

HO206 – Plumpton Road Wall

Melton Dry Stone Walls Survey No.:	200
Location:	625-833 Holden Road, Plumpton; Lots 1, 2 & 3, LP 135872
Critical Dates:	Original construction sometime between 1854 –1885; considerable repair and reconstruction
Existing Heritage Listings:	Associated with HO 53
Recommended Level of Significance:	LOCAL



Statement of Significance:

The Plumpton Road Wall, built sometime between 1854 and 1885, is a remnant of a group of dry stone walls built in the northern part of the Clarke Rockbank station. It is significant at the LOCAL level as one of the largest and more intact remnants of a Clarke boundary wall in the Shire of Melton, and as one of a diminishing number of all-stone, dry stone walls remaining in the north of the Shire. Its significance as a demonstration of nineteenth century pastoralism in the Shire of Melton is enhanced by its link to the nearby Holden Dam, and its location in the prime sheep fattening country of the Rockbank estate.

The Plumpton Road Wall is historically significant at the LOCAL level. (AHC A4, B2, D2) The wall is expressive of early pastoral practices on Melbourne's western plains. It is an early Rockbank station boundary wall which express the Shire's seminal and dominating nineteenth century pastoral industry, and in particular the activity of nationally significant pastoralist WJT Clarke and his son Sir WJ Clarke. The wall is a boundary wall, the most common type of fence associated with a pastoral estate, and contrasting to the walls of small farmers. It is one of few dry stone walls that were built on the prime northern part of the Rockbank station, used for fattening sheep prior to sale at Newmarket; its significance is enhanced by its proximity and likely former functional relationship with the nearby Holden Dam. The wall is situated on

'Plumpton Road', named after Australia's first Plumpton, and was possibly a part of WJT Clarke's pioneering coursing events in the area.

The Plumpton Road Wall is aesthetically significant at the LOCAL level. (AHC E1) The Plumpton Road wall makes a fundamental statement about human interaction with the volcanic landscape of which it is a part. Looking to the west, across grazing paddocks are views of the Mount Kororoit volcanic cone. In its original rural context the wall is a prominent feature as one drives along Plumpton Road. The wall has been repaired with a higher degree of care and skill than is evident with most of the walls in the Shire. It is now a comparatively scarce example of an all-stone wall, rather than the more typical composite wall, and in parts has excellent sculptural qualities. It expresses the historical diversity of dry stone wall construction in Victoria, and is representative of the typical style of wall in the Shire of Melton and Melbourne's west. The cypress plantation along most of the wall, while diminishing its original historical context, and constituting a potential threat to the structure, echoes and highlights the length of the wall and enhances its aesthetic quality. It is situated on one of the few north-south roads of the Shire, with good visual access to travellers.

The Plumpton Road Wall is scientifically significant at the LOCAL level. (A3, C2) It demonstrates the volcanic origin of the landscape. It is one of a group of dry stone walls and dams on Plumpton and Holden Roads that are situated south of two unnamed former volcanic eruption points that are the likely source of the stone of the walls. The wall has the potential to yield research information regarding wall construction techniques, nineteenth century rural settlement patterns, pastoral management, and ways of life on Melbourne's western plains.

The Plumpton Road Wall is socially significant at the LOCAL level (AHC G1). It 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 on Melbourne's western plains.

Overall, the Plumpton Road Wall is of LOCAL significance.