

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: TIMBER COTTAGE AND ORCHARD (FORMER)

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Henty Street Elliott Street BRANXHOLME

STUDY NUMBER: 227

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

PRECINCT: Branxholme

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: 1-10 **SECTION:** 15 **PARISH:** PARISH OF BRANXHOLME

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 473 J; VicRoads 233 T3; located on the north-east corner of Henty and Elliott Street about 750m from the centre of Branxholme on the east side of the Arrandoovong Creek.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



Cottage and Orchard (Former) Henty Street, Branxholme. View south-west.

Image Date: 28/03/2002

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All of the cottage and all of the mature plantings within the area of land defined as 175m frontage to the eastern boundary on Henty Street, commencing 175m north of the cottage and the north and south boundaries being 100m..

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

This site consists of the ruins of a single storey timber cottage of two main rooms and a rear skillion and a substantial orchard. The cottage is located close to the rear or Henty Street boundary, facing away from Henty Street, overlooking the Arrandoovong Creek. There is a domed well between the rear of the cottage and the street. The construction revealed by its ruinous condition includes lathe and plaster walls with both hand split and machine sawn lathes, both rough sawn and dressed lining boards, and other primitive linings. Remnants of wallpaper survive in one cupboard which is untrimmed edging. The roof is timber shingled and subsequently covered in corrugated iron. The skillion includes a primitive fireplace used for cooking at the southern end.

The so-called orchard includes a row of Osage Orange (*Macula pomifera*) trees along the southern or Elliott Street boundary and extensive groves of olives, said to be the progeny of a single tree planted in the 1860s. (This tree has not been located precisely and may be on Section 16). Osage oranges were often used for parts in transport vehicles such as carriages, or used for fencing to keep stock in. It appears that the row of Osage Oranges may have formed the boundary of an orchard, or part of a stock enclosure, as they are planted very close together. Other exotics also survive such as two Lemon Trees (*Citrus limone*), at least one Mulberry (*Morus nigra*) as well as several other fruit trees.

HISTORY:

The history of this site is unclear. The physical fabric of the cottage suggests a very early date because of the use of hand-split lathes, adzed timbers and vestiges of wallpaper fashionable in the mid-nineteenth century. Oral history suggests that the cottage site included other buildings such as the men's or staff quarters, perhaps to the south of the existing rear yard. There has been no substantiated history regarding the ownership or purpose of the cottage, orchard or nearby Olive trees (*Olea europea*). The only other site on which Osage Orange plantings has been found in the area are in a remnant garden, on the corner of Henty Highway (Creek Street) and Brown Street. This allotment was taken up by A. Bradley in the early 1850s. The southern boundary of this site is defined by a (shorter than in this orchard) row of Osage Oranges. Due to the unusual planting, and the range of less common plants which both sites exhibit, it is possible that there may be some connection.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies
3.5 Developing primary production
3.5.3 Developing agricultural industries

Theme 5: Working
5.8 Working the land

CONDITION:

The cottage is in a ruinous and now irredeemable state. The orchard is overgrown and infested with woody and soft weeds.

INTEGRITY:

High degree of integrity

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The timber cottage and orchard (former), located on section 15 of the township of Branxholme appears to date from the mid nineteenth century, although an 1858 Township Map does not show any owners of that

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section at that time. The cottage faces the main Hamilton Road over the Arrandoovong Creek valley, rather than facing Henty Street, which suggests that it probably pre-dates the Township survey of 1858. The cottage has a substantial orchard planted to the west down the slope of the valley, with a wide variety of exotic fruit and timber trees, the most unusual of which are a row of Osage Orange (*Maclura pomifera*), probably planted to fence in a garden from stock. There are also some very substantial Olive trees (*Olea europea*) which are said to be the progeny of one Olive planted as part of a larger orchard in the 1860s. No individuals or families have been able to be linked with the cottage or orchard. The cottage is in ruinous condition, and the orchard is overgrown. Both retain a high degree of integrity.

How is it significant?

The timber cottage and orchard located on Henry Street Branhholme are of historical significance to the township of Branhholme an Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The timber cottage and orchard (former) are of historical significance as a rare surviving example of an early (mid nineteenth century) cottage and associated extensive orchard. The orchard is of further historical interest for its large size and variety of trees, particularly for its unusual use of Osage Orange for either timber, decoration or fencing purposes.

COMPARISON:

006 Wannon Lea Homestead and Garden,
205 Albert Homestead Complex, Springfield Lane, Peshurst

ASSESSED BY: aen

ASSESSMENT DATE:

9/04/2002

EXISTING LISTINGS:

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR Include in RNE Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

REFERENCES:
