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# ROYSTON



23299 Royston Branxholme  
0625



23299 Royston Branxholme  
0623



23299 Royston Branxholme  
0624



23299 Royston Branxholme  
0626

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## Location

Henty Highway, BRANXHOLME VIC 3302 - Property No 0670

## Municipality

SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

## Level of significance

Stage 2 study complete

## Heritage Listing

Southern Grampians Shire

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - December 10, 2003

What is significant?

Royston is a single storey bluestone house to the south of Branxholme, set on a substantial rise overlooking the Arrandoovong Creek valley towards Mount Napier. The house was built in 1868 for Catherine McPhee who was said to be the mistress of George Coldham Junior, the younger son of the owner of nearby Audley Homestead. No architect has been associated with the design, nor any building contractors. The house was altered and extended by the Gough family in the early twentieth century, long term settlers and hoteliers in Branxholme. Substantial plantings which date from the Edwardian period survive in the garden, and provide a fuller picture of the way the house and garden were designed to compliment each other. The house was further altered after 1954. While the house is in good condition, its pre World War Two integrity has been compromised. Beyond the house, a set of original timber stables survive, in good condition, with a good degree of integrity, and a workman's cottage also survives with a relatively high degree of integrity.

How is it significant?

Royston is of historical significance to the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

Royston is of historical significance as an example of a house and garden deliberately laid out to capture a view (to Mount Napier), which was incidentally the same view her (said) lover would have seen from his nearby property, Audley Homestead. It also represents a different sensibility, that of the a private space for its owners (the garden in front of the 1860s wing). The earliest parts of the house and garden, along with the timber stables and workmans cottage represent a previous way of life, and the twentieth century alterations to the house illustrate changing focus away from the picturesque towards the practical. It is of further historical significance for its associations with the original owner, Catherine McPhee, and her connection through George Coldham to the Audley Homestead.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Southern Grampians - Southern Grampians Shire Heritage Study, Timothy Hubbard P/L, Annabel Neylon, 2002;
Construction dates	1868,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	23299
Property Number	

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## Physical Conditions

The house is in excellent condition.

## Physical Description 1

Royston is a single storey bluestone house set on a substantial rise overlooking the Arrandoovong Creek valley and beyond towards Mount Napier. (This is the same view as that enjoyed by the new wing at Audley Homestead, probably built about 1860 for George Coldham, who is said to have been Catherine McPhee's lover.)

The windows are two paned, double hung sashes. The pair of low pitched hipped roofs are corrugated iron. The walls of the house are rock faced bluestone with simple struck joints. Because the quoins are raised and the stones around the openings are dressed to form architraves, it seems likely that the walls were intended to be rendered. The house is generally symmetrical about the front door but the second room on the north side projects. There may have been an early verandah. In any case, a timber verandah with cast iron brackets appears to have been added early in the twentieth century, probably after the First World War. [This appears in the John Collins collection of photographs held in the State Library.] Other alterations appear to date from this time including a new entrance on the south side, facing the main garden. The garden contains several early plantings including a Cork Oak, a Fan Palm and two Eucalyptus citriodora. These appear to date from the early

twentieth century.

The house has been extended towards the rear using a rendered surface which simulates the original rockface finish of the bluestone. A new verandah replaced that which existed previously.

The original timber stable building survives at the rear in a paddock to the south-west of the house.

## **Historical Australian Themes**

Theme 3. Developing local, regional and national economies

3.24 Selling companionship and sexual services

Theme 8 Developing Australia's cultural life

8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

Theme 9 Marking the Phases of Life

9.2 Forming families and partnerships

Establishing partnerships

Bringing up children

9.5 Living outside a family/partnership

## **Usage/Former Usage**

Residential

## **Integrity**

low degree of integrity externally and internally

## **Physical Description 2**

Catherine McPhee

George Coldham

*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/>*