

27 May 2022

68 O'Hallorans Road  
Geeveston 7116

208

General Manager  
Hoon Valley Council  
PO Box 210 Huonville  
TAS 7109

Dear Mr Browne,

**RE: Representation for the Huon Valley Council's advertised Local Historic Heritage Code overlay applied to 68 O'Hallorans Road Geeveston (PID 3167236)**

Property        68 O'Hallorans Road Geeveston  
PID              3167236  
Purpose         Removal of the Local Heritage Place Overlay

We, Helen and Mark Jessop, owners of the above property would like to submit the following representation that objects to the application of the Local Historic Heritage Code overlay to 68 O'Hallorans Road Geeveston.

We believe that the application has not followed appropriate process in that it is not based on a proper assessment of the site, is applied to the wrong parcel of land and is not required to protect any heritage values that might exist at the site.

**SUMMARY**

While 68 O'Hallorans Road is an early place of settlement in Geeveston it has no structures of historical interest and lacks community cultural significance.

It was removed from the Tasmanian Heritage Register (THR) in 2012 after it was placed on it in error in 1998. We contend it was entered on the Huon Valley Local Heritage list as a result of it being on the THR and has remained on the Council register not because of merit but simply through a lack of thorough review of heritage values in the area..

We content that the HVC has erred in applying the code because it has not undertake a proper assessment and there has been no community consultation with the listing as required under the STRLU (CV 3.1). The lack of consultation or public scrutiny has denied the current owners natural justice.

The application of the overlay to the house and 100m surrounds is unreasonable, it limits what we can do to the house (which has insufficient historical interest) and it is applied to the wrong parcel of land. For that reason we contend that the application of this code is an unnecessary encumbrance on the reasonable and lawful rights of the current owner.

The relevant purpose of the Local Historic Heritage Code is:

C6.1.1 To recognise and protect:

(a) the local historic heritage significance of local places, precincts, landscapes and areas of archaeological potential

The site is not under threat, as there are no remnant buildings of historical interest and as such the code is unnecessary.

## **PROPERTY DESCRIPTION**

68 O'Halloran's Road is a 5.5 ha Rural Zoned property. It contains a dwelling made from timber and iron (some of which is c1850's), a shed with various extensions dating variously from early last century (timber), 1960's (sheet iron) and 2010's (colour bond). The property is at the end of O'Halloran's Road and fronts the Kermandie River.

The house was extensively damaged by fire (we believe in the late 1800s) resulting in loss of the upstairs floor and dormer windows. There are few original internal features. The house has been extensively modified post WWII. Windows have been replaced with 1940/50's sash windows; in the 1960/70's windows and verandas were added and an adjoining structure (1960's) between the house and a early 1900's outbuilding. According to the Council's consultant the house holds no historical architectural merit.

The house was owned by the Hill family from the 1850's to 1940's - they were not the builders of the house. Richard Hill took over a mill on the site. The Registration Manager of the Tasmanian Heritage Register wrote, in 2012, that Heritage Tasmania had no interest in undertaking any "research assessment work" on the saw mill. None of the saw mill has physically existed since the 1970's, we contend no outbuildings linked to the mill exist and the convict water way cannot be clearly seen. Furthermore the site of the mill, which may hold some historical interest, is not located on PID 3167236, but rather it is located in the riparian reserve (PID 5261568) which is Crown land and by the nature of its zoning and ownership is protected from development.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Local Historic Heritage Code be removed from PID 3167236.

Consideration be given to applying the Local Historic Heritage Code to PID 5261568, the actual mill / waterway site.

Any future Huon Valley Council assessment of historic places considers the merit of 68 O'Halloran's Road along with other sites in Geeveston so its merits can be assessed more accurately and fairly.

## **ARGUMENT**

### **How did the property come to be listed on the Local Historical Sites list?**

We contend that the original listing was due to an error. Between 1998 and July 2012 the property was listed on the Tasmanian Heritage Register. As part of making an application for a DA in 2012 we made a Works Application to Heritage Tasmania. It was at this point it was discovered that 68 O'Halloran's Rd, known to some as Honeywood, had been mistakenly entered in addition to another property known as Honeywood. We believe the other property was in Four Foot Road and continues to remain on the Local Historical Sites list. There is also another Honeywood at 4308 Huon

Highway which is actually listed on the State register - we do not believe that house was originally called Honeywood!

Heritage Tasmania stated that they have no interest in entering 68 O'Halloran's Rd or the Four Foot Rd Honeywood on the register - see the July 2012 Correspondence from David Scott, Registrations Manager and Dr Dianne Snowden Chair of the Tasmanian Heritage Council - documents attached.

As such we believe that the property is only on the local register because it was previously on the State register and there is no legal reason for 68 O'Halloran's Rd to be listed on either register. We contend that the HVC did not make a lawful assessment of the building to justify the original listing on the local register and it should not have been included in the 2013 HVC review by Paul Davies Pty. Furthermore we argue that the Davies report was unfair and had a strong 'conformational bias' and this work does not constitute a valid or meaningful assessment of the particular site. The Council has not been able to provide any initial assessment of the site or an explanation of how it was originally listed.

**Does the property have historical significance to the level that it should be registered?**

The HUO Table C6.1 provides three main cases for listing:

C6.1 Case	Response
The house and site is associated with the commencement of the timber industry	The house has no particular significance to the timber industry apart from people who lived there were involved in the industry - it was not for example a meeting or planning place for the industry. There are no remnant aspects of the old mill on PID 3167236. It was one of three early mills in the area but ceased operation well before the others (c late 1890s)
The House allows an understanding of the patterns of development in the area	The house is not recognisable to its original form and the listed property on Four Foot Road is a much better example of the early vernacular. The House retains limited internal features and the exterior has been extensively modified after an earlier fire and by subsequent owners. The Councils own consultant's report pays it little value.
There is an association with the Hill family an early pioneering family	It is true that Richard Hill lived in the house, but it seems he had a number of residences and his family largely moved on and set up businesses in other part of the Huon and Tasmania. There are much stronger links to Geeveston's beginnings with other families who are still active in the community. We would argue Richard Hill's contribution is worthy of note but not to cause the listing of one of his previous residence (not his birth place nor place of death).

We contend that none of these individually or collectively is a significant enough reason to cause the property to be listed and if a proper assessment had been carried out this would be apparent. We believe the evidence that has been provided to us by the HVC is insufficient and flawed to make an assessment.

1 The HVC has not carried out sufficient assessment of its historical places

We contend that the Huon Valley Council has not undertaken a proper assessment of historical places across the whole Council area, and has not provided 68 O'Hallorans Rd a proper assessment.

In July 2013 Paul Davies Pty undertook a *Review of Existing Items not included on the SHR*. We do not raise the qualifications of Mr Davies as an issue, however we argue that the report was significantly lacking in that it undertook no primary research and it appears he based findings purely on a discussion with us, the current owners.

The lack of primary research has been acknowledged by the HVC and I understand also been raised by the Commission (personal communication, L. Ground, HVC). The Council went to the extent of receiving a quote in June 2018 from Gray Planning for a Local Heritage Review Project. This proposed a much more scientific assessment. The study was never carried out.

This lack of research and low number of local listings by default raises the status of properties such as 68 O'Halloran's Road purely because it is one of a handful of properties on any Register across the whole area of the HVC. It makes 68 O'Halloran's Road appear more significant than it is. In fact there are many more sites across the Council area that could be on the Local Register and present a more complete or comprehensive representation of the local heritage.

Two primary examples of this exist on the other side of Whale Point Hill - both have lacked listing. The site of the first experimental hard wood pulp mill on the waterfront at Kermadie, on land now owned by Huon Aquaculture. The research undertaken there created an industry that has divided Tasmania. It also led to the chipper mill by AMP on the same site which was a major employer in the town for many years (a site which was recently cleared by the current owner). This site is well sign posted, has received grant funding and includes guided tours. The site was not listed on the Local Register, but did get listed on the State Register - but only in 2021.



The second site, a few metres from the pulp mill, is the Speedwell Jetty, just off the Huon Highway at the mouth of the Kermadie. This site was built pre-1900 and operated into the 1920's, and was the main source of loading the timber that the local economy relied on. This is not listed as a local site.



Both the Mill and Jetty contain significant archaeological evidence that has the potential to provide information which could contribute to an understanding of the industrial uses of the sites, and of the lived experiences of its workforce. This potential is visible and highly identifiable. By contrast, we contend the 68 O'Hallorans Road contains no such valuable evidence of the timber industry.

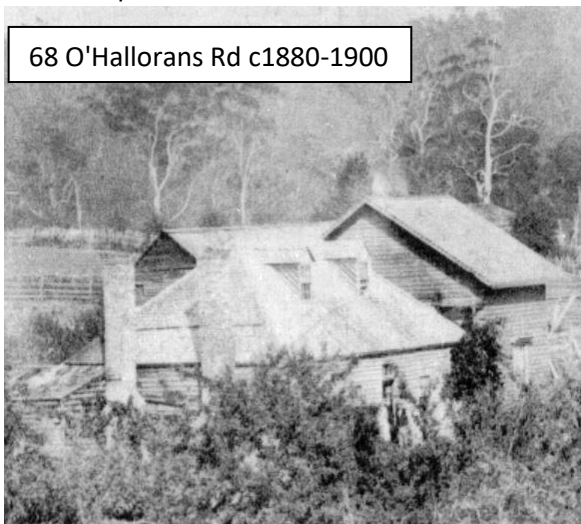
The Davies report also misses an important point that the property included in the report and listed as House and Cottage, Four Foot Road Geeveston, is in fact a much more intact "twin" of the house at 68 O'Halloran's Rd also built by the Hill family and also called Honeywood (which was the cause of the original confusion and listing of 68 O'Halloran's Road instead). This house remains on the local register and is a substantially better example of the style than 68 O'Hallorans Rd.



**LOCALLY LISTED**  
Relatively intact property in Four Foot Road that provides a good example of an early house associated with the Hills. This property is the "other Honeywood" that is listed on the HVC Register.

### 2 Flaws in the HVC Davies Report

The report written in 2013 appears based purely on the information we provided to the assessor. In his personal communication he stated the house had "no" historical value because of its modification. His report uses the term "modest" and "limited" to refer to the house. The house has been extensively modified over time and has few internal period fittings and external features are substantially changed. We would argue that there is no justification to list the house as a building of importance.



68 O'Hallorans Rd c1880-1900



68 O'Hallorans Rd 2022

Comparisons of the before and after photographs shows that the house has been significantly changed - the dormers are gone and the pitch of the single story roof changed. The back section has been added to/the roof line extended. Both chimneys have been removed. Windows have been added and existing ones changed. A verandah has been added. There is a later back room added plus an adjoining structure between the two buildings.

The Davies report refers to a shed. There is some evidence of age of this shed, however the shed does not appear in the photos of the mill and we contend has no evidenced association with the Mill. In the photograph of the house (above) there is evidence of a shed behind the house. The shed referred to by Mr Davies is not in this location behind the house and the photograph of the Mill from c1920 does not show a shed. The location of the current shed is approximately behind the Mill. As the Mill ceased operations in the late 1800's this shed is unrelated to the Mill.

The shed has been reclad and existing roof structures and roofing replaced and is a poor example because of this. The shed also has other sheds built onto it and the vernacular if any is lost.

The shed does not justify listing.

The "shed" identified by Mr Davies is in the foreground of the photograph below.



Sheds added to the "original shed".





The Davies report states that the site is important because of its links to the early timber industry. There are many sites that have that same claim - old railway lines, sites for at least three other early mills within a few kilometres of 68 O'Halloran's Road and elements of the township itself - none of which are listed. While the report claims the site is significant it then goes on to state it is "far from intact and is not recoverable to an earlier form". We would also argue that the significance, if any, pertains to the convict dug water way and the mill site which Davies acknowledges is not on PID 3167236 but on the bank of the river which is protected as part of the riparian area (PID 5261568) - which is Crown Land.

To be clear, the PID 3167236 site contains NO intact aspects of the mill or industrial history of the area - as confirmed by the Davies report.

It is true that Richard Hill was an early industrialist and settler in the area, but he also had interests beyond Geeveston and it does not appear that the Hill family retained strong links to the district after Hill's death. The children largely moved away after the death of their father Richard. Unlike families such as the Geeves and Burgess there is no local celebration of the Hill family. In the 10 years of our ownership we have been contacted by one Hill descendent who now lives in NW Tasmania.

We have approached the Geeveston Archive and Historical Society on a number of occasions to see if there was any interest or research on the property and as recently as April 2022 Belinda Balmforth, GAHS President & Archivist confirmed that they were not aware of anyone doing research on the site or Hill family.

The Davies report claims the building (house) has a level of community esteem - yet he presents no evidence of this and we have not had any of this esteem conveyed to us. I cannot say if the mill had some esteem, but there did not appear to be any opposition to the removal of its remains by a land care group in the 1970's nor has any regret been expressed to us about the removal of any remains.

### **Is the application of the Local Historic Heritage Code justified under the STRLUS?**

The aim of the STRLUS is "Built and natural heritage that is valued and protected". Are heritage values at 68 O'Halloran's Road protected without the Code overlay? We believe that they are. The site of the old mill site and convict water way are protected on Crown land in a riparian reserve (which is not part of this property). The house, even with its limited heritage values has been recovered by the current owners spending around \$70,000 on tasks including re-stumping, re-flooring and re-roofing. This investment and the "cute cottage" feel makes the property "desirable" and it is unlikely current or future owners would remove it or again allow it to deteriorate.

In this light we believe that the application of the Local Historic Heritage Code is not required to meet the objective of STRLUS.

Council must also adequately answer the question "Does the place have cultural heritage?" in this case we do not believe it has to the extent that justifies listing.

The STRLUS requires that, to be listed, a place must have "local significance". Just because a place has existed for a long time or was once lived in by a known person this should not be assumed to infer that it is valued by the local community or is considered as significant to that community. Council has failed to prove that 68 O'Halloran's Road has local significance.

The STRLUS also requires the listing process be undertaken in an open and transparent fashion in which the views of the community are taken into consideration". In fact CV 3.1 requires Heritage Studies or Inventories be open to public comment and consultation prior to their finalisation. We do not believe that this has been done by the HVC. Therefore 68 O'Hallorans Road is unlawfully included on the HVC Register.

### **Has the Council Processes being fairly applied to all places of interest in the LGA or for that matter even in Geeveston?**

We would argue that a lack of openness, scientific method and general rigor has denied the community of a fair assessment of local heritage. There are only 4 site with the Code overlay in Geeveston - of which our property is one. Yet we know there are many site of historical interest in the local area - certain tall trees, some fine intact Federation houses, the Port Huon wharf, timber mill tramways, Shipwrights Point and so on.

For our property simply to be listed due to an error in the Tasmanian Heritage Council is unfair and unjust and is not the result of a proper assessment of heritage values as is recommended in national standards. The lack of process means we, the current owners, have been denied natural justice.



**Is the Application of the Code proportionate with the significance of the site?**

The use of the Local Heritage Code is an important protection for places of historical value. As such the Code has a number of significant limitations on what land owners can lawfully do. When applied the code requires land holders to bear significant cost if they do want to do anything with their homes (eg consultant reports).

The Interim Planning Scheme applies the Code to "within 100m of the house". This means that the house is subject to the requirements of the code. Yet it has been established that the house has little historical merit (and in fact the description of the consultant in his personal communication with us was very demeaning of the house saying it had been so modified over time it had "no heritage value"). The historical interest is however former site of the mill and convict waterway - which are not located on 68 O'Hallorans Road but on Crown Land (PID 5261568).

While we have significantly invested in the preservation of the front of the house (the older section) the back (post 1900's and 1960's) additions are in a poor state of repair and unliveable. The entry of the house on the Register will unfairly add costs to any future works on the back of the house.

We are open to meeting with planning staff to find an agreeable solution.

Yours sincerely



Mark Jessop



Helen Jessop

## APPENDIX

### HUO-Table C6.1 Local Historic Heritage Places Datasheet - HUO-C6.1.9

#### Description

c1850 weatherboard house, 68 O'Halloran's Road, Geeveston.

#### Specific Extent

The specific extent of the local historic heritage place is within 100m of the house.

#### Statement of local historic heritage significance and historic heritage values

(a) Significance of the local heritage place and its historic heritage values because of its role in, representation of, or potential for contributing to the understanding of:
(i) local history; or The house and the broader site is of historic heritage significance because of its association with the commencement of the timber industry in the Huon Valley. The main dwelling at 68 O'Halloran's Road has some historic heritage significance because it allows an understanding of the pattern of development in the early phase of settlement of the Huon Valley.
(ii) creative or technical achievements; or Not applicable.
(iii) a class of building or place; or Despite multiple alterations and additions, the main dwelling retains some historic heritage significance because elements of the building demonstrate the principle characteristics of an early housing typology within the Huon Valley area.
(iv) aesthetic characteristics; or Not applicable.
(b) Significance of the local heritage place and its values because of its association with:
(i) a particular community or cultural group for social or spiritual reasons; or Not applicable.
(ii) the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance to the locality or region. The house and the broader site's association with the Hill family, and in particular Richard Hill, who was prominent in business, orchards, milling, commerce, and community activity within the Geeveston area.

13 July 2012

File Number: 10-14-19THC  
THR Reference: #11929

Helen and Mark Jessop  
68 O'Hallorans Road  
GEEVESTON TAS 7116

**Confirmation that 68 O'Hallorans Road, Geeveston  
Is Not Entered on the Tasmanian Heritage Register**

Dear Mr & Ms Jessop

Following receipt of a recent Works Application for the above property, Heritage Tasmania has undertaken a review of whether or not this property is lawfully entered on the Tasmanian Heritage Register.

I am hereby providing you with written confirmation that your property at 68 O'Hallorans Road is NOT entered in the Heritage Register, and as such the Tasmanian Heritage Council has no interest in any development or activity upon your property.

I apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused to you and your family.

Previously there was considerable confusion over this matter, as a property known as 'Honeywood' – a previous historical name for 68 O'Hallorans Road – was entered in the Heritage Register in 1998, incorporating a photograph and description of your house at 68 O'Hallorans Road. From this I conclude that there may have been an intent to register 68 O'Hallorans Rd in 1998, however due to the incorrect address and title details being recorded at that time, neither 68 O'Hallorans Road nor the alternative 'Honeywood' property are considered to having been lawfully entered in the Heritage Register.

Whilst we understand your property at 68 O'Hallorans Road may possess some heritage values as the site of the Richard Hill's Sawmill, we have no interest in undertaking any further research assessment work on the property at this time.

We will notify Kingborough City Council of this matter to avoid any requirement for Works Applications on your property.

If you have any further enquiries on this matter please contact me on 6233 4589 or [david.scott@heritage.tas.gov.au](mailto:david.scott@heritage.tas.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



David Scott  
**Registration Manager**

CC: Danielle Gray, Kingborough City Council

***Protecting Tasmania's Historic Environment***

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30 July 2012

10-14-19THC

Mr M Jessop  
"Honeywood"  
68 O'Halloran's Road  
GEEVESTON  
TASMANIA 7116

Dear Mr Jessop

**WORKS APPLICATION #4101**  
**68 O'HALLORAN'S ROAD, GEEVESTON**

I am writing to confirm that your property at the above address is not currently entered in the Tasmanian Heritage Register and, as a consequence, we do not have the authority under S. 39 of the *Historic Cultural Heritage Act* to make a determination of your application.

It would appear there are two properties in Geeveston bearing the name 'Honeywood' and one of these is a registered place. However, your property at 68 O'Halloran's Road is not the 'Honeywood' in question.

Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience that has arisen from this matter.

Yours sincerely

*Dianne Snowden*

Dr Dianne Snowden  
Chair