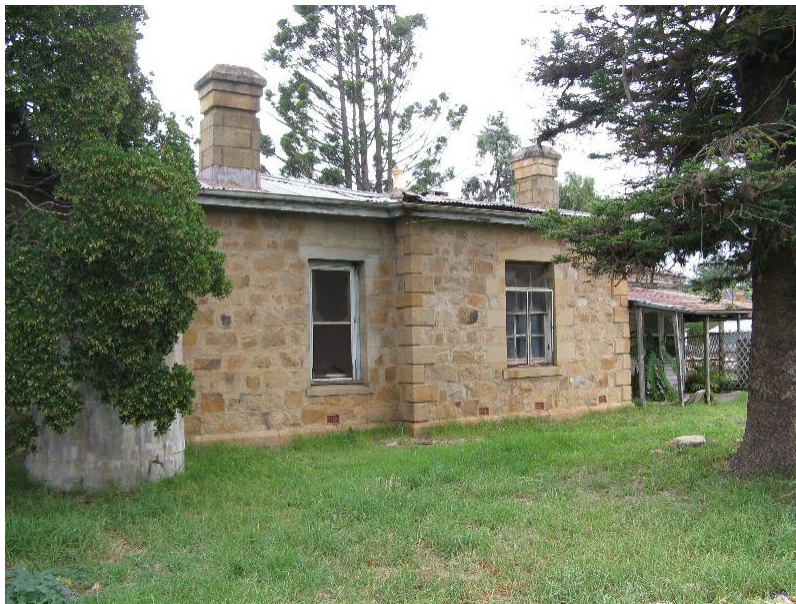


Victorian Heritage Database place details - 24/6/2021

FORMER SURVEY OFFICE



Location:

178 HIGH STREET HEATHCOTE, GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number: H2247

Listing Authority: VHR

Extent of Registration:

1. All the land marked L1 on Diagram 2247 held by the Executive Director, being all of the land described in Certificate of Title Volume 6564 Folio 611.
2. All the building B1 on Diagram 2247 held by the Executive Director.

Statement of Significance:

The former survey office at Heathcote was built in 1854 for Phillip Chauncy (1816-80), who was sent to the McIvor goldfield district in 1853 as surveyor-in-chief. He had been given £1546 by the Government to construct a building to serve as a survey office and a residence for his family. Gold had been discovered at McIvor Creek in 1852, there was a short-lived rush to the area in 1853, and a Government Camp was set up on Camp Hill in the same year. The sandstone survey office was constructed by James Crowle, who had built the other Government buildings in the Camp. Chauncy lived in the survey office from 1854 until 1860, during which time he surveyed the towns of Heathcote and Echuca, and was then moved to Dunolly. As well as being a surveyor Chauncy was a sketcher, and made drawings in the 1850s of Heathcote and of the survey office. He also contributed to R Brough Smyth's 1878 book, *The Aborigines of Victoria*. After 1860 the survey building became

redundant and it was bought in 1872 by Frederick Spinks, the owner of the local store, who made substantial timber additions to the stone building for use as a residence, which he named Helenslee. It was described then as having nine rooms, a cellar and outbuildings, a notable garden and a tennis court. In 1896 it was bought by a local doctor, Alfred Esler, who made further additions, and from then until 1968 it was owned by a series of medical practitioners who used it as a residence and surgery, following which it again became a private residence.

The former survey office is a single storey symmetrical Victorian-period Georgian style sandstone building with walls of coursed rubble and with quoining and the three chimneys of ashlar. The 1850s drawings show the house facing Chauncy Street, with a small arched entrance porch and arched windows with fanlights on either side. There were two rooms at the front and an arched opening leading to a passage at the rear with two more rooms opening off it. The roof is now clad with corrugated iron. Changes made to the survey building in the late nineteenth century, when extensive timber additions were made on the north and west sides and a timber verandah added along the south side, include the removal of the entrance porch, the cutting of two square-headed windows in the east wall, and the cutting of a new opening into the new building in the west side. On the site are a large Norfolk Island Pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*), a Hoop Pine (*Araucaria cunninghamii*), a Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) and an Irish Strawberry (*Arbutus unedo*). Chauncy's drawings show buildings to the north of the survey office and on the corner of High and Chauncy Streets, and there may be archaeological remains of these.

This site is part of the traditional land of the Taungurung people.

The former survey office at Heathcote is of architectural and historical significance to the state of Victoria.

The former survey office is architecturally significant as a fine and unusual example of a public building constructed in the early years of the Colony of Victoria. It is notable for its Georgian-influenced style and for the use of the local Heathcote sandstone, which was also used for other early Government buildings in the town.

The former survey office at Heathcote is historically significant for its association with the history of settlement in the State, and as a reflection of the importance of survey offices in this settlement process in the post-gold rush period. The discovery of gold in various parts of Victoria in the 1850s led directly to the establishment of settlements in these areas, and surveyors were sent to lay out new towns. The Heathcote survey office is a demonstration of the importance of the McIvor goldfield in the early 1850s, and is significant as the oldest surviving building in the town. It is significant for its association with Phillip Chauncy, the surveyor who was sent to the Mc Ivor goldfields in 1853, who laid out the towns of Heathcote and Echuca, and who lived in the survey office with his family from its completion in 1854 until he was sent to the Dunolly Survey District in 1860, and also made an important contribution to Robert Brough Smyth's 1878 book, *The Aborigines of Victoria*.

Heritage Study	
Year Construction Started	1854
Architect / Designer	
Architectural Style	Victorian Period (1851-1901) Georgian
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place, Registered archaeological place
Municipality	["GREATER BENDIGO CITY"]
Other names	Helenslee
History	