

# RESIDENCE



BUILDING SOHE 2008



1 39 finch street beechworth  
front view sep1983



39 finch street beechworth  
side view sep1983



Front



Back entrance and 1862  
kitchen



Rear, 1867 kitchen on left



view from north, kitchen on  
right, infilled breezeway  
between it and house



Entrance in corner



kitchen and bathroom right

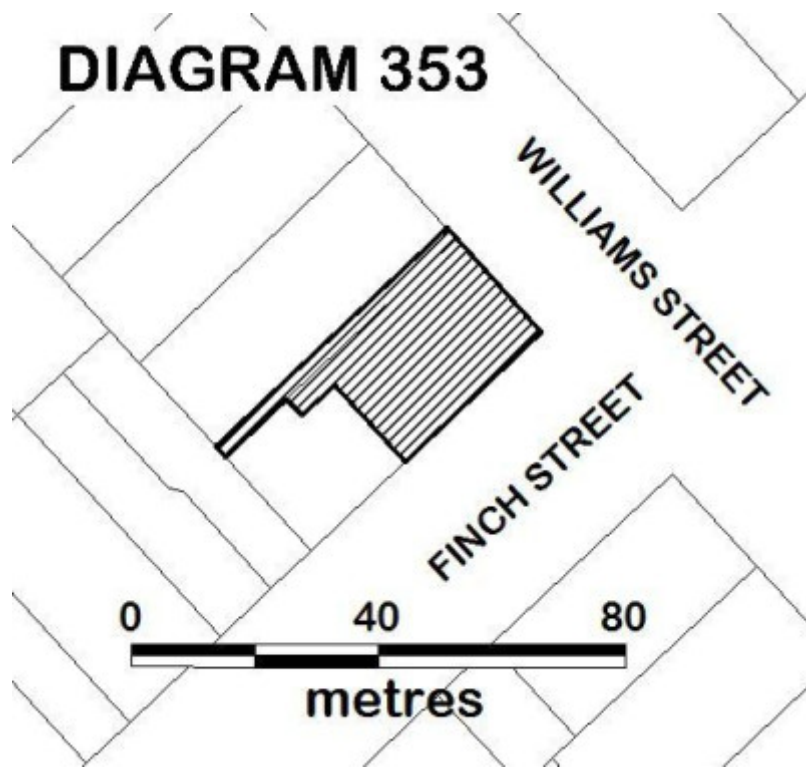


Diagram 353.JPG

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**Location**

39 FINCH STREET BEECHWORTH, INDIGO SHIRE

**Municipality**

INDIGO SHIRE

**Level of significance**

Registered

**Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number**

H0353

**Heritage Overlay Numbers**

HO35

**VHR Registration**

October 9, 1974

**Amendment to Registration**

June 11, 2015

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 4, 2015

What is significant?

The Residence at 39 Finch Street, Beechworth consisting of a brick house and outbuilding built c1862 and the later kitchen building, now joined to the house, which was added in 1867.

#### *History Summary*

The Residence at 39 Finch Street was built c1862 for Alexander Greig. The ratebooks note that in 1861-62 the land was cultivated and fenced, and by 1863 there were two buildings on the site: a 26ft x 17ft [7.9 x 5.2m] brick structure with a shingle roof, and a separate 13ft x 9ft [4.0 x 2.7m] kitchen of similar construction. Another 9ft x 17ft [2.7 x 5.2m] brick structure was added in 1867 closer to the house, and was later used as the kitchen. An 1875 photo shows the house with a verandah at the front, which by the 1970s had been removed, but a new verandah has since been added. Greig was a master builder who came from England to the goldfields in the late 1850s, and set up a business as a building contractor. In the 1860s he established the firm of Greig & Wilson, dealing in hardware and builders' supplies, and became one of Beechworth's most respected early citizens. The house has been used as a residence since it was built.

#### *Description Summary*

The Residence at 39 Finch Street is a single storey Picturesque Gothic Revival style house of rendered brick on granite footings. It has an L-shaped plan and a steeply-pitched gable roof. The two gables each has a small lancet window and decorative timber bargeboards. There is a French window on the ground floor opening into the garden. All the joints in the timber roof frame are mortised or bolted together, with no nails used. The original shingles remain under the corrugated iron roof. There is an attic bedroom in the rear wing of the c1862 house, with a rear balcony added to it in recent years, but there is no attic room in the front section. The original c1862 detached brick kitchen building is a few metres south-west of the back entrance to the house. The 1867 detached brick structure is now used as the kitchen and bathroom, and the original open breezeway separating it from the house has been roofed. The original front verandah has been replaced.

How is it significant?

The Residence at 39 Finch Street is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A

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

Criterion D

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects.

Why is it significant?

The Residence at 39 Finch Street, Beechworth is significant at the State level for the following reasons:

The Residence at 39 Finch Street is historically significant as a largely intact example of a residence dating from the gold rush period. It is an outstanding example of the modest houses built in rural Victoria in the mid-nineteenth century, and assists in an understanding of housing conditions in rural Victoria during that time.

[Criterion A]

The Residence at 39 Finch Street is architecturally significant as a largely intact example of the Picturesque Gothic Revival style houses built in country Victoria in the gold rush period of the mid-nineteenth century. The kitchen buildings demonstrate the contemporary practice of constructing kitchens detached from the rest of the house. The house is architecturally significant for its construction techniques, especially in the roof framing, and for its Gothic Revival style detailing. [Criterion D]

The Residence at 39 Finch Street is also significant for the following reasons, but not at the State level:

The Residence at 39 Finch Street is one of Beechworth's oldest surviving houses and is a reminder of the town's gold rush prosperity. Built in c 1862 and added to in 1867, it demonstrates the typical form of many of Beechworth's early houses. The house is significant for its association with Alexander Greig, a master builder who came from England to the goldfields in the late 1850s, and became one of Beechworth's most respected early citizens. The house is prominently located on a corner site and is an essential element of the Beechworth streetscape.

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### Specific Exemptions:

It should be noted that Permit Exemptions can be granted at the time of registration (under s.42(4) of the Heritage Act). Permit Exemptions can also be applied for and granted after registration (under s.66 of the Heritage Act)

#### General Condition 1

All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.

#### General Condition 2

Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object,

then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible.

### General Condition 3

All works should be informed by Conservation Management Plans prepared for the place. The Executive Director is not bound by any Conservation Management Plan, and permits still must be obtained for works suggested in any Conservation Management Plan.

### General Condition 4

Nothing in this determination prevents the Heritage Council from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

### General Condition 5

Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the relevant responsible authority, where applicable.

## SPECIFIC PERMIT EXEMPTIONS

### Exterior

- . Minor repairs and maintenance which replace like with like.
- . Removal of non-original items such as air conditioners, pipe work, ducting, wiring, antennae, aerials etc and making good in a manner not detrimental to the cultural heritage significance of the place.
- . Installation or removal of external fixtures and fittings such as hot water services and taps a manner not detrimental to the cultural heritage significance of the place.
- . Repair and removal of non-original fences and gates in a manner not detrimental to the cultural heritage significance of the place.
- . Installation or repair of damp-proofing by either injection method or grouted pocket method in a manner which does not affect the cultural heritage significance of the place.

### Interior

- . Painting of previously painted walls and ceilings provided that preparation or painting does not remove evidence of any original paint or other decorative scheme.
- . Installation, removal or replacement of non-original carpets and/or flexible floor coverings.
- . Installation, removal or replacement of non-original curtain tracks, rods and blinds.
- . Installation, removal or replacement of hooks, nails and other devices for the hanging of mirrors, paintings and other wall mounted art.
- . Demolition or removal of the following non-original features: stud/partition walls, suspended ceilings or wall linings (including plasterboard, laminate and Masonite), flush panel or part-glazed laminated doors.
- . Removal of non-original door and window furniture including, hinges, locks, knobsets and sash lifts.
- . Refurbishment of existing bathrooms, toilets and kitchens including removal, installation or replacement of sanitary fixtures and associated piping, mirrors, wall and floor coverings.
- . Removal of tiling or concrete slabs in wet areas provided there is no damage to or alteration of original structure or fabric.
- . Installation, removal or replacement of ducted, hydronic or concealed radiant type heating provided that the installation does not damage existing skirtings and architraves and that the central plant is concealed, and is done in a manner not detrimental to the cultural heritage significance of the place.

. Installation, removal or replacement of electrical wiring provided that all new wiring is fully concealed and any original light switches, pull cords, push buttons or power outlets are retained in-situ. Note: if wiring original to the place was carried in timber conduits then the conduits should remain in situ.

. Installation of new built-in cupboards providing no alteration to the structure is required.

## Theme

2. Peopling Victoria's places and landscapes 6. Building towns cities and the garden state

Construction dates 1862, 1867,  
Heritage Act Categories Registered place,  
Hermes Number 102  
Property Number

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## History

### Contextual history

#### History of Beechworth:

Beechworth owes its existence to the discovery of gold in 1852. The Beechworth area was first settled by squatters from 1837, but the discovery of gold resulted in a rush of miners to the area, with about 8,000 arriving by November that year. The Ovens was an important river system in north-east Victoria and gave its name to the goldfields in this area. The town developed around the Gold Commissioner's Camp, established in 1852 on the granite hill on the north bank of Spring Creek. The township was first known as Mayday Hills, but when surveyed in 1853, it was named Beechworth. The main overland route between Melbourne and Sydney passed through the town until the 1870s (when the railway was built further to the west), and until then Beechworth was one of the richest towns in Victoria and the financial and administrative centre of the north-east.

Until the mid-1850s most buildings in the town were constructed of wood, bark or canvas, but following the election of a town council in 1856 building regulations were introduced. Many of the town's major buildings were erected during the following five years, including the Ovens District Hospital (1856, VHR H358) and the Burke Museum (VHR H345, begun in 1857 by the Young Men's Association as a hall and library). The first town hall was built in 1859. By the early 1860s a group of important administrative buildings, known as the Beechworth Justice Precinct (VHR H1464), had been completed along the south side of Ford Street, and a large gaol (VHR H1549) was begun to the north of this in 1858. The Beechworth Lunatic Asylum, later the Mayday Hills Hospital (VHR H1864-67) was built in 1864-67, and the landmark post office (VHR H867) was completed in 1870.

The Ovens gold rushes peaked in 1857, and during the following two decades the population of Beechworth decreased (though the last mining company in the district only closed in 1956). Despite the decline in the gold industry the town was sustained well into the twentieth century by the presence of the government institutions founded in the 1850s and 1860s: the asylum and the gaol.

Tourism has now become a major industry in Beechworth. Tourism began in the 1880s with the town's reputation as a health resort and picturesque beauty spot. The declining prosperity of the town had the advantage that the post-World War II development that led to the destruction of so much of Victoria's nineteenth century fabric between the 1950s and 1970s was avoided. At this time there was an increasing awareness of the importance of Victoria's early history and heritage. In the 1960s the National Trust was active in classifying Beechworth's early buildings, and efforts began to restore buildings which had fallen into disrepair. The retention of much of the town's historic character has now made it a popular tourist destination.

#### Beechworth's early houses

With the introduction of building regulations in 1856, the standard of buildings in Beechworth improved markedly, and new houses increasingly replaced the tents which had been used as residences even in the central part of the town. The first brick houses had appeared early in 1855 in Camp Street, but after 1856 increasing numbers of brick and stone homes as well as rows of weatherboard cottages appeared. During the 1860s-70s, new houses continued to be built and many early makeshift houses were converted into

more substantial structures. The number of houses in the town was about 750 in 1868. Camp, Finch and Loch streets were preferred for residences, and gradually filled with rows of houses of weatherboard or brick, and occasionally granite, with gables or hipped roofs, often decorated with ornamental bargeboards in the gables or iron lacework on the verandahs. Occasional grander residences were built.

#### History of place

According to ratebooks, the site of 39 Finch Street was owned in 1856 by J Manson. The 1861-62 ratebooks note that the land was by then owned by Alex Greig and was cultivated and fenced. The Residence at 39 Finch Street was built in 1862 for Alexander Greig. The 1862-63 the ratebooks describe the buildings on the site as a 26ft x 17ft brick structure with a shingle roof, and a 13ft x 9ft kitchen of similar construction. Another 9ft x 17ft brick structure was added to the side in 1867 (now the kitchen and bathroom). An 1875 photo shows the house with a verandah at the front (this was later removed).

Greig was a master builder who came from England to the goldfields in the late 1850s, and set up a business as a building contractor. In the 1860s he established the firm of Greig & Wilson, dealing in hardware and builders' supplies. He became one of Beechworth's most respected early citizens.

The house has been used as a residence since it was built.

#### KEY REFERENCES USED TO PREPARE ASSESSMENT

Carole Woods, *Beechworth A Titan's Field*, North Melbourne 1985.

Peter Freeman Pty Ltd, 'Indigo Shire Heritage Study', vol 2, June 2000.

Transcriptions of Beechworth ratebooks (1856-70) held in Burke Museum.

#### Plaque Citation

This Picturesque Gothic style house and detached kitchen were built in c1862 by the master builder Alexander Greig, a respected early citizen of Beechworth, and it was added to in 1867. It is typical of the modest houses of the period.

#### Extent of Registration

##### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act 1995, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by modifying Heritage Register Number H353 in the category described as Heritage Place.

Residence  
39 Finch Street  
Beechworth  
Indigo Shire

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 353 encompassing all of Lot 1 on Title Plan 11356.

Dated 11 June 2015  
TIM SMITH  
Executive Director

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*