

Avonlea Homestead Statement of Significance

City of Greater Geelong, November 2025

Heritage Place:	Avonlea Homestead 85-105 Bluestone Bridge Road, Bell Post Hill	PS ref no:	HO2026
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(D.Scott, 2022)

What is significant?

'Avonlea', a Victorian-era single storey 8-roomed weatherboard homestead built in c.1892 exhibiting elements of the Italianate style.

The following features contribute to the significance of the place:

- The moderate-high integrity of the homestead's original built form
- Return verandah, and concave profile roof
- Eave brackets
- Double-hung timber windows either side of an elaborate four-panelled door with side and high lights
- Two corbelled brick chimneys at the rear.
- Prominent siting among landscaped grounds with view-scapes to places of historic and cultural significance including Coolangatta Homestead, Cowie's Creek Rail Bridge No 1, You Yangs Regional Park and Corio Bay through its elevated situation above Cowie's Creek.
- Mature trees with high to moderate value inclusive of:
 - a row of Sugar Gums along the driveway (north) and eastern face of property (fronting Bluestone Ridge Road),
 - garden trees including a group of natives (including a *Casuarina* and eucalypts) and exotic trees (including a Blue Atlas Cedar of high value, two English Oaks, and a peppercorn).

Features that do not contribute to the significance of this place includes alterations and additions to the dwelling: hipped wing of the south side (added 2019); rear hipped roof additions, faceted bay addition on the north side, linking gable and flat-roofed wing between the old and the new; a large c.1950s farm shed, with progressive changes, a steel-framed windmill at the western end of the property, with introduced Victorian-like lamp post in the front garden, several major new outbuildings constructed within the late 2010s including a garage/barn structure, new farm shed, water tank and children's play house, along with an olive grove of 200 trees.

How is it significant?

'Avonlea', at 85-105 Bluestone Ridge Road, Bell Post Hill, is of historical, representative, aesthetic and associative significance to the City of Greater Geelong.

Why is it significant?

The homestead upon its pastoral block is an extant example of nineteenth and early twentieth century farming in the Bell Post Hill district. The homestead and grounds of 'Avonlea' are of historical heritage significance for their ability to demonstrate the development of the local farming community, and association with the rising

importance of dairying in the Geelong Region around the end of the 19th century through the establishment of the Geelong District Butter and Cheese Factory in 1894. (Criterion A)

'Avonlea' is a representative example of a Victorian-era homestead exhibiting elements of the Italianate style that once proliferated in Greater Geelong in the later part of the nineteenth century. At eight rooms, it is a more substantial example and one of a small number of notable timber rural dwellings in Greater Geelong. (Criterion D)

'Avonlea' and its landscape setting are of aesthetic significance. The importance is enhanced by the elevated siting overlooking Cowies Creek, its outstanding views, and the substantial number of mature native and exotic trees within its grounds, including the mature Sugar Gum and the Blue Atlas Cedar located at the front of the property and row of Sugar Gums extending along the driveway past the homestead on its northern side. (Criterion E)

'Avonlea' is significant for its association with George Henry Rollins and his sons Frank and George Jnr who owned and farmed the property and worked in the Creamery. Frank and George Jnr were part of a group of local farmers who lobbied for a Creamery to be established at Lovely Banks. The property is also significant for its associations with Jane Rollins (nee Robinson) who was station mistress at the Cowie's Creek railway station, the earliest and only female station mistress in 1860 in Victoria. Rollins Road is named in honour of Frank Rollins. (Criterion H)

Primary source

Avonlea Homestead Heritage Assessment, Janine Barrand 24 May 2023, peer reviewed by GML Heritage 28 February 2023, updated 14 August 2024.

Creamery Road Precinct Structure Plan, Post Contact Heritage Assessment FINAL, David Scott, Built Heritage Coordinator 29 May 2023, peer reviewed by GML Heritage 28 February 2023.

This document is an incorporated document in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme pursuant to section 6(2)(j) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*