

Victorian Heritage Database Report  
**MORANGHURK**

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**Location:**

3320 MIDLAND HIGHWAY LETHBRIDGE, GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

**Heritage Status / Level of Significance:**

Registered

**Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number: H0266**

**Listing Authority:** VHR

**Heritage Overlay Number: HO10****Statement of Significance:**

What is significant?

Moranghurk is the remains of a large pastoral property originally called Morangourke, located on the Moorabool River near Lethbridge. The first squatters to occupy the run were the partners Dugald McPherson and William Taylor, from 1840 to 1846. McPherson and Taylor subsequently moved to Longerenong on the Wimmera. Taylor went on to acquire several pastoral runs, and built his main home at Overnewton near Keilor in 1849. In 1847 the lease to Moranghurk comprised more than 18,000 acres, and in the 1850s it was 26,000 acres. The Soldier Settlement Commission acquired most of the land in the 1950s.

The exact date of construction of the present homestead is uncertain but is likely to be from the mid 1840s. It is axially planned, and built of an adzed frame covered with hand sawn timber slabs fixed vertically with cover battens. The corrugated iron roof covering conceals an earlier shingle roof fixed over rough bush pole rafters. A substantial and unfortunate 1960s cement brick addition to the house meant the removal of part of the verandah.

The garden is laid out to the east of the house in a squared form, including terraces, stone walls and steps, and is enclosed within a dry stone wall built in the 1920s. The gravel paths are edged by terracotta glazed spoon drains with the manufacturer's name 'Cornwell'. There is a small remnant orchard, south of which is an old garden shed that has partially collapsed.

The landscape is dominated by conifers, mainly cypress and pines, and features an impressive driveway planting of a row of *Cupressus macrocarpa* 'Horizontalis' and alternating *Cupressus sempervirens*, on the inside, now overgrown by the Monterey Cypress. West of the small driveway bridge built in 1926 is a double row of *Cupressus macrocarpa* 'Horizontalis', which form an impressive avenue with enclosed canopy along the drive. Beyond the gate lodge to the garden entrance is an avenue of mature Monterey Pines. A post and single rail fence, and a modern picket fence partly surround the homestead garden.

A substantial collection of historic 19th and early 20th century farm structures survive, including a picturesque hexagonal meat house. The ruined c1870 bluestone stable building contrasts to the imposing 1920s bluestone-faced motor garage sited nearby. Other notable structures are the 1920s circular pump house by the river, a greyhound kennel and pens, 1920s bluestone and brick shearers' quarters, and the small 1926 bridge along the driveway, with concrete balusters and rails but earlier bluestone abutments.

How is it significant?

Moranghurk is of architectural, historical and aesthetic (landscape) significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Moranghurk homestead is architecturally significant as a rare example of the early Australian Colonial style house. The construction of vertical timber slabs with cover battens is not known elsewhere in Victoria. The homestead is evocative of the earlier colonial architectural traditions of New South Wales and Tasmania.

Moranghurk homestead is historically significant as one of the oldest pastoral era homesteads in Victoria. The

homestead site is historically significant as a representative example of an early Victorian squatting run. The land tenure history demonstrates the familiar sequence of licensed squatting, granting of leasehold, acquisition of a pre-emptive right and later disposal of much of the run under the auspices of the Soldier Settlement Scheme.

Moranghurk is of aesthetic (landscape) significance. The key features of the garden are the squared layout, extensive use of glazed tile drains, driveway cypress trees, the orchard enclosed by a picket fence and cypress hedge, and the pines and cypress plantings that enclose the garden. Glazed terracotta spoon drains are now rare in Victorian gardens.

Heritage Study / Consultant	
Construction Date Range	1840 -
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE
Other names	
Hermes number	651
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*