

MINER'S COTTAGE



498-500 High St Golden Square front view



498-500 High St Golden Square side view



498-500 High St Golden Square parish plan

Location

498B High Street, GOLDEN SQUARE VIC 3555 - Property No 237471

Municipality

GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO715

Heritage Listing

Greater Bendigo City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 24, 2024

What is significant?

The former single storey timber weatherboard miner's cottage at 498-500 High Street dates at least to the early 1870s when a house and store were listed in 1873 to the ownership of Miller and Packwood. The property is sited on the banks of the Adelaide Creek, now a channel, a few metres from the junction with Bendigo Creek near Christmas line of reef, which crosses the highway at an angle towards Speck Gully and Specimen Hill to the north. Almost from the beginning of the alluvial rush in Bendigo the small gullies such as Golden, Tin Pot, Adelaide, Kangaroo and others, supported sizable mining populations.¹ The whole of the creek bed and associated branches were upturned during the 1850s in search of gold. By the 1850s and 1860s various Chinese camps along the creek had developed into minor villages generating market gardens. However, increasing development of quartz mining in the 1860s took the mining community away from the creeks. The apexes of the hills were the places where the quartz reefs were exposed that later mining was most active. It was here that associated working miners built their elevated communities on the shoulders of the hills attracting settlement away from the banks of the creeks. Puddling and reworking of discarded spoil continued for a time in the creek beds. Resulting damage caused by sludge build up was the source of ongoing political recrimination by land owners and the wealthy against the Chinese and single alluvial diggers, and necessitated the conversion of the major creeks into sludge channels to contain spoil from damaging the newly created freeholds in central Bendigo (Sandhurst). From the late 1850s works continued on Bendigo Creek and over the next 30 years an extensive channelization project focussed on the central district along Pall Mall extending to Golden Square. The creek was lined first with hardwood then stone and brick walling, and in due course Bendigo Creek was widened, deepened, undergrounded in sections and in other sections new bridges were built over the channel. Except for outlying areas of Golden Square and Kangaroo Flat, the character of Bendigo Creek was fundamentally altered, leaving no trace of the early alluvial surface mining era.²

How is it significant?

The timber weatherboard miner's cottage at 498-500 High Street has historic, architectural and social significance at a local level to the City of Greater Bendigo.

Why is it significant?

Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

The former miner's cottage at 498-500 High Street, Golden Square, is historically significant as a good representative example of an early miner's cottage associated with an early shop in 1873 built near the junction of Adelaide and Bendigo Creek along the main highway, Melbourne Road, on the outskirts of the Golden Square settlement. The former miner's cottage at 498-500 High Street, Golden Square, is historically significant for its cultural landscape setting, comprising the original former Miners Residency Area located on the junction of Bendigo and Adelaide Creek. Bendigo Creek was where the first alluvial gold rush was located and where thousands of miners congregated in the early days of Bendigo. The cottage is one of a group of three timber cottages, which are very modest in size typical of miners' cottages, located within a former alluvial mining relic landscape, which can be seen from Melbourne Road, the main highway into Bendigo.

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

The miner's cottage at 498-500 High Street, Golden Square, is associated with one of the unique features of the Victorian goldfields- the Miners Residency Area. It is one of a group of increasingly rare structures on the

Bendigo goldfields and in particular the former Bendigo and Adelaide Creek area that clearly illustrate the typical construction, design and layout of a timber weatherboard miner's cottage. The area along Bendigo Creek between Golden Square and Kangaroo Flat with its associated creeks such as Adelaide Creeks has heritage significance for its rare and poignant historic landscape of the early gold rush on the Bendigo field. The cultural landscape shows archaeological evidence of early alluvial mining works, which together with the one or two remaining mining cottages such as that at 498-500 High Street, built along the banks of the gullies are associated with small time diggers and Chinese miners, who engaged in alluvial gold mining, market gardening and small trading along the Melbourne Road leading out of Bendigo (Sandhurst).

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or environments.

The house at 498-500 High Street, Golden Square, is an excellent representative example of miner's cottage particularly associated with Bendigo Creek and Adelaide Creek gold mining era that development during the early alluvial gold rush period. It is associated with one of the key elements of the historical fabric of Victorian goldfields, the working miner's cottage. It is a historical and architectural record of one of the earliest types and designs of miners' cottage that developed in response to the opportunities that the gold rush provided.

1 Birrel, R. W. And J. A. Lerk, *Bendigo's Golden Story*, 2001, p 59

2 Eaglehawk and Bendigo Heritage Study, Butler, 1993, City of Greater Bendigo

Heritage Study/Consultant	Greater Bendigo - Heritage Advisor report, City of Greater Bendigo, 2016;
Construction dates	1875,
Other Names	House,
Hermes Number	164827
Property Number	

Integrity

The place has a high degree of integrity, although there are some later changes and alterations.

Physical Conditions

Fair in need of maintenance and upgrade

Physical Description 1

The cottage is a small single room-width, double fronted early miners cottage, dating from at least 1873, as evidenced by the four pane double hung timber windows, and general proportioning of the front facade. The building has a simple front corrugated ridge roof with rear skillion section and one external brick chimney. The two front timber windows are located either side of the door. The structure is built off the ground with timber stumps and timber flooring. The height of the basic timber

frame is higher than many other miners cottages, suggesting the structure may have been purchased and constructed by skilled tradesmen. There are a number of out buildings at the rear of the lot.

The timber frame timber weatherboard cottage is located within an original Miners Residency Area that has since been converted to Torrens Title. The parcel of land backs onto Bendigo Creek and to the south a small creek- channel, the former Adelaide Gully. To the north is another very early miners cottage, which is smaller than the subject building, but unlike the property at 498-500 High Street, the original allotment has been subdivided with a small 1940-1950s bungalow house sited slightly to the rear side of the cottage.

These two historic cottages together with later Victorian cottage (c.1880s) at approximately 494 High Street are the first historic buildings to be seen at the entrance to Bendigo from the south and Kangaroo Flat, and inclusive of that latter area. The majority of residences in this section of the main road approaches to Bendigo are post war houses with some interwar bungalows.

The subject building therefore is one of a few representative examples of structures that date to the 19th century gold rush in Golden Square, which can be seen along Bendigo Creek where the first alluvial gold rush was located and where thousands of miners congregated in the early days of Bendigo. It is one of a group of three timber cottages, which are very modest in size and typical of miners cottages located in a former alluvial mining relic landscape, which can be seen in the public land alongside Bendigo Creek.

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/>