

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT

NAME: Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex

PLACE: 26584

ADDRESS: Ngarrindjeri and Ramindjeri Country
Basham Beach Road, Port Elliot



Dairy One in foreground and Dairy Two in background (top right), Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex, Basham Beach Road, Port Elliot, 2024.

Source: DEW Files

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Statement of Heritage Significance:

A statement of heritage significance has not been prepared for the Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex as it is recommended that the place does not meet any of the criteria for listing as a State Heritage Place.

Relevant South Australian Historical Themes

5. Developing South Australia's Economies

5.2 Developing Primary Production (pastoralism, agriculture, bio-security)

Comparability / Rarity / Representation:

Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex is associated with Homestead Complexes and Dairying.

Homestead Complexes

Places associated with homesteads are well represented in the South Australian Heritage Register (the Register). A keyword search for 'homestead' using the State Heritage Places Database yields 325 results, including 139 State Heritage Places (SHPs), 184 Local Heritage Places (LHPs) and 2 Contributory places. These listings are diverse, ranging from single farmhouses to complexes comprised of several structures, typically including outbuildings like stables, barns, sheds, etc. Similarly, their condition varies, from ruinous to highly intact.

Some examples of intact homestead complexes listed as State Heritage Places include:

- Sunnybrae Farm Historic Site, c.1882, Tikalara Road, Regency Park (SHP 10757, confirmed 1 September 1983). Includes Manager's residence and Dairymen's Quarters, Cheese Room and Cellars, Stables, Cow Shed and Smoke House.
- Hughes Park Homestead Complex, Hughes Park, c.1857, near Watervale (SHP 13024, confirmed 21 October 1993). Includes Dwelling, Dairy, Blacksmithy, Stables, Petrol House, Coach House, Cottages, Offices, Garage and Manager's House.
- Bungaree Homestead Complex, c.1850, 431 Bungaree Road, Clare (SHP 13048, confirmed 4 March 1993). High integrity. Includes Homestead, Manager's House, Council Chamber, Stables, Office/Store, Men's Kitchen, Shearing Shed, Shearer's Quarters, Swaggie's Hut, Stallion Box and Gate House.
- Richmond Park Homestead, c.1863, Main South Eastern Road, Robe (SHP 12544 confirmed 14 February 1985). Includes a main house, kitchen, coach house, cottage, blacksmith's forge and implement shed.
- Magrath Flat Homestead – House, Stables, Woolshed and Shearers Quarters, c.1855, Princes Highway, Coorong (SHP 12303, confirmed 5 April 1984).
- Booborowie Homestead, Shearing Shed, Water Tank, Stables and Outbuildings, c.1870s, Booborowie (SHP 19122, confirmed 1 April 2004 under criterion g).
- Dwelling – 'Lindsay Park Homestead' Complex, c.1850, 102 Stott Highway, Angaston (SHP 12212, confirmed 27 September 1990). Includes Main House, Two Outbuildings, Old Stables, Garden House, Stable Cottage, Stable/Barn, Worker's Cottage, Gatehouse and Garden.



Sunnybrae Farm Historic Site (SHP 10757), c.1982.

Source: DEW Files



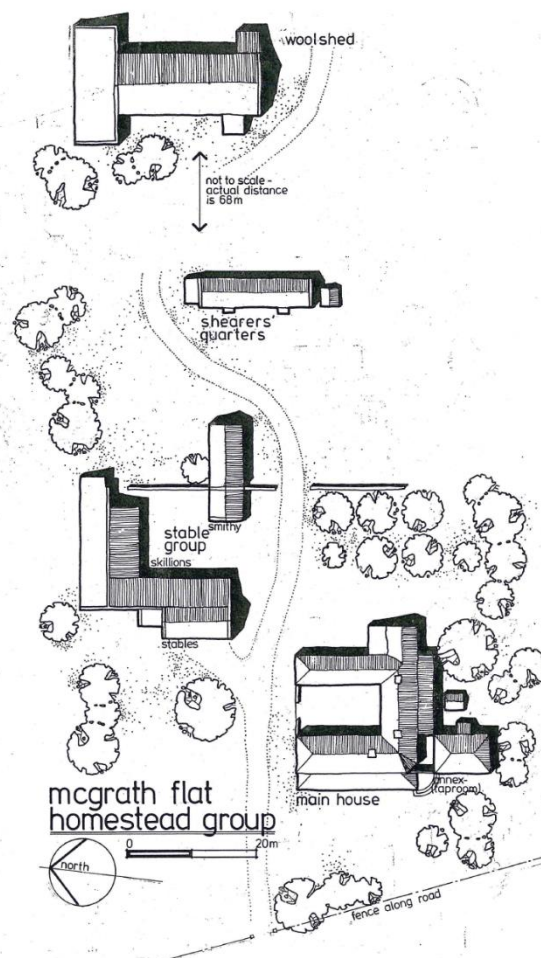
House of Hughes Park Homestead Complex (SHP 12212), 2019.

Source: DEW Files



Assorted outbuildings at Hughes Park Homestead Complex, c.1992.

Source: DEW Files



Plan of McGrath Flat Homestead (SHP 12303) showing some typical structures associated with homestead complexes in South Australia.

Source: DEW Files

Dairying

There are several places associated with dairying in the Register, listed at the state and local levels. These places are from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and are either part of larger complexes, such as homesteads, or are simple factories typically relating to cheese and butter production.

An example of State Heritage Places associated with dairying include:

- Albion Homestead (comprising cottage and stone outbuilding), 95-107 Sturt Road, Dover Gardens (SHP 14402, confirmed 21 October 1993): associated with the dairy industry for most of the twentieth century, operated as a dairy, Guernsey stud and milk distribution centre.
- Onkaparinga Cheese, Butter and Produce Factory (Melba's Chocolate Factory), c.1889, 20-24 Henry Street, Woodside (SHP 12864, confirmed 28 May 1987): associated with dairy production.
- Hughes Park Homestead Complex, Hughes Park, c.1857, near Watervale (SHP 13024, confirmed 21 October 1993): includes a dairy building.
- 'Merridong' including Dwelling (formerly 'Briardene'), former Balhannah Cheese and Butter Factory and Cottages, c.1894, 129 Onkaparinga Valley Road, Balhannah (SHP 12853, confirmed 8 November 2001 under criteria a, e and g): in part recognised due to its 'significant associations with the development of the dairy industry in the late 19th and early 20th century'.
- Former Milang Butter Factory, c.1880s, 22-23 Daranda Terrace, Milang (SHP 13867, confirmed 11 June 1998 under criterion a): associated with dairy production.
- Brauns Farm, c.1854, Tiers Road, Woodside (SHP 12523, confirmed 28 May 1987). Includes 'Dwelling, Two Barns and Milking Shed': includes a dairy building.
- Thrush Grove – Dwelling and Dairy, c.1838, 142 Wheatsheaf Road, Morphett Vale, (SHP 11039, confirmed 23 June 1994 under criteria a and b).

Places relating to the commercialisation of dairying and the large co-operative enterprises that dominated the industry during the twentieth century, such as AMSCOL, Farmers Union and, later, Dairy Vale, are under-represented in the Register.

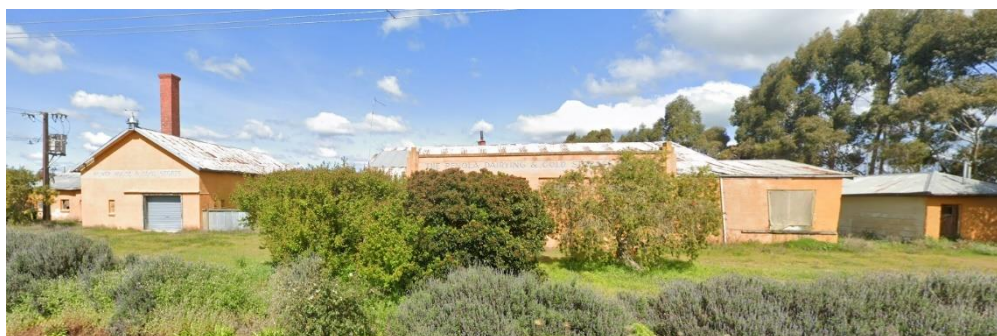
Some unlisted places associated with commercialisation and the consolidation of intrastate and regional cooperatives during the twentieth century include:

- Dairy Vale factory, c.1956, 21 Woodcone Road, Mount Compass
- Penola Dairying and Cold Storage Co. Ltd., 1939, 37 Riddoch Street, Penola.
- Myponga Co.op Dairying Society Ltd. cheese factory, c.1937, 46 South Road, Myponga.
- Former AMSCOL factory, 1941, 21a Adelaide Road, Victor Harbour.



Onkaparinga Cheese, Butter and Produce Factory (Melba's Chocolate Factory) (SHP 12864), c.2005.

Source: DEW Files



Penola Dairying and Cold Storage Co. Ltd, 2023.

Source: Google Street View



Myponga Co.op Dairying Society Ltd, 2023.

Source: Google Street View

**Assessment against Criteria under Section 16 of the *Heritage Places Act 1993*.
All Criteria have been assessed using the 2020 Guidelines.**

(a) it demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should be closely associated with events, developments or cultural phases which have played a significant part in South Australian history. Ideally it should demonstrate those associations in its fabric.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion if they are of a class of things that are commonplace, or frequently replicated across the State, places associated with events of interest only to a small number of people, places associated with developments of little significance, or places only reputed to have been the scene of an event which has left no trace or which lacks substantial evidence.

Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex is associated with the theme Developing South Australia's Economies and its subtheme Developing Primary Production (pastoralism, agriculture, bio-security).

Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex in Port Elliot is associated with mixed farming in South Australia during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The homestead was established by Charles Abraham Basham in 1856 and subsequently developed as a mixed farm with assorted crops and livestock between the 1850s and 1920s. Like many other homesteads around South Australia, various structures were erected at the site, including a house, stables, dairies, water trough, poultry shed and blacksmiths' forge. These structures remain extant in varying degrees of intactness.

Such homestead complexes were and are commonplace in South Australia and there are over 130 homesteads listed as State Heritage Places. Several of these places, such as Sunnybrae Farm Historic Site (SHP 10757) and Hughes Park Homestead Complex (SHP 13024), feature the same or similar structures as Pleasant Banks and are highly intact. Such homestead complexes thus suitably demonstrate the development and functionality of nineteenth and twentieth century homesteads. By comparison, Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex does not represent the theme as strongly at the State level.

Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex is also associated with the dairy industry during the twentieth century. Like other farmers around South Australia, the Basham family shifted their focus from mixed farming to specialised production during the twentieth century. Between 1927 and 1973, the Bashams operated a Guernsey stud and dairy at Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex. They were among a handful of other dairy farmers to introduce Guernsey cattle to South Australia and were successful at their husbandry, as shown by the multiple awards they received, including at the Royal Adelaide Show.

The family's turn towards dairying was related to larger trends that began to develop during the 1920s. In a bid to enlarge and regulate the dairy industry, the government

passed the *Dairy Cattle Improvement Act, 1921*, and the *Dairy Industry Improvement Act, 1928*. Dairy farmers responded by increasing the quantity of their stock, including through the acquisition and breeding of formerly less prominent breeds like Friesians, Illawarra Shorthorns and, to a lesser extent, Ayrshires and Guernseys. By the early 1930s, the number of cattle in South Australia had increased drastically, growing from 104,255 in 1929 to 127,757 in 1932.

However, the above is a secondary aspect of the broader effort to modernise the dairy industry during the twentieth century. Indeed, it can be characterised as an expansion of typical and established patterns. By contrast, commercialisation and the rise and dominance of cooperative enterprises, like AMSCOL, Farmers Union and, later, Dairy Vale, shaped the industry and demonstrate this important evolution in the pattern of the state's history of dairying (see comparability/rarity/representation). As such, Pleasant Banks is not considered to meet criterion (a) at the state level.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (a).

(b) it has rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should demonstrate a way of life, social custom, industrial process or land use which is no longer practised, is in danger of being lost, or is of exceptional interest. This encompasses both places which were always rare, and places which have become scarce through subsequent loss or destruction.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion if their rarity is merely local, or if they appear rare only because research has not been done elsewhere, or if their distinguishing characteristics have been degraded or compromised, or if they are at present common and simply believed to be in danger of becoming rare in the future.

Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex is associated with homestead complexes. While such places are culturally significant, demonstrating a range of important aspects about the history of agriculture and pastoralism in the State, in this instance mixed farming, there are over 300 listed as state or local heritage places. The structures remaining at Pleasant Banks that demonstrate mixed farming, such as the house, blacksmith's forge, sheds and poultry coop are typical of homestead complexes in South Australia. Compared to other homestead complexes in the Register, such as Bungaree Homestead Complex (SHP 13048) and Sunnybrae Farm Historic Site (SHP 10757), Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex exhibits a lower degree of intactness. Consequently, Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex is not considered to demonstrate rare, uncommon or endangered qualities of cultural significance.

Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex is also associated with South Australia's dairy industry during the twentieth century, specifically cattle husbandry and milking. The Basham family shifted their primary focus away from mixed farming to dairy husbandry and farming in 1927. However, during the twentieth century it is the modernisation of the dairy industry that is considered to be of cultural significance to south Australia.

Places associated with the commercialisation and rise and dominance of cooperative enterprises, like AMSCOL, Farmers Union and, later, Dairy Vale, are more likely to demonstrate this criterion at the state level than Pleasant Banks Homestead. Consequently, Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex is not considered to have rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance to South Australia.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (b).

(c) it may yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the State's history, including its natural history.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should provide, or demonstrate a likelihood of providing, information that will contribute significantly to our knowledge of the past. The information should be inherent in the fabric of the place. The place may be a standing structure, an archaeological deposit or a geological site.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion simply because they are believed to contain archaeological or palaeontological deposits. There must be good reasons to suppose the site is of value for research, and that useful information will emerge. A place that will yield the same information as many other places, or information that could be obtained as readily from documentary sources, may not be eligible.

Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex was built on land previously undeveloped by Europeans and has subsequently been used for mixed farming, dairying and cattle husbandry. The land is not believed to contain any archaeological deposits beyond what would be considered commonplace in a pastoral or agricultural context. The physical fabric of Pleasant Banks is documented in a variety of primary and secondary sources including photographs, newspaper reports, maps and other documents. There is no evidence (documentary, oral history or physical) to suggest that the place may yield information that will contribute meaningfully to an understanding of the State's history.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (c).

(d) it is an outstanding representative of a particular class of places of cultural significance.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should be capable of providing understanding of the category of places which it represents. It should be typical of a wider range of such places, and in a good state of integrity, that is, still faithfully presenting its historical message.

Places will not be considered simply because they are members of a class, they must be both notable examples and well-preserved. Places will be excluded if their characteristics do not clearly typify the class, or if they were very like many other places, or if their representative

qualities had been degraded or lost. However, places will not be excluded from the Register merely because other similar places are included.

Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex is associated with the class of place known as homestead complexes. Principal characteristics of the class include a collection of structures like houses, cottages, stables or coach houses, workshops, water tanks, animal enclosures, and wheat stores. A blacksmith's forge, dairy, bakery and cellar may also be present. While Pleasant Banks Complex demonstrates a range of the typical structures of a homestead complex, it lacks the level of intactness and integrity demonstrated by similar homesteads represented in the Register, such as Bungaree Homestead Complex (SHP 13048) and Hughes Park Homestead Complex (SHP 13024). Consequently, Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex is not considered to be an outstanding representative of the class.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (d).

(e) it demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment or is an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should show qualities of innovation or departure, beauty or formal design, or represent a new achievement of its times. Breakthroughs in technology or new developments in design would qualify, if the place clearly shows them. A high standard of design skill and originality is expected.

Places would not normally be considered under this criterion if their degree of achievement could not be demonstrated, or where their integrity was diminished so that the achievement, while documented, was no longer apparent in the place, or simply because they were the work of a designer who demonstrated innovation elsewhere.

Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex comprises several structures typical of homestead complexes. Most are vernacular masonry structures built by the Basham family, with intactness ranging from moderate to low. Some, like Dairy One and the Poultry Shed, have been at least partially reconstructed. The house is in good condition but resembles many villas built during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It has also been altered and reconfigured over time. As such, Pleasant Banks is not considered to demonstrate a high degree of creative, aesthetic, or technical accomplishment, nor is it an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (e).

(f) it has strong cultural or spiritual association for the community or a group within it.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should be one which the community or a significant cultural group have held in high regard for an extended period. This must be much stronger than people's normal attachment to their surroundings. The association may in some instances be in folklore rather than in reality.

Places will not be considered if their associations are commonplace by nature, or of recent origin, or recognised by a small number of people, or not held very strongly, or held by a group not widely recognised, or cannot be demonstrated satisfactorily to others.

Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex was established by the Basham family in 1856. While it has undergone several transformations and faced challenges over time, the family has had a continuous presence at the site. Members of the Basham family understandably have a very strong familial and experiential association with Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex. While part of the site is now Crown Land and leased to Alexandrina Council, the family continue to care for its legacy and preservation. However, there is no evidence that the association and attachment to Pleasant Banks extends beyond the family to larger communities or groups that would be considered to be significant to South Australia as a whole.

Other individuals in the region may have a cultural or spiritual attachment to the Ratalang-Basham Beach Conservation Reserve. However, there is no evidence to suggest that such a connection is to Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex itself and it is doubtful such a group would constitute one recognised across South Australia.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (f).

(g) it has a special association with the life or work of a person or organisation or an event of historical importance.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place must have a close association with a person or group which played a significant part in past events, and that association should be demonstrated in the fabric of the place. The product of a creative person, or the workplace of a person whose contribution was in industry, would be more closely associated with the person's work than would his or her home. Most people are associated with many places in their lifetime, and it must be demonstrated why one place is more significant than others.

Places will not generally be considered under this criterion if they have only brief, incidental or distant association, or if they are associated with persons or groups of little significance, or if they are associated with an event which has left no trace, or if a similar association could be claimed for many places, or if the association cannot be demonstrated. Generally the home or the grave of a notable person will not be entered in the Register unless it has some distinctive attribute, or there is no other physical evidence of the person's life or career in existence.

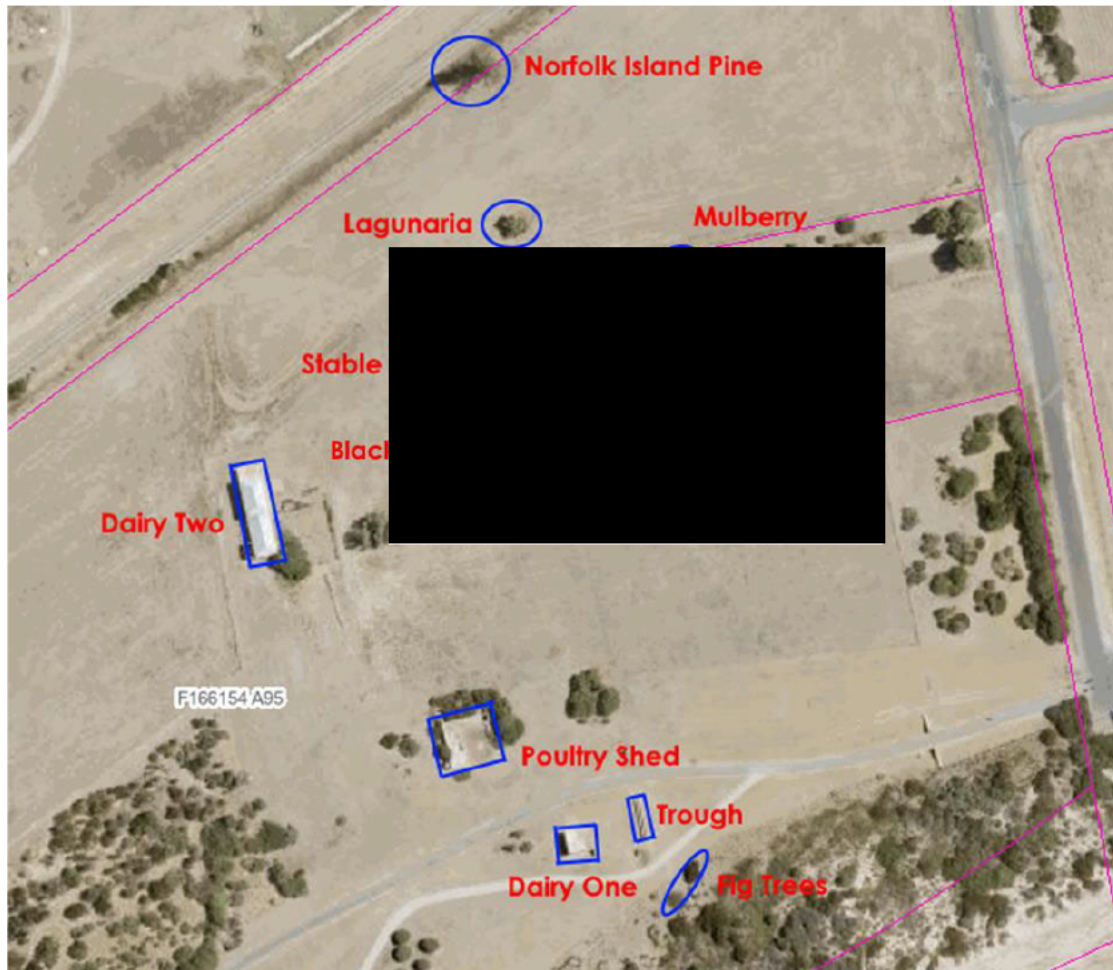
The Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex is associated with the Basham family. The family's presence in the southern Fleurieu Peninsula extends back to the early 1840s. William Basham arrived in South Australia in the late 1830s and settled in Hindmarsh Valley by the early 1840s. He and his descendants contributed to the development of the township and its surrounds, including the establishment of Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex in Port Elliot in 1856. Several of their contributions remain relevant today. For instance, the Basham family erected the still-operating Royal Family Hotel (LHP) and helped found the Southern Agricultural Society, which continues to be responsible for the annual Port Elliot Show. Their contributions to and involvement in Port Elliot's history persisted well into the twentieth century and has continued into the twenty-first. Recognising their local importance, the adjacent beach, several roads and a pavilion at the Port Elliot showgrounds bear the Basham name.

While the Basham Family are historically important to the area around Port Elliot, this relationship is typical of many families throughout South Australia who have been influential at a local level but have not otherwise made a strong, notable or influential contribution towards the course of South Australian history more broadly. Even if such a contribution can be demonstrated, it is not Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex but rather other places that better convey those contributions.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (g).

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex comprises several structures erected during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that are dispersed across two land titles. They comprise a house, two dairies, a poultry shed, a blacksmith's forge, two stables, remnant plantings and a trough. Each is described briefly below.



Site plan of Pleasant Banks.

* Note that the House, Stable One, Stable Two and the Blacksmith's forge are located on private property.

** The structures on public land have been temporarily closed for repair.

House

The house is a single-storey villa constructed in stages over time and features:

- coursed bluestone with hipped roof clad with corrugated galvanised iron/steel,
- front return section with gable roof clad with corrugated galvanised iron/steel and scalloped timber facias and a timber finial,
- bullnose verandah at front adjacent to the return with timber facias and supported by decorative timber posts and brackets,
- multiple extensions and adaptations to the house built of various materials, including corrugated galvanised iron/steel and pebbledash,
- stone fence surrounding house and garden.

Dairies

Dairy One

Dairy One is a random rubblestone structure, open on its northern side, and has a sloped roof clad with corrugated galvanised steel, supported with timber posts on the southern elevation. Extensive restoration/reconstruction work has been undertaken.

Features include:

- semi-circular window opening on the northern elevation (non-original),
- open entrance on the southern elevation,
- redbrick floor underneath the roof.

Dairy Two

Dairy Two is comprised of two main wings: an older rectangular wing on the northern end, purportedly originally built as a draught horse stable, and a semi-enclosed wing on the southern end.

The former is entirely constructed of random rubblestone with a hipped roof clad with corrugated galvanised iron/steel. The latter is variously constructed of random rubblestone, concrete blocks and redbrick with a gable roof also clad with corrugated galvanised iron/steel.

Features include:

- lean-to room on the southern end with a hipped roof,
- lean-to engine room on the western elevation with sloped roof (cladding unknown),
- semi-enclosed lean-to on the northern end with a sloping roof clad with corrugated iron/steel,
- timber stalls in the southern wing,
- timber fencing and gates located at the front.

Poultry Shed

The poultry shed is a semi-enclosed structure constructed of random rubblestone including a room with a sloped roof clad with corrugated galvanised steel. Extensive restoration and reconstruction work has been undertaken.

Features include:

- large stone elevations along the north and west and a smaller elevation along the east,
- northern elevation has several perforations along the bottom section and the western elevation has a small square window towards the northern end,
- arched stone and concrete platform with redbrick steps along northern and western elevations,
- square window on room's southern elevation,
- enclosures within room constructed of concrete.

Blacksmith's Forge

The Blacksmith's Forge is a long and narrow rectangular structure partly constructed of random rubblestone with a sloped roof clad with corrugated galvanised iron/steel,

Features include:

- timber posts,
- corrugated iron/steel for front and side elevations.
- iron bars along the top half of front elevation and a gate made of the same material,
- extension on the northern end built of stone, redbrick and concrete.

Stables

Stable One

Stable One is a rectangular structure constructed of random rubblestone with a sloped roof clad with corrugated iron/steel. The front has been enclosed with slatted timber walls and doors.

Stable Two

Stable two is a rectangular structure constructed of random rubblestone with a gable roof clad with corrugated iron/steel.

Features include:

- upper loading door with brick surrounds and timber door,
- ventilator openings with brick surrounds (temporarily enclosed),
- timber roof trusses,
- interior loading dock and elevated flooring,
- large entrance doors with brick surrounds.

The scattered rubblestone adjacent to the southern elevation may be the ruins of a dairy from the nineteenth century.

Trough

The trough is rectangular and built of stone rendered with concrete.

Trees

There are several trees around the homestead identified in the nomination due to their age and association with the Basham family (estimated dates stated in nomination):

- Norfolk Island Pine (c.1870s)
- Mulberry (not specified)
- Lagunaria (c.1870s)
- Olive tree (not specified)
- Fig trees (c.1856-1907)

HISTORY

Dairying in South Australia during the twentieth century

The South Australian dairy industry formed soon after colonisation and continued to grow and modernise from the late nineteenth century onwards. Dairy cows were introduced in 1837, primarily on the small farms established around the Adelaide Plains, Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula, Murray River and Mid North.¹ In the early 1840s, rudimentary butter and cheese factories emerged and from the 1880s, the industry benefited from mechanisation and agricultural science. Local cooperative enterprises began to form around this time and government intervention increased.² By the turn of the twentieth century, there were about 84,000 dairy cows in South Australia.³

In the 1920s, government intervention markedly increased in a bid to stimulate production and increase South Australian exports. Several acts of parliament were assented including the *Dairy Cattle Improvement Act 1921*, which mandated annual bull licensing, the proceeds of which funded breeding programs aimed at improving the quality and quantity of bulls and the *Dairy Industry Act 1928*, which introduced greater quality standards and required all sectors of the industry to be licensed.⁴ Further legislation was assented during the 1930s to assist with marketing, set production quotas and control pricing. All these developments shaped the industry for decades, some into the 1980s.⁵

The 1920s also resulted in the growth of large cooperative enterprises. The South Australian Farmer's Co-operation Union, formed in 1888 and now known as Farmer's Union, commenced dairying operations in 1919 and Adelaide Milk Supply Co-Operative Limited (AMSCOL) was founded in 1922.⁶ Most dairy farms, typically comprised of 70 cattle at most, went on to supply their produce to these cooperatives, or to smaller regional counterparts.⁷

Dairy farmers responded keenly to these developments, particularly the legislative changes. Their response can be observed by the rapid increase of their stock following the *Dairy Industry Act 1928*. Beforehand, growth had been gradual. In 1919, for instance, there were 103,230 dairy cows recorded in South Australia.⁸ A decade later, the number had increased modestly to 104,255.⁹ Then, between 1929 and 1932, the number soared to 127,757.¹⁰ The *Chronicle* attributed this growth to a 'greater interest' in dairying, motivated by depressed wheat and wool prices; the 'enterprise' of breeders; and the 'benefits derived through the operation of the [government's] bull subsidy scheme'.¹¹ Part of this growth was achieved by the acquisition and breeding of formerly less prominent breeds like Friesians, Illawarra Shorthorns and, to a lesser extent, Ayrshires and Guernseys.¹²

The dairy industry continued to grow over the next several decades and was divided into five regions: 'the Barossa Valley and mid-north, the River Murray irrigated swamps and Lakes, the Central Region comprising the Adelaide Hills and Fleurieu Peninsula and the South-East'.¹³ Following the Second World War, dairy production increased to

cater for global demand and new factories were erected. More cooperatives entered the market and better irrigation and pastures contributed to the industry's post-war development.¹⁴ Importantly, the domestic market was served entirely by South Australian producers during this period.¹⁵

Major transformations in the industry began to take place in the 1950s, most relating to efficiency and mass production. The government started to shift its focus away from bull subsidies and towards artificial insemination. By the 1970s, bulk handling had become the dominant storage and collection model. Furthermore, small herds were gradually replaced by large herds on bigger pasture lands. Between the 1980s and 2000s, the industry was deregulated at the state and national levels, subjecting local producers to greater interstate and global competition.¹⁶

Establishing Port Elliot and Surrounds

The area around Victor Harbor, Port Elliot, Middleton, Goolwa and Hindmarsh Island has been country for Ramindjeri people for tens of thousands of years.¹⁷ The Ramindjeri people are part of the Ngarrindjeri nation, whose territory covers large portions of the eastern Fleurieu Peninsula, the lower Murray River and the Coorong.¹⁸ The Ramindjeri and the Ngarrindjeri were adversely impacted by early European contact, initially owing to disease and violent encounters. Although Ngarrindjeri people worked with Europeans as farmers, whalers and labourers, their way of life was totally disrupted by the advancement of British settlement, which resulted in their dispossession and displacement.¹⁹ Today, Ngarrindjeri people's Native Title rights are recognised over much of their traditional lands.²⁰

Europeans began visiting and exploring the coastal area of the Fleurieu Peninsula in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Whalers, sealers and smugglers from Europe and North America were the first to establish a non-Indigenous presence in the area and in 1802 the Flinders and Baudin expeditions chartered the coast on behalf of Britain and France respectively.²¹ Charles Sturt and Collet Barker began their inland expeditions in the 1830s. Later that decade, South Australia was proclaimed a British colony in December 1836. Shortly thereafter, Governor John Hindmarsh advocated for the capital to be in the Encounter Bay area, largely due to its proximity to the Murray Mouth, which he and others hoped to develop into a river trading hub.²² However, Colonel William Light considered the area unsafe for the colony's harbour and the proposal was rebuffed.²³

Instead, commercial whaling stations were established near Victor Harbor and various settlers were attracted to the area owing to its fertile land.²⁴ The country surveys were completed in 1839 and settlement throughout the Fleurieu Peninsula intensified during the 1840s.²⁵ Interest remained in navigating the Murray and developing it for commercial use, an ambition that remained unrealised in the short term due to the colony's poor economic situation.²⁶

In the early 1850s, Governor Henry Edward Fox Young revived the prospect by establishing an inland port at Goolwa and a seaport at Port Elliot, located at

Horseshoe Bay.²⁷ Port Elliot was declared a port in 1851 and construction of a horsedrawn railway line between the two ports commenced that year.²⁸ The Port Elliot township was surveyed in 1852 and important portside infrastructure was erected that year, including a jetty, harbour master's cottage and navigational beacon, built as an obelisk (SHP 10355).²⁹ In 1853, two steamboats successfully navigated the Murray River, establishing it as a trading route.³⁰ The following year, the railway was completed, and the ports at Goolwa and Port Elliot began operating in tandem. All the while, settlers flocked to the area and built houses, businesses and farms.³¹

Although the river trade blossomed during the decade, Port Elliot's role as the area's principal seaport was short lived. The hazards associated with Horseshoe Bay were recognised even before the port commenced operating. After multiple shipwrecks, including four in 1856, the port's reputation worsened, in turn hastening its decline. In 1864, the railway was extended to Victor Harbor, which took over as the area's key seaport.³²

Even so, locals in and around Port Elliot continued to participate in the river trade. For instance, farmers produced wheat for local flour mills, whose product was then distributed to intercolonial buyers via the Murray River.³³ The township itself also continued to develop over the 1850s and 1860s. Historian Rob Linn notes that Port Elliot's 'services trades and professions became more sophisticated' and by 1870 resembled the 'English villages of settler's memories'.³⁴

Port Elliot and the southern Fleurieu area began to change in the 1870s. After reaching its peak in the mid-1870s,³⁵ the river trade subsequently declined due to the expansion of the railway network throughout South Australia.³⁶ Places interwoven with the river trade, like Port Elliot, were greatly affected by its downfall and many residents left the area.³⁷ Those that remained adjusted their business practices to meet changing economic circumstances. Farmers, for instance, began to extend their agricultural interests, with many turning to dairying. In time, the area developed into a popular destination for domestic tourism, especially during the summer.³⁸

Origins of Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex

Convicted for forgery, Xenophon Herne Basham was transported to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania), where he arrived in early 1814.³⁹ In the late 1830s, Xenophon's son William relocated to South Australia and settled with his family in Hindmarsh Valley, located on the Fleurieu Peninsula.⁴⁰ William soon became a leading figure in the area, as observed by his role in helping to establish the Port Elliot Steam Flour-Mill company between 1852, which he later purchased outright in 1866.⁴¹ Also in 1866, William officially launched the *Jolly Miller*, a steamboat built to carry goods along the River Murray, particularly flour from the mill.⁴²

In 1856, Henry Edward Fox Young granted William's son Charles Abraham (C. A.) Basham a thirty-year lease for Sections 2303 and 2317, Hundred of Goolwa.⁴³ C. A. purchased both sections around twelve years later,⁴⁴ by which point the 'farm and residence' was well established as 'Pleasant Banks'.⁴⁵ Shortly afterwards, he

unsuccessfully attempted to sell the property.⁴⁶ Resultantly, the Basham family remained at Pleasant Banks.

C. A. built the first sections of the house at Pleasant Banks, apparently then comprising three rooms. Extensions commenced as early as the 1880s, eventually developing into a bluestone villa.⁴⁷ C. A. is also likely responsible for building the blacksmith's forge and stables at Pleasant Banks, as well as planting several trees which remain at the site, including the Norfolk Island Pine towards the north and the fig trees near the coast.⁴⁸

Pleasant Banks appears to have operated as a mixed farm from the outset, though likely focussed initially on wheat production. It is probable that wheat was produced first for William Basham's flour mill and later for the Middleton Mill. Although local farmers increasingly turned away from wheat,⁴⁹ Pleasant Banks continued to harvest the crop at least until the early twentieth century.⁵⁰

The Basham family began to expand into dairying during the 1890s. In 1892, C. A. and his brother, William James, entered a business partnership as 'Dairy Producemen [sic]'.⁵¹ The Basham Bros. Dairy Factory located in the Port Elliot township commenced operations thereafter. The *Southern Argus* reported on 28 September 1893 that the factory had been 'recently fitted with a cheese plant' and the manager was 'engaged manufacturing the article', indicating it was operating by that time.⁵² While the Basham brothers appear to have sold the business in 1897,⁵³ Charles William Hussey Basham (C. W. H.), C. A.'s son, established a milking herd at Pleasant Banks during the decade.⁵⁴

Like his forebears, C. W. H. became a prominent figure in the southern Fleurieu area. During the 1890s, he helped found the Port Elliot branch of the Agricultural Bureau and was also appointed President of the Southern Agricultural Society, the organisation responsible for the region's annual show.⁵⁵ He inherited Pleasant Banks following C.A.'s death in 1907.⁵⁶

Pleasant Banks as a Guernsey Farm

C. W. H. continued mixed farming operations at Pleasant Banks. Crops included wheat, oats and barley, and livestock included 'cattle, horses [...], pigs, poultry, geese and sheep'.⁵⁷ However, the focus continued to be on wheat production. Decades later, C. W. H.'s son Bernard 'Bun' Basham recalled:

[Pleasant Banks] wasn't always a dairy. Well, they always had a couple of cows just to send a bit of cream away. But, no, it was a mixed farm really. It was wheat – I recall carting bags of wheat to the local miller at Middleton [...]. Dad used to grow a fair bit of wheat for the people in the district – had a lot of fowls and [the] like, and we used to deliver wheat to the local storekeepers in Port Elliot. They'd sell it in bushel lots to make a bit of extra money.⁵⁸

Reflecting Pleasant Banks' varied interests at the time, the poultry shed, dairy located near the coast (Dairy One) and large draught horse stable towards the western end were erected during the early twentieth century, likely by C. W. H.⁵⁹

During the 1910s and 1920s, C. W. H. drastically increased the size of his herd, possibly possessing up to 70 cows.⁶⁰ In 1927, he purchased a Guernsey bull and cow for Pleasant Banks, bred by Captain Payne of 'Yarra View' farm in Victoria, apparently 'one of the best Guernsey studs in Australia at that time'.⁶¹ Around this time, he retired from the farm, leaving it to his sons Phillip (Phil) and Bun, born 1903 and 1910 respectively.⁶²

Phil and Bun subsequently established a business partnership, operating from Pleasant Banks as Basham Bros' Guernsey Stud.⁶³ Soon after, they adapted the draught horse stable into a dairy and added a large extension to its southern elevation, effectively dividing the structure into two wings.⁶⁴ The new addition was primarily used for milking, with an engine room attached to its east.

Over the next several decades, the brothers went on to become leading Guernsey farmers in South Australia. In 1933, Phil helped establish the South Australian branch of the Guernsey Cattle Society of Australia.⁶⁵ Phil and Bun also received multiple awards for their Guernseys, many of which were awarded at the Royal Adelaide Show.⁶⁶ Moreover, they received recognition for their 'high production records' of milk and butter fat. The *Chronicle* reported on 6 July 1944 that the Basham Bros had '15 cows in the Advanced Register of Merit in their herd'.⁶⁷

After several successful decades, Phil and Bun decided to dissolve the partnership in 1953. Phil remained at the homestead and continued operating a Guernsey farm named 'Merside'.⁶⁸ Bun established his own farm to the north of the homestead, taking with him the Pleasant Banks name (though the homestead continued to be known by the same name).⁶⁹ Phil ran Merside until he decided to disperse the herd in 1973.⁷⁰ Bun's family continued to operate their business into the 21st century.⁷¹

Subsequent History

Around the time Phil dispersed his herd, he decided to sell a large amount of land, including portions of the original Pleasant Banks homestead. He retained the land containing the house and several of its outbuildings, but sold land containing other structures, including both dairies, the poultry shed and the trough.⁷² Phil passed away in March 1976, leaving the house to his wife Gwen and daughter Anne.⁷³

Following the sale, locals embarked on a campaign to preserve the area as open space.⁷⁴ Their efforts look to have been at least partially successful. In 1976, the government compulsorily acquired much of the land and declared it to be open space, including Section 2303.⁷⁵ A large section along Basham Beach was thereafter named Basham Beach Regional Park.⁷⁶

In 1981, the District Council of Port Elliot and Goolwa acquired a 99-year lease for the site.⁷⁷ As of 2024, the council's successor, Alexandrina Council, holds the lease and is responsible for the property. The historic structures remain and have recently undergone stabilisation works. The council has since renamed the site the Ratalang Basham Beach Conservation Reserve, intended to acknowledge its First Nations and European heritage.⁷⁸ An extensive native revegetation process is currently

underway.⁷⁹ The Basham family continue to own the house and its attendant structures and have a longstanding interest in the area's history.⁸⁰

Chronology

Year	Event
1814	Xenophon Herne Basham is transported to Tasmania, first arriving in New South Wales on 7 February.
1838	26 June: Victor Harbor is proclaimed a port.
1838-1842	Xenophon Basham's son William arrives in South Australia with his family and settles in Hindmarsh Valley.
1851	Work commences on the railway line between Goolwa and Port Elliot. 28 August: Port Elliot is proclaimed a port. Settlers began to move to the area and erect structures.
1852	January: The Port Elliot township is surveyed. The Port Elliot jetty is completed. William Basham is involved in the creation of the Port Elliot Steam Flour-Mill Company.
1853	9 July 1853: William Bartley, a solicitor based in Adelaide, purchases Sections 2303 and 2317, Hundred of Goolwa, for £133. 26 November: Bartley conveys Section 2303 to Henry Edward Fox Young of Adelaide for £550.
1854	Port Elliot is proclaimed a township. 18 May: The railway between Goolwa and Port Elliot is completed and becomes operational.
1856	1 December: William's son Charles Abraham Basham leases Sections 2303 and 2317, part of which become Pleasant Banks. Four ships are wrecked around Port Elliot, leading to its decline as a port. The District Council of Port Elliot and Goolwa is established.
1863	14 June: Charles William Hussey Basham is born (hereafter C. W. H. Basham).
1864	The railway line is extended to Victor Harbor. Victor Harbor becomes the primary seaport for the Murray River trade.
1865	Port Elliot effectively ceases to operate as a port. 16 June: Charles Abraham Basham purchases Sections 2303 and 2317.
1866	The Southern Agricultural Society is formed. William Basham purchases the Port Elliot Steam Flour-Mill. 12 May: The <i>Jolly Miller</i> , a steamboat built for William Basham, is launched.
1869	17 November: The Southern Agricultural Society's first show is held.
1886	15 April: William Basham passes away.
c.1891	The Port Elliot branch of the Agricultural Bureau is formed. C. W. H. Basham is a foundation member.

- 1890s C. W. H. Basham establishes a milking herd at Pleasant Banks.
- c.1892-1893 C. W. H. Basham is appointed president of the Southern Agricultural Society.
- c.1899 C. W. H. Basham is appointed vice-president of the Southern Agricultural Society.
- 1903 6 February: Phillip Lancelot Basham is born.
- 1907 Charles Abraham Basham passes away.
- 1910 Bernard 'Bun' Horatio Basham is born.
- 1921 7 December: The *Dairy Cattle Improvement Act, 1921*, is assented. The Act requires bulls to be licensed and proceeds from the sale of licenses are used to support and stimulate the dairy industry.
- 1924 The Port Elliot township is incorporated.
- 1927 Brothers Phillip and Bernard Basham form a partnership and establish a Guernsey stud and dairy at Pleasant Banks, operating as Basham Bro's.**
- 1930s-1950s Basham Bro's receive multiple awards for their Guernsey cattle, including at the Royal Adelaide Show.**
- 1928 7 November: The *Dairy Industry Act 1928*, is assented. The Act introduces new quality standards and requires all sectors of the dairy industry to be licensed.
- 1933 August: The *Chronicle* reports that dairy cattle numbers have increased from 104,255 in 1929 to 127,757 in 1932. It further notes the diversification of breeds, including Guernsey cattle.
Phillip Basham helps form the South Australian branch of the Guernsey Cattle Society of Australia.
- 1934 The *Dairy Produce Act 1934*, is assented. The Act establishes the Dairy Produce Board to facilitate the marketing of dairy goods and establishes production quotas to prevent oversupply.
- 1951 Phillip marries Gwen Lewis.
- 1953 The partnership between Phillip and Bernard Basham is dissolved and Phillip continues operating the Guernsey stud at Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex as 'Merside'. Bernard commences operating a stud to the immediate north of the homestead, which he calls Pleasant Banks.**
- 1958 5 July: C. W. H. Basham passes away.
- 1959 A bushfire starting in Hindmarsh Valley spreads to Port Elliot, causing damage to several properties.
- c.1966 Phillip Lancelot Basham is appointed vice-president of the South Coast branch of the National Trust.
- 1973 Merside's Guernsey stud of Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex is dispersed.**

15 May: Portions of the Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex, including a portion of section 2303, are sold.

1974-1975 Anne Basham is appointed State Chairman of S.A. Rural Youth, the first woman to hold the position.

1976 1 March: Phillip Lancelot Basham passes away. He is survived by his wife Gwen and daughter Anne, who continue to reside at the homestead.

25 November: The State Planning Authority compulsorily acquires land that was formerly part of Pleasant Banks, including a portion of section 2303.

Locals commence a campaign to prevent the residential development of the acquired land and acquisition of the homestead.

1977 Anne Basham is appointed publicity officer of the South Coast branch of the National Trust.

1979 19 April: The government proclaims a portion of section 2303 as 'open space'. The land is referred as Basham Beach Regional Park.

1980 Anne Basham receives the P. C. Angrove Memorial Award for her involvement in the Rural Youth Movement of South Australia.

1981 24 April: The government leases a portion of section 2303 to the Alexandrina Council for 99 years.

1994 Gwen Basham passes away.

2007 Bernard Basham passes away.

2017 Alexandrina Council renames Basham Beach Regional Park as Ratalang Basham Beach Conservation Reserve to acknowledge the First Nations and European heritage of the area.

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SITE RECORD

NAME:	Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex	PLACE NO.:	26584
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DESCRIPTION OF PLACE: Homestead complex comprising multiple structures erected during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including a house, stables, two dairies, poultry shed, blacksmith's forge and trough.

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: c.1856 -

REGISTER STATUS: Nominated: 6 March 2024
[Date of Provisional Entry]

CURRENT USE: Residence, 1856 -
Reserve, 1978 -

PREVIOUS USE(S): Pastoral estate, 1856 – c.1973

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Alexandrina Council

LOCATION: **Street Name:** Basham Beach Road

Town/Suburb: Port Elliot

Post Code: 5212

LAND DESCRIPTION: **Title** CT 5782/101 F166155 A96; CT

Reference: 5744/925 F166154 A95

Hundred: Goolwa

MAP REFERENCE -35.516974, 138.698888 (approx.)

PHOTOS

NAME: Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex

PLACE NO.: 26584

* All photographs from DEW files, 26 July 2024.



Eastern side of Dairy One.



Sheltered area of Dairy One in south-western corner.



Semi-circular window with non-original iron insert on northern elevation of Dairy One.



Trough and Dairy One to right of image.

NAME: Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex

PLACE NO.: 26584



Trough, looking south.



Poultry shed with Dairy Two in background.



Central area of poultry shed.



View of north-western corner of poultry shed.



South-western corner of poultry shed showing room and shelter.



Interior of poultry shed room showing enclosures.



North-eastern corner of poultry shed showing perforations.



Eastern elevation of Dairy Two (1).

NAME: Pleasant Banks Homestead Complex

PLACE NO.: 26584



Eastern elevation of Dairy Two (2).



Interior of southern wing of Dairy Two showing stalls.



Timber fences and gates at the front of Dairy Two.



Side view of timber fences and gates.



Southern elevation of Dairy Two.



Engine room extension on western elevation of Dairy Two.



Western elevation of Dairy Two showing lean-to to north.



Northern elevation of Dairy Two with lean-to in foreground.

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- ³ Radcliffe, *South Australian Dairy Industry*, p.5.
- ⁴ Rice, 'History of Dairy Legislation'.
- ⁵ Rice, 'History of Dairy Legislation'.
- ⁶ Radcliffe, *South Australian Dairy Industry*, p.4.
- ⁷ Morbey and Rice, *A Brief History*, pp.1-2.
- ⁸ 'South Australia's Live Stock ... The Dairying Industry', *Journal*, 13 November 1919, p.1.
- ⁹ 'Dairying Industry in SA: Remarkable Development in Recent Years...', *Adelaide Chronicle*, 31 August 1933, p.5.
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- ¹¹ 'Dairying Industry in SA', 31 August 1933, p.5.
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- ¹³ Radcliffe, *South Australian Dairy Industry*, p.6.
- ¹⁴ Morbey and Rice, *A Brief History*, pp.2-3; Radcliffe, *South Australian Dairy Industry*, p.6.
- ¹⁵ Morbey and Rice, *A Brief History*, p.2.
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- ¹⁹ See Ngarrindjeri Nation and Hemming, 'Chapter 1.1', pp.14-18; Rob Linn, *A Land Abounding: A History of the Port Elliot and Goolwa Region, South Australia* (Goolwa: Alexandrina Council, 2001), pp.7-10, 12-16, 19-26, 28-29, 40-41, 73 and 77-87.
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- ²³ Jones, 'Fleurieu Peninsula'; Webb, *Port Elliot*, p.8.
- ²⁴ Jones, 'Fleurieu Peninsula'.
- ²⁵ Jones, 'Fleurieu Peninsula'.
- ²⁶ Webb, *Port Elliot*, p.8.
- ²⁷ Linn, *A Land Abounding*, pp.45-64.
- ²⁸ Webb, *Port Elliot*, pp.9-10.
- ²⁹ Webb, *Port Elliot*, p.12; 50.
- ³⁰ Rob Linn, 'River Murray', SA History Hub, History Trust of South Australia, 2015.
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- ³¹ Webb, *Port Elliot*, p.10, pp. 41-43; Linn, *A Land Abounding*, pp.98-124; Noack, Marsden and Dallwitz, *Port Elliot and Goolwa*, p.6.
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- ⁴⁸ Based upon the time of his ownership and the estimated construction and plating dates of these items.
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- ⁵¹ Deed of Partnership between W. J. Basham and C. A. Basham, 1892.
- ⁵² 'Country Intelligence... Port Elliot, 26 September', *Southern Argus*, 28 September 1893, p.3.
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- ⁵⁴ ASPECT Studios, *Master Plan for Ratalang Basham Beach Conservation Reserve* (Goolwa: Alexandrina Council, 2018), p.13.
- ⁵⁵ C. W. H. Basham was among the attendees of the Southern Agricultural Bureau's meetings. See 'Agricultural Bureaus', *South Australian Chronicle*, 28 March 1891, p.13. In 1893, the *Southern Argus* reported that he had been re-elected as president of the Southern Agricultural Society. 'Country Intelligence... Port Elliot', *Southern Argus*, 27 July 1893, p.3.
- ⁵⁶ Certificate of Title Vol. 68, Folio 69, Pursuant Application No. 459572.
- ⁵⁷ ASPECT Studios, *Master Plan*, p.13.
- ⁵⁸ Basham, transcription, p.16.
- ⁵⁹ Based upon the time of his ownership and the estimated construction and plating dates of these items.
- ⁶⁰ ASPECT Studios, *Master Plan*, p.13; Bun Basham suggests there may have been around 50 cows. Basham, transcription, p.27.
- ⁶¹ Basham, transcription, p.27.
- ⁶² Basham, transcription, p.16; Genealogy SA birth records, 707/199 and 835/30.
- ⁶³ Basham, transcription, p.23; ASPECT Studios, *Master Plan*, p.13.
- ⁶⁴ ASPECT Studios, *Master Plan*, p.13.
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- ⁶⁷ 'Pleasant Banks Guernseys. High Production Records', *Chronicle*, 6 July 1944, p.5.
- ⁶⁸ 'Merside Guernseys', *Chronicle*, 20 August 1953, p.14.
- ⁶⁹ Basham, transcription, p.28.
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- ⁷¹ Elizabeth Anderson, 'Basham's Service to Dairy Sector Recognised with Industry Award', *Stock Journal*, 10 September 2024.
- ⁷² Certificate of Title Vol. 1492, Folio 47.
- ⁷³ Certificate of Title Vol. 3964, Folio 12, Application No. 4164484.
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⁷⁴ ASPECT Studios, *Master Plan*, p.13.

⁷⁵ Certificate of Title Vol. 4084, Folio 507.

⁷⁶ ASPECT Studios, *Master Plan*, p.13; *Government Gazette*, 19 April 1979.

⁷⁷ Certificate of Title Vol. 4084, Folio 507, Lease No. 4730022.

⁷⁸ ASPECT Studios, *Master Plan*, p.13.

⁷⁹ ASPECT Studios, *Master Plan*, p.15.

⁸⁰ See Gwen Basham and Anne Basham, 'Old Home to Remain (letter to the editor)', *Victor Harbor Times*, 2 June 1976, p.2; Anne Basham, 'Letters to the Editor', *Victor Harbor Times*, 22 February 1978, p.8.