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# CROWN LAND OFFICE



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SOHE 2008



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1 crown land office napier  
street st arnaud front view  
aug1984

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## Location

4 NAPIER STREET ST ARNAUD, NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

## Municipality

NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1530

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO4

## VHR Registration

August 20, 1982

## Amendment to Registration

May 23, 1998

## Heritage Listing

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 21, 1999

### **'What is significant?**

The discovery of gold at St Arnaud in 1855 led to the survey of a township the following year. As the town developed through the 1860s, a number of public buildings were erected. The borough of St Arnaud was established in 1863. Apart from serving mining interests, the town also serviced a large pastoral district. From the mid-1860s and through the 1870s, large areas of Crown land in the immediate district and further north became available to selectors under the new Selection Acts. The amended Land Act of 1869 (the Grant Act), which permitted the free selection before survey of 320-acre blocks subject to the selector making certain required improvements to the block, led to a rush for land. As a result, the large squatting runs were broken up and replaced by smaller holdings. Wheat-growing proved particularly successful in the district. Land selection boosted the town's development, and St Arnaud became the administrative centre of a large and thriving farming district.

A local government land office was established by 1874 to administer the large volume of applications under the new land act. A total of 122,000 acres had been selected in the district in the ten months prior to June 1873. A new purpose-built Crown Lands Office was built in 1876. The new building accommodated the local land board, which was responsible for the local administration of the Act. Crown land administration was not always carried out in purpose-built premises, but was often accommodated within other existing public buildings, such as court houses.

Built to a design of the Public Works Department, the Crown Lands Office, St Arnaud, is a simple, four-roomed, red-bricked office building with a hipped slate roof, an entry porch and a granite plinth to the base of the building. There a suggestion of Italianate design in the arched windows, which are highlighted by cream brick. Between two rooms in the buildings, there a small opening in the wall was made to allow for 'conversational intercourse between the clerks and the surveyors'. The new building was described in 1876 as 'somewhat squat, but far from being unhandsome' with 'a splendid foundation of Yowang Hill granite, four rooms and a hall six feet wide'.

### **How is it significant?**

The Crown Land office, St Arnaud, is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

### **Why is it significant?**

The Crown Land office, St Arnaud, is of historical and architectural significance as an example of a purpose-built Crown Land office built in response to the large volume of land selections in the wake of the 1869 Land Act. These are relatively rare in Victoria, as Lands offices were often allocated space within other public buildings, such as court houses or municipal offices.

The Crown Lands Office, St Arnaud, is also of historical significance for its part in opening up the vast Wimmera wheat-belt in the 1870s; as such, it marks the important shift from gold-mining and grazing to wheat-farming.

The Crown Lands Office, St Arnaud, is also of historical and architectural significance significant as one of an important group of public buildings that make up the town's historic public buildings precinct. These include the Post Office (1866), Court House (1866), Police Lockup (1862?) Shire Offices (1902) and Town Hall (1869).

*[Online Data Upgrade Project 2004]*

## 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. General Conditions: 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. Note: All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component.

General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: A Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan.

General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. Minor Works : Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works must submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Construction dates	1876,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	1086
Property Number	

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## History

**The draft statement of significance and the above history were produced as part of an Online Date Upgrade Project 2004. Sources were as follows:**

National Trust of Australia (Vic.). 'Tour Notes of the St Arnaud District', 1974.

Yvonne Palmer, *Track of the Years* (Melbourne University Press 1955), pp. 228, 235.

Walkabout website – <http://www.walkabout.com.au/locations/VICStArnaud.shtml>

Northern Grampians shire - [http://www.ngshire.vic.gov.au/tourism/starnaud\\_history.html](http://www.ngshire.vic.gov.au/tourism/starnaud_history.html)

## Extent of Registration

Amendment of Register of Government Buildings

St Arnaud Town

Crown Land Office, Napier Street, St Arnaud.

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No. G39 12 October 1988 p.3093]

Transferred to the Victorian Heritage Register 23 May 1998 (2 years after the proclamation of the Heritage Act 1995 pursuant to the transitional provisions of the Act)

*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/>*