



ACT Heritage Council

BACKGROUND INFORMATION LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED (BLOCK 39, MOUNT CLEAR)

At its meeting of 30 May 2019 the ACT Heritage Council decided that Lutons Crutching Shed was not eligible for provisional registration.

The information contained in this report was considered by the ACT Heritage Council in assessing the nomination for the Lutons Crutching Shed against the heritage significance criteria outlined in s10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

HISTORY

History of Aboriginal and European Settlement in the Bobeyan Valley

Lutons Crutching Shed is within Namadgi National Park, which is managed by the ACT Parks and Conservation Service (ACT PCS). The place is located under Sentry Box Mountain, near Naas Creek in the Bobeyan Valley. It is accessed from the Namadgi Visitor Centre via the Bobeyan and then Old Bobeyan Roads to a locked gate. From the gate, access is via Sam's Creek Fire Trail. Due to the remoteness of the site, most visitors to the crutching shed are likely ACT PCS staff, hikers and members of the Kosciuszko Huts Association (KHA), who have an interest in the complex. (Higgins & Scott 1994)

Namadgi National Park falls within the Commonwealth heritage listed landscape of the Australian Alps National Parks and Reserves; a landscape extending across 1.6 million hectares of the ACT, New South Wales and Victoria. The Alps are protected for diverse natural and cultural values and for their rarity within the context of the hot, dry and relative low relief of the rest of the Australian continent. (Higgins 2009; Australian Heritage Database 2008)

Namadgi is rugged mountain, foothill and valley terrain, with some of the highest peaks in Australia occurring within it (i.e. Mt Bimberi 1911m). The park contains large tracts of wilderness, as well as natural and culturally modified landscapes. It provides for water catchment, recreation and natural and cultural heritage conservation. (Higgins & Scott 1994)

Although this assessment concerns a site of European pastoral heritage, Namadgi is an important place for Aboriginal people. Parts of it, especially the valleys, are known to have been inhabited year round. In addition to affording habitation for the Ngunnawal, Ngarigo and Wolgalu peoples, the area was visited by other tribes during the annual gatherings and ceremonies connected with harvesting Bogong moths from the higher peaks. Of great cultural significance, Namadgi contains ceremonial stone arrangements on the higher peaks and three of the most significant rock art sites in the Australian Alps. (ACT Government 2010)

The pastoral history of what is now Namadgi commenced with exploration and settlement of the Limestone Plains – the area later to become Canberra – in the 1820s. In 1821 the Murrumbidgee River was sighted. By the late 1820s settlers were moving south towards Tuggeranong and had crossed the Murrumbidgee, even though for the government the river delineated the western extent of settlement. Irrespective, the flow of settlers across the river continued, and in response, the government in 1836, permitted settlement beyond it with purchase of a licence. (Higgins 2009)

On the Limestone Plains in 1824, Joshua John Moore took up the first land grant 'Canberry' and Robert Campbell the second at Duntroon, the following year. Pastoral settlement in Namadgi's valleys commenced in 1830 at Naas, just

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west of the Murrumbidgee with William Herbert, who later went on to take up the Orroral valley. Bobeyan was subsequently settled, first by James Ritchie and then by Queanbeyan storekeeper John Grey, who installed Scottish settlers Charles and Elizabeth McKeahnies as managers. When Grey went bankrupt around 1844 the McKeahnies partnered with another Scottish settler, Alexander Crawford, to purchase Bobeyan. (Higgins 2009)

Soon the McKeahnies, who owned Orroral after Herbert, sold their share of Bobeyan to the Crawfords. With Crawford ownership came, via marriage, a Brayshaw association with the Bobeyan valley that endured for around a century. Through their fourteen children, the Brayshaws ended up owning most of the valley, with one of them, Richard 'Dick' Brayshaw progressively inheriting or buying most of the valley. The Brayshaws lived at Bobeyan Homestead; the Crawfords lived further up the valley at 'Old Station', a site approximately 200 meters from the crutching shed. In 1952 elderly Dick Brayshaw, who had lived a bachelor's life at Bobeyan Homestead for many years, arranged the sale of Bobeyan to Morris Luton. Dick and the Lutons were related and Morris had for many years helped Dick with stock and other work in the valley. (Higgins 2009; Higgins & Scott 1994)

Morris Luton purchased the property for his sons Noel and Greg, who each had separate blocks within the it (the site of the crutching shed was Noel's) and were to repay him for the purchase. One of the agreements of sale was that the Luton family care for Dick until his passing. Following sale of the property, Dick Brayshaw, who Noel and Greg knew as 'Uncle Dick', moved eight miles from Bobeyan to one of the Luton properties at Shannons Flat. After two years, Dick passed away in his sleep aged 89. (Higgins 2009; Higgins & Scott, 1994).

Pastoralism in the Mountain Valleys

In the early years, the pastoralists in the mountain valleys of Namadgi, and nearby Tidbinbilla, ran mostly cattle, with horse breeding being important on some properties. Sheep were also important at this time but presented a range of animal husbandry challenges difficult to overcome in the early years of settlement. Higgins (2009) notes; 'sheep were a risky venture, especially as the high wet pastures were prone to fluke infection and other parasites. It was not until the early twentieth century that vaccines and drenches were developed. Also, the prevalence of dingoes meant sheep mortality was high ... sheep had to be shepherded by day ... and yarded at night, often in simple 'breaks' made from branches; and sometimes fires were lit at night to keep dingoes away (Higgins 2009: 33, 35).'

Despite the challenges presented by them, sheep did feature in the early pastoral enterprises. In 1839 when Bobeyan and Orroral were inspected by the Commissioner of Crown Lands Henry Bingham, he documented the following; at Bobeyan, James Ritchie had 494 cattle, 11 horses, 1132 sheep and was producing dairy; at Orroral, William Herbert had 700 cattle, 37 horses and no sheep. Of this account, Higgins (2009) observes; 'Herbert's experience at Naas had perhaps taught him that some of the higher country at that time was not well-suited to sheep – something other graziers would later learn' (Higgins 2009: 24). Higgins doesn't mention anything of Ritchie's success, or otherwise, with sheep at Bobeyan at this time. (Higgins 2009)

Later at Bobeyan, the Crawfords drove cattle to the Victorian goldfields for sale. They also had a dairy and piggery and sold this produce in Sydney annually on a round trip taking two months. Interestingly, Higgins (2009) records that a travelling stock route to the snow leases of what is now Northern Kosciuszko National Park passed through Bobeyan to the Yaouk valley and to the upper Murrumbidgee. The route may have passed within vicinity of the crutching shed. The Crawfords, along with other ACT families – the Oldfields, Tongs, Sheahans and Maguires – are all known to have had snow leases and so drove their cattle to the high plains in the summer months. (Higgins 2009)

Whilst cattle demanded little attention, sheep were a challenge to keep alive due to liver fluke and dingoes. Sheep also require more animal husbandry than cattle. They need wiggling and crutching; wool removed from around their eyes to prevent wool blindness and from around their hindquarters to prevent fly-strike. They also need dipping to kill lice and drenching to kill internal parasites – such as liver fluke, which remains a serious agricultural problem today and is countered with good grazing management and drenching. (Higgins 2009)

As the mountain country opened up and the foothills were cleared of trees, the landscape became more amenable to sheep. Around the same time, new vaccines and drenches became available ensuring sheep were protected from parasites – including liver fluke. Combined, these changes led to an increase in the number of sheep in the area that is now the ACT. In the 1920s for example, Andrew Cunningham, the owner of Lanyon, Tuggeranong and Tidbinbilla, purchased Orroral Valley from the McKeahnies and introduced sheep there. With sheep, Cunningham arranged

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construction in 1929 to 1930 of the now heritage listed Orroral Woolshed (Place Number: 20110) including associated external yards and concrete sheep dip with connected draining area. The Orroral Woolshed is discussed in further detail in the 'Contextual Analysis' section of this assessment. (ACT Government 2005; Higgins 2009)

In 1952 when the Lutons purchased Bobeyan, they switched from mostly cattle to mostly sheep. In their oral history recordings, conducted by Matthew Higgins and archived at the National Library of Australia, Noel (interviewed in 1990) and Greg (interviewed, 2012) Luton both note that Dick Brayshaw had been a 'cattle man' who disliked sheep and swore he would never run them in the valley. The Lutons on the other hand, had sheep on both their Shannons Flat properties – Muzzlebrook and Rosevue – and as soon as they purchased Bobeyan they drove 3000 sheep and 300 cattle the eight miles from Shannons Flat to Bobeyan. (Higgins & Scott 1994; Luton 1990; Luton 2012)

The Lutons were able to successfully farm sheep at Bobeyan due to their holdings at Shannons Flat. Of sheep farming at Bobeyan, Greg Luton (2012) states; 'Really Bobeyan probably is better cattle country than sheep country, cause it gets very wet down there; [but] we could bring the sheep back here at times if it got too wet; it's a lot of swamp country, it's not good for sheep, but there's a lot of hill country, we did well there, we had thousands of sheep there ... we introduced sheep there straight away, we took the surplus sheep down there and let them get a bit older before we sold them and [we] stocked them up that way. We didn't breed any there, we bred them all here [at Shannons Flat] and only took wethers [male sheep] there, and young ewes perhaps, we didn't breed anything down there [as] it was a bit far away to manage them properly. It was better for wethers and cattle. All the male sheep went down there from the Rosevue property' (Luton 2012).

As stated above, the Luton brothers did very well with sheep at Bobeyan as their venture there coincided with the high prices paid for wool during the Korean War (pers.comm. Higgins 2019). In his oral history recording Greg Luton (2012) said it did not take the brothers long to repay their father for his purchase of Bobeyan on their behalf. The Luton enterprise at Bobeyan ended when the valley started to be resumed for the Federal Capital Territory during the 1970s; the holding on which the crutching shed is located became part of Gudgenby Nature Reserve in 1979 and then formed part of Namadgi National Park in 1984. (Higgins 2019; Higgins & Scott 1994; Luton 2012)

Fences and Yards in the Bobeyan Valley

When the Lutons purchased Bobeyan valley there was an absence of fencing due to it having been previously used for cattle. Noel (1990) says; 'when we took over it was more or less one big paddock' (Luton 1990). Irrespective, the sheep still needed to be managed for liver fluke and dipped once every four to six weeks to protect them. To do this, the Lutons needed to muster; Noel recalls riding from Shannons Flat with half a dozen men on horseback and commencing the muster as soon as arriving in the valley. The men would flush the sheep from the tree line into the valley and herd them up to the old cattle yards (modified for sheep by the Lutons) in front of Bobeyan Homestead, where Dick Brayshaw had lived. Of these cattle yards Noel (1990) notes; 'this was the only set of yards on the place when we took over' (Luton 1990).

Of the fencing in the valley at the time of purchase, Greg Luton (2012) recalls; 'all the old fences had been built by hand and they all started to fall down and when we bought the place there wasn't a paddock left, they'd either burned or they'd fallen over ... all [the fences] built out of the timber, mainly forks, they used to get a forky tree and put the rails in between'. Greg notes; 'We had to do a terrible lot of fencing in those early years' (Luton 2012).

Presumably, many of the fences mentioned by Greg, are those marked on the early portion plans for County of Cowley, Parish of Bobeyan as a variety of fence types, not just 'fork'. From interest, the fences on the portion plans for Bobeyan show many sections of fences variously described as; log, fork, split, brush, pack, drop, stud line, rail & wire, skid, stud, or slab, two or three rail, and finally, fork & wire or slip rail. Portion Plan 31, dated 1883 and owned at that time by Edward Crawford, encompasses the site on which the crutching shed was later built. It shows several fence lines and a fenced garden as well as a yard and hut very close to the crutching shed and yards, as shown in image 4.

While Higgins & Scott (1994) draw the conclusion that the yards at Lutons Crutching Shed date from the Crawford era, there is no evidence in the oral history recordings, of either Noel or Greg, that this is the case. The transcript excerpt below between Matthew Higgins (MH) and Noel Luton (NL) provides a first person narrative on the construction of Lutons Crutching Shed;

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Mathew Higgins (MH): Going further up the valley there is the crutching shed? Can you tell me who it was that built that and when it was built?

Noel Luton (NL): I just forget the date, but it's a fairly late building that one. I used those yards there and used to crutch in the yards.

MH: The old existing yards?

NL: The old existing yards in front of that crutching shed. The yards were there before the shed was there, we built the yards to run sheep in, to drench sheep in, we used to crutch in the yards for several years before building the shed, just a portable crutching plant in the yards ... same for wiggling, it was all done in the yards with blade shears ... it was only a fairly late building the crutching shed, I just forget the date, be in the 60s I would think, late 60s.

MH: Was the shed built to give yourselves some cover while doing that job?

NL: Yes, some cover and to have dry sheep and to get a man to come and do it for you. [The sheep could be] shedded overnight and you're out of the weather.

MH: But shearing was never done there?

NL: No, all the sheep were bought back here to Rosevue to shear ... That was a once a year muster job, they had to all be bought back here and they were kept around Rosevue here for a couple of weeks until they were used to the cold weather after shearing, before they were taken back to Bobeyan.

MH: And the crutching shed itself; that was built by yourself?

NL: With the help of a couple other work men.

MH: Who were they?

NL: Alan Robinson And his mate Herb Dyball, helped there for a couple of days ... my brother may have helped, I'm not sure.

MH: How were the materials bought in?

NL: Bought in by truck. We cut the bush timber from just up the valley from the shed there itself, the main posts were cut there and drug in by tractor.

MH: Just adjacent to the crutching shed, there are those big old drop log yards, I think they are? They date back quite a bit further I understand. Do you know much about those?

NL: Well one of the fences run along that particular line. We sort of built onto the fence and built our sheep yards in the early days of taking up Bobeyan. The old cattle yards that used to be in that area had long since fallen down. They were further towards the east from those yards, you could still see the remains there.

MH: There are quite high yards there though now. The drop log yards which are tied together with wire at the top and they sort of wind around a bit. Are they actually the ones that you built?

NL: Yes, my brother and father helped build those, yes. We used to run cattle in them, used to work cattle in them as well. Used to brand cattle, that sort of thing in them. They were built high so cattle didn't get over them. They were mainly used for sheep, sheep drenching, but we did brand cattle in them, save driving cattle right back to the lower end of Bobeyan. Built there for convenience.

The above transcript excerpt illuminates construction of the yards and clarifies that the perimeter fences around the shed were built by the Lutons. Additionally, geo-referencing and overlaying the portion plan with a 2017 air photo does not align the yards from 1883 with the later yards at the crutching shed, as shown in image 4. Further, ACT PCS

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records show that much of the drop log fence at the crutching shed is a reconstruction by the KHA. A list of post 2014 KHA works is detailed in the 'Description' section of this assessment.

History and Use of Lutons Crutching Shed

The oral history excerpt confirms the crutching shed yards pre-date the shed. The yards are known to have been built by Morris, Noel and Greg Luton soon after their purchase of the property in 1952. Higgins & Scott (1994) record the location selected for the yards was based on the sheep naturally gathering at the site during mustering. In addition, as noted in the oral history excerpt, the yards were built following an existing section of fence line. It seems likely therefore, that re-using existing materials was another justification for the location. (Higgins & Scott 1994; Luton 1990)

Immediately, the yards were used for a variety of stock work; and they included a race – which is the drop log section. In the longer term, Noel was the main beneficiary of the yards using them for wiggling and crutching – first with hand shears and then using a portable petrol driven crutching plant. In due course, Noel determined to build the crutching shed so his sheep could be yarded overnight (yarding helps empty out the sheep before crutching and keeps sheep dry for shearing) and so that crutching could be done under cover, protected from the elements. The shed was likely constructed in the late 1960s and was erected in a week. Alan Robinson, who worked with the Lutons as a shearer and carpenter, took the lead on the shed's design and construction, building it to a configuration he had already used on a shed at Rosevue. Noel Luton and Herb Dyball (Alan's brother in law) helped Alan build the shed. It is unknown whether the Rosevue shed remains. (Higgins & Scott 1994; Luton 2012)

In regards to Lutons Crutching Shed, its layout, as relates the management of sheep for crutching, shares similarities with the design of a shearing shed, especially regarding configuration of essential elements for sheep movement within the complex – yards, catching pens, shearing board and chutes. Within the crutching shed, the large open area at ground level had several yards within it for overnighting sheep, and the elevated northern section contained two catching pens and the shearing board with chutes to outside the shed. (Higgins & Scott 1994)

In the crutching shed, the sheep were managed as follows; from the ground floor yards, they were moved up one of two ramps by the roustabout into one of the two battened floor catching pens (the battens allow the passage of sheep waste). From the catching pens the sheep were drawn by the shearer or shearers through swinging gates onto the board for crutching. Once finished crutching a sheep, the shearer pushed it down a chute into yards outside of the shed. See image 12 for a plan drawing of the shed from the 1994 conservation study.

During crutching, as with shearing, the board area is kept as clean as possible by a worker and the crutched wool lifted to the sorting table – at Lutons this was an iron gate on its side – to remove poor quality stained wool. The remaining acceptable clip was placed in a bale in the Ajax wool press for market. (Higgins & Scott 1994)

Noel Luton crutched annually in March or April, attending to 1500 sheep in two days. Alan Robinson and a friend of his did the shearing, while Noel worked as roustabout. With one exception, shearing was never done at Bobeyan. Instead, for the annual shearing, the mob was driven to the established Rosevue shearing shed at Shannons Flat. At Rosevue, it was easier to get shearers and workers to help as the property was more accessible, and there were facilities available to support the enterprise – for example a proper shearing shed and shearers' quarters. There was also a sheep dip and, as the transcript excerpt notes, the sheep could be monitored by Noel (who lived at the property) whilst adjusting to the cooler temperatures without their wool, before being driven back to Bobeyan. (Higgins & Scott 1994; Luton 1990)

The one instance of shearing at the crutching shed was in the 1970s, when drought conditions necessitated shearing 400 pregnant ewes there. At this time, the crutching shed was extended to the north in a day to make a small engine room for the shearing plant, which was moved from the board, to make more room for the shearers. Whilst previous information in this assessment states ewes were never at Bobeyan, drought conditions must have necessitated moving them there for feed on this occasion. (Higgins & Scott 1994)

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DESCRIPTION

Landscape Setting

The Bobeyan valley is flat grassland on the valley floor, surrounded by steep forested ridges. The crutching shed is situated on the north side of a prominent spur which descends from Sentry Box Hill between Naas Creek and Sheep Station Creek. The northerly aspect of the site, combined with screening from winds provided by the Sentry Box spur, created an ideal protected area within the valley for the shed and yards. The site is located on a slope leading into the valley, just below the existing tree line. The main features of the site are the large corrugated iron crutching shed and associated yards. The boundary for the site is shown in image 1 and is described in the 'Physical Condition and Integrity – Boundary' section of this assessment. (Higgins & Scott 1994)

Additional Sites

There are settlement and pastoral sites close to Lutons Crutching Shed. Some of these have already been mentioned, such as the probable snow lease stock route, the ruin of Crawfords 'Old Station' homestead and the earlier Crawford cattle yards and nearby hut. In addition to these features, are sites marked on image 19 from the 1994 conservation study as follows;

- two fire places (additional to the Old Station fireplace),
- a race and spring,
- a cutting and possible old track, and
- an old gate and track.

Also, the County of Cowley, Parish of Bobeyan, Portion Plan 31 dated 1883 shows a hut and yard close to the crutching shed, plus a garden, and several separate sections of fence. Whilst these sites are not within the boundary defined for Lutons Crutching Shed, they are worth noting as this part of the valley appears amenable to European settlement and pastoral enterprise. The clustering of sites in this part of Bobeyan draws parallels with the Orroral valley's more intact European settlement and pastoral sites. Orroral's sites and the significance of them is presented in the 'Contextual Analysis' section of this assessment.

Lutons Crutching Shed Modifications

The main eras in the evolution of Lutons Crutching Shed are as follows;

- yards constructed circa 1952,
- crutching shed built late 1960s,
- plant room added 1970s,
- ACT PCS modifications for ranger accommodation and yarding horses in 1980s, and
- KHA works post 2014.

The following section of the assessment describes the built features related to the aforementioned eras, as described in the 1994 conservation study, as follows;

Yards constructed circa 1952

Constructed in 1952 on a site selected as being protected from the weather, and possibly also for the availability of timbers from a previous fence line, the perimeter fence measured 70 meters x 35 meters, and included a drop log section used as a race. At the time of the 1994 conservation study, the perimeter fence and race were not intact and the internal yarding had been removed. The exact details of the perimeter fence, race and internal yards were also unknown in 1994. (Higgins & Scott 1994)

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Crutching shed built late 1960s

The crutching shed is 12 meters square, it was constructed with a series of white gum posts, cut from the Bobeyan valley, placed at 3 meter intervals. Its roof is framed with sawn timbers of alpine ash from an Adaminaby saw mill, and the roof, plus north, west and south walls are clad with new and reused corrugated iron. The east wall, opening to the outside yards, was open to the yards, but separated from them with yard rails and gates. Some of the rails and / or gates were designed to be removable [possibly the ones at the shearing board] to enable baled wool to be loaded onto a truck with ease. The ground floor area, which forms three quarters of the shed, originally had a series of yards within it. The two catching pens had a battened floor, with an access ramp from ground level leading to each of them. The shearers' board is solid timber and is the same elevation as the catching pens. It had two chutes off it, from where the crutched sheep were pushed by the shearer into the outside yards, following crutching. The elevated floor sections were framed with sawn timbers as per the roof. (Higgins & Scott 1994)

Plant room added 1970s

According to Higgins & Scott (1994) the plant room was added for shearing in the 1970s, it measured 3 meters x 2.4 meters and was added to the north-east corner of the building. It was constructed in a day using corner posts that appear similar to the ones used for the original building; it has a skillion roof and is clad in corrugated iron as per the original building. It was built over the sheep chutes from the board. A 'gangway' was built between the sheep chutes, at the same elevation as the shearing board; it was here that the crutching plant was moved, to make more room on the board for shearing. At the time of the conservation study the interior walls of the engine shed had remnants of a wall lining which may have dated from the Luton era or was later added by ACT PCS. (Higgins & Scott 1994)

ACT PCS modifications 1980s

In 1979 the Bobeyan valley was incorporated into Gudgenby Nature Reserve, in 1984 it became part of Namadgi National Park. At the time of resumption, ACT PCS made considerable modifications to the yards and shed as they planned to use the complex as a ranger base with accommodation for a ranger and yarding for a horse or horses. The proposed use never eventuated, but did result in the removal of significant fabric to the detriment of the shed and yards. (Higgins & Scott 1994)

As per the 1994 conservation study, the following modifications were made to the building; for accommodation the board was enclosed. This entailed removing timber rails on its west, south and east sides and replacing these with stud wall framing clad with corrugated iron on the outside and lined with Masonite on the inside. Two doors and a casement window were added to the proposed accommodation area. It seems the horse/s were to be accommodated undercover of the shed and within the external yards. To this end, all internal and external yarding was removed and the outside perimeter fence renewed to keep the horses in – this included closing over some of the original gateways with wire. For a water supply, a water tank and guttering was added to the south elevation and plumbed using galvanised steel piping to a tap inside the engine room extension. Also at this time, the timber rails subdividing the pens in the remainder of the shed were removed and a sliding gate built across one of the ramps leading to the battened floor. This modification was to keep horses away from the accommodation area. (Higgins & Scott, 1994)

KHA works post 2014

The KHA have had an association with Lutons Crutching Shed since at least 1994 when they were awarded grant funding via the National Estates Grants Program for the *Lutons Crutching Shed Conservation Study* by Higgins & Scott (1994), on which this assessment draws. It is considered likely that KHA completed limited works pre 2014, a list of their post 2014 works is as follows;

- 2014: Commence reconstruction of drop log fence, repair netting and wire fencing running from rear of the shed, and affix large corrugated iron sheet,
- 2015: Re-stump / replace / scarf 6 posts, remove and replace damaged battens to catching pens, remove lining and clean up machinery room,
- 2016: Re-stump / repair 8 posts, affix loose corrugated iron, adjust guttering along rear of the shed, and continue reconstruction of drop log fence, and
- 2017 to 2018: Re-stump /repair 6 posts that are part of the roof support, clean-up and wash-down interior affected by roosting starlings, construct new rear door, general clean-up around the shed, reconstruct north

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west door, and continue reconstruction of drop log fence.

In addition to previous works, KHA have articulated the following future plans for the site during a March 2019 work party;

- undertake further inspections of posts on the rear north side of the shed and repair as necessary,
- install replacement rear door, and
- resurrect the wire fenced yards south of the shed.

Currently, the main work the KHA is completing is the reconstruction of the drop log race and working with the Luton family to understand the original configuration of the race and internal yarding, with the possible aim of reinstating them. At a site visit on 10 February 2019 it was noted that the crutching shed was well maintained and on the whole is well maintained. The KHA caretaker for Lutons has a reputation for thoughtful work.

ANALYSIS OF TYPE AND COMPARRISON WITH ORRORAL VALLEY

Type analysis

In 1994 the authors of the conservation study noted the following of Lutons Crutching Shed; ‘Lutons Crutching Shed is the only such building in Namadgi. Indeed it is probably the only such structure in both Namadgi and Kosciuszko national parks (the crutching shed at Gooandra, near Kiandra, collapsed many years ago, while the shed at Currango, although used for crutching, was a shearing shed). It is also one of a few surviving pastoral buildings (as opposed to accommodation structures) in Namadgi. There are only two shearing sheds in the Park, at Orroral and Tennant; a number of others (eg Curtis’ shed at David Brayshaws, the Mt Clear shed, Norman Curtis’ shed and Westermans shed, the Glendale shed) were all lost or destroyed following resumption’ (Higgins & Scott 1994).

Further to the above;

- the Tennant shearing shed was destroyed by the 2003 Canberra fires,
- the Currango crutching shed fell down, and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service Ranger, Megan Bowden, confirms there are no shearing or crutching sheds in Kosciuszko National Park (pers. comm. 18/2/19), and
- the ACT Heritage internal document ‘Woolsheds’ records 42 extant woolsheds in the ACT, none of which are recorded in internal documents as for crutching only.

Whilst the above excerpt from the 1994 conservation study appears to delineate a crutching shed as a type of building distinct from a shearing shed, for the purposes of heritage assessment, this document does not consider a crutching shed to be substantially distinct in either its use or form from a woolshed. Whilst it certainly appears that constructing a building for crutching only is uncommon – as most often crutching is completed in a woolshed – an examination of Lutons Crutching Shed shows it shares many elements of form and function in common with a woolshed. Lutons form only appears to differ from that of a woolshed in its economy of construction – possibly its likely smaller size, but almost certainly, its absence of a raised floor throughout. This reflects the less intense nature of crutching as opposed to shearing. Likely, it also reflects the fact that the Lutons had a shearing shed at Shannons Flat, which was the main hub of their enterprise, and to which the sheep in the Bobeyan valley were driven for annual shearing.

Comparative analysis with two precincts in Orroral Valley

Adjacent to Bobeyan, is Orroral valley which is recognised as a cultural landscape demonstrating European settlement and pastoral enterprise. Aspects of Orroral’s history was presented in the background section of this document. Lutons Crutching Shed and the cluster of documented sites in its vicinity can be usefully compared with two listed Orroral sites; Orroral Valley Homestead and Ploughland (NI: 3 September 2004) plus adjacent Orroral Woolshed Precinct (NI: 23 February 2005). The Orroral sites are impressive, evocative, and substantially intact. Site and significance information extracted from their registration details is included here, as are additional details of the Orroral Woolshed; Orroral Woolshed and Lutons Crutching Shed share common features and are the only remaining pastoral buildings in Namadgi National Park.

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The Orroral Valley Homestead and Ploughland, located on part of Block 8, District of Rendezvous Creek, includes features associated with the homestead and rural landscape setting, as follows;

- the Homestead Complex including;
- the Homestead building,
- moveable heritage related to the Homestead complex,
- the archaeological remains of the kitchen,
- ground traces of the school building,
- the stone-lined well, and
- the ploughland.

The rural landscape setting is also listed as is considered to include;

- views and vistas along the Orroral valley,
- the identified ploughland,
- mature exotic trees including three pine trees, there willow trees near the creek and the fruit trees in the orchard, and
- two mature eucalypts.

The adjacent Orroral Woolshed Precinct is located on part of Block 8, District of Rendezvous Creek. It includes features associated with the Woolshed, as follows;

- the Woolshed,
- the Woolshed yards [including dip and drying area],
- site of former yard north-north-east of the Woolshed,
- 'Horse works' gearing disc,
- collapsed yards and former site shed,
- the former Gregory's (1950's) homestead ruin including orchard and garden,
- the dam,
- two pine trees in the enclosure west of the former Gregory's homestead ruin,
- one pine tree in enclosure northwest of the former Gregory's (1950's) homestead ruin,
- former toilet,
- collapsed pen and metal tank,
- quarry,
- cattle yards,
- flag stone floor west of yards,
- paddock north west of yards,
- former post holes east of yards,
- ploughed paddock east and north of cattle yards,
- perimeter and internal fence lines, and
- archaeologically sensitive areas.

The significance of the two registered Precincts is outlined in the registration details for the Orroral Woolshed Precinct as follows; 'Taken with the adjacent Orroral Homestead and Ploughland complex, the Woolshed Precinct demonstrates the distinctive way of life of the initial European settlers of the early high country pastoral runs. These places demonstrate a land use and pastoral function no longer practiced, and are among the oldest archaeological remains of back-country pastoralism in the ACT. The Woolshed, yards, plantings, dams, and former structures, together with the adjacent homestead, ploughland, dairy and access track demonstrate the self-reliance required in such isolated locations' (ACT Government 2005).

Comparative analysis with Orroral Woolshed

In many ways Lutons Crutching Shed and the Orroral Woolshed have elements in common. To understand this, the registration details for Orroral Woolshed explain its impact within its setting as follows; 'Orroral valley is recognised as a cultural landscape cleared of vegetation for pastoral purposes. The Woolshed Precinct, with its strong pastoral associations, and the Woolshed building as the largest extant structure in the valley, is a significant component of that

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED

cultural landscape and, in conjunction with the adjacent Homestead and ploughland forms part of the Orroral settlement' (ACT Government 2005).

Also from the Orroral Woolshed listing are the following details of the integrity and intactness of the building; 'Along with sheep dip and yards, [the woolshed] provides a very good example of a three-stand shearing shed utilising bush pole framing, with corrugated galvanised iron cladding. The significance of the woolshed is enhanced by the integrity of the interior, including the diversity of gates in the pens, the sorting table, the quality of the sorting bins, overhead gear and stencilled labelling on bins and comb sharpening pockets. The significance would be further enhanced if the original Lister engine was returned to the shed' (ACT Government 2005).

In addition to the above extract, the yards and the concrete sheep dip associated with the shed are relatively intact, enabling their use for managing sheep into and out of the woolshed to be well understood.

LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED PHYSICAL CONDITION AND INTEGRITY

Perimeter fence and yards

Currently, the perimeter fence is not intact and all the internal yards and gates remain absent. In the 1980s ACT PCS made many modifications to suit their planned use. These are known to include; changing the perimeter fence to suit horses, which included removing some of the gateways and all internal yarding. All the gates were removed by Noel Luton on resumption of the land in 1979. As mentioned previously, the KHA is progressively reconstructing the drop log race. A comparison of images 4 and 8 show the perimeter fence and the extent of reconstruction of it by the KHA. The attention to original detail and impact on the archaeology of the KHAs work is unknown. At a recent work party the KHA planned to restore the wire fence line to the south of the crutching shed.

Crutching shed

The original 12 meter square shed forms the major part of the existing building. The 1970s plant room addition is easily identified attached to the original building. Both parts of the shed appear relatively intact and most works by KHA seem to have involved re-stumping and securing galvanised iron – essentially maintenance works.

The battened floor of the catching pens and one ramp, the board, and the gangway on which the crutching plant was located are mostly intact but the catching pens and board remain separated by the 1980s stud wall framing, clad with corrugated iron. The lining to the 1980s proposed accommodation area and engine shed has been removed, likely it was in very poor condition.

Some of the railings and all of the gates associated with the catching pens have been removed. All the railings separating catching pens from the board have been removed and replaced with the ACT PCS stud wall. The chutes and associated hatches at the board through which the sheep were passed following crutching no longer exist. The apertures in the engine room wall through which the sheep passed into the external yards remain, but are covered with iron. The holes in the same area, through which the exhaust from the plant was plumbed, also remain. All the ground floor yards within the shed remain absent.

The absence of pens, yards and gates – within and external to the shed – make it difficult to interpret the function of the building and its use for stock management. The addition of the ACT PCS corrugated iron wall dividing catching pens and board also interferes with understanding the flow of the building. The wool sorting table, Ajax wool press and crutching plant have been removed, most likely by Noel upon resumption. All the gates associated with the shed and yards were also removed by Noel at resumption. By way of comparison, the absence of significant fabric (pens, yards and gates) and presence of intrusive elements (ACT PCS era stud wall) means Lutons Crutching Shed prima facie compares unfavourably with the much more intact Orroral Woolshed. Whilst Lutons can only be assessed for what it is now, judicious restoration and recovery works could enhance its significance and substantially enhance its interpretive value.

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Integrity and intactness

On the whole, the modifications made to the complex by ACT PCS, for a proposed change of use that did not eventuate, resulted in removal of significant fabric and introduction of intrusive fabric. The progressive reinstatement of the drop log yards in consultation with the Luton family is a worthy project however, the quality of the work based on an understanding of original detailing cannot be commented on.

Whilst the building is somewhat lacking in integrity and intactness, consideration of it, in its setting, is worthwhile. Of woolsheds within the pastoral landscape, Hobbs (1993) states they were constructed entirely as functional objects in response to landscape and need. Indeed, Lutons Crutching Shed was built as a necessary response to managing sheep in an isolated area at a site selected for several practical reasons – including shelter from weather and availability of materials. The impact of Orroal Woolshed in its setting is noted as significant, likewise, Lutons Crutching Shed, even with its limitations is impactful within its setting. (Hobbs 1993)

Hobbs (1993) additionally notes woolsheds are a distinctive form within their rural setting and unlike homesteads (which often with many trees planted around them) frequently remain a distinct, visible and identifiable form due to their functional nature. Whilst Lutons is not intact, it does maintain an evocative pastoral presence within its landscape setting. It's siting, nestled at the side of the valley and in the shadow of Sentry Box, is especially telling of a site selected for protection from the elements. Lutons is co-located with other sites related to European settlement and pastoralism. Whilst not necessarily aligned temporally, the clustering of sites speaks of the amenity of this part of the valley for settlement and pastoralism. (Hobbs 1993)

Boundary

The site boundary is considered that which is marked on image 1. The boundary as selected is intended to incorporate the two tracks leading into and from the yards at their north and south, and two sections of sample dilapidated fence line to the west of the perimeter yards.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED

SITE PLAN

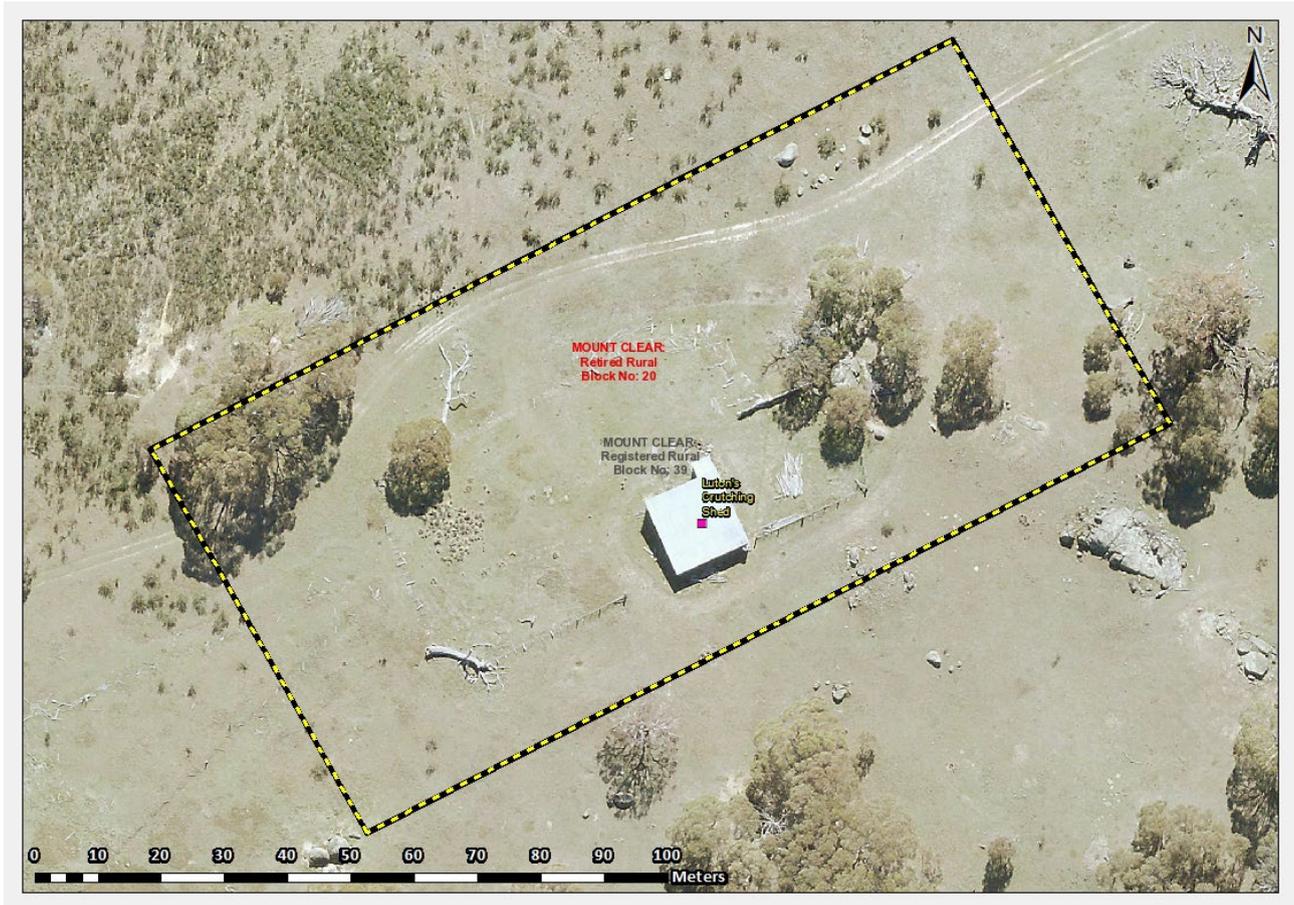


Image 1 Lutons Crutching Shed site boundary

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED

IMAGES

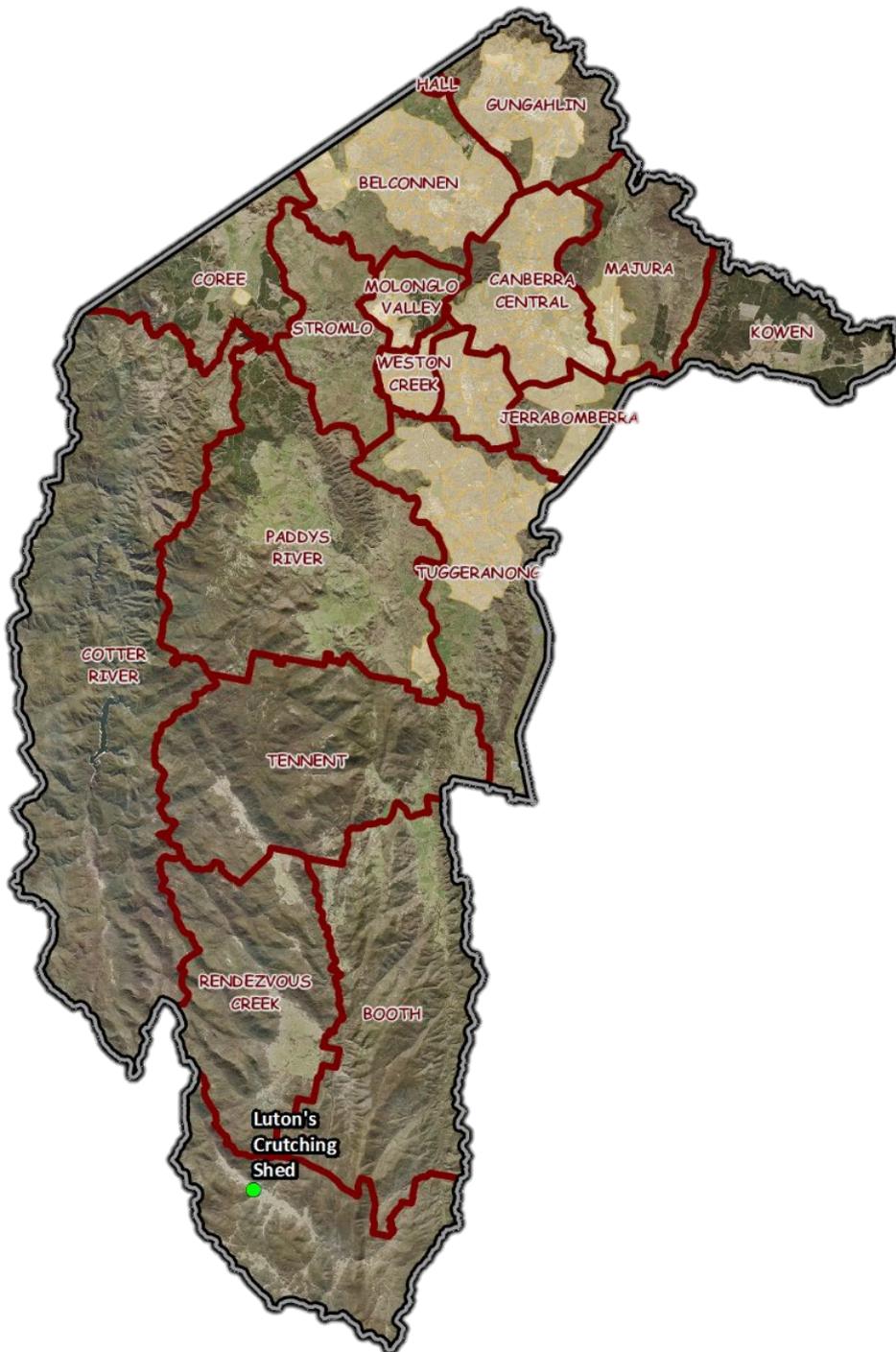


Image 2: Location of Lutons Crutching Shed in the far south of the ACT. It is within the Mt Clear District in Namadgi National Park.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED



Image 3: Shows Lutons Crutching Shed in its setting. This image is looking to the east, towards the bottom of Bobeyan valley. Image from 10 February 2019 site visit.



Image 4: This image is a composite of 2017 air photo with 1883 Portion Plan Overlay. It shows yards from the Crawford era not in the vicinity of the yards associated with the crutching shed.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED

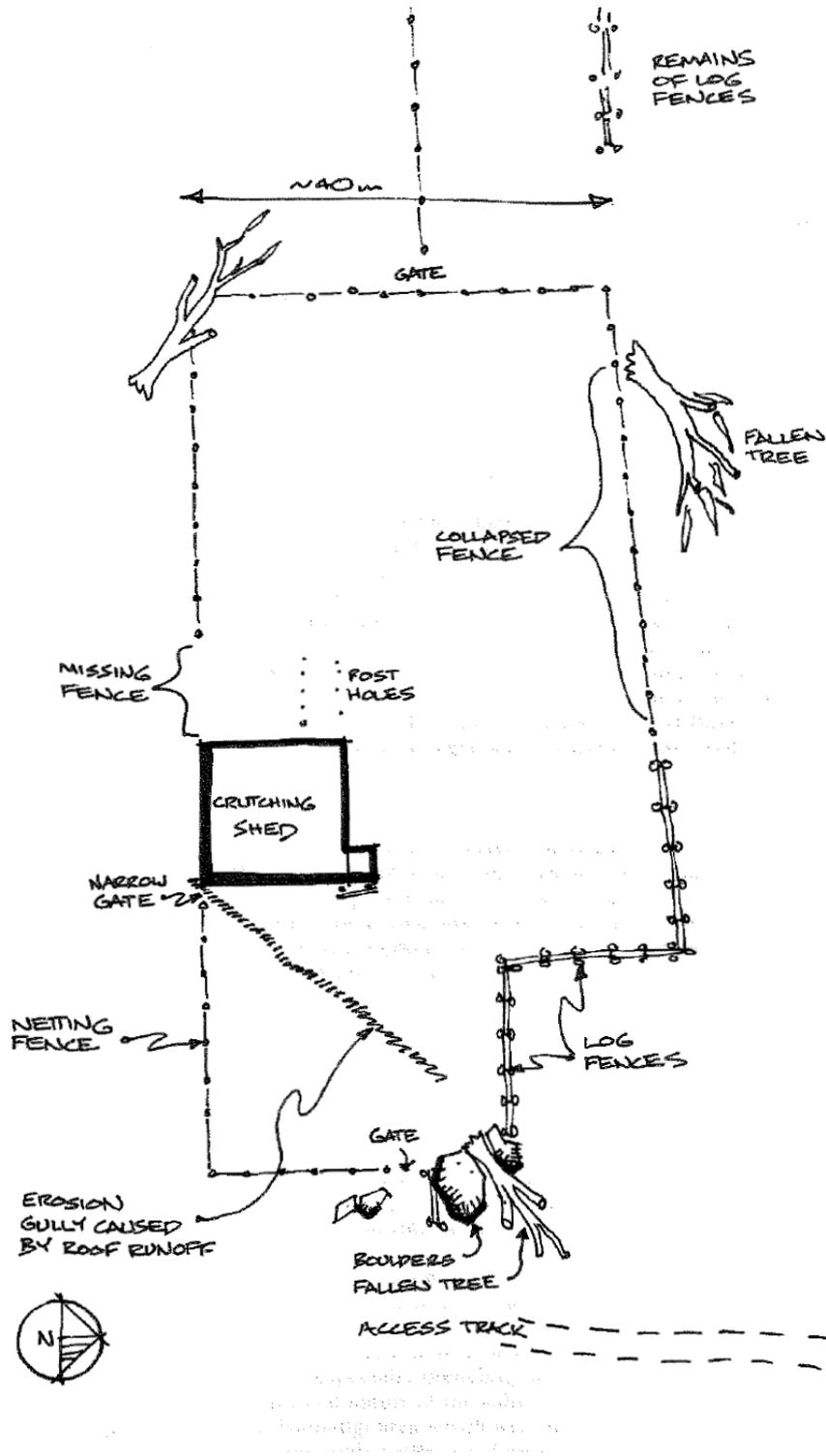


Image 5: Perimeter fence line – this sketch from the 1994 conservation study shows the shed and perimeter fence line. The section labelled 'log fences' is the drop log section considered to form the race and currently under reconstructing by the KHA. Of the fence lines, that labelled 'netting fence' is relatively intact. The remainder are in poor condition or collapsed.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED



Image 6: Perimeter fence line - looking towards the north-east, this image demonstrates the general lack of intactness of the perimeter fence. On the far side of the shed however, is the relatively intact 'netting fence'. Image from site visit 10 February 2019.



Image 7: Perimeter fence line - looking to the south-east, this image demonstrates the lack of intactness of the perimeter fence and absence of original internal yards. Image from site visit 10 February 2019.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED



Image 8. Perimeter fence line – this image shows the drop log section of fence reconstructed by the KHA with building materials in the foreground. Comparing this with air photography dated 2017 in image 1 shows the extent of recent fence reconstruction. Image from site visit 10 February 2019.



Image 9: Perimeter fence line – shows the relatively intact section of ‘netting fence’ on the eastern side of the crutching shed. Image from site visit 10 February 2019.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED



Image 10: Shows the external western wall of the crutching shed. The red iron was originally from the verandah at Muzzelbrook. Image from site visit 9 August 2018.



Image 11: Shows the external southern wall of the crutching shed. The guttering and tank were ACT PCS additions from the 1980s. Image from site visit 10 February 2019.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED

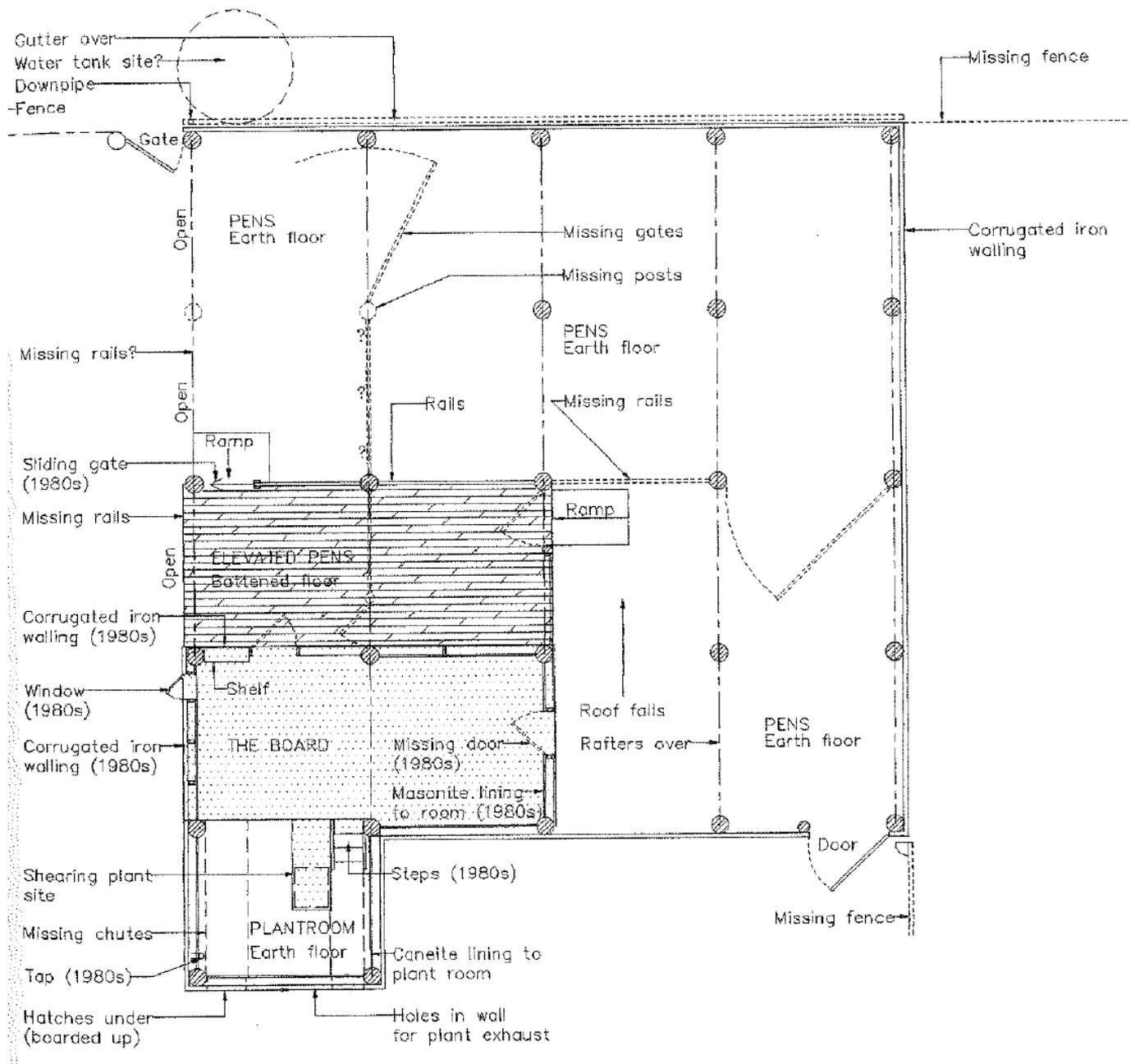


Image 12: Plan drawing from the 1994 conservation study. The drawing shows three quarters of the original shed being earth floor pens. The elevated quarter of the original shed is shown in the bottom left hand side of the drawing; this area is the catching pens (shown in drawing as 'elevated pens') and the shearing board. The 1970s plant room addition is shown beneath the board, it is also at ground level.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED



Image 13: This image shows the eastern side of the crutching shed, opening onto the yards. Prior to ACT PCS modifications in the 1980s there were yards and gates separating the covered pens from those outside. Image from site visit 9 August 2018.



Image 14: This image shows the 1970s engine shed addition to the northern side of the original building. The two apertures were the chutes from the shearing board, through which sheep were returned to the yards following crutching. The small hole is where the exhaust from the crutching plant was plumbed. Image from site visit 9 August 2018.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED



Image 15: This image shows the interior of the shed. On the right hand side are the catching pens. Visible are the timber poles cut from the Bobeyan valley and the sawn timbers used for roof framing from a saw mill at Adaminaby. From site visit 10 February 2019.



Image 16: This image shows the batten floor of the catching pens and remaining rails. Also visible are the notches in posts showing the location of original rails. From site visit 10 February 2019.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED



Image 17: The image shows the shearing board at the bottom of the frame and the gangway on which the crutching plant was located. The hole into which the crutching plant exhaust was plumbed is visible, as are oil stains on the floor boards where it was located. From site visit 10 February 2019



Image 18. This image relates to the next sketch. It shows one of the site identified with exotic trees and possible fire place.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – LUTONS CRUTCHING SHED

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