
Former Stawell Grammar School, 54-56 Smith Street, STAWELL



SL 376 - Former Stawell Grammar School, 56 Smith Street, STAWELL

Location

54-56 Smith Street STAWELL, NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Municipality

NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Heritage Listing

Northern Grampians Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 27, 2004

The former Stawell Grammar School building at 54-56 Smith Street, Stawell, has significance for its associations with the Stawell Grammar School established in 1869 and which closed in c.1912. Designed by Robert Alexander Love, architect, the building was constructed as the school room in 1869-70 for the owner and headmaster, R.S. Bradley. The building also represents an intact example of a rudimentary Victorian style, and is in fair condition.

The former Stawell Grammar School building at 54-56 Smith Street is **architecturally** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It demonstrates original design qualities of a rudimentary Victorian style. These qualities include the steeply pitched gable roof form, face brick wall construction, galvanised corrugated iron roof cladding, and the stepped

brick parapets that terminate at the apex in unusual point forms, the lower reaches having projecting brick pinnacles with pedimented cappings. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the single storey height, round-arched door opening on the Smith Street facade (including the vertically boarded double timber doors), side flat-arched single door opening (with an altered four panelled timber door), three window openings on the east facade, and the rough-hewn Stawell stone base. The visual connections to the original school residence also contribute to the significance of the place.

The former Stawell Grammar School building at 54-56 Smith Street is **historically** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It is associated with the development of the Stawell Grammar School after its construction in 1869-70, and particularly with R.S. Bradley, original owner and headmaster of the Grammar School from 1869. The building served as the Grammar School until 1896. It also has associations with Richard B. Chater, headmaster from 1879, and with the architect, Robert Alexander Love.

The former Stawell Grammar School building at 54-56 Smith Street is **scientifically** significant at a **LOCAL** level. The cavity brick wall construction represents an early example of this form of building employed by the architect R.A. Love in the late 1860s and 1870s.

The former Stawell Grammar School building at 54-56 Smith Street is **socially** significant at a **LOCAL** level. Although no longer serving as a school, it is still recognised by members of the Stawell community for its past purpose as an important educational institution.

Overall, the former Stawell Grammar School building at 54-56 Smith Street is of **LOCAL** significance.

Heritage Study/Consultant Northern Grampians - Shire of Northern Grampians - Stage 2 Heritage Study, Wendy Jacobs, Vicki Johnson, David Rowe, Phil Taylor, 2004;

Hermes Number 113089

Property Number

Physical Description 1

The former Stawell Grammar School building at 54-56 Smith Street, Stawell, is set on the Smith Street boundary of a large landscaped allotment. The original school residence is situated nearby, with views of the rear of this building (it was originally accessed from D'Arcy Street).

The single storey, face brick, rudimentary Victorian styled former school building is characterised by a steeply pitched and parapeted gable roof form. This roof form is clad in lapped galvanised corrugated iron and the stepped brick parapets terminate at the apex in unusual point forms, the lower reaches having projecting brick pinnacles with pedimented cappings.

The rudimentary nature of the design is expressed in the austere elevations highlighted only by the round-arched door opening on the Smith Street facade (including the early vertically boarded double timber doors), side flat-arched single door opening (with an altered four panelled timber door) and the three window openings on the east facade. The metal crosses on the east and west elevations are evidence of the tie rods introduced to stabilise the building. The base of the building is also denoted by the rough-hewn Stawell stonework.

Mike Butcher in Robert Alexander Love: Goldfields Architect provides further details of the building construction and associated problems:

"... the walls are high and unbuttressed. It is also surprisingly dark with just three small windows, all on the east wall. The walls are hollow, with a cavity the full width of a brick. A serious defect in the building is the design of the roof trusses. Love used collar ties bolted to the rafters and king post to prevent lateral stresses being experienced by the walls, but the rafters were of quite inadequate size for this to be effective. There has been

considerable movement and if the roof had been other than corrugated iron, it might have collapsed long since. [Love made a similar mistake with his Chapel of Ease at Lockwood.] The present owner has stabilised the walls by the insertion of tie rods."

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/>