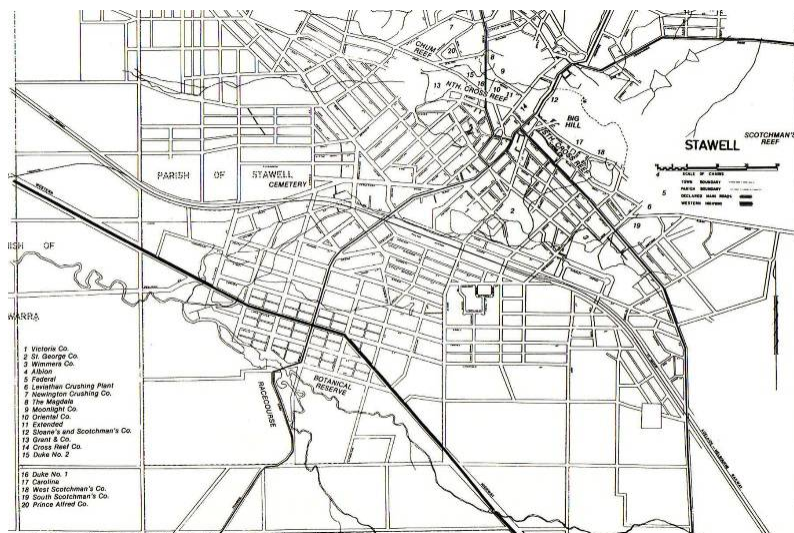


Victorian Heritage Database Report
Oriental Company Mine, Darlington Road (east and west sides), STAWELL



Location:

Darlington Road (east & west sides) STAWELL, NORTHERN GRAMPAINS SHIRE

Heritage Status / Level of Significance:

Stage 2 Heritage Study Complete

Statement of Significance:

Heritage Inventory History of Site: The Oriental mine was one of the richest of the Stawell mines and was worked to a depth of 1,866 feet. The mine had two main periods, with its earliest being the most productive. From the early 1860s to the time of the company's amalgamation with the adjoining North Cross Company in August 1888, the Oriental produced, from a very small claim, 4387 kg of gold from 90315 tonnes (141,036 ounces, from 38,893 tons, valued at £556,612, and paid out £300,000 in dividends; and the Oriental & North Cross Reef Company -1888 to 1906 - produced 96 kg of gold from 7977 tonnes of ore.

In December 1868, Stawell's mining registrar reported that there had been four years of successful quartz mining on the field. This record had been achieved not by any one company but a host of small claimholders, eg. in March 1867 there were 71 claims being worked on 11 reefs. The uninterrupted success of the small claimholders, according to the mining registrar, was beginning to attract the attention of outside capital, instigating an investment spree. This spree led to the rapid formation of numerous joint-stock (public) companies and the marking off in leases of a very extensive area of country, principally to the north-west of the worked reefs. The investment spree, which saw £12,000 invested in machinery in three months, proved to be

unsuccessful. The field's fortunes was quickly reversed when two of the old established mines - the Pleasant Creek North Cross Reef and the Oriental - commenced producing rich gold from below the 600-ft levels. The North Cross, and to a lesser extent, the Oriental Company, were to dominate the field's gold production through the 1870s. Their success on the deep formations encouraged others: such as the Magdala, Prince Patrick, Prince Alfred, Carolina, Great Northern and Newington & Pleasant Creek companies.

The Oriental Mine site is historically and scientifically important at a LOCAL level as a substantially intact example of an important gold mining technique. Gold mining sites are of crucial importance for the pivotal role they have played since 1851 in the development of Victoria.

Overall the Oriental Mine site is of LOCAL significance.

Description

DESCRIPTION & INTERPRETATION OF FEATURES:

The shaft is immediately north of Magdala shaft, east side of Darlington Road. The battery foundations are on the west side of the road.

Battery. Large brick engine bed, 20 ft x 4 ft, and 7 ft high. Running north from the bed (approximately 18 ft) is a line of partly buried mortar blocks and tie bolts. The battery foundations are obscured by a large pepper tree.

Pumping plant. Abutting the north-west corner of the battery engine bed is a concrete pumping bed, 12 ft x 5 ft, with 1¼ inch mounting bolts.

Shaft. Oriental shaft (fenced) is located on the opposite side of Darlington Road.

CONDITION OF FEATURES:

The area around the standing foundations has been levelled.

Heritage Study / Consultant	Northern Grampians - Shire of Northern Grampians - Stage 2 Heritage Study, Wendy Jacobs, Vicki Johnson, David Rowe, Phil Taylor, 2004
Construction Date Range	
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE
Other names	
Hermes number	112088
Property number	

This place/object may also be State heritage listed. Check the Victorian Heritage Database. For further details, contact the local Council or go to Planning Schemes Online