
Lethbridge Precinct



Lethbridge Heritage Precinct
Map

Location

LETHBRIDGE, Golden Plains Shire

Municipality

GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO98

Heritage Listing

Golden Plains Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The township of Lethbridge is located on the Midland Highway, approximately 32 kms northwest of Geelong. It was established on land which was part of the Wabdallah Run, part of the greater Golf Hill holdings of the Clyde Company managed by George Russell and adjacent to the Moranghurk Run, established by Peter Sharp and William Sharp. The topography of the township is relatively flat, although the nearby Moorabool River valley located only 2 km to the east is composed of a series of dramatic undulations. The township comprises two formal grids that are aligned to the Midland Highway and the Geelong-Ballarat Railway line respectively. The original site of the Lethbridge township, first known as 'Muddy Water Holes', was aligned to the tracks made by the horse-drawn wagons of early settlers, which followed the route of the present Midland Highway. By the early nineteenth century, this track became the primary transportation route connecting the goldfields of Ballarat to the port of Geelong. The second grid of allotments is located approximately 700 metres to the west of the Midland Highway and was laid out following the construction of the Geelong-Ballarat Railway line in 1858/62. The township was renamed Lethbridge in 1854, after the Railway Engineer who oversaw the construction of the Geelong-Ballarat Railway line.

The construction of the Railway Station dramatically reoriented the configuration of the original township and re-focused the commercial, residential and public activities. Important buildings located within this grid include: the Lethbridge Uniting Church and Sunday School Hall; Lethbridge General Store; Lethbridge Public Hall. The Lethbridge Lake and Recreation Reserve is fed by Bruce's Creek and features a public swimming hole, BBQ shelters and the former Railway Water Tank. This site was originally gazetted as a Railway Reservoir to supply water for steam engines required to take on water at Lethbridge station. The prosperity experienced by the township as a commercial centre servicing surrounding pastoral properties and trade generated during the gold rush and the construction of the railway line has since diminished. The township has experienced a decline in commercial activity and population. The township of Lethbridge remains substantially intact and the surviving buildings and infrastructure from a range of periods retain a high degree of integrity and are in good condition.

How is it significant?

The township of Lethbridge is of historical, architectural and social significance to the Golden Plains Shire.

Why is it significant?

The township of Lethbridge is of historical significance as one of the earliest settlements established along the major trade route linking the port of Geelong to the interior of Victoria and the Ballarat Goldfields. Surviving buildings and infrastructure also reflect its prominence as a commercial centre servicing trade generated from the railway and surrounding pastoral properties. Lethbridge is of architectural significance for its range of civic infrastructure and building types dating from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Lethbridge is of social significance as the focus of community activities and as a representation of the inter-relationship between pastoral, mining, agricultural and viticultural industries.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Golden Plains - Golden Plains Shire Heritage Study Phase 2, Heritage Matters P/L, 2009;
Hermes Number	42800
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

The township of Lethbridge (formally 'Muddy Water Holes') is located on the Midland Highway, approximately 32 kms northwest of Geelong. The topography is flat, with Bruce's Creek meandering through the centre of the township before entering into the Lethbridge Lake at the Recreation Reserve. The township comprises two formal grid patterns that are aligned to the Midland Highway and the Geelong-Ballarat Railway line respectively.

The construction of the Geelong-Ballarat Railway line in 1858/62 dramatically reoriented the configuration of the township, re-focusing the commercial, residential and public activities in alignment with the railway line. Prior to its construction, the original 'Muddy Water Holes' township was located on either side of High Street (Midland Highway), bound by Russell Street to the north and Hodges Street to the south. The township grid survives today, aligned to the road, and consists of six sections situated to the west and six sections to the east of High Street.

A second grid of township allotments is located approximately 700 metres to the west of the Midland Highway. This grid was formally laid out following the construction of the Geelong - Ballarat Railway line. It is located on either side of the sidings, bound by Cubbitt Street to the north, Read Street to the south and Brunel Street to the west. Both Ackland Road and Noyes Road run parallel to the railway line in a north-south direction, with two sections of the grid located to the west of Noyes Road and four sections located to the east of Ackland Road.

The Lethbridge Heritage Precinct is situated within the second grid, on either side of Russell Street, bound by Cubbitt Street to the north and Brunel Street to the east. The Lethbridge Railway Station (186 Ackland Road) is situated at the heart of the precinct. The Railway Station, designed in the conventional Italianate style, is constructed of locally quarried bluestone and based on Victorian Railways specifications. A cast iron standpipe is situated to the south of the Station, adjacent to the railway sidings. It is fed via a pipe from the former Lethbridge Railway Reservoir located approximately 500 metres to the east.

The timber clad Lethbridge Uniting Church and the Sunday School Hall, located opposite the Railway Station on the east side of Ackland Road. The Lethbridge General Store (1 Russell Street) is a large commercial premises with a corner entrance, timber verandah and attached Victorian weatherboard residence. There are a number of houses located on either side of Russell Street including, the Victorian weatherboard with half-hipped gable roof (2 Russell Street), timber cottage (7 Russell Street) and the Victorian weatherboard (17 Russell Street). The brick clad Public Hall (25 Russell Street) is located on the corner of Russell Street and Brunel Street.

There are a number of weatherboard houses located on Brunel Street including the small timber cottage with triple gabled roof (80 Brunel Street), timber vernacular cottage (88 Brunel Street) and the small Victorian cottage (90 Brunel Street). The Lethbridge Sporting Centre and Recreation Reserve (8 Stephenson Street) addresses the southern side of Russell Street and features the 'Burrows Laird Memorial Gates' constructed in 1961 to honour local soldiers who served in World War Two. A vernacular timber cottage with a gable roof and recent side extension is located at 1 Stephenson Street.

A number of late nineteenth and early twentieth century houses are situated on the western side of the railway line. These include the small vernacular timber cottages (11 & 21 Noyes Road) located opposite the Lethbridge Railway Station, the Victorian weatherboard house (7 Noyes Road) timber cottage (1 Noyes Road), and the series of the vernacular timber cottages (841, 837 and 829 English Road).

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 Lethbridge 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

3.8.6 Building and maintaining railways

3.8.7 Building and maintaining roads

3.11 Altering the environment

3.11.1 Regulating waterways

3.11.5 Establishing water supplies

3.12 Feeding people

3.12.5 Retailing foods and beverages

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

6.1 Forming associations, libraries and institutes for self-education

6.2 Establishing schools

8 Developing Australia's Cultural Life

8.1 Organising recreation

8.1.1 Playing and watching organised sports

8.1.3 Developing public parks and gardens

8.5 Forming associations

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 Lethbridge Heritage Precinct:

Uniting Church Ackland Road, Lethbridge

House, 193 Ackland Road Lethbridge

House, 195 Ackland Road Lethbridge

House, 80 Brunel Street Lethbridge

House, 88 Brunel Street Lethbridge

House, 90 Brunel Street Lethbridge

House, 19 Cubbitts Street Lethbridge

House, 829 English Road Lethbridge

House, 837 English Road Lethbridge

House, 841 English Road Lethbridge

House, 1 Noyes Road Lethbridge

House, 7 Noyes Road Lethbridge

House, 11 Noyes Road Lethbridge

House, 21 Noyes Road Lethbridge

Stone gutters Russell Street Lethbridge

Shop and Residence, 1 Russell Street Lethbridge

House, 2 Russell Street Lethbridge

House, 7 Russell Street Lethbridge

House, 17 Russell Street Lethbridge

Shop, 17 Russell Street Lethbridge

Lethbridge Public Hall, 25 Russell Street Lethbridge

House, 1 Stephenson Street Lethbridge

Memorial Gates at Recreation Reserve, 8 Stephenson Street Lethbridge

Integrity

The township of Lethbridge remains relatively intact and the surviving buildings, civic infrastructure and major plantings retain a high degree of integrity. Most buildings are in good condition.

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/>