Heritage
VICTORIA

25 May, 1998

Mr Ron Krieger
Manager - Development and Statutory Services
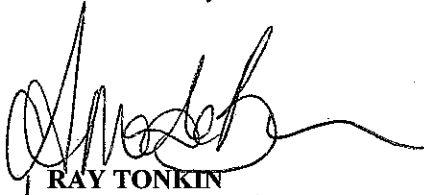Yarra City Council
PO Box 168
RICHMOND VIC 3121

Dear Mr Krieger

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS REGISTER REMOVALS AND PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENTS

Further to my correspondence dated 20 May 1998, I enclose documentation relating to the significance of places removed from the Government Buildings Register and included in your planning scheme. Please be aware that this material is based upon information available to Heritage Victoria at the time of assessment.

Should you have any queries regarding the removal of places from the Government Buildings Register or the inclusion of places in the planning scheme, please direct you inquiries to Amanda Bacon, Heritage Project Officer (03 9655 9724) or Nicola Stephens, Planner (o3 9655 8862).

Yours sincerely

RAY TONKIN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ASSESSMENT REPORT
NAME: Fitzroy Primary School. No. 450
LOCATION: George Street, Fitzroy
FILE NO: 602333
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Yarra City

CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

Fitzroy

The suburbs of Fitzroy and Collingwood were originally known as the parish of Newtown. On February 1838, a land sale was held in Sydney of 25-acre lots for an average of £7 per acre. These were further subdivided by the purchasers and re-sold. In 1842 the area was officially named Collingwood after a British admiral. The area east of Smith Street became known as East Collingwood. Up till about 1851 it was almost a rural area with a few cottages, a few hotels and factories and a few homes of larger landholders along the Yarra.[1] Later it became an industrial centre with many factories, tanneries and other noxious trades on the Yarra as well as many workers cottages. The western area was re-named Fitzroy and by 1873 East Collingwood had become just Collingwood. Fitzroy, on the other hand, became a residential suburb with many early houses, elegant terraces and a layout incorporating some squares and public gardens.

The inner suburbs declined when the extension of the railway made the outer suburbs more attractive to professional and business men. By the end of the 1880s, Fitzroy was in decline. Large houses in Nicholson Street and Victoria Parade became boarding houses, some houses were sub-divided and rented by their owners. Slum-dwellers who had lived in Little Bourke Street were forced out and moved into South Fitzroy.[2] North and South Fitzroy developed in different ways. North Fitzroy remained largely a residential suburb, while South Fitzroy by the 1890s was a rundown depressed area. In the 1930s the unemployed flocked back to Fitzroy and Collingwood in search of cheap rents. Waves of migration made Fitzroy and Carlton a half-way place for newly arrived ethnic groups. In the 1950s and 1960s, slum clearance policies demolished scores of houses in South Fitzroy and replaced them with high-rise tower blocks of Housing Commission flats. In the 1980s more than seventy ethnic groups were living in Fitzroy, and the suburb was transformed yet again by young, middle class newcomers, who wanted inner-city living.[3]

The Architect

Bastow, Henry Robert (1839- 1920) was born on 3 May 1839. He migrated to Australia from Bridport, Dorset. He practised as an architect and

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[1] *In Those Days: Collingwood Remembered: Memories of Collingwood Residents.* Collingwood, Carringbush Regional Library in association with the Collingwood City Council, 1979. P. 7

[2] *Fitzroy North Primary School No. 1490. Centenary Souvenir 1875-1975.* Ed. By S. Cullen. Fitzroy, 1975. P. 6

[3] *Fitzroy: Melbourne's First Suburb.* Compiled by the Cutten History Committee of the Fitzroy History Society, Carlton, Melbourne University Press, 1991. P. xi.

surveyor in Tasmania in 1863 and is known to have designed the Union Chapel in Hobart. [4] He took up an appointment with the Victorian Public Service on 30 April 1866, working as a draughtsman for the Victorian Water Supply and later as an architect and civil engineer for the Railway Department. In 1873 he was appointed to the Education Department as head of the architecture branch.[5]

The introduction of free compulsory and secular education in Victoria in 1872 led to a wave of building of schools all over the state. As the architect in charge of the provision of school buildings, Henry Bastow left a huge legacy to the State in the form of hundreds of schools of every type and size. Bastow was attached to the Education Department from 1873 to 1883 when he and his staff were transferred to the Public Works Department as part of the State Schools Division.[6] By 1885 he was Senior Architect. He then had responsibility for "the design and execution of all architectural works".[7]

Bastow supervised the design of the new Crown Law Offices in 1892. He was retrenched on 30 April 1894, when reductions in the public service were made during the economic depression.[8] He worked as an orchardist at Harcourt until his death on 30 September 1920. [9]

HISTORY OF PLACE

The first school was a Wesleyan one opened in 1841. Hugh Templeton opened a private school in the Presbyterian Chapel in Napier Street. He then moved to Johnston Street where the school was known as the Collingwood Commercial Academy. He built a school on the corner of Greeves Street and George Street which opened on 1 October 1855 and was called the North Collingwood National School. Under the Board of Education from 1862, it became Collingwood Common School No. 450.

The Education Department took over Common School No. 450, renting the building which was on land owned by Hugh Templeton's son, Thomas. In 1874 a new building was constructed on land bought by the Department for £1800. The architect was Henry Bastow, Chief Architect for the Education Department. Caretaker's quarters were constructed in 1888, and extra land acquired for playground space in 1914 and 1961. A new infants' school was completed in 1970.

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[4] Wood engraving by Samuel Calvert in Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

[5] Bibliography File, State Library of Victoria.

[6] L. Burchell. Victorian Schools. Carlton, Vic., Melbourne University Press, 1978. P. 162

[7] Burchell. P. 162; Bibliography File, State Library of Victoria

[8] *Shire of Metcalfe Heritage Study* by Wendy Jacobs and Karen Twigg.. Vol. 1 P. 35

[9] Bibliography File, State Library of Victoria.

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

The George Street Fitzroy Primary School No. 450 is a double-storey brick building with decorative string courses and arched window mouldings. Front and back window openings have been enlarged: there are only a few arched openings remaining. It has been extended at the rear in brick with square multi-paned window units and concrete lintels. The slate roof is intact over the original section but has been replaced with tiles elsewhere. A corner entrance is marked by a turreted roof form.

The interior has been considerably altered. False ceilings have been installed in most classrooms. There is a polished timber honour board in the front hall.

COMPARISON:

The George Street Fitzroy Primary School No. 450 is an example of a Large Later Urban Gothic school constructed in 1874. It has had some windows altered to the square headed type. It is the prototype for the asymmetrical plan schools.

The Historic Government School survey places George Street Fitzroy Primary School No. 450 in the category 4.1, Large Later Urban Schools. There are 34 examples of this type. Of these, 18 were on the Government Buildings Register and another is recommended by the survey. The most intact examples are Camp Hill (1877), Glenferrie (1877,1881), Queensberry St. Carlton (1880-81) and Cremorne Street Richmond which have been transferred to the Victorian Heritage Register.

RECOMMENDATION

George Street Fitzroy Primary School No. 450 does not warrant inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register as it is not of State Significance and more intact examples of its type have been recommended for transfer to the Victorian Heritage Register. The building is however a representative example of a Large Later Urban school design and of local significance. Although substantially altered it is important as the prototype for assymetrical school plans. Also of interest is the form of the school and the tower situated on one corner. It is important for its contribution to the social history of Fitzroy. Fitzroy Primary School No. 450 has been removed from the Government Buildings Register and included in the Heritage Overlay of the relevant Local Planning Scheme.