

Heritage Buildings Report

Site ID

Building/Site Name

Frankley Road School Teachers' Residence (Former)

Address

407 Frankley Road, New Plymouth



Statement of Significance

The original portion of this building was constructed during 1888 as the Frankley Road School Teachers' Residence; a purpose for which it was used until 1969. The building has historic significance for its long association with the Frankley Road (now simply Frankley) School and is associated with late-nineteenth century attitudes towards the provision of accommodation for schoolteachers. Designed by capable local architect James Sanderson, it is a good example of the smaller-scale domestic work he produced whilst employed as architect to the Taranaki Education Board. Well-maintained and visible from Frankley Road, the former Frankley Road School Teachers' Residence contributes positively to the local streetscape. The building has group value for its association with the nearby Frankley Road Schoolhouse (Former) and is a good and representative example of the types of teachers' residences constructed for the Taranaki Education Board during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Although the subject of alterations and additions during the 1980s, these have mostly occurred at the rear of the dwelling, with the 1888 structure retaining much of its original fabric.



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Legal Information and Heritage Status

Legal Description Lot 1 DP 518600

District Plan Item/ Map No.

Heritage New Zealand List Not listed

Construction Information

Date of Construction 1888

Principal Materials Wooden framing, weatherboard, corrugated steel

Construction Professionals James Sanderson (architect), Walter Henry Scott (builder)

History

The history of the Frankley Road (or simply Frankley) School, stretches back to 1853, when a school was established in the barn of prominent local settler Peter Elliot; this being located on the site of the present Hurdon Cemetery in Tukapa Street.¹ On the outbreak of the First Taranaki War in 1860, many upper Westown settlers were forced to flee their homes and classes ceased.² Whilst settlers began returning to their farms in the mid-1860s, it wasn't until more than a decade later, during November 1877, that local settler's requested a school be established at Frankley Road.³ A site for the school at the intersection of Frankley Road and Tukapa Street (then unformed and called Elliot Road) was offered by Mr William Bolland Davies, with approximately fifteen to twenty children located within a mile and a half radius willing to attend.⁴

During February 1878 it was reported that the Taranaki Education Board had accepted Mr Davies offer of land and tenders for construction of the school were soon advertised.⁵ In March 1878 it was reported that Mr William Thomson Small's tender of £135 16s had been accepted for the construction of the school building, with his separate tender of £18 16s also accepted for supplying desks and cupboard at the school.⁶ The Frankley Road School opened on July 1st with a roll of 4, rising to 11 by the end of the first week. School was administered under the Education Act of 1877 which introduced free secular and compulsory education.

For the first decade of operation the Frankley Road School was one of only a few Taranaki schools without a teachers' residence. In 1885 the education board declined a request to contribute towards rent costs for the schoolmaster, although would consider constructing a teachers' residence when the new building fund was being allocated.⁷ However, by the end of 1886, monetary constraints meant that funding was still not allocated for the construction of a teachers' residence at Frankley Road; It being reported that the board having a list of requirements totalling over £2000, with less than half that amount available.⁸

¹ Frankley School Jubilee Committee. Frankley School 125th Jubilee: 1853-1978. New Plymouth: Stratford Press, 1978.

² Ibid.

³ *Taranaki Herald*, 6 November 1877, page 3

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *Taranaki Herald*, 5 February 1878, page 2; *Taranaki Herald*, 2 March 1878, page 3

⁶ *Taranaki Herald*, 12 March 1878, page 2

⁷ *Taranaki Herald*, 29 July 1886, page 2

⁸ *Taranaki Herald*, 17 December 1886, page 3

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By April 1888, no doubt frustrated with the lack of action, the Frankley Road School Committee resolved to send a deputation to wait on the Education Board with regard to constructing a teachers' residence.⁹ Two months later, during June 1888, that it was finally decided to allocate £130 from the balance of the Education Board's building fund to the construction of teachers' residence at the Frankley Road School.¹⁰ Once funding was secured progress proceeded with relative pace, it being reported the following week that the Board's architect James Sanderson had completed plans for the residence and that tenders were to be advertised 'on a reduced plan'.¹¹

Architect James Sanderson had practiced independently since the 1880s and was one of the New Plymouth's foremost late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century architects. He joined in practice with Horace Victor Griffiths in 1907, and this partnership continued until 1915 when Sanderson moved to Auckland.¹² As architect to the Taranaki Education Board from 1886 until 1913 (the later period in partnership with H. V. S. Griffiths), he was responsible for the design of many significant education buildings including the neighbouring Frankley Road School House.

Tenders for construction of the teachers' residence were received from eight contractors, the successful tenderer being Mr Walter Henry Scott, who submitted the lowest tender at £130.¹³ The teachers' residence is constructed on part of Section 68 Grey District, with the south-western corner of the property purchased by the School Commissioners in July 1888 from owner Mr Tatton. The cost of the one-acre portion was £20, with the Frankley Road School Committee contributing £7 10s towards its purchase.¹⁴ The School Committee requested that the residence should be sited $\frac{3}{4}$ of a chain from the Frankley Road boundary, and $\frac{3}{4}$ of a chain from the eastern boundary.¹⁵

By August 1888 it was reported that construction of the residence was proceeding satisfactorily.¹⁶ However, likely owing to budgetary constraints, the building was initially going to have no internal linings! At the request of the school committee, the Education Board arranged for the "ceilings of some of the rooms" to be lined.¹⁷ However, this proved insufficient, and soon after completion of the residence, during October 1888, the school master, Mr Morgan, complained that the residence was very damp on account of there being no internal wall linings.¹⁸ Whilst James Sanderson recommended the residence be lined as soon as possible, at a cost of £23, the Board decided to defer the work until March 1889, when tenders were called for the work.¹⁹

By February 1891 the School Committee complained to the Board about the "leaky state of the school residence"; this was referred to Sanderson to remedy.²⁰ It seems the veranda was also omitted at the time of initial construction, as several years later, during January 1892, Sanderson was instructed by the Board to call for tenders for the erection of a veranda at the residence, the cost not to exceed £10.²¹ The following month, the School Committee was given permission to erect a porch at the

⁹ Frankley Road School Committee Minute Book - circa 1885-1911, Item ID R18850124, Agency ABDU, Accession W3570, Box 125, Record 4, Part A, Archives New Zealand (ANZ).

¹⁰ *Taranaki Herald*, 7 June 1888, page 2

¹¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 14 June 1888, page 2

¹² *Taranaki Herald*, 20 June 1907, page 2

¹³ *Taranaki Herald*, 27 June 1888, page 3

¹⁴ *Taranaki Herald*, 12 July 1888, page 2

¹⁵ Frankley Road School Committee Minute Book - circa 1885-1911, Item ID R18850124, Agency ABDU, Accession W3570, Box 125, Record 4, Part A, Archives New Zealand (ANZ).

¹⁶ *Taranaki Herald*, 9 August 1888, page 2

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ *Taranaki Herald*, 10 October 1888, page 3

¹⁹ *Taranaki Herald*, 24 October 1888, page 2; *Taranaki Herald*, 6 March 1889, page 3

²⁰ *Taranaki Herald*, 26 February 1891, page 3

²¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 28 January 1892, page 2

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residence, provided this was done under the supervision of the architect.²² During early-1894, the School Committee requested the Board make additions to the residence, however, the Board replied they had no funding available for the work at the time.²³ It wasn't until January 1907 that tenders were called for additions at the residence, this involved the enlargement of the dining room at the rear of the western gable and had a cost of £50.²⁴ Further alterations with a cost of £107 were completed in 1912, and again in 1925, when two contracts valued at £19 and £50, respectively, were let.²⁵

During March 1939 an application was made for a grant of £1226 for the construction of a new residence, although it seems this was declined, with the original residence remaining in use.²⁶ It appears the residence was occupied until 1969, after which time it was utilised as a temporary classroom for a short period. Frankley School shifted to its present site during 1969 and both the former residence and old schoolhouse were sold to private owners soon after.



[Plans of School Buildings – Teachers' Residence at Frankley Road – Detail of Front Elevation], James Sanderson, circa. 1888, Item ID R18854119, Agency ABDU, Accession W3570, Box 367, Archives New Zealand (ANZ).

²² *Taranaki Herald*, 25 February 1892, page 2

²³ *Taranaki Herald*, 15 February 1894, page 2

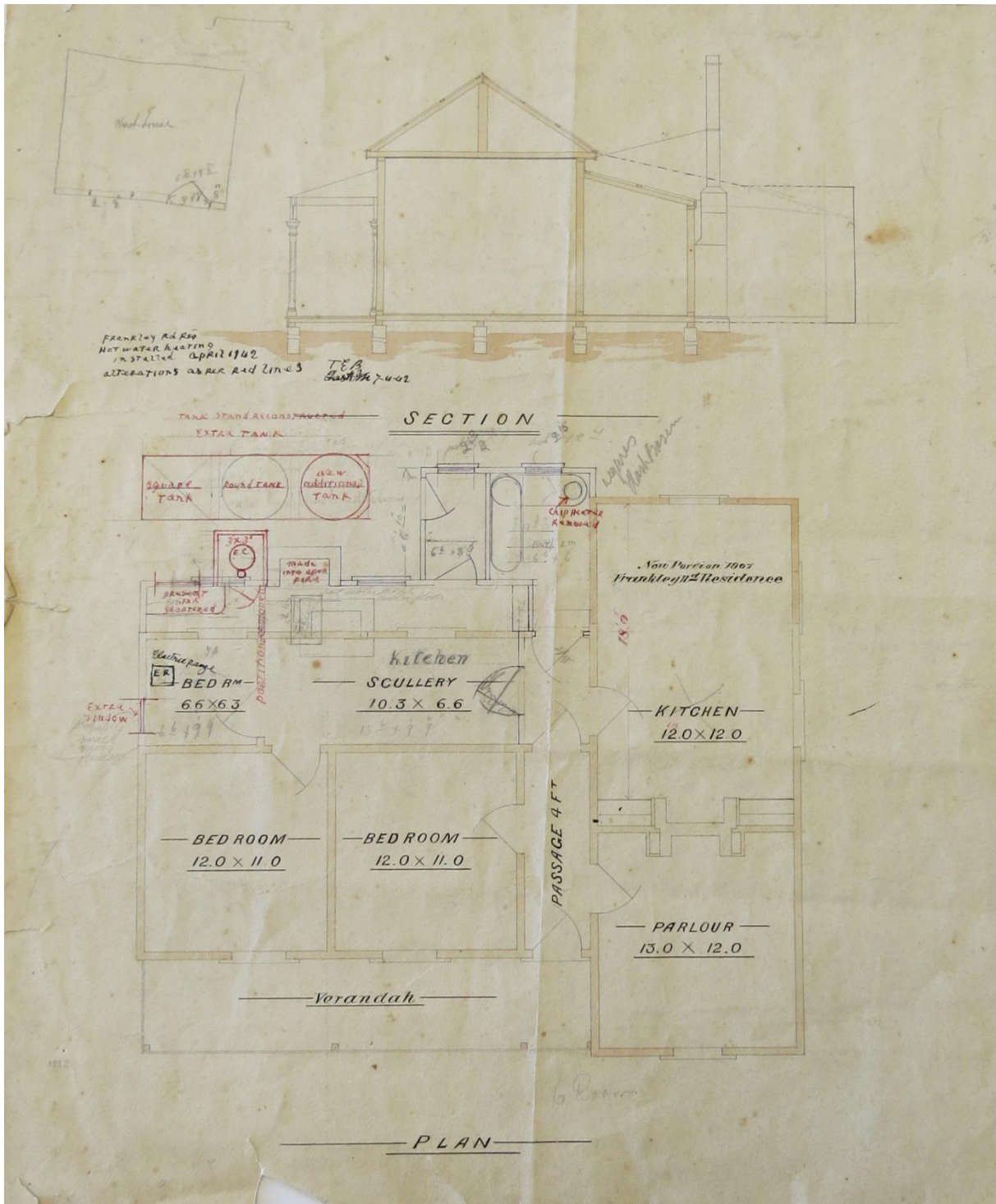
²⁴ *Taranaki Herald*, 3 January 1907, page 7

²⁵ 'The Black Book' Register of Schools and Residences [Administered by the Taranaki Education Board], Item ID R18849804, Agency ABDU, Accession W3570, Box 96, Record 19, Archives New Zealand (ANZ).

²⁶ *Ibid.*



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[Plans of School Buildings – Teachers Residence at Frankley Road – Layout and Side Elevation], James Sanderson, circa. 1888 [with later amendments], Item ID R18854119, Agency ABDU, Accession W3570, Box 367, Archives New Zealand (ANZ).

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Description

The former Frankley Road School teachers' residence is located in the western New Plymouth suburb of Ferndale. Originally rural in character, continued subdivision of former pastureland into lifestyle blocks, and more recently smaller residential building allotments, has seen the surrounding area become increasingly suburbanised in recent years. The former teachers' residence site was subdivided into smaller allotments in 2017 and a number of houses have recently been erected on the site. This has somewhat reduced the visual connectedness between the residence and schoolhouse, although both remain on their original sites and within close proximity (approx. 100m apart).

Several interesting heritage features exist within the vicinity of the former teachers' residence. These include the former schoolhouse erected in 1910; the Frankley Road War Memorial (WWI & WWII); the George Patterson Memorial; the former Jury Cottage at 427 Frankley Road, erected circa 1908-09; and the former site of Dingle's Blockhouse, which was erected in 1864 to provide protection for farmers returning to the area (located 100 m south of the Patterson Road corner, on a knoll east of the road).

Fronting Frankley Road and set-back behind a lawn with mature trees and shrubs, the former Frankley Road School teachers' residence is well-maintained and contributes positively to the character of the immediate streetscape. Originally a single-storey T-plan villa with front veranda and rear lean-to, subsequent alterations, notably during the 1980s, have both considerably enlarged, and also complicated the design of the building. However, these alterations have largely left the structure and fabric of the original villa intact, mostly being in a sympathetic style, and occurring at the rear of the building. The timber-framed building is principally clad in square profile rusticated (shiplap) weatherboard cladding (rather an unusual profile for a New Plymouth building), although the first-floor rear addition above the lean-to is clad in battened plywood. The roof is sheathed in corrugated steel, with a painted two-flue corbelled brick chimney rising at front, and a single-flue brick chimney, extended at the time of the 1980s additions, rising at rear.

The gable-end of the northwest facing main front elevation is fitted with a single central four-light double-hung sash window. Above is a steeply pitched bracketed and shingled hood, with a small replica finial fitted to the remnant of the original, more substantial, finial. East of the projecting gable is a sloping post and beam veranda fitted with replica cast brackets. The timber panelled and glazed main front entrance door is positioned next to the gable wall, incorporating two lower recessed wooden panels and a single upper pane of patterned glass. A single four-light double-hung sash is positioned to the east of the front door. The eastern end of the veranda has been enclosed to form a sun porch and is clad in battened plywood. Four three-light timber casements are fitted to the front of the porch, whilst the original four-light sash has been replaced with a pair of French casements.

The principal feature of the southwestern elevation is a projecting gable extension with veranda added during the 1980s. In an identical style to the original villa, the extension is fitted with two pairs of panelled and glazed French casements at front, with a four-light double-hung sash on the gable-end. A further slender double-hung sash and four-light sash are fitted to the southwestern wall of the original villa. At the rear of the dwelling, a partially enclosed passageway connects the main house to a double-car garage. Fitted to the rear elevation are two timber panelled doors, a set of timber casements, and a pair of glazed French casements.



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Assessment:

Historical	The Frankley Road School Teachers' Residence (Former) has historic significance for its long association with the Frankley Road School (now known as Frankley School) and is associated with late-nineteenth century attitudes towards the provision of accommodation for schoolteachers. Designed by capable local architect James Sanderson, it is a good example of the smaller-scale domestic work he produced whilst employed as architect to the Taranaki Education Board.	✓
Importance to Community	Older residents who attended the Frankley Road School still recall a time when this building was used for its original purpose as a teachers' residence.	✓
Architecture & Construction	A good local example of an 1880s bay villa, of which comparatively few examples now survive in New Plymouth District.	✓
Setting and Context	Well-maintained and visible from Frankley Road, the former Frankley Road School Teachers' Residence contributes positively to the local streetscape. The building has group value for its association with the nearby Frankley Road Schoolhouse (Former).	✓
Archaeology	As the original portion of the building was constructed in 1888, the property likely has archaeological evidence relating to pre-1900 human activity and has the potential to reveal information about the past through archaeological investigation.	✓
Representativeness, rarity and integrity	A good and representative example of the types of teachers' residences constructed for the Taranaki Education Board during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, of which relatively few now survive. Although the subject of alterations and additions during the 1980s, these have mostly occurred at the rear of the dwelling, with the 1888 structure retaining much of its original fabric.	✓
Meets threshold for listing (three or more ticks, or two ticks in one criterion)		✓