

## 50 Oatland Road, Plenty

### House, Farm

<b>Prepared by:</b> Context	<b>Survey date:</b> September 2021
<b>Place type:</b> Residential	<b>Designer:</b> Not known
<b>Significance level:</b> Significant	<b>Builder:</b> Not known
<b>Extent of overlay:</b> See map below	<b>Major construction:</b> c1928



Figure 1. Main (west) elevation of 50 Oatland Road, Plenty. (Source: Nillumbik Shire Council, photograph of owner)



Figure 2. Main (west elevation) with mature tree in front and timber garage. (Source: Nillumbik Shire Council, photograph of owner)

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

This place is associated with the following historic themes in the *Nillumbik Thematic Environmental History* (2016):

### 1 4 TRANSFORMING AND MANAGING THE LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

#### 4.4 Agriculture, orchards and viticulture

### 6 BUILDING TOWNS AND SHAPING SUBURBS

#### 6.3 Interwar subdivisions and estates

## LOCALITY HISTORY

Plenty is a semi-rural district north of Greensborough, about 20 kilometres northeast of Melbourne. The name Plenty is drawn from the nearby Plenty River, which was named by Joseph Gellibrand in 1835. Gellibrand chose the name to reflect the promising countryside of the area (Victorian Places 2015).

Crown land sales in the area began in the 1840s, with blocks ranging from around 300 to 800 acres. Alexander McKillop was the first to purchase a block: Crown Portion 5, Parish of Morang, comprising 820 acres (Figure 3). The Crown continued to auction the other blocks in 1853: Patrick Mornane obtained Portion 3 Section 4, and LC Luscombe purchased 308 acres in Portion 2 Section 4 (Westbrooke 2016).

The land between Plenty River and the early Yan Yean Road (now part Heard Avenue and part Yan Yean Road), was subdivided gradually until the early twentieth century. From this time the need for smallholdings increased, and land was divided more frequently as a result (Westbrooke 2016).

This initial, ad hoc settlement pattern contrasts with other settlements in the Nillumbik Shire and relates to the selection and take-up of occupation licences. Much of this land was believed to be auriferous and hence was taken up under 20-acre occupation licences under the Land Acts. Fruit-growing became the most viable use of the small hilly lots. A number of small communities developed to service this new settlement pattern and industry. Often these settlements featured only a school and post office. 'Glenaulin', on Portion 2 Section 12 of the Parish of Yan Yean farther north, was subdivided into 108 two-acre lots and 72 one-acre lots, which were advertised in early 1854. The selling of the lots, however, was unsuccessful (Westbrooke 2016).

The alignment of the Greensborough Road (now Yan Yean Road) was altered from the original survey line with a series of curves to the west in 1869 (Argus, 23 June 1869:2). This new road formed a boundary for a number of subsequent subdivisions (Westbrooke 2016).

Some who owned large blocks of land towards the north in Yan Yean Parish attempted ambitious early subdivisions involving division of the land into several smallholder blocks. Portion 2 Section 4 of Yan Yean, to the north of Plenty, was subdivided by Henry and John Cooke, who advertised the blocks as 'Egglestone Estate' c1885 (Westbrooke 2016).

The 1870s marked a more traditional pattern of subdivision in the area in which larger blocks were divided into two or three lots. This pattern lasted until 1900, by which time only a few significant homesteads had been erected.

The early twentieth century marked the height of a subdivision trend in the area. This was likely influenced by the success of smallholders, particularly orchardists, in surrounding areas such as

Arthurs Creek. Leslie Woodbourne Clarke, a grazier from the Doreen property 'Linton Grange', inspired this trend in 1905, having bought the northern lot of the northern half of Crown Portion 5, subdividing it into nine lots of 10 to 28 acres. The first of Clarke's allotments was purchased in 1906. By 1914 eight had been sold, and the last was sold in 1927 (CT: V3098 FF446). The southern edge of the subdivision included a private road, Clarkes Road, now Worns Lane. This success led to an increase in subdivision in the Plenty area, where most smallholdings ranged from 10 to 30 acres.

Portion 5 west of Yan Yean Road, owned by Bank of Australia Ltd (presumably the rebadged Real Estate Bank Ltd, which had purchased the land in 1888), was subdivided into 17 lots of approximately 20 acres each in 1911. Browns Lane provided a central dividing line for the subdivision. Fourteen lots had sold by 1916 (CT: V2020 F836).

Arthur Grenbry Outhwaite of 'Tallarook', in Walsh Street, South Yarra, purchased a section of Portion 3 Section 4 west of the Yan Yean Road, comprising 496 acres, from John Butler's executors in April 1912 (CT: V2326 F062), and immediately subdivided the property into 40 lots (CT: 3589 F730). In 1925 the Lierse brothers bought the 38 acres at the western end of the subdivision, which included a number of weekender lots (CT: V3589 F 730). When Outhwaite died in 1938, only two lots remained unsold (CT: V3589 F730).

In 1924 the secretary of the Plenty Progress Association proclaimed, 'within eight years our district has been converted by city workers from absolute bush into orchards and poultry farms...' (*Age*, 26 October 1924:9).

The area was described as being 'thrown open for selection' in 1913, with Plenty's new landscape celebrated in a 1925 article in the *Advertiser (Hurstbridge)*, as being 'the Toorak of the northern suburbs, where you get a panoramic view of the surrounding landscape for miles; a grand health resort, and only fifteen miles from the GPO' (*Advertiser (Hurstbridge)*, 31 July 1925:4). This intensification of subdivision coincided with the establishment of the Plenty Social Club and the Plenty Progress Association, and the development of a Plenty town centre in the 1920s that included a Primary School (HO213), Methodist Church (HO250), Store and Hall (HO248)

In 1928–29 the Heidelberg Shire compulsorily acquired 10 acres of land in Portion 2 Section 4 to create a 'pleasure ground and place of public resort'. In May 1930 the Plenty Progress Association began to raise funds to build a hall on this new recreation reserve (*Advertiser (Hurstbridge)*, 9 May 1930:4). Tenders were called in May 1931 and the hall was opened in July 1931 (*Advertiser (Hurstbridge)*, 9 May 1930:4; 23 May 1930:1).

In the early 1930s, the poultry industry was growing in the Diamond Creek area and it was suggested the area may grow a greater reputation for poultry than fruit-growing. The poultrymen of Diamond Creek noted as being 'among the first to export eggs to England' (*Advertiser (Hurstbridge)*, 22 April 1932, p. 2.)

After World War II additional community facilities were built. The Plenty reserve became a War Memorial Park featuring memorial gates, a playground, toilets, and trees planted by schoolchildren on Arbour Day. The Plenty War Memorial Gates (HO249) were erected by the Plenty War Memorial Trust in 1951. A fire station shed was erected on the corner of Howell and Yan Yean roads in the 1960s (Westbrooke 2016).





A dwelling is evident in a similar position to the house on a topographic map of the area dated 1930 (Figure 4). The garage to the south of the house appears to have been built contemporaneously to the house. By 1932 William Lierse owned a car, so it is probable the garage was constructed by then (*Advertiser (Hurstbridge)* 8 January 1932, p. 2).

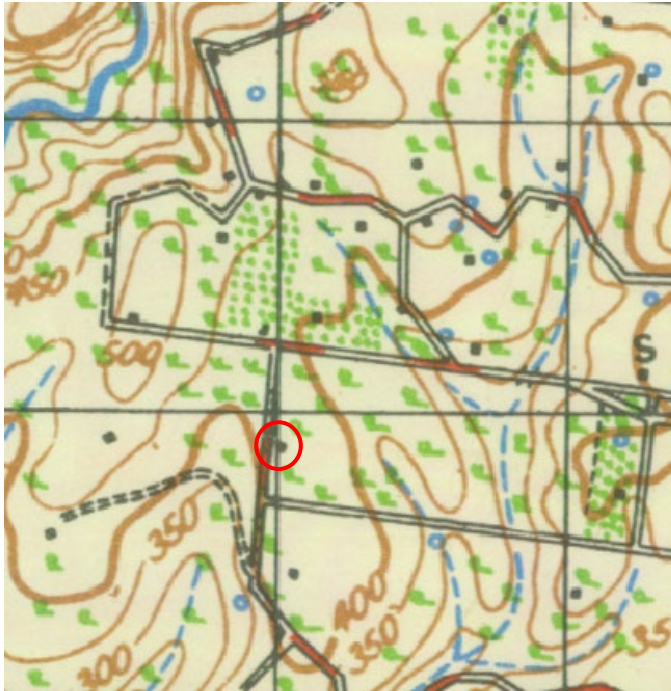


Figure 4. Detail from 'Victoria, Yan Yean' topographic map dated 1930 showing the possible dwelling (black square) circled in red with treed surroundings. (Source: State Library Victoria)

William Charles and Priscilla had one son, William John (John) Lierse, who was born in 1930. A photograph of the family taken from what appears to be the rear of the property shows the rear brick chimney, weatherboard cladding, clerestory window and moulded timber back door that appear extant today (Figure ).

In 1936 the 30-acre property was divided into three. The northern lot was taken by Ernst Lierse and the southern by Bernhard Lierse, and William took the central lot of 11 acres 19 perches that includes the subject site (Figure ). William was described in the certificate of title as a market gardener of Plenty, although it appears he undertook a variety of farming pursuits and services (CT: V4863 F425).

By 1943 William was identified as a poultry farmer of Plenty rather than an orchardist of Diamond Creek (ER 1943). William and Priscilla continued to live in Oatland Road and engage in community life.

Aerial imagery from 1946 shows the subject house surrounded by a number of sheds, likely to be poultry sheds, and areas of cleared land. A garage building to the south of the house, one rear shed and a dam visible in 1946 remain extant today (Figure ).



Figure 5. Photograph of Priscilla, John and William Lierse dated 1934, part of the collection of photographs owned by Dorris McLaughlin. The photograph appears to be taken at the rear of the subject house. (Source: Identifier 1315, Victorian Collections, photographer unknown)

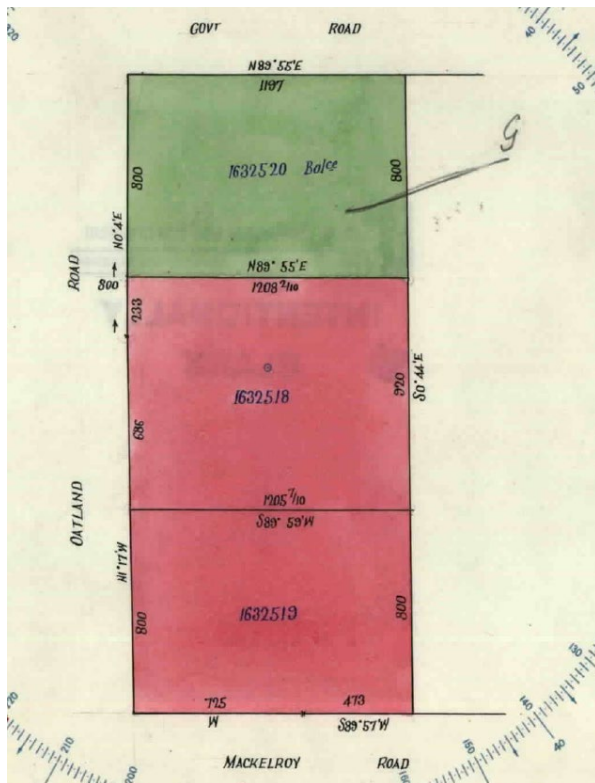


Figure 6. Detail from the certificate of title, showing the subdivision in 1936 whereby the blocks in red were transferred to William and Ernst Lierse as proprietors as tenants in common. The central portion, 1632518, which includes the subject site, was transferred to William Lierse. (Source: CT: V4863 F425)





Figure 7. Detail of the subject site from aerial imagery taken in 1946–47 by Adastra Airways, showing the house, garage, and numerous large sheds to the rear. (Source: DELWP)



Figure 8. Detail from aerial imagery dated 1951. (Source: Central Plan Office, photographer unknown)

In 1965 John Lierse was working in poultry sheds on the family property in Oatland Road when a bushfire approached. The house was saved by sprinklers in the garden, but over 500 hens perished in the heat and smoke as the fire passed (Plenty George Bushfire Committee undated, p. 3)



Figure 9. Detail from aerial imagery of the subject site dated 1968. (Source: Central Plan Office, photographer unknown)

Following the death of William in 1976, the property was transferred to Priscilla. When she died in 1983 the property was transferred to son John Lierse, who appears to have been living at the property. He subdivided the lot comprising 50–68 Oatland Road into three portions in 1996 (CT V6090 F888). The subject site containing the house, portion 3, became 50 Oatland Road (Figure ). John Lierse continued to live at the Oatland Road property until 2018 (CT V10371 F839). He died in 2020 (*Herald Sun* 11 March 2020).

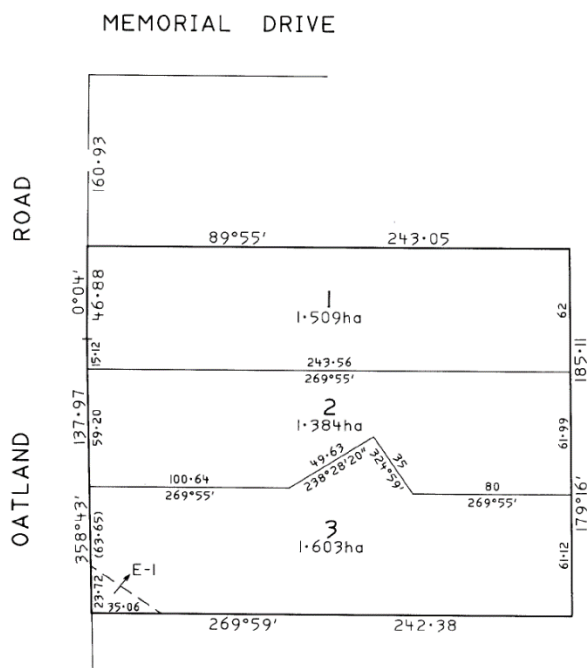


Figure 10. Plan of the subdivision of 50–68 Oatland Road, Plenty, in 1996. The subject site is portion 3. (Source: CT V6090 F888)





Figure 11. Aerial photograph of the site in 2015 showing the original sheds prior to demolition. (Source: Nillumbik Shire Council, photographer unknown)

The subject site was sold in 2018 (CT V10371 F839). The corrugated iron roof was replaced in 2011 (Nearmap). All but one of the corrugated iron agricultural sheds to the rear, and other smaller structures, were demolished in 2018 (Nearmap). The 1920s hairpin wire fence that had been at the front of the property was replaced with a slatted timber fence in 2019–20 (Nearmap). The subject site was sold to the current owners in May 2021 (CT V10371 F839).



Figure 12. The subject site in 2021 showing the main house (c1928), timber garage (by 1946) and remaining corrugated iron shed to the rear (by 1946). The property boundary is outlined in blue. (Source: Nearmap)

### *The Lierse family*

William (Karl Wilhelm) Lierse, carpenter and father of William Charles (eldest son), Ernst Otto (second son) and Bernhard (third son), was born in Germany in 1853 and came to Diamond Creek in the early 1890s. His carpentry skills featured in many of the early buildings around Diamond Creek (*Advertiser (Hurstbridge)* 22 April 1932, p. 2). In 1895 William married Marie Louise Strauch (also referred to as Louise Mary Stansh), who was likely a German migrant as well and advertised as a dressmaker in Diamond Creek in the late 1890s (*Mercury and Weekly Courier*, 26 May 1899, p. 4). The Lierse family lived in Chute Street, Diamond Creek, with their three sons and daughter. William (Karl Wilhelm) appears to have had an orchard at Diamond Creek 'near Mr Alston's'. This was offered for sale or to rent in 1931 (*Advertiser (Hurstbridge)* 18 December 1931, p. 6). The elder William Lierse died in 1932 (*Advertiser (Hurstbridge)* 22 April 1932, p. 2).

The 'Lierse Bros' were sanitary contractors to the Shire in 1928 and 1931 (*Advertiser (Hurstbridge)*, 14 December 1928 p.4; 23 May 1931 p. 6.). The younger William Lierse was involved in sanitary services for a longer period, contracting from c1920 to c1935 (*Eltham and Whittlesea Shires Advertiser and Diamond Creek Valley Advocate*, 22 October 1920 p. 3. *Advertiser (Hurstbridge)*, 10 May 1935 p. 6.).

The Lierse brothers and their spouses were heavily involved in the developing community life and community facilities of Plenty from the late 1920s. William and Priscilla and Bernhard and his wife Olive were involved in the Plenty Tennis Club and in the construction and maintenance of the courts at Plenty Park (*Advertiser (Hurstbridge)* 8 January 1932, p. 2). William held the position of joint vice-president of the tennis club committee and was appointed foreman for the construction. Priscilla was secretary (*Advertiser (Hurstbridge)* 8 January 1932, p. 2). Ernst appears to have been most prolific as secretary of the Plenty Progress Association and Plenty Social Club, secretary of the Plenty Hall Committee, and MC at numerous local social occasions (*Advertiser (Hurstbridge)* 23 December 1932, p. 3; *Advertiser (Hurstbridge)* 14 March 1930, p. 5). Ernst and his wife Linda were involved in fundraising for and building the Plenty Hall. Priscilla was elected secretary of the Plenty branch of the Red Cross in 1942 (*Eltham and Whittlesea Shires Advertiser*, 27 February 1942, p. 4).

## DESCRIPTION

The house at 50 Oatland Street, Plenty, is a single-storey timber structure built c1928 for the owner, orchardist William Charles Lierse. Located on the eastern side of Oatland Road, between Memorial Drive and Mackelroy Road, the house has a generous setback from the street and sits on a 3.95-acre rural allotment. The allotment is broadly rectangular, with a protrusion at the middle of the northern side to accommodate a dam. Outbuildings include a timber garage with pitched roof to the south of the house and two corrugated iron sheds.

Asymmetric in form with a projecting front room, the weatherboard-clad house sits beneath a Dutch gable roof clad in corrugated iron. The base of the weatherboard house is slightly elevated on timber stumps clad with wide boards spaced for ventilation.

A return verandah runs from the projecting front room along the west elevation, wrapping around the northwest corner of the house and along the north side terminating at an enclosed room about two thirds of the way along.

The main roof of the house extends down over the verandah at a lower pitch. Access to the verandah is via a flight of brick steps along the street facing (west) side of the house, aligned to the front door.

Key features of the building and landscape include:

- asymmetric built form with a projecting front room and return verandah;
- weatherboard-clad walls;
- corrugated iron Dutch gable roof that extends down at a lower pitch over the return verandah;
- exposed rafter ends;
- red brick chimney;
- projecting front gable;
- decorative gable end detail, including timber lattice work and small timber brackets;
- timber window hood clad in corrugated iron with scalloped trim, supported by brackets;
- original pattern of fenestrations on the west, south and north elevations;
- timber double-hung sash windows;
- glazed door under the verandah on the west elevation
- half-glazed front door set in a moulded timber door frame with sidelights;
- original or early timber flywire screen doors;
- corrugated iron clad timber garage with pitched roof and decorative gable end detail including timber lattice work south of the house (by 1946);
- extant corrugated iron clad agricultural shed to the rear (by 1946);
- mature tree in front of the house; and
- open rural landscape setting.

Alterations and additions include:

- The cutting back of the western edge of the verandah and construction of a low brick planter box on which the verandah posts now sit,
- recent corrugated iron shed south of the garage
- timber front fence (c2019).





Figure 13. Projecting front room with decorative gable end above a pair of timber double hung sash windows with a timber window hood supported by brackets with scalloped trim. (Source: Nillumbik Shire Council, photograph of owner)



Figure 14. Decorative timber fly screen door with half glazed front door behind. Note the unpainted panel on the wall where an original name plate would have been located. (Source: Nillumbik Shire Council, photograph of owner)



Figure 15. North elevation showing the return verandah with turned timber posts and Dutch gable end. (Source: Nillumbik Shire Council, photograph of owner)



Figure 16. South elevation showing Dutch gable end, red brick chimney, pair of double-hung sash windows. (Source: Nillumbik Shire Council, photograph of owner)



Figure 17. Rear (east) elevation. (Source: Nillumbik Shire Council, photograph of owner)



Figure 18. Northeast corner of the house showing the enclosed verandah. Note the extant early window hood that runs the length of the east elevation. (Source: Nillumbik Shire Council, photograph of owner)



Figure 19. Timber garage with pitched roof and corrugated iron walls. (Source: Nillumbik Shire Council, photograph of owner)



Figure 20. Timber garage with lattice gable end detail that matches the house. The timber doors retain their original hinges. (Source: Nillumbik Shire Council, photograph of owner)

## INTEGRITY

The house at 50 Oatland Road, Plenty is highly intact, with very few changes visible to its original or early built form and fabric. The integrity of the house is greatly enhanced by the intactness of the main elements and details as listed above. Overall, the place has very high integrity.



## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Much of the land in Nillumbik was taken up as large agricultural properties from the 1860s onwards. Although subdivisions occurred in the area in the late 1880s, and again in the first decade of the twentieth century, these subdivisions were predominantly speculative and little development occurred. The land continued to be largely rural until World War I, with small, scattered townships.

The early subdivisions did not drastically change the rural nature of the area. In 1909, when a large farm northeast of Eltham was divided, the lots were still sold in parcels of 6 to 29 acres. These allotments were advertised as being equally suited to farming and fruit-growing as they were to residential purposes (Mills & Westbrooke 2017).

The success of such subdivisions led to an increase in subdivision in the nearby Plenty area, where most smallholdings ranged from 10 to 30 acres. Coinciding with this intensification of subdivision in the area, the Plenty Social Club and Plenty Progress Association were established along with the development of a Plenty town centre in the 1920s, that included a Primary School (HO213), Methodist Church (HO250), Store and Hall (HO248)

Arthurs Creek, Doreen, Hurstbridge, Strathewen, Plenty, Diamond Creek, Yarrambat and Research became important centres for a fruit-growing industry that was based at Diamond Creek. In 1931 *The Leader's* correspondent wrote that 'scores of small orchards few more than 20 acres in extent, are to be found within the neighbourhood of Diamond Creek and Eltham, and it is on fruit growing that most of the inhabitants of this district depend for their livelihood. Smaller orchardists however often struggled to make a living from their trees and often turned to other activities such as raising chickens, selling firewood or even working for other landowners or in goldmines as well as tending their fruit trees (Mills & Westbrooke 2017). This appears to be the case for the subject property, as William Charles appears to have run a poultry farm on the property, established by 1943, after previous work as an orchardist and sanitary contractor. The Lierse brothers undertook a variety of occupational pursuits on various landholdings in the area.

Reflecting the popular architecture of the time, most houses built as a result of the subdivisions in the Plenty area were 'bungalows'. The early bungalows from the 1920s were commonly associated with the Californian Bungalow style, which usually featured a high level of detailing. Many houses built in the same period or later, however, conformed to a broader interwar bungalow type, especially those in outer suburban and semi-rural areas. These houses were generally simpler and more stripped back than their Californian Bungalow counterparts and were commonly asymmetric in form, with large verandahs incorporated under the main roof line of the house.

This interwar period of development in the Shire was identified in the Shire of Nillumbik Heritage Gap Study Framework (June 2009) as under-represented in the Heritage Overlay. Four properties (including the subject property) not included in the Heritage Overlay were identified as demonstrating this development period. The other identified properties are:





Figure 21. 145 River Avenue, Plenty (assessed as individually significant by Mills (2016). (Source: Mills 2016c)

145 River Avenue, Plenty, is historically significant as a representative example of an early development within a smallholding subdivision, the Plenty River Estate. The property contains a rare surviving example of a brick interwar farmhouse built during the closer settlement of Plenty.

145 River Avenue is aesthetically significant for its substantially intact brick interwar farmhouse, which retains its original form and main features including an all-encompassing main hip roof, timber-framed windows, front gable-roofed wing and front verandah with brick balustrade and pillars. The farming sheds to the rear demonstrate the operation of a farm smallholding and contribute to the setting of the place (Mills 2016c).



Figure 22. 'Nilgiris', 183 Yan Yean Road, Plenty, assessed as individually significant by Mills (2016). (Source: Mills 2016b)

'Nilgiris' is historically significant as a representative example of the farm properties established during the development of Plenty in the 1920s following the major early twentieth century subdivisions. It is of historical importance as an example of a War Service Home erected in the 1920s and as a successful poultry farm during the 1930s.

'Nilgiris' is aesthetically significant as a 1920s weatherboard bungalow. The farming sheds to the rear demonstrate the operation of a poultry farm and contribute to the setting of the place (Mills 2016b).



Figure 23. 14-26 Browns Lane, Plenty assessed as individually significant by Context 2021. (Source: Context July 2021)

14-26 Browns Lane, Plenty, is historically significant for its association with the development of Plenty in the interwar years. It provides tangible evidence of the interwar subdivision pattern in which large rural landholdings in the Plenty area were divided for sale in allotments of 10 or 30 acres. These allotments were advertised as being equally suited to farming and fruit-growing as they were to residential purposes. It is a largely intact representative example of a timber interwar bungalow.

Key characteristics include its asymmetric built form with projecting front room below a dominant hip and gable roof, extensive wrap-around verandah under the sweep of the main roof line, and a box bay window that sits under its own skillion roof with a window hood (Context 2021).

The following examples of 1920s bungalows included in the schedule to the Heritage Overlay in the Shire of Nillumbik are comparable to 50 Oatland Road.



Figure 24. Orchard House, 25 Cottles Bridge – Strathewen Road, Cottles Bridge (HO190). (Source: VHD)

The property at 25 Cottles Bridge –Strathewen Road, Cottles Bridge, is significant as one of few brick houses built prior to 1930 in Nillumbik. It is unique in the municipality as an example of the transitional bungalow style, exhibiting elements of both the interwar and Federation eras. It is also significant for its association with Thomas Cottle, the namesake of the Cottles Bridge area, the Cooke orcharding family, and the probable builder of the house, 'Caffin' (VHD).



Figure 25. 200 Ryans Road, Eltham North, assessed as Individually Significant by Context (2021). (Source: Context 2021)

200 Ryans Road, Eltham North, is historically significant as a house built in the Glen Park Estate area of Eltham North during the 1930s. The subject site is important as one of the earliest surviving houses from this initial development period of the estate. Built in 1933, it is of representative significance as a 1930s timber house built during the time when a general lack of material affluence was evident. The house demonstrates key elements typical of 1930s bungalow, which were designed with more restrained decorative detailing than bungalow types of earlier decades.



Figure 26. Old Brinkkotter House, 32 Lindon Strike Court, Research (HO114). (Source: VHD)

The substantial brick house built c1935 at 32 Lindon Strike Court, Research, is significant for its associations with the Brinkkotter family, well-known Research farmers and orchardists. The existence of two adjacent farmhouses on the one property is rare in the former Shire of Eltham, and the c1935 house is aesthetically significant for its unusual design (VHD).



Conservative in its design, 50 Oatland Road, Plenty is also stylistically comparable to earlier houses built in the shire in the 1910s.

The following examples of earlier houses included in the schedule to the Heritage Overlay in the Shire of Nillumbik are comparable to 50 Oatland Road:



Figure 27. Edwin Peters House, later Henry Ryan House, 5 Hyde Street, Diamond Creek (HO217). (Source: Victorian Heritage Database)

The Peters house at 5 Hyde Street, Diamond Creek, is historically and architecturally significant to Diamond Creek. It is significant as one of the earliest houses in the area and for its association with local carpenter Edwin Peters, and subsequently Henry Ryan of Ryan's butchery. It is architecturally significant as an early surviving example of a weatherboard Federation Bungalow in the shire (Victorian Heritage Directory).



Figure 28. Fermanagh, 1080 Heidelberg – Kinglake Road, Hurstbridge, assessed as Individually Significant by Context (2021). (Source: Context 2021)

'Fermanagh', 1080 Heidelberg-Kinglake Road, Hurstbridge, is of historical significance to the Shire of Nillumbik for its association with orcharding in Hurstbridge, which was the main agricultural industry in the Diamond Valley region from the 1880s to the 1930s. 'Fermanagh' is aesthetically significant as a particularly well-executed and architect-designed Federation villa that retains an early garden. It is distinguished by its intact Queen Anne details combined with the massing and verandah form of an Australian homestead.

## Discussion

The house at 50 Oakland Road, Plenty, is a one of few surviving residences that demonstrates the pattern of interwar subdivision, in which large rural landholdings in the Plenty area were divided up for sale in allotments of 10 to 30 acres. These allotments were advertised as being equally suited to farming and fruit-growing as they were to residential purposes. In response to an increasing population in the area, this development coincides with and supported a growing Plenty town centre established in the 1920s which included a Primary School (HO213), Methodist Church (HO250), Store and Hall (HO248).

As was typical for many houses built in the area in the interwar era, 50 Oatland Road is of single-storey timber construction with an asymmetric form and a dominant verandah. Stylistically, the house demonstrates characteristics of a standard asymmetrical late Victorian or Federation villa. This is combined with an Australian homestead massing with a wraparound verandah roofed by a lower-pitched extension of the main roof. It is comparable to 5 Hyde Street, Diamond Creek (HO217), 1080 Heidelberg-Kinglake Road (recommended as Individually Significant), which both incorporate an asymmetric built form with projecting front room below a dominant hip and gable roof. The house at



50 Oatland Road differs from these examples in its incorporation of an extensive wrap around verandah under the sweep of the main roof line and decorative window hood over windows of the projecting room. In this way it is more comparable to 14-16 Browns Lane, Plenty (recommended as Individually Significant), 25 Cottles Bridge – Strathewen Road, Cottles Bridge (HO190), 200 Ryans Road, Eltham North (recommended as Individually Significant) and Old Brinkkötter House, 32 Lindon Strike Court, Research (HO114).

50 Oatland Road compares well to 'Nilgiris', 183 Yan Yean Road, Plenty (assessed as individually significant) and 145 River Avenue, Plenty (assessed as individually significant) as an example of a farm smallholding. The c1920s timber garage and one remaining poultry shed at the rear of the house evidence the operation of a farm smallholding.

Overall, 50 Oatland Road, Plenty, is a good representative example of an interwar timber bungalow with a traditional asymmetrical form combined with an Australian homestead massing and verandah form. It is one of few surviving houses built in the interwar period as a result of increased land subdivision in the Plenty area. As such it is a highly intact example of a bungalow typology and corresponding period of development that is under-represented in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay. Together with the remaining poultry shed, timber-framed garage and setback, 50 Oatland Road provides tangible evidence of a farm smallholding dating from the interwar period.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT?

50 Oatland Road, Plenty, built c1928, is significant.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include:

- setback from Oatland Road;
- asymmetric built form with a projecting front room and return verandah;
- weatherboard-clad walls;
- corrugated iron Dutch gable roof that extends down at a lower pitch over the return verandah;
- exposed rafter ends;
- red brick chimney;
- projecting front gable;
- decorative gable end detail, including timber lattice work and small timber brackets;
- corrugated iron clad timber window hood with scalloped trim supported by brackets;
- original pattern of fenestrations on the west, south and north elevations;
- timber double-hung sash windows;
- glazed door under the verandah on the west elevation;
- half-glazed front door set in a moulded timber door frame with sidelights;
- original or early timber flywire screen doors;
- timber garage with pitched roof south of the house;
- extant corrugated iron clad agricultural shed to the rear.

The mature tree in front of the house is not significant in its own right but contributes to the setting of the place.

Other more recent outbuildings are not significant.

### HOW IS IT SIGNIFICANT?

50 Oatland Road, Plenty, is of local historical and representative significance to the Shire of Nillumbik.

### WHY IS IT SIGNIFICANT?

50 Oatland Road, Plenty, is historically significant for its association with the development of Plenty in the interwar years. As an intact timber bungalow built for William Charles and Priscilla Mary Lierse in c1928, originally on a 30 acre lot, it provides tangible evidence of the interwar subdivision pattern in which large rural landholdings in the Plenty area were divided for sale in allotments of 10 or 30 acres. These allotments were advertised as being equally suited to farming and fruit-growing as they were to residential purposes. In response to an increasing population in the area, this development coincided with and supported a growing Plenty town centre. Established in the 1920s, the town centre included a Primary School (HO213), Methodist Church (HO250), Store and Hall (HO248). The Lierse family were early residents in the Diamond Creek and Plenty area involved in a variety of agricultural

and other pursuits. They were heavily involved in the development of community life in Plenty from the mid-1920s (Criterion A).

Arthurs Creek, Doreen, Hurstbridge, Strathewen, Plenty, Diamond Creek, Yarrambat and Research became important centres for a fruit-growing industry that was based at Diamond Creek. Smaller orchardists, however, often struggled to make a living from their trees and often turned to other activities such as raising chickens, selling firewood or even working for other landowners or in goldmines, as well as tending their fruit trees. This was the case for William Charles Lierse, who was an orchardist and sanitary contractor prior to establishing a poultry farm on the property by 1943. 50 Oatland Road provides important tangible evidence of these early agricultural activities in the area. The significance of the place is enhanced by its rural setting, which maintains its street frontage and setback to Oatland Road (Criterion A).

The house at 50 Oatland Road, Plenty, is a largely intact representative example of a timber interwar bungalow. It has had very few changes made to the original or early built fabric across its principal elevations. Key characteristics include its asymmetric built form with projecting front room below a dominant Dutch gable roof, and an extensive wrap-around verandah under the sweep of the main roof line. The extant c1920s garage, poultry shed, and open setting evidence the use of the site as a poultry farm complex (Criterion D).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Nillumbik Planning Scheme as an individually significant place.

**Extent of overlay:** As per map below:



Figure 29. Proposed curtilage for 50 Oatland Road, Plenty, outlined in red. (Source: Nearmap with Context overlay)



Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Municipality Planning Scheme:

**Nillumbik Planning Scheme**

External paint controls	No
Internal alteration controls	No
Tree controls	No
Outbuildings or fences	Yes
To be included on the Victorian Heritage Register	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted	No
Aboriginal heritage place	Unknown

**Other**

N/A

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