SPRINGBANK

ADDRESS: 833 Cookinburra Road, BARNAWARTHA NORTH

STUDY No.: 2B HO No.: ..... HERMES No.: 27551

DATE: Circa 1870s

CONDITION: Good

INTEGRITY: Good



Springbank (Biosis, March 2020*)*

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

What is significant?

Springbank at 833 Cookinburra Road, Barnawartha North built circa 1870s for Patrick Merrigan is significant. The significant elements are the original pisé section of the house with its hipped clad in corrugated sheet metal, symmetrical façade with central entry and multi-paned windows. The Canary Island date palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) to the front of the house is also significant.

The non-significant elements include the verandah to the original section, main part of the house, pool, outbuildings, and garden.

How is it significant?

Springbank at 833 Cookinburra Road, Barnawartha North is of local historical, rarity and representative significance to the City of Wodonga.

Why is it significant?

Springbank is of historical significance for being an early farmhouse, one of the earliest in the municipality. The site also has associations with the longstanding pastoral use of the land by the Merrigan family. (Criterion A)

Springbank is of a rarity significance as the only identified surviving instance to date of the use of pisé. (Criterion B)

Springbank is of representative significance as an example of an early (circa 1870s), modest scale residence in the rural parts of the municipality, which although altered, retains its original form and materials and remains evocative of its time and type. The original section is contrasted with the dramatic form of the mature Canary Island date palm, which became popular planting type during the early 20th century and so is evocative of that time. (Criterion D)

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The house is well setback from the road/front boundary and concealed with various planting. It consists of the small original front section and a much larger, recent addition and a swimming pool to the rear.

The original section of the house has a rectangular footprint with walls of rendered pisé and a corrugated iron hipped roof. The form and detailing are indicative of late 19th century residential design. The façade is symmetrical with a central entry, which is flanked by multi-paned windows.

A timber-framed bullnose verandah encircles it, while not original is complementary. Originally, the verandah may have only extended across the façade.

To the front of the house is a large Canary Island date palm (*Phoenix canariensis*), which was likely planted during the early 20th century. The rest of the garden has been planted from the late 20th century onwards.

About the site are various elements clad in corrugated sheet metal dating across the 20th century, including a large shed to the east of the house as well as two small silos, and a grain mixer.

HISTORIC THEMES

4.3 Grazing and raising livestock

4.4 Farming

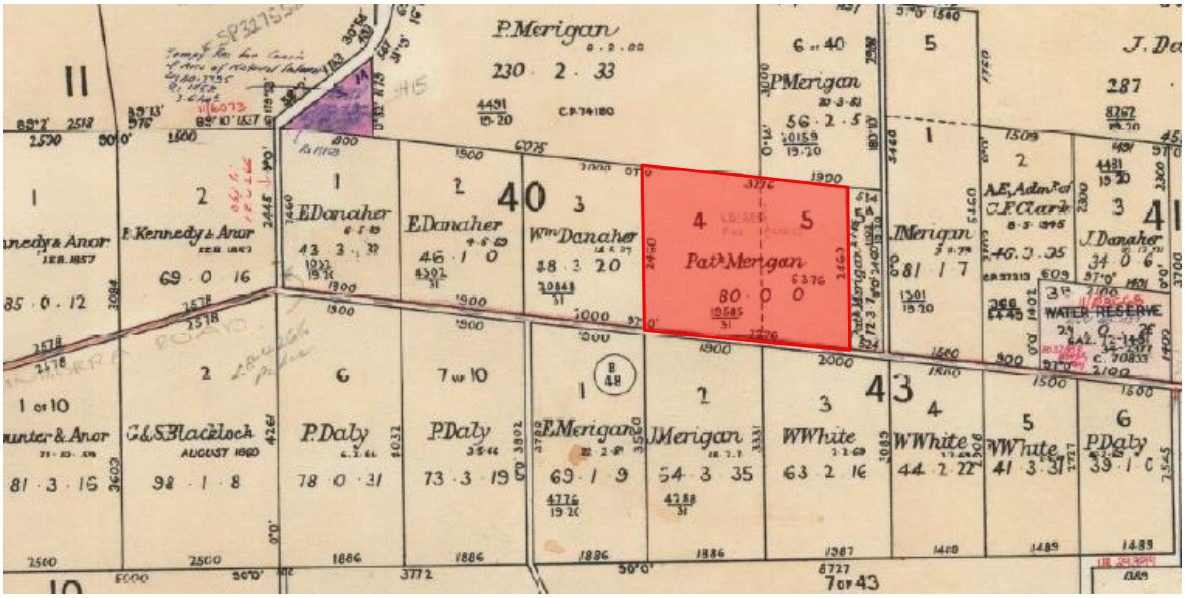
6.7 Making homes for Victorians

HISTORY

The subject site initially formed part of two combined allotments - nos 4 and 5, Section 40, comprised of 80 acres, in the Parish of Barnawartha South. The freehold was acquired through selection by Patrick Merrigan in March 1876 (Barnawartha South Parish Plan, PROV). When he applied for the freehold, it was recorded that the applicant was residing on adjoining land and that 14 acres had been 'cleared and cultivated at present in crop, 50 acres grubbed but not cleared' (Selection file, no. 19585).

An 1875 article in the *Ovens & Murray Advertiser* provides the earliest known reference to the subject site referring to it as 'Mr. Merrigan's farm, Cookinburra' ('Yackadandah Shire Council,'

Albury Banner and Wodonga Express). This reference confirms that Merrigan was leasing the site prior to his purchase in the following year.



Parish plan with Merrigan's original holdings, Allotments 4 + 5, highlighted. The Merrigan family acquired many of the surrounding parcels in the decades following. (Barnawartha South Parish Plan, PROV)

The name *Springbank* first appears in 1907 in reference to Merrigan's efforts to eradicate rabbits ('For Destroying Rabbits,' *Woodend Star*). Merrigan practiced mix farming including efforts at cattle breeding and dairying as well as viticulture ('From P. Merrigan…' *Wodonga and Towong Sentinel,* 1910).



Dairy herd on "Springbank" Farm, Barnawartha.

('A Collection of Snaps by Weekly Times Readers,' *Weekly Times,* 2 June 1928, p44)

By 1920, Merrigan and his family were no longer living at *Springbank* having moved to Albert Park, a suburb in Melbourne. Merrigan's second son, Patrick Francis 'Frank' Merrigan moved to the property his marriage to Hannah May Ryan during that same year (Marriage, *Border Morning Mail*). However, it appears that ownership of the property was given to their oldest son John.

John retained ownership of the property until 1949 when he put it up for auction. Over the years, the Merrigan family had acquired a vast tract of land comprising a total of 1,566 acres, 3 roods, 37 perches (approximately 634 hectares). The property is thoroughly described in the following auction advertisement with the subject place referred to as Lot 1 identifying the house at that consisted of pisé and weatherboard sections:

> Lot 1: known as homestead, containing 519 acres 0 roods 7 perches, consisting of rich creek flats, suitable for dairying or fattening, balance rising and low hills, suitable for sheep or fat lamb raising. There is also a small area of green timber on this block.
>
> Improvements comprise a 7-roomed residence, part pisi[é], part weatherboard, with bathroom and pantry, and verandahs almost all around, with concrete floors. Large G.I. shearing and implement shed. Large slab and G.L grain and fodder shed. Milking shed, with engine and separator rooms and chaff house attached. W.B. and G.I. pig styles, G.I. stable and 5 stalls, G.I. harness room, G.I. fowl house, W.B. cream room, water laid on, telephone installed.
>
> [...] Note: These properties have been in the hands of the Merrigan family for very many years. It is very sound sheep country; no licks or drenches being necessary to keep them healthy. The property has been well kept and fencing generally is in good order. Watered by springs and creeks.' ('For Sale by Auction,' *Border Morning Mail*)

The whole of the property was sold to a single purchaser reported to be Mr K J Lobban of Bungowannah ('Sale of *Springbank', Border Morning Mail,* 1949). Lobban disposed of the property four years later in 1953 ('Extensive Clearing Sale,' *Border Morning Mail*).

The following aerial of 1980 shows a much smaller, square footprint to the house and the Canary Island date palm as an established specimen. There was minimal planting to the front or southern portion of the site.



1980 serial showing location of the house and date palm (Run CAC325, Frame 80, 1980, Geoscience Australia)

COMPARISON

The subject place is one of only a few early houses to survive in the municipality and be included in the Schedule to the heritage Overlay and the only identified pisé example. Three other early similarly small houses are constructed in stone, however are differentiated in subtle ways:

- HO15: Torranceville, 8 Bank St, Wodonga. 1869, vernacular, stone with several phases of brick additions, mainly a hipped roof.
- HO34: Stone Cottage, 41 Church Street, Wodonga. Circa 1850s, stone walls (overpainted) with brick to the openings and a gable roof. The windows are relatively small and set close to the central entry.
- HO38: Stoneleigh, 50 High Street, Wodonga. Circa 1850s, walls of granite rubble with brick lintels to the openings (of varying size) and a hip roof.

The other Victorian period residences included in the Schedule are a varied group in terms of scale and materiality and not readily comparable to *Springbank*.

- HO3: De Kerilleau Homestead, Lawrence Street, Wodonga. Built in 1870, two storey, brick with two level, cast iron verandah with French windows.
- HO11: Brick residence, 10 Stanley Street, Wodonga. Ca 1890s, single storey with hipped roof and polygonal bay.
- HO12: Brick Cottage, Cookinburra Road, Barnawartha North. Circa1890s, brick with gable roof.
- HO14: Glen Avon, 392 Wodonga-Yackandandah Rd, Staghorn Flat. 1898 and 1907 (essentially Federation period), timber with hip roof and cast iron verandah.
- HO49: Stenzel Cottage, 665 Kiewa Valley Hwy, Baranduda. This circa 1882 gable roof house is constructed from wattle and daub.

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXTENT OF LISTING

It is recommended that *Springbank* at 833 Cookinburra Road, Barnawartha North, is included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Wodonga Planning Scheme with tree controls.

The extent of the listing should include the existing original section of the house and Canary Island date palm (*Phoenix canariensis)* with generally a curtilage of 20 metres about them as practical on Lot 2/PS511832.



(Nearmap, 31 January 2024) – Original section of the house (red) Date palm (yellow)

PLANNING SCHEME CONTROLS

Planning Controls	Y/N
External Paint Controls Apply?	N
Internal Alteration Controls Apply?	N
Tree Controls Apply?	Y Canary Island palm tree (*Phoenix canariensis)*
Solar Energy System Controls?	Y
Outbuildings or Fences Not Exempt Under Clause 43.01-4?	N
Included on the Victorian Heritage Register Under the Heritage Act 2017?	N
Prohibited Uses Permitted?	Y
Aboriginal Heritage Place?	N

REFERENCES

1875, 'Yackadandah Shire Council,' *The Albury Banner and Wodonga Express*, 20 November, p10

1907, 'For Destroying Rabbits,' *Woodend Star,* 12 January, p4

1910, 'From P. Merrigan…' *Wodonga and Towong Sentinel,* 29 April, p4

1920, Marriage, *Border Morning Mail,* 6 February, p4

1928, 'A Collection of Snaps by Weekly Times Readers,' *Weekly Times*, 2 June, p44

1949, 'For Sale by Auction,' *Border Morning Mail,* 10 December, p12

1949, Sale of *Springbank, Border Morning Mail,* 22 December, p2

1953, 'Extensive Clearing Sale,' *Border Morning Mail,* 17 October, p12

1980, Aerial, Run CAC325, Frame 80, 1980, Geoscience Australia

Barnawartha South Parish Plan, PROV

Selection file, no. 19585: VPRS 626/P0/UNIT 240, PROV