

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

name: Kewell Park
Address: 2991 Henty Highway KEWELL
Place Type: Homestead building
Citation Date: 2022



Recommended Heritage Protection **VHR -**
HI -
PS
Yes

Integrity

Dwelling in good to excellent condition. Most early 20thC outbuildings now demolished/ substantially altered post WW11 – low integrity.

History and Historical Context

Kewell Park homestead is situated approximately 30km north-north-east of Horsham on the Henty Highway, just south of the Old Minyip Road. The homestead was constructed in c.1915 for Mr Michael Bartholemeu (Tom) Coffey on Allotment 161, Parish of Kewell East. Tom inherited the land upon the death of his father, John in February 1908.

John Coffey was born in Limerick, Ireland and arrived in Australia in the early 1870s. Shortly after, he was engaged to cart goods from Melbourne to the Wimmera and return with wool from the sheep stations. John and his brother, Michael were pioneers in the early days of land settlement in the Wimmera, having selected land in

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Kewell c.1875. John's obituary stated that:

He was a successful farmer and hotel keeper, was a very shrewd business man, and was very fortunate in all his speculations. He owned a very large extent of first-class land and was very wealthy. He was a man whose word was his bond: he was charitably disposed, and gave to all deserving objects: he was a good supporter of the church, and gave liberally to it.[1]

The extent of John's wealth was revealed in his Will, which listed an extensive number of landholdings within in the Parishes of Kewell East, Glen Thomson and Jung Jung (now known as Jung), as well as a property at Sea Lake in the Mallee. Tom (referred to as Michael in the Will) was bequeathed Allotments 150, 151, 160, 161, 162, 164, 165, 167, 168, 169, 170 and 171, Parish of Kewell East.[2]

On 27 May 1914, Tom married Jean McCormack of Balham Hill, Molesworth.[3] Soon after, they built Kewell Park – a large comfortable homestead, which would accommodate their future family. According to Tom's sons, John and Michael, the homestead was constructed by a team of builders who were travelling by wagon through the region at the beginning of the First World War. They explained that the team, which purportedly carried their own saws and equipment, felled trees from the property and constructed the house onsite. John and Michael were told by their father that he had drawn the builders a rough plan of the house on the ground, specifying that there be a large hallway in the centre of the house to allow a breeze to travel through.[4] John and Michael believe that similar houses in the district were also built by the same travelling work crew.

Kewell Park is a simple rectangular shape timber framed and clad homestead with a corrugated iron sheet roof and wrap-around timber verandah. It features two large bedrooms, bathroom (renovated) and walk in pantry on the left side of the central hallway. A formal dining room is located on the right (front) side of the hallway, as is another bedroom and kitchen (renovated). The interior features early light fittings and original decorative woodwork, which is purported to have been carved onsite at the time of construction. The hessian lined, timber framed walls feature a mix of original wallpaper with subsequent additions. Several of the original outbuildings have been demolished due to deterioration over time, including the original woolshed, which was replaced c.1960s. However, the cellar and worker's cottage (now a guest house) remain. At the time of inspection, the original coach house was still standing, though in structurally unsound condition. It has since been demolished. The top right door hinge of the coach house was branded by the blacksmith who had produced the hinges: "Ackland maker Jung".

As of 2014, Kewell Park was most recently occupied by Tom's wife, (the late) Jean, and daughter, Edwina.

[1] Horsham Times (1908) Obituary. The late Mr. John Coffey. *Horsham Times*. 14 February, p. 3.

[2] Will of John Coffey. VPRS 7591, no. 42. VPRO.

[3] Weekly Times (1914) Coffey-McCormack. *Weekly Times*. 13 June, p. 10.

[4] Per. Comm. John and Michael Coffey. 12 March 2014.

Description

Physical Description

Single storey, timber framed, projecting asymmetrical gable front villa, with CGI 'm' shape roof, wrap-around bull-nose verandah with turned timber posts and cast-iron lacework, and timber weatherboard cladding.

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Chimneys are corbelled brick (overpainted). Central passage defines the inside layout, with principal and service rooms either side. Footprint of dwelling is substantial. Internal walls are lined with hessian and covered with period wallpaper – several varieties noted. Timber fretwork from the era dresses passageway. Early half buried cellar and rooms over remain to rear yard. Other outbuildings all replaced c 1970s.

Physical Condition

Good to excellent condition. House maintained as residence.

Australian Heritage Commission Criteria

Relevant HERCON Criteria

Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of our cultural or natural history. (illustration of early 20thC expansion and establishment of smaller scale, but higher yield farms and associated homesteads to the north of Horsham (city))

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments. (reflects the type of farm being established c1915 in the northern Horsham district. Kewell Park is representative of such farms & the homestead is intact. The house is very substantial in size while conservative in its design, illustrating the slow transition from Victorian Italianate forms and details and the Edwardian Queen Anne).

Comparative Analysis

Several farm dwellings of the early 20thC period were identified as of potential HO value in Stage I study. The early 20thC farm of Kewell Park is not uncommon in other Shires – comparison will therefore be local, rather than state-wide. Comparison is based upon finding places from the public realm. There may be further representative farms 'off road', which were beyond the scope of the Stage 1 study.

Dwelling/ farmhouse, 529 Western Highway Vectis, Hermes no. 186229: 'Windarra' farmhouse and outbuildings of period (close inspection not possible)

Dwelling/ farmhouse, 249 Drillers Rd, Kewell, Hermes no. 186059: Symmetrical villa residence, timber cladding – similar era and condition as Kewell Park residence. History of property not known.

Farm / dwelling, 461 Polkemmet Rd, Vectis, Hermes no. 191220: Substantial farm of period – mostly off road – homestead c early 20thC, with outbuildings.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The elements of heritage value of the 1915 Kewell Park homestead, 2991 Henty Highway, Kewell, include:

- . External form of the residence, chimneys, wrap-around verandah.
- . Any surviving early outbuildings.

How is it significant?

The 1915 Kewell Park homestead is of local historic significance to Horsham Rural City.

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Why is it significant?

The 1915 Kewell Park homestead is:

. of local historic significance as a representation of the type of farm homestead illustrating the early 20thC expansion and establishment of smaller scale, but higher yield farms to the north of Horsham. The house is very substantial in size while conservative in its design, illustrating the slow transition from Victorian Italianate forms and details and the Edwardian Queen Anne. (Criteria A and D)

Recommendations 2022

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

References

Literature title: Horsham Times Newspaper

Literature type: General Reference

Literature author:

Literature publisher:

Literature year:

Literature title: Weekly Times Newspaper

Literature type: General Reference

Literature author:

Literature publisher:

Literature year:

Literature title: Will and probate of John Coffey, VPRS 7591, no. 42

Literature type: General Reference

Literature author:

Literature publisher: Victorian Public Records Office

Literature year:

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.