Blue Mountains Heritage Register Review

Heritage Inventory - 2016 Heritage Review

SHI Number 1170095
Study Number K003

Item Name: Scenic Railway and Environs

Location: 2 Violet St, Katoomba [Blue Mountains]

Address:	2 Violet St	**DUAP Region:**	Sydney West
Suburb / Nearest Town:	Katoomba 2780	**Historic region:**	Sydney
Local Govt Area:	Blue Mountains	**Parish:**	Megalong
State:	NSW	**County:**	Cook

Other/Former Names:

Area/Group/Complex: Scenic Railway and Environs **Group ID:** 1170095

Aboriginal Area:

Curtilage/Boundary:

Item Type: Landscape **Group:** Landscape - Cultural **Category:** Other - Landscape - C

Owner: Private - Corporate

Admin Codes: **Code 2:** **Code 3:**

Current Use: Tourism.

Former Uses: Mining.

Assessed Significance: **State** **Endorsed Significance:**

Statement of Significance: Site associated with the early mining and development of Katoomba during the late nineteenth century. The coal and shale mines in the vicinity were integral to the development of the area. The site is also associated with the early tourist industry. The site retains some important relics and other physical evidence which derive from the former occupations and uses. These include sites (such as mine adits) and items relating to the mining phases, and items modified or installed for the later phase of tourist development of the site. The Scenic Railway utilises the route of the earlier inclined skipway for the mines and is believed to be the only example in Australia of former mining haulage being used for recreational purposes. This usage commenced in the 1930s.

Historical Notes or Provenance: The earliest discovery of commercial shale around Katoomba was made in the 1860s. In the 1870s John Britty North purchased substantial quantities of land in Katoomba, including the land along the cliff front from Echo Point to Narrow Neck and the Ruined Castle. To exploit the coal seams which outcropped on the cliff face near Echo Point North formed a company the "Katoomba Coal Mine" in 1872. In 1882 a rail siding, known as North's Siding was opened adjacent to the western railway line near modern 'Shell Corner'. This siding was connected with tramways to the coal mines which operated in the Megalong and Jamison Valleys. In 1885 another company was formed by North, the "Katoomba Coal and Shale Co", to exploit outcrops of kerosene shale which had been discovered near the Ruined Castle. An elevated ropeway was constructed from the company's engine bank (now the site of the Scenic Railway complex) across the Jamison Valley to the Ruined Castle ridge. This structure collapsed after only transporting 500 tons of shale, and shale mining at the Ruined Castle ceased soon afterwards with the company going into liquidation. The Australian Kersosene Oil and Mineral Company subsequently purchased or leased The mines in both

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the Jamison and Megalong valleys. Operations continued to mine or process shale sporadically until about 1908. In 1925 a new company, the Katoomba Colliery, was formed to recommence coal mining at North's old workings near Orphan Rock. A steam haulage winch was purchased and installed at the top of the incline. The steam winch was replaced with an electrical motor in 1933. On weekends the inclined skipway was operated as a tourist ride known as the "Mountain Devil". The mines closed down in the early days of WW II, with much equipment being scrapped.

In 1945, the defunct Katoomba Colliery and its landholdings were purchased by Harry Hammon. The area was operated as a low key tourist attraction based upon the use of the incline haulage. The tourist facilities were gradually improved and expanded with the Skyway, an aerial cable car, being opened in 1958. Older buildings have been extended and replaced over this period. Replacement winding engines have been installed in 1966 and 1993.

A major redevelopment of the site in recent years saw the construction of the "Scenicender", now called the "The Scenic Cableway" and an elevated board walk in the Valley. A detailed history of the site is in Pells & Hammon 2009.

Themes:

National Theme	State Theme	Local Theme
3. Economy	Industry	(none)
8. Culture	Leisure	(none)

Designer:

Maker / Builder:

Year Started: **Year Completed:** **Circa:** No

Physical Description: The present Scenic Railway and Skyway tourist complex occupies much of the area adjacent to the cliff edge at Malaita Point. There are carparks and picnic areas, and five main buildings which comprise: tourist kiosk, offices, restaurant and shop in one main building, two winding sheds, workshop/store building and toilet block. Several steel towers which carry the cabling and transfer wheels for the skyway and railway are situated between the main building and the winding sheds.

Sites and relics of note within the area of the complex are:

— The former haulage incline, now used as the Scenic Railway. This is approximately 450m in length with a drop of 250m. The present lower terminal platform is about 250m shorter than the original mining facility. No fabric remains of the original haulage and the track, platforms and carriages have been replaced as part of normal operations.
— Salvaged mining relics. These are situated near the winding sheds and comprise an aerial cableway bucket and a reconstructed tramway skip mounted on a section of tramway.

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The bucket features the manufacturer's plate "Adolf Bleichert Leipzig Patent 1876".
— Concrete foundation blocks for the 1886 aerial ropeway towers, situated in the vicinity of the modern Scenic Railway counterweight. 3 blocks and some cabling survives, additional remains of cables and buckets still exist on the Jamison Valley floor (some away from this site).
— Explosive storage cave.
— Original Orphan Rock floodlighting equipment.
— Winding sheds and winding engines. The winding sheds and workshop are housed in large steel framed and corrugated iron clad sheds dating from c1994. Remnants of older winding sheds are preserved within the larger buildings, these are of brick and fibro. Several generations of winding engines and winding drums are present within the sheds. These stand in line with each other with each having served as the reserve machine when the new set has been installed. The dates of each set are 1933, 1966 and 1993 (current set). Various generators are also present, both diesel and electric (500 kpa).
— Walking track and mine adits. These are situated near the base of the haulage incline. The track (part of the Federal Pass) crosses the Scenic Railway by a modern overbridge and then follows the route of the older haulage tramway towards the Narrow Neck. The track has some evidence of its former use in the form of coal/shale deposits, cable grooves in rock and it also passes several old mine adits (either blown in or secured with grills).

On the slopes below the track is an area of former mine workings with various debris scattered through the bush. Some of this material eg ferrous artefacts such as spades and drills and bottles have been salvaged and are now in the workshop buildings at the complex. This area includes the original Katoomba sewerage filter bed pipes.

Physical Condition:

Modification Dates:

Recommended Management: An archaeological survey could locate important relics of the mining equipment and workers' villages.

Lapsed item under LEP 1991, now zoned LEP 2005 and included in LEP 2005 Heritage Schedule. Remove from LEP 1991 Heritage Schedule- 1991 Heritage Review. Superseded by inclusion in LEP 2015.

Management:

Further Comments:

Criteria a)

Criteria b)

Criteria c)

Criteria d)

Criteria e)

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Criteria f)

Criteria g)

Integrity / Intactness:

References:

Author	Title	Year
Godden Mackay	Katoomba Scenic Railway Development Control Plan Heritage Issues	1996
P. Pells & P. Hammon	The Burning Mists of Time, Philsquare Publishing, Katoomba, 2009.	

Studies:

Author	Title	Number	Year
Blue Mountains City Council	Technical Audit BM Heritage Register	K003	2008
Tropman and Tropman	Heritage Study Review, Blue Mountains	K003	1992
Croft & Associates Pty Ltd & Meredith Walker	Blue Mountains Heritage Study	K003	1983
Blue Mountains City Council	LEP 2015 Heritage Review		2016
Heritage Advisor	Technical Review		2010
Jim Smith	LEP 1991 Consultant Review		2010

Parcels:

Parcel Code	LotNumber	Section	Plan Code	Plan Number
LOT	2		DP	1025431

Latitude: **Longitude:**

Location validity: **Spatial Accuracy:**

Map Name: **Map Scale:**

AMG Zone: **Easting:** **Northing:**

Listings:

Name:	Title:	Number:	Date:
Local Environmental Plan	LEP2015	K003	21/12/2015
Local Environmental Plan	LEP2005	K003	7/10/2005
Local Environmental Plan - Lapsed	LEP1991	K003	27/12/1991
Heritage study		K003	

Local Instrument: LEP 2015

Local Identifier: K003

Draft Instrument: Proposed deleted item in LEP 1991 Heritage Schedule- Lapsed under LEP 1991, formerly in LEP 2005 Schedule. Superseded by inclusion in LEP 2015.

Technical Comment:

Update Notes: (i) Lot / DP added and location verified. Minor content & recommendation added. Area expanded to include all of Scenic World land. (Jim Smith 2010).

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(ii) Reference to 'The Scenic Cableway' added to Historical Notes - 21/9/10 by City Planning Staff.
(iii) 2016 Review - Aboriginal statement added, minor Admin updates (CA/Nov2016)

Aboriginal Heritage:

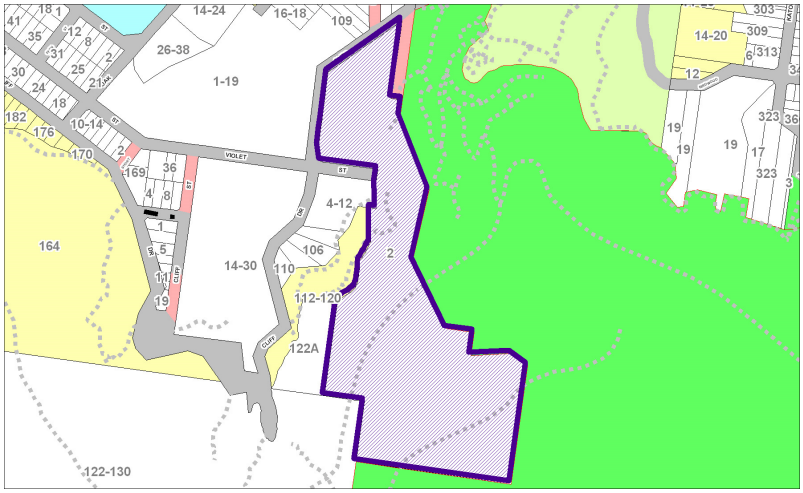
Data Entry: **Date First Entered:** 14/11/1999 **Date Updated:** 11/11/2016 **Status:** Partial

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Item Name: Scenic Railway and Environs

Location: 2 Violet St, Katoomba [Blue Mountains]

Image:



Caption: Location Map

Copyright: City Planning

Image by: City Planning

Image Date: 16/03/2011

Image Number:

Image Path:

Image File: 1170095b00.jpg

Thumb Nail Path:

Thumb Nail File:

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Item Name: Scenic Railway and Environs

Location: 2 Violet St, Katoomba [Blue Mountains]

Image:



Caption: Scenic Railway and Environs
Copyright:
Image by:
Image Date: 10/05/2001
Image Number: 1170095b04
Image Path:
Image File: 1170095b01.jpg
Thumb Nail Path:
Thumb Nail File:

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Item Name: Scenic Railway and Environs

Location: 2 Violet St, Katoomba [Blue Mountains]

Image:



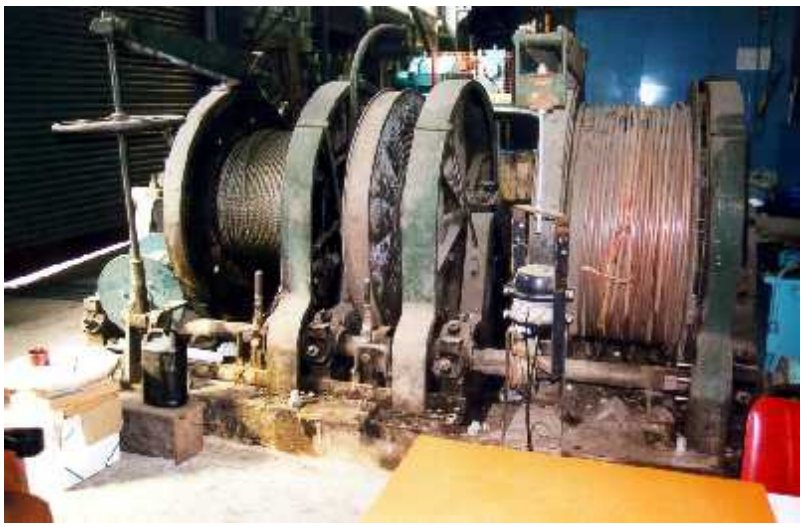
Caption: Scenic Railway and Environs
Copyright:
Image by:
Image Date: 31/05/2001
Image Number: 1170095b03
Image Path:
Image File: 1170095b02.jpg
Thumb Nail Path:
Thumb Nail File:

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Location: 2 Violet St, Katoomba [Blue Mountains]

Image:



Caption: Scenic Railway and Environs

Copyright:

Image by:

Image Date: 31/05/2001

Image Number: 1170095b02

Image Path:

Image File: 1170095b03.jpg

Thumb Nail Path:

Thumb Nail File:

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Location: 2 Violet St, Katoomba [Blue Mountains]

Image:



Caption: Scenic Railway and Environs

Copyright:

Image by:

Image Date: 31/05/2001

Image Number: 1170095b01

Image Path:

Image File: 1170095b04.jpg

Thumb Nail Path:

Thumb Nail File:

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