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# DEPTFORD TOWNSHIP

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## Location

DEPTFORD ROAD DEPTFORD, EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

## Municipality

EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8422-0004

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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Hermes Number 11038

Property Number

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## History

Heritage Inventory History of Site: The township of Deptford, named in 1864, was built on the banks of the Nicholson River, almost opposite the Navigation Creek junction. Before that, Store Creek settlement had been the district's service centre since about 1857, and there was also a store at the junction of the Barmouth and Nicholson Rivers, early on. Deptford township consisted of a hotel, post office, store, blacksmith's shop, chemist, and baker's. There were only ever three timber houses—all other buildings, apart from the hotel and store, were simple bush structures of spars and bark. Fairweather observes that, bark huts not being suitable for removal, people leaving the area just walked out of their houses and left them. At most, the population numbered about 300, but during the prolonged slumps in mining, the township was reduced to a few families. In 1888, for example, the mining registrar noted that, despite a great depression in alluvial mining, 'some of the old residents still have faith in the district'. The Miner's Rest Hotel started business at Deptford in 1865 and was extended in 1894, after which it had a bar, service rooms, six guest rooms, and family quarters, as well as extensive stables

and a chaff house at the rear. The hotel burned down in about 1905, after which premises were licensed at Store Creek. The flat on which the Miner's Rest Hotel stood has been partially washed away by flood waters. The Deptford School No. 3151 opened in January 1892—formerly, Deptford children had attended a farm school some three miles below the township. Deptford School closed in 1928, after which the bark, one-roomed building was used as a camp. Also during the 1890s, a church was established, as well as a cemetery—the original one, on Navigation Creek, having been eroded by flood waters. There being no hall, dances were regularly held in a large storeroom opposite the general store. The road to the township from Bairnsdale was always in a deplorable state and was the cause of much complaint to the Shire of Bairnsdale, which scarcely spent a penny on it, despite the business brought to that town by the mines of Deptford. In the early 1890s, the Shire of Omeo upgraded the track between Deptford and Stirling (on Haunted Stream) to coaching standard, but it was soon allowed to degenerate again.

*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/>*