TWO OUTBUILDINGS AT MOUNT LEA

ADDRESS: 2344 Beechworth-Wodonga Road, Leneva

STUDY No.: 2C HO No.: ..... HERMES No.: 28020

DATE: Interwar period

CONDITION: Good

INTEGRITY: Good



Shearing shed, south elevation (RBA, June 2024)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

What is significant?

The Two Outbuildings at Mount Lea at 2344 Beechworth-Wodonga Road, Leneva dating to the Mortimer period of occupation during the interwar period are significant.

The two significant outbuildings are a large storage shed and a shearing shed. The significant external elements are the massing, gable roof form, and corrugated sheet metal cladding, and original openings and associated post and rail fencing. Internally the significant elements of the storage shed are posts and beams of rough-hewn timber, earthen and brick floor. Internally the significant elements of the shearing shed are the timber floors and pens. In addition, the two concrete domed tanks to either side of the storage shed are significant.

The non-significant elements are the house and all other outbuildings and plantings.

How is it significant?

The Two Outbuildings at *Mount Lea* 2344 Beechworth-Wodonga Road, Leneva are of local historical and representative significance to the City of Wodonga.

Why is it significant?

The two early outbuildings at Mount Lea are historical significance as a well-preserved interwar period examples of a typology of which few have survived or been identified in the municipality providing insight to the arrangement and operation of grazing properties in the district during early twentieth century theme of living off the land and the booms of farming in the last century. The place is also of historical significance for its association with the Mortimer family who were prominent in local affairs (Criterion A).

The two early outbuildings at Mount Lea are of representative significance as good intact examples of their typology. The large storage shed is impressive in its scale and sweeping gable roof form and is distinguished by its tall bush poles supports. The concrete domed tanks to either side complement the structure, taking advantage of its large roof expanse to collect water. The shearing shed is also a substantial example of its type and retains the key internal timber elements including slatted floors to the pens. (Criterion D)

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Outbuildings

The two outbuildings, likely dating to the interwar period, are located to the south of the residence. Both have gable roofs and are fully clad in corrugated sheet metal, some rusting but in traditional short sheet sizes. There is also another late 20th century shed further south.

The northern storage shed has a sweeping, steep pitched roof and brick-lined stables section to the south side and earthen floor elsewhere. There are two sets of large steel-framed doors to the east elevation and another to the west elevation. It is supported on tall bush pole posts and some rough-hewn beams and rafters with sawn timbers for the purlins.

There is a domed concrete water tank to the north-west corner and another to the south-east corner. Adjacent to the later, is a larger modern PVC water tank.



Storage shed, north elevation with a concrete water tank in the foreground (RBA, June 2024)



Storage shed, interior (RBA, June 2024)

To the south is a shearing shed with a broad gable roof, with a skillion verandah to the east. There is typical timber post and rail fencing to pens, etc., on the side elevations. To the north elevation is a central raised sliding door at the level of the timber floor with storage areas and

catching pens to the side. Lower paired hinged doors are located at either end of the north elevation. To either end of the south elevation is a metal clad doorway and to the middle part is a single timber, multi-paned window and door.



Shearing shed, north elevation (RBA, June 2024)



Shearing shed, interior (RBA, June 2024

HISTORIC THEMES

4.3 Grazing and raising livestock

HISTORY

The subject place initially formed part of Crown Allotment 2A, Section 25 within the Parish of Baranduda. This relatively small farming allotment of about 19 acres was acquired by David Williams by selection in June 1881.

Historically the boundaries of this estate included CA2 to the east (nearly 41 acres), acquired in 1898, and CA3 to the west (about 137 acres), acquired in 1895.



Baranduda Parish Map, circa 1880s, showing the original land sales, and the approximate location of the subject site. (Baranduda Parish Plan, PROCB59)

It was on Crown Allotment 2A that David, with his wife, Elizabeth, and their 12 children lived in a four-bedroom weatherboard home (66/193 David Williams: Grant of administration 1897). The Williams family established the boundary of their property by erecting a rail and wire fence on which David held sheep and cattle. The mention of a one-roomed cellar on this property as well as wine-making chattels in his Letter of Administration indicates that a small vineyard was also established (66/193 David Williams: Grant of administration 1897). David Williams died in 1888 and left no Will. As such, administration of his estate was transferred to his wife, Elizabeth (66/193 David Williams: Grant of administration 1897). Elizabeth continued to occupy the four-bedroom weatherboard home on Crown Allotment 2A, where she took an active interest in her garden.

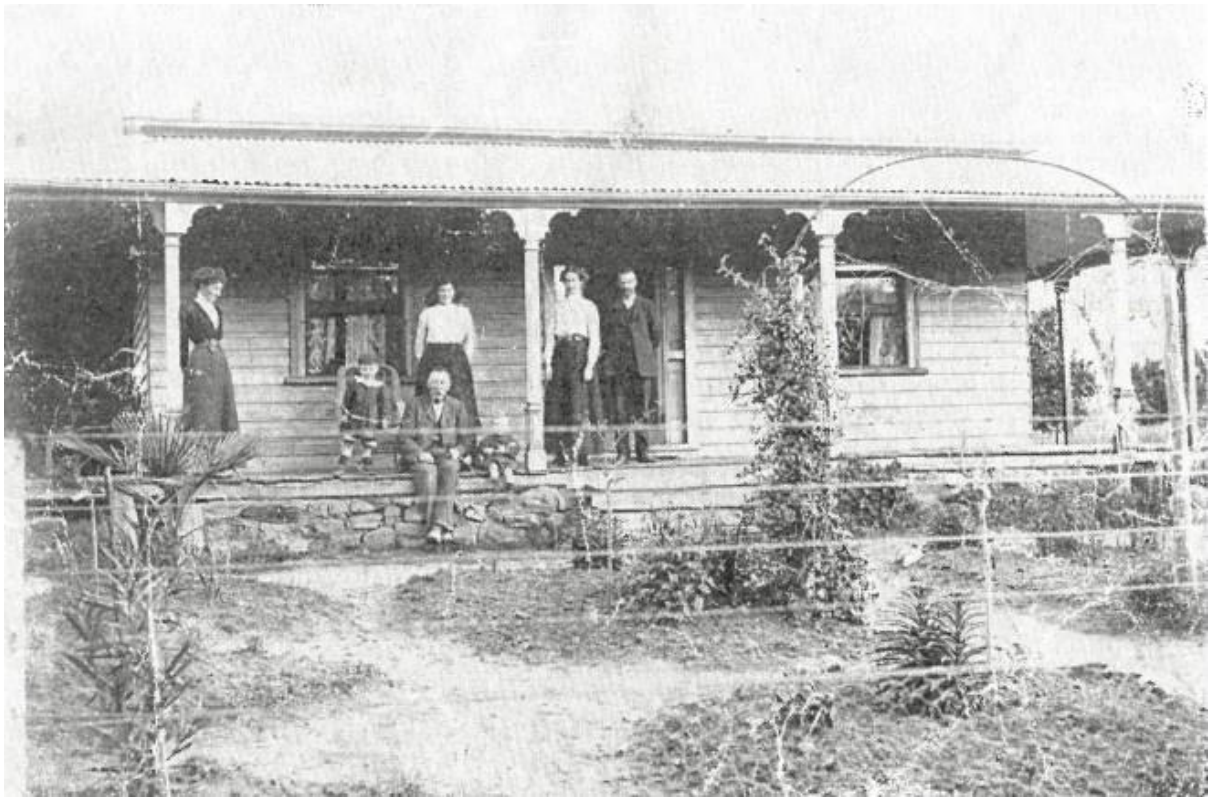
In 1892, Elizabeth applied to Council for approval to plant ornamental trees along the road outside her house, along with approval to remove some stumps and a tree from the front of her

house ('Ordinary Meeting', 1892). Evidently the property was fronted by a European garden tended to by its passionate and proud owner.

Five years later in 1897 Elizabeth's died (Elizabeth Williams: Grant of administration 1898). The estate was then administered to her children and their spouses with her eldest son, David Augustus Williams, identified as the administrator (Grant of Administration: David Williams 1897, Elizabeth Williams: Grant of administration 1898). Records indicate that Williams either rented or sold the property shortly thereafter to their southern neighbour, David Horn Mortimer.

The earliest reference to Crown Allotment 2A as *Mount Lea* is in 1897 by its new occupant David Horn Mortimer some months prior to Elizabeth's death. Mortimer, a sheep grazier, rented the property where he ran an agricultural farm; grazing cross-bred sheep and sheared for market until at least 1926 ('Albury Wool Sales', 1926).

The following early 20th century photograph captures the Mortimer family on the front verandah of the original weatherboard house (demolished) at *Mount Lea*.



The Mortimer family at the original Mount Lea (L Goyne, *Leneva as We Remember*, p160)

The current masonry house, which has been heavily modified after Mortimer's occupation, and the some of the planting was likely also undertaken during Mortimers period of occupancy in the early 20th century. This is supported by oral history of former local, Mrs Stitz, recorded as part of the 2004 Heritage study.

The Mortimer family were well known in the area during the 19th and early 20th century and are connected with two significant events in Australian history. David Horn Mortimer is credited as being the last survivor of the Glenrowan siege of 1880 headed by the Ned Kelly and his gang. David' son was Captain Kenneth Malcolm Mortimer (1895 – 1916), who led 200 men in the 8th Brigade at Fleurbaix in 1916 as they moved forward through the trenches to reinforce the leading Battalion.

In 1931, a final sale of farming good and furniture was held marking an end to the occupation of Mount Lea by David Horn Mortimer and Lucy Mortimer. The pair retired from farming and moved to Wodonga. Subsequently, there is no reference to the site as Mount Lea in the newspapers.

The storage shed and shearing shed were probably built during the interwar period (1920s or 1930s) either during Mortimer's occupation of *Mount Lea* or the subsequent owner.

1963 aerial shows limited planting at the site but the two outbuildings – storage and shearing sheds – are evident. The northern concrete water tank seems to be visible as the southern would be obscured by trees.



Aerial, 3 November 1963, showing the two outbuildings (CAD4, Frame 105, Geoscience Australia)

The 1990 aerial shows the southernmost shed, which was built between 1966 and 1980. The concrete water tanks are visible. Though the planting was much less than the current circumstance, that to the area east of the house was underway.



Aerial, 6 January 1990, showing the two outbuildings (AUS223, Frame 694, Geoscience Australia)

COMPARISON

To date few outbuildings of any type have been included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay. Only two places have identified significant outbuildings, of which there is limited imagery available, as they are not visible from the public realm. As the two outbuilding on the subject site are likely to date to the early part of the 20th century, probably the interwar period according to their design, they are of a different period to the following, one being earlier (HO1) and the other being later (HO56).

- HO56: 'Bandiana Park', Shed/Dairy and Shearing Shed, 137 Frederick Street Road, Leneva. The shearing shed, sheep loading ramp, hay shed and the two tank stands as group of structures are described as being representative of mid-20th century farm based industrial buildings. One of the sheds has a long rectangular footprint with a broad gable roof, all similarly clad in corrugated sheet metal as at the subject place.
- HO1/VHR - H233: *Cambourne,* 2 High Street, Wodonga. The house was built circa 1903 and a stables building and detached toilet are thought to be contemporary with it. No images are however available of these buildings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXTENT OF LISTING

It is recommended that the two historic outbuildings - shearing shed and storage shed - at the *Mount Lea Estate,* 2344 Beechworth-Wodonga Road, Leneva, are included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Wodonga Planning Scheme.

The extent of the heritage overlay should include the two outbuildings and a curtilage of up to 10 metres as practical about them on 11\PS605366.



(Nearmap, 10 December 2023)

PLANNING SCHEME CONTROLS

Planning Controls	Y/N
External Paint Controls Apply?	N
Internal Alteration Controls Apply?	N
Tree Controls Apply?	N
Solar Energy System Controls?	Y
Outbuildings or Fences Not Exempt Under Clause 43.01-4?	Y – storage shed and shearing shed
Included on the Victorian Heritage Register Under the Heritage Act 2017?	N
Prohibited Uses Permitted?	Y
Aboriginal Heritage Place?	N

REFERENCES

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