

# HERITAGE PLACE REPORT

Greater Bendigo City

**Name****Heritage Overlay No**

House

**Address**

498 High Street, Golden Square

**Property No:** 180656

**Building Type**

**VHR Number** NA

Residential building private

**HI Number** NA

**Heritage Status**

**File Number** NA

Recommended heritage overlay as an individual heritage place

**Precinct** Recommended as a significant contributory place in the heritage precinct

**Hermes Number**

**Heritage Study**

Eaglehawk & Bendigo  
Heritage Study  
(Butler:1993)

**Author**

Significant Assessment  
Mandy Jean, Prue Hawkey

**Year**  
**2009**

**Grading**

Individual local significance B

**Designer/Architect**

unknown

**Maker/Builder**

Unknown

**Architectural Style**

Vernacular Victorian 1870s

**Year**

Circa 1873

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Type of Place

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## Statement of Significance

### What is Significant?

The former single storey timber weatherboard miner's cottage at 498-500 High Street dates at least to the early 1870s when a house and store were listed in 1873 to the ownership of Miller and Packwood. The property is sited on the banks of the Adelaide Creek, now a channel, a few metres from the junction with Bendigo Creek near Christmas line of reef, which crosses the highway at an angle towards Speck Gully and Specimen Hill to the north. Almost from the beginning of the alluvial rush in Bendigo the small gullies such as Golden, Tin Pot, Adelaide, Kangaroo and others, supported sizable mining populations.<sup>1</sup> The whole of the creek bed and associated branches were upturned during the 1850s in search of gold. By the 1850s and 1860s various Chinese camps along the creek had developed into minor villages generating market gardens. However, increasing development of quartz mining in the 1860s took the mining community away from the creeks. The apexes of the hills were the places where the quartz reefs were exposed that later mining was most active. It was here that associated working miners built their elevated communities on the shoulders of the hills attracting settlement away from the banks of the creeks. Puddling and reworking of discarded spoil continued for a time in the creek beds. Resulting damage caused by sludge build up was the source of ongoing political recrimination by land owners and the wealthy against the Chinese and single alluvial diggers, and necessitated the conversion of the major creeks into sludge channels to contain spoil from damaging the newly created freeholds in central Bendigo (Sandhurst). From the late 1850s works continued on Bendigo Creek and over the next 30 years an extensive channelization project focussed on the central district along Pall Mall extending to Golden Square. The creek was lined first with hardwood then stone and brick walling, and in due course Bendigo Creek was widened, deepened, undergrounded in sections and in other sections new bridges were built over the channel. Except for outlying areas of Golden Square and Kangaroo Flat, the character of Bendigo Creek was fundamentally altered, leaving no trace of the early alluvial surface mining era.<sup>2</sup>

### How is it Significant?

The timber weatherboard miner's cottage at 498-500 High Street has historic, architectural and social significance at a local level to the City of Greater Bendigo.

- **Criterion A**
- **Criterion B**
- **Criterion C**
- **Criterion D**

### Why is it Significant?

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<sup>1</sup> Birrel, R. W. And J. A. Lerk, *Bendigo's Golden Story*, 2001, p 59

<sup>2</sup> Eaglehawk and Bendigo Heritage Study, Butler, 1993, City of Greater Bendigo



## **Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.**

The former miner's cottage at 498-500 High Street, Golden Square, is historically significant as a good representative example of an early miner's cottage associated with an early shop in 1873 built near the junction of Adelaide and Bendigo Creek along the main highway, Melbourne Road, on the outskirts of the Golden Square settlement.

The former miner's cottage at 498-500 High Street, Golden Square, is historically significant for its cultural landscape setting, comprising the original former Miners Residency Area located on the junction of Bendigo and Adelaide Creek. Bendigo Creek was where the first alluvial gold rush was located and where thousands of miners congregated in the early days of Bendigo. The cottage is one of a group of three timber cottages, which are very modest in size typical of miners' cottages, located within a former alluvial mining relic landscape, which can be seen from Melbourne Road, the main highway into Bendigo.

## **Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.**

The miner's cottage at 498-500 High Street, Golden Square, is associated with one of the unique features of the Victorian goldfields- the Miners Residency Area. It is one of a group of increasingly rare structures on the Bendigo goldfields and in particular the former Bendigo and Adelaide Creek area that clearly illustrate the typical construction, design and layout of a timber weatherboard miner's cottage.

The area along Bendigo Creek between Golden Square and Kangaroo Flat with its associated creeks such as Adelaide Creeks has heritage significance for its rare and poignant historic landscape of the early gold rush on the Bendigo field. The cultural landscape shows archaeological evidence of early alluvial mining works, which together with the one or two remaining mining cottages such as that at 498-500 High Street, built along the banks of the gullies are associated with small time diggers and Chinese miners, who engaged in alluvial gold mining, market gardening and small trading along the Melbourne Road leading out of Bendigo (Sandhurst).

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

The house at 498-500 High Street, Golden Square, is an excellent representative example of miner's cottage particularly associated with Bendigo Creek and Adelaide Creek gold mining era that development during the early alluvial gold rush period. It is associated with one of the key elements of the historical fabric of Victorian goldfields, the working miner's cottage. It is a historical and architectural record of one of the earliest types and designs of miners' cottage that developed in response to the opportunities that the gold rush provided.



## Place History

### History of the Area

Bendigo is one of the world's great goldfields and has produced the largest amount of gold of any field in Eastern Australia. The Bendigo goldfield, about 12 kilometres wide extends 30 kilometres from north to south. It is made up of folded beds of sedimentary rock, eroded sandstone and shale ridges which formed anticline and syncline folds that run approximately 1000 metres apart in parallel formation, north-south towards Eaglehawk. The gold was mined from about 38 north-south anticline lines of gold bearing reef that lay from Bendigo East to Kangaroo Flat. Gullies and dry creeks cut across the ridges in a west to easterly direction, flowing into the Bendigo Creek, which spread out into the gravel plains of Epsom, a former shallow sea in the north, and thence into the Campase River, a north flowing tributary of the Murray River.

Bendigo mining field's unique geology influenced mining development and in turn had a major influence in shaping the built landscape of the city. Mining in the area commenced in 1851, and continued over the next 150 years through times of boom, decline, revival and stagnation. The first gold was found at the junction of Golden Gully and New Chum Gully and Bendigo Creek in 1851 at Golden Point near Rose and Shamrock Streets. A major alluvial rush followed in 1852 along the banks of Bendigo Creek (Kangaroo Gully) running parallel to Bullock Street, with successful diggings spreading out to the adjacent 24 tributaries, inclusive of the junction of Adelaide Gully and Bendigo Creek, (location of 498-500 High Street Golden Square). The early history of mining in the area is marked by extremely transitory nature of the settlements, diggers moved from gully to gully and then returned to the central creek valley, the site of the initial rich discoveries.<sup>3</sup>

By 1853, attention was turning to the mining of quartz reefs and steam powered machinery for mining was being set up as early as 1855, although, Bendigo remained a major alluvial centre well into the 1860s. In the early 1860s Bendigo experienced its first mining boom with the formation of hundreds of companies. As technology and mine administration improved, so did the confidence of investors. Larger steam plants and winding engines were installed so the mines could be worked at greater depth and also control ground water inflow. The quartz mining boom was in full swing in 1871 and boosted the establishment of foundries and engineering works. The apexes of the hills were the places where the quartz reefs were exposed that mining was most active. It was here that associated working miners built their elevated communities on the shoulders of the hills. Accompanying this phase of mining came the building of more substantial buildings. By the mid 1860s, the commercial heart had taken on a recognizable character, with the development of Pall Mall and the lining of Bendigo Creek. While smaller traders spread along the main Melbourne Road from Golden Gully, which ran parallel and adjacent Bendigo Creek.

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<sup>3</sup> Eaglehawk and Bendigo Heritage Study, Vol 2 Environmental History (Butler 1993)



The whole of the creek bed and associated branches had been upturned during the 1850s in search of gold. The various Chinese camps along the creek had developed into minor villages generating market gardens. From 1854 freehold land was surveyed along the creek changing the character of the area in the centre of Sandhurst. Increasing development of quartz mining in the 1860s also took the mining community away from the creeks. By 1867 the dominance of the alluvial miner was in decline with less than four thousand of whom nearly a thousand were Chinese. Puddling and reworking of discarded spoil continued to a lesser degree, usually by poor individual miners and Chinese miners. This caused sludge build up along the creeks. Sludge channels had to be created to contain the spoils from damaging the newly created freeholds along the flats near Pall Mall in the late 1850s. Work continued over the next 30 years resulting in the creation of an extensive sludge channel, first with hardwood lining, then lined with stone and brick walling, and in due course the Bendigo Creek was widened, deepened, undergrounded and new bridges were built. The character of Bendigo Creek was fundamentally altered, leaving no trace of the early alluvial surface mining era.<sup>4</sup>

According to the Sandhurst Rates Books the area surrounding 498-500 High Street, was settled first by miners. The absence of quartz mining in the vicinity suggests that these miners were alluvial miners and puddlers, many of whom were Chinese engaged in both mining and later market gardening.

## History of the Buildings

The house at 498-500 High Street Golden Square is built on Allotment 8 of Section 39A in the Parish of Sandhurst, County of Bendigo [1].

Available title records show that the property was transferred on 2 September 1983 to Oscar Maurice Rice, a labourer of 844 High Street, Bendigo for a sum of one thousand five hundred dollars [2]. Following Rice's death on 10 December 1987 the property was granted to Maurice William Pellas-Rice and Philip John Rice, prior to transferring to Ethel Mavis Rice on 7 March 1988 [3]. Following this, the property transferred to its current owner, Colnol Pty Ltd on 15 February 1999. [4]

Early Sandhurst rate books show that in 1906 the property was owned by Prudence Williams, listed as a widow of 498 High Street. The property fell in the Sutton Ward, and is described as 'land and house, High Street', located at number '498' with the net annual value of £13. At this time the house is surrounded by miners' residences either side [5]. Prudence Williams owned the property back as far as 1886, when the rates list John Williams as the owner of the property [6]. Williams' occupation is listed as carpenter, and it is likely that he was Prudence's late husband [7]. Throughout Prudence's ownership the property remained at a constant net annual value of around £11-13, however under John's ownership in 1886 the property value jumps to £19 [8]. The property value is again £19 in 1885, and listed as 'land and house, High Street', however the value falls back to £15 the previous

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<sup>4</sup> Eaglehawk and Bendigo Heritage Study, Butler, 1993, City of Greater Bendigo



year [9]. This indicates that John possibly made some improvements to the property during the years 1884-1885.

Williams is not listed as an owner in the rates made in 1883, however, due to its unchanged neighbouring entries it is probable that the property was occupied by John Packwood, a miner [10]. The owner of the property was Michael John, who also owned several neighbouring properties [11]. The property was rated at a net annual value of £10 under John's ownership in this year [12].

In 1881 it is possible Packwood was also the tenant of the property, and it was still owned by John [13]. The rates made in 1879 saw Packwood's occupation shift from a miner to a confectioner, and the value of the property was £12. In this same year it is likely that James Miller was the owner of the property [14]. It is probable that Miller continued to own the property and also that Packwood continued to tenant the property from 1877-1875, with the description of the site continuing as 'land and house, High Street', and the net value ranging from £10-14 [15]. The 1875 entry shows a store was located next door to the property, which may have had some connection with Packwood [16]. Miller and Packwood are also listed in 1873 as the tenant and occupier of a 'land and store' in High Street, with the net annual value of £16[17]. Unfortunately the property cannot be accurately traced earlier than this in the available rate books.

[1] Certificate of Title, Volume 9543 Folio 001

[2] Certificate of Title, Volume 9543 Folio 001

[3] Certificate of Title, Volume 9543 Folio 001

[4] Certificate of Title, Volume 9543 Folio 001

[5] Sandhurst rate book, 1906

[6] Sandhurst rate book, 1906

[7] Sandhurst rate book, 1906

[8] Sandhurst rate books, 1886-1906

[9] Sandhurst rate books, 1884-1885

[10] Sandhurst rate books, 1884-1885

[11] Sandhurst rate books, 1883

[12] Sandhurst rate books, 1883

[13] Sandhurst rate books, 1881

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[14] Sandhurst rate books, 1879

[15] Sandhurst rate books, 1875-1877

[16] Sandhurst rate books, 1875

[17] Sandhurst rate books, 1873

### **Comparable Examples:**

Apart from the adjacent timber miner's cottage, which has been substantially altered, there are few comparative examples of early timber weatherboard miners' cottages in this area.

**Bibliography** See above

## **Description**

### **Conservation Policy Guidelines (Specific)**

It is recommended that the heritage place be protected as an item of individual local significance within the heritage overlay of the Bendigo Planning Scheme. It is recommended that on completion of a heritage assessment of the extent of the Bendigo Creek linear precinct, the heritage place be protected as an item of contributory significance to the linear precinct as a contributory element to the significance of the historic mining cultural landscape of the Bendigo Creek.

**Integrity.** The place has a high degree of integrity, although there are some later changes and alterations.

### **Physical Conditions**

Fair in need of maintenance and upgrade

### **Physical Description 1**

The cottage is a small single room-width, double fronted early miners cottage, dating from at least 1873, as evidenced by the four pane double hung timber windows, and general proportioning of the front façade. The building has a simple front corrugated ridge roof with rear skillion section and one external brick chimney. The two front timber windows are located either side of the door. The structure is built off the ground with timber stumps and timber flooring. The height of the basic timber frame is higher than many other miners cottages, suggesting the structure may have been purchased and constructed by skilled tradesmen. There are a number of out buildings at the rear of the lot.

The timber frame timber weatherboard cottage is located within an original Miners Residency Area that has since been converted to Torrens Title. The parcel of land backs onto Bendigo Creek and to the south a small creek- channel, the former Adelaide Gully. To the north is another very early miners



cottage, which is smaller than the subject building, but unlike the property at 498-500 High Street, the original allotment has been subdivided with a small 1940-1950s bungalow house sited slightly to the rear side of the cottage.

These two historic cottages together with later Victorian cottage (c.1880s) at approximately 494 High Street are the first historic buildings to be seen at the entrance to Bendigo from the south and Kangaroo Flat, and inclusive of that latter area. The majority of residences in this section of the main road approaches to Bendigo are post war houses with some interwar bungalows.

The subject building therefore is one of a few representative examples of structures that date to the 19<sup>th</sup> century gold rush in Golden Square, which can be seen along Bendigo Creek where the first alluvial gold rush was located and where thousands of miners congregated in the early days of Bendigo. It is one of a group of three timber cottages, which are very modest in size and typical of miners cottages located in a former alluvial mining relic landscape, which can be seen in the public land alongside Bendigo Creek.

## References

*Early Photo location.* NA

*References/sources of information.* See above



Photo showing side view of the cottage



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Parish map



Zones

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Aerial map of the area



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