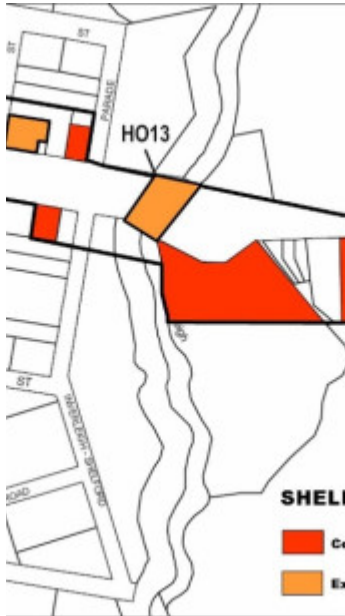


## Shelford Precinct



Shelford Heritage Precinct  
Map

### Location

Shelford Bannockburn Road SHELFORD, GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

### Municipality

GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

### Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO103

### Heritage Listing

Golden Plains Shire

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

Shelford, formerly called Leigh, is located on the Bannockburn-Rokewood Road where it crosses the Leigh River approximately 42 kms from Geelong. It nestles into the Leigh River Valley and is approached dramatically from the east and west. The settlement still pivots around the old stone and iron bridge, designed and built by Leigh Shire engineer, Charles Anthony Corbett Wilson in 1874. The settlement is focused on the former Shelford Hotel, an imposing late Georgian building built before 1854 and later used as a shop. The settlement has always had a very close association with Golf Hill, the centre of vast squatting interests owned by the Clyde Company and managed by George Russell. He subsequently owned Golf Hill in his own right. George Russell, a member of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, gave land for the construction of a new church, which was designed by a Geelong architect, J. L. Shaw, built in 1859 and superintended by Russell. It marks the entrance to Golf Hill. The first timber church continued to be used as a classroom along with a stone classroom, also the work of Russell, which were the Presbyterian school and later State School No. 379. The inter-relationship of these sites historically, socially and visually across the Leigh River Valley is one of the strongest demonstrations of patronage in the Western District. Other buildings contribute to the character of Shelford as a township including the former Mechanics Institute and a range of small cottages on the Leigh river flats. The landscape is enhanced by a range of traditional plantings, particularly *Schinus molle* (Peppercorn trees) and *Pinus pinea* (Stone Pines).

How is it Significant

The settlement of Shelford is of historical, architectural and social significance to the Golden Plains Shire.

Why is it Significant

Shelford is of historical significance for its direct association with George Russell, pastoral pioneer and manager of and later partner in the influential Clyde Company and particularly the continuing relationship with his home, Golf Hill and the civic institutions he founded on land he provided. It is of architectural significance for its range of building types dating from the nineteenth century, including specifically the Presbyterian Church, the State School and the former Shelford Hotel as well as various early vernacular cottages and other structures. Shelford is of social significance as the focus of the surrounding community's education and religious activities, which continued into the mid twentieth century and which is still expressed by the relationship of elements within the precinct but also their location in the broader cultural landscape.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Golden Plains - Golden Plains Shire Heritage Study Phase 2, Heritage Matters P/L, 2009;
Hermes Number	55597
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

The settlement of Shelford is located at the crossing of the Bannockburn-Rokewood Road (Mercer Street) over the Leigh River, approximately 42 kms north-north-west of Geelong. It is situated within the Leigh River valley with dramatic views and a strong sense of entrance from the east and the west. Another important approach is along the river valley floor from Inverleigh, about 14 kms downstream.

The Shelford Heritage Precinct is located on either side of Main Street, bound to the west by Tolson Street and to the east by the Shelford Primary School and Presbyterian Church. The sparse settlement is composed of small rural and residential allotments, with the greater density of development on the western side of the intersection of Mercer Street with the river, with the former Shelford Hotel ( 2 Mercer Street) acting as the keystone to the streetscape. It is an imposing two-storey brick building with a canted corner entrance to the former bar and later shop, and another residential entrance on the south elevation. Its scale, form and detailing reflects a late Georgian influence. It is in contrast to the vernacular timber cottage (5 Mercer Street) opposite which may date from the same period. The former Mechanics Institute is a conventional late nineteenth century hall with extensions and was recently refurbished. Other important buildings are located on the eastern side including the State School No. 379, comprising a crude Gothic Revival stone classroom and modern facilities, and the Presbyterian Church, described as rudimentary Early English Gothic Revival. It has an octagonal tower and spire and is five bays long. The interior is sparse but intact. The entrance to Golf Hill homestead is beside the church and the drive is lined with *Ulmus procera* (English Elms). There are several small cottages setback close to the river, the timber clad vernacular cottage with a blue stone chimney ( 1735 Bannockburn - Shelford Road) and the former Blacksmiths House (1741 Bannockburn - Shelford Road). These dwellings are enhanced by the traditional planting of *Schinus molle* (Peppercorn Trees) and *Pinus pinea* (Stone Pines) as well as traditional dry stone walls and bluestone gutters.

The former stone and iron bridge across the river is the pivot to the precinct. Views to and from Golf Hill and the Presbyterian Manse (31 Mercer Street) (and Leighburn, 1567 Bannockburn-Shelford Road) criss-cross the valley and pass over the church and school in perhaps the most dramatic expressions of patronage in the Shire.

## Historical Australian Themes

### Australian Historic Themes

The Australian Heritage Commission devised the Australian Historic Themes in 2001. The following themes have influenced the historical development of the Shelford Precinct.

#### 2. Peopling Australia

##### 2.2 Adapting to diverse environments

##### 2.5 Promoting settlement

#### 3 Developing Local, Regional And National Economies

##### 3.3 Surveying the continent

##### 3.3.4 Looking for land with agricultural potential

##### 3.3.5 Laying out boundaries

##### 3.5 Developing primary production

##### 3.5.1 Grazing stock

##### 3.5.2 Breeding animals

##### 3.5.3 Developing agricultural industries

##### 3.6 Recruiting labour

##### 3.7 Establishing communications

##### 3.7.1 Establishing postal services

##### 3.8 Moving goods and people

##### 3.8.5 Moving goods and people on land

3.8.7 Building and maintaining roads

4 Building Settlements Towns And Cities

4.1 Planning urban settlements

4.1.1 Selecting township sites

4.2 Supplying urban services (power, transport, fire prevention, roads, water, light and sewerage)

4.3 Developing institutions

4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia

5 Working

5.6 Working in the home

5.8 Working on the land

6 Educating

6.2 Establishing schools

7 Governing

7.6 Administering Australia

7.6.1 Developing local government authorities

8 Developing Australia's Cultural Life

8.6 Worshipping

8.6.1 Worshipping together

8.6.2 Maintaining religious traditions and ceremonies

8.6.4 Making places for worship

8.8 Remembering the fallen

8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

## **Physical Description 2**

Contributory elements located in the proposed Shelford Heritage Precinct:

House and *Pinus pinea* trees, 1735 Bannockburn-Shelford Road Shelford

Blacksmith's House and *Schinus molle* trees, 1741 Bannockburn-Shelford Road Shelford

Hotel, 2 Mercer Street Shelford

House, 5 Mercer Street Shelford

Bluestone gutter, Mercer Street Shelford

Shelford Public Hall (Former Mechanics Institute), 16 Mercer Street Shelford

Bluestone outbuilding, 8 Thompson Street Shelford

## **Integrity**

Shelford retains a high degree of integrity and most of the buildings are in fair to good condition. The most serious loss was the demolition in 1977 of the Settlers' Arms Hotel.

*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/>*