

### Laurel Street Precinct Extension (HO25)

<b>Address</b>	Laurel Street, High Street, Panton Street, Maple Street Golden Square		
<b>Designer/s</b>	Various	<b>Dates</b>	1851 - 1935
<b>Significance</b>	Local	<b>Builder/s</b>	Various
<b>Recommendation</b>	Recommended for inclusion in the heritage overlay of the Greater Bendigo planning scheme	<b>Survey Date</b>	14 January 2020



Figure 1 The existing Laurel Street Precinct boundary is shown in blue, with the revised boundary indicated in red. Source: Google Maps 2020

### Golden Square History

The Bendigo Creek valley and its environs had been the location of human activity for thousands of years before European settlement. The area was occupied by the Jaara Jaara people of the Dja Dja Wurrung language community. Archaeological digs have shown an extensive period of occupation prior to European arrival.

## **GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY**

The first Europeans arrived in Victoria in 1834 with the arrival of the settlers in the Portland area. Positive reviews of the country were taken back to New South Wales by Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell's 1836 expedition to the Port Phillip district, and it was not long before land elsewhere in what would become the colony of Victoria was being taken up by European settlers. These land claims disrupted the thousands of years of occupation by the Dja Dja Wurrung, unsettling established cultural practices and altering the environment, sometimes beyond recognition.

One of these settlers was Charles Sherratt who took up 119,000 acres around 1839. He named the property Mount Alexander. The property changed hands several times in the following years. By 1848 it was owned by brothers Stewart and Robert Gibson. Ill health meant one of the brothers was almost immediately replaced as an owner by their brother-in-law, Frederick Fenton. Fenton soon became the sole owner of the property, which he called Ravenswood run. The northern part of the property was crisscrossed by several creeks, among them the Bendigo Creek which was named for English prize fighter William "Bendigo" Thompson. It was along a stretch of this creek known as "the Rocks" that gold was found in 1851, reportedly by the wives of two workers on the Ravenswood run.

Word of the discovery spread quickly, coming on the back of other gold finds in both New South Wales and elsewhere in the newly independent colony of Victoria over the preceding year. Optimistic fossickers rushed to the region, quickly establishing a series of rough and ready settlements along the chain of ponds that formed the Bendigo Creek.

Golden Square development was driven by the gold discovery. The initial rush to the area was fuelled by alluvial gold finds. Gold was found on the surface, in creek beds, and at shallow depths in the surrounding gullies (Kirkwood 1881:1). The search required little mining experience, and anyone could try their hand. If they weren't successful, many would move on to the next goldfield and hope for better luck. Others would stay and shift their focus to providing goods and services to other miners, creating the first businesses.

The alluvial gold soon played out, however, and many miners moved on to other fields rather than take on the more difficult quartz reefs. This type of mining was more technical and required experienced miners as well as an initial investment as it could take some time for a site to show dividends. It also needed a steady supply of skilled workers. As quartz reefing became more profitable, the settlement took on the appearance of a more permanent community.

The alluvial diggings of the Bendigo Creek valley, including Golden Square, were surveyed by R W Larritt in 1853-54 under instructions from the Victorian Surveyor-General Andrew Clarke. His original layout for Golden Square was based on the course of the Bendigo Creek and applied some order to the collection of huts and tents along the line of the creek. The first land sales in Golden Square took place in 1854 and were among the first in Bendigo. The lots for sale were plotted out on Larritt's survey. Many of these lots were taken up by those who had already turned a profit on the goldfields, or who had arrived with means to speculate. Merchants, tradesmen and skilled workers could afford to purchase land one which to build their own houses. The earliest homes on the goldfields, however, had been built by miners.

The wave of miners who arrived to take up work on the quartz mines were often more settled than the alluvial miners who preceded them. They were experienced men who had worked other mining areas, and they brought their families with them. This meant that they needed to find accommodation quickly but would stay in one place longer. Timber housing was ideal of this,

## GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY

allowing quick construction of homes that could be adapted and embellished as their owner's circumstances changed. As the main lines of reef were worked, miners built their homes close by, on auriferous (gold bearing) Crown land that qualified for the Miner's Residency Area. This was a provision from the government that allowed holders of a miner's right to lease an area of Crown land. The land was unsurveyed, away from made roads and siting of houses was up to the individual miner, creating many houses that would not align with the streets that were eventually imposed over the mining areas. As tenure on the Residency Area became more secure, miner's housing became larger and more elaborate. Titles to the residency areas could be purchased from the government, and the mining areas took on something closer to a typical suburban appearance.

The three most common birthplaces for migrants during the mining era were the United Kingdom, China and Germany, with by far the greatest number coming from the United Kingdom, in particular Cornwall. Their influence was felt in naming of hotels, in the number of Methodist or Wesleyan churches. Early education was offered on the site of the Wesleyan chapel. By far the greatest number of migrants came from the United Kingdom. They brought with them religion, social structures and, among other things, the names of hotels. The United Kingdom and Hibernian hotels are among the oldest in Bendigo, and the former Uniting Church in Laurel Street was once described as 'the cathedral of Methodism' Victorian Heritage Database VHR H1371).

There was a Chinese camp in Golden Square, as there was in many other diggings. Its occupants were associated with mining and food growing, as well as other businesses like stores and laundries. In spite of the numbers of Chinese migrants to the area, however, little trace remains today. In contrast, German architects, such as Vahland and Getzschmann, were commissioned to design prominent buildings. Their legacy can still be seen in the Working Men's Club and other landmark buildings in both Golden Square and Greater Bendigo.

Although it started out as a separate settlement, Golden Square was soon being treated as a suburb of Sandhurst (Bendigo). As early as 1857 rating of properties at Golden Point (Golden Square) was carried out by the Sandhurst Borough council. This meant that the government functions generally associated with independent towns, such as a town hall or courthouse, were never established in Golden Square. Government offices were present, however, in the form of a post office from 1859 (*Bendigo Advertiser* 7 December 1877:3) at 291 High Street, and a police station and lock up, also on High Street.

There had been several sites earmarked as a public hall for Golden Square, but in spite of numerous efforts into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, none of the plans eventuated. Other buildings took on the function of public hall, however. The hotels of Golden Square hosted public meetings, political gatherings, social occasions and legal proceedings, as well as the more traditional hotel functions. Sources suggest that the Church of England services were held in the rear of the United Kingdom Hotel in 1858, ten years before the first church building was constructed on Panton Street (*Back to Golden Square* 1964:np). The Forester's Lodge Hall (1874) also hosted social gatherings until it was sold to the Salvation Army in 1917c. Among these gatherings were the first meetings of the Working Men's Club. The gradual shift of social focus away from these locations saw the Forester's Hall sold to the Salvation Army in 1917. The Mechanic's Institute had formed part of the Golden Square Working Men's Club; although it no longer serves the Mechanics Institute function, the Working Men's Club can still be found in High Street.

## GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY

Mining yields began to decline after World War 1, pushing Golden Square to diversify. Although mining revived with a high gold price during the Great Depression of the 1930s, Golden Square was already evolving away from its initial mining base. With the end of most mining operations in Golden Square by the mid twentieth century the area shifted its focus. Former mining land to the south east of the railway line that had been dotted with mines became an industrial centre, continuing the suburb's association with manufacturing and industry. Textile factories, manufacturing, and food production were some of the industries that took advantage of available land in an established area with good transport links and a ready workforce.

Other mining land was reclaimed for housing, and miners housing was subdivided to allow for new infill development. The formerly desolate mine sites, such as Chum Street, were gradually softened by vegetation and many mullock heaps were flattened by both natural and mechanical means. Equipment was removed, leaving only concrete pads to show where the machinery of mining had been. Mine shafts were capped or infilled or built over. Some former mining land became infill housing, giving an increasingly suburban appearance to Golden Square from the 1920s and completing the shift away from active mining. This is reflected not only in the repurposing of mining land, but in the people who were building the more substantial houses of the area. Taraxville, owned by soft drink manufacturer George Pethard (HO443), Dr A. J. Bothamley's house at 316-320 High Street (HO439), or dentist Robert Batchelder's at 325 High Street may have been smaller scale than mining magnate George Lansell's 'Fortuna Villa' (HO434, VHR H2211), but they provide ample illustration of a successful – and growing – professional class and a diversifying industrial base in the wake of the mining era.

### Precinct History



*Figure 2. N. J. Caire's photograph of the township of Golden Square c. 1873 is dominated by the Methodist Church with the school beyond. Source: State Library of Victoria*

From *Eaglehawk and Bendigo Heritage Study 1993 Golden Square Precinct:*

## **GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY**

*Golden Square has long been a separate entity, perhaps since the gold prospects found by Mrs Kennedy and Mrs Farrell at Golden Point in October, 1851. As a result the 'Hamlet' of Golden Square was surveyed by 1854 and allotments sold over the next few years.*

*Caire's 1875 view of Golden Square centres on the former Methodist Church (1873-), which was one of the earliest spires to rise over Bendigo. A product in part of the financial and other contributions of local mine managers, the church stood for Cornish devotion to Methodism.*

*Behind it was Golden Square School, itself a product of the Methodist zeal. A Methodist school existed near here from 1853 and was replaced, soon after (c1857-9), by a new timber church-school, initiated by the Rev. Joseph Dare. The site was at the corner of Laurel and High Streets, with a detached teacher's residence, where the former Sunday School still stands (313 High Street). The present school site was gazetted in May, 1873, and builder, Robert Wilkinson, proceeded to erect a new schoolroom there. However, with an average attendance on 500, spread over the old and new schools, the community sought government aid, resulting in John Cowper building a more substantial brick school on the site in 1873-4. The north wing opened in August 1874. Nearby, there was also St. Mark's Anglican Church which opened, in 1881, at Panton Street.*

*This growth in the number of civic buildings reflected Golden Square's family population and paralleled the growth of the rest of the district, benefiting from the established highly capitalised mines with a salaried work force. To serve this industry, a crusher was set up by Young in 1856, to serve mines in the area. Andrew Harkness & Co (255 Mackenzie Street) had commenced their Victorian foundry as early as 1858 at Golden Square and well past 1900. He was well located, with the dense peppering of mine shafts which followed the New Chum line of reef, occupying sites in Panton, Breen and Rose Streets (Shnandoah, New Chum Railway, Eureka Extended, Shamrock, Old Chum, Young Chum and Craven's shafts).*

*The church and miners, however, did not always agree – with the Rev. Nish vying with a Mr Richards in 1872 over a site in Maple Street; one wanting a church site, the other wanting gold.*

*Another early sign of community needs is the Golden Square Police Station at the Beech Street corner of High Street. Further north is the Salvation Army Hall (former) at 319 [High Street], located next to the old Methodist Sunday School and, next again, to the more recent Golden Square Post Office (321). The Golden Square Railway Station is another.*

*Golden Square was to be served by a horse tram in 1887, linking it with Bendigo, Lake Weeroona and Eaglehawk. Trees were to be planted in large numbers at the Golden Square Recreation Reserve in Laurel Street, during mid-1890, under the supervision of the municipal head gardener, Gadd. This did not stop those at Golden Square demanding better picnic facilities at Rosalind Park, now that tram travel was available.*

*Individual sites in the area include mine manager David Lanyon's house at 6 Beech Street, also a product of the noted architect William Beebe. The former Golden Square Hotel and nearby Hibernian Hotel (opposite the police station) served the Golden Square hamlet over a long period, as did the more distant Foundry Arms located nearer to the Victoria Foundry. Thomas Howe's fruit shop still survives on the Maple Street corner of High Street.*

*Panton Street commences with the church as the focus of a small community which consists mainly of residential with some commercial uses along High Street. The main residential streetscape is 2834*

## GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY

Panton Street and 93 another [sic] a the Beech Street intersection. Otherwise the development is patchy, with different eras represented, some instructive, others supportive of the overall character. Elm trees provide for some visual continuity along Panton Street and the civic use of the school, church and notable bridge nearby reinforce this part of the precinct's village centre role.



Figure 3. Detail of Sandhurst Parish Plan 22 showing the Laurel Street Precinct area. Source: Public Records Office of Victoria

### Significant Sites

#### Golden Square Methodist Church, 2a Laurel Street

When the original Methodist Church was no longer large enough for the burgeoning congregation, Crouch and Wilson were commissioned to design a new one. However, the congregation did not wish to incur a debt they could never pay. So, in 1870 the old church was extended ten metres at a cost of £600 and was completed in 1873. The old church was demolished, and the extension incorporated into the building we see today. This further work cost over £4,000, an amount met entirely by the congregation. A feature of the design is the wide galleries supported on cast-iron pillars.

## **GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY**

The organ, by H. McKenzie and Company, suffered from inadequate accommodation. In 1885 the organ loft was re-designed and the organ rebuilt by Alfred Fuller of Melbourne. It has required further attention over the years and a major rebuilding is planned at the time of writing'.

The organ is the only example of McKenzie's work to survive outside of Melbourne, McKenzie having come to the colony to install the Melbourne town hall organ in 1871.

The 1870 section was built at the rear of the existing stone church (open 11.5.70), the second was complete in 1873, both with a substantial effort and financial contribution from mining figure, R. Allingham.

### *Golden Square Primary School (former), 6 Laurel Street*

The first school to operate in Golden Square was conducted out of the timber shed that served on Sunday as the Methodist Church. The 1872 Act of Parliament that provided for government schools to take over from the earlier religious schools led to the construction of a new school. Golden Square School was completed in 1874 to a design by the Public Works Department. It shares similar detailing to contemporary Victorian schools and is noted for its restrained detailing. The school was substantially altered in 1912 and later additions can be found around the grounds. The area between the school building and Laurel Street served as a parade ground and the grounds retain well established planting. The school ceased operations 20XX when a new campus on Maple Street was opened.

### *7 Laurel Street*

Allotment 2, Section 21A of the Parish of Sandhurst was first titled in 1869 under the ownership of William Henry Rigby. Rigby did not develop the land and it was purchased by miner Joseph Roberts in 1871. By 1872, rate books indicate that the house had been constructed.

Roberts had arrived in Bendigo in 1851 and spent most of the rest of his life in Golden Square. He was part of the company that opened the New Chum Railway mine, was a trustee of the Wesleyan Church in Golden Square and was involved in the wider community (*Bendigo Advertiser* 10 August 1898:2) including both the Foresters Lodge and the Working Men's Club.

### *Laurel Street Railway Bridge*

In June 1852 the Melbourne, Mt Alexander and Murray River Railway Co. was promulgated to build a main line of railway of Melbourne to Mt Alexander and the River Murray, at Echuca and a branch line to Williamstown. Its inability to raise adequate funds however led to its purchase by the government in 1856 and to the formation of the Victorian Railways during the same year. The Williamstown and the first section of the Echuca railway (to Sunbury) were opened simultaneously on January 13, 1859. They were the first lines to be opened by the Victorian Railways department.

The balance of the Echuca railway was opened as follows:

## GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY

Sunbury to Woodend 8.7.61

Woodend to Kyneton 25.4.62

Kyneton to Bendigo 21.10.62

Bendigo to Echuca 19.9.64

Laurel Street railway bridge was constructed c.1862 and features granite quoining and keystones, with cement-rendered lining on the soffit.

The 1860s construction of the railway line reflects strategic economic issues of the day and was part of the largest building enterprise in the colony at the time. The importation of indentured German masons, who were accused of undercutting locally established conditions and pay rates, was a trigger for strike action in 1859-60 against the principle of sub-contracting and a wider battle for improved working conditions.

### *15 Panton Street/ 5a Laurel Street*

The complex of buildings at the corner of Panton and Laurel Streets is located on allotments 4, 5 and 6 of Section 21A. Ralph Jones purchased Allotment 4 in July 1860, and quickly began construction of a brick house facing Laurel Street and a brick store on the corner of Panton and Laurel Streets. Jones was described variously as a corn dealer/chandler, storekeeper and produce merchant.

Allotment 5 was purchased in the same sales by William Pritchard. Pritchard at least seems to have occupied the land prior to this, appearing in rate books with a wood cottage on Crown land in Laurel Street from 1859. By the time he sold the land in 1867, the rate value had more than doubled, suggesting a more substantial house had been constructed. Jones acquired the property and rented out the house, typically to miners, while he continued to occupy the more substantial house next door. By 1873, he was also leasing out the corner store, initially to Edward Stent who lived at 32 Panton Street (see below), then to James Richardson.

Richardson was a long-standing tenant, operating one of several grocery shops in Golden Square and Bendigo, as well as an extensive wholesale business specialising in fodder seeds. Although he moved to other premises after 1890, The Panton and Laurel Street shop was where he became established, having been burnt out of his original shop within months of opening. Until his death in 1914, Richardson claimed to be the oldest grocer in Bendigo. (*Bendigonian* 27 January 1914:13)

Jones had acquired a further narrow strip of land in 1873, and constructed a second store on Panton Street on this and the remainder of Allotment 4, completed by 1874. Jones used this second warehouse to continue his own business. Following Richardson's departure, Jones and his son, also Ralph Jones, continued to operate out of both stores selling hay, corn and produce. Ralph Jones senior continued to live in the brick dwelling on Laurel Street, and his son seems to have occupied the smaller house constructed by Pritchard, although this does not appear in rate books after 1890 and seems to have been either demolished. It was later replaced by corrugated iron sheds which have been home to motor mechanics since at least 1977, connected to the rear of the later Panton Street store.

Fire gutted the interior of the corner building in 1900, leaving just a shell, but the Jones's repaired the damage and continued to operate from the site with minimal interruption and no change to the



## GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY

rated value of the place. Following the death of Ralph Jones Senior in 1904, the probate of his will described the buildings on the land as 'a Brick Produce and Grain Store and a ten roomed dwelling house containing seven rooms brick and three rooms weatherboard attached.' Later additions have consolidated the buildings on the site, but the core of Jones's buildings remain.

### *St Marks Anglican Church, 29 Panton Street*

William Smith was one of Bendigo's earliest architects, but few of his buildings have survived. He designed the first 'town hall,' a timber building at View Point originally belonging to an American, George Washington Haycock. St Mark's was one of his last commissions. It was opened by the Bishop of Melbourne in August, 1881. The ceiling was lined in 1889. Its stained-glass lancet windows, apse and timbered ceiling are attractive. The omission of a vestry in the original design was rectified by the addition of one at the front of the church in 1938.

### *32 Panton Street*

34 Panton Street was one of several allotments purchased on Panton Street by J. S. Moore in the first land sales of April 1854. Rate books indicate the site was initially occupied by tribute company Allingham and Moore, although there is no record of mining related activity on the site. Moore did not develop the land, selling it to grocer Edward Stent who built a modest house on the land. In addition to being a grocer, Stent was a mining investor. He is listed among the shareholders of the Phoenix Gold Mining Company in 1870 (*Bendigo Advertiser* 28 October 1870:4), The Cambrian Company (*Bendigo Advertiser* 22 July 1875:4) and the Colledge Reef Gold Mining Company (*Bendigo Advertiser* 6 November 1871:4).

Business and investing appear to have had some success because Stent made alterations and additions to his house in 1875 to make it a substantial dwelling. Stent died in 1877, and the property was purchased by Edwin Simpson, described as a gentleman.

The property changed hands approximately every fifteen years after that until in 1911 it came into the ownership of Ralph Jones Junior, son of the Ralph Jones who had constructed the stores and house on the corner of Panton and Laurel Streets. Ralph Jones Junior also owned the property at the corner of Panton and Maple Streets, but used 34 Panton Street as a home for his son, Francis.

### *34 Panton Street*

34 Panton Street was another of the allotments purchased J. S. Moore in April 1854. Again, Moore did not develop the land, selling it to miner Henry Osborne who built a house in 1865. He gradually increased the size of the house and outbuildings over the following decade, until the house reached a substantial form that remained unchanged for many decades

When Osborne sold the property in 1876, it was described in the advertisement as 'That most desirable freehold allotment ... with the exceedingly handsome family residence in brick erected

## GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY

thereon, containing 7 rooms and kitchen, first-class stables (two storey), and excellent garden'. (*Bendigo Advertiser* 6 March 1876:4) The property was purchased by corn dealer Thomas Jones, who sold it to speculator Alfred Beeson in 1883.

### *42 Panton Street*

Allotment 5, Section 13A City of Bendigo Parish of Sandhurst was purchased in 1866 by Henry Banfield. The existing house was built for Banfield, who was a manager at F. C. Klemm's claim on the Garden Gully line of reef, in 1870 and is reputed to have been designed by prominent goldfields architect Robert Alexander Love. It is an early example of cavity wall construction, using an imitation Flemish bond pattern and is the earliest known example of this type of building in Golden Square.

The Banfield family remained in residence at the property into the twentieth century. Banfield himself died in 1887 by which time he was a "large mining speculator and ... a director in several companies" (*Bendigo Advertiser* 26 March 1887:2) in addition to connections with the M.U.I.O.O.F. Loyal Catherine Lodge.

### *Golden Square Swimming Pool, 14 Maple Street*

The Golden Square Swimming Pool was constructed in 1911 on land that is marked as 'Tailings' on Black's re-survey plans. It quickly became a local gathering place. It was the first public swimming pool to allow mixed bathing. Initially constructed as a simple dam with a mud bottom, it was reconstructed in 1967 to the current configuration and is now managed by a local community group.

### *Scout Hall, 15 Maple Street*

The first meeting of the Golden Square Scout troop had been held at St Mark's School Hall in 1917, although the Scout movement had been active in Bendigo as early as 1910. Meetings later moved to the Golden Square Drill Hall. In 1926, the former Specimen Hill School was relocated to Maple Street to serve as a hall for the 1<sup>st</sup> Golden Square Scout Troop. The land had been granted by Bendigo City Council. At the time was the largest building moved in Bendigo. The troop was one of the first to have its own hall outside of Melbourne (*Bendigo Advertiser* 4 February 1926), rather than having one gazetted for its use. Specimen Hill State School opened in 1874 but was destroyed by fire in 1889 and moved to a new site from 1901. The *Argus* noted that the building had been used 'many years ago' as a State school (*The Argus* 17 April 1926:21), suggesting it dates from the 1890 reconstruction on Marong Road rather than the later Inglewood site. The building is consistent with Public Works Department school designs at that time.

The building has had several phases of addition to the side and rear since 1926 and no longer serves as a Scout hall. It is currently occupied by a dance school.

### *Working Men's Club, 291 High Street*



Figure 4. Golden Square Working Men's Club. Source: Minerva Heritage 2020



Figure 5. Golden Square Working Men's Club in the 1970s before the original Post Office to the front of the building was demolished. Source: Minerva Heritage 2020

The first Post Office in Golden Square opened on High Street in 1859. The Post Office relocated in 1877, although the location of the next Post Office has not been identified. The use of the building over the next six years is unclear, but in 1883 it was one of the sites suggested to house a club in Golden Square. Reverend H. J. Howell of St Marks Anglican Church had instigated the idea as a possible response to concerns about the large numbers of youths who could be found on the streets at night engaging in larrikin behaviours. The idea proved popular and those recommending the club joined forces with another group agitating for a Mechanics Institute for Golden Square, who had already been promised assistance from Council. Funds were raised to lease the former post office for an initial six months, with an option to purchase the building during the term of the lease.

The Golden Square Working Men's Club was opened on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1883 by Mayor Mr Abraham Harkness. In February 1884, the committee purchased the building and engaged architect William Vahland to carry out renovations to the building. The alterations were complete by July 1884. It incorporated reading rooms to the front of the building and smoking and gaming rooms to the rear. The committee of the club gradually acquired several thousand books for the library and three billiard tables, as well as other games, for the entertainment of local youths.

The building has undergone many further changes since then, including the demolition of the front portion of the building, construction of brick additions to the rear and to the front, but although it no longer incorporates a reading room and mechanics Institute, it has retained its function as an entertainment and social interaction venue for the people of Golden Square through to the present day.

## **GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY**

### *Methodist Sunday School, 311 High Street*

In 1852, a timber store building was moved to a site in High Street Golden Square and renovated to serve as Wesleyan church. The building was also used as a day school from 1854 until 1873 when Golden Square State School was opened. The new Methodist church on the corner of Laurel and Panton Streets made the earlier church redundant, but it continued to serve as a Sunday School. In 1882, the school was renovated, and children's classrooms were added in 1898.

### *316-320 High Street*

The house at 316-320 High Street was constructed for Dr A. J. Bothamley by Ludwig Manniche in 1930 at a cost of £2,000 (City of Bendigo Building Register 1924-1938). The house includes a portico at the front and consulting rooms for the doctor's practice.

Dr. Bothamley had a short but eventful stay in Golden Square. He and his wife had been living in Golden Square from 1928 before moving to 316-320 High Street. The house was broken into in 1933, while Bothamley and his wife were sleeping, thieves taking goods and cash valued at £140 (*The Argus* 25 September 1933:14). Thieves struck again in 1934, stealing Mrs Bothamley's car from under the front portico of the house (*The Herald* 15 September 1934:11). The couple divorced and Dr Bothamley returned to Melbourne soon after with a new wife and child by 1936. The property was purchased by another doctor who took advantage of the consulting rooms at the front of the house, and continued to be used by a succession of medical professionals for many years, although today it is a commercial premises.

### *Former Foresters' Hall, 319 High Street Golden Square*

Tenders to construct a Court Room of the Court of Pride of the Forest were called by architects Vahland and Getzschmann in 1874 (*Bendigo Advertiser* 5 September 1874:4). The tender was awarded to Rowse & Co, with carpentry by Longstaff and Roberts (*Bendigo Advertiser* 17 December 1874:2) and the building opened in December 1874. Locally known as the Forester's Hall, the building often served as a public hall for Golden Square, hosting community gatherings and meetings, church services, including the initial meetings of the Working Men's Club. The building was sold to the Salvation Army in 1917 for use in their services. The building is now an antiques shop.

### *325 High Street*

The land of 325 High Street was first purchased by J. B. Burstall in 1854. It was eventually consolidated with C. A. Grelck's parcel on Panton Street. The property was purchased by dentist Robert Batchelder and his wife Lily in approximately 1912. They constructed a new dwelling on the then-vacant site that was completed in 1917. It was an attic storey bungalow with a design that draws heavily on the Arts and Crafts movement that was influential at the time and demonstrates early characteristics of the California Bungalow style that would become the dominant domestic style of the next decade. The early sate of the design is suggestive of an architect's involvement, but none has been identified to date. The house and outbuildings are a prominent feature of Charles Pratt's aerial photograph of Golden Square (Figure 6), which shows that the house and garden

## GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY

remain largely unchanged, with outbuildings likely dating to the late 1920s and early 1930s remaining in recognisable forms.

Robert Batchelder was a prominent Golden Square resident. His obituary described him as 'associated with the life and development of Bendigo and known for his many charitable gifts'. (*The Age* 26 June 1941:8) He was an active member of the Golden Square Fire brigade, serving as secretary for many years. (*Bendigo Independent* 6 December 1916:5)

### *330 High Street*

A house and land appear at the corner of Maple and High Streets from 1864. The property is owned by the crown, and the rate payer is miner Samuel Gray. Parish plans show the freehold being granted in 1875 to Thomas Lawley, along with the neighbouring lot on Maple Street. After Lawley took ownership, there was little change to the property until 1910, when rate books list the property, now owned by John and Maria Whitburn, as vacant.



Figure 6. Aerial view of High Street and Pantom Street ca 1925-1940, Laurel Street is at the bottom left. Source: Charles Daniel Pratt, State Library of Victoria

Description and Integrity



Figure 7. Working Men's Club, High Street

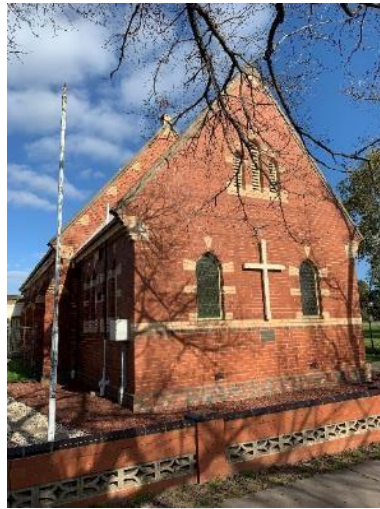


Figure 8. St Mark's Anglican Church, Panton Street



Figure 9. Shops on High Street



Figure 10. Former Howe's Fruit Shop on the corner of High and Maple streets



Figure 11. Store and residence on corner of Laurel and Panton streets



Figure 12. Golden Square Hotel, on the corner Maple and High streets



Figure 13. Early Victorian villa at 42 Panton Street



Figure 14. Victorian cottage at 334 High Street



Figure 15. Interwar bungalow at 325 High Street

The existing Laurel Street Precinct (HO25) consists of churches, schools, hotels and housing on High, Laurel and Panton streets, as well as the site of the first gold find in the Bendigo area and recreational facilities on Maple Street. The precinct is located in the heart of the former Golden Square commercial, social and civic centre. It encompasses the life of the early gold settlement with a variety of housing types to compliment the public buildings. The precinct demonstrates development of Golden Square from the early days of the gold era and into the Interwar period and retains a high degree of integrity.

## GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY

The site of the first gold discovery is commemorated by a marker. A plaque mounted on top of the pillar is inscribed:

*Commemorating 150 years of gold*

*Mrs Margaret Kennedy and Mrs Farrell found gold near this spot in the spring of 1851. Discovery of gold marked the beginning of Bendigo, which became eastern Australia's most productive goldfield.*

*"The Golden Trail" project supported by the Victorian Government through the Community Support Fund.*

*28 September 2001*

The marker is in good condition, although some signs of oxidisation from the plaque can be seen on the pillar.

The marker is located on a bend of Bendigo Creek Trail, which runs along the north side of the creek. The nearby Maple Street footbridge marks a shift in the treatment of the creek bed. To the east, it is a concrete channel; to the west, it is still a concrete channel, but the bank is grassy and tree lined, giving a more natural appearance.

High and Panton streets parallel the creek alignment within the precinct. Both streets are a mix of uses and incorporate a variety of periods. Commercial functions are largely confined to High Street, although there are some businesses located around the intersection of Panton and Laurel Streets. Ecclesiastical buildings, typically located away from High Street, are generally no longer providing church services, with the exception of St Mark's Anglican Church. South of High Street, the former Methodist church and St Marks are both red brick buildings with cream brick accents. The former Methodist church is the larger and more ornate of the two, sited in a prominent position that once dominated Golden Square. In contrast, the former St John's Presbyterian Church at 15 Maple Street was a more modest weatherboard building. A parsonage and Sunday school were added to the building in 1899.

The Working Men's Club at 291 High Street is a red brick hall with a parapeted single ridge gable roof running perpendicular to High Street. The parapet is lined with a row of corbelling at the top edge, which is broken only by a plain unadorned red brick chimney. A skin of late 20<sup>th</sup> century brown brick has been applied to the front of the building, with a small skillion roof addition where the earlier post office building once stood. To the rear a more recent gable addition, also in red brick but with a lower ridge, almost doubles the size of the building. The original side walls show signs of other alterations with openings having been bricked up. The building still houses the Working Men's Club, with a sign on the front gable advertising the billiard room, but no longer serves as a Mechanics Institute.

Other social functions of Golden Square were accommodated in the former Forester's Lodge, now Dornal's Antiques, which has aluminium windows and painted brickwork but is otherwise largely intact, and the hotels which occupy the central intersections on High Street in the precinct. Both the Golden Square Hotel, on the corner of High and Maple Streets, and the United Kingdom Hotel, on the corner of High and Laurel Streets, are generally intact, although the United Kingdom, in particular, has been greatly expanded over time. These alterations are generally identifiable as later works and do not detract from the aesthetic and social contributions the hotels make to the

## GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY

precinct. The United Kingdom Hotel has been divided into smaller tenancies including a restaurant, bottle shop, café and shop fronts and no longer operates as a hotel, but the Golden Square Hotel continues to trade in its original purpose.

The precinct offers a showcase of the variety of housing in Golden Square, from the earliest gold mining settlers through to the Interwar period. It is reflective of the patterns of development seen throughout Greater Bendigo, where it is unusual to find areas of homogenous development. While there are pockets, such as the Victorian housing at 332 – 340 High Street, which is a collection of small-scale cottages and villas that remain largely intact, it is more common to find areas where the original subdivisions have been further broken up over time to create a mixed streetscape like that at 38-42 Panton Street or 306-328 High Street, which although largely Victorian also includes a mix of Edwardian, Interwar and Postwar housing. In spite of varied rhythm and scale, a sense of unity is created in the streetscape, and across all residential areas of the precinct, by the planting of exotic street trees and small front setbacks contrasted with wide streets. Many of the gardens also include notable trees, such as the palms in the house built for Robert Batchelder at 325 High Street, or the fig tree on the front boundary of 7 Laurel Street. These are indicated, along with other notable examples, in Figure 19.



*Figure 16. Panton Street, looking north towards the intersection of Panton and Laurel streets. Source: CoGB 2020*





*Figure 17. Housing on the north side of High Street, west of Maple Street shows a mix of Victorian housing styles. Source: CoBG 2020*

The commercial buildings of Golden Square were strung out along High Street, often in small groups broken up by housing. The former Howe's fruit shop at 330 High Street is one example of this type of development. The commercial centre of Golden Square saw more concentrated development around the intersection of High and Laurel streets, where strips of shops remain today. While many of these are mid- or late twentieth century developments, there are some earlier buildings remaining at 295-297 High Street. The shop fronts date to the Interwar period, although detailing of the side walls of no. 295 hints at their earlier origins, with all three shops visible on 1934 aerial photography (Bendigo Mines Ltd) in their current form. Rear elements of the other shops in this strip also retain signs of their Victorian or early 20<sup>th</sup> century origins. A chimney at 303 High Street, a formerly detached shed or warehouse at 305 and a glimpse of polychromatic brickwork at 301 High Street are the only visible remains of the earlier structures, the parapets, shop fronts and verandahs all being either reconstruction or altered beyond recognition. They do provide evidence of the continued commercial function of the strip, however.



*Figure 18. The High Street commercial area, taken from 1934 aerial photograph. Source: Bendigo Mines Limited*

At the southern end of the commercial strip, the former Golden Square Post Office is a modest late Interwar weatherboard building now serving as a massage business. Although now lacking its Australia Post signage, the building itself is substantially intact to its Interwar form. No traces of the earlier post office on the site remain.

On the corner of Pantom and Laurel Streets, the former Jones Store buildings are now linked to early postwar corrugated iron sheds of a motor mechanic. The earlier brick store and house are largely intact and retain many early period features. The front of the slightly later of the two store buildings has been altered and lost much period detail, but remains identifiable and continues to contribute to the precinct. The sheds are non-contributory to the precinct.

The remainder of the north side of Pantom and Laurel Streets is residential. Although a mix of eras are present, the housing is predominantly Victorian with some Interwar mixed in. There is surprisingly little Edwardian housing present, although the former manse of the Methodist church is an intact example of the period and provides something of a bridge between the two periods. The housing is a mix of weatherboard and brick, some rendered, but the unity of scale, setback and detailing, combined with the established street trees, provide a sense of place.



Figure 19. Significant trees within the Laurel Street Precinct, indicated with yellow dots. Source: Google Maps 2020

### Comparative Analysis

There are other Heritage Overlays in the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme that are applied to activity centres. In Eaglehawk (HO19), a similar gold-era independent settlement, the civic and commercial functions are the prominent elements of the precinct. Golden Square is lacking the Civic functions in its activity centre because it was absorbed into Bendigo (Sandhurst) before they could be formalised.

More closely aligned to the development of Golden Square are the Long Gully Precinct (HO28) and the Quarry Hill Precinct (HO30). Both areas developed as satellites of Bendigo, although along very different lines. Both are residential precincts with small scale commercial developments scattered individually. Both also include social functions, such as pubs and halls. The comparisons between them enable a better understanding of how the different periods of mining activity – or relative lack thereof in the case of Quarry Hill – shaped settlements around Bendigo, with each having a contribution to make to the whole picture of the Bendigo goldfield.

### Assessment against criteria

The following analysis is based on Victorian Government Planning Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay (August 2018).

## **GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY**

**Criterion A:** *Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).*

The Laurel Street Precinct is of historical significance as the core of the community that sprang up around the first gold discovery in the Bendigo region. The precinct incorporates all functions of the community, including social, recreation, commercial, ecclesiastical, government and residential. The precinct includes the location of the first gold discovery in the Bendigo area.

**Criterion B:** *Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).*

N/A

**Criterion C:** *Potential to yield information that will contribute to understanding our cultural or natural history (research potential).*

N/A

**Criterion D:** *Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).*

The Laurel Street Precinct is of representative significance as an example of the gold-era settlement which, although initially independent, became a satellite of its larger neighbour, Bendigo.

**Criterion E:** *Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).*

N/A

**Criterion F:** *Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance).*

N/A

**Criterion G:** *Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).*

The Laurel Street Precinct is socially significant to the City of Greater Bendigo for its connections with the Working Men's Club, and for its hotels which provided a social focus of the Golden Square community from its earliest stages of settlement. In the swimming pool and sporting facilities, it is illustrative of the shifts in community recreation over time.

**Criterion H:** *Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).*

N/A

### **Statement of Significance**

#### *Existing assessment*

The existing statement of significance for the Laurel Street Precinct (HO25) includes the following:

## GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY

*Golden Square's historic identity springs from the first gold finds in the district at Golden Point and the subsequent development of a rich mining industry, along with some of the area's most important foundries.*

*Although parts of the old hamlet have altered beyond recognition, it still possesses a core of civic buildings which allow recognition of its former self-contained status. The housing stock is both expressive of the boom-era in mining and, in some cases, the aspirations of mine owners and their chosen architects. It is close to or adjoins to significant mine sites such as the New Chum Railway and Eureka Extended mines and possesses elm plantings from the Victorian era in Panton and Maple Streets.*

*Golden Square was one of the best-known mining areas of nineteenth century Bendigo. While few remnants of the early alluvial phase of mining survive the present road patterns, street patterns and several buildings still include elements which suggest different phases in the history of Bendigo both before and after alluvial mining.*

### *What is significant?*

The Laurel Street Precinct comprising the area approximately bounded by Panton Street, Laurel Street, Maple Street, Beech Street, Cedar Street and the Bendigo Creek is significant. Within the precinct are part of High, Laurel, Panton and Maple streets. Significant elements within the precinct include:

- 14 Maple Street, Golden Square Swimming Pool
- 15 Maple Street, former Scout Hall
- 291 High Street, Golden Square Working Men's Club
- 311 High Street, Methodist Sunday School (HO438)
- 316-320 High Street (HO439)
- 319 High Street, Former Foresters' Hall
- 325 High Street
- 330 High Street
- 2a Laurel Street, Golden Square Methodist Church and Complex (HO445, VHR H1371)
- 6 Laurel Street, Former Golden Square Primary School
- 7 Laurel Street (HO446)
- Laurel Street Rail Bridge (HO444)
- 15 Panton Street/5a Laurel Street
- 29 Panton Street, St Marks Anglican Church (HO452)
- 32 Panton Street
- 34 Panton Street (HO453)
- 42 Panton Street

Contributory elements in the precinct include:

- 295-297 High Street
- 299 High Street
- 306 High Street

## GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY

- 307 High Street
- 310 High Street
- 312 High Street
- 314 High Street
- 321 High Street, former Golden Square Post Office
- 322 High Street (HO440)
- 324 High Street
- 326 High Street
- 332 High Street
- 334 High Street
- 336 High Street
- 338 High Street
- 340 High Street
- 4 Laurel Street
- 5 Laurel Street
- 9 Laurel Street
- 5 Maple Street
- 7 Maple Street
- 8 Maple Street
- 12 Maple Street
- 11 Panton Street
- 18 Panton Street
- 20 Panton Street
- 24 Panton Street
- 28 Panton Street
- 29 Panton Street
- 30 Panton Street
- 31 Panton Street
- 33 Panton Street
- 38 Panton Street
- 40 Panton Street
- 42 Panton Street

### *How is it significant?*

The Laurel Street Precinct is locally significant to the City of Greater Bendigo.

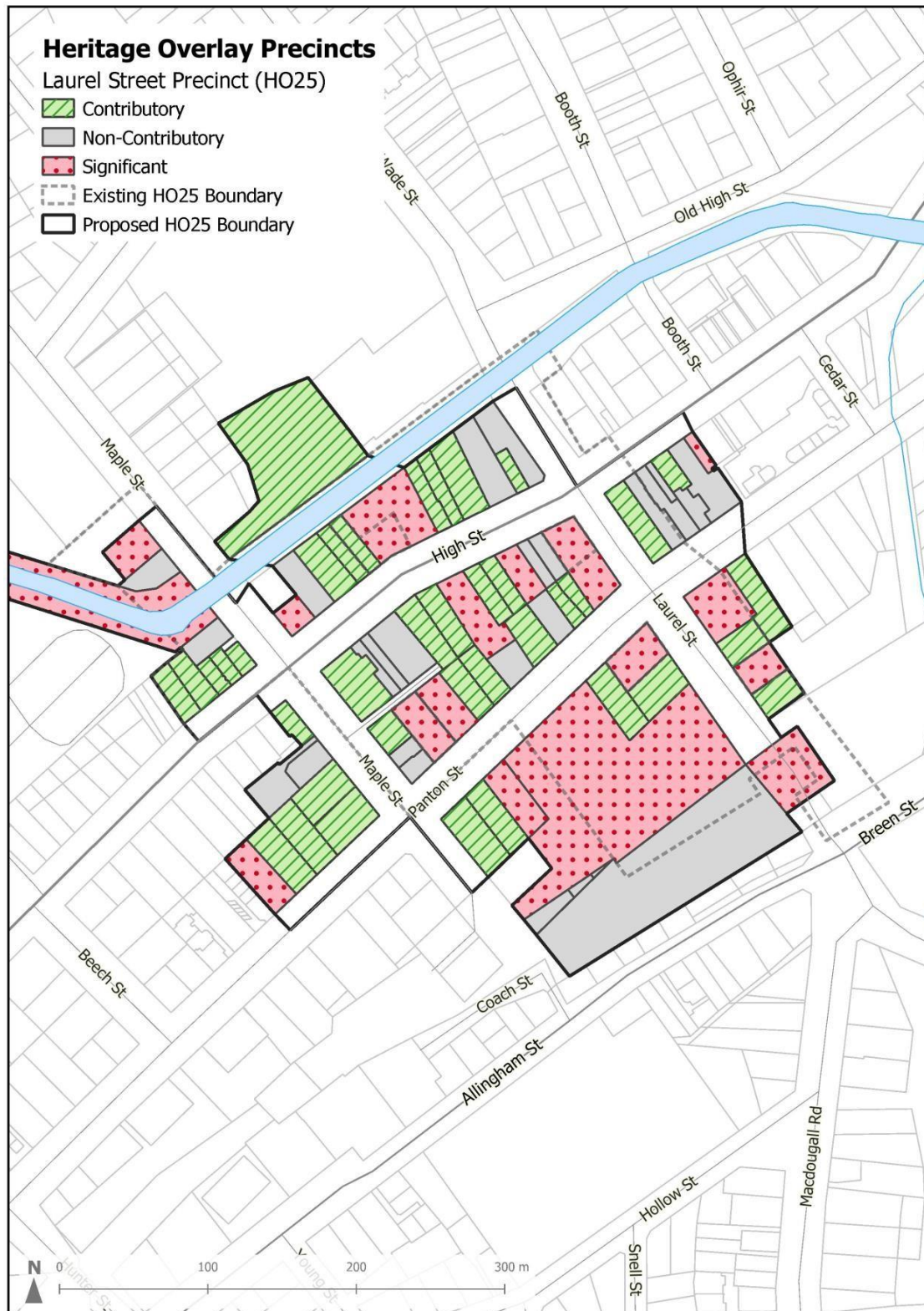
### *Why is it significant?*

The Laurel Street Precinct is of historical significance as the core of the community that sprang up around the first gold discovery in the Bendigo region. The precinct incorporates all functions of the community, including social, recreation, commercial, ecclesiastical, government and residential. The precinct includes the location of the first gold discovery in the Bendigo area. (Criteria A)

## GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY

The Laurel Street Precinct is of representative significance as an example of the gold-era settlement which, although initially independent, became a satellite of its larger neighbour, Bendigo. (Criteria D)

The Laurel Street Precinct is socially significant to the City of Greater Bendigo for its connections with the Working Men's Club, and for its hotels which provided a social focus of the Golden Square community from its earliest stages of settlement. In the swimming pool and sporting facilities, it is illustrative of the shifts in community recreation over time. (Criteria G)



## GOLDEN SQUARE HERITAGE STUDY

### Additional Controls

External paint controls apply	No
Internal alteration controls apply	No
Tree controls apply	Yes – refer mapping
Outbuildings or fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-4	Yes
Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Heritage Act 2017	No
Prohibited uses permitted	No
Aboriginal heritage place	No

### Recommendations

Assess 328 High Street for significance as a postwar dwelling.

### References

Black's Re-survey of Sandhurst c1880)

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**Identified by City of Greater Bendigo**