



Victorian Heritage Database Report

Cuming-Smith & Co Wood Distillation Works

Location:

210 Britannia Creek Road, Wesburn VIC 3799 - Property No 47502

Heritage Status / Level of Significance:

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number: H8022-0038

Listing Authority: HI

Heritage Overlay Number: HO127

Statement of Significance:

This site, although now partially obliterated, is of state significance as the only evidence of a commercial wood distillation plant in Australia. (Supple 1991)

Description

Sites associated with the Britannia Creek tramway take their significance from two periods. One was from 1907 to 1924 when Cuming Smith & Co operated a wood distillation plant at Britannia Creek, and the other was from 1924 to 1936 when the Yelland brothers took over and developed the associated sawmill sites. The Britannia Creek tramway connected with the main Warburton railway line at Britannia Siding, east of Yarra Junction.

The site of the Cuming, Smith & Co wood distillation plant has been largely obliterated by a modern sawmill. However, the surviving features are documented as:

- 1) concrete foundations of the original factory, partly overlaid by the new mill but still evident on the northern side.
- 2) three houses once occupied by managers, two of which are used for recreational purposes: 'Guidehouse', 'Brownie House' and a derelict early manager's home.
- 3) scattered artefacts on the perimeter of the new sawmill and around the derelict home.
- 4) terraced hillside where retort wood was stacked for drying.
- 5) a small gatehouse, possibly dating from the factory era. (Supple 1991)

Fair

Altered

Heritage Study / Consultant	Yarra Ranges - Shire of Yarra Ranges Heritage Study, Context Pty Ltd, 2000
Construction Date Range	
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	YARRA RANGES SHIRE
Other names	
Hermes number	115257
Property number	47502

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](#)