FORMER CUMMINS HOMESTEAD

ADDRESS: 34 Hillandale Court, Bonegilla

STUDY NUMBER: 2C HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

DATE: 1906

CONDITION: Good

INTEGRITY: Good



South-west corner (Biosis, December 2021)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

What is significant?

The *former Cummins Homestead* at 34 Hillandale Court, Bonegilla, built in 1906 and designed by noted local architects Gordon & Gordon. The significant fabric relates to the original southern section including its symmetrical form, hipped roof, chimneys, bracketed cornice, verandah with bullnose profile and cast-iron elements (columns and frieze), front entry and tripartite windows with decorative glass to the side panes.

The non-significant elements are the front concrete deck, rear additions, landscaping and trees, tennis court, pool, and any outbuildings.

How is it significant?

The *former Cummins Homestead* at 34 Hillandale Court, Bonegilla is of historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Wodonga.

Why is it significant?

The *former Cummins Homestead* is of local historical significance for its connection to the pioneering Bonegilla settler John Cummins, who was a prominent landowner, pastoralist, and local postmaster. It also has associations with the notable local architectural practice of Gordon & Gordon (Criterion A).

The *former Cummins Homestead* is of aesthetic significance as a largely intact and fine example of a Federation period villa indicative of the Victorian Survival mode. It is distinguished by its prominent chimneys, cast iron elements and the decorative glass with the progressive design of abstracted floral motifs. (Criterion E)

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The house is located to the southern end of a large parcel of land, comprised of 8000m^2. It is accessed from the rear, Hillandale Court, but the original façade addresses the Murray Valley Highway, from which it is essentially obscured by a well-established garden and a high metal fence.

The large house consists of original front/southern section and various phases of additions to the rear/north. The roof is mainly hipped with two later gable ends and is clad in a green, corrugated sheet metal (presumably Colorbond). The original section is punctuated by a pair of chimneys with projecting, rendered caps. Several solar cells have been installed to the central part of the roof. The non-original gable ends are clad in sheeting with thin battens.

The original front section is bichrome red and (overpainted) cream brick quoining to the openings and corners in garden wall bond (five rows of stretchers to one row of headers) and has paired brackets to the cornice. A return verandah with a bullnose profile and non-original concrete deck extends across the front and is supported on fluted cast iron columns and has a decorative frieze typical of the turn of the 20th century (flatter and more open than earlier types). It is meant to have been manufactured by William Stephens of South Melbourne (Excelsior Foundry).



Entry (Biosis, December 2021)

The openings are timber framed with voussoirs. The front entry includes a panelled door and sidelights with stained glass and a toplight. It is flanked by tripartite windows with double hung sashes with abstracted floral motifs to the leadlight and stained glass to the narrow side windows typical of the early 20th century.



Front window - details (Biosis, December 2021)



Front window (Biosis, December 2021)

The gable end to the west elevation has a large window typical of the interwar period and the building has been enlarged considerably to the rear.



West elevation with gable end (Biosis, December 2021)

Stonework including the northern retaining walls and garden features dates to 1980s having been constructed by a well-known Italian stonemason from Bonegilla (Owners, December 2020).



Rear of house from Hillandale Court (RBA, June 2024)

In terms of landscaping, there is a large deciduous exotic tree in the south-west corner among others and four established trees in front of the stone retaining wall to the north along Hillandale Court, however none of these specimens date to the early 20th century rather they date to the late 20th century.

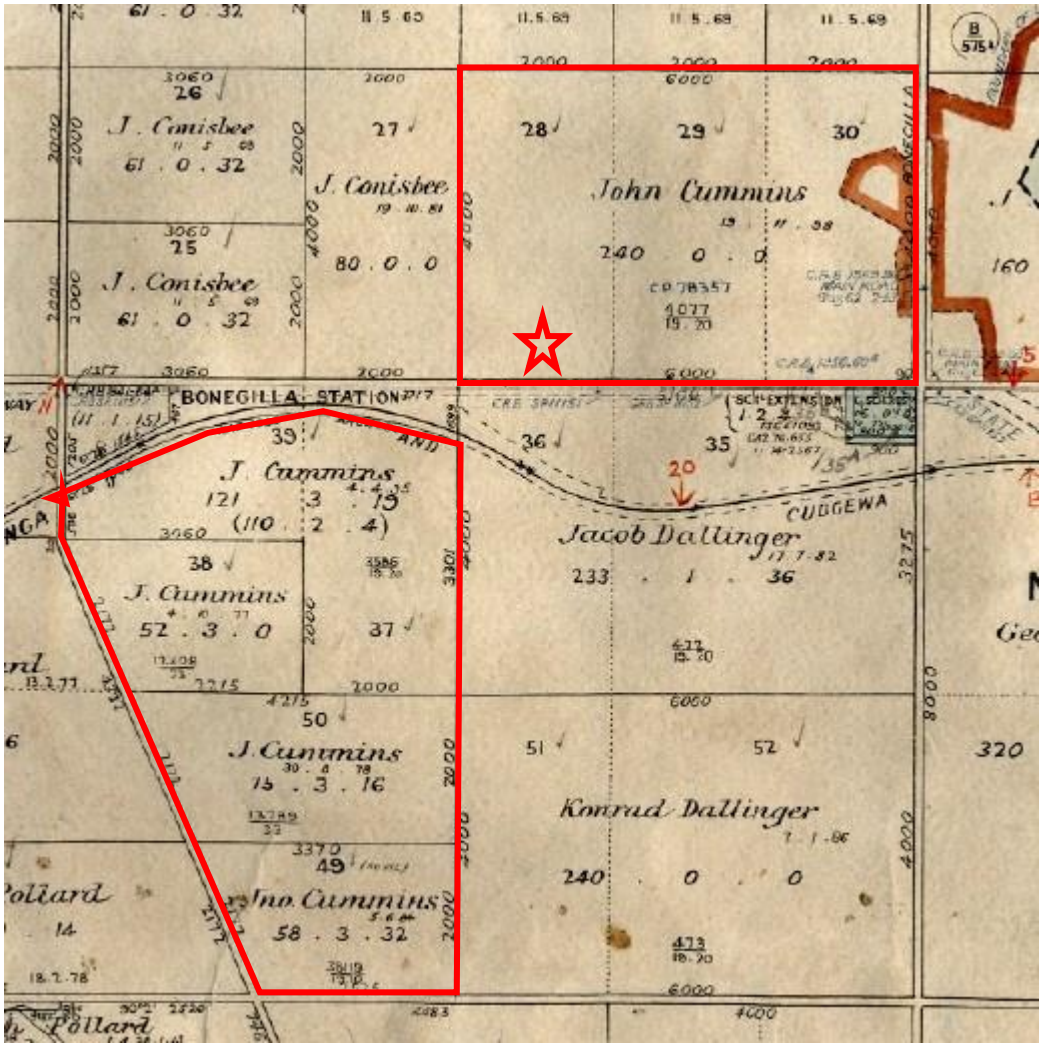
HISTORIC THEMES

6.7 Making homes for Victorians

HISTORY

The subject place originally formed part of the 80-acre Crown Allotment 28, Section 8 in the Parish of Bonegilla with a frontage to the Murray Valley Highway (Bonegilla Parish Plan 2178 1952). The Crown Allotment was selected by Irish-born John Cummins, who procured the freehold on 19 November 1898. Cummins arrived in the colony of Victoria in 1862 and in 1869 moved to Bonegilla with his wife Alice (nee Byrne).

From the 1870s to the turn of the 20th century, Cummins developed an extensive real estate portfolio in Bonegilla, which included the adjoining Crown Allotments to the east, 29 and 30 (comprised of 240 acres with no. 28). He also purchased 300 acres to the south of the Murray Valley Highway (CA 38, 39, 49, 50) from 1877 to 1895 and 100 acres to the west in 1902 (CA 10, Section 7) with a frontage to the Kiewa River (Bonegilla Parish Plan 2178 1952).



Bonegilla parish plan 575(4), showing most of Cummins' land acquisitions and the approximate location of the subject site (star)

From approximately 1881, Cummins was the postmaster for the Bonegilla region and later, held a position at the Bonegilla Post Office, a post he held for approximately 40 years ('Bonegilla', 1920). According to the present-day property owners Cummins, during his time as postmaster, ran the Bonegilla Post Office from this site. In addition to this, with the assistance of his sons, Cummins also managed sheep, cattle and three acres of vines on his properties. Cummins was described as '… one of the oldest and most highly respected residents of the Bonegilla district.' He helped with local improvements in the district including donating the land for a public hall in Bonegilla ("OBITUARY" 1920).

It is likely that the house was constructed in 1906 to a design by the notable local architects Gordon & Gordon, who had offices in Albury and Wodonga. In May of that year, they sought tenders for 'Mr Cummins' brick making contract' (*Albury Banner* …, May 1906). A month prior however, Gordon & Gordon had sought tenders for 'the erection of homestead in wood for John Cummins esq, Bonegilla. Plans and specifications to be seen at our offices' (*Albury Banner* …, April 1906).

The following 1940 aerial shows only a few large trees in the vicinity of the house, including two along a driveway to the north-east of the house.



Aerial, 1 December 1940, with the approximate extent of the site outlined (MAP1353, Frame 10231, Geoscience)

By 1972, more trees had been planted however they do not align with the few evident on the previous 1940 aerial. At that time, the house continued to be accessed from the east and the gable section to the rear of the west elevation had been constructed.



Aerial, 28 May 1972, with the approximate extent of the site outlined (CACD7532, Frame 140, Geoscience)

In 1975, Crown Allotment 28 was subdivided and purchased by the Albury Wodonga Development Corporation. The property's new Crown Allotment was identified as being on lot 28B (Bonegilla Parish Plan 2178 1952).

The following photograph taken in 2002 reveals the earlier relationship and visibility of the façade to the Murray Valley Highway.



Façade from the south (Murray Valley Highway) Stage 1, 2002 (Randell & Pennay 2004)

There is believed to be a family grave on the property, but this was not located (Biosis, 2020).

COMPARISON

To date, only a few residences from the Federation period have been included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay and are not reflective of the full array of styles typical of the period. Whilst there are a few other examples of the Victorian Survival type, there are considerable differences in their materiality and/or design.

There is one other large masonry villa/mansion from the period - *Cambourne* at 2 High Street, Wodonga (HO1/VHR - H233). It is of a similar date, 1903, however it is of State significance and has an unusual, elongated façade with a prominent verandah supported by paired columns and has elaborate window settings. It is also thought to have been designed by the same architects Gordon & Gordon.

The other residences covered by an individual heritage overlays are all timber and of a more modest type. *Bailabbe*, at 232 Beechworth Rd, Wodonga (HO24) is also indicative of the Victorian Survival style but is clad in shiplapped boards and has a bay window to one end of the façade and another to the side street elevation.

The group of three adjacent timber houses at 241, 243, 245 Beechworth Road (HO26, 27, 28) have prominent gambrel roofs and exposed rafter ends typical of the Federation period but also have symmetrical facades though with bullnose profile verandahs rather than hipped as at the subject site.

Within the Lawrence Street Precinct (HO48), a few houses date to the Federation period, some of which are indicative of the Victorian Survival style. The house at 5 Ethel Street is timber-framed and that at152 Lawrence Street is brick however with a small, non-original porch and multi-

paned sashes. Another at 151 Lawrence Street is broadly reflective of the Queen Anne style as it is asymmetrically massed with a gable end.

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXTENT OF LISTING

It is recommended that the *Former Cummins House* at 34 Hillandale Court, Bonegilla, is included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Wodonga Planning Scheme.

The extent of the Heritage Overlay should include parcel of land on which the house is located - 23\PS636953.



(VicPlan)

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?	N
Included on the Victorian Heritage Register Under the Heritage Act 2017?	N
Prohibited Uses Permitted?	Y
Aboriginal Heritage Place?	N

REFERENCES

Bonegilla Parish Plan 2178 1952., accessed 5 July 2022, http://prov.vic.gov.au/vers/schema/PROS99-007

'Bonegilla', 1920., *The Border Morning Mail and Riverina Times (Albury, NSW: 1903-1920)*, http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article120586138

("OBITUARY" *Wodonga and Towong Sentinel (Vic. : 1885 - 1954)* 12 March 1920: 3. Web. 7 Sep 2022 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article69659523>.).R.A.A.F 1948. ALBURY_782B3, accessed 22 June 2022, http://spatialapps-prd-mapshare-platform-storage.s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/WebmapMedia/HistoricPhotomap/ALBURY/782B3.jpg

Randell F & Pennay B 2004. *City of Wodonga Heritage Study Stage 1*, WODONGA CITY COUNCIL

'Gordon and Gordon', *Albury Banner and Wodonga Express*, 4 May 1906, p37

'Tenders', *Albury Banner and Wodonga Express*, 6 April 1906, p21