
Former Beechworth Training Prison - Beechworth Historic Area



B0624 Old Gaol Beechworth

Location

Ford Street,, BEECHWORTH VIC 3747 - Property No B0624

Municipality

INDIGO SHIRE

Level of significance

State

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1549

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 7, 2008

The Beechworth Training Prison was erected in stages from 1858-1864 from designs prepared by the Public Works Department. The buildings erected at that time were the Central Hall, principal cell blocks, the perimeter and some internal walls, towers, gateway, gaolers', wardens' and turnkeys' quarters and the chapel wing. These were all constructed in stone and had slate roofs. There have been several later additions.

This is one of the finest of a series of gaols erected by the Public Works Department in the period 1858-64. The

plan and form is typical of gaol design during this period. It is the largest structure in the area erected in the superb local stone and the scale and quality of the stone walls, towers and buildings is a distinctive feature of the complex. The gaol is an outstanding element of this important historic town and is essential in the Ford Streetscape. It is surrounded by attractive lawns and gardens.

The buildings are generally intact. They were partially damaged by fire and some parts have been reconstructed. Later additions in the main entrance courtyard have spoilt its original appearance. The slate roofs have been replaced by corrugated decking.

Classified: 09/07/1959

Also part of Group Classification (B2615) with Court House, Forests Office, Lands Office & Police Station.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (HISTORIC AREA)

Beechworth is a picturesque nineteenth Century provincial town. It is a well preserved example of a Government and private building, which resulted from the town's important historical role as the administrative and commercial centre of Victoria's north - eastern goldfields. Beechworth was once significant for its position on an early overland route from Melbourne to Sydney.

The town is located sympathetically to the topography, in an area of considerable landscape interest. Set amidst forested undulating country, there remain many relics of the mining era in and about Beechworth. It is a rich field for the industrial archaeology.

There are within the town a large number of historical and architecturally significant buildings. These display a quality of form and richness of material and detail, which make Beechworth one of the most significant of Australia's goldfield towns. Of particular interest is the common usage of local granite in construction. Its honey colour imparts a quality distinctive to Beechworth.

The highlights of Beechworth are the grid of wide streets flanked with granite kerbing; the streetscapes of considerable integrity with groups of homogeneous buildings set off by mature elms and other exotic trees; and the remnants of historic Victorian gardens. About the town there are many examples of nineteenth century street furniture, signs and fences. Beechworth's historical wealth is of national significance.

Classified: April, 1983

Other Names Beechworth Gaol,

Hermes Number 68677

Property Number

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/>