

---

# NATIVE POLICE BARRACKS (FORMER)



52514 Native Police Barracks

---

## Location

OFF OAKBANK LANE, LOT 7 PS437883, HEYWOOD, GLENELG SHIRE

## Municipality

GLENELG SHIRE

## Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Listing

Glenelg Shire

---

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant?

The stone ruin (on Allotment 2, Section 7, Parish of Drumborg) located 7.5km due north of Heywood between Drumborg and Mount Eckersley, is almost certainly the Native Police Barracks or, possibly, the Officer of Native Police Quarters built in 1843, one of four structures built for the police at the time. Lt. Governor La Trobe set up the Native Police Corps in 1842. James Blair, Police Magistrate at Portland reported the completion and fitting out of the buildings to La Trobe in 1843. This was the third such attempt to form such a corps in the Port Phillip District prior to separation from the mother colony of NSW. The corps was formed in response to the conflict between pastoralists and Aborigines in the first years of European settlement. The conflict was particularly violent in the Western District. The corps under the command of Captain H Pulteney Dana JP (1820-1852) operated in the Portland Bay district (which included Glenelg Shire) between 1842 and 1849 and was acknowledged for its professionalism. It appears that the members of the corps were employed more or less as equals to Europeans, such as the Mounted Police located in Barracks closer to Heywood on the north bank of the Fitzroy River. The

Native Police Barracks was constructed in 1843 for Dana and his Aboriginal force and used by them at least until 1849. The corps was finally disbanded in 1853. The building's immediate fate, when the conflict had subsided, is not known in detail. It may have been taken over by Colin Hunter, a pioneer settler in the Mt Eckersley area. In 1842, a year prior to the construction of the Native Police Barracks, Captain Dana visited Hunter at Mt Eckersley. Hunter sold his station in 1850 to Donald Cameron (1810-1879). The building was eventually subsumed into the Oakbank pastoral property owned by Cameron from c1845 to 1879, then by the Quayle family until the end of the twentieth century. A plan of the Oakbank Estate dated 1885 describes the building as a house. A 1942 Army ordnance map describes the building as a hut. The building's form is traditional particularly to northern Britain and is similar to the earliest part of the Oakbank homestead and, although smaller and simpler, is also similar to the Customs House as Portland built in 1849. It was symmetrical and single storey with an attic under the gable roof. The ground floor had two rooms with a central door flanked by windows and a chimney in the side wall. All of the original joinery, flooring and roof structure have been lost. The coursed bluestone walls still stand to more or less their original height. There is no surviving garden or significant vegetation. The site has substantial archaeological potential.

How is it Significant?

The Native Police Barracks is of historical, social and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it Significant?

The Native Police Barracks is of historical significance as a demonstration of the pre-Separation colonial government's response to the conflict between Aborigines and Squatters, the worst conflict being in the Portland Bay district. It has direct associations with Lt. Governor Charles Joseph La Trobe, Captain H Pulteney Dana, Commander of the Native Police and James Blair, Portland Police Magistrate. It has subsequent historical significance as part of the Oakbank squatting run occupied and later owned by Donald Cameron and subsequently the Quayle family. It is of social significance as the only surviving evidence in Victoria of the employment of Aborigines on more or less equal terms with Europeans in the public service. The building has architectural significance for its traditional form and for its parallels with buildings at Oakbank homestead and at Portland.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Glenelg - Glenelg Shire Heritage Study Part One, Carlotta Kellaway, David Rhodes Mandy Jean, 2002;
Construction dates	1843,
Other Names	,
Hermes Number	52514
Property Number	

---

## Usage/Former Usage

Ruinous

## Physical Description 1

There may have been as many as three buildings at the site: the Native Police Barracks; the Non-Commissioned Officer of Native Police Quarters; and the Officer of Native Police Quarters. The surviving structure appears to have been the first. It shows that the original bluestone building was symmetrical and single-storey with an attic storey in the gabled roof. There were doors in the centre of the front and rear elevations with windows on either side of the front door but none at the rear. The lintels of the window are timber. A chimney stack survives at one end of the building with a window opening to one side. There may have been a window in the opposite gable. The masonry is standard coursed random rubble. The stone work at the rear corners of the building is keyed in anticipation of an extension. The dimensions of the building are slightly larger than those described by James Blair, Police Magistrate in 1843 for the building but he may have been describing the internal spaces rather than

the external dimensions. There are indications that the interior walls of the ground floor were rendered and plastered. No joinery survives to indicate the type of fenestration or any of the roof structure. Although smaller and simpler, the building is similar in form to the earliest parts of the nearby homestead, Oak Bank and to the Customs House at Portland which was designed by Henry Ginn and built in 1849.

## **Physical Conditions**

ruinous

## **Historical Australian Themes**

### **2. PEOPLING AUSTRALIA**

2.1: Living as Australia's earliest inhabitants

2.5: Promoting settlement

2.6.2: Displacing Indigenous people

### **3. DEVELOPING LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ECONOMIES**

3.6: Recruiting labour

3.10: Integrating people into the cash economy

3.10.1: Assisting Indigenous people into the cash economy

3.16: Struggling with remoteness, hardship and failure

### **5. WORKING**

5.1: Working in harsh conditions

5.7: Surviving as Indigenous people in a white-dominated economy

### **7. GOVERNING**

7.6: Administering Australia

7.6.3: Policing Australia

7.6.5: Incarcerating people

7.6.4: Dispensing justice

7.6.7: Enforcing discriminatory legislation

7.6.8: Administering Indigenous Affairs

*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/>*