

HO201 – Mount Kororoit Dry Stone Wall Precinct

Melton Dry Stone Walls Survey Nos:	(See description)
Location:	Leakes Road, Mount Kororoit Road, Finches Road, Plumpton
Critical Dates:	Construction of dry stone walls: most c.late 1850s – late 1860s, with alterations c.1900; construction of dwellings and farm complex c.late 1850s – 1890s
Existing Heritage Listings:	HO144, HO146
Recommended Level of Significance:	STATE



Statement of Significance:

The Mount Kororoit Dry Stone Wall Precinct is significant as a collection of characteristic and outstanding dry stone walls in an intact cultural landscape, largely unchanged since the 1860s, which also includes a volcanic eruption point of geological and historical significance; a nineteenth century farm complex; and an 1860s selector's bluestone cottage. It is significant in terms of the number, variety, aesthetic and technical quality of its all-stone walls, which include types very rare in Victoria such as galloway-walls and distinctive double-single walls; for the quality and quantity of its former post & rail fences and composite walls. The precinct demonstrates nineteenth century rural settlement patterns, and has high potential to provide both research and educative information regarding mid-nineteenth and early twentieth century fencing practices within Victoria. The landscape qualities of the precinct includes the remnant riparian vegetation of the Kororoit Creek, and its winding passage through the precinct; the intact, rocky summit of the volcanic cone; views to and from the volcanic cone, the views provided by the C19th landscape of dry stone walls enclosing fields of crops and stock; and the C19th buildings of the farmstead.

The Mount Kororoit Dry Stone Wall Precinct is historically significant at the STATE level (AHC A3, A4, B2, D2). It is a cultural landscape arranged around

Mount Kororoit, which is of state geological significance and was an early landmark for the Port Phillip explorers and pioneers. The precinct includes an important variety of wall types, including some that are important in the history of dry stone wall construction such as rare galloway-walls, double-single walls, and also composite 'half-walls' with post and wire. Many walls are distinctive for their use of large stones in the upper, rather than the lower courses which are instead constructed of tightly packed small stones. Some of the walls would appear to be unique for their use of massive longitudinal coverband stones (or rocks) at half height. All of the wall faces are uncoursed as a result of the characteristic shape of the fieldstone on Melbourne's western plains, and are excellent representative examples of this type of wall.

The precinct demonstrates early farming settlement patterns of Melbourne's western plains. It is historically significant for its association with the Moylan farming family, who were notable participants in the sporting, social, religious, and political life of the Melton district. The property also had close associations with Sir WJ Clarke's Diggers Rest Plumpton and the Melton Coursing Club, and early aviation. The precinct is enhanced by its historic and aesthetic integrity as a cultural landscape, which includes Mount Kororoit Farmstead, a highly intact nineteenth century farm complex part of whose layout is defined by dry stone walls; and an 1860s bluestone Selector's cottage directly associated with an excellent dry stone wall of the same date.

The Mount Kororoit Dry Stone Wall Precinct is aesthetically significant at the STATE level (AHC E1). The dry stone walls which cross the landscape in regular enclosure patterns, make a fundamental statement about human interaction with the volcanic landscape of which they are a part. Numerous individual walls, including Walls A277, A275, A274, and A272 have excellent sculptural qualities and are situated in visually dramatic ways which is expressive

of the farming history of the Shire, and the craftsmanship of their builders. The volcanic cone of Mount Kororoit can be seen from as far away as the Calder Freeway with views to and from Mount Kororoit taking in most of the Shire. It is a visually dramatic element in a largely flat plain, and has a summit which is not greatly compromised by new structures, which is rare in Melbourne’s Western region. The reaches of the Kororoit Creek which lie within the precinct, has old-growth River Red Gums (some of the oldest in any part of the Creek), good instream vegetation and deep, rocky pools which preserve birdlife and other fauna. The creek corridor has steep banks and boulder outcrops which create a visual and spatial character of enclosure, which is in sharp contrast to the open landscape of plains beyond. Dry stone walls have been built down to the water line or along the banks of the creek, and a C19th dry stone ford crosses the creek to the north of the farmstead, affording glimpses of the history of the place, in an otherwise pristine natural landscape.

The Mount Kororoit Dry Stone Wall Precinct is scientifically significant at the STATE level (A1, C2). The precinct demonstrates the volcanic origin of the landscape, and is associated with the unusual geomorphology of Mount Kororoit, which is the best example in Victoria of a scoria volcano covered by later lava flows which have filled the crater and earlier scoria deposits. The walls also have potential to yield research information regarding nineteenth century rural settlement patterns and farm management, and ways of life on Melbourne’s western plains. In particular they have high potential for research of mid nineteenth century wall construction techniques, and early twentieth century modification of these for changing farming practices.

The Mount Kororoit Dry Stone Wall Precinct is socially significant at the STATE level (AHC G1). The precinct has the potential to educate the community in regard to wall construction techniques, and also nineteenth century farm management, settlement patterns, and ways of life.

Overall, the Mount Kororoit Dry Stone Wall Precinct is of STATE heritage significance.

The following information from Council’s GIS records all the walls in the Mount Kororoit precinct. (Note that through address idiosyncracies and the size of the main property, some walls that are situated on the west side of Kororoit Creek have a Leakes Road address.)

HO201	
Wall No.	Nearest Road
A259	Leakes Road
A260	Leakes Road
A261	Leakes Road
A263	Leakes Road
A264	Leakes Road
A265	Finchs Road
A266	Finchs Road
A269	Leakes Road
A270	Leakes Road
A278	Leakes Road
A279	Ryans Road
A280	Mt Kororoit Road
R242	Holden Road