

## FORMER NATIONAL SCHOOL



FORMER NATIONAL  
SCHOOL SOHE 2008



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1 former national school  
portland side view jun1984

### Location

45 PALMER STREET PORTLAND, GLENELG SHIRE

### Municipality

GLENELG SHIRE

### Level of significance

Registered

### Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1647

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO54

### VHR Registration

August 20, 1982

## Amendment to Registration

May 23, 1998

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

### ***What is significant?***

The former National School at Portland was built in 1855-56 to a design by local architect John Barrow. The National Board of Education functioned from 1851 to 1862, managing government-funded, non-denominational schools, of which 193 were built.

The Portland National School was opened in October 1856, with Mr and Mrs Dunbar appointed as resident teachers. Constructed of local bluestone, it comprises a commodious double-storey, five-roomed teachers' residence abutted by a single-story schoolhouse (that comprises the boys school room). The double-storey section comprises a central porch, first-floor window mouldings and a chimney set in the centre of the apex of the roof. Both sections have notable terminations to the gables. A second single-storey wing, intended as the girls school room, was planned for the other side of the two-storey section, but this was never completed. The finished design nevertheless represented a characteristic design of government schools at this time, notably with the incorporation of a teachers' residence, and the separation of boys' and girls' school rooms. The intended design was to follow a symmetrical plan with a central teachers' residence and a school room either side, which was a typical layout for early National Schools in Victoria.

The former Portland National School became a Common School in 1862 and a State School in 1873. A new school building was erected on the site, behind the original building, in 1879. The building continues to be used as the Portland Primary School.

### ***How is it significant?***

The former National School at Portland is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

### ***Why is it significant?***

The former National School Portland is of architectural and historical significance as one of only around 23 surviving examples of early National School buildings constructed in Victoria between 1851 and 1862. It is of architectural significance as one of the earliest surviving examples of the work of local architect John Barrow. Its unfinished plan was typical of National Schools of that period. The former Portland National School is the oldest surviving government school building in Portland, an early settled town of Victoria, and hence one of the earliest surviving schools in Victoria.

The former National School Portland is of historical significance for its continuing function as a government school building since 1856, a period of nearly 150 years. Together with the broader complex of buildings on the site, the Portland National School building is important for its demonstration of the long and continuing role of education in the State.

It is also historically significant for its important contribution to our understanding of the origins of government education in the State. Its incorporation of a substantial two-storey residence is an example of unusually comfortable teachers' living quarters, which demonstrates the important function and high regard shown to school-teaching at that time.

*[Online Data Upgrade Project 2004]*

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

**Places of worship:** In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

**Subdivision/consolidation:** Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### Specific Exemptions:

**General Conditions: 1.** All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object. **General Conditions: 2.** Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible. **Note:** All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component.

**General Conditions: 3.** If there is a conservation policy and plan all works shall be in accordance with it. **Note:** A Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan.

**General Conditions: 4.** Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. **General Conditions: 5.** Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. **Minor Works :** **Note:** Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works must submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Construction dates            1855,

Architect/Designer            Barrow, John,

Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	FORMER PORTLAND NATIONAL SCHOOL,
Hermes Number	946
Property Number	

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## History

**The draft statement of significance and the above history were produced as part of an Online Date Upgrade Project 2004. Sources were as follows:**

Wilson Sawyer, 'Portland Urban Conservation Study' (1981).

SLV 'Pictoria' collection of online images (J.T. Collins photos, c.1970s-80s)

Lawrence Burchell. *Victorian Schools: A study in colonial government architecture 1837-1900* (MUP, Carlton 1980), p. 136.

## Extent of Registration

Amendment of Register of Government Buildings

Portland Town

Former National School, corner of Julia and Palmer Streets, Portland.

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No. G39 12 October 1988 p.3092]

Transferred to the Victorian Heritage Register 23 May 1998 (2 years after the proclamation of the Heritage Act 1995 pursuant to the transitional provisions of the Act)

*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/>*