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# Daylesford Railway Station Complex.

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## Location

Raglan Street,, DAYLESFORD VIC 3460 - Property No B7208

## Municipality

HEPBURN SHIRE

## Level of significance

State

## Heritage Listing

National Trust

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 2, 2004

### STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant? The Daylesford Station Complex dates from 1882 when Daylesford was linked to Melbourne by rail with the completion of the Karlsruhe-Daylesford Branch line. The area occupied by the complex is defined as the entire railway reserve from Raglan Street to 300 metres south of East Street bridge. It contains two substantial buildings constructed in 1882; a bichromatic brick station building and an early example of a standard 20 feet wide corrugated galvanised iron goods shed. Other features include passenger and goods platforms, timber buffer stops, a 70 foot turntable, a steel plate girder bridge over East Street, a re-railing ramp rack, track and signalling system, and a variety of railway fences.

The completion of the Daylesford to North Creswick railway in 1887 provided Daylesford with a direct rail link to Ballarat, a link that ended when the line closed in 1953. The Daylesford-Karlsruhe railway closed in 1978. In 1981 The Central Highlands Tourist Railway was formed and today this museum operates restored railmotors of the Victorian Railways from Daylesford Station along a restored 9 km section of the former Daylesford-Karlsruhe branch line to Bullarto.

How is it significant? The Daylesford Railway Station Complex is significant for architectural, historic, technical and social reasons at the State level.

Why is it significant? The Daylesford Railway Station Complex is architecturally significant for the 1882 buildings: (1) The 1882 dichromatic brick passenger station building was in its day the most substantial example of a branch line terminal station, and although it is unique on plan and in form, exhibits all external functional elements of the later standardised station designs of the 1880's.

(2) The goods shed is the best surviving early example of its type and demonstrates the architectural high-point in corrugated galvanised iron shed design by the Victorian Railways; a design that balanced the need for an economical, functional building while retaining pleasant aesthetic qualities not found in subsequent designs. With little modification the design became the standard nineteenth century railway goods shed constructed in large numbers by the Victorian Railways during the rapid expansion of the railway network from about 1879 to 1904.

The Daylesford Railway Station Complex is historically significant for the dominant role it played in the political, social and commercial development of Daylesford in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. It played a major role in the rapid early development of tourism in the Daylesford district and in particular the commercial exploitation of the mineral springs that made Daylesford the 'Spa Capitol of Australia', both as a gateway for tourists travelling to the springs and for the transportation of the famous spa water for sale elsewhere. It also has significant historical associations with the mining and timber industries and the supply of farm produce to Melbourne markets. During the 1930's and from 1948 until the closure of the line by the Victorian Railways in 1978, Daylesford station was associated with the operation of railmotors of various types, an association which is revived today by the activities of Daylesford Spa Country Railway.

Daylesford Railway Station Complex is significant for technical reasons as the most intact and comprehensive country railway complex (based on the proportion of components remaining when the line closed). It is a unique and essentially intact example of a station complex designed initially as the terminus to a branch line that developed to become in effect both a railway junction station and terminus to two branch lines that catered for peak holiday traffic. It is the most intact surviving demonstration of the physical form, functional integration and operation of a variety of individual items and systems of railway infrastructure that collectively made a country railway terminus in the days of the Victorian Railways. In particular, the physical and operational relationship between track layout, points and signalling system is clearly demonstrated. Items of special technical significance include the goods shed; four types of platform edging; an extended carriage dock; a rare set of four different timber buffer stops; a variety of point levers including the very rare column box type; a rack for re-railing ramps, probably the only surviving example today; the East Street bridge which demonstrates the adaptation of standard late nineteenth century through plate girder bridge technology to an unusual location within a station yard; a 70 foot turntable and locomotive ash pit; and a variety of fences and guard rails of standard Victorian Railways design. A rare and probably unique feature for a country branchline station is the presence of a double-ended point in the Daylesford yard, a legacy of the time Daylesford was the terminus for two branchlines.

The station complex is of social significance as the headquarters and terminus of the Daylesford Spa Country Railway, a railway museum and successful tourist attraction that every Sunday operates restored railmotors of the Victorian Railways for the enjoyment and education of the public along 9km of restored railway to Bullarto, Victoria's highest operating station. The Daylesford station site is also venue for displays by other community based groups held in conjunction with the museum, and also the very popular Daylesford Sunday Market held every Sunday.

Classified: 17/05/2004

Hermes Number 70096

Property Number

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## Intactness

The passenger station building: Extensive internal and some external alterations were made over the years by the Victorian Railways. In order to enlarge the stationmaster's and parcels offices, significant modifications were made that involved rearrangement of interior walls and the relocation of a brick fireplace and chimney. In the 1950's, a kitchen was constructed within the roadside verandah for the benefit of railway staff sleeping overnight at the station. After closure of the line in 1978, the building was used by a community group who removed some of the walls and most of the internal fittings. Today the building has been externally restored to its 1960's condition, complete with signage and poster boards. Internal restoration of the building awaits funding.

The goods shed: Apart from the early lengthening of the shed from 60ft to 80ft, and the doubling of the size of the internal office, the shed has remained essentially unaltered. Today the shed is in poor condition and urgently needs restoration to prevent serious structural damage and loss. The timber foundations are decaying and sinking, and the timber deck on the timber platforms along each side decaying and dangerous. Some of the cast iron lion-head guttering and down pipes fell down, and the remainder has been removed. Samples have been kept to act as patens for future restoration work.

The turntable is operational and maintained in good condition. The timber planking along both sides has been renewed accurately to the original design.

The Fleet Street bridge is maintained in operational condition, and in 2003 the timber walkways on the bridge were renewed accurately to the original specifications.

The three sill buffer stops are in very poor and decaying condition, with two of them broken and missing some parts. The pile buffer stop, although fragile due to the decaying state of its old timber elements, still clearly demonstrates its shape and structural detail.

All trackwork and signalling has undergone major changes since the line opened in 1881. Today they are maintained in operational condition, and have been altered little since the line was closed by the Victorian Railways in 1978.

The fences and gates constructed by the Victorian Railways vary greatly in their condition, from the well preserved metal guard rail behind the station to decaying remnants of timber post and three rail fencing.

*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/>*