

SORELL HERITAGE SURVEY

Address: Shrub End Road Wattle Hill 7172		UPI: FKH45	PID: 0
Name: DOWNWARD'S MILL SITE			
Feature Type: Mill	Structure Type	Dating:	1800 - 1829
	Site Feature Type	Access Restrictions:	Restricted
		Inspection Date:	J McCarthy September 96
		Style:	
Indication of Significance: Potential archaeological significance		Grid ref:	5426 551200 5266400
Material: Stone		Theme:	Industry Processing Foods
Condition: Ruins		Listings:	
Integrity: Disturbed or damaged			
National Estate Criteria:		Photograph Index:	25: 18 & 19
Risk:	Excavation: ☒	Development: ☐	Maintenance: ☐ Vandalism: ☐

SITE DESCRIPTION:

The mill site is located along the Iron Creek to the immediate east of the road bridge. It consists of a remnant mill site, a quarry on the northern bank, remnants of a rubble dam and mill race upstream leading to a rendered brick and stone lined rectangular pit. This pit is sandstone flagged and has 4 iron holding down bolts set into the flags. There is a channel between the flags - possibly for a flywheel. The bricks are handmade and are scattered to the south of the pit. The pit has been recently excavated by the owners using a backhoe and hand tools.

There is a hollow beyond the pit and an excavated pond on a bend in the creek. This has stone facings on the southern and eastern sides and appears to be related to the hollow and pit.

To the south east of the mill site in a paddock are scatters of handmade bricks and some mounds which are possibly structural ie wall bases which have become covered and overgrown. These may be have been cottage sites for mill workers. There are isolated 19th century ceramic and bottle glass sherd evident in these areas. There may therefore be significant archaeological deposits on the property.

HISTORY:

Built by Robert Downward in 1824 as a water powered flour and corn mill. The site was not ideal for a water mill as Iron Creek frequently stopped flowing in the summer. Nonetheless, in 1826 he had built a 'Snug cottage, Mill and Mill Dam' By 1841, Downward had added a brewery, 'so arranged as to command advantages from the hills,' and 'an excellent steam-mill, driven by an eight horse-power engine, on the latest and most improved principles, recently imported to order, set up by an experienced engineer, works with ease and mechanical exactness, facilitated still further by supplying itself with water, and close at hand is an inexhaustible supply of fuel.'

A year later the property supported twenty-three inhabitants of whom fourteen were bonded. When he sold the property to Jonas Gatehouse after 1849, Downward advertised it as follows:

"The Brewery, capable of producing 18 hogsheads per week, comprises malt house, kiln, granary, and cellar; a water flour mill, a ten horse power steam flour mill, dressing machine, &c. An extensive dam supplies the mill and brewery with water, and between 7 and 8 thousand bushells of farm grist is ground annually, besides manufacturing flour to a considerable extent for Hobart Town: and water carriage is within a distance of 5 miles, easily and inexpensively reached near the township of Sorell".

By the mid 1860s the steam mill was being described as old and in 1877 was not in working order and by the 1920s little was left of the buildings.

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BOUNDARY:

The listing boundary is formed by the title boundary for the property.

COMMENTS:

The mill, brewery and associated buildings and infrastructure were important early features of the area and now have potential as archaeological sites to illustrate that history.

The site should be included in Schedule 3 of the Sorell Planning Scheme.

BIBLIOGRAPHY + PREVIOUS STUDIES:

Assessment Rolls

CEN 1/41/12

Hobart Town Courier 5 January 1841, p1.

McKAY, Anne (ed). 1962. *Journals of the Land Commissioners for Van Dieman's Land 1826-8*. University of Tasmania and Tasmanian Historic Research Association, Hobart.

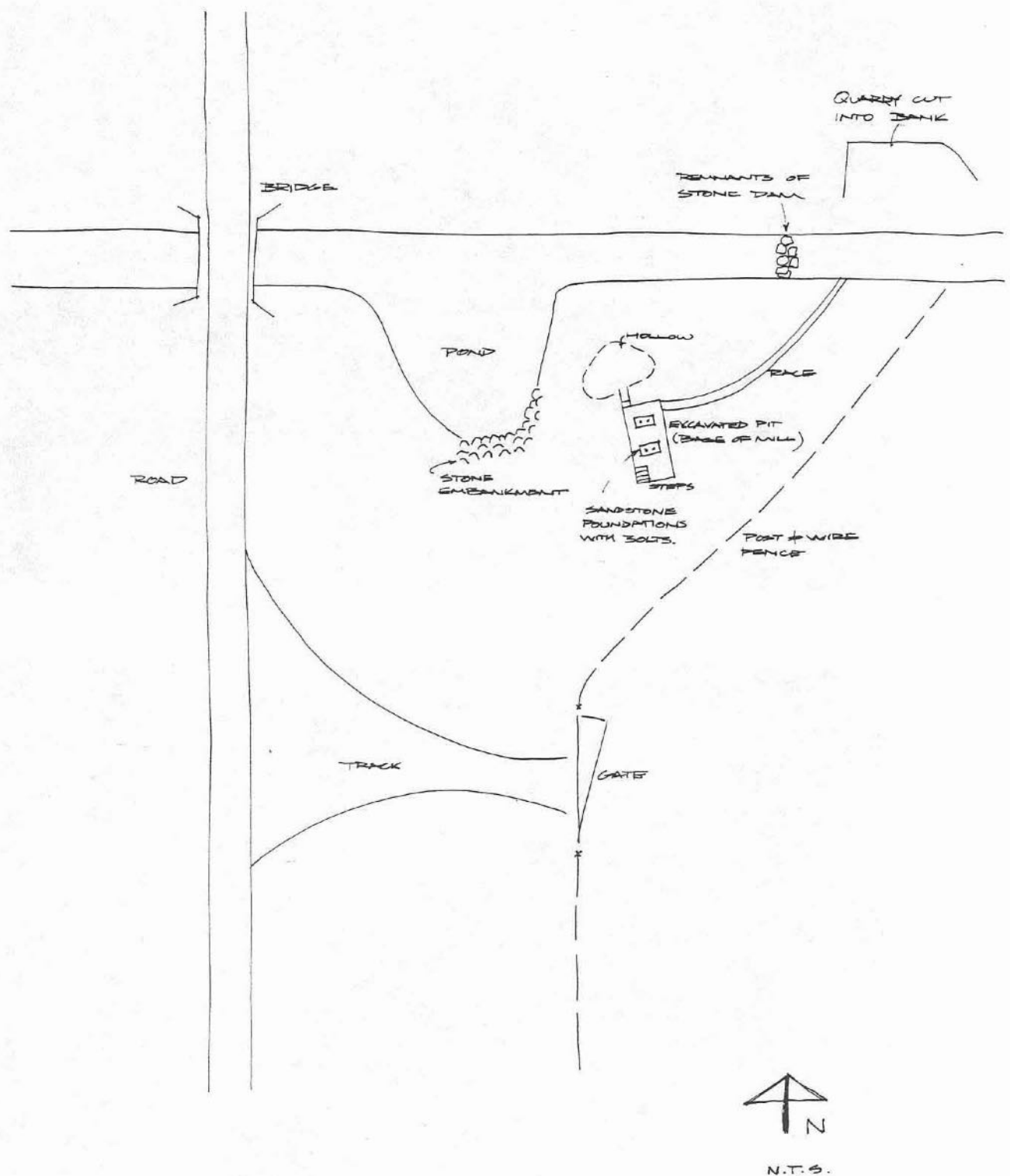
Pem 1/59 (survey plan)

TERRY, Ian. 1996. *Sorell Heritage Study Stage 1: Thematic History*

The Mercury 31 January 1861, p3.

WHITWORTH, Robert. 1877. *Bailliere's Tasmanian Gazetteer and road guide, containing the most recent and accurate information as to every place in the colony*. F.F. Bailliere, Hobart Town

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