Victorian Heritage Database Report

Chitt's Farm

Location:
322 Glenfern Road, Upwey VIC 3156 - Property No 53427

Heritage Status / Level of Significance:
Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number:
Listing Authority: HI

Heritage Overlay Number: HO325

Statement of Significance:
This Chitt's property, located on part of an allotment selected by the Morris family and subdivided during the First World War, has local historic significance as a rare surviving farm complex. It is also significant for its continuity of use by Jim and Charlie Chitts as a market garden since the 1920s and as one of several local properties associated with the Morrises and Chitts, both well known and established

local families. (RNE criteria B.2, H.1)

It is also architecturally significant for the unusual interwar dwelling and for the range of rural vernacular techniques and materials used in the construction of its outbuildings. (RNE criteria E.1, D.2)

Description

The current site, which is to the south of the ridge defined by Glenfern Road, slopes steeply at the rear and is part of a larger former occupation that includes the valley floor below. The relevant part of the property, close to Glenfern Road, contains a dwelling and a number of out-buildings. It is defined by Glenfern Road, the west boundary and an access road to the valley below at the east and south. Recent dwellings now occupy the sites to both east and west.

The house is a Californian Bungalow , thought to have been built in 1935. [1] This house is located at the west of the site, close to the road and is unusual in the way it is planned with a wide verandah on three sides of a more traditional symmetrical rectangular plan with central passage. Both the dwelling and the side verandahs are contained under a single corrugated iron gabled roof. The detailing of the house is quite refined. It has paired posts on low brick pedestals supporting a verandah with a flat cement sheet ceiling and concrete floor with a projecting verandah gable over the entry. It has a low weatherboard dado below paneled, unpainted cement sheet walls and a combination of cement sheet diamond shingles and a projecting timber shingled pediment in the main gable end. The house is set within a hedged garden that is typical of the period with holly and privet hedges and characteristic large shrubs. To the east, on the road frontage, a former orchard area, now a vegetable garden still tended by Charlie Chitt, is protected by a clipped Cypress hedge.

Close to the house are a series of outbuildings. In line with the house to the east across the driveway is a long narrow gabled corrugated iron clad structure containing a garage with paneled sliding doors and a shingled gable end typical of the interwar period at the front. Continuing the gable behind is a workshop/blacksmith's shop. The collection of tools seen in the workshop on earlier inspections has since been removed. [2] South of this structure is a large modern corrugated iron shed, a stock loading ramp and a large pine tree.

At the east of the dwelling, close to the verandah is a small split paling gabled shed (the former dairy) with central door at the south and an east facing window. The original split paling roof has since been over-sheeted in corrugated iron.

Behind the house, along the west boundary is a long gabled shed with verandah terminating at the south in a higher cross gabled machinery shed with a lower floor level. The long gable contains a closed section at the north and an open section against the machinery shed. It is constructed in a mixture of sawn, adzed and bush pole timbers and is clad partly in flattened kerosene tins and mini-orb corrugated iron (ripple iron). There are two chimneys. One in an enclosed section of the verandah, serves a wood fired copper.

Further south, beyond the access road are two further structures. To the east is a chicken coop containing five separate pens clad in flattened kerosene tins on a sawn timber frame with hessian roller blinds on the wire fronts. To the west is a former pigsty in the form of a gable roofed barn with clerestory containing a number of small pens obscured by stored hay.

Notes:
[1] The former Shire of Sherbrooke Building Permit files were destroyed by fire in 1966, but there is a record of a permit issued in 1935.
[2] Pers comm., owner.

Heritage Study / Consultant	Yarra Ranges - Shire of Yarra Ranges Heritage Study, Context Pty Ltd, 2000
Construction Date Range	1935 - 1935
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	YARRA RANGES SHIRE
Other names	
Hermes number	115217
Property number	53427

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