WINE VATS

ADDRESS: 2A Dick Street, Wodonga

STUDY No.: 2B HO No.: ..... HERMES No.: 206326

DATE: late 19th century

CONDITION: Fair (though not inspected)

INTEGRITY: Good



Wine vats (Biosis, February 2020)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

What is significant?

The Wine Vats at 2A Dick Street, Wodonga, built during the late 19th century are significant. The significant elements of the vats are the form, brick walls, rendered to the front in four arched bays each with a small opening, and their location in the terrain.

The non-significant elements are the red brick interventions.

How is it significant?

The Wine Vats at 2A Dick Street, Wodonga are of local historical and rarity significance to the City of Wodonga.

Why is it significant?

The Wine Vats are of historical significance as a remnant of the once flourishing local wine industry during the late 19th century winery before its cessation with the Phylloxera outbreaks during the early 20th century. They are also significant for their associations with Dr Thomas Dick and Octavius Batt, who operated the winery and were prominent members of the local wine industry. (Criterion A)

The Wine Vats are of rarity significance as the only known example of their type, set into the terrain, from a late 19th century winery to survive in the municipality. (Criterion B)

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The four co-joined brick wine vats, approximately five metres in length, are located within the rear garden to the south-west of a late 20th century house.

The wine vats have a rectangular footprint and are approximately cubic form are set into raised ground and covered in part by the existing garden and remnant bricks.

The main/east elevation is rendered and flush however divided into four arched bays. The render of the arch is lighter or contrasting with the rest of the elevation. A small opening is set high in the arches of each bay. There is an arched recess at base of some/all bays, with an opening now roughly filled in with red bricks. The side elevations may have been finished with a light screed.

HISTORIC THEMES

4.4 Farming

HISTORY

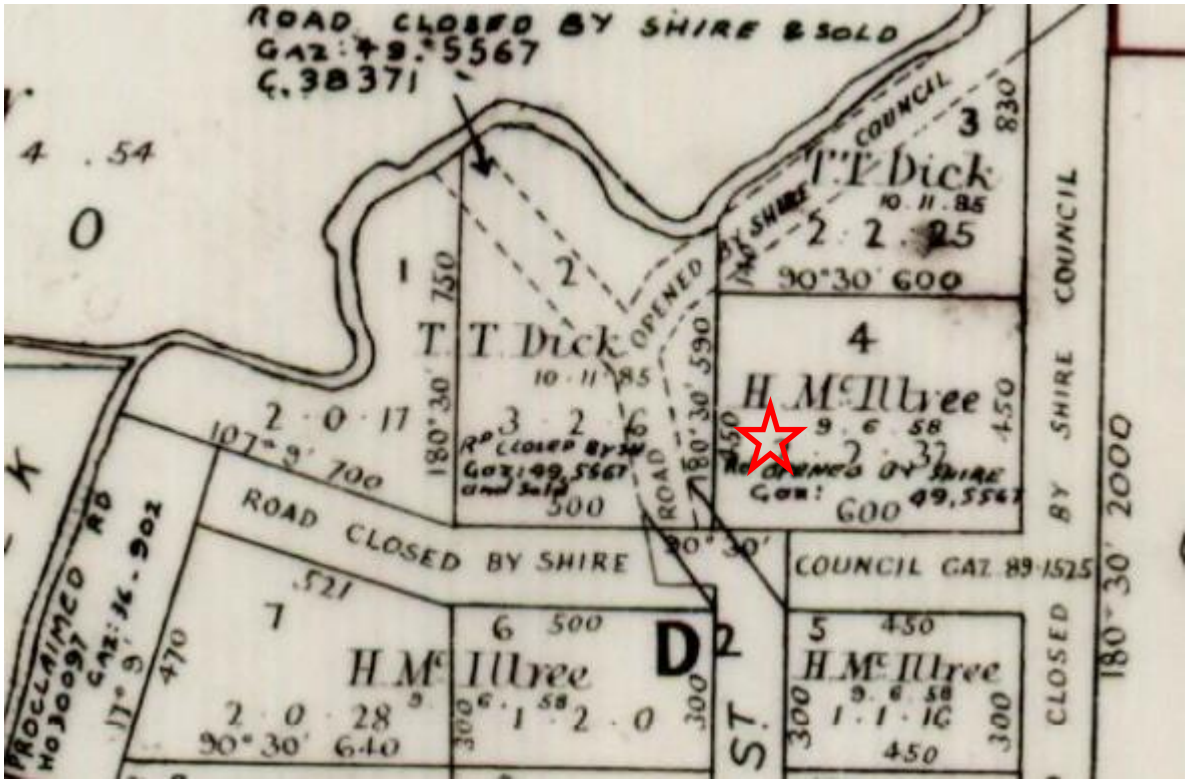
The subject site forms part of Crown Allotment 4, section D2 in the township of Wodonga, the freehold of which was purchased by H M McIltree in June 1858. McIltree also acquired several nearby allotments.

Wine making has historically been associated with the Rutherglen area in Northeast Victoria, but for a while was also sufficiently prominent an industry in Wodonga, to briefly support a local Wine and Fruit Growing Association. Irishman Octavius Batt, born 1865, arrived in Australia circa 1880s where after a lack of success in the north Queensland mining boom ventured to Melbourne where he accepted a clerical post in a Government Department which connected him to family friend Dr Thomas Dick. Dr Dick had extensive interests in winegrowing and Batt would eventually manage Dick's vineyards and cellars. The earliest mention of Dick's vineyard in Wodonga is from 1883 when the local paper reported that he was trying to convince the local council to sell him a strip of land serving as a road, something he described as valueless.

Octavius Batt managed a vineyard owned by Dr Dick, which extended along the bank of House Creek north of Batt Avenue. Dick planted the first vines by 1883 and invested £3,000 in the venture and constructed a winery, originally located near the corner of the present Batt Avenue and Dick Street. The brick and concrete vats are believed to have been part this winery.

Phylloxera infested the vines in 1908 when half an acre was destroyed and in 1913 another 40 acres was affected. Dr Dick died in 1919 unmarried and his extensive estate comprising large landholdings in Wodonga, was left to the public trustee. Octavius Batt was given the option to

purchase the vineyard allotments and continue operating the vineyard, but evidently he did not take it up and *(Wodonga and Towong Sentinel,* June 1937; *Ovens and Murray Advertiser,* June 1937*).*



Township of Wodonga, showing approximate location of the subject site (W308, Sheet 4, Landata)

The wine cellars were depicted on a 1923 subdivision plan as part of lot 4, consisting of over 2½ acres, with the vineyard identified to east on the flats, a former lagoon.



1923 plan of Crown Allotments 1 to 12 of Section D2 showing location of wine cellars. (AP45147A, LASSI)

The land was offered for sale in Dicks Estate during December 1924, advertised initially as '26 beautiful building allotments, right in the heart of Wodonga' (*Wodonga and Towong Sentinel,* 12 December 1924, p3*).* Five years later in December 1929 '31 choice building allotments' at "Dick's Estate" were offered for sale, though it is not clear if these were additional allotments (*Wodonga and Towong Sentinel,* 6 December 1929).



1963 aerial with approximate location of wine vats highlighted (CAD8, Run 2, Frame 269, 1963, Geoscience Australia)

COMPARISON

One other wine-related place has been included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay being the Willows Cellar/Workshop (HO32). This building is located on 142 Castle Creek Road, Wodonga and is also not visible from the public domain. Images from 2004 indicate that it is similarly semi-underground/built into the side of a hill to facilitate temperature control.

The structure is different to the subject place and is two-levelled, being comprised of a stone basement/wine cellar with an upper-level workshop of wattle (vertical saplings) and daub (mud). Externally the walls had been finished in a tooled render but some sections of this had been failing. The date of 1891 has been marked on one of the beams. The use of vertical saplings is reminiscent of/thought to be adapted from a traditional German vernacular construction technique Lehmwickel (earth wrapping).

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXTENT OF LISTING

It is recommended that *Wine Vats* at 2A Dick Street, Wodonga is included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Wodonga Planning Scheme.

The extent of the heritage overlay should include the four wine vats and a nominal 5-metre wide curtilage within Lot 2/PS440121 as is practical/indicated below.



Recommended extent of the Heritage Overlay outlined
(Source: Nearmap, June 2024)

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?	Y
Prohibited Uses Permitted?	Y
Aboriginal Heritage Place?	N

REFERENCES

'OBITUARY', *Wodonga and Towong Sentinel*, 4 June 1937, p3 (http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article69630231)

'OBITUARY', *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, 5 June 1937, p2

Wodonga and Towong Sentinel, 12 August 1898, p2 (http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article69543898)

Wodonga and Towong Sentinel, 12 December 1924, p3

Wodonga and Towong Sentinel, 6 December 1929, p3

ADDITIONAL IMAGES



Detail of exposed brick beneath the render (Biosis, February 2020)



Rear elevation of wine vats (Biosis, February 2020)