

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Name Axedale Police Station (former)
Address 33 William Street AXEDALE **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)
English Queen Anne Revival

Maker / Builder No information held

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

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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.^[6]

History of Axedale

The plan of the township of Axedale, with its characteristic crescent ends, was laid out circa 1856. Axedale was included in the district of Mandurang and under the control of the Strathfieldsaye Roads Board. Patrick Drake had built the Campaspe Hotel in 1855, and by 1865, the district had developed to the extent that it was able to support a further six hotels.^[7] Goldfields were typically rough and lawless places, and hotels were big business in their midst. Patterns of settlement continued to reflect the status of Axedale as a centre of support for surrounding farm lands and mining pursuits, and by the 1860s, there were some 500 residents.^[8]

Axedale was proclaimed a district on the 20th August 1861, and then a Shire on the 25th September 1866.^[9] Much of the population of Axedale was of Irish origin, and tensions between Catholics and Protestants were articulated through the establishment and development of separate facilities for both religions. Facilities in the town were established to cater for, or became associated with, either the Catholic or Protestant communities, so much so that Axedale duplicated its cemeteries, hotels and schools in order to cater for both sectors.^[10]

Religious facilities were first established in Axedale with the opening of the St. Mary's Catholic Church in Axedale in 1862. The Catholics also ran a school from the Church, catering for the children of waves of settlers that continued to arrive in the area. By the end of the 1860s, pressure from the Common School Committee led to their acquisition of Crown Land, that was gazetted as the site for the Axedale Common School in 1869. The school opened in 1871.^[11] Alongside the establishment of religious and educational facilities was the construction of the Axedale Police Station, which opened in 1866.

The rich soils of the Campaspe River allowed for the continuation of farming as a mainstay for the area. Alongside the maintenance of agricultural and pastoral pursuits, residents of Axedale developed other industries. Napthali Ingham established a bluestone quarry on his land in the 1860s, and a further quarry was opened in by Riley, Brazier and Nelson

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in 1905.[12] Vineyards and orchards were important developments in the district.

Development of the district and its industries were further enhanced with the construction of the railway from Bendigo to Heathcote, which opened in 1884. The railway was vital means of connecting a number of small towns in the district. The station at Axedale was opened on the 1st October 1888, and continued to be serviced until its closure during the Second World War.[13]

In the 1930s, construction of a weir at the Campaspe River was commenced, though work was suspended at the height of the depression.[14] Proximity to Lake Eppalock, constructed in 1960-65, also proved a source of employment for the town.

The marked development of the region culminated in the decision in 1994 to amalgamate the Shire of Strathfieldsaye with nearby Shires to form the City of Greater Bendigo.

History of Police Station (former), 33 William Street, Axedale

The allotment at 33 William Street formed part of the survey of the township of Axedale, that was laid out in 1856. The house was built on Allotment 9 of Section 12, which is marked out in Parish plans as a reserve for police purposes.[15] The first police station in Axedale was opened on the 25th February 1866, and information gathered from the community confirms it was located at 33 William Street.[16] Stables were located at the rear of the property, from which mounted police embarked on their daily rounds.[17] The officer in charge was John Wright, mounted constable, though there was a rapid succession of officers in this position.

The 1866 police station was later demolished and replaced with a standard design police quarters that was built in 1892 and opened on the 14th June that year. Jerson and Beardmore were employed as the builders on the project, and construction cost a total of £329.16.10 to complete.[18] The Police Gazette of 1930 records the building as a five roomed weatherboard dwelling with iron roof. There was also a three stall stables and single cell lockup extant on the one acre allotment.[19]

In 1974, the Axedale Police Department undertook the construction of a new station and residence. Upon completion, the premises at 33 William Street were vacated. The lot was sold to Richard Denehy Tyndall and Vera Tyndall, of Bendigo, on the 10th December 1974. Following Vera's death, Richard Tyndall remained the sole proprietor of the property until his death on the 3rd February 2001. The property was thereafter granted to Christopher Richard Tyndall of Bendigo.

[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.

[3] Spreadborough and 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] Hewat, Tim (1983), p. 107.

[7] Whitworth, Robert P. (1879). *Bailliere's Victorian Gazeteer and Road Guide*, F. F. Bailliere, Melbourne, p. 17.

[8] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), *Accent on Axedale*, Axedale, Victoria, p. 8.

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- [9] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 21.
- [10] Earth Tech Engineering Pty Ltd (2002), *Heathcote - Strathfieldsaye Thematic History*, City of Greater Bendigo, Bendigo, p. 10.
- [11] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 16.
- [12] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 21.
- [13] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 28.
- [14] Hewat, Tim (1983), p. 115.
- [15] Plan of the Parish of Heathcote, dated 18/12/1906.
- [16] Axedale Community Consultation, 20/9/07; Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), *Accent on Axedale*, p. 21,.
- [17] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 21.
- [18] Survey of Historic Police Buildings, Department of Planning and Housing Historic Buildings Branch.
- [19] Victorian Government Gazette, 2/6/1930.

Secondary sources

Earth Tech Engineering Pty Ltd (2002), *Heathcote - Strathfieldsaye Thematic History*, City of Greater Bendigo, Bendigo.

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

Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (?), *Accent on Axedale*, Axedale, Victoria.

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 Historic Buildings Branch.

Description

Physical Description

33 William Street is a late Victorian timber framed weatherboard building designed as a police station and residence in the English Queen Anne Revival style. It has large red and cream brick dichrome chimneys. The building has a projecting gable and a tripartite window with a window hood. The verandah has slender timber posts and timber fretwork brackets. A wing at the rear appears to be a recent addition but is done in corresponding style. There is timber fretwork to the gable

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end . There is an outbuilding with gable roof and built of weatherboard that appears to be the three stall stable . It is unclear if the lock-up is still extant.

Physical Condition

Fair

Conservation Policy

None Specified

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Former Axedale Police Station of 1892, including all the fabric of timber framed weatherboard house and the stable, is significant.

How is it significant?

The Former Axedale Police Station site is of local historic and aesthetic significance for the City of Greater Bendigo.

Why is it significant?

The Former Axedale Police Station at 33 William Street is of historic significance for its use for police purposes for more than one hundred years. Its use as a Police Station and residence dates from 1866 until its sale as a private residence to the Tyndall family in 1974. The present building is the second police station to occupy the site. *Criterion A*

Designed in 1892 the former Axedale Police Station is a good example of a late Victorian timber police station. It is relatively intact apart from a complementary extension, and displays a number of architectural features of the period including a projecting gable with strapped gable end, tripartite window with a window hood, large brick dichrome chimneys and a verandah with slender timber posts and timber fretwork brackets. The weatherboard police stables is also significant. *Criterion D*

Assessment Against Criteria

Criteria:

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

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

Criterion C Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history,

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

Criterion D Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

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

Criterion G 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 their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

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

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 33 William Street, Axedale 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.'