

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Name AXEDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL NO. 1008

Address 81 High Street AXEDALE

Grading 2008 Local

Building Type School - State (public)

Assessment by Context Pty Ltd



Recommended Heritage Protection VHR No HI No PS Yes

Architectural Style Victorian Period (1851-1901), Federation/Edwardian Period (1902-c.1918)

Maker / Builder Moore, W, Milburn

Integrity

Altered

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

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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.^[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

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established a bluestone quarry on his land in the 1860s, and a further quarry was opened in by Riley, Brazier and Nelson 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.

Contextual History of Education in the formers Shires of McIvor and Strathfieldsaye

Prior to 1873, education in Victoria was optional, fee-paying and primarily carried out by religious institutions. Education was in some way regulated by the Port Phillip Denominational Schools Board, which had been established in 1848, and was responsible for the funding and establishment of Church schools.[15] In the districts around Bendigo, education was similarly associated with the establishment of religious facilities. Providing an alternative to religious education, the Heathcote National School was established in 1853, along with a number of other private institutions that were operating in the area.[16]

Governor LaTrobe spearheaded the establishment of the National Board of Education in Victoria in 1851, which owned and built "vested" schools throughout the state. While designs were based on those used by the Education Committee of the Privy Council in London, they were not standardised. [17]

The Common Schools Act of 1862 manifested a desire to amalgamate schools and do away with denominational influence. Schools were publicly owned and numbered from 1863. Free, compulsory and secular education was introduced with the Education Act of 1872 and became operational the following year. The Education Act became the impetus for the standardisation of designs for schools. Responsibility for their construction rested initially with the Department of Education Architectural Division, but was transferred to the Public Works Department by 1883. [18] One room schools were built according to a series of standardised plans which were determined by the amount and type of seating provided, and there were models for thirty, forty and sixty students.[19]

Development of educational facilities was primarily tied with the development of towns themselves. The first state school constructed in the former shires of Strathfieldsaye and McIvor was built at Heathcote in 1869, and later Mia Mia in 1873.[20] Many of the schools constructed in the district were small portable timber constructions, built in accordance with standard designs by the Education Department and later the Public Works Department. As the population of the small townships around Bendigo increased, so did the need for the provision of schools. Often redundant portable schools were brought in from other locations, and similar circumstances sometimes befell portable schools built for the local McIvor and Strathfieldsaye communities.

The construction of the railway line from Bendigo to Heathcote in the 1880s opened by the district for both import of people and export of produce, and had solidified the nature of many of the smaller townships in the vicinity. This meant the establishment of more permanent educational facilities for some towns, and the establishment of rudimentary ones for others. By the turn of the century a number of regional communities boasted brick schools in place of their previous portable timber facilities. Small portable schools were often extended and renovated, with additional classrooms being added as the need arose.

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History of Axedale State School No. 1008

Construction of Axedale Common School No. 1008 began in September 1870. By October, the project had received some government funding. Mr. C. Hayes was awarded the contract to manufacture bricks for the school, a process that was carried out at an allotment on Mitchell Street. Hayes' charged 30,000 bricks at the price of 23/- per thousand, while the contract for the bricklaying was given to a Mr Milbourn at the sum of £21. Mr W. Moore was the carpenter, painter and plumber for the project, and was contracted for the sum of £17/16/017. Materials for the construction, including the timber and iron were purchased from a Mr Cooper. The new Common School building was first occupied on March 27 1871, with Mr Pearce as the Head Teacher.[21] Like other facilities in Axedale, tensions between Catholic and Protestant communities had played out in the push towards the establishment of educational facilities.

Aid was formally granted for the school in 1871, incorporating a teacher's salary, and £95 for building costs and furniture.[22]

In May 1872, an application was written for aid of £60 towards building a residence on the school site, and in June a request was made by a Mr Strachan for a residence of a 'four room cottage including kitchen, weatherboard with a shingle or iron roof'.[23] In October 1873 a quote from C.H George, Railway Timber Yard, in Sandhurst was accepted, and in May the following year the residence was completed.[24] The site was extended in November to also contain allotments 6 and 8 of the Township of Axedale, surrounding the initial school land of allotment 721.

The school sustained some damage during a particularly harsh storm in 1878, which destroyed the outside student toilet.[25] No further repairs or alterations to the property are noted until 1896 when it was reported that urgent and extensive repairs were needed to be undertaken on the residence.[26] In 1906 an application to have the gallery removed from the school was filed.

In 1908 the secretary of the Committee applied for the allotments 1 and 2 of block 6 to be revoked and sold by public auction, which took place in 1909. In 1913, it was decided that the 30 by 18ft room that was in use for the teaching staff of three and the sixty two children was inadequate. The following year the School Inspector suggested that this structure be extended by a further 10 ft[27]. The District Architect recommended the building be widened instead of lengthened, for an estimated cost of £39,527. Contracts for the renovation of the room were let in 1915 and the work was completed on the 12th June that year.

In the interim, the Presbyterian Church was used as a school room for the cost of £1 per week. Builders Hume and Iser were contracted to build a shelter shed at the school in 1915, for the cost of £57/5/0.[28]

The neglected teachers residence was removed in October, after the quarry workers who were renting it moved out.[29] An application for the construction of a new teacher's residence was made in 1917, the first of many requests over the years. It was not until 1950 that the residence was given approval.[30]

On the 22nd August 1951 plans were drawn up for the residence, which included a garage. The work was carried out by L.R Ronald at the cost of £3,588/5/2. The new residence was completed by August 1952.[31]

A school bell was mounted on the porch gable in 1923, only to be later destroyed in 1929 by a storm. In 1924 a WW1 machine gun was said to have been mounted on a wall, remaining there until WWII. Electricity was connected to the school site in December 1956, a year after Axedale was connected to electricity.[32]

Painting and repairs were undertaken in 1958.[33]

Due to increased enrolment triggered by the Eppalock Weir construction a request was made for an extra classroom to be

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built on the site. A temporary schoolroom had been relocated to the site to cater for the extra attendances. Additionally, in 1963 a new infant room was built and used on July of that year.[34] It is still in used as a school today by the town of Axedale.

[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 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.

[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] Peterson, Richard (1993), Historic Government Schools: A Comparative Study, Heritage Management Branch, Building Division, Department of Planning and Development, Victoria, p.1.

[16] Earth Tech Engineering Pty Ltd (2002), Heathcote - Strathfieldsaye Thematic History, City of Greater Bendigo, 2002, p. 51.

[17] Peterson, Richard (1993), p.1.

[18] Peterson, Richard (1993), pp. 1 - 3.

[19] Burchell, L. E. (1989), Survey of One Room State Schools 1900 - 1940, L. E. Burchell, Victoria, p. i.

[20] Randell, J. O. (1985), p. 151.

[21] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 17.

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[22] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 16.

[23] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 17.

[24] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 17.

[25] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 17.

[26] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 17.

[27] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 17.

[28] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 18.

[29] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 18.

[30] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 18.

[31] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 18.

[32] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 18.

[33] Axedale State School No. 1008 Painting and Repairs to School and Residence, Public Works Department Plans, SSN 1008.1, Public Records Office, Victoria.

[34] Centenary and Back to Axedale Committee (1970), p. 19.

Primary sources

Axedale State School No. 1008 Painting and Repairs to School and Residence, Public Works Department Plans, SSN 1008.1, Public Records Office, Victoria.

Whitworth, Robert P. (1879). *Bailliere's Victorian Gazeteer and Road Guide*, F. F. Bailliere, Melbourne.

Secondary sources

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

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

Heritage Victoria, (n.d), *Eppalock weir*, Hermes entry 6482

Relevant Historical Australian Themes

8. Building Community Life

8.1 Educating people

Description

Physical Description

Axedale Primary School comprises a gable roofed brick classroom built in brick c.1870 with a brick addition of one additional classroom of 31'6" x 24', a cloak room and porch built c.1914. The roof form is half hipped, and there are a series of six roof ventilators arrayed across the roof. The windows are multi-paned double hung sashes with hopper sashes above. The ceiling is coved and interior fittings included a corner fireplace and a teacher's platform. The original building has undergone a number of changes including alterations to the size and nature of window openings. A new covered way has been joined to the porch. Other buildings on the site include a weatherboard teacher's residence built c.1950. Additional classrooms have been added to the school and these are of light timber construction in a standard design.

Physical Condition

Good

Conservation Policy

Guidelines (Specific)

The following specific conservation actions are recommended, should the opportunity arise:

Face brickwork should not be painted.

Windows could be replaced in their original sizes.

Comparative Analysis

There are a number of schools within the study area and Big Hill Primary School is a more intact example of an 1870s brick school designed by the Education Department.

Statement of Significance

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What is significant?

The Axedale Primary School including all the fabric of the 1870s brick building and the 1914 addition is significant. Other light timber construction buildings are not significant. The teachers' residence has association with the school but is not a significant building.

How is it significant?

The Axedale Primary School is of local historic and social significance for the City of Greater Bendigo.

Why is it significant?

The Axedale Primary School is historically significant for its association with the provision of early educational facilities, which had an important role in the developing community. *Criterion A*

When compared to the construction of timber schools, and the use of portable schools in other McIvor and Strathfieldsaye communities, the permanence of the brick school building reflects the ambitions of Axedale as an enduring community, despite early religious tensions.

The school is of social significance for the Axedale community as a place of continuous education since the early 1870s. *Criterion G*

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.

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.

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Recommendations 2008

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

Other Recommendations

It is recommended that the Primary School at 81 High Street, Axedale be added as an individual place to the Heritage Overlay of the Greater Bendigo City Planning Scheme with the schedule entry as shown above. The extent of registration is defined by a map. The recommended Incorporated Plan is the 'Permit Exemption Incorporated Plan - Former Shires of McIvor and Strathfieldsaye.'