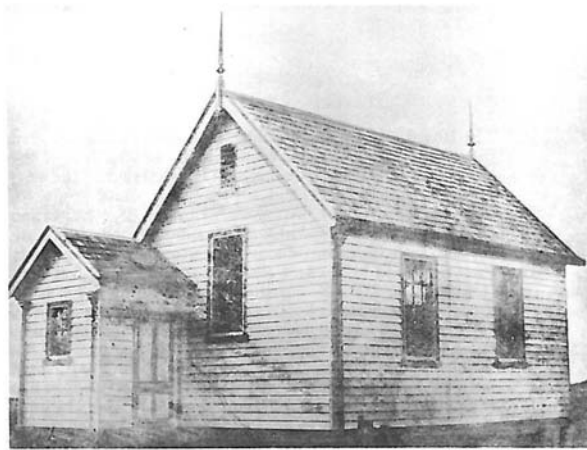


Name	Former Kamarooka Road School (Neilborough North) no. 1726	Reference in 1998 Marong Study	SU1
Address	CA 5A Elmore-Raywood Road, Neilborough ¹	Map reference	VicRoads 44 F2
Building type	School (abandoned)	Survey date	June and August 2010 (external inspection only)
Date of construction	1876	Recommendation	Include in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay
Significance	The former Kamarooka Road School is of local historical and aesthetic/architectural significance.		



Left: Standard timber school room and porch with capacity for 40 pupils designed in 1872. The picture is not dated, and the school room is not named. (Source: Right: Lawrence Burchell, *Victorian Schools: a Study in Colonial Government Architecture 1837-1900*, University Press, 1980, p. 114).
Right: North elevation of the Former Kamarooka Road School



Left: North and west elevations, note sugar gums at rear. Right: Rear (south) elevation.



Left: West elevation, note partially detached entrance porch. Right: Aerial view, 2010 (Source: City of Greater Bendigo).



Proposed Heritage Overlay map, with the subject site shown as SU01.²

Intactness Good ✓ Fair Poor

History

The area of open, gently undulating farming country approximately eight kilometres east of Raywood was first settled in the 1860s, by William Waugh.³ The only road through the area was the Kamarooka Road, now the Elmore-Raywood Road. Subsequent settlers, including the Frazier, Hocking, Brown and Farnald families, named the settlement Summerfield.⁴ It was renamed Neilborough North in 1901, reverting to Summerfield in 1924, in response to an outcry from residents.⁵

In response to a report from District Inspector Craig, an application for a school to serve the children of local farmers was approved on 16 September 1874. The site for the Kamarooka Road School no. 1726⁶ was gazetted in February 1875, being excised from W J Newton's farm. Newton received £10 in compensation. The timber school room measured 7.3 (24ft) by 4.9m (16ft) and had a capacity for 40 pupils. There was an attached porch and two rooms as quarters for staff. The first Head Teacher, from 1876 to 1890, was Benjamin H Fernhold, who taught an average of 15 boys and 16 girls. After a period of diminishing attendances the school was closed on 12 May 1911 but re-opened on 6 May 1915. It was finally closed on 23 March 1955. However, the school had been unstaffed for a number of years prior to that.⁷ It is now privately owned and unoccupied.

Prior to the construction of the Summerfield church (now demolished), in 1888, church services were also held at the Kamarooka Road School.⁸

Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes

Victoria's themes and sub-themes:

- 8.1: Maintaining spiritual life

- 8.2: Educating people

Description & Integrity

The former Kamarooka Road School (Neilborough North School) no. 1726 is located in open, gently undulating farmland approximately 8km east of Raywood. The single-storey gabled timber building is in the approximate centre of a large rectangular allotment on the south side of the Elmore-Raywood Road. The building is oriented north-west to south-east. As well as the timber school building, with attached porch and lean-to quarters, the site includes a concrete water tank. Sugar gums to the north-east, south-east and south-west boundaries of the reserve are vestiges of an early wind break. The property was not inspected internally. Descriptions of internal elements in the following derive from the 1998 survey.⁹

The school room, lean-to quarters and porch are clad in weatherboard fixed to a stud frame and raised on stumps. The school room and porch have gabled roofs, the quarters is a skillion. All roof areas are clad with corrugated galvanised sheet steel. However, the battens, exposed to the north end of the school room, suggest that the roof was originally shingle. The stumps of timber finials, at both ends of the school room roof, are extant. A rectangular brick chimney with corbelled cornice is located to the south-west side of the schoolroom. The school is entered by a door to the north-east of the porch. A second door, presumably to the quarters, is located to the south of the rear elevation of the school room. The window openings to the school room and porch appear to be in their original locations, and are double sashes hung with glazing bars to the sashes. Only the lower section of the window to the north-west (front) elevation of the school, next to the porch, has not been sheeted over. The two windows to the south-west wall of the quarters are of a later date. There are rectangular timber louver vents, cambered at the top, to the front and rear gable ends of the school room. Inside, there is a fireplace, beaded timber linings, a coved ceiling with tie rods and diagonal braces.

The former school is in poor condition. The school room and quarters have subsided by several degrees, resulting in the base plate being twisted, and the porch has settled c. 3 or 4 degrees to the east, partially separating it from the north-west face of the school room, and pulling away seven courses of weatherboard. Two more courses of weatherboard have fallen off the north-west wall of the quarters, and there is some weatherboard damage above and below the gable vent on the north-west elevation. Roof sheeting at the north end of the south-west face of the school room is missing. Guttering is in place on each side of the classroom and quarters and is connected to a PVC downpipe on the north-east face of the school room. The chimney appears to be almost perpendicular, and the base plate and footings appear intact, with stumps sitting level on the entry side and fitted with intact steel ant caps. The weatherboard has not been painted for some decades. There are some signs of recent maintenance, including protective blue sheeting that has been fed into the open wall cavity between the porch and the main entry-side wall, below the opened roof area.

The school building has a high degree of intactness in terms of its original design. However, this is tempered by extensive water damage, the twisting subsidence of the building frame and removal of areas of the weatherboard cladding to reveal the inner frame and walling.

Comparative Analysis

The former Kamarooka Road School (Neilborough North School) no. 1726 is a reversed version of the standard 40 pupil school and basic quarters, drawn up by the Colonial Architects in 1872.¹⁰ Around 75 of these schools were built in 1875 alone, at the first of two peaks of construction, the other being in 1879.¹¹ It otherwise differs from the original drawing in having a marginally broader chimney, broader and possibly later planked entrance door (in contrast to the original design's muntin and panel door) and a broader porch elevation. In all other design respects it appears to be identical. The corbelled brick chimney cornice, the gable vents, finial placements, window placements, six-pane sash frames, gable and wall proportions and roof pitch are all consistent with the 1872 prototype. In design the school is also related to a parallel series of 60-pupil schools built in both weatherboard and brick between 1873 and 1890. A brick example of this can be seen in the Raywood School, although that design has been altered since construction. It is also possible that the subject building is rare in the State context, as comparatively few timber school buildings of this early period survive (although this would require confirmation).

Assessment Against Criteria*Amended Heritage Victoria Criteria*

Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of the City of Greater Bendigo's cultural history.

The former Kamarooka Road School (Neilborough North School) no. 1726, built in 1876, is of historical significance. It is the last surviving (former) public building in the settlement of Summerfield, a small isolated farming community once sufficiently large to warrant a school with a capacity for 40 pupils. Summerfield was first settled in the 1860s, and the school finally closed in 1955. Prior to the construction of the Summerfield church in 1888 (now demolished), church services were also held at the Kamarooka Road School.

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the City of Greater Bendigo's cultural history.

The former Kamarooka Road School no. 1726 is believed to be a rare surviving example of a standard timber school and basic quarters, with capacity for 40 pupils, dating to the 1870s. The model was drawn up by the Colonial Architects in 1872, and in 1875 alone at least 75 were built across Victoria. No other examples of its type are known to survive in the Bendigo area. However, further research is required to confirm this.

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the City of Greater Bendigo's cultural history.

N/A

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or objects.

N/A

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics in the context of the municipality.

The former Kamarooka Road School no. 1726 is of aesthetic/architectural significance. It is a small and simply detailed building, and a surviving example of a once common standard school building design of the 1870s. Although in poor condition, and with some structural problems, the school room, lean-to quarters and porch retain a comparatively high degree of intactness (i.e. have been only minimally modified) to the original design. The building has some picturesque qualities, due to the gabled form and steep roof pitch; and a high degree of visibility from Elmore-Raywood Road where it is seen in an open and informal landscape setting complemented by Sugar gums to the east, south and west boundaries of the reserve, vestiges of an early wind break.

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

N/A

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of the place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

N/A

Criterion H: Special association with life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the City of Greater Bendigo's history.

N/A

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The former Kamarooka Road School (Neilborough North School) no. 1726 is a small and simply detailed timber building, and a surviving example of a once common standard school building design drawn up by the Colonial Architects in 1872. It is a remnant of the settlement of Summerfield, an agricultural community established in the 1860s located in open, gently undulating farmland approximately 8km east of Raywood. As well as the single-storey gabled timber building with attached porch and lean-to quarters, the site includes vestiges of a wind break to the north-east, south-east and south-west boundaries of the reserve. Extant elements include the corbelled brick chimney, gable vents, finials, six-pane sash windows and steeply pitched roof.

How is it significant?

The former Kamarooka Road School is of local historical and aesthetic/architectural significance.

Why is it significant?

The former Kamarooka Road School is historically significant (Criterion A) as the last surviving (former) public building in the settlement of Summerfield, a small isolated farming community once sufficiently large to warrant a school with a capacity for 40 pupils. Summerfield was first settled in the 1860s, and the school finally closed in 1955. Prior to the construction of the Summerfield church, in 1888, (now demolished), church services were also held at the Kamarooka Road School. The former school is also significant (Criterion B) for being a rare surviving example of a standard timber school and basic quarters, with capacity for 40 pupils, dating to the 1870s. The model was drawn up by the Colonial Architects in 1872, and in 1875 alone at least 75 were built across Victoria. No other examples of its type are known to survive in the Bendigo area, although further research is required to confirm this. The former Kamarooka Road School no. 1726 is also of aesthetic/architectural significance (Criterion E). It is a small and simply detailed building, and a surviving example of a once common standard school building design of the 1870s. Although in poor condition, and with some structural problems, the school room, lean-to quarters and porch retain a comparatively high degree of intactness (i.e. have been only minimally modified) to the original design. The building has some picturesque qualities, due to the gabled form and steep roof pitch; and a high degree of visibility from Elmore-Raywood Road where it is seen in an open and informal landscape setting complemented by sugar gums to the east, south and west boundaries of the reserve, vestiges of an early wind break.

Recommendations

The property is recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Greater Bendigo Heritage Overlay. It is recommended that the Heritage Overlay curtilage includes the historic building, which is the focus of significance, the setback to Elmore-Raywood Road and sugar gums in the immediate vicinity of the building. It is recognised that the poor condition of the building will likely lead to further deterioration and accordingly reuse or occupation of the building is highly desirable, including a sympathetic adaptive reuse.

External Paint Colours	No
Internal Alterations Controls	No
Tree Controls	Yes
Outbuildings and fences exemptions	No
Victorian Heritage Register	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted	No
Incorporated plan	No
Aboriginal heritage place	No

Identified By

Andrew Ward, 1998.

References

Ken Arnold, *Bendigo its Environs, The Way it Was*, Volume 1, Crown Castleton Publishers, 2003.

Andrew Ward *et al*, *City of Greater Bendigo Heritage Study (Marong) Study Area*, Stage 2, 1998.

Specific:

- ¹ Changed address from 3085 Elmore-Raywood Road, Summerfield, *Heritage Policy Citations Review*, 2011. November 2011.
- ² Changed map from Heritage Policy Citations Review, 2011. November 2011.
- ³ Ken Arnold, *Bendigo its Environs, The Way it Was*, Volume 1, Crown Castleton Publishers, 2003, p. 345.
- ⁴ Marie Manning, *Back to Raywood and District*, Raywood and District Back To Committee, 1973, p.12.
- ⁵ Ken Arnold, *Bendigo its Environs, The Way it Was*, Volume 1, Crown Castleton Publishers, 2003, p. 345.
- ⁶ In 1901, when Summerfield was renamed Neilborough North, the Kamarooka Road School was renamed Neilborough north School. Ken Arnold, *Bendigo its Environs, The Way it Was*, Volume 1, Crown Castleton Publishers, 2003, p. 346.
- ⁷ *Vision and Realisation*, Victorian Government, Melbourne, 1973, v. 2, pp. 495-96.
- ⁸ Marie Manning, *Back to Raywood and District*, Raywood and District Back To Committee, 1973, p.12.
- ⁹ 'House' [sic], Andrew Ward *et al*, *City of Greater Bendigo Heritage Study (Marong) Study Area*, Stage 2, 1998.
- ¹⁰ Lawrence Burchell, *Victorian Schools: a Study in Colonial Government Architecture 1837-1900*, University Press, Victorian Department of Education, Melbourne, 1980, p. 112 Fig. 143 (plan) 144 (discussion) 145 (images of completed examples).
- ¹¹ See the graph for construction of 'Forties' in Burchell, p. 114 Fig. 144. Their production ceased around 1889.