
Inverleigh Precinct



Inverleigh Heritage Precinct
Map

Location

Hamilton Highway INVERLEIGH, GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Municipality

GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO97

Heritage Listing

Golden Plains Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The township of Inverleigh is located on the Hamilton Highway approximately 28 kms west of Geelong. It is nestled within a curve of the Leigh River, approximately 1 km north of the junction of the Leigh and the Barwon Rivers. The township was officially proclaimed in 1855, following a crown survey undertaken in 1854. It is laid out in a conventional grid aligned north-south to east-west on the western side of the Leigh River. The early settlement of Inverleigh is associated with the Derwent Company's runs of the 1830s and 1840s. The Company laid claim to 26,000 acres of land in the Portland Bay District. When it was dissolved in 1842 its properties were divided up by mutual consent and pastoral runs such as Native Hut No. 3 and Weatherboard Nos. 1 & 2 were formed within the Inverleigh area. The new owners continued to be important patrons of the town. The Inverleigh township developed during the 1850s as a commercial and civic centre servicing surrounding pastoral properties. It was also an important stop on the colonial trade routes that linked Geelong to the Western District and the Woody Yaloak goldfields to the north. At first, a gravel ford provided access across the Leigh River. After the completion of a permanent bridge over the Leigh River in 1853 and the formalization of the township grid, High Street became the primary route into and out of town. The bluestone abutments survive but the bridge has been superseded by a modern structure. An impressive avenue of *Cupressus macrocarpa* (Monterey Cypress), established in the early twentieth century, signals the Hamilton Highway's eastern and western entrance.

Important public and commercial buildings were established during the 1860s, such as the township's two bluestone hotels, a post and money order service, a Mechanics Institute, four churches and three denominational schools. The division of large pastoral properties at the end of the nineteenth century gave way to intensive agricultural activities such as dairy and horticulture. A farmer's common was established to provide inhabitants of the town access to pasture for the grazing of cattle and horses. Orchards originally established to supplement dairy farming developed into large commercial operations, supplying jam manufacturers located in Geelong. The Gheringhap to Maroona railway line was completed in 1910, with local produce dispatched from the Inverleigh Railway Station.

While surrounding townships experienced a decline in population and services during the mid twentieth century, Inverleigh struggled but survived. In the 1950s the townships population was 250 persons, with an increase to 350 persons recorded in the 1960s. During this period the township had a post and telegraph office, State School, savings bank, four churches, a public hall, police station, electric lighting and football, cricket, golf and tennis clubs. By the 1970s the public hall was extended to incorporate a baby health care centre and medical clinic. The township of Inverleigh remains substantially intact and the surviving buildings and infrastructure from a range of periods retain a high degree of integrity. Key public buildings, open public spaces and surviving examples of commercial and residential development provide a clear sense of past and present settlement.

How is it significant?

The township of Inverleigh is of historical, architectural and social significance for the Golden Plains Shire.

Why is it significant?

The township of Inverleigh is of historical significance as one of the many small settlements in the Shire established to support agricultural industries during the 1850s and 1860s. It has direct associations with members of the Derwent Company and subsequently the Willis and Berthon families and Dr. Robert Cuthbertson Hope, pioneer pastoralist and medical doctor. It is of architectural significance for its range of commercial, residential and public buildings dating from the nineteenth century and some designed by architects. The town is of social significance as the focus of community life, religious activity, education and recreation.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Golden Plains - Golden Plains Shire Heritage Study Phase 2, Heritage Matters P/L, 2009;
Hermes Number	55594
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

The township of Inverleigh is located on the Hamilton Highway approximately 28 kms west of Geelong. It is nestled within a curve of the Leigh River, approximately 1.0 km north of the junction of the Leigh and the Barwon Rivers.

The township is laid out in a conventional grid on either side of High Street, which is wider than the other streets, and is aligned north-south to east-west. It is composed of twelve sections with the Leigh River providing the eastern boundary, Cambridge Street forming its northern boundary and the Gheringhap to Maroona railway line providing the southern boundary. The allotments are generally long and narrow, with some square parcels positioned on corner lots. Approaching from the west, the Hamilton Highway enters an avenue of *Cupressus macrocarpa* (Monterey Cypress) dating from the early twentieth century.

The Inverleigh Heritage Precinct is located either side of High Street, bound to the west by Newman Street and to the east by East Street. Residential and commercial buildings located on the north of High Street between Newman Street and East Street are accessed by a service road. These include a cluster of timber cottages (36 and 34 High Street) and the Victorian timber cottages located on either side of the intersection of Dundas Street (24 & 20 High Street) which have almost no set back from the street but are located on deep corner allotments. The former bank and residence (14 High Street) now a restaurant is located next door to the General Store and Post Office (12 High Street). The double shop front features three hipped roofs, is clad in weatherboard with four double hung sash windows and two entrance doors. A large *Pinus pinea* (Italian Stone Pine) is located in the front yard of 8 High Street, a small timber cottage with a substantial garden.

A row of commercial and residential buildings line the southern side of High Street accessed by a service road. These include the former bakery, now a private residence (5 High Street) featuring a hipped roof and low verandah with timber posts. The facade is clad in two materials, a timber section on the east with a set pair of twelve pane double hung casement windows. The brick section to the west has two twelve pane double hung sash windows and a four panel front door. A small picket fence runs the length of the verandah. The pair of cottages (9 High Street) has a shallow set back and low verandahs to the footpath. The cottage on the east is clad in weatherboard and features three twelve pane double hung sash windows. Its timber verandah has detailed fretwork and a timber picket fence. The western cottage is constructed of bluestone and features two twelve pane double hung sash windows on either side of the front door. A wire fence runs the length of the timber verandah. The small cottage (23 High Street) with a shallow set back from the street on a large corner block, featuring a low timber verandah with detailed fretwork.

Historical Australian Themes

Australian Historic Themes

The Australian Heritage Commission devised the Australian Historic Themes in 2001. The following themes have influenced the historical development of the Inverleigh Precinct.

2. Peopling Australia

2.2 Adapting to diverse environments

2.5 Promoting settlement

3 Developing Local, Regional and National Economies

3.3 Surveying the continent

3.3.4 Looking for land with agricultural potential

3.3.5 Laying out boundaries

3.5 Developing primary production

3.5.1 Grazing stock

3.5.2 Breeding animals

3.5.3 Developing agricultural industries

3.6 Recruiting labour

3.7 Establishing communications

3.7.1 Establishing postal services

3.8 Moving goods and people

3.8.5 Moving goods and people on land

3.8.6 Building and maintaining railways

3.8.7 Building and maintaining roads

3.12 Feeding people

3.12.2 Developing sources of fresh local produce

3.12.5 Retailing foods and beverages

4 Building Settlements Towns And Cities

4.1 Planning urban settlements

4.1.1 Selecting township sites

4.2 Supplying urban services (power, transport, fire prevention, roads, water, light and sewerage)

4.3 Developing institutions

4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia

5 Working

5.6 Working in the home

5.8 Working on the land

6 Educating

6.1 Forming associations, libraries and institutes for self-education

6.2 Establishing schools

7 Governing

7.6 Administering Australia

7.6.1 Developing local government authorities

7.6.3 Policing Australia

7.6.5 Incarcerating people

8 Developing Australia's Cultural Life

8.5 Forming associations

8.6 Worshipping

8.6.1 Worshipping together

8.6.2 Maintaining religious traditions and ceremonies

8.6.4 Making places for worship

8.8 Remembering the fallen

8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

Physical Description 2

Contributory elements located in the proposed Inverleigh Heritage Precinct:

House, 5 High Street Inverleigh

House and *Pinus pinea* (Stone Pine), 8 High Street Inverleigh

House, 9a High Street Inverleigh

House and *Ulmus prosera* (Elm) at rear, 9b High Street Inverleigh

Store, 12 High Street Inverleigh

Restaurant, 14 High Street Inverleigh

House, 20 High Street Inverleigh

House, 23 High Street Inverleigh

House, 34 High Street Inverleigh

House, 36 High Street Inverleigh

Integrity

The township of Inverleigh remains substantially intact and the surviving buildings and infrastructure from a range of periods retain from a good to a high degree of integrity. Key public buildings, open public spaces and surviving examples of commercial and residential development provide a clear sense of past and present settlement.

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/>