

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: CAVENDISH HERITAGE PRECINCT

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Henty Highway CAVENDISH

STUDY NUMBER: 407

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

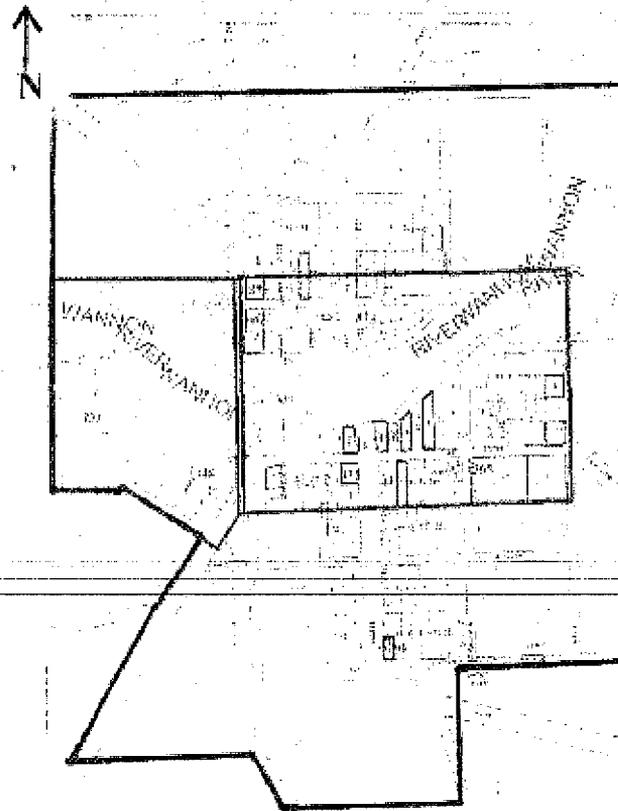
PRECINCT: Cavendish

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 432J ; VicRoads 228 J8

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



Cavendish Heritage Precinct: Red = Heritage Overlay * Green = Significant Landscape Overlay

Image Date:

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the buildings and infrastructure constructed before 1954 including not only the places specifically identified as typical or outstanding examples of their type, but also those which contribute in a minor way. 2. All the land, both public and private, which is included within the precinct boundaries defined by the red and green lines on the plan of the Cavendish Heritage Precinct.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The grid of the township of Cavendish is aligned parallel with the Wannon River and is therefore set on a rigid north-south orientation. The earliest formal subdivision of the township (then known as Wilton) provided for town allotments in twenty sections, and suburban allotments beyond. The sections, for the most part, include ten standard allotments of 50,000 square feet or two roods (4,644 square metres). These allotments increase in size further from the town centre, ranging from little more than one acre (.407 hectares) to six acres (2.428 hectares). The main streets are Scott Street (Dunkeld-Cavendish Road) and Barker Street (Henty Highway). Barker Street still crosses the Wannon River at the same point where the original river ford was located. The 1877 plan shows reserves for the Church of England, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic Churches in Bunbury Street, a reserve for Public Purposes (State School forest plantation), a Cemetery, Police Reserve and State School Reserve. The practicalities of the plan can be traced back to the subdivision for towns in the colony of New South Wales promulgated by Governor Darling in the 1820s and adopted, more or less, by the colonial government of Victoria. The theory behind the plan can be traced back as far as the colonial towns and cities of the ancient Roman Empire.

Scott and Barker Streets became the major crossroads of the towns for two main reasons. Firstly, it was the central point where the important major routes to Adelaide, Melbourne and Ararat met. Secondly, the major crossroads may have been deliberately located where an Inn already stood. Waddell's Inn became the current Bunyip Hotel. There has been a hotel on this site since prior to 1842, and it is possible that this building may have influenced the precise alignment of the streets.

The introduction of the Hamilton-Balmoral-Cavendish railway line in the early twentieth century was an intrusion on some of the northern allotments of the township. A extensive area was carved out of several allotments for the railway line and station ground. Although the Cavendish railway station has been demolished, a substantial timber rail bridge remains spanning the Wannon River upstream from the Old Cavendish Cemetery.

The township has an old and a new cemetery. The new cemetery dates from 1906, and was sited after the Public Health Department demanded the old cemetery be closed for reasons of sanitation. The 'old' cemetery is located on a bend of the Wannon River, close to the township, and concerns were raised regarding water contamination. The 'old' cemetery is now used as a public open space, and the river flats have been landscaped for recreational purposes. Other large public open spaces were reserved on the flood plains either side of the Wannon River, in the centre of the township. These were intended to be enjoyed by the residents, and left in their natural state. In recent years picnic facilities have been established in these areas to encourage their use. Cavendish has few other recreational outdoor facilities. There is no public oval, show grounds or sporting ground, common to comparable small towns.

The churches, and the residences associated with them, are all in Bunbury Street, to the north west of the township, adjacent to the Wannon River. The residential density of the township is very low in the centre and lower on the outskirts. The shops that survive are clustered around the main intersection of Scott and Barker Street. The main road bridge across the River dates from the 1960s.

Other notable sites include: -

- 192 The Heath (former racecourse site) Old Tannery Road, Cavendish CFA 432 A
- 264 Railway Workers Cottage Scott Street, Cavendish CFA 432 A
- 406 Timber Cottage (Cavendish 8) Dwyer Street Cavendish CFA 432 A
- 399 Timber Cottage (Cavendish 4) Scott Street Cavendish CFA 432 A
- 398 Schinus molle (Peppercorn Tree) Scott Street Cavendish CFA 432 A
- 397 Timber Cottage (Cavendish 2) Scott Street, Cavendish CFA 432 A
- 395 Timber Cottage (Cavendish 1) Scott Street, Cavendish CFA 432 A

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394 Timber House (Cavendish 1) Henty Highway, Cavendish CFA 432 A
400 Timber Cottage (Cavendish 5 - ruined) Wills Street, Cavendish CFA 432 A
190 Site of Cavendish Academy (former) North Side of Wannon River, Cavendish CFA 432 A
526 Shed Railway Station Site, Cavendish CFA 432 A
118 Bills Horse Trough, Cavendish CFA 432 A
193 The Common (former cricket site) Coleraine Road Cavendish CFA 432 A
191 Cavendish Brewery (former) Unknown Cavendish CFA 432 A

HISTORY:

Several factors combined to trigger the establishment of the service centre that became the township of Cavendish, or Wilton as it was known until 1850. Firstly, Major Mitchell's comments on the area were favourable, when he passed through in 1836 which led to the establishment of large and eventually successful squatting runs in the immediate vicinity from the 1840s. The land was considered to be ideal for grazing sheep with usually reliable water. Secondly, there was a useful crossing point of the Wannon River for traffic from Adelaide to Melbourne. Cavendish, along with Balmoral was an important point on the route between Ararat, Adelaide and Melbourne. Thirdly, building materials were readily to hand, such as timber of different species suitable for different purposes, durable and easily worked stone, and clay for making bricks.

Waddell's Inn, at what would become Wilton, and later Cavendish, is marked on a map of the Western District in 1842 (Lingham, after Best, 1842). The building was replaced and altered several times, but remains on the same site, now known as the Bunyip Inn. Henry Wade surveyed Cavendish (Wilton) in 1850. Wade also surveyed another twenty five allotments two miles south of the township. It is thought that there may have been a tannery operating at this site prior to 1850, as the twenty five allotments were surveyed around the tannery site. The first Cavendish allotments were sold in February 1852. At this land sale, fourteen half acre allotments in the centre of the township were sold.

By the end of 1852, a boarding school, Cavendish College, was opened under Mr. James Brake (Dundas Shire Centenary, 64). This school was referred to by James Bonwick as "an excellent national school, which boasts of being the largest boarding school in the west" where settlers sent their children many miles to attend (ibid., 64)

The earliest squatting runs around Cavendish were established in the 1840s. The main runs included Mokanger, Kenilworth, Kanawalla and further north, Glenisla. Other than Glenisla, these runs were located relatively close to the new township and influenced it directly. Labour was recruited from the town, shopkeepers and tradesmen provided goods and services, and some banks and churches were in the town.

The location of the original Cavendish (or Wilton) cemetery is unusual, being sited on the bank of the main water supply to the settlement, the Wannon River. It seems that, in the original survey, a site 87 chains to the south-east of Cavendish was surveyed as a cemetery, but it was never used. The area which is marked on Wade's 1850 map as 'burial ground - subject to flood' had been used since before 1850 and continued to be used by the townspeople. This land was eventually gazetted as a Cemetery Reserve in 1877. It is not known when the first concerns were raised regarding sanitation and the cemetery's proximity to the Wannon River. In 1894, the Health Officer, A. Bennett inspected the Old Cemetery in response to a request from the Shire of Dundas. His recommendation was not to re-locate the cemetery. He argued that the water of the Wannon was not used immediately for many miles downstream, that any nitrogenous or other material would filter a good deal before reaching the river, and that a substantial amount of money had already been spent on beautification and maintenance of the Cemetery. Despite this report, the Board of Health stated that the site should be given up and a new site obtained. John Taylor, who made the 1895 survey of the Cavendish (Old) Cemetery stated "It is certainly a most undesirable site for burial purposes and should never have been granted" (DSE, in Rowe, et al., 31). To the chagrin of most of the townspeople, a new cemetery site was developed and the first burials were made in 1908.

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Storekeepers were critical for the beginning of the town. The first general store in Cavendish (known as the Cavendish Store) was established in 1847 on the site of the present St. Mark's Church. This store was established prior to 1850, and is said to have served bullock teams, coaches and travellers who passed through Cavendish to the pastoral properties and beyond. The second general store opened in 1860, known as the Wannon Store. The Cavendish General Store is located on the same site, and has incorporated parts of the original Wannon Store in the current building. Its location at the crossroads of the township attracted the business of road traffic between Melbourne-Adelaide and Ararat, as well as serving as a meeting place and general merchant for the large pastoral properties surrounding the town. As the settlement grew, the store expanded to serve as general merchant to the growing townfolk, travellers and pastoralists.

Official communication came through the postal service. The first post office in Cavendish operated from the Cavendish Store, with John Mercer as post master. The post office was located in a number of different residences until a post office was built. It is interesting to note that as Cavendish's population has declined in the later twentieth century, the postal service has reverted to the general store.

The Police were an early official presence in the township. The township map of 1858 shows the of the police reserve located at the current site of the lock-up. This location, at the intersection of the Melbourne, Adelaide and Ararat Roads, and opposite the Bunyip Inn appear to be deliberately central. A lock up (identical to those at Balmoral and Dunkeld) was constructed about 1860, and continued to be used until the mid 1960s. The new police station has been built about 100 metres north of its original position.

By 1865 the official Government Gazetteer, produced by F. F. Bailliere, described Cavendish as "a postal and shire council township in the parish of Cavendish, and electoral district of Dundas and Follett. It is situated on the Wannon river, 12 miles S. W, from the Victorian range and 5 miles S. E. of the Dundas group of hills. The district is strictly pastoral. There is a tannery in the neighbourhood, and no other manufactories or mills ... Hoyle's coaches run twice a week between Cavendish, Hamilton, and Balmoral. Cobb and Co.'s coaches run from Cavendish, via Hamilton, and to Ballarat, when trains run to Melbourne ... The surrounding country is, particularly to the N. and N. W., undulating, well grassed, lightly timbered and excellently adapted for pastoral purposes." (Bailliere, 24). It advised that the population was 200 persons. Cavendish showed little population growth, it took nearly one hundred years to reach the peak population of about 500 in 1963 (Dundas Shire Centenary, 63).

The Cobb and Co Coaches which served Cavendish in the nineteenth century were the main transport method for those wishing to visit the larger towns Hamilton and Balmoral. The name Cobb & Co is still famous for more than sixty years of service, especially in the more remote parts of the colony of Victoria. As railways were built, coaches lost business on some of Victoria's main routes. As the Gazetteer of 1865 states, Cavendish was served by two coach services, Hoyles and Cobb and Co. A Cobb and Co. depot was located near the 'old' cemetery in the extension of Scott Street, unusual for its distance from the hotel. The arrival of the railway at Cavendish in 1915 meant that it became the preferred mode of transport. The railway line passed directly past the Cobb and Co. depot.

Particular individuals emerged as leaders of the community, working hard and long for its advancement. Some were townspeople, but the more influential of these individuals were the owners of the squatting runs. Many of the streets are named after the early squatters, such as Cadden Street (after Simeon Cadden of Glendinning and Gringegalgona); Chirnside Street (after Thomas and Andrew Chirnside of Mokanger); Mercer Street (after William Mercer of Kanawalla) and Lockhart Street (after George Lockhart of Kanawalla). Townspeople, particularly merchants, also worked hard for the community, establishing schools, churches and recreational venues. More regular entertainment and recreation had been provided from the 1870s through the Hall and Library (since demolished), another institution supported by the squatters and the townspeople.

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The Presbyterian Minister, Rev. Angus McDonald was appointed to Hamilton in 1857, and preached once a month at Cavendish, also visiting Branhholme, Dunkeld and Penshurst. The foundation of the various churches was an important step in the 'civilisation' of the area. Land was reserved for the major denominations and each strived to build a church. The construction dates of Cavendish's churches indicate the very strong early Presbyterian dominance of the population in the nineteenth century. It also indicates the slow population growth from migration by different groups into the Cavendish area until decades into the twentieth century. St John's Presbyterian Church (now St. Luke's Lutheran Church), built in 1862, was the first to be built. For over seventy years, the Presbyterian Church was the only denomination which had a formal place of worship. The next church was not built until 1938, when the foundation stone for the Methodist Church was laid. The last church to be built was St. Mark's Anglican in 1962. Until the Methodist and Anglican churches were built, their services were held in the Presbyterian Church.

The establishment of a school was one of the first objectives of everyone in the town. As mentioned, the first school was the Cavendish College, established in 1852, this was the first formal school in what is now the Southern Grampians Shire. Cavendish College was later known as the Wannon National School prior to the Education Department taking control of the school in 1873. Later school buildings were constructed towards the end of the nineteenth century, but were mostly demolished when the current building was constructed in 1963. A small portion of one of the late nineteenth century buildings survives as the core of the 1963 structure.

There was little industry in the township of Cavendish, but the hinterland supported the early tannery and a thriving sawmilling industry. The tannery was located at the surveyed township site some two miles south of Cavendish. It is possible that the tannery had been operating since pre-1850 when Wade undertook his survey of Cavendish and this settlement site. He deliberately accommodated what appears to have been a substantial settlement upstream from the tannery with the tannery itself excluded from the street grid. Various important local people purchased the land, perhaps for speculation, such as Thomas Bromell, A Riley, A Donaldson, J Sandison and R Donelan. Bromell was the owner of Hensleigh Park and became an MLC. The last was a publican and selector who ran the Karabeal Inn at the time and who may have bought his central block to build a public house. Other than depressions in the earth, no physical fabric remains of the tannery. Sawmill sites were located throughout the timbered areas around Cavendish, both on private and government land. These increased with the advent of the railway, which developed sidings for the transport of timber.

The eventual arrival of the railway in 1915 was the first major advance for Cavendish in the twentieth century. "A railway linking the Wimmera with Portland was first proposed in 1889 but nothing was done for many years. Work was started on a line in 1912 from Hamilton to Cavendish to serve an area of Closer Settlement. After much investigation and political maneuvering it was decided to link the two lines through Balmoral. The extension to Balmoral was opened in 1919, but it was not until 19th November 1920 that the line was completed" (Harris, 17). When the railway did arrive, there was a great demand for sleepers in their construction and an easier method of transport for processed timber. Red gum blocks were also used for paving in Melbourne, particularly around tram tracks. Consequently, sawmills were closely associated with railway stations and sidings.

The township consolidated rather than grew after the Second World War. Along with the decline in rural population from failed agricultural pursuits, the loss of many young men from Cavendish and district in World Wars One and Two compounded the decline in the township between 1901 and 1945. These conflicts are commemorated a fine Memorial Hall and Park located at the centre of the township.

Growth declined after 1954, as economic factors forced many small landholders and soldier settlers from the land, reducing the rural population and therefore demand for services within the township. Over the past five decades, the town has gradually declined to play only a minor service role in the district. Hamilton now serves as the major regional centre for the provision of goods and services, further compounded by the amalgamation

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of the Wannon, Dundas and Mount Rouse Shires in the 1990s to form the Shire of Southern Grampians, administered from Hamilton.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 2 Peopling Australia

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies

3.5 Developing primary production

3.5.1 Grazing stock

3.5.2 Breeding animals

3.5.3 Developing agricultural industries

Theme 5: Working

5.8 Working on the land

Theme 6 Educating

6.2 Establishing schools

6.5 Educating people in remote places

Theme 8 Developing Australia's cultural life

8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The township of Cavendish, to the extent of its official boundaries, unchanged since its survey in the early 1850s, was an important settlement serving the pastoral interests of the surrounding squatting runs, some limited agricultural development, and subsequent efforts at closer settlement. It is located 27 kilometers north of the provincial centre of Hamilton. The town developed at the road crossing of the Wannon River, particularly for traffic between Adelaide, Melbourne and the Ararat Goldfields. The first buildings were Waddell's Inn (where the Bunyip Hotel stands) and the Cavendish store (on the site of St. Marks Anglican Church). These were built to capitalise on the traffic to newly established pastoral properties and further afield. One early industry was the tannery, located 3.2 kilometers north of the township. The tannery is thought to have been established prior to 1850, when Wade surveyed the township of Wilton (Cavendish) and also established a survey of twenty five sections around the tannery site. By the mid 1860s, the town could boast substantial public buildings such as a National School (the eighth established in Victoria), police station lock-up, and Presbyterian Church, representing the strongest Christian denomination in the area. Churches of other denominations were not built until well into the twentieth century, indicating the low population movement into and out of Cavendish. The township serviced the surrounding squatting runs not only in a commercial and mercantile sense, but also for social purposes. The arrival of the railway was relatively late and less than successful in the promotion of the town. It did support other industries such as saw milling, but was largely used for passenger transport and transit of wheat from the Wimmera. The town has been influenced by the breaking up of large estates, at the end of the nineteenth century and after the two World Wars. The town's population has declined in parallel with a reduction in other local services. This is a general trend across the state and is due to a combination of factors, not least the decline of the wool industry and an increased mobility.

How is it significant?

The township of Cavendish is of historical, cultural, social and architectural significance to the community of

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Cavendish and the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The township of Cavendish is of historical significance as one of the oldest permanent urban settlements in the Shire, and of social significance as the focus for the community in the Cavendish area. It is and of architectural significance as a planned town with a typical range of buildings including public facilities and utilities, churches, commercial buildings and private residences.

COMPARISON:

408 Balmoral heritage precinct Henty Highway Balmoral
402 Branxholme heritage precinct Henty Highway Branxholme
409 Byaduk heritage precinct Hamilton-Port Fairy Road Byaduk
401 Coleraine heritage precinct Glenelg Highway Coleraine
406 Dunkeld heritage precinct Glenelg Highway Dunkeld
405 Glenthompson heritage precinct Glenelg Highway Glenthompson
403 Penshurst heritage precinct Hamilton Highway Penshurst
404 Tarrington heritage precinct Hamilton Highway Tarrington

ASSESSED BY: AEN

ASSESSMENT DATE:

07-Apr-04

EXISTING LISTINGS:

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR Include in RNE Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

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