

125, 173 and 191 Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge

‘Wendouree’ and Canary Island Date Palms, and Smith Orchard Houses

Prepared by: Context	Survey date: December 2020
Place type: Residential, Orcharding	Designer: -
Significance level: Significant	Builder: Not known
Extent of overlay: To title boundaries	Major construction: 1910 (125), c1915 (173), c1903 (191)



Figure 1. ‘Wendouree’ at 125 Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge. (Source: Context 2020)



Figure 2. 173 Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge. (Source: Context 2020)

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

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

2 PEOPLEING NILLUMBIK'S PLACES AND LANDSCAPES

2.8 Twenty-acre occupation licences

One of the most conspicuous features of the cadastral map of the Nillumbik area is the concentrated clusters of hundreds of small lots of around eight hectares (20 acres), which are located almost exactly over the old auriferous (gold-bearing) lands of the area. There are around 800 of these small lots, amounting to around 6,500 hectares, or 15 per cent, of the land area of the current Nillumbik Shire. This settlement pattern originated in a system of temporary tenure on auriferous Crown land that was introduced in the land Acts from the 1860s and would prove a useful safety valve to the problems that arose from selection (Mills & Westbrooke 2016:34).

Victoria's land acts are best known for the introduction of selection but this was accompanied by an evolving system for licensed occupation of Crown land for residential and cultivation purposes. The Nicholson Act 1860 provided for licences to occupy Crown lands for purposes such as stores, inns, ferries and bridges. This provision stretched to include 'occupation licences' and hundreds were taken up by miners and tradesmen on goldfields and on other Crown land (Mills & Westbrooke 2016:34).

By June 1866 more than 5,000 settlers had occupied over 120,000 acres in the colony under this section [Section 42 of the Land Act 1865] (Nelson & Alves 2009, p. 253; Powell 1970, p. 126). Section 42 licensees were typically tenant farmers, married farm labourers, working miners, storekeepers, small traders and carriers (Mills & Westbrooke 2016:34).

The success of Section 42 was also the cause of some dissent, as many considered the application of this section of the Act to be a distortion of the original purpose, which was to assist needy miners. As a result, under the Amending Land Act 1869, Section 42 was replaced with the more stringent Section 49 under which licensees could apply to occupy and cultivate a maximum of 20 acres exclusively on auriferous land. They could only hold one licence and there was no provision for later sale. This was soon found to be too severe and, by 1873 under new land Regulations, licensees could apply to have the land sold at public auction. Under Section 4 of the Amending Land Act 1880 licensees were able to purchase the land directly and could then take out further licences (Mills & Westbrooke 2016:36-37).

As mining slowed around Queenstown and Panton Hill in the late 1860s, miners turned to the land as another source of sustenance. Alan Marshall illustrated this process when he wrote about selectors including Burrows, Purcell, Smith, Owens, Clarke, Ellis and Harvey occupying Cherry Tree Road, (on the way to Panton Hill from Hurstbridge). The majority took up licences under Section 49 then purchased the land after 1880 and, in many cases, acquired further licences. One of these was Lot 3, Section C, Greensborough, later the site of the Smith Orchard House

(HO182), first licensed to E Smith in 1877 and purchased by him in 1880 (Mills & Westbrooke 2016:36-37).

4 TRANSFORMING AND MANAGING THE LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

4.4 Agriculture, orchards and viticulture

The spread of orchards began with the selectors in the 1860s and by 1900 orchards covered much of the west of the shire, from Diamond Creek up to Strathewen in the north. Auriferous or quartz-laden soil was said to be suitable for fruit growing and the slopes of the Diamond Valley offered well-drained soil for the trees. Fruit growing is a labour-intensive activity, well suited to the small blocks of land selected in the Diamond Valley. The growing population of Melbourne in the second half of the nineteenth century provided a handy market for the fruit of the Diamond Valley (Mills & Westbrooke 2016:61).

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. While many smaller orchardists probably struggled to make profits in a labour-intensive industry, those who planted on a larger scale did very well (Mills & Westbrooke 2016:61).

The Arthurs Creek Fruitgrowers Association was formed in 1890. Members held regular shows at Diamond Creek and were active in the fight for railway connections between the fruit-growing districts and Melbourne. By the turn of the century, Arthurs Creek dominated the Melbourne fruit market. In 1912, following the passing of the Cool Store Trust Bill, for which the Arthurs Creek Association had actively lobbied, a cool store was constructed at Diamond Creek (on the site now occupied by squash courts). As well as the co-operative coolstore there were, by 1931, two privately owned cool stores at Diamond Creek operated by TJ Clark and Burke Brothers respectively. Even in the 1950s and 1960s Yarrambat orchardist Otto Rupp was placing his apples and pears in Mr Collins' cool store. 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.' Writing of the 1920s, Graham McInnes recalled that from Hurstbridge to Panton Hill the 'immediate countryside was undulating park-like bush with the trees widely spaced, or else rolled aside by the fastidious patterns of orchards. As we bowled merrily on the downhill stretches the neatly planted rows of peaches, apples, nectarines and pears went by like wheel spokes and made a neat line from every angle' (Mills & Westbrooke 2016:61).

The Shire of Nillumbik orchards probably peaked around the turn of the century, when local fruit was being exported to other states and overseas. By the First World War however, many local orchardists were experiencing difficulties. The Australasian reported in 1910 that 'growers have been loath to part with their old trees and their hesitation has resulted in one of the most important fruit-growing districts being left in the background.' Smaller orchardists struggled at the best of times to make a living from their trees, turning to raising chickens, selling firewood like Otto Rupp, even working for other landowners or in goldmines as well as tending their fruit trees. Even large growers like Draper disadvantaged themselves

by offering too wide a variety of fruits at a time when dealers began to demand fewer varieties, but steady supplies, especially for overseas markets (Mills & Westbrooke 2016:62).

The Federation of Australia had removed tariffs between colonies so Tasmanian apples now competed with local produce, while the spread of railways throughout Victoria made fruit from the Goulburn Valley an equal competitor for the Melbourne market. There are still fruit growers in the shire today, but as a major local industry, orchards were finally defeated by the drop in exports to the United Kingdom during the Second World War. Disease wiped out some fruit trees and, as the city crept nearer, land became more valuable as building blocks rather than for farming or orcharding (Mills & Westbrooke 2016:62).

LOCALITY HISTORY

Hurstbridge, established near the junction of Arthurs Creek and Diamond Creek, is located on the country of the Wurundjeri-willam clan of the Woi wurrung people.

The Hurstbridge area, named after Henry Hurst and a ford he built over Diamond Creek in 1860, was originally known as Upper Diamond Creek, or Allwood, after Cornelius Haley's cattle run of the same name. 'Allwood' was taken up in 1841 and occupied by Robert Hurst, father of Henry, and his family from 1868 (Hurstbridge and District Local History Group). In 1894, Henry Hurst's daughter, Frances, and her husband, William (Bill) Gray, rebuilt the Allwood residence, incorporating a transported building, and named it 'Allwood House'. They developed the extensive Allwood Nurseries on the property, from which they exported fruit trees ('Hurstbridge Heritage Trail' n.d.).

A number of land Acts were introduced after the 1850s gold rushes in Victoria, to establish an agricultural industry. Land was made available in the Hurstbridge area under the 1869 land Act. Some of the land taken up under this Act was held freehold by the 1870s; other allotments were leased until the introduction of the 1901 land Act, and not held freehold until the first decades of the twentieth century (*Greensborough Parish Plan* 1961). Orchards and nurseries were subsequently established, with apples, in particular, grown in large quantities.

Hurstbridge was a part of a substantial area given over to the growing of apples, pears and stone fruit, the main agricultural industry in the Diamond Valley region (the area covered by much of the present Nillumbik Shire), from the 1880s to the 1930s. With its soil and climate suited to the growing of fruit, Diamond Valley formed a significant part of the wider fruit-growing region situated to the north and east of Melbourne in the counties of Evelyn, Bourke and Mornington. Orchards and nurseries were established on the hills and in the gullies of the catchments of Diamond Creek and Arthurs Creek, stretching from the township of Diamond Creek, through Hurstbridge, Cottles Bridge, Arthurs Creek and Panton Hill, to the foot of the Kinglake Ranges at Strathewen and Queenstown (now St Andrews) (National Trust Report, 'Shaws Cool Store, Cottlesbridge', B6979, cited in Butler 2006:140).

Up until 1900, when private subdivision commenced, Hurstbridge's businesses comprised only tearooms, a wine and billiard saloon, a butcher shop, a bakery and a blacksmith (Butler 1996:43). A public hall opened in 1892 (Eltham District Historical Society 2000).

When the Melbourne-Eltham railway line was extended to Hurstbridge in 1912, the railway station at today's Hurstbridge was named Allwood and a settlement subsequently developed (Hurstbridge Historical Trail; *Victorian Places* 2015). The Allwood Post Office and store opened in 1911 opposite the railway station (Eltham District Historical Society 2000). Fruit-drying works and a cool store for fruit

were constructed behind the station in 1912. The railway station became a central point for the transport of fruit and timber from surrounding areas (Eltham District Historical Society 2000).

Subdivision of residential estates followed. In 1913, a sale advertisement noted that 219 acres in the 'Home of the Wattle' at Hurstbridge had been subdivided into allotments 'admirably adapted for week-end homes, small farms, orchard blocks' (*Argus* 10 December 1913:5).

Most of the town's growth between 1912 and the mid-1920s took place along Main Road. Offices to house the *Evelyn Observer* newspaper opened in 1918 (the building now houses the Hurstbridge Post Office) (*Victorian Places* 2015; 'Hurstbridge Heritage Trail' n.d.). Hurstbridge State School No. 3939 opened in the Church of England Sunday school hall in 1916, with a dedicated school building opened in 1922 (the building was destroyed by fire in 2005) (Blake 1973:445). A memorial sports oval was opened at Hurstbridge in 1921 (Eltham District Historical Society 2000). A single lane bridge, designed by John Monash, opened in 1918 to replace the ford built by Henry Hurst.

Special trains ran to Hurstbridge so that Melbourne visitors could gather wattle. So great were their numbers and the destruction they wrought that a charity, the Wattle Day Red Cross afternoon tea, was established in the Hurstbridge to bring some control to the crowds (Butler 1996:48).

Further subdivision occurred in Hurstbridge in the interwar period. In 1920, for example, landowners Frances and Bill Gray subdivided 34 lots on the west side of Main Road in the northern part of what is now Hurstbridge; by 1925 a few lots had also been subdivided on the west side of Main Road. The Hurstbridge Railway Estate also opened in 1924 (Mills & Westbrooke 2017:72). Some soldier settlement also occurred on rural blocks in the area in the 1920s.

The township was renamed Hurstbridge in 1924 after Henry Hurst, although the derivations 'Hurst's Bridge' and 'Hurst Bridge' were in use until the 1950s. The section of railway line between Eltham and Hurstbridge was electrified in 1926, three years after the electrification of the line between Melbourne and Eltham.

Due to the increased competition in fruit-growing from irrigated districts after World War I and the impact of the economic depression of the 1930s, many of the area's orchardists turned to other pursuits such as raising poultry, selling firewood, or supplementing their incomes by working for other landowners or in the few goldmines still in operation in the Diamond Creek, Greensborough and Smiths Gully areas (Nillumbik Shire 2020; 'Victorian Gold Project' 1999:14).

By 1940, a recreation reserve, a croquet green and tennis courts had been established (*Victorian Places* 2015). The majority of the Hurstbridge township area was not subdivided into residential blocks until after World War II. With this subdivision and the availability of rail services to Melbourne, Hurstbridge's population nearly doubled between 1933 and 1954, increasing from 433 to 824. Electricity was supplied to the town in 1957, and in 1967 a high school was opened (*Victorian Places* 2015; 'Hurstbridge Heritage Trail').

Hurstbridge has been a tourist destination since the opening of the railway line in 1912, with visitor numbers rising with increased car ownership from the 1920s and particularly after World War II.

Like Eltham, Hurstbridge attracted artists, with Albert Tucker moving to a five-acre property with his wife, Barbara Bilcock, at Hurstbridge in the 1960s (Hurstbridge and District Local History Group).

The population had grown to 2350 residents in 1981. By the 1980s, Hurstbridge featured clubs, four churches and an active shopping centre (*Victorian Places* 2015).

PLACE HISTORY

'Wendouree' and Canary Island Date Palms at 125 Cherry Tree Road, and the two Smith Orchard Houses at 173 and 191 Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge were owned for long periods of time by the Smith family, who operated a number of orchards in the area.

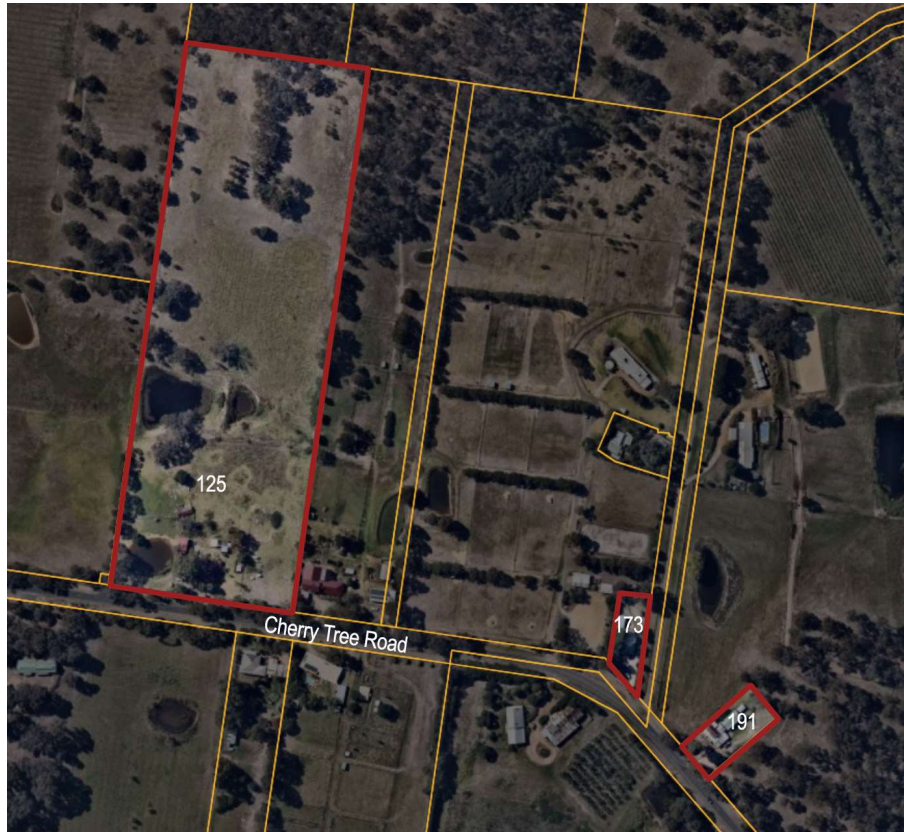


Figure 3. Showing the subject properties at 125, 173 and 191 Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge, outlined in red. (Source: Nearmap 2021)

125 and 173 Cherry Tree Road

Wendouree at 125 Cherry Tree Road is located on Crown Allotment 3, Section C, Parish of Greensborough. It was licensed in 1877 to Edwin Smith under the *Amending Land Act 1869*. Crown Allotment 3 was granted to Edwin Smith in 1888 (CT:V2110 F871; *Greensborough Parish Plan 1961*). 173 Cherry Tree Road is located on adjacent Crown Allotment 2, granted in 1888 to John Smith, baker of Yarra Flats (CT:V2110 F870; *Greensborough Parish Plan 1961*). In 1894, Edwin Smith, then a farmer of Panton Hill, became the owner of latter allotment (CT:V2110 F870).

After they married in 1873, Edwin Smith and his wife Louisa Georgiana (née Purcell) selected land on Cherry Tree Road. They subsequently cleared the allotments to start an orchard and farm, and built a house, 'Beaumont' (at today's 190 Manuka Road, see Figure 4). The Smiths continued to develop their commercial orchard, which in later years comprised apples, peaches, apricots, plums and pears (Smith 2013).

Following Edwin Smith's death in 1910, Edwin's son William Thomas Smith, orchardist of Panton Hill, became the owner of both Crown allotments (CT:V2110 F870 & F871). The existing houses at 125 and 173 Cherry Tree Road were built after this time.



Figure 4. Showing the Smith family home, 'Beaumont', then addressed as Cherry Tree Road, Pantton Hill (today at 190 Manuka Road, Hurstbridge), c1895. Pictured are Edwin and Louisa with the first 10 of their 11 children. From left: Florence Emily, Marian Louisa Sarah, Edwin (father) with Victor Albert on his lap, Edwin James Samuel, Lilian Rose, Louisa Georgina (mother), Alice Mary (at back), Bertram Edward (next to his mother), William Thomas (at back), George John, and Alfred George. (Source: Smith 2013)

125 Cherry Tree Road

The existing building at 125 Cherry Tree Road was built c1910 for George John Smith and his wife Barbara (née Bradley) shortly after their marriage. Their property 'Wendouree', was located near the Smith family home 'Beaumont'. George and Barbara established an orchard and brought up their family of three children on the property (Smith 2013).

In 1917, under William T Smith's ownership, Crown Allotment 3 was subdivided into two allotments. The ownership of both lots were to pass to orchardist George John Smith, of 'Wendouree' in Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge, in 1917 and 1921. George Smith retained ownership of both lots until 1952 (CT:V2110 F871).

In 1952, Lester (Les) George, son of George and Barbara Smith, and his wife Valeria (Val) Annie Smith, became the owners of the larger allotment, today's 125 Cherry Tree Road (CT:V4909 F751). Separate accommodation was built onto the existing home, 'Wendouree', for Les and Val, with George continuing to live in the house as well. At this time, the land was also used as a poultry farm, which was a common for smaller orchardists who were experiencing financial difficulties (Smith 2013; Mills & Westbrook 2016:62). The Smith family retained ownership of this allotment until 1993 (CT:V7687 F116).

In 1952, Dorothy Beeton became the owner of the other allotment (today's 145 Cherry Tree Road) of approximately one-quarter acre (CT:V4909 F751).

'Wendouree' is visible in the two aerial photographs taken in 1951 and 1987. The Canary Island Date Palms existed by 1951, indicating that they were planted between 1918 and 1951, during George and Barbara's ownership (Figure 6 and Figure 7). An extension or verandah is evident to east side of the original house by 1951. This is possibly the separate accommodation built for Les and Val Smith, who married in 1952. By 1987, a return verandah with an elongated eastern portion was extant, indicating

that the house was further extended during the Smith family's ownership. The southern portion of the land surrounding the house was also cleared by 1987 (Figure 7 and Figure 8).

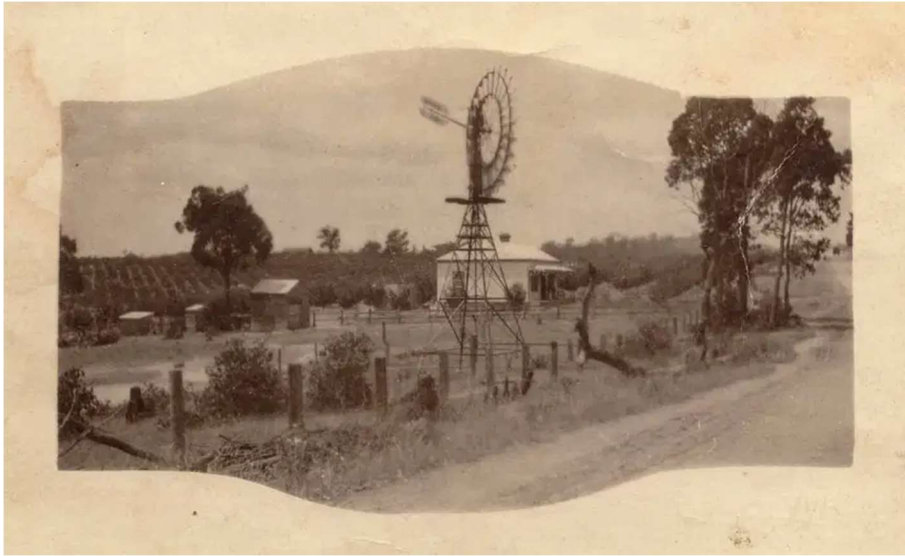


Figure 5. 'Wendouree', the home of George and Barbara Smith, built 1910 at 125 Cherry Tree Road. (Source: Smith 2013)

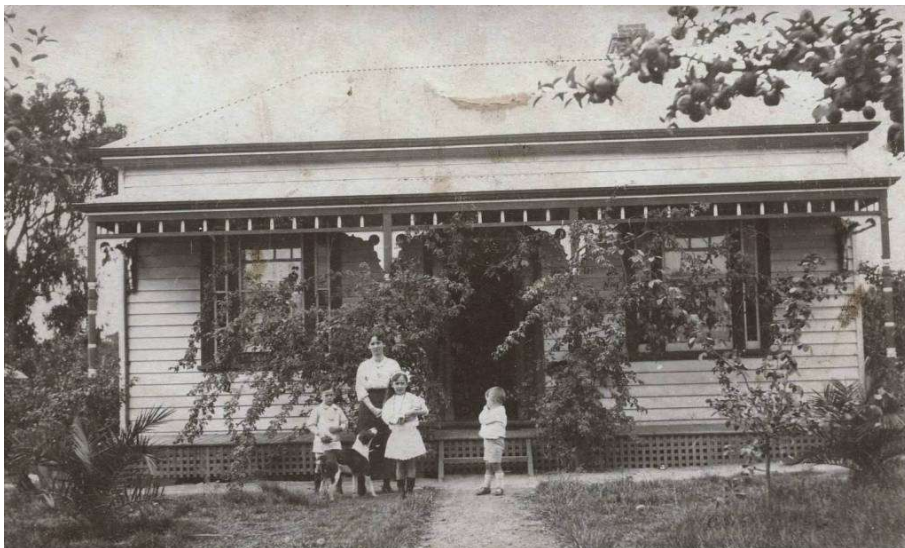


Figure 6. Barbara Smith with her three children and their dog, at 'Wendouree' in 1918. The Canary Island Date Palms (HO182) were planted after this time. (Source: Smith 2013)



Figure 7. Extract of a 1951 aerial photograph showing the property 'Wendouree', with the approximate boundaries of the pre-1952 subdivision shown in green dotted line, and approximate boundaries of today's 125 Cherry Tree Road in red. The rows of trees surrounding the house indicate that the surrounding land was still being used for farming activities. Two Canary Island Date Palms existed by this time (outlined in yellow). (Source: CPO, 'MELBOURNE AND METROPOLITAN PROJECT' 1951, via Landata)



Figure 8. Extract of a 1987 aerial photograph showing 125 Cherry Tree Road with its approximate boundaries shown in red dotted line. The southern portion of land was cleared by this time. The return verandah with an elongated eastern portion was added after 1951 (outlined in yellow). (Source: CPO, 'WESTERN PORT FORESHORES' 1987, via Landata)

173 Cherry Tree Road

Under William T Smith's ownership from 1910, Crown Allotment 2 was subdivided into four lots between 1917 and 1924: two lots comprised house blocks of approximately one-half to one acre each; another lot comprised a narrow strip of land on the western boundary of the allotment; with the balance comprising the majority of the land (see Figure 9).

One house block, part 839042, was transferred to Louisa Georgina Smith, Edwin Smith's wife and William's mother, in 1917. Louisa retained ownership of the block until 1928 (CT:V2110 F870;

CT:V4079 F670). This land comprised the Smith family home, 'Beaumont' at 190 Manuka Road (see Figure 9 and Figure 10).

In 1917, part 839043, at the southeast corner of Crown Allotment 2, was transferred to Bertram (Bert) Edward Smith, as was part 1184111 (today's 155 Cherry Tree Road) in 1924 (see Figure 9) (CT:V2110 F870). Bertram Smith, son of Edwin and Louisa Smith, owned both lots until 1970 with members of the Smith family retaining ownership until 1978 (CT:V4079 F671; CT:V9323 F431).

The subject house at 173 Cherry Tree Road was built for Bert Smith and his wife Mabel (née Suttie) around the time of their marriage in 1915 south the earlier Smith family home 'Beaumont' (see Figure 12) (Smith 2013). Bert and Mabel established an orchard on the land and brought up their two sons on the property (Smith 2013).

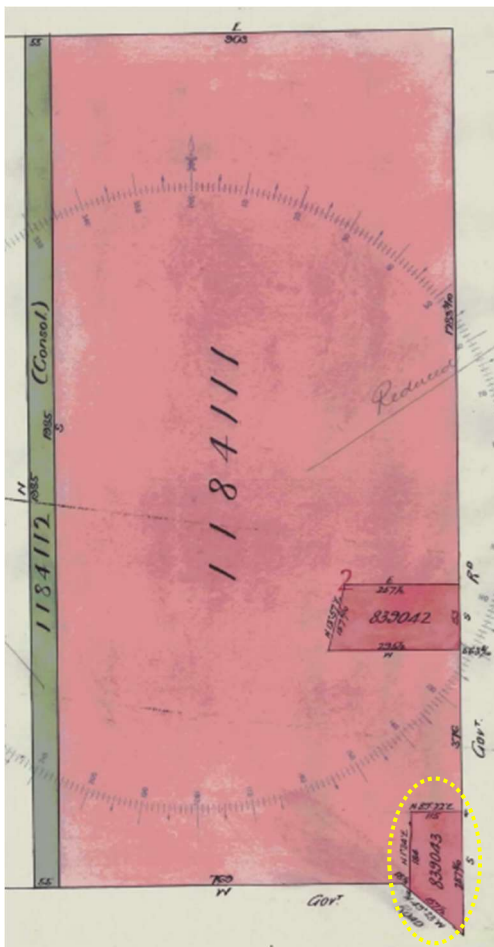


Figure 9. Crown Allotment 2, subdivided in 1917. Part 839043 (outlined in yellow) comprises the site at 173 Cherry Tree Road. Bert Smith also owned part 118411 and established an orchard on the land. (Source: CT:V2110 F870)



Figure 10. Extract of a 1951 aerial photograph showing the approximate boundaries of the land owned by Bertram Smith at that time (in green dotted line) and today's 173 Cherry Tree Road in red. The early Smith family home 'Beaumont' is shown in yellow. (Source: CPO, 'MELBOURNE AND METROPOLITAN PROJECT NO.2' 1951, via Landata)

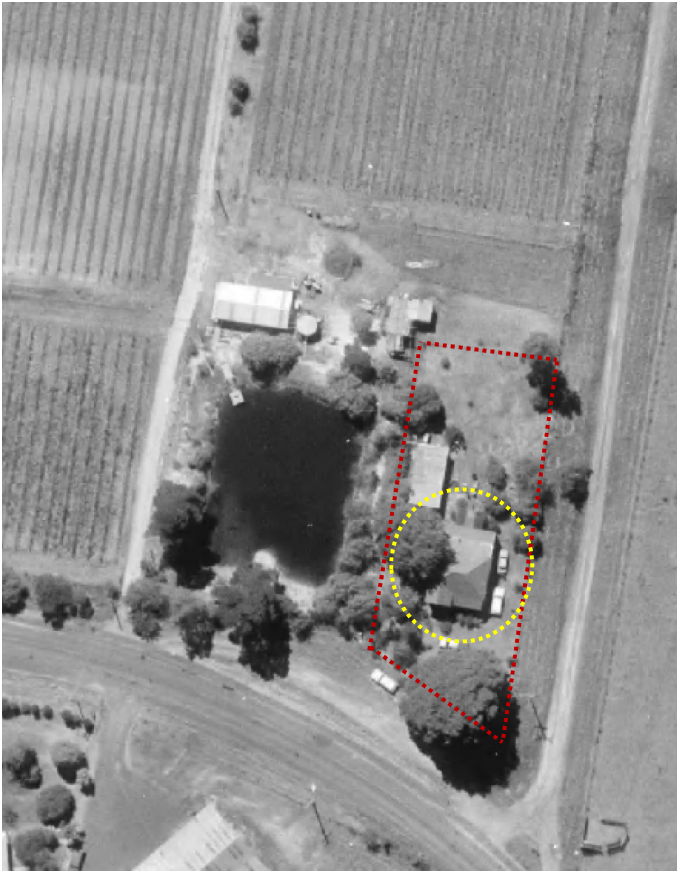


Figure 11. Extract of a 1987 aerial photograph showing 173 Cherry Tree Road with its approximate boundaries shown in red dotted line. The surrounding land was no longer owned by the Smith family but was still being used for farming at this time. A new shed was built to the northwest of the house (outlined in yellow). (Source: CPO, 'WESTERN PORT FORESHORES' 1987, via Landata)



Figure 12. Undated photograph of the home of Bertram, son of Edwin and Louisa, and Mabel Smith at 173 Cherry Tree Road. (Source: Smith 2013)

191 Cherry Tree Road

191 Cherry Tree Road is located on part of Crown Allotment 1, Section C, Parish of Greensborough. Edward Caledonia Purcell, labourer of Eltham, took up Crown Allotment 1, under the 1869 land Act, owning the allotment of approximately 20 acres by 1888 (CT:V2182 F385; Greensborough Parish Plan). It is likely that Purcell was a relative of Louisa Smith (née Purcell).

In 1894, Edwin James Samuel Smith, farmer of Panton Hill and the eldest son of Edwin and Louisa Smith, became the owner of the property (CT:V2182 F385). Shortly after their marriage in 1903, Edwin and Violet Smith (née Bartlett) built their home on the property, where they brought up nine children and established a commercial orchard. This house was next door to the earlier Smith family home 'Beaumont' which appears to remain extant at 190 Manuka Road, Hurstbridge (Smith 2013). Edwin and Violet's son Frederick married Bessie Gibbons in 1938 and lived in a small cottage next to Edwin and Violet on the same orchard (Smith 2013).

In 1949, the property passed into the ownership of Lloyd Richard Smith, son of Edwin and Violet. Lloyd Smith had left Panton Hill and moved to Yarra Glen where he worked as life assurance agent. The property was subdivided into two lots in 1974 under Lloyd Smith's ownership (see Figure 5) (CT:V2182 F385). Smith retained ownership of the larger lot of approximately seven hectares until 1980 (CT:V9386 F713).

A Planning Permit was issued in 1999 for an extension to the dwelling at 191 Cherry Tree Road (PP).

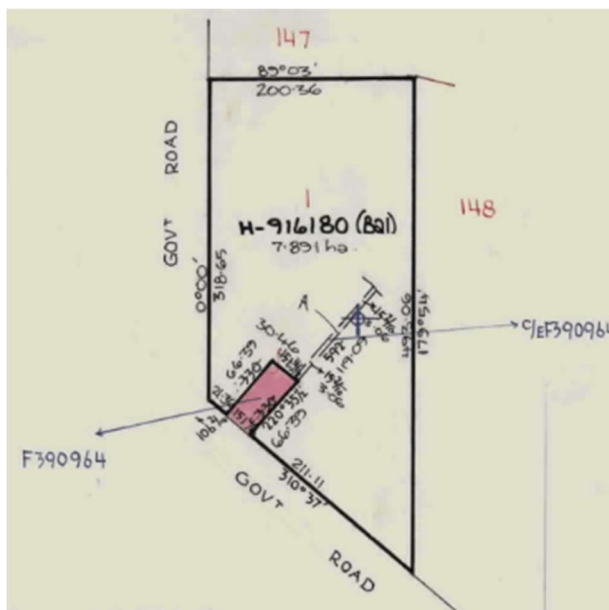


Figure 13. Showing the subdivision of today's 191 Cherry Tree Road in 1974. (Source: CT:V2182 F385)



Figure 14. To the left is an extract of a 1951 aerial photograph showing the approximate boundaries of the land owned by Edwin James Samuel Smith at that time (in green dotted line) and today's 191 Cherry Tree Road (highlighted in red). to the right is an extract of a 1987 aerial showing 191 Cherry Tree Road with additions to the front, side and rear of the original house. (Source: CPO, 'MELBOURNE AND METROPOLITAN PROJECT NO.2' 1951' & 'WESTERN PORT FORESHORES' 1987, via Landata)

Smith family, owners 1877-1980

The following extract from *Gold 'n' opportunity* by Leonie Smith, a fifth-generation Smith descendant, details the history of the Smith family.

Edwin Smith was born on the 3rd December 1848 at Bury, Lancashire, the 5th child of Samuel and Sarah Smith. He was almost 6 years old when he arrived in Australia in 1854 with his family. After he left school he worked as a miner at Caledonia Diggings. At the age of 25 he married Louisa Georgina PURCELL on the 2nd April 1874 at the Eltham Church of England...

Louisa, the first of...five children was born shortly after James and Sarah [Purcell] arrived in Australia [in 1853]. She was born at Sandridge (...Port Melbourne). James and Sarah Jane Purcell made their way to the goldfields area of Andersons Creek...then to Smiths

Gully/Queenstown...The Purcell's became the keepers of the Caledonia Hotel at Queenstown, said to have been situated near the Caledonia Creek...

After their marriage, Edwin and Louisa were one of the first to take up Crown land in Cherry Tree Road, Panton Hill. Edwin bought 10 lots of about 20 acres each at a cost of about half a crown an acre. For a short time Edwin and Louisa rented a cottage a little further down the road towards Hurstbridge while they cleared their land by hand and built their own cottage which they named "Beaumont". The cottage is still standing today, although it has seen some changes over the years.

The 10 lots Edwin originally purchased were eventually divided up amongst his children, some selling their lot to siblings and others staying on and working the land. At Beaumont, as he cleared the land Edwin began establishing an orchard, planting many varieties of apples, and peaches, apricots, plums and pears etc. and continually extended his plantings as he cleared the land.

Edwin and Louisa had 11 children over the 22 years following their marriage. As adults, those who didn't stay on the original property, stayed close by in the Panton Hill/Smiths Gully/Wattle Glen and Yarra Glen areas, the men established their own orchards, the Smith sisters with their husbands also established orchards or ran cattle...In the next generation of Edwin and Louisa's family, many of their grandchildren and a great grandson stayed in the local Panton Hill area and established their own orchards, the latter only to retire and sell his apple orchard in 2003...That ended well over a century of commercial fruit growing by the Smith family in the area.

Edwin Smith died on the 18th January 1910 and was buried at Nillumbik Cemetery in Diamond Creek...After the death of her husband, Louisa stayed on the family property for another 25 years, and died on the 24th October 1935. Like her husband, she was also laid to rest at the Nillumbik Cemetery in Diamond Creek (Smith 2013).

Other information about the Smith family can be gleaned from the obituary of Louisa Smith published in 1935:

The death occurred on October 24 of Mrs L. G. Smith, relict of the late Edwin Smith, of Panton Hill, at the residence of her eldest daughter (Mrs Arthur Jones) of Wattle Glen. The late Mrs Smith was born at Sandridge (now Port Melbourne) on May 22 82 years ago, a few weeks after her parents (the late Mr and Mrs James Purcell) had arrived from England in the sailing ship "Catherine Mitchell." Her childhood and girlhood days were spent in various parts of the district, Warrandyte (then Anderson's Creek), Diamond Creek, Eltham, Queenstown, and Panton Hill. In 1873 [1874] she was married to Edwin Smith, of Queenstown, and they selected land on Cherry Tree Road and commenced an orchard and mixed farm. Seven sons and four daughters were born of the marriage, three of the sons and one daughter are still living on the original property (Advertiser 15 November 1935:2).

DESCRIPTION

The three properties associated with the Smith family are located on the north side of Cherry Tree Road, a two-lane road connecting the Hurstbridge and Panton Hill townships. Built in the earlier decades of the twentieth century, 125, 173 and 191 Cherry Tree Road adopted various designs of Edwardian timber houses typically built on rural properties.

125 Cherry Tree Road

125 Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge, comprises a large land parcel of about 13 acres covered with moderate vegetation and a 1910 timber house 'Wendouree'. The land gently slopes down to the west. Three dams exist within the property boundaries, including one close to the southern property boundary. Built for George Smith, orchardist, and his wife Barbara, 'Wendouree' is a 1910 single-storey weatherboard house with an M-profile hipped roof clad in corrugated metal. The original house had a symmetrical façade with two windows with sidelights on the either side of the central doorway, and a concave profile verandah to the front of the building. The house has undergone various changes since 1918 (Figure 6). The changes on the primary (south) elevation include the timber verandah with simple timber posts and brackets (replaced the early verandah between 1951 and 1987), infills under the verandahs on both sides (by 1987), altered window openings and loss of a face brick chimney (date unknown). A modern iron ventilator penetrates the hipped roof on the left-hand side. The timber front fence with a gate is also a later addition. There is a post-1987 rear extension to the western portion of the house (Figure 17).

There are two corrugated metal-roofed sheds to the west and northwest of the main house. These sheds are likely the pre-1952 structures shown on Figure 7. A more recent slanted roofed shed and carport exist to the northeast of the house.

The two mature Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) trees that were planted between 1918 and 1951 (HO182) stand in front of the building. The Canary Island Date Palms are good specimens of a tree that was fashionable during the first decades of the twentieth century.



Figure 15. 'Wendouree' at 125 Cherry Tree Road. The return verandah supported by simple timber posts is an addition from between 1951 and 1987. (Source: Context 2020)



Figure 16. 'Wendouree' at 125 Cherry Tree Road, viewed from the south. The timber front fence and covered gateway is a later addition. (Source: Context 2020)



Figure 17. An aerial view of 125 Cherry Tree Road (left), and a close up of 'Wendouree' (right) with the post-1987 extension to the rear (outlined in yellow). (Source: Nearmap)

173 Cherry Tree Road

173 Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge, is a smaller allotment at the corner of Cherry Tree Road and Manuka Road, comprising a c1915 timber house. The allotment was formed by the 1917 subdivision under the ownership of William Thomas Smith, orchardist and son of Edwin and Louisa Smith. After the change of the ownership in 1978, the property is now separated from the large farmland at 155 Cherry Tree Road, formerly owned and operated by the Smith family as orchards. The existing weatherboard-clad house was built c1915 for orchardist Bertram and Mabel Smith. The house has a

high-pitched hipped roof with a transverse gable wing, clad in corrugated metal. The verandah is incorporated under the main roof form, and features turned timber posts and timber brackets. The façade is double fronted with a projecting gabled bay on the left-hand (west) side. The gable end is treated with half-timbering and rough cast render. The projecting bay features a three-light window with a corrugated metal awning. There is a face brick chimney behind this projecting bay. Another three-light window is provided on the right-hand side of the entrance. The front windows are later replacements. The central doorway features a sidelight and highlight. The property also comprises a metal-clad shed with a skillion roof (built between 1951 and 1987), to the northwest of the house.



Figure 18. 173 Cherry Tree Road, with a projecting gabled bay with half-timbering detailing. Note the face brick chimney behind the projecting bay (outlined in yellow). (Source: Context 2020)



Figure 19. 173 Cherry Tree Road, comprising a 1910 house and a shed built between 1957 and 1987. (Source: Nearmap)

191 Cherry Tree Road

191 Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge, is located near the corner of Cherry Tree Road and Manuka Road, comprising a c1903 timber house. The land was subdivided in 1974 during the ownership of Lloyd Richard Smith, son of Edwin and Louisa Smith who was living in Yarra Glen. The c1903 house built for Edwin James Samuel Smith, farmer of Panton Hill and the eldest son of Edwin and Louisa Smith, and his wife Violet. A large gable roofed extension was made to the original house in 1999 to the rear of the earlier house (Figure 20). The earlier weatherboard house exists in a substantially altered form. This house has a corrugated metal-clad gable roof. The primary (south) and west elevation is clad in painted sheets, while the east elevation retains the weatherboard cladding. The original portion of the house has an early rear wing clad in weatherboards with skillion roof. the gabled section next to this wing is a later addition. An attached garage has been added after 1987 to the east elevation. A new window opening is provided on the west elevation. All window and door joinery on the primary elevation are replaced. The front verandah with corrugated iron roof is also a replacement. There is no chimney extant. The 1999 extension has a gabled roof and an attached shed with a smaller gabled roof.



Figure 20. Oblique view of 191 Cherry Tree Road. Note the attached garage (outlined in green), an early rear wing with skillion and gable roofs (outlined in red) and the rear extension dating from 1999 (outlined in yellow). (Source: Nearmap 2019)



Figure 21. The primary (south) elevation of 191 Cherry Tree Road, with an attached garage, replaced window and door joineries and extended verandah. (Source: Google 2019)



Figure 22. 191 Cherry Tree Road clad in painted sheets on the primary (south) and side (west) elevations. The window on the west elevation shown here and the verandah to the front of the house are later additions. (Source: Context 2020)

INTEGRITY

The three Cherry Tree Road properties display varying degree of changes.

Wendouree at 125 Cherry Tree Road is somewhat intact with some changes to the early built form and fabric. The building retains M-profile hipped roof and symmetrical double-fronted façade design. The overall legibility as an Edwardian timber house is interrupted by later additions such as the return verandah and infills, and the rear extensions.

173 Cherry Tree Road is highly intact to its c1915 design and form, retaining the asymmetric form with a steeply pitched hipped roof with a projecting transverse gable wing and the front verandah inset under the main roof form. Its intact elements and detailing characteristic of the period of its construction includes its weatherboard-clad elevations, corrugated metal-clad roofs, face brick

chimney, half-timbering treatment to the gable end, doorway with a sidelight and highlight, and turned timber verandah posts and timber brackets. The windows are latter replacements.

191 Cherry Tree Road retains the overall built form as a single-storey gable roofed house with skillion roofed rear wing but is substantially altered, having lost key elements of its early design as an Edwardian timber house. The changes include the new surfaces of the primary (south) and side (west) elevations finished with painted sheets, loss of chimney and verandah, replaced window and door joinery.

Overall, 125 and 173 Cherry Tree Road have moderate integrity, remaining legible of its original designs as Edwardian timber houses built on agricultural properties. The integrity of 191 Cherry Tree Road is compromised due the changes, but legible when viewed part of the group.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The planting of orchards in the municipality began in the 1860s with the selectors who applied for 20-acre occupation licences under the Amending Land Act 1869. By 1900 orchards covered much of the Shire of Nillumbik. Arthurs Creek, Doreen, Hurstbridge, Strathewen, Plenty, Diamond Creek, Yarrambat and Research became key areas for a fruit-growing industry that was based at Diamond Creek. Orchardng in Nillumbik peaked from the 1880s to the 1910s until World War I, when local orchards were exporting their produce to other states and overseas.

Although the industry declined from the 1930s, a few commercial orchards in more rural parts of the Shire remained productive into the 1990s and the present. Parts of Nillumbik played a major role in the wider orcharding regions situated to the north and east of Melbourne in the counties of Evelyn, Bourke and Mornington.

'Wendouree' and Canary Island Date Palms at 125 Cherry Tree Road, and the two Smith Orchard Houses at 173 and 191 Cherry Tree Road are demonstrative of a group of houses that exhibit characteristics of the smaller-scale houses associated with small orchards or farms. These houses were built on a large land parcels held by local families who look up lands to establish to grow fruits from the 1860s. Largely built from the late nineteenth century until World War I, these houses are mostly built of timber, smaller and more basic in size and design than the houses in the rural townships or suburbs in Melbourne. Like the Smith properties, many of these examples had direct access from the surrounding land, while some other examples had a clearer distinction between the workplace and home.

These houses demonstrate the type of houses built in the rural area prior to World War I, when land was increasingly being taken up for small-scale agricultural pursuits, such as the Smith family's orchards.

The following examples of pre-1920 houses established in local orchards are listed on the Nillumbik Heritage Overlay.



Weatherboard farm house and outbuildings, 760 Hurstbridge-Arthurs Creek Road, Arthurs Creek (HO89). (Source: VHD)

The property comprises a c1905 farmhouse and pre-1920 outbuildings. The farmhouse is of historical and associative significance for its associated with the MacMillan family of orchardists over a long period of time and has strong links with Eltham's fruit-growing industry. The house is also historically and aesthetically significant as one of a small number of pre-1920s weatherboard dwellings in the rural areas of the shire, and as one of the most substantial examples (VHD). The house has a double-gable roof with return verandah, situated on a sloping land.



Weatherboard farm house, 710 Hurstbridge-Arthurs Creek Road, Arthurs Creek (HO88). (Source: VHD)

The house (built c1876-1880s with subsequent Federation period renovations and additions) is historically significant for its strong associations with orchardist, William Draper, a member of the noted fruit-growing firm started by the local pioneer and horticultural expert, Charles Draper, and its strong links with Eltham's fruit-growing industry, which reached its heyday in 1880-1910. The house is historically and architecturally significant because houses of this style are comparatively rare in the shire and because it has a number of unusual features, including a distinctive bay window (VHD). The house displays some changes from later periods, including the infill of the verandah (likely from the Federation period).



Nink farm and orchard complex, 265 Ninks Road, St Andrews (HO237). (Source: VHD)

The Nink farm and orchard complex comprises a group of pre-1940 buildings and exotic planting. The original front garden and driveway are also retained. This place is of historical and associative significance for the close link with the locally prominent Nink family. The main house and the associated buildings display various changes, reflecting the focus on practicality of the farm-associated buildings. The site is also important as an uncommon example late nineteenth century weatherboard farmhouse complex. Its collection of some major exotic plantings is reminiscent of its once quite substantial ornamental garden which is also rare in Nillumbik. The New Zealand cabbage tree palms are significant as the largest examples of their type in the shire (VHD).



Cracknell orchard house, 395-405 Kangaroo Ground-St Andrews Road, Panton Hill (HO221). (Source: VHD)

The c1889 Cracknell orchard house is significant for the long association with Sam Cracknell who had a Colony-wide prominence in the nineteenth century in equestrian business pursuits, and for the design of the house which is a rare and intact example in the shire of what is a standard design Victorian period timber house in some Melbourne suburbs. The site is also significant as a well-preserved house from an early orchard in the district. This house retains an ornamental front garden separated from the surrounding land (VHD). The house represents a slightly different type of living in farm, where the residence was carefully separated from the utilitarian nature farm workings.



Harless orchard house, 35 Ingrams Road, Research (HO218). (Source: VHD)

The Harless Orchard House, built in 1905, is described as 'as probably the best Edwardian era dwelling' in the former Shire of Eltham (VHD). Residential buildings from that era are not common, and many examples adopted the late nineteenth century standard house designs.

The orchard house is one of limited numbers of the surviving Federation period housing stock within the shire, and is a well-preserved example of an orchardist's house in an era of expansion for the industry (VHD).



English oaks (3) and farm house at the former Panton property, 270 Mt Pleasant Road, Eltham (HO235). (Source: Google 2020)

English oaks and farm house, at the former Panton property are significant for its retention of the oaks that are typical plantings for early farms in the area which now are uncommon at this maturity. The house is also historically significance as it recalls Edwardian-era cottage construction in the area, as weekenders and farm let houses, and for the property's historical association with the well-known Joseph Panton whose name has been memorialised in the Panton Hill locality (VHD).

Discussion

The subject buildings and the above examples also share associations with local families who look up lands in the local areas for orcharding. Like the subject properties, the above houses are mostly of small scale with basic designs that reflected the pragmatism of farming life.

The subject group of buildings is compares favourably to the above houses, in particular, 710 Hurstbridge-Arthurs Creek Road, Arthurs Creek, 265 Ninks Road, St Andrews and 270 Mt Pleasant Road, Eltham, which also evidence alterations to their original built form. These small-scale houses built on farmlands represent the shire's key historical development period - the hayday of fruit-growing industry between 1880 and 1910, and the continuation of the smaller-scale orcharding industry into the 1970s. Changes to these houses reflect the nature of the farm-associated buildings with their focus on practicality over aesthetic purity.

Although altered, 125 Cherry Tree Road is similar to 395-405 Kangaroo Ground-St Andrews Road, Panton Hill, as a house originally built to a standard design that was more common in suburban areas. 191 Cherry Tree Road would have been an example of typical Edwardian cottages of a more basic design, as seen at 760 Hurstbridge-Arthurs Creek Road, Arthurs Creek, or 270 Mt Pleasant Road Eltham. 173 Cherry Tree Road is more directly comparable to 35 Ingrams Road, Research, for

its high intactness to its original c1915 design. Residential buildings from the immediate prewar era are not common in the municipality, and most examples from that period often used the standard house designs from the earlier century.

Built for different members of the Smith family as the family expanded over time, 125, 173 and 191 Cherry Tree Road are a good example as a grouping of farming properties associated with one family. As a group they evidence how families frequently took out a number of occupation licences in close proximity under the names of various family members and continued to farm in association with each other into the twentieth century. As a cluster of buildings closely associated with local orchardists Smiths, the houses represent the orcharding that was major part of the shire's industry from the nineteenth to early twentieth century.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT?

'Wendouree' and Canary Island Date Palms at 125 Cherry Tree Road (built in 1910), and the two Smith Orchard Houses at 173 (c1915) and 191 (c1903) Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge, a group of houses associated with generations of the Smith family, is significant.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include:

- original single-storey forms and scale (125, 173 and 191);
- original or early timber cladding and corrugated metal roofs (125, 173 and 191);
- M-profile hipped roof and symmetrical double-fronted façade design (125);
- two mature Canary Island Date Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) in the front garden of no 125;
- asymmetric form with a projecting gabled wing, high-pitch hipped roof with a transverse gable, front verandah inset under the main roof form (173);
- stylistic detailing including the face brick chimney, half-timbering treatment to the gable end, doorway with a sidelight and highlight, and turned timber verandah posts and timber brackets (173); and
- single-storey gable roofed form with an early weatherboard-clad rear wing with skillion roof, as well as the original or early weatherboard cladding to the east elevation (191).

Later changes (especially those applied after the Smith family's ownership) are not significant.

HOW IS IT SIGNIFICANT?

Wendouree and Canary Island Date Palms at 125 Cherry Tree Road, and the two Smith Orchard Houses at 173 and 191 Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge, is of local historical, representative and associative significance to the Shire of Nillumbik.

WHY IS IT SIGNIFICANT?

The group of houses built for generations of the Smith family at 125, 173 and 191 Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge, are historically significant for its demonstration of the shire's key historical development period. The cluster of properties evidence the hayday of the fruit-growing industry between 1880 and 1910, and the continuation of the smaller-scale orcharding industry into the 1970s. The houses are built of timber and are basic in form and design reflecting the rural origins of the area. The Smith properties had close association with surrounding land, where they operated commercial orchards and other agricultural businesses including poultry farm. The two mature Canary Island Date Palm trees in the front garden of no 125 are good specimens of a very fashionable tree during the first decades of the twentieth century. (Criterion A and D)

The group of houses at 125, 173 and 191 Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge, is significant for their generational association with the Smith family. Edwin Smith and his wife Louise established orchard and farm from 1877 with 20-acre occupation licence issued under the *Amending Land Act 1869*. Edwin and Louisa raised their 11 children at the earlier family home 'Beaumont'. Some of their children continued working at the family orchards, settling in new homes built in the vicinity. 'Wendouree' at 125 Cherry Tree Road was built c1910 for George John Smith and his wife Barbara (née Bradley) shortly after their marriage. The c1915 house at 173 Cherry Tree Road was built for Bert Smith and his wife Mabel (née Suttie). Edwin and Violet Smith (née Bartlett) brought up nine

children in the house at 191 Cherry Tree Road. The Smiths were among a number of local families who settled in the Hurstbridge/Panton Hill area, taking up a number of occupation licences in the 1860s in close proximity under the names of various family members. Members of the Smith family continued the agricultural operation for over 100 years into the 1970s. (Criterion A and H)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Nillumbik Planning Scheme as a serial listing, to include HO182 Smith Orchard House at 125 Cherry Tree Road and the properties at 173 and 191 Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge.

Extent of overlay: To title boundaries

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

Nillumbik Planning Scheme

External paint controls	No
Internal alteration controls	No
Tree controls	Yes - Two Canary Island Date Palms (<i>Phoenix canariensis</i>) at number 125
Outbuildings or fences	No
To be included on the Victorian Heritage Register	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted	No
Aboriginal heritage place	No

Other

It is recommended that the early Smith family house at 190 Manuka Road, Hurstbridge, is investigated for potential inclusion in this serial listing.

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