

Kylie Dam Reserve and Water Tank

The Conservation Plan for *Kylie Dam Reserve and Water Tank* has been prepared for the National Trust of Australia (WA), the owners of the place. The Reserve has been placed in the care of the National Trust through a Management Order. The purpose of the Plan was to determine the cultural heritage significance of *Kylie Dam Reserve and Water Tank*, to examine the current condition of the place and to develop guidelines for the conservation of all the features and components that comprise *Kylie Dam Reserve and Water Tank*.

Kylie Dam Reserve (Reserve No. 16712) is located North of Bokal East on Arthur Road (also known as Kylie Arthur Road), approximately mid way between Duranillin and Arthur River, in the Shire of West Arthur.

Kylie Dam Reserve is a 220-hectare property which exhibits a unique combination of natural and cultural (built) heritage values.. The National Trust of Australia (WA) is working in partnership with the Shire and local community to restore the natural environment of the Reserve to a satisfactory conservation standard. Long term, the property will be transferred to the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) for its ongoing protection and management.

Kylie Dam Reserve and Water Tank was constructed to supply water for steam locomotives on the Wagin – Bowelling line which was built in 1914-16. The water catchment area for the Kylie Dam was resumed from privately owned land and the dam and pipeline was constructed in 1916-17.

The Reserve contains a dam and associated channels and overflows, a 3 km cast iron pipeline and a railway water supply tank, which are over 90 years old and remain in good condition. The property also has significant natural heritage values, with a good representation of upland native vegetation.

Later in 1919, the Railways Department began receiving requests to lease the land for grazing and the catchment area around the Dam was fenced off to prevent livestock from accessing the water and damaging the land. Eventually the land was leased to the Piesse Bros who were permitted to install a pipe and water trough for livestock use from the Kylie Dam. The Piesse Bros continued to lease the land until 1949.

After this time, various other farmers were given permission to utilise the water at Kylie Dam. From the 1960s, the decline of the rail line was evident but it wasn't until a flood in January 1982 damaged the line and only minor repairs were carried out for seasonal use. The rail line was closed a few years after this.

The Reserve and Dam continued to be used by neighbouring farmers until late 2005. It was at this time that the Shire of West Arthur determined that the Kylie Dam Reserve should be conserved for the greater community.

The DEC was approached in 2006, however they would only accept part of the Reserve. Other avenues were pursued and the National Trust was contacted. In March 2006, the Council moved to support transfer of the Reserve to the National Trust and this took place later that year.

Rehabilitation works commenced on the degraded natural vegetation including the planting of jam and sandalwood seedlings. This has been undertaken through partnerships between the National Trust, Forests Products Commission, the Shire of West Arthur and the local community which formed the Kylie Reserve Conservation Group.

The Water Tank is presently not in use but is owned by the Public Transport Authority. An engineers report assessing the condition of the structure was undertaken by the PTA and due to its association with the Kylie Dam Reserve; it too is included in this Conservation Plan.

Kylie Dam Reserve and Water Tank was found to have cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

- Kylie Dam is a rare example of a Dam that is filled through the use of contour channels;
- the place is associated with the government's policy of developing the state's wheat industry by providing an extensive rail network during the first quarter of the twentieth century that would assist farmers to get their crops quickly and easily to market;
- the place demonstrates the abilities of the engineers employed by the Public Works Department of Western Australia, who, through the construction of cleverly designed dams, were able to supply water for steam engines, travellers, stock and towns;
- the Water Tank is a prominent feature in the landscape and marks the location of the former Kylie Railway siding;
- the Water Tank is an excellent representative example of the style of stand and tank that were erected along the various networks and which are no longer common;
- the place is valued by the local community for its associations with the former Wagin-Bowelling Railway line and its natural values; and,
- the place demonstrates the government's management of water catchment areas.

The Conservation Plan was prepared by Dr Kate Gregory BA(Hons), PhD, Fiona Bush BA(Hons) MB Env ICOMOS and Lisa Sturis BA, GCert and will be used to guide future conservation of the Kylie Dam Reserve.

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