

Imagine

A place for connection & community

FACT SHEET 8

BIRKDALE COMMUNITY PRECINCT

Willards Farm

As one of the oldest surviving farms and residences on Redlands Coast, Willards Farm is a rare and fascinating example of early settlement in the area.

The relatively intact and early complex (which includes the core of the original homestead and dairy shed) was built using bush carpentry techniques and with timbers felled on the site, including white beech, swamp beech, cedar and pine.

The site of the homestead was registered in 1865 to James Willard and Mark Blundell. In the same year, James and his brother Edward were granted a timber license to clear trees on the property. This was to become an early revenue source, with the Willards' timber carted by bullock teams to Winship's sawmill (est. 1856) at Cleveland Point and later floated down Tingalpa Creek to other mills.

It is likely the house, owned by James and Margaret Willard, was built in 1876, as this was when James took out a mortgage on the land.

The exact date is uncertain but it was likely James would have been keen to move his family as early as he could from the original bark hut they had built on the banks of Tingalpa Creek in about 1865.

The Willards ran a dairy farm on the property, which was also known as The Pines until the mid-1920s. The property changed ownership a couple of times after 1933 before Rosemary Cotton and her husband Doug bought it in June 1941. However, only a few years later the Commonwealth asserted possession over a large portion of the property to establish a radio communications facility as World War II raged.

The Cottons farmed their portion of the land for many decades, with the property being sold several times following Rosemary Cotton's death in 1979.

The wider estate is often associated with a local identity often referred to by locals as 'the goat lady'. Isabelle Alcock lived alone as a squatter on the Commonwealth land for some 60 years until her death in 2019, aged 84. She cared for cattle and sheep and a small herd of goats on the property, which she vigorously defended from trespassers.

Willards Farm was bought by Redland City Council in 2016. The purchase followed community concern that the site was subject to a development approval for subdivision into residential allotments.

It is now time for the community to imagine the property's future. What are your ideas for Willards Farm?

Visit yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au

KEEP IN MIND

- How do we protect this asset?
- What are the best uses for it?
- How do we celebrate it?
- What suits the site?



A community legacy for everyone.

We're listening: Tell us your ideas at yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au

 Your Say Redlands Coast

Images are concepts only and do not represent final plans for the site.



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