

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Name: Former Natimuk State School No. 1548

Address: 1a Sudholz Street, Natimuk

Place Type: Residence (Private); Former School

Citation date: September 2023



Former Natimuk State School, 1a Sudholz Street, Natimuk, viewed from Main Street (GGA, September 2023)

Recommended Heritage Protection:

VHR	-
HI	-
PS	Yes (existing) – HO18

Existing Hermes entry: N/A – new entry created: 210137

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

INTEGRITY

The former school has a low to moderate level of integrity. This is explored further in relation to its external and internal appearance, as well as in relation to the site.

- *Externally*

The external appearance of the building is relatively intact to the original extent of the brick structure, retaining polychrome brickwork, complex 'jerkinhead' roof form with galvanised sheet metal cladding, with finials and brick chimneys, and encircling verandah with timber posts and simple timber brackets. Timber sash windows are retained, as are the high level windows and vents above the verandah.

A later weatherboard clad extension has been relocated and extended, sited to the north of the brick school house. It contains bedrooms, wet areas and a carport structure facing towards Sudholz Street.

The original porch has been removed, and it is understood the verandah previously had a timber floor which no longer exists.

The building has had conservation work undertaken recently, including reroofing in galvanised steel with ogee profile gutters and folded galvanised rainheads; repointing of brickwork and installation of tie rods; and repairs to rotten and damaged timber elements.

- *Internally*

Internally, little fabric remains to describe the function of the place as a schoolroom. The fireplace remains, as does the internal volume of the space, but otherwise not much evidence of the former use remains. The timber floor has been entirely replaced. Internally the space has been renovated to include kitchen joinery, and has been painted throughout.

The previously external brick wall now forms one side of the central corridor, but has been left as face brick so that its previous role as an external wall can be readily understood. The original State School sign is missing, although the pins which supported it remain in the wall.

The interiors of the lightweight extension are simply detailed and do not compete with the prominence of the former school room space.

- *Site*

All earlier school buildings have been removed from the site, and there is no evidence of their locations remaining visible. A low cyclone wire perimeter fence, and intermediate timber picket fencing are not related to the school's period of development. There is no significant vegetation or other site features remaining that relates to the use of the place as a school.

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

HISTORY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The land for the Natimuk State School had been reserved in 1874, and the school was opened in April, 1875, with a wooden school room being erected on the two acre site on Main Road. A teacher's residence was then constructed on the adjacent allotment.

The brick school building was constructed in 1891, attached to the timber building. At this time the residence was relocated elsewhere on the school reserve. In 1908 a timber cloakroom was added, and two additional windows installed in the western façade of the brick school room. The old timber school room was removed from the site, and the new school site established on Jory Street.

The Natimuk school had 22 students on opening, rising to 170 by the end of the first year. It was one of many built in the Horsham district during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and reflects the design language of what architectural historian Lawrence Burchell described as a Horsham, or Horsham – Avoca typology. This originated at the Horsham State School in 1876, and it is understood to have been applied to at least 26 schools in the area. Whilst the schools ranged in size and architectural detail, they display consistently the jerkinhead style roof, encircling verandah, and timber bracket detailing. Natimuk was one of the last to be constructed, and appears to be one of maybe a third of the original 26 that remains standing. The design of this and its collective of the Horsham – Avoca typology is attributed to Henry Bastow of the Public Works Department, and can be seen as a stylistic evolution from the more traditional Gothic Revival style employed by the Bastow and the Department.

After the new school in Jory Street was established, the former school site was repurposed for community facilities, and some of the surrounding land sold to raise funds. The adjacent Natimuk Gymnastics Club purchased the former school in 1964 and used the buildings on the school site for various activities. The land was then sold in 1998 and the building is now privately owned and furnished as a residence.

The weatherboard clad lightweight addition was constructed in 2006, and relocated to its present position in 2019. This was extended to house a carport in 2020.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

A rectangular brick building measuring approximately 10 metres by 6 metres, with encircling verandah to the east, south and west sides. A later weatherboard addition spans along the north side of the brick building, with the face brickwork retained internally. The brickwork is primarily brown brick laid in Flemish bond, with a dark glazed brick plinth and chamfered cream brick course above. At the window sill level, a single dark glazed course with two cream brick courses over is punctuated by basalt window sills. Cream bricks are also utilised as window headers and chimney details, as well as a second double course above the verandah.

The Dutch gable, or jerkinhead roof, has been recently reroofed in galvanised corrugated steel, with galvanised flashings, cappings, and ogee profile gutters, round downpipes, and fabricated rainheads. The verandah roof has also been replaced in galvanised steel. The eaves are timber lined, with timber brackets to the east and west facing roof projections. The verandah is supported on timber posts with simple timber brackets. The timber verandah floor, later

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

replaced with concrete, has been removed and there is currently no finished verandah floor surface.

Timber framed windows are double hung sashes, with multi-pane glazing bars. There are three windows to the west and south walls, a single window to the east, and no openings in the north wall, which houses the fireplace. Above the line of the verandah, there are three windows facing to the east and west; on the south facing gable are two timber louvred vents.

Entry into the building is via the weatherboard clad addition to the north, which has doors located at either end of a central corridor, with bedrooms and bathroom spaces to the north of this. The previously external north wall of the brick building is exposed along the length of the corridor space, with entry into the former school room space from the north. The large brick hearth and chimney breast with slate mantle are retained on the north wall, as well as the timber panel ceiling lining. The timber floor has been entirely replaced, and the tiered 'risers' where students would be seated are no longer existing.

The decorative circular ceiling vents have been repurposed as lights. A split system air conditioner and ceiling fan have also been installed to the space, and the single high level tie rod remains across the space. The eastern wall houses kitchen joinery and appliances. A picture rail runs along the north and south walls, but it is not certain if this was an original feature.

AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE COMMISSION CRITERIA

The HERCON Criteria for assessment of heritage value are as follows:

- *Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history*

The Former Natimuk State School is of historical importance within the Horsham Rural City Council area, as an externally intact example of the Horsham – Avoca typology of state school buildings, attributed to Henry Bastow of the Public Works Department. Constructed in 1891, it is the only remaining built structure on the original school site, which operated until 1961.

Criterion A is met.

- *Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history*

The Former Natimuk State School is one of a collection of remaining school buildings erected by the State, however it is not considered to be an uncommon or rare example. Other examples remain, and are represented on the Victorian Heritage Register.

Criterion B is not met.

- *Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history*

Given the extensive changes to the site including removal of earlier timber buildings, along with the recent renovations to the building, it is considered highly unlikely that the place has the potential to yield additional information that will inform a better understanding of its history.

Criterion C is not met.

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

- *Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and object*

The Former Natimuk State School does demonstrate attributes typical of the building type, namely a school building, and it has been identified as one of a collection of approximately 26 other structures, all designed as schools and displaying consistent architectural features externally. Its internal integrity is somewhat diminished, and the site has lost all other structures originally built to house the school. However, its external appearance is considered of high enough integrity to clearly be identified as a former school.

Criterion D is met.

- *Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics*

The Former Natimuk State School retains its largely original external appearance and key features of the Horsham – Avoca building typology established by the Victorian Public Works Department in the late nineteenth century. It retains its distinctive jerkinhead style roof with projecting eaves and timber brackets, polychrome Flemish bond brickwork with glazed and cream brick detailing, encircling timber verandah with simple timber brackets, and timber double hung sash windows.

Criterion E is met.

- *Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period*

Whilst of high architectural merit, the Former Natimuk State School does not demonstrate a particularly high degree of creative or technical achievement.

Criterion F is not met.

- *Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular present-day community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons*

The Former Natimuk State School is likely well known amongst the community for its former educational use, however it is not understood to be regarded with any strong or special spiritual, religious, cultural or political associations.

Criterion G is not met.

- *Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history*



The Former Natimuk State School has associations with the Public Works Department and specifically Henry Bastow, who was a prominent architect within the Department, as well as holding roles with the Victorian Railways Department and Victorian Water Supply Department in the mid to late nineteenth century. He was responsible for designing and overseeing the construction of in the order of 600 schools across Victoria. At least 25 of his schools are entered in the Victorian Heritage Register. Henry Robert Bastow was appointed Departmental Architect and Surveyor in March 1873, and he served as Chief Government Architect from 1886 until 1890.

Criterion H is met.

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Natimuk School was one of several schools built in the Horsham district during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and reflects the design language of what architectural historian Laurence Burchell described as a Horsham, or Horsham – Avoca typology. This originated at the Horsham State School in 1876, and it is understood to have been applied to at least 26 schools in the area. Whilst the schools ranged in size and architectural detail, they display consistently the jerkinhead style roof, encircling verandah, and timber bracket detailing. Natimuk was one of the last to be constructed, and appears to be one of maybe a third of the original 26 that remains standing. Some comparative schools include the following:

Place	Description	Image
<p>Avoca State School No. 4 (1878) VHR</p>	<p>Avoca Primary School is of architectural significance as a precedent for a number of subsequent school buildings in Victoria. The Avoca School is a single storey, asymmetrical, red brick building with simple cream brick banding and a high pitched, tent-like slate roof. The building is encircled by verandahs.</p> <p>The Avoca Schools is regarded as the most intact of the Horsham – Avoca model.</p>	
<p>Former Primary School No. 668, Western Highway, Cardigan (1883) (456 Remembrance Drive Windermere, Ballarat City) VHR</p>	<p>A brick school opened in 1883, as the Windermere Town School, to replace an earlier wooden building of 1860. The structure was designed by the Public Works Department of Victoria. The roof is essentially hipped in form, with jerkinhead roof, bracketed gables allowing top-lights. A timber verandah faces three sides and there is a tall brick chimney.</p> <p>This example is of a similar scale to the Natimuk School.</p>	

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

<p>Former Lower Homebush Primary School No. 2258, Avoca-Dunolly Road, Homebush (1886) National Trust</p>	<p>Built as Primary School No 2258 by Joseph Jarvis in 1886. The drawings were executed by S E Bindley and endorsed by H R Bastow of the Public Works Department. The jerkinhead roofs, the multi-coloured brick walls, the original windows and all the roof and gable finials are as originally designed. Another remaining example of a similar scale, regional school building.</p>	
<p>Horsham State School</p>	<p>(demolished) <i>Image at right is c1907 postcard showing Horsham State School at right</i> <i>This example has been included as a relevant comparison within the Horsham Rural City Council area – although no longer in existence, it reinforces the stylistic approach in the region at the time.</i></p>	

Of the remaining schools considered to fall within the Horsham – Avoca typology, the Natimuk School is externally of a good level of integrity, and demonstrates well the key stylistic attributes of the class of places.

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

What is Significant?

The Former Natimuk State School was constructed in 1891 to provide additional school facilities for the Natimuk district, after the construction of the original timber school room in 1875. Attributed to Architect Henry Bastow of the Public Works Department, this building operated as a school until 1961 when the new campus was established.

It is a polychrome brick building with glazed and cream brick detailing, a distinctive jerkinhead or Dutch gable roof form with timber lined projecting eaves and timber brackets, encircling verandah with timber posts and brackets, and timber sash windows with basalt sills.

The building has been altered internally and retains few original internal fittings, but externally is substantially true to its original configuration and appearance.

An extent of listing could be described as follows:

- External form of the building, including rectangular floor plan, jerkinhead roof with projecting timber lined eaves with timber brackets;
- Timber lined galvanised sheet encircling verandah on three sides with timber brackets;
- Polychrome face brickwork with glazed and cream brick banding and details;
- Basalt window sills, timber framed sash windows;
- Face brick chimneys, timber finials;
- Perforated metal wall vents

How is it Significant?

The Former Natimuk State School is of historical, aesthetic and associative significance to the Horsham Rural City Council area.

Why is it Significant?

The Former Natimuk State School is of historical importance as an externally intact example of the Horsham – Avoca typology of state school buildings, attributed to Henry Bastow of the Public Works Department. Constructed in 1891, it is the only remaining built structure on the original school site, which operated until 1961.

It demonstrates attributes typical of the building type, and has been identified as one of a collection of approximately 26 other schools, all displaying consistent architectural features externally. It retains its largely original external appearance and key features of the Horsham – Avoca building typology, including the distinctive jerkinhead style roof with projecting eaves and timber brackets, polychrome Flemish bond brickwork with glazed and cream brick detailing, encircling timber verandah with simple timber brackets, and timber double hung sash windows.

The Former Natimuk State School has associations with the Public Works Department and specifically Henry Bastow, who was made Departmental Architect and Surveyor in March 1873, and served as Chief Government Architect from 1886 until 1890. Bastow was responsible for designing and overseeing the construction of over 600 schools across Victoria. At least 25 of his schools are entered in the Victorian Heritage Register.

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS

External Paint Controls	Y
Internal Alteration Controls	N
Tree Controls	N
Fences and Outbuildings	N
Prohibited uses may be permitted	N
Incorporated Plan	N/A
Aboriginal Heritage Place	N

REFERENCES

- Heritage Impact Statement - works to former Natimuk State School No.1548; Dr Peter Mills
- *Victorian Schools: A Study in Colonial Government Architecture 1837-1900*; Lawrence Burchell (excerpts)
- *A Historical Review of Natimuk and District 1870 – 1947*
- The Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership: Bastow Legacy blog:
<https://www.bastow.vic.edu.au/blog/bastow-legacy-part-1-a-new-era-in-social-history>
- https://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/wm13Z0H_Lower_Homebush_State_School_Avoca_Dunolly_Rd_Lower_Homebush_via_Avoca_VIC_Australia
- Wikipedia entry: Henry R Bastow
- Verbal information from owners
- Council correspondence