

## HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

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**Name** Outbuilding Western Vale  
**Address** 358 Brownes Lane AXEDALE **Grading** 2008 Local  
**Building Type** Private studio/outbuilding  
**Assessment by** Context Pty Ltd




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

**Architectural Style** Victorian Period (1851-1901)  
Vernacular

**Maker / Builder** Unknown

### 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 large party in 1836, on the homeward leg of a journey to Portland Bay. Impressed by what he perceived as the bounty of

# HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

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the land, Mitchell named the area *Australia Felix*.<sup>[1]</sup>

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.<sup>[2]</sup>

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.<sup>[3]</sup>

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.<sup>[4]</sup> 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.<sup>[5]</sup>

In 1864, Strathfieldsaye Shire was divided into three wards; Mandurang, Strathfieldsaye and Axedale.<sup>[6]</sup>

## 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.<sup>[7]</sup> 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.<sup>[8]</sup>

Axedale was proclaimed a district on the 20th August 1861, and then a Shire on the 25th September 1866.<sup>[9]</sup> 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.<sup>[10]</sup>

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.<sup>[11]</sup> 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

# HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

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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]

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

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 Outbuilding, 358 Brownes Lane, Axedale**

The outbuilding at 358 Brownes Lane is built on part of allotment 13a section B in the Parish of Weston, on the outskirts of the Township of Axedale, that was granted by the Crown to Patrick Browne on the 12th July 1883.[15] The land had been previously subject to a lease by Michael Browne under sections 19 and 20 of the Land Act of 1869 and Patrick Browne was granted the land as the administrator of Michael Browne's will.[16] Michael Browne was also the owner of an adjacent 40 acre allotment that he had been granted on the 28th April 1875, and a further 119 acre allotment that he was also leasing under sections 19 and 20 of the Land Act. It is likely that he held the lease over lot 13a from around this time. Michael Browne probably built the outbuilding at 358 Brownes Lane during the period of his lease, which may have dated from prior to the 1870s.

John Brown became the owner of lot 13a on the 13th April 1885 and despite the altered spelling, it is likely that he was related to Patrick and Michael Browne. John Brown was a farmer, and would have used the outbuildings at 358 Brownes Lane in conjunction with his farm. As well as lot 13A, John Brown also acquired lots 2A, 13 and 16 of section B, which gave him a total holding of land of over 450 acres.[17]

John Brown took out a mortgage to Henry O'Neill on the 19th May 1892, and it is likely that the capital raised by this venture was used to further develop the property. Brown went on to take out a total of six further mortgages over the following 35 years.[18]

John Brown died on the 13th April 1940, and the probate of his will was granted to the Sandhurst and Northern District Trustees Executors and Agency Company on the 20th January 1941. Michael Francis Browne, presumably his son, became the owner of his property at Browne's lane on the 20th January 1941, and he continued to run the farm there until his death in 1959. His widow, Eileen Kathleen Browne owned the property until 1971, when title was transferred to Michael Vincent Brown and Beatrice Mary Browne as joint proprietors.[19]

[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.

[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.

# HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

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[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] Certificate of Title, Vol. 1490, Fol. 956.

[16] Plan of the Parish of Weston, undated; Certificate of Title Vol 1490, Fol. 956.

[17] Plan of the Parish of Weston, undated

[18] Certificate of Title, Vol. 1490, Fol. 956.

[19] Certificate of Title, Vol. 1490, Fol. 956.

## 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.

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## Relevant Historical Australian Themes

Transforming the Land

# HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

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## Description

### Physical Description

Western Vale is a farm complex on the outskirts of Axedale and the locality of Brownes Lane contains several farms with buildings constructed of stone. Western Vale at 358 Brownes Lane is a farm complex containing a stone outbuilding set amongst more contemporary structures as part of a farm complex. It is built from random rubble bluestone with the unshaped stones in an unsophisticated manner. The building has a timber loft floor over joists. There is a stone chimney and small windows indicating that this may have been an early residence associated with the farm at Western Vale. The stone walls have been painted internally, and there is a wall that appears to be composed of vertical logs or bark. Although surrounded by verandah structures of later construction, this building is of interest for the vertical timber wall and the loft structure which is rare in such a small building. Other surrounding buildings on this site are not of interest.

### Physical Condition

Fair

## Conservation Policy

Stone work should be repaired when required with stone matching in size and shape.

The internal timber structure should be retained.

## Statement of Significance

*What is significant?*

The stone outbuilding probably built c.1869 at Western Vale, 358 Browns Lane is significant. The house and other buildings of the farm complex are not significant.

*How is it significant?*

The stone outbuilding is of local historic and technical significance.

*Why is it significant?*

The stone outbuilding at Western Vale is of historic significance for its association with the Browne family for its complete history since 1869. *Criterion A*

The building is of technical significance for its demonstration of early building technology in the form of vertical logs and for its loft floor which is rare in the study area. *Criterion B*

## Assessment Against Criteria

### HERCON CRITERIA

# HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

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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**

Yes

**Internal Alteration Controls**

No

**Tree Controls**

No

**Fences & Outbuildings**

Yes

**Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted**

Yes

**Incorporated Plan**

Yes

**Aboriginal Heritage Place**

No

## Other Recommendations

It is recommended that 358 Brownes Lane, Axedale be added as an individual place to the Heritage Overlay of the Greater Bendigo City Planning Scheme with the schedule entry as shown below. 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.'