HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Name	Police Station (former)		
Address	12 Blucher Street STRATHFIELDSAYE	**Grading**	2008 Local
Building Type	Police station		
Assessment by	Context Pty Ltd		

Recommended Heritage Protection	**VHR** No **HI** No **PS** Yes

Architectural Style	Victorian Period (1851-1901) Vernacular

Maker / Builder	Public Works Department (Builder not known)

Integrity

High

History and Historical Context

History of the Shire of Strathfieldsaye

The land around the former Shires of Strathfieldsaye and McIvor had a long history prior to the arrival of Europeans. The Jaara Jaara people are the original inhabitants of the area.

The area around Port Phillip was explored by Sir Thomas Mitchell, the Surveyor General of New South Wales, and a

large party in 1836, on the homeward leg of a journey to Portland Bay. Impressed by what he perceived as the bounty of the land, Mitchell named the area *Australia Felix*.[1]

The Port Phillip district was opened up for settlement soon thereafter, and much of the land in the Western districts of Victoria, including the former Shires of McIvor and Strathfieldsaye, was subsequently dominated by a series of pastoral runs. Most of the area around the town of Axedale and the numerous small towns in its vicinity was licensed to David Jennings as part of the Campaspe Plains run. The run covered an area of more than 144,900 acres and was populated with an estimated 12,000 sheep. A portion of Campaspe Plains was licensed to A. Jennings and George Playne in 1840 and the 67,000 acre station became known as Axedale. In the coming decade the holders of the license changed a number of times. By the time the leasehold over the land was cancelled in 1865, the run had greatly reduced in size.[2]

Following the cancellation of leasehold, land holdings were of a smaller scale and pastoralists were gradually overtaken by farmers. The discovery of gold at Bendigo and the surrounding areas changed the face of the district and brought about new patterns of settlement and expansion. William John Bulling claimed to be the first man to discover gold at McIvor, and he was granted a £400 reward for the find. By 1853, over one hundred prospectors had assembled at Wild Duck Creek in the hopes of striking it rich. This number expanded the following year, and included some 2,000 Chinese immigrants.[3]

The Strathfieldsaye Road District was proclaimed in the Government Gazette on the 12th August 1861, and encompassed within it the parishes of Axedale, Strathfieldsaye, Eppalock, Mandurang, Sedgwick and Lyell.[4] The process of election of the board was punctuated by rivalries between Catholic and Protestant faiths, a characteristic of the district which infiltrates much of its history. Strathfieldsaye met the criterion prescribed to become a Shire in 1863, a transition that was officially proclaimed on the 17th September of that year.[5]

In 1864, Strathfieldsaye Shire was divided into three wards; Mandurang, Strathfieldsaye and Axedale

History of Strathfieldsaye

The Shire hall at Strathfieldsaye was built in 1869 to accommodate the officers of the new Shire. Prospectors panned for gold in the nearby Sheepwash Creek at the height of the gold boom. Following the dwindling of the gold boom, many former prospectors turned to farming and agricultural pursuits. Orchards were established and flourished in the rich soils of the district, though Strathfieldsaye remained one of the smaller townships in the district. The forestry industry was also of some importance to the township of Strathfieldsaye, especially during the height of the gold rushes.

By the late 1800s, the area around Strathfieldsaye was being used extensively as vineyards, though the industry was devastated by the *Phylloxera* outbreak in the 1890s. The failing of the wine industry then prompted the development of many of the already established orchards in the vicinity of the town. The provision of dried fruit to prospectors had proved a valuable industry during the gold rushes, and orchardists continued to expand in the district into the twentieth century.

During recent times Strathfieldsaye has expanded in response to growing pressure for residential land, and has gradually shifted away from its previous agricultural focus.

History of former Police Station, 12 Blucher Street, Strathfieldsaye

The Strathfieldsaye Police Station on Blucher Street opened in 1863, and the officer stationed there was responsible for patrolling much of the district from Bendigo to Redesdale. A lockup attached to the rear of the building was probably built at the same time, along with stables located to the rear of the station. The first constable stationed at Strathfieldsaye was Edward Stubber, an Irish man who had been previously employed as a stockrider before opting for a career with the police force in 1859. He was described in records as a 'good and efficient constable' and after his resignation went on to

become a Councillor for the Shire in December 1870.[6]

Constable John Corbett was stationed at Strathfieldsaye in April 1868. He had already served nine years in the Irish Mounted Constabulary prior to his arrival in Port Phillip. In June 1869, Constable Corbett was fined the sum of £1 for 'having his station dirty and not having his horse properly cleaned'.[7] By virtue of its proximity to Bendigo, Strathfieldsaye fell under their supervisory jurisdiction, which had proved unfortunate for Corbett. Corbett's conduct apparently did not improve and he was ultimately transferred to the Depot Hospital and later discharged from the force in 1870. He was replaced by William Harris Purcell as constable.[8]

The region endured storms in 1889 which flooded the Police Station at Strathfieldsaye. Mounted Constable Edwin Ryan was stationed there at the time, and was prompted to make a rapid evacuation with his family. He was also charged with the position of Inspector of Nuisances as well as being appointed the Health Inspector for the district for a time. Ryan was promoted to Senior Constable and transferred to Swan Hill in February 1892, after which time F. Arthur, and later Joseph Teague assumed duty at Strathfieldsaye.[9] Additions were carried out in 1889/ 1890.[10] At some point the lockup was incorporated into the house as the fourth room, and it may have been this work that was carried out.

Mounted Constable Teague, his wife, and their six children resided at the station at Strathfieldsaye from the time of his appointment in 1890 until his resignation from the force in 1912.[11] Following Teague's departure, the station at Strathfieldsaye was closed.

Thomas James Hargreaves bought the former police station from the Crown on the 4th August 1914, and used the place as a private residence from that time. He was a farmer and lived there until 1924, when he sold the property to Hilda Helen May McLean. She sold it in 1961 to Ambrose Herbert Lowndes and his wife, Mabel.[12]

[1] Randell, J. O. (1985). *McIvor: A History of the Shire and the Township of Heathcote*, Shire of McIvor, p. 1.

[2] Spreadborough, Robert and Anderson, Hugh (1983). *Victorian Squatters, Red Rooster Press*, Ascot Vale, p. 150

[3] Spreadborough & Anderson (1983), p. 31.

[4] Hewat, Tim (1983), *Bridge Over Troubled Waters, A History of the Shire of Strathfieldsaye*, Shire of Strathfieldsaye, Victoria, pp. 11 - 12.

[5] Hewat, Tim (1983), p. 18.

[6] Mitchell, Barbara (2005). *On the Creeks: Early Life at Strathfieldsaye in the Valley of the Three Creeks - Axe, Emu and Sheepwash,* Barbara Mitchell, Bendigo, Vic, p. 68.

[7] As cited in Mitchell, (2005). p. 69.

[8] Mitchell,(2005). p. 69.

[9] Mitchell, (2005).p. 73.

[10] Survey of Historic Police Buildings, Department of Planning and Housing.

[11] Mitchell, (2005) p. 73.

[12] Certificate of Title, Vol. 4238, Fol. 452.

Primary sources

Certificate of Title, Vol. 4238, Fol. 452

Secondary sources

Hewat, Tim (1983), *Bridge Over Troubled Waters, A History of the Shire of Strathfieldsaye,* Shire of Strathfieldsaye, Victoria

Mitchell, Barbara (2005). *On the Creeks: Early Life at Strathfieldsaye in the Valley of the Three Creeks - Axe, Emu and Sheepwash,* Barbara Mitchell, Bendigo, Vic

Randell, J. O. (1985). *McIvor: A History of the Shire and the Township of Heathcote,* Shire of McIvor

Spreadborough, Robert and Anderson, Hugh (1983). *Victorian Squatters,* Red Rooster Press, Ascot Vale

Survey of Historic Police Buildings, Department of Planning and Housing.

Relevant Historical Australian Themes

7 Governing Victoria

7.3 Maintaining law and order

Description

Physical Description

The former Police Station is located near the creek in a on a lightly timbered allotment. A new subdivision for residential housing is located adjacent. The site on which the former police station at Strathfieldsaye is situated also contains a brick stables that may have been used as a lock-up. A contemporary house has been constructed behind these buildings but this is not of interest. The police station and stables are designed by the Public Works Department and feature the characteristic fine detailing to roofs, chimneys and verandahs that characterises many public buildings of this period. The police station is a double fronted house with gable roof in slate, and paired timber posts to the verandah. The gable overhangs the end walls and the eaves are neatly detailed. The verandah has also been clad in slate although this may be a recent change in material as the slope is too flat for slate. Corrugated iron was generally used for verandahs.

The stable is built in matching style in red brick and a slate roof. It has a loft above and has recently been repaired.

Physical Condition

Good

Conservation Policy

None Specified

Comparative Analysis

12 Blucher Street is a good example of a police complex. Other complexes are found at Axedale (33 William Street) and in Heathcote (Herriot Street) - although these are both later examples.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The former Strathfieldsaye Police Station, including all the fabric of 1863 red brick building and red brick stables at the rear, is significant. The recently constructed house is not significant.

How is it significant?

The former Strathfieldsaye Police Station is of local historical and architectural significance to the City of Greater Bendigo.

Why is it significant?

The former Strathfieldsaye Police Station opened in 1863 and is historically significant for its association with Edward Stubber, first Constable stationed at Strathfieldsaye and later Shire Councillor in 1870, and also with Mounted Constable Teague and his family, who resided at the station from 1890 to 1912. Following Teague's departure, the station at Strathfieldsaye was closed and has since been used as a private residence occupied firstly by Thomas Hargreaves. The stables are also of historic importance as they are representative of a time of a mounted police force in Victoria. The former police buildings demonstrate Strathfieldsaye as separate town with its own services before becoming part of the urban area of Bendigo. *Criterion A*

The former Strathfieldsaye Police Station and stables, designed by the Public Works Department are architecturally significant. The double fronted red brick building features the characteristic fine detailing to gable roofs, chimneys and verandahs of the period. While the slate roofing may be of more recent origin, the paired timber posts to the verandah are of particular interest. The building formerly used as a stable or lock-up is built in a matching style with red brick and a slate roof. It has a loft above and has recently been repaired. The site also contains a contemporary house but this is not of interest. *Criterion D*

Assessment Against Criteria

Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history. *Criterion A*

Possession of uncommon rare or endangers aspects of our cultural or natural history. *Criterion B*

Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history. *Criterion C*

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments. *Criterion D*

Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics. *Criterion E*

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

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

Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history. *Criterion H*

Recommendations 2008

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Fences & Outbuildings	Yes
Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted	No
Incorporated Plan	Yes
Aboriginal Heritage Place	No

Other Recommendations

It is recommended that 12 Blucher Street, Strathfieldsaye be added as an individual place to the Heritage Overlay of the City of Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme with the schedule entry as shown above. The extent of registration is the whole of the property as defined by the title boundaries. The recommended Incorporated Plan is the 'Permit Exemption Incorporated Plan - Former Shires of McIvor and Strathfieldsaye.'