Recommendation of the Executive Director and assessment of cultural heritage significance under s.32 of the *Heritage Act 1995*

**NAME**  
Sambas Gold Mine

**LOCATION**  
Great Alpine Road, Harrietville, Alpine Shire

**VHR NUMBER:**  
Prov H2356

**CATEGORY:**  
Heritage Place, Archaeological Place

**HERITAGE OVERLAY**  
Not In The HO

**FILE NUMBER:**  
Fol/15/56729

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**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE HERITAGE COUNCIL:**

- That the Sambas Gold Mine be included as a Heritage Place and Archaeological Place in the Victorian Heritage Register under the *Heritage Act 1995* [Section 32 (1)(a)].

**STEVEN AVERY**  
Executive Director

**Recommendation Date:** 21 July 2017

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This recommendation report has been issued by the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria under s.32 of the *Heritage Act 1995*. It has not been considered or endorsed by the Heritage Council of Victoria.
EXTENT OF NOMINATION

The nomination includes all the land containing the current operating mine (processing plant, redundant equipment, earthworks and mine workings) and historical archaeological evidence (adits, battery relics, mullock heaps, tracks and hut sites) from earlier gold mining periods.
RECOMMENDED REGISTRATION

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 2356 enclosed by a line beginning at a point 147.05021°E, 36.91731°S thence to 147.05069°E, 36.91705°S to 147.05290°E, 36.91883°S to 147.05368°E, 36.91897°S to 147.05438°E, 36.92008°S to 147.05338°E, 36.92050°S to 147.05232°E, 36.91932°S to 147.05126°E, 36.91874°S and thence to the beginning point, and encompassing parts of Crown Allotment 2020 Parish of Harrietville, Crown Allotment 17A Section 12 Parish of Harrietville and part of the road reserve for the Great Alpine Road.

The extent of registration of Sambas Gold Mine in the Victorian Heritage Register affects the whole place shown on Diagram 2356 including the land, all mining infrastructure, earthworks and historical archaeological features.

Name: Sambas Gold Mine
Hermes Number: 198045
RATIONALE FOR REGISTRATION

The proposed extent of registration includes the adit mines, all structures in the gold processing precinct, ruinous archaeological features around the site and a sufficient protective curtilage.
STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT?

The Sambas Gold Mine including abandoned and working mining infrastructure and archaeological remains. Above ground infrastructure includes a battery shed and gold retrieval plant, and a stamping battery. Mining workings in the landscape include eleven adit levels (horizontal tunnels) and earthworks such as mullock heaps. Ruinous archaeological features include remnant machinery such as a benched platform, loading ramp, galvanised iron water tank, and parts of a collapsed and partially buried battery.

History Summary

Harrietville is a rural township in north-east Victoria, midway between Bright and Mount Hotham. The first gold was discovered in the area in 1852 and by the late 1850s it became known as the Upper Ovens Goldfield. After the initial phase of alluvial mining in the rivers and creeks, the rich quartz reefs in the surrounding hills were soon discovered. The Sambas reef was struck in 1910 and the lease was taken up by local mining entrepreneur CF Proctor who installed the first stamp battery at the mine. The steep terrain of the Upper Ovens Goldfield meant that the quartz reefs at the Sambas Mine were worked almost exclusively by horizontal tunnels dug into the hillside (referred to as ‘adits’, a Cornish mining term) rather than the vertical shafts seen in the flatter gold mining landscapes around Bendigo and Ballarat. The Upper Ovens Goldfield was unusual because new and profitable quartz reefs continued to be discovered well into the twentieth century. During the 1950s, the Sambas Mine was by far Victoria's richest small gold mine. The mine is located on Crown Land and has been leased and worked almost continuously since 1910. A bushfire in 2013 damaged the 10-head battery installed in 1966. The battery was restored and mining continues to the present time at the No. 11 adit.

Description Summary

The Sambas Gold Mine is a a historically layered landscape of abandoned and working mining infrastructure formed over several decades. The mine elements include a battery shed and gold retrieval plant, comprising a stamping battery (manufactured by Thompson & Co. Castlemaine), three Butchart shaking tables and a flotation system. There is also an ore crushing plant including a fine ore bin, rod mill, disused rod mill, secondary crusher, primary crusher and air compressor tanks. Mining workings in the landscape include eleven adit levels, earthworks such as mullock heaps, tailings dumps and embankments. Ruinous archaeological features and remnant machinery includes a benched platform, loading ramp, galvanised iron water tank and battery, known as the No.7 battery, which is partially buried. The extent is 3.17 hectares, the landscape is mountainous and the estimated terrain elevation is approximately 840 metres above sea level.

This place is on the traditional land of Waveroo. There is no Registered Aboriginal Party for this place.

HOW IS IT SIGNIFICANT?

The Sambas Gold Mine is of historical and archaeological significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria’s cultural history.

Criterion B

Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria’s cultural history.

Criterion C

Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria’s cultural history.

Name: Sambas Gold Mine
Hermes Number: 198045
Criterion D
Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects.

WHY IS IT SIGNIFICANT?

Sambas Gold Mine is significant at the State level for the following reasons:

The Sambas Gold Mine is historically significant because of its association with gold mining in Victoria and the particular adit mining techniques evident in the Upper Ovens Goldfield and other mountainous areas of Victoria. This relatively intact palimpsest of mine workings is a rare example of a once widespread form of small scale adit gold mining carried out in the mountainous regions of the state. It now is the oldest working mine of its type in Victoria. [Criterion A]

The Sambas Gold Mine is significant as a rare landscape of abandoned and working mining infrastructure which has formed over several decades relating to the particular practice of adit mining. It contains an uncommon assemblage of ore crushing machinery and gold retrieval technology, both redundant and in-use, that survives at the site including the stamping battery and rod mills. [Criterion B]

The Sambas Gold Mine is of archaeological significance for its likelihood to contain archaeological remains that relate to the construction and use of adit gold mines in Victoria. It has the potential to yield artefacts and evidence which will provide information about the cultural and technological history of adit gold mining, and the miners involved in this practice over the last hundred years. [Criterion C]

The Sambas Gold Mine is significant as the most representative, intact and continuing adit mine in Victoria. It is notable for its wide range of crushing and processing technology on display, such as a working stamp battery and rod mills. All elements of the mine are located in close proximity to each other on a small site allowing an understanding of the operations of a small adit mine, and the significance of the place to be readily observed and interpreted. The site demonstrates the practice of adaptive reuse of fabric over time, such as after the 2013 bushfire, and the practice of integrating mining machinery from other locations. [Criterion D]

Sambas Gold Mine is also significant for the following reasons, but not at the State level:

The Sambas Gold Mine is socially important as one of the most productive gold mines in the history of the Upper Ovens Goldfield region. It was one the most important reef mine employers for Harrietville and Alpine Shire residents from the 1930s to the early 1970s. It is an intermittent employer of miners to the present day forging strong connections within and across generations of Harrietville families.
RECOMMENDATION REASONS

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDING INCLUSION IN THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER [s.34A(2)]

Following is the Executive Director’s assessment of the place against the tests set out in The Victorian Heritage Register Criteria and Thresholds Guidelines (2014).

CRITERION A

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria’s cultural history.

STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The place/object has a CLEAR ASSOCIATION with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life in Victoria’s cultural history.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The association of the place/object to the event, phase, etc IS EVIDENT in the physical fabric of the place/object and/or in documentary resources or oral history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The EVENT, PHASE, etc is of HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE, having made a strong or influential contribution to Victoria.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Executive Director’s Response

- The Sambas Gold Mine is historically significant because of its association with gold mining in Victoria and the particular adit mining techniques evident in the Upper Ovens Goldfield and other mountainous areas of Victoria.
- The association of the Sambas Gold Mine to gold mining in Victoria and adit mining is evident in the physical fabric of the place, documentary resources and oral history.
- Gold mining has made a strong and influential contribution to Victoria.

Criterion A is likely to be satisfied.

STEP 2: A BASIC TEST FOR DETERMINING STATE LEVEL SIGNIFICANCE FOR CRITERION A

| The place/object allows the clear association with the event, phase etc. of historical importance to be UNDERSTOOD BETTER THAN MOST OTHER PLACES OR OBJECTS IN VICTORIA WITH SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME ASSOCIATION. |

Executive Director’s Response

- The Sambas Gold Mine is a relatively intact palimpsest of adit mine workings formed over the last hundred years.
- It is a rare example of a once widespread form of small scale adit gold mining carried out in the mountainous regions of Victoria.
- It is now the oldest working mine of its type in Victoria.
- Its history, fabric and continued use of traditional-type mining technology and techniques means that the place allows the clear association with adit gold mining to be better understood than most other places with substantially the same association.

Criterion A is likely to be satisfied at the State level.

Name: Sambas Gold Mine
Hermes Number: 198045
CRITERION B
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria’s cultural history.

STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The place/object has a clear ASSOCIATION with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life of importance in Victoria’s cultural history.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The association of the place/object to the event, phase, etc IS EVIDENT in the physical fabric of the place/object and/or in documentary resources or oral history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The place/object is RARE OR UNCOMMON, being one of a small number of places/objects remaining that demonstrates the important event, phase etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The place/object is RARE OR UNCOMMON, containing unusual features of note that were not widely replicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The existence of the class of place/object that demonstrates the important event, phase etc is ENDANGERED to the point of rarity due to threats and pressures on such places/objects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Executive Director’s Response

- The Sambas Gold Mine has an association with gold mining in Victoria and the particular adit mining techniques evident in the Upper Ovens Goldfield and other mountainous areas of Victoria.
- The association of the Sambas Gold Mine to gold mining in Victoria and adit mining is evident in the physical fabric of the place, documentary resources and oral history.
- The Sambas Gold Mine is rare, being one of a small number of relatively intact adit mining landscapes in Victoria.

Criterion B is likely to be satisfied.

STEP 2: A BASIC TEST FOR DETERMINING STATE LEVEL SIGNIFICANCE FOR CRITERION B

| The place/object is RARE, UNCOMMON OR ENDANGERED within Victoria. |

Executive Director’s Response

- The Sambas Gold Mine is rare within Victoria, being one of the last operating small-scale Alpine gold mining operations.
- It is a rare palimpsest of abandoned and working mining infrastructure which has formed over several decades relating to the particular practice of adit mining.
- It contains a rare assemblage of ore crushing machinery and gold retrieval technology, both redundant and in-use, that survives at the site including the stamping battery and rod mills

Criterion B is likely to be satisfied at a State level.
CRITERION C
Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria’s cultural history.

STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION C

The:
- visible physical fabric; &/or
- documentary evidence; &/or
- oral history,
relating to the place/object indicates a likelihood that the place/object contains PHYSICAL EVIDENCE of historical interest that is NOT CURRENTLY VISIBLE OR UNDERSTOOD.

Plus
From what we know of the place/object, the physical evidence is likely to be of an INTEGRITY and/or CONDITION that it COULD YIELD INFORMATION through detailed investigation.

Executive Director’s Response
- The visible physical fabric and site features, documentary evidence and oral history relating to the Sambas Gold Mine indicates a likelihood that the place/object contains physical evidence of historical interest that is not currently visible or understood.
- From what we know of the Sambas gold mine, the physical evidence is likely to be of an integrity and/or condition that it could yield information through detailed investigation.

Criterion C is likely to be satisfied.

STEP 2: A BASIC TEST FOR DETERMINING STATE LEVEL SIGNIFICANCE FOR CRITERION C

The knowledge that might be obtained through investigation is likely to MEANINGFULLY CONTRIBUTE to an understanding of Victoria’s cultural history.

Plus
The information likely to be yielded from the place/object is not already well documented or readily available from other sources.

Executive Director’s Response
- The knowledge that might be obtained through archaeological survey or excavation of the Sambas Gold Mine is likely to meaningfully contribute to an understanding of Victoria’s cultural history.
- The Sambas Gold Mine has the potential to yield artefacts and evidence which will provide information about the cultural and technological history of adit gold mining, and the miners involved in this practice over the last hundred years.
- The information likely to be yielded from the place is not already well documented or readily available from other sources.

Criterion C is likely to be satisfied at the State level.
CRITERION D

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects.

STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The place/object is one of a CLASS of places/objects that has a clear ASSOCIATION with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, important person(s), custom or way of life in Victoria’s history.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The EVENT, PHASE, etc is of HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE, having made a strong or influential contribution to Victoria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal characteristics of the class are EVIDENT in the physical fabric of the place/object.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Executive Director’s Response

- The Sambas Gold Mine has an association with gold mining in Victoria and the particular adit mining techniques evident in the Upper Ovens Goldfield and other mountainous areas of Victoria.
- Gold mining has made a strong and influential contribution to Victoria.
- The association of the Sambas Gold Mine to gold mining in Victoria and adit mining is evident in the physical fabric of the place, documentary resources and oral history.

Criterion D is likely to be satisfied.

STEP 2: A BASIC TEST FOR DETERMINING STATE LEVEL SIGNIFICANCE FOR CRITERION D

| The place/object is a NOTABLE EXAMPLE of the class in Victoria (refer to Reference Tool D). |

Executive Director’s Response

- The Sambas Gold Mine is a notable example of the class in Victoria.
- It is a highly intact example (refer to Reference Tool D) of an adit gold mine in Victoria.
- It displays characteristics of the class that remain mostly unchanged from the historically important period of development or use of the place.
- The restricted size of the mine site means that all elements of the mine are located in close proximity to each other allowing the significance of the place to be readily observed and interpreted.
- The site demonstrates the practice of adaptive reuse of fabric over time, such as after the 2013 bushfires, and the practice of integrating mining machinery from other locations.

Criterion D is likely to be satisfied at the State level.
PROPOSED PERMIT POLICY

Preamble
The purpose of the Permit Policy is to assist when considering or making decisions regarding works to a registered place. It is recommended that any proposed works be discussed with an officer of Heritage Victoria prior to making a permit application. Discussing proposed works will assist in answering questions the owner may have and aid any decisions regarding works to the place. The extent of registration of Sambas Gold Mine in the Victorian Heritage Register affects the whole place shown on Diagram 2356 including the land, all buildings, roads, earthworks and archaeological features. Under the Heritage Act 1995 a person must not remove or demolish, damage or despoil, develop or alter or excavate, relocate or disturb the position of any part of a registered place or object without approval. It is acknowledged, however, that alterations and other works may be required to keep the place in good repair and adapt them for use into the future.

If a person wishes to undertake works or activities in relation to a registered place object, they must apply to the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria for a permit. The purpose of a permit is to enable appropriate change to a place and to effectively manage adverse impacts on the cultural heritage significance of a place as a consequence of change. If an owner is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that Heritage Victoria be contacted.

Permits are required for anything which alters the place, unless a permit exemption is granted. Permit exemptions usually cover routine maintenance and upkeep issues faced by owners as well as minor works or works to the elements of the place or object that are not significant. They may include appropriate works that are specified in a conservation management plan. Permit exemptions can be granted at the time of registration (under s.42 of the Heritage Act) or after registration (under s.66 of the Heritage Act).

Conservation management plan
It is recommended that a Conservation Management Plan is developed to manage the place in a manner which respects its cultural heritage significance.

Aboriginal cultural heritage
If any Aboriginal cultural heritage is discovered or exposed at any time it is necessary to immediately contact the Office of Aboriginal Affairs Victoria to ascertain requirements under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006.

Other approvals
Please be aware that approval from other authorities (such as local government) may be required to undertake works.

Archaeology
Ground disturbance may affect the archaeological significance of the place and, subject to the exemptions stated in this document, requires a permit.

Future mine closure and remediation
Any future site remediation that may harm the cultural heritage significance of the place will require a permit.
Cultural heritage significance

Overview of significance

The Sambas Gold Mine is significant because of its association with the history of adit gold mining in Victoria. It is a rare example of a once widespread form of small scale adit gold mining carried out in the mountainous regions of the state. The mine’s fabric demonstrates over one hundred years of small scale adit mining. The Sambas Gold Mine is now the oldest working mine of its type in Victoria.

a) All of the buildings, machinery and features listed here are of primary cultural heritage significance in the context of the place.
   • Battery shed (refurbished using second hand elements and pre-fire fabric) and all internal machinery including ten head stamping battery manufactured by Thompson & Co., Castlemaine, 3 Butchart shaking tables and other ore processing machinery.
   • Fine ore bin
   • Rod mill
   • Disused rod mill
   • Secondary crusher
   • Primary crusher
   • Air compressor tanks
   • All mine workings (adits), all earthworks (mullock heaps, tailings dumps and embankments), archaeological remains and artefacts.

b) Buildings and features that are listed here or not listed in a) or c) are deemed to have contributory cultural heritage significance to the place.
   • Cyanide works

c) The following buildings and features are of no cultural heritage significance.
   • Mining and ore processing equipment purchased after 2013 such as the compressor, generator, excavator, forklift, mine vehicle, tipping trailer and Gemini table.

PROPOSED PERMIT EXEMPTIONS (UNDER SECTION 42 OF THE HERITAGE ACT)

It should be noted that Permit Exemptions can be granted at the time of registration (under s.42(4) of the Heritage Act). Permit Exemptions can also be applied for and granted after registration (under s.66 of the Heritage Act)

General Condition 1

All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.

General Condition 2

Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible.
General Condition 3
All works should be informed by Conservation Management Plans prepared for the place. The Executive Director is not bound by any Conservation Management Plan, and permits still must be obtained for works suggested in any Conservation Management Plan.

General Condition 4
Nothing in this determination prevents the Heritage Council from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

General Condition 5
Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the relevant responsible authority, where applicable.

Specific Permit Exemptions

Mining operations
- All mining and mineral explorations and operations authorised under a Work Plan for a Mining Licence approved and valid at the time of registration.
- Repair or replacement of failed equipment where there is no removal of or detrimental impact on the heritage fabric of the place. This may include the dismantling of buildings to remove and/or repair large items of equipment and their subsequent reconstruction.
- General and emergency maintenance, repairs to all structures and equipment (which replaces like with like), and the installation of new equipment required for operational purposes where there is no removal of or detrimental impact on heritage fabric.
- Installation of safety equipment or earthworks required for the safe operation of the mine where there is no removal of or detrimental impact on heritage fabric.
- Undertaking of safety and access works to restrict vehicular access to the site and minimise foot traffic near foundations where there is no removal of or detrimental impact on heritage fabric.
- Works confined to protect, conserve and stabilise buildings and structures where there is no removal of or detrimental impact on heritage fabric.

Landscape
- Landscape maintenance works provided the activities do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits.
- Removal and/or lopping of trees and vegetation, and planting of trees and other vegetation where there is no removal of or detrimental impact on heritage fabric.

Fire Suppression Duties
- Fire suppression and fire-fighting duties (such as fuel reduction burns, and fire control line construction) provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits.
Note: Fire management authorities should be aware of the location, extent and significance of historical places when developing fire suppression and fire-fighting strategies. The significance of places listed in the Heritage Register must be considered when strategies for fire suppression and management are being developed.

Weed and Vermin Control
- Weed and vermin control activities provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits.
- Removal of plants listed as noxious weeds in the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994.

Name: Sambas Gold Mine
Hermes Number: 198045
Note: Particular care must be taken with weed and vermin control works where such activities may have a detrimental effect on the significant fabric of a place. Such works may include the removal of ivy, moss or lichen from an historic structure or feature.

**Public Safety and Security**
- Public safety and security activities provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of heritage fabric.
- The erection of temporary security fencing, scaffolding, hoardings or surveillance systems to prevent unauthorised access or secure public safety which will not adversely affect the fabric of the place.
- Emergency stabilisation necessary to secure safety where a site feature has been irreparably damaged or destabilised and represents a safety risk to its users or the public.

Note: Urgent or emergency site works are to be undertaken by an appropriately qualified specialist such as a structural engineer, or other heritage professional.

**Signage and Site Interpretation**
- The erection of non-illuminated signage for the purpose of ensuring public safety or to assist in the interpretation of the heritage significance of the place or object and which will not adversely affect heritage fabric or obstruct significant views of and from heritage fabric.
- Signage and site interpretation products must be located and be of a suitable size so as not to obscure or damage heritage fabric.
- Signage and site interpretation products must be able to be later removed without causing damage to heritage fabric.

Note: The development of signage and site interpretation products must be consistent in the use of format, text, logos, themes and other display materials.

Note: Where possible, the signage and interpretation material should be consistent with other schemes developed on similar or associated sites. It may be necessary to consult with land managers and other stakeholders concerning existing schemes and strategies for signage and site interpretation.
HISTORY

[The following text has been drawn from Rob Kaufman Cultural Heritage Report: Remedial Works Sambas No. 7 Battery, LRGM Services, August 2013.]

The Sambas Gold Mine is an operating mine whose history and fabric goes back to the early 1900s. The mine is located in the Upper Ovens goldfield and is part of the living echo of the Victorian gold rush. Mining in the area began in 1853-54 with miners getting gold nuggets (alluvial gold) from the stream systems. By 1858, the source of the gold, the quartz reefs, in the ranges above the streams were being mined. The Upper Ovens goldfield was unusual in that new and profitable quartz reefs continued to be discovered well into the twentieth century.

The Sambas Reef was discovered by Tom Powers of Harrietville in 1910. He took out a six-acre lease and named the mine the ‘Sambas’ after the town of the same name in east Borneo. Some rich crushings were taken out by Powers until 1917 when the reef was lost on a fault. Local mining entrepreneur CF Proctor took up the lease in the late 192Os. He installed the first stamp battery at the mine, just below the level seven adit on the Hotham Road (Great Alpine Road) and worked from the level 7 and level 8 adits. He gradually increased annual production till his death in 1947, when the mine ownership passed to his widow.

Charles Tavare was then appointed manager of the Sambas Gold Mine. Operations were improved in 1950 with the purchase of an air compressor and pneumatic drills. Norm Staff assumed management of the mine after marrying Lillian Proctor in 1952, and a new battery was installed at the level-9 adit in 1954. Gold production peaked in the mid-1950s at over 2000 ounces per year under the management of Neville Wolff, working from the level one adit from 1955 (level-10 was Tunnel B of the former English Company on the Tiddle-de-addle-de Reef). Some was crushed at the Lady Jane battery in a gully to the north of No 10 adit.

During the 1950s, it was by far Victoria's richest small gold mine. The steep terrain meant that the quartz reefs at the Sambas Mine were worked almost exclusively by tunnels, rather than shafts. It is more economical and easier to drive a tunnel (normally referred to as adits, a Cornish mining term) into a hillside, than sink a shaft downwards from the top of a hill. When the gold content available from one adit was exhausted, another one, either 100 metres above or below, was opened up. (See diagram on page 21 for illustration of adit mining).

High production continued until the mid-1960s with up to twenty-three men employed at the mine. After Wolff left in 1966, Norm Staff purchased a 10-head battery from the Williams United Mine at Wandiligong and installed it at the 10-level, eliminating costly ore transport to the Lady Jane. Production declined in the late 1960s and operations ceased in 1971. A year later the mine was taken over on tribute by Les Lawson.
and Archie Wilson and obtained small but profitable crushings into the 1980s. Total production to 1981 was about 44,000 ounces of gold and exceeded 50,000 ounces by 2012. This makes the Sambas Gold Mine the third highest producing reef mine in the history of the Upper Ovens Goldfield, behind the Rose, Thistle and Shamrock Mine at Harrietville and the Oriental Mine at Wandiligong.

In recent times the lease has been owned by a succession of companies and a significant number of people have been employed at the mine intermittently. New plants include a large carbon-in-pulp cyaniding works, and a rod mill. One recent lease holder was Hazav Pty Ltd, which worked from the ten-level adit on a commercial basis under the management of Simon Law. A flotation plant was installed at this time and driving works commenced at level 11 (Adit A of the former English Company on the Tiddle-de-addle-de Reef). The mine is now (2016) operated under the management of Mitch Kermond. He refurbished the mine after a 2013 bushfire, including re-building the battery shed with the original corrugated iron roofing in its original location. Its refurbishment demonstrates the technical ingenuity and self-reliance of miners which is a hallmark of this type of mining.

**VICTORIAN HISTORICAL THEMES**

04 Transforming and managing land and natural resources

4.5 Gold mining

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

The Sambas Gold Mine is a palimpsest (a historically layered landscape) of abandoned and working mining infrastructure formed over several decades. These include a battery shed and gold retrieval plant, comprising a stamping battery (manufactured by Thompson & Co. Castlemaine), three Butchart shaking tables and a flotation system. There is also an ore crushing plant including a fine ore bin, rod mill, disused rod mill, secondary crusher, primary crusher and air compressor tanks. Mining workings in the landscape include eleven adit levels (horizontal tunnels), earthworks such as mullock heaps, tailings dumps and embankments. Ruinous above ground archaeological features include a benched platform, loading ramp, galvinsed iron water tank and battery, known as the No.7 battery, with stampers removed, in addition to subsurface deposits. The extent is 3.17 hectares, the landscape is mountainous and the estimated terrain elevation is about 840 metres above sea level.

**LANDSCAPE**

The Sambas mine is located in a steep hilly sclerophyll forest dominated by eucalypts. The steep and sloping topography lends itself to adit mining (horizontal shafts).

**ARCHAEOLOGY**

The site contains the remains of a stamp battery located on a benched platform approximately 100 metres to the north west of the main sheds in the mine. The tiered surface measures approximately 10 metres x 5 metres. The remains include parts of an air-compressor, a four-cylinder engine and a water tank, and has the potential to contain other concealed elements. The broader site has the potential to contain other historical deposits that relate to the development and use of the mine and also hut sites.

**INTEGRITY/INTACTNESS**

**Intactness** – The mine has a good level of intactness, retaining a palimpsest of significant fabric associated with the mining and processing of auriferous ore.

**Integrity** – The Sambas has a good level of integrity. The mine’s management over many decades has always followed the same course – retention of old elements rather than removal, and recycling where possible – leading to the survival of a palimpsest of old and new mining infrastructure.

Name: Sambas Gold Mine
Hermes Number: 198045
CONDITION
The place is in good condition. It is a working mine and subject to mining legislation and regulations.

COMPARISONS
Mining is an important historical theme in Victoria. There are around 140 gold mines (or gold mining precincts) currently included in the Victorian Heritage Register. This reflects the importance of gold mining to Victoria’s history, particularly in the nineteenth century. Many of these registered places include buildings, landscapes and machinery such as stamping batteries which crush material by pounding, rather than grinding, to process or extract gold.

Adit mines
Red Robin Gold Mine and Battery (VHR H1881)
In Victoria gold mining has taken many forms during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the flatter landscapes around Bendigo and Ballarat the most popular mining technique method was to excavate vertical shafts, or ‘adits’, a Cornish mining term. Across the mountainous regions of Victoria quartz reefs were worked almost exclusively by tunnels dug into the hillside. Adit mines were common in these areas from the mid-nineteenth century. The vast majority do not survive and have been reduced to a ruinous condition. Only a few survive intact, including the Sambas Gold Mine which is one of the best examples in Victoria. The only other small scale adit mine in the VHR is the Red Robin Gold Mine and Battery (VHR H1881) at Mount Hotham. It is historically important due to its association with what is still Victoria’s last discovered goldfield in 1940 and subsequent gold rush. It is a palimpsest of mine workings, redundant mining equipment and huts. The stamping battery is in working order and Parks Victoria are managing the site as a ruin.

Stamping batteries and other machinery
Maldon State Battery (VHR H1264) & Wattle Gully Gold Mine (VHR H1879)
In Victoria – across adit and other forms of mining – only ten gold mines have stamping batteries in working order established during the twentieth century, from an estimated seventy-five. In addition to the Red Robin Gold Mine and Battery, the Maldon State Battery (VHR H1264) is the most significant because of the high usage. The Wattle Gully Gold Mine (VHR H1879) was the most productive mine during the middle decades of the twentieth century and the flagship of the state mining industry. It has a working stamp battery and a modern mill ball and cyaniding plant. The other operational batteries are not included in the VHR: Sambas Gold Mine, Bright State Battery, Mt Egerton State Battery, Creswick State Battery, Wedderburn State Battery, Rutherglen State Battery, and the Williams United Mine in Wandiligong.
Comparisons summary
Compared with these other batteries, the Sambas Gold Mine has a much greater range of crushing and processing technology on display which allows the history of the place to be better understood than other places with a similar association in Victoria. Only the Sambas Mine can demonstrate the development in crushing technology because it has examples of older as well as newer rod mills (designed to crush and refine ore into a fine powder). The Sambas Gold Mine is a rare example of a once widespread form of small scale adit gold mining carried out in the mountainous regions of the state. It is significant as the most representative, intact and continuing adit mine in Victoria. Compared with other similar places, it contains an uncommon assemblage of ore crushing machinery and gold retrieval technology, both redundant and in-use, that survives at the site including the stamping battery and rod mills.

KEY REFERENCES USED TO PREPARE ASSESSMENT
Kaufman, R. Australian Alps Mining Heritage Conservation & Presentation Strategy, for the Australian Alps Liaison Committee, 30 April 2002.
Kaufman, R. Cultural Heritage Report: Remedial Works Sambas No. 7 Battery, LRGM Services, August 2013
Victorian Heritage Register.

PROPOSED TEXT FOR THE BLUE HERITAGE PLAQUE
The Sambas Gold Mine (1910) is a rare example of an intact adit mine which were once widespread in the mountainous goldfield regions of Victoria. It contains a rich assemblage of gold mining technology such as a working stamp battery and rod mills.
The location of the Sambas Mine.

Name: Sambas Gold Mine
Hermes Number: 198045
The area of Crown Land leased to the operator of the Sambas Mine.
Diagram showing the building footprints at the Sambas Gold Mine.

General diagram showing the process of adit mining (at a different location). Horizontal tunnels are dug into the hillside rather than vertical shafts being sunk.
Aerial photo showing building footprints after the bushfires in 2013 prior to their refurbishment.

No. 10 adit at the Sambas Mine.
Looking up to No. 7 adit from No. 10 adit platform.

Largely buried remains of No. 7 adit battery (non-operational).
Air receivers next to No. 5 adit.

Restored battery shed.
Tailings pond and No. 11 adit.

Processing plant, battery shed.
Processing plant, battery shed.

Original concrete wall foundations
Ten head stamping battery and refurbished Butchart shaking tables

Battery manufacturer’s plate.
Ten head battery and Butchart’s shaking tables.
Original iron framing of Butchart’s shaking table.

Butchart’s driving mechanism.