

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

name: 'Oakville Park' homestead
Address: 522 Vectis Station Road VECTIS
Place Type: Residence
Citation Date: 2022



Oakville Park Homestead

**Recommended
Heritage Protection** **VHR -**

 HI -

 PS
 Yes

Integrity

Reasonably high integrity of base structure, however missing verandah, windows and glazing, and floors to main rooms.

History and Historical Context

The present, modestly sized property was subdivided in 1981 off a much larger land holding. It is part of Crown Allotment 137B in the Parish of Vectis East.

The Koenigs were one of the German families that arrived from South Australia during the 1860s and 1870s in response to the *Land Act* of 1869. Under the Grant Act, Crown land was sold for £1 per acre. The requirements of the selectors were residence, cultivation and improvement of the land, with a yearly rent paid to the government of 2 shillings per acre. Selections could be up to 320 acres in size.

It is recorded that 'Carl and Christian' [sic] Koenig built the first Zion Lutheran Church in Vectis in 1875.[1] Friedrich Carl Christian Koenig was born in Hoffnungstal, South Australia, in 1852. He wed Matilda Schmidt, also born in South Australia, at the Schmidt residence in Natimuk in 1878 (NB: this is a wattle and daub house of the late 1870s, which survives at 5 Schmidt Street). They had 10 children.[2]

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Friedrich Carl Christian Koenig selected land at Vectis, a total of 308 acres comprising Crown Allotments 137B, 137A1, 138A and 138B. Friedrich improved the land as until 29 March 1884 when he received the crown grant.[3] It is likely the Friedrich constructed the substantial mud-brick house only after he had freehold ownership of the land. Certainly by 1888 his residence was large enough to host a 'Public Meeting of Farmers' to which 'All farmers [were] requested to attend'.[4]

The villa dwelling comprises six rooms, accessed off a central passage. Mud brick blocks form the walls and are reinforced with barbed wire – a technique typical of the region during this period. A bullnose, corrugated iron sheet verandah originally wrapped around the facades, which would have added in the protection of walls from weather. Chimneys are fired clay brick in construction and have a dog-tooth band below the corbelled top, suggesting an 1870s-80s building date. Inside, there are pressed tin ceiling linings to many rooms. Pressed metal ceilings were imported by the Wunderlich company from 1885, and manufactured in Australia from 1887, reaching their height of fashion around 1910. This suggests the metal ceilings may have been an early improvement to the house. The front door has since been removed and is now reputedly part of the 'Old Horsham Restaurant' in Horsham.

Friedrich Koenig sold the 308-acre property in 1896 to John Clover, another local farmer. The Koenig family, this time Philip Alfred Koenig, regained the property in 1905.[5] Either of these property transfers may have provided the impetus for an internal redecoration with pressed metal. Upon Philip's death in 1932, the property passed to his widow, Louisa Ernestina Koenig, who later owned it jointly with Walter Albert Koenig. Walter Koenig owned it solely from 1959 to 1978, when the property left the family for good.[6]

A new residence was erected adjacent to the villa after 1945. It is probable that the villa was abandoned after this date. A later shed has been built in front of the villa in the last 10-15 years, partially blocking the former entrance from view.

[1] 'Vectis Church buildings – 100th Anniversary' by John Noack, 17 Nov. 2008, on <https://www.wendishheritage.org.au/vectis-church-buildings-100th-anniversary/>, accessed on 23 May 2022.

[2] 'Lemann Henschke – Family Card' genealogy, on [https://moadstorage.blob.core.windows.net/\\$web/Lehmann_Henschke/wc03/wc03_141.html](https://moadstorage.blob.core.windows.net/$web/Lehmann_Henschke/wc03/wc03_141.html) accessed 23 May 2022.

[3] Parish Plan of Vectis East-2 (PROV VPRS 16171); FCC Koenig had Section Act application No. 41766/19.20. Certificate of title Vol. 1593 Folio 433.

[4] 'A Public Meeting of Farmers' (1888) *Horsham Times*, 2 Oct., p. 3.

[5] Certificate of title Vol. 1593 Folio 433.

[6] Certificate of title Vol. 3054 Folio 733 and Vol. 8240 Folio 448.

Description

Physical Description

Mud brick symmetrical villa style residence of six main rooms, central corridor and service rooms. Coursed and pointed mud brick blocks approximately 150mm high x 450mm long, with fired brick quoins and window surrounds. Remnants of a protective limewash coating remain, particularly on the south wall. Hipped corrugated sheet metal roof with central valley gutter and ogee-profile eaves gutters, timber lined eaves. Handmade brick foundations with bitumen / mortar damp proof course. Double hung timber sash windows (most with sashes and glazing now missing); front door and surround completely removed. Bullnose verandah presumably on timber

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posts now completely missing.

Internally walls are rendered and wallpapered, with pressed metal ceilings and timber floors remaining to central hall, large rear room, kitchen and bathroom only.

Two established Washingtonia palms located either side of front door location. There is a domed well or cistern just behind the house.

Site previously contained associated sheds (now removed); later (c1945) dwelling located nearby.

Physical Condition

Poor to moderate condition – missing a number of elements – and some cracking to walls. Ceiling to rear room collapsing, windows missing, verandah missing.

Mud bricks in fair condition; brickwork in sound condition. Roof in fair condition.

Australian Heritage Commission Criteria

Relevant HERCON Criteria

Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history. (demonstrates the development of farming properties in the early twentieth century, including the use of local construction techniques and materials to provide housing)

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history (unusual, large villa style mud brick residence, of which few good examples remain intact – and none known within Shire)

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period. (indicative of a low-tech, but appropriate and innovative response to the need for low cost housing in the district in the early twentieth century – using local materials and improvised construction techniques)

Comparative Analysis

Dwelling, Mud Brick Farm Complex, Wards Road, Haven, Hermes no. 186079: Much smaller scale, simpler in form and detail, and of a later date (c1930s).

Dwelling, 6476 Ararat-St Arnaud Road, Beazleys Bridge (Northern Grampians Shire), Hermes no. 104790: Similar scale and design characteristics – not dated. Condition (based on Hermes report) much better.

Dwelling, 16 Fenaughty Street, Kyabram (Campaspe Shire), Hermes no. 42653: Similar scale and era but in town setting (not rural).

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The elements of heritage value of the c1884-88 Oakville Park Homestead, 522 Vectis Station Road, Vectis, include:

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. The single storey mud brick building with remnant limewash, including brick quoins and dressings, corbelled brick chimneys, barbed wire reinforcement, timber window frame remnants, hipped corrugated sheet metal roof, ogee gutters;

. Internally, pressed metal ceilings, remnant wallpapers are of interest.

How is it significant?

Oakville Park Homestead is of historical and technical significance to Horsham Rural City. It is also of rarity value.

Why is it significant?

Oakville Park Homestead is:

. Of local historical significance, demonstrating the development of farming properties in the early twentieth century, including the use of local techniques and materials to provide housing. It also illustrates the influx of German settlers and selectors, such as Friedrich Carl Christian Koenig, in the 1870s who arrived from South Australia in response to the *Land Act* of 1869. (Criterion A)

. Of local rarity value, being an unusual, large villa style mud brick residence, of which no other known examples remain. (Criterion B)

. Of local technical significance, indicative of a low-tech, but appropriate and innovative response to provide housing in the district in the early twentieth century – using local materials and construction techniques. (Criterion F)

Recommendations 2022

External Paint Controls	Yes
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Fences & Outbuildings	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted	No
Incorporated Plan	-
Aboriginal Heritage Place	No

This information is provided for guidance only and does not supersede official documents, particularly the planning scheme. Planning controls should be verified by checking the relevant municipal planning scheme.