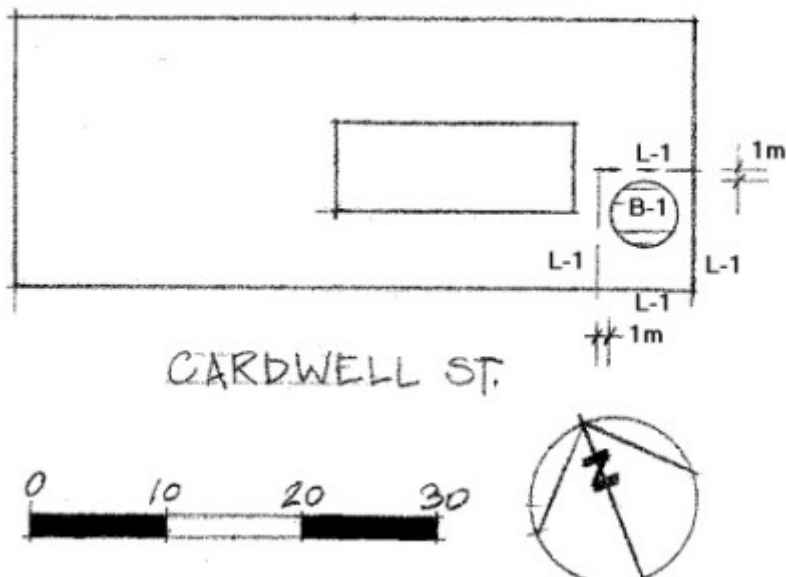


# FORMER ELMORE WATER TOWER



FORMER ELMORE WATER  
TOWER SOHE 2008



former elmore water tower plan

## Location

47 CARDWELL STREET ELMORE, GREATER BENDIGO CITY

## Municipality

GREATER BENDIGO CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1678

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO416

## VHR Registration

August 20, 1982

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 25, 1999

The Elmore Urban Waterworks Trust held its first meeting in February 1890 and by 1891 had acquired land at Cardwell St adjacent to the Campaspe River. The Trust had also appointed J.T. Noble Anderson as their engineer. Anderson was a graduate of a Dublin university, tutored at Trinity College, Melbourne and later became business partner of (Sir) John Monash. It was during his time at Trinity College that he drew up plans and specifications for the erection of the Trust's first water tower.

The Trust's contract number 1 for the erection of the tower was awarded to A Nelson contractor and work proceeded in the latter half of 1891. The tower erected was a circular red brick structure surmounted by a circular riveted iron tank. The tower has two levels of timber floors with a stop valve at the ground floor. Water pumped to the tank provided pressured reticulation through-out the town.

The tower remained in use until 1964 when the Elmore Water Board commissioned a new taller concrete tower.

The former Elmore water tower is of architectural and historical importance to the state of Victoria.

The Elmore Urban Waterworks tower is historically significant as a rare surviving remnant of early urban infrastructure in the settlement of Victoria. The tower provided reticulated water to the population of this small country town in a continent noted for its dry environment.

The tower is also of architectural and engineering significance in its ability to display 19th century approaches to technology and art particularly given the need to erect this structure in an urban setting, and in its rarity as an industrial building type. The tower is also a fine example of the skills of 19th century bricklayers.

## 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](#).

### Specific Exemptions:

Nil

Construction dates	1891,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	5215
Property Number	

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## History

Contextual History:History of Place:

History of Place:

Situated on the corner of Cardwell and Jeffrey Streets, Elmore, opposite the Campaspe River, is the Elmore Water Tower. The Crown alienated the land on 6th October, 1864, and sold it to D.C. Sterry. In March 1891 the Elmore Urban Waterworks Trust bought a quarter acre of this land from Mrs de Fries at a cost of £30.00 for the purpose of building a water tower on the site. The Certificate of Title for the land records it as allotment 10, section 4, Township and Parish of Elmore.

The Elmore Water Tower was a pressure system used to reticulate the township of Elmore during the period 1891-1962. The Elmore Urban Waterworks Trust pumped water from the Campaspe River through a pumping station to the tower which distributed the water through a gravity feed system to the town. The tower provided a reserve of water to supply the residents of Elmore during peak times and in emergency situations. The tank on top of the tower held approximately 10,000 gallons of water. As Elmore grew in size, the Trust built a weir to guarantee the supply of water pumped to the tower. However, with an increased demand for water quality and quantity, the town switched to an underground supply and the Trust built a new tower in 1962 rendering the old one in Cardwell St redundant. The river was no longer the main source of water for Elmore. The house adjoining the tower was the residence of a caretaker who oversaw the reticulation system and weir. When Elmore changed their source of water, the Elmore Water Board no longer needed the old tower and sold it in 1987.

On 21st February, 1890, the first Committee meeting of the proposed Elmore Urban Water Trust took place in Elmore. At the meeting the Committee appointed Mr J. Slee as secretary and Mr S.H. Farrall as chairman of the Trust Committee. One of the first acts of the newly formed Committee was to inform the Commissioners of Railways that the ratepayers of Elmore had decided to form a Water Trust. The Committee also asked the Commissioners if the Trust could purchase the local water plant that the railways had previously used to service steam trains. Another early initiative of the Committee was the appointment of an engineer for the Trust. After advertising the position, the Committee chose Joshua T. Noble Anderson in March 1891. Anderson was an Irishman who graduated in engineering from a Dublin university before arriving in Australia in 1889 to become a tutor at Trinity College, Melbourne University.

After appointing an engineer and having already purchased land in Cardwell St, the Committee decided to advertise for tenders for the construction of the water tower and tank. Advertisements appeared in the Bendigo Advertiser and the Melbourne papers, The Argus and The Age. The closing date for applicants was 26 May, 1891. Plans and specifications drawn up by Anderson were available for interested parties to view at the office of the now Hon. Secretary. S.H. Farrall in Elmore or at Anderson's office at Trinity College, Melbourne. The Chairman and Commissioners called for tenders to build a "Brick Tower and Iron Tank". Anderson also made it a requirement that the builders use cement in the construction of the tower rather than lime mortar. In total the Committee received nine tenders that ranged in price from £851.3.0-£1240.15.6. On 1 June the Trust approved the tender of A. Nelson for Contract No. 1 at a cost of £1022.0.0, subject to the condition that the "timber for foundation lower and upper floor have joints neatly struck". The Trust funded the expense through a loan.

For three months during the construction of the water tower, Anderson was on leave and James B. Lewis appointed as his replacement on Anderson's recommendation. While Anderson was away the Committee appeared to have some problems negotiating parts of the contract with Nelson. On 28 July, 1891, at a special meeting, the Committee wired Lewis requesting that he come immediately to Elmore and to bring all the contracts and specification relating to Contract No. 1 with him. Lewis did not arrive and so on 7 August they wrote to him with the instruction that he tell Nelson the Committee would pay for a £12 railway freight on 20,000 first class pressed bricks for the tower "provided no delay in same". Nelson completed the tower and tank by 14 November, 1891, but the Committee decided to retain his deposit of £50.00 for the initial contract until 26 May 1892. A dispute had arisen regarding the amount of concrete used in the structure and a certificate of extras issued to Nelson by the Committee for £63.1.0.

By the end of January 1892 the Committee was continuing to hold up the final payment for the contract to Nelson. On 22 January the Committee received a letter from Nelson "informing Trust that his creditors were becoming impatient for their money and offering to accept a Bill for 1-2 or 3 months bearing 8% bank interest". The Committee, however, refused to settle the bill until their engineer gave "satisfactory" explanation for the extras charged. Eventually, Nelson's lawyers, Goldsmith and Sharp Solicitors, wrote to the Committee threatening that if the Trust did not pay they would serve a writ to recover the money. By June the Committee had agreed to pay off Nelson's debtors.

An interesting aspect of the history of the Elmore Water Tower is the involvement of John Monash in its construction. On 4 September, 1891, Lewis wrote to the Committee informing them that Mr Monash "assisting engineer" would visit Elmore that month. Monash took an active involvement in development of the tower, arranging for water pipes to be sent and making measurements for the amount of concrete and brickwork required. Even when Lewis left and Anderson returned from leave, Monash continued to make progress reports on the tower.

In March 1962 the Committee decided that the Waterworks Trust required a new tower. Again the Committee took out a loan to pay for the structure that they envisaged would hold 125,000 gallons of water. The Committee approved the tender of H.L.B. Construction to build the new tower in January 1964. The Minister for Water officiated at the opening on 19 November at 11.00am. Initially, the Committee discussed the sale or demolition of the old water tower in Cardwell St. Later, one of the Committee members suggested that the water tank be removed from the brickwork as "it is the wish of the ratepayers and the members of the Trust to retain the brick portion of tower as they are considered of historical value". In May 1967 the Committee instructed the Trust engineers to remove the storage tank from the tower and suggested the installation of a "grain silo type top cover".

On 26 September, 1986, the Campaspe Rural Water Commission, who took over the Trust, auctioned the Cardwell St water tower. A Catholic priest Father Connelly bought the property, which included the tower and caretaker's house, for \$19,500. Jan Penney recorded on 8 October, 1986, that Father Connelly intended to knock the tower down and sell the bricks. However, Father Connelly did not complete his purchase of the property because he mistakenly believed the National Trust had put a preservation order on the tower. The Elmore Water Board put the property up for sale again in January, 1987. By 2 April 1987 the Board had received a cheque for \$17,601.49 for the sale of the site although the actual sale price was \$19,500. Philip Mage currently owns the Elmore Water Tower and caretaker's house that he bought on 22 April, 1997. The National Trust registered the water tower in December 1986.

## **Extent of Registration**

## NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including the Heritage Register Number 1678 in the category described as a Heritage place:

Former Elmore Water Tower, 47 Cardwell Street, Elmore, Greater Bendigo City Council.

## EXTENT

1. All of the water tower marked B-1 on diagram 607845 and all of the land marked L-1 on diagram 607845 held by the Executive Director and being part of Certificate of Title Volume 2364 Folio 688.

Dated 7 May 1998

RAY TONKIN

Executive Director

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No. G20 21 May 1998 p.1132]

*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/>*