 metres in length.

An agricultural track runs to the south of this complex, providing access to the field to the east. This is lined by a bluestone drain on its south side as it runs past the farmyard.

Interpretation of Site

The field to the south of this lane contains a number of features suggesting that this was a later extension of the farm compound. These include what appears to be the site of a demolished building, now an overgrown pile of concrete and brick rubble, a brick drain running north south which probably intersects with that along the lane to the north, two subterranean concrete tanks and a concrete slab foundation. Whilst the previous survey (Du Cros 1991) did not record the features to the south, it did identify further concrete slabs and drains to the east of the main farmyard. These have since been removed.

Archaeological Significance

The extant bluestone barn, which is probably contemporary with the industrial school, is cut into the slope of the hill, and a brick surface reached by a brick stair covers the terrace to its rear. Another brick surface, incorporating a drain and a series of concrete slabs which may represent the floors of animal stalls, extends along the northern edge of the yard and the building, and the foundation of a brick and concrete structure lies on the southern side of the yard.

The farm site covers a large area and does not appear to have been subject to a great deal of ground disturbance. It is therefore probable that archaeological deposits are contained within it that relate to its date and the activities undertaken here.

Historical Significance

The site is of historical significance for its relation to the former Industrial School, the first purpose-built example of this type, and the Lunatic Asylum, both of which are represented by substantial physical evidence at the nearby Caloola site (H0937). It illustrates the range of occupations into which the inmates of the nineteenth century industrial school were directed, and perhaps the methods by which it was supported.

Other Names

CALOOLA 7, FARM COMPOUND, HOLDEN FLORA AND FAUNA RESERVE,

Hermes Number

8745

Property Number

History

Following the implementation of the Neglected and Criminal Children's Act of 1864, a 1,000 acre site was put aside on Jackson's Hill in Sunbury on which was developed the Sunbury Industrial School. This institution was designed to provide destitute or orphaned children with the skills necessary to care for themselves in adulthood.

The farm compound was probably originally created as part of the original industrial school to provide opportunities for agricultural training, and perhaps to supplement the schools income. It appears to have continued in use as a farming complex well into the 20th century.

Provisions for the children were inadequate and illness was rife. It was estimated that around 10 percent of children died within the first year of operation, and this led to the school gaining the nickname of the Sunbury Slaughterhouse. After public outcry, and after numerous Royal Commissions into the Industrial School System the Sunbury Industrial School was closed.

The site was redeveloped in 1879 as an asylum for the mentally ill and, having been substantially enlarged in the period 1891 - 1914, it reached 1000 patients at its peak. The 1920s the Health Reformation Act improved conditions and the site was maintained in use as a psychiatric hospital before becoming the Caloola Training Centre for the Intellectually Disabled between 1968 and 1992. It is now occupied by a number of organisations including Sunbury and Macedon Ranged Specialist School and Victoria University, although the latter is due to be replaced at the site by the Hume Anglican Grammar School in 2010.

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/>