

Historic Heritage Inventory



Union Hill (Waihi Battery) Historic Area, Waihi



Location: Union Hill, Waihi.

Heritage Status

Historic Places Trust Registration Number:

Historic Places Trust Category:

HDC Heritage Category: **B** - Heritage Area. Regional or Sub-Regional Significance

Other: Recorded archaeological site (T13/303)

Physical Description: Includes the historic features of Union Hill such as the Cyanide Tanks, Brick Kilns, remains of the Union (Waihi) battery, mine shafts, adits, tramways, water races, mill site.

The Union battery site, at the foot of the north side of the Union Hill, is a jumble of modern and old structures. The modern gold recovery plant was built in the late 1970s to early 1980s by Mineral Resources Ltd. Amid these buildings are early concrete foundations and a concrete strongroom dated to 1898. A line of six concrete cyanide tanks are located on a terrace below the plant.

Other known names:

Notable features:

Style:

District Plan Schedule

Number: **HAU247**

Heritage Category: **B**

Heritage Type:

- Wahi Tapu
- Cultural Landscape
- Building
- Group of Buildings
- Structure
- Monument
- Historic Place
- Archaeological Site
- Other

Date Period:

1881-1910

Significance:

- Archaeological
- Architectural
- Cultural
- Historic
- Scientific
- Technological

Thematic Context

- Maori
- Early Settlement
- Industry (mining)
- Extraction
- Forestry
- Agriculture
- Transport
- Communication
- Commerce
- Residential
- Social/Cultural
- Civic
- Health
- Educational
- Church/yard
- Other

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District Plan Schedule

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Materials:

Date of Construction: 1888

History: The Rosemont-Silverton hill was substantially worked as the Union, Rosemont and Silverton claims by the Waihi Gold Mining Company from 1885 to 1894 when a subsidiary company, Union-Waihi Gold-mining Company, was formed and systematically reworked the area. The battery was reconstructed and improved in 1899. In 1902, for financial reasons, the claims were transferred back to the Waihi Gold Mining Co. Nothing was done to further the claim. At this time, the Victoria battery was established at Waikino. The rakeline was used to transport much smaller volumes of precipitate from Waikino back to the company's refinery just to the north of the Union Battery site. At the refinery, the precipitates were electrolytically purified to 99.999%, almost unique by world standards. Another rakeline connected the refinery to the Martha Mine.

Architect:

Designer:

Builder:

Engineer:

History of changes:

Condition: ruins

Integrity: substantially altered

Current Uses:

Former Uses: mine

Registered owner: Waihi Gold Mining Company

Legal Description: Pt Sec 356 Blk XVI Ohinemuri SD

Reference Source: Waihi Historical Society; Downey, J. F. (1935) *Goldmines of the Hauraki District*. Cadstonbury Press; Ritchie, N. (1990) *A Survey of Historic Mining Sites in the Thames and Ohinemuri Areas of the Hauraki District*. Department of Conservation; McAra, J.B (1988) *Gold Mining At Waihi*. Martha Press, Waihi.

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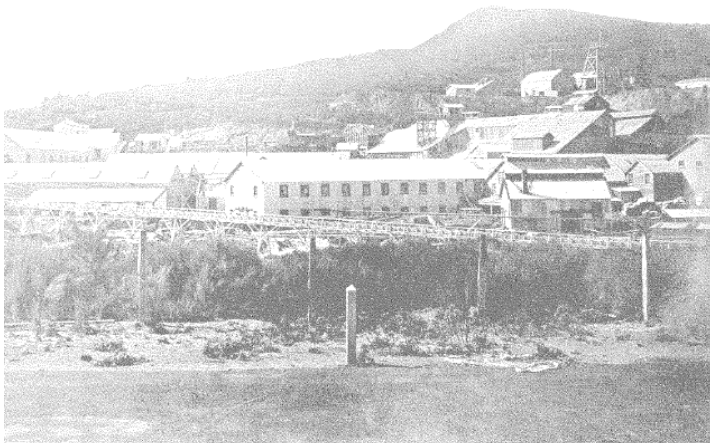
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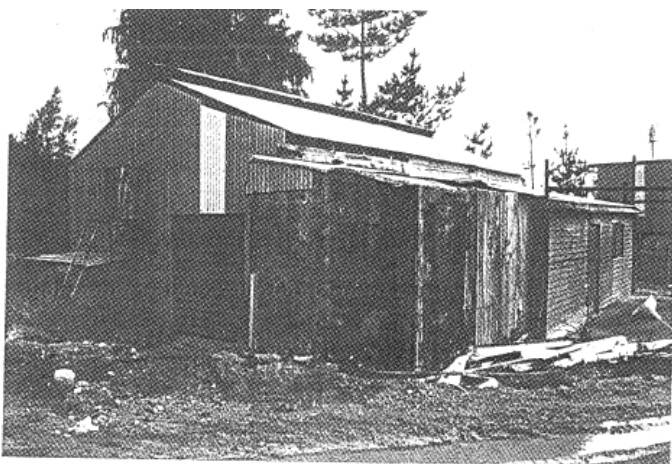
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Associated Pictures:



THE COMPANY'S WAIHI BATTERY, c. 1910

Union Hill rises in the background.



T13/303. A concrete strongroom erected by the Waihi G.M.C. after it acquired the Union claim in 1887. Note the detail "Built AD 1898" cast into the end wall. The modern structures are part of a gold recovery plant erected by Mineral Resources in the late 1970s.