
NAME: Dwelling & outbuilding, 371 Plains Road, SELICKS HILL

CURRENT USE:	Dwelling & former chaff mill
FORMER USE:	Dwelling & former chaff mill
DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION:	C.1912 residence with later additions and alterations. Some evidence of late 19 th century masonry fabric incorporated into the c.1912 building. Former chaff mill with two construction periods c.1872 and c.1902.
LOCATION:	371 Plains Road, SELICKS HILL
LAND DESCRIPTION:	CT 5150/371, Section 620, Hundred of Willunga
OWNER:	Private ownership
RECOMMENDATION:	Local Heritage Place



Residence (above) and former chaff mill (below) at 371 Plains Road, Sellicks Hill (GGA, 2022)

NAME: Dwelling & outbuilding, 371 Plains Road, SELICKS HILL

DESCRIPTION:

C.1912 Federation Queen Anne symmetrical villa constructed of masonry with brick quoins, surrounds and dressings. Evidence of inclusion of earlier 19th century masonry residence incorporated into c.1912 building. Early timber entrance door and window elements, later replacement entrance door with top and side lights, later timber-framed French doors to dining room to north elevation. Early brick chimneys, original hipped and gabled roof form with later corrugated steel cladding. Stone and brick paving to verandah to all sides of c.1912 building with timber-framed verandah with turned posts and brackets with later replacement corrugated steel roofing. Lean-to additions to west elevation, some evidence of incorporation of late 19th century masonry fabric dating to earlier residence. Mid to late 20th century additions to north and west elevations.

Late 19th century chaff mill constructed of freestone with timber-framed roof with corrugated steel cladding, two distinct periods of construction dating to c.1872 and c.1902. Extensive original internal and external steel and timber industrial fabric, including wall plates, machinery, chaff mill infrastructure, etc. Extensive reconstruction works dating from 2014, including new steel-framed internal 'skeleton' and various modifications to original external masonry fabric.

It is recommended that the residence at 371 Plains Road, Sellicks Hill be included on the South Australian Heritage Register as a Local Heritage place.

Due to the extensive c.2014 modifications to original masonry fabric, it is recommended that the former chaff mill at 371 Plains Road, Sellicks Hill should **not** be included on the South Australian Heritage Register as a Local Heritage place.

A delineation of significant historic fabric is provided in the Extent of Listing.

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

371 Plains Road, Sellicks Hill is of local significance as an early 20th century farmhouse incorporating late 19th century elements with associated late 19th century chaff mill dating to an important period of development for the district and providing a strong contribution to the Sellicks Hill landscape. The residence is closely associated with the Eats family, early Sellicks Hill settlers and farmers; particularly with Albert Henry Eats (1874-1918) who is attributed as being responsible for the c.1912 farmhouse's construction.

RELEVANT CRITERIA (As defined in Section 67(1) of the PDI Act 2016):

- a) it displays historical, economic or social themes that are of importance to the local area; being attributed as an early 20th century farmhouse with late 19th century elements and a late 19th century chaff mill dating to an important period of development for the Sellicks Hill district, providing a strong heritage contribution to the local landscape.
- b) it represents customs or ways of life that are characteristic of the local area; being attributed as an early 20th century farmhouse with late 19th century elements and a late 19th century chaff mill to an important settlement period of the Sellicks Hill district.
- e) it is associated with a notable local personality or event; being strongly associated with members of the Eats ('Eatts') family, early settlers and residents of the Sellicks Hill district. The resident is

strongly associated with Albert Henry Eats (1874-1918) a prominent Sellicks Hill resident during his lifetime and likely responsible for the farmhouse's c.1912 construction.

RELEVANT HISTORIC THEMES:

Theme 2: Regional Life in the Southern Vales

2.1 Cottages and small dwellings

Theme 4: Local Settlers and Local Entrepreneurship

4.1 Notable early local settlers and families

BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

371 Plains Road, Sellicks Hill was initially assessed as part of the 1997 Willunga District Heritage Survey, undertaken by conservation and heritage consultants McDougall & Vines.

The 1997 Survey identified that the farmhouse was constructed in 1918-9 for Albert Eats. The 1997 Survey noted that Albert Eats and his brother William Eats (also occasionally spelled 'Eatts' or 'Eates') purchased a large allotment from farmer Frank Culley junior in 1902; William Eates later acquiring the eighty-acre allotment Section 620 with an existing house and sheds, etc. The two brothers traded as Eatts Brothers in a chaff milling business supplying chaff throughout the district, their main sales were to coach drivers. The nearby Victory Hotel was a prominent stop where horses were changed for the long steep climb over the hills to Myponga. The 1997 Survey identified that the current house may have replaced an earlier farmhouse on the site, mostly likely built during the same period as the earlier chaff mill.

The 1997 Survey recommended Local Heritage listing according to criteria a), b) & d) & e) Section 23(4) of the *Development Act 1993*. An extent of listing was also recommended as including the overall external form and detailing of the residence, with conservation of the 'barn' (ie. chaff mill) if possible unless public safety was an issue.

Current research has largely confirmed previous historical accounts. The earliest identified Lands Title records date to October 1896 when the farming property, consisting of Sections 534, 542, 544, 620 and a portion of Section 621, was owned by Farquhar McRae, farmer of Sellicks Hill. As the McRae family have been identified as old residents and settlers of the Sellicks Hill district, it is likely that the 1896 title is likely a subdivision of a pre-1858 Torrens Title. It is also likely the McRae family were responsible for the earliest portions of the outbuilding later used as a chaff mill, attributed as being constructed in c.1872. No information relating to an early residence on or near the site has been identified, though as described by the 1997 Survey it is possible an earlier residence may have been demolished. Various periods of stonework and brickwork retained within the current fabric of the residence would suggest that the current building incorporated earlier walls or stonework of a pre-existing building.

McRae transferred ownership to Frank Gabriel Culley of Willunga, farmer in March 1898, Culley registering a mortgage on the same day as the land transfer. Culley would transfer ownership to the Albert Henry & William Alfred Eats in May 1902. The Eats brothers also registered a mortgage on the day of their acquisition, in addition to a subsequent mortgage in 1912. It is believed that the 1902 mortgage may relate to further additions to the chaff mill at this time, including the 'front' section of the building now identified as the 'millery' containing extensive chaff processing machinery, with the older section used for grain storage and bagging.

While the 1997 Survey identified that the current residence as having been constructed in 1918-19, the 'Federation Queen Anne' physical fabric of the building suggests construction before the First World War. Precise information relating to the construction was not identified though it is possible that Culley's 1898 mortgage and/or the Eats (or Eatts) family's 1912 mortgage may relate to residential construction works. A later certificate of title indicates that the Eats' 1912 mortgage for

£1600 was discharged by 1924; the amount and repayment time suggestive of an extensive construction project that perhaps indicates construction from c.1912. As Albert Henry Eats died in April 1918 after a long illness, it would seem unlikely he could have constructed the residence in the 1918-19 period determined by the 1997 Survey. As mentioned, the masonry fabric of the current building indicates various periods of stonework and brickwork, suggesting that portions of an earlier residence, likely including entire walls or masonry materials, were incorporated into the current residence.

The Eats family retained a long association with the property; title records dating until 1987 indicate the property was retained within the Eats family until this time, a significant association lasting for most of the 20th century. Eats family history has recorded that the chaff mill burned down during a fire in 1919, a lapsed insurance policy unfortunately meant the Eats family could not afford to reconstruct the mill and the building lapsed slowly into dilapidation.

The property was most recently sold in 2005. From 2014, extensive reconstruction works have been undertaken to the former chaff mill, the current owners transforming the formerly-dilapidated building into attractive, architecturally designed accommodation. The reconstruction works incorporated a great deal of original machinery and historical fabric from the early building, though extensive modifications did occur to the building's mid-19th century masonry fabric.

EXTENT OF LISTING:

The form and materials of all surviving and intact masonry fabric to the original residence, including all early external walls, quoins, surrounds and dressings, chimneys and window & door openings. Surviving intact early timber window and door elements are considered of significance and included in the listing, though replacement entrance door, French doors and reconfigured masonry surrounds to the north elevation are identified as later additions and are not included in the listing. Where replacement is required, replacements should match the profile and materials of early elements. The form of the hipped and gabled roof is considered of significance, as is the use of corrugated steel as the roof cladding material. Current replacement elements are considered stylistically appropriate but are not historic fabric and are not included in the listing.

The form and materials of early timber elements to the verandah are considered of significance and are included in the listing. Where replacement is required, replacements should match the profile and materials of early elements. Later corrugated steel cladding is not included in the listing though the use of corrugated steel is considered stylistically appropriate.

All later additions and alterations, including mid to late 20th century additions to the north and west elevations are not included in the listing. Internal elements are not included in the listing.

As indicated, extensive c.2014 reconstruction works have occurred to the former chaff mill, including the reconstruction of most early timber structural elements and numerous new openings to masonry fabric. While an attractive and well-executed design, late 19th century fabric is now extensively modified. As such surviving historic fabric relating to the former chaff mill is not included in the listing.

REFERENCES:

Our Sainted Dead, Australian Christian Commonwealth, Fri 7 Jun 1918, p.13.

<https://oldchaffmill.com.au/history/>, accessed 12/4/2022.

CTs 613/108; 1355/38; 2990/1101; 3066/60; 4045/150; etc.

McDougall & Vines, 1997, Willunga District Heritage Survey, pp.210-211.

SITE MAPPING:



Site of 371 Plains Road, Sellicks Hill, red circles denote (1) c.1912 residence; (2) c.1872 chaff mill with c.1902 additions. (Planning SA SAPPa)

HISTORICAL IMAGES:



371 Plains Road, Sellicks Hill, (McDougall & Vines, 1997, Willunga District Heritage Survey, p. 210).



Former chaff mill at 371 Plains Road, Sellicks Hill, (McDougall & Vines, 1997, Willunga District Heritage Survey, p. 210).



Dilapidated chaff mill in 2014 before commencement of reconstruction works (image courtesy of current owners).



Dilapidated chaff mill in 2014 before commencement of reconstruction works (image provided courtesy of current owners).

OTHER IMAGES:



Primary east and north elevations of the c.1912 residence at 371 Plains Road, Sellicks Hill (GGA, 2022)



Differing stonework to c.1912 residence; it is possible that elements of a late-19th century residence formerly associated with the late 19th century chaff mill were incorporated into the c.1912 building (GGA, 2022)



Early stonework and brickwork to south wall of c.1912 residence; it is possible that elements of a late-19th century residence formerly associated with the late 19th century chaff mill were incorporated into the c.1912 building, as this wall suggests. (GGA, 2022)



Masonry fabric associated with the 'lean-to' additions to the west elevation, (GGA, 2022)



Reconstructed western elevation of the former chaff mill (GGA, 2022).



Early industrial fabric relating to the chaff mill's function, retained and incorporated into the c.2014 reconstruction works (GGA, 2022)



Early masonry and timber fabric to former chaff mill, now with later reconstructed elements dating to c.2014 (GGA, 2022)