

# FORMER IRYMPLE RAILWAY STATION BUILDING



August 2022 Former Irymple Railway Station Building



2022, Former Irymple Railway Station Building, platform side (signal not from Irymple)



2022, Type A ventilated roof on the Former Irymple Railway Station building showing the batted timber inner roof and ventilator



2022, Interior of lobby with ticket windows and remnant walls



2020, Lobby and doors to the General and Ladies' waiting rooms



2020, Chimney and window sunshades



2020, ticket window in lobby



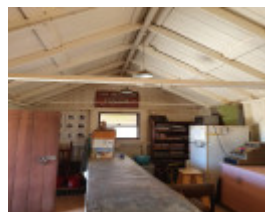
2022, Station building at Red Cliffs after 2001 restoration



2022, Chimney side of building and edge of modern picnic shelter



2020, interior of roof



Interior of office with parcels counter at Red Cliffs



2022, Ticket window and counter and fireplace inside the office at Irymple



2022, Early electrical equipment on varnished plywood panelling with interpretation and non-original telephone and red Safeworking (stet) instruments.



Extent diagram

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## Location

2 MILLEWA ROAD RED CLIFFS, MILDURA RURAL CITY

## Municipality

MILDURA RURAL CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2440

## VHR Registration

December 7, 2023

## Heritage Listing

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - November 30, 2023

## What is significant?

The Former Irymple Railway Station Building is a timber building with a wide verandah constructed ca.1921 at Irymple to service the railway staff and people who were drawn to the area by the rapidly expanding fruit industry. It is made from four portable, partially prefabricated, timber units joined together to form one building. The office component of the building has a double ventilated roof. It was moved to Red Cliffs in 2002.

## How is it significant?

The Former Irymple Railway Station Building is of historical and architectural 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 B

Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects 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 Former Irymple Railway Station Building is historically significant for its association with the extension of the railway network into the Wimmera and Mallee regions in the early twentieth century, including to Irymple where it provided transport services for people, freight, parcels and fruit products.

(Criterion A)

The Former Irymple Railway Station Building is historically significant for its association with the period following the 1890s depression where the Victorian Railways were forced to operate under budget restrictions. These led to the development of standardised portable, partially prefabricated railway station building units which could be adapted and moved to suit the passenger and freight needs of each site.

(Criterion A)

The Former Irymple Railway Station Building is a rare example of a portable railway building with a double ventilated roof.

(Criterion B)

The Former Irymple Railway Station Building is architecturally significant because it is a notable example of the class of portable railway station buildings, displaying the principal characteristics of the class in a way that allows it to be easily understood and including features such as ventilated roofs which were adapted to the climate requirements of their sites.

(Criterion D)

## 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](#).

## Theme

### 3. Connecting Victorians by transport and communications

Construction dates	1905,
Architect/Designer	Victorian Railways,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	Karadoc Station,
Hermes Number	209373
Property Number	

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## History

### Irymple Railway Station (VHR H1568)

Irrigation installed in the Mildura and surrounding areas in the 1880s led to a massive fruit growing and processing industry. By the 1930s, the area produced more than half of all Australia's dried fruit. The 'Eat more Fruit' campaign initiative by Harold Clapp, then commissioner of the Victorian Railways, was responsible for popularising consumption of Victorian fruit. The aim of this campaign was to create public demand for fruit and fruit products, this would in turn create a demand for rail freight.

Private fruit packing and drying sheds, cold stores and factories were located near Irymple Railway Station. These were serviced by rail sidings and extensions and roads. In 1926 three local companies combined to form Sunbeam Foods which is still based in Irymple. These factories packed, dried and preserved locally grown fruit as well as producing fruit-based products such as wine, cordial, and jam.

The Ballarat-Mildura line reached Irymple in 1903 and the Irymple Railway Station commenced operation the same year. It was serviced by combined freight and passenger trains. From the 1950s freight trains included the 'Fruit Flyer' and 'Sunraysia Fresh' while the 'Mildura Sunlight' and the 'Vineland' transported passengers. Irymple Railway Station is no longer in use. Fruit sent by rail now travels from a container terminal at Merbein through Irymple. Passenger train services no longer depart from Mildura with V-Line now operating buses.

### **Portable railway buildings**

The 'Octopus' Acts of the 1880s heralded a rapid expansion of Victoria's railway network. New stations required buildings and the Victorian Railways appears to have developed the concept of prefabricated and portable buildings in response. Victorian Railways referred to these buildings as 'Portables' which appears to refer both to the portability of the pre-fabricated components and the ability to move the fully fabricated buildings from place to place. This terminology has been used in this report.

In 1892 the responsibility for the construction of new railway lines and stations in Victoria was transferred from the Victorian Railway Commissioners to a new Railway Construction Branch which was part of the Board of Land and Works. It appears that this group constructed and distributed large numbers of standard building units. Standardised sections of each unit as well as components such as bearers and rafters were manufactured and transported to the site for assembly in accordance with provided instructions. Even bolts and washers were supplied.

Each building unit measured 20 feet by 12 feet and there were three types:

- Office (also used as a covered lobby with some or all walls removed or 'abolished')
- Shelter (also known as a General Waiting Room - GW)
- General Waiting Room and Ladies Waiting Room (one building unit containing two small rooms - LW).

Contemporary drawings show how these units could be assembled on site into different station building configurations. The building configurations ranged from simple one room station buildings to more complex, structures with several rooms. The six most common building configurations created from the three types of units were :

- A: Office / General Waiting Room / Ladies Waiting Room / Ladies Yard and toilet
- B: Office / Lobby / General Waiting Room / Ladies Waiting Room / Ladies Yard and toilet
- C: Office / Shelter / General Waiting Room / Ladies Waiting Room / Ladies Yard and toilet
- D: Office / General Waiting Room / Ladies Waiting Room / Ladies Yard and toilet
- E: Office / Shelter
- F: Office

The Former Irymple Railway Station Building represents a complex version of the 'B' configuration, with its office being made up of two Office units.

Perhaps for safety reasons, Ladies' Waiting Rooms also had an open, fenced Ladies' Yard attached. A W.C. (toilet) shed (which also may have been a portable) was located in the Ladies' Yard which could only be accessed from the Ladies' Waiting Room.

'Mallee Sheds' made from corrugated iron were also developed for unattended halts, while station buildings assembled from the standard units were used for more important stations. Portable goods sheds and staff residences were also produced. All these types of station buildings were widely distributed throughout the rail network in country and rural areas and could be moved to other stations as needed. Portable buildings were still in use in the 1950s, mainly for residences, and were then known as "Pre-cut." These simple buildings were once very common.

## **Ventilated roofs**

Some portable railway station buildings in the Wimmera Mallee also had ventilated roofs to provide cooling to the users in the hot summers. There were two types which have been classified as Type A and Type B .

Type A consisted of a completely separate roof over the inner gable roof of the building, with its ridge line coincident with that of the inner roof. Its pitch, however, is less steep, resulting in an air space between the inner roof and the inner side of the outer roof which increases in depth as it proceeds from the ridge line to the eaves. The Irymple Railway Station Building is an example of this type, although only the office two unit component has the ventilated roof.

Type B was a simpler design where the roof lining followed the slopes of the ceiling lining with a screened gap for ventilation of the space between them.

## **Former Irymple Railway Station Building**

The building was originally located at the Irymple Railway Station (VHR H1568) and was part of the registration of this place. The station no longer operates as a goods or passenger station and all the buildings on the site suffered damage due to disuse, neglect and vandalism. In 2002 works occurred to restore the station building and move it to Red Cliffs Historical Steam Railway. These works were allowed under Permit P5510 issued under the Heritage Act 1995 because it was felt that this significant building had a better chance of survival in a location with committed owners and an operating tourist railway.

Originally the station facilities at Irymple Railway Station consisted of two small portable timber buildings functioning as the station office and the ladies waiting room. These buildings were destroyed by fire in 1911. A single, temporary 20 feet x 12 feet wooden office building unit was installed in late 1911 following the fire. There was still only a single building in 1921 and the staff complained of excessive heat . The station building must have been extended after this time with the 1911 office building becoming the current open lobby; or else replaced altogether with the current four unit structure, the units of which may have come from different locations. Presumably the office building with its ventilated roof was cooler for the staff, although the waiting room unit did not have a ventilated roof. The lobby and waiting room pair of units have a slightly different roof slope to the two office units which may reflect the lack of ventilation, or they may have been previously used on another site or constructed at a different time.

The term "Manangatang style" developed by the late architect and railway historian Andrew Ward , is often used to describe a station building which is of a rectangular plan and designed to allow for future extension along the main axis. In 1988 Ward did not describe the Former Irymple Railway Station Building as being of the Manangatang style perhaps because the information regarding its post-1921 rebuilding was not available, and he considered that the current building was constructed in 1903. The layout of the Irymple building appears similar to the Manangatang Station Building (VHR H1576) which was constructed in 1913 and it appears that many Manangatang style station buildings were portables.

Victorian railway stations communicated with each other by telegraph, and in 1913 Irymple residents were able to get the Railway Commissioners to agree to connect the railway station telephone to the Irymple Exchange. It is not known if the surviving early electrical equipment is connected to these functions or to the operations of Safeworking (stet) equipment. It is not known when the ticket and parcels counters were installed.

## **Assessment Against Criteria**

### **Criterion**

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Criterion D

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## Extent of Registration

Heritage Act 2017

### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act 2017, I give notice under section 53 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including a place in the Heritage Register:

Number: H2440

Category: Registered Place

Place: Former Irymple Railway Station

Location: 2 Millewa Road, Red Cliffs

Municipality: Mildura Rural City

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 2440 encompassing those parts of Allotment 310B Section B Parish of Mildura, Allotment 310C Section B Parish of Mildura, and Allotment 331A Section B Parish of Mildura within five metres of the eaves of the railway station building.

Dated 7 December 2023

STEVEN AVERY

Executive Director

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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/>*