

## BEECHWORTH JUSTICE PRECINCT



BEECHWORTH JUSTICE  
PRECINCT SOHE 2008



1 beechworth courthouse ford  
street beechworth front view  
nov99



beechworth courthouse ford  
street beechworth front view  
dec1984



Police Station Ford Street  
Beechworth Front View  
November 99



Lands Office Ford Street  
Beechworth Front View  
December 1984



beechworth courthouse ford  
street beechworth side view  
dec1984



Police Stables Ford Street  
Beechworth November 99



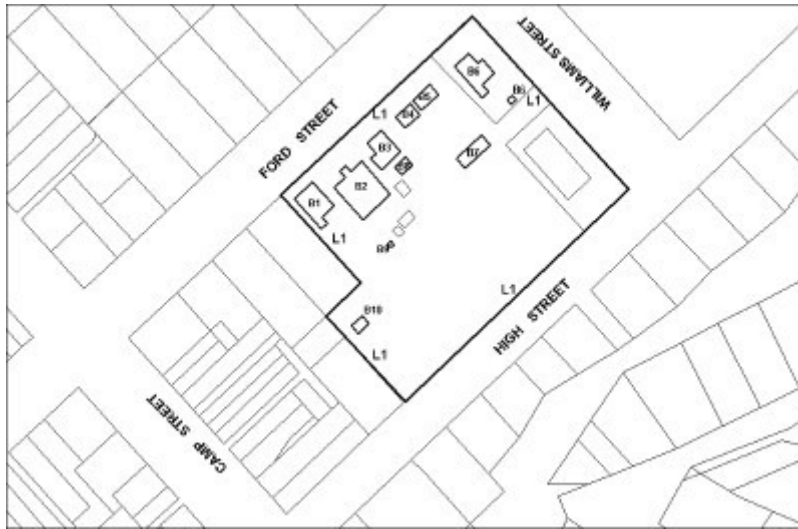
After Photograph - Reference  
F3879 2016



Before Photograph -  
Reference F3879 2014



During Photograph -  
Reference F3879 2015



beechworth justice precinct plan

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## Location

FORD STREET WILLIAMS STREET HIGH STREET BEECHWORTH, INDIGO SHIRE

## Municipality

INDIGO SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1464

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO47

## VHR Registration

August 20, 1982

## Amendment to Registration

July 20, 2000

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 8, 2000

What is significant?

Gold was discovered at Beechworth in 1852 and the township of Beechworth was proclaimed on 1 July 1853. On 23 August 1856 the Municipal District of Beechworth was proclaimed and the first meeting of its council was held 10 October. Beechworth tapped the river trade as well as benefiting from being on the main overland route between Melbourne and Sydney. As a result it quickly became the administrative centre of Victoria's north east. Originally forming part of the government camp, the site on which the Justice Precinct is situated, had officially been gazetted as a police reserve by 1856. In the period 1857-60 numerous weatherboard government offices, which were constructed when gold was first discovered were replaced by a more substantial complex of public buildings, constructed of local honey-coloured granite. Most of these early granite buildings still survive and included in the Justice Precinct are; the former Telegraph Office (1858), Court House (1859), Police Station (1858 originally Sub-Treasury and Gold Office), Chinese Protectors Office (1858) and the Gold Wardens Office (1859). Also surviving on the site, are the, brick Stables (1870), portable timber Lock-Up, and brick Police Residence 1912-13. Along with other notorious criminals including other members of his family, Ned Kelly appeared before the Beechworth court during the 1870s on robbery and assault charges. What is now known as the Police Paddock also originally formed part of the government camp and once contained Police Barracks, Superintendent's Quarters, Offices, Officer's Quarters, Offices, Police Kitchen and a stone Lock-Up. Records demonstrate that most of these buildings were on the site in 1859 and constructed of timber. The only of these remaining is the stone Lock Up which was constructed in 1867 and has since been partly demolished. The Police Superintendent in Beechworth during the 1850s was Robert O'Hara Burke, who was later to become famous for his exploration expedition with William John Wills. He died in 1861 while on that expedition.

How is it significant?

The Beechworth Justice Precinct is of historical, architectural, aesthetic and archaeological significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Beechworth Justice Precinct is of historical significance as activity on the site dates from the time when Beechworth was the focus of Australia's richest goldfields and the administrative centre for north eastern Victoria. The remarkably intact collection of police and justice buildings dating from 1857 to 1913 reflect the site's continuing use and public importance and demonstrate many aspects of the history of law enforcement in Victoria. Being intact as a group and so little altered individually gives them great importance. The Courthouse is historically significant as it was once a branch of the Supreme Court and has a long judicial history well documented by extant charge books. It has significant associations with the bushranger Ned Kelly who was tried in the building. The site also has associations with the famous explorer Robert O'Hara Burke, who was Police Superintendent at Beechworth during the 1850s.

The group of five distinctive granite buildings facing Ford Street is aesthetically significant for the fundamental contribution it makes to the streetscape of Beechworth. It is a rare example of such a collection of buildings. These five buildings are of architectural significance for their construction of unusual honey coloured granite, which was collected locally. The buildings demonstrate early stonemasonry techniques and fine craftsmanship. The Warden and Chinese Protector's Offices are rare surviving examples of their type and period, with the Chinese Protector's Office, in particular being a unique example of a building associated with that specific function. The Telegraph Office is also a rare surviving example of its type in Victoria. The Police Stables and the Police Residence are fine intact examples of their type, and contribute considerably to representing the continuing history of the site.

The Police Paddock is of archaeological significance for its potential to yield information on buildings that were once on the site. It originally formed part of the government camp and was gazetted as a Police Reserve by 1856 and contained numerous weatherboard structures associated with law enforcement. Evidence of occupation on this site could provide further insights into the early settlement of Beechworth and its role in Victoria's history. The Police Paddock has been relatively undisturbed and plays an integral part in the understanding of the history of the Justice Precinct.

## 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:

General Conditions:

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.
2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of alterations 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 alteration shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible.
3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it.
4. Nothing in this declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.
5. Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authority where applicable.

Exterior

- \* Minor repairs and maintenance which replace like with like.
- \* Removal of any extraneous items such as air conditioners, pipe work, ducting, wiring, antennae, aerials etc, and making good.

Interiors

- \* Painting of previously painted walls and ceilings provided that preparation or painting does not remove evidence of the original paint or other decorative scheme.
- \* Removal of paint from originally unpainted or oiled joinery, doors, architraves, skirtings and decorative strapping.
- \* 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.

Construction dates 1857,  
Heritage Act Categories Registered place, Registered archaeological place,  
Other Names POLICE STATION, COURT HOUSE,  
Hermes Number 108  
Property Number

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## History

Associated People: Assoc.People NED KELLY  
Assoc.People NED KELLY

## Assessment Against Criteria

### Criterion A

The historical importance, association with or relationship to Victoria's history of the place or object.

### Criterion B

The importance of a place or object in demonstrating rarity or uniqueness.

### Criterion C

The place or object's potential to educate, illustrate or provide further scientific investigation in relation to Victoria's cultural heritage.

### Criterion D

The importance of a place or object in exhibiting the principal characteristics or the representative nature of a place or object as part of a class or type of places or objects.

### Criterion E

The importance of the place or object in exhibiting good design or aesthetic characteristics and/or in exhibiting a richness, diversity or unusual integration of features.

### Criterion F

The importance of the place or object in demonstrating or being associated with scientific or technical innovations or achievements.

### Criterion G

The importance of the place or object in demonstrating social or cultural associations.

### Criterion H

Any other matter which the Council considers relevant to the determination of cultural heritage significance

## Extent of Registration

1. All the buildings marked as follows on Diagram 1464 held by the Executive Director:

B1 Former Telegraph Office 1858

B2 Court House 1858

B3 Police Station (former Sub Treasury and Gold Office) 1857

B4 Chinese Protector's Office 1858

B5 Warden's Office 1859-60

B6 Police Residence 1912-13 and Toilet

B7 Stables 1870

B8 Portable Lock-Up 1907

B9 Dung Pit

B10 Stone Lock-Up 1867

2. All the land marked L1 on Diagram 1464 held by the Executive Director title details to be confirmed.

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*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/>*