



Heritage Buildings Report

Site ID

Building/Site Name

Frankley Road School (Former)

Address

419 Frankley Road, New Plymouth



Statement of Significance

This attractive building was constructed during 1910 as a replacement for the original 1878 Frankley Road School. The building remained in use as a schoolhouse until 1969 when a new school was constructed on nearby Tukapa Street; the building has been used as a private residence since the 1970s. The Frankley Road School (Former) has historic significance for its long association with the Frankley Road (now simply Frankley) School. Designed by capable local architects Sanderson & Griffiths (James Sanderson & Horace Victor Griffiths), it is a good example of the work they produced during their tenure as architects to the Taranaki Education Board. A well-known local landmark and tangible link to the history of Frankley School and the wider Frankley Road area, the building is a good and representative example of the types of schoolhouses constructed for the Taranaki Education Board during the early-twentieth century. The building is notable for its high degree of external integrity and contributes positively to the surrounding streetscape; it has group value for its association with the nearby former Frankley Road School Teachers' Residence.



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Legal Information and Heritage Status

Legal Description Lot 1 DP 20960

District Plan Item/ Map No.

Heritage New Zealand List Not listed

Construction Information

Date of Construction 1910

Principal Materials Wooden framing, weatherboard, corrugated steel

Construction Professionals Sanderson & Griffiths (James Sanderson & Horace Victor Griffiths) (architects), Frank Newell (builder)

History

Early History of the Frankley Road School

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 residents 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.⁷ School was administered under the Education Act of 1877 which introduced free secular and compulsory education. With the roll continuing to grow, additions were made to the original schoolhouse during 1886 to increase capacity to 80 students.⁸ During 1888, after several years of lobbying, a teachers' residence was finally erected on a site east of the schoolhouse; this requiring the purchase of an additional acre of land. The residence was designed by James Sanderson and survives as a private residence at present 407 Frankley Road.

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

⁸ *Taranaki Herald*, 10 February 1886, page 2

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Muir, T. S. Frankley School [Original 1878 school before 1886 additions]. Circa 1878-1886.
PHO2013-0125, Puke Ariki (PA)

A New School at Frankley Road

During March 1907, serious complaints were made about the condition of the Frankley Road School, including that its unsanitary state resulted in three pupils fainting in class.⁹ Members of the Taranaki Education Board promptly arranged a visit to the school, and whilst minor issues were found, they were not, in the Board's opinion, serious enough to warrant condemnation of the building; the ? space per student was also considered satisfactory.¹⁰ Despite continued pressure from the Frankley Road School Committee, a deputation of whom waited on the Board the following month arguing for the construction of a new school, it was decided to simply make improvements to the existing building, including the addition of ventilators and further windows.¹¹

By the April 1909 meeting of the Frankley Road School Committee, the school roll had increased to 90 students and it was decided a deputation would wait on the Education Board to again raise the question of constructing a new school.¹² It was argued that there was insufficient space for students and that three teachers were conducting separate classes in one large room.¹³ It seems the issue was set aside until September 1909, when Committee Chairman Mr E. N. L. Okey wrote to the Education Board requesting the 'immediate necessity' for rebuilding the school, now with 99 pupils on the roll and a large increase expected in the following years.¹⁴ Board members expressed sympathy with the committee, requesting that the architects report on the state of the school buildings, and the inspector on attendance.¹⁵

During mid-October the Education Board applied to the Education Department for a grant of £640 for a new school at Frankley Road, with architects Sanderson & Griffiths (James Sanderson & Horace

⁹ *Taranaki Herald*, 27 March 1907, page 7

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 24 April 1907, page 7

¹² 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).

¹³ *Taranaki Herald*, 27 April 1909, page 3

¹⁴ *Taranaki Herald*, 22 September 1909, page 3

¹⁵ *Taranaki Daily News*, 23 September 1909, page 4



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Victor Griffiths), forwarding plans for the new school later that month.¹⁶ 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; Griffiths continued in sole proprietorship for a time, before joining with Frank Messenger in 19???.¹⁷ Individually and as a partnership, Sanderson and Griffiths were responsible for a considerable number of commercial and residential buildings in New Plymouth.

The initial response from the Department was far from favourable, the Education Board receiving a brief response from the Education Board during early-November declining the request for a new school.¹⁸ Whilst no reasons were initially given, it was later discovered that the attendance records held by the Education Department were out-of-date, indicating an average attendance of only 70 students, for which the present school building was considered of an adequate size.¹⁹ At a meeting with the Education Department in Wellington during late-November, Education Board member Mr A. Morton discussed the matter with heads of the Department, who, in learning of the increased student numbers, agreed to re-assess the application.²⁰ On a visit to New Plymouth during January 1910, the Hon G. Fowlds, Minister for Education and Public Health, personally visited the Frankley Road school, where he observed that the present building was quite inadequate to meet present needs.²¹ Just over a month later. The Education Board was notified by the Department that a grant of £320 has been made available for the construction of a new school at Frankley Road.²²

However, the Minister of Education did not believe that a building capable of housing an average attendance of 130 pupils was required at the time, and that the new Frankley Road School should be no larger than 1200 square feet.²³ The Board was hesitant to accept the Department's offer, as not only did £320 not cover the cost of even the smaller 1200 foot school, but the Department was also going to reduce the Board's buildings maintenance grant, which board members thought wholly unfair on other schools in the province.²⁴ Whilst the Board initially protested the Department's action, it seems they later accepted the smaller grant, with tenders being advertised for the construction of new school at Frankley Road during mid-March.²⁵

During late-March it was reported that Frank Newell's tender was accepted for the construction of the school.²⁶ The new school would be constructed on the site of the old school, although the crest of the hill would be levelled.²⁷ After a deputation of Committee members waited on the Board, it was agreed that the Board would provide a £50 subsidy to the Committee for levelling the site, and that the Committee would, at their own cost, relocate the old school buildings to a position south of the proposed new school, to be used as a gymnasium.²⁸ Thomas Arthur Berridge's tender of £48 2s was accepted for levelling the new school site, whilst Frank Newell was engaged by the Committee to relocate and make alterations to the old school.²⁹

¹⁶ *Taranaki Herald*, 14 October 1909, page 2; *Taranaki Daily News*, 27 October 1909, page 2

¹⁷ *Taranaki Herald*, 20 June 1907, page 2

¹⁸ *Taranaki Herald*, 3 November 1909, page 2

¹⁹ *Taranaki Herald*, 26 November 1909, page 2

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 14 January 1910, page 7

²² *Taranaki Daily News*, 21 February 1910, page 4

²³ *Taranaki Daily News*, 24 February 1910, page 7

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ *Taranaki Daily News*, 15 March 1910, page 1

²⁶ *Taranaki Daily News*, 24 March 1910, page 4

²⁷ *Taranaki Daily News*, 23 March 1910. Page 5

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ 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).



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Timber began arriving on site during late-April to enable construction of the new school to commence during late-May once site levelling and removal of the old school was complete.³⁰ Classes were halted until the old school had been shifted to its new site, with the time made-up by students during the winter holidays.³¹ Two months extension was granted to Newell to complete the new school, with the timber provided not being sufficiently seasoned.³² By late-July Newell had resumed work and the building was nearly ready to receive its roof; however, bad weather during August delayed the completion by at least another month.³³

Finally, after years of lobbying, the new Frankley Road School was officially opened on Thursday September 23rd, 1910, by Mr J. Wade, chairman of the Taranaki Education Board.³⁴ The new building was described as consisting of:

...two large rooms 28ft. by 25ft. and 28ft. x 21ft. respectively, and two porches 18ft. x 18ft. The classrooms are splendidly lighted and ventilated, and each has two or three slightly raised platforms. The cupboards and blackboards fill in the recesses on either side of the fireplaces. The ceilings are channel-lined, and the walls match-lined with dado round. The porches are fitted with lavatories supplied with patent basins, and the floors are of concrete. Two large tanks erected on a concrete stand supply the water. The building has a 14ft. stud and will accommodate 120 scholars comfortably.³⁵

Throughout the ensuing decades many children received their formative education at the Frankley Road School and a number of significant events associated with this period were recorded by the School Committee. These include the commencement and conclusion of two World Wars; epidemics of influenza (1918), whooping cough (1928) and polio (1947-48); royal visits and coronations; school sports, holidays and jubilee celebrations.³⁶ The old 1878 school which had been converted into a gymnasium in 1910 was finally demolished in 1963, with the 1910 building, being little altered since first constructed, soon seen as being no longer fit for purpose.³⁷

On March 21 1968 the Hon. Mr. Kinsella, Minister of Education, along with members of the Taranaki Education Board, visited the school to investigate construction of a new school.³⁸ It was soon decided to abandon the Frankley Road property and construct a new school a short distance away, along Tukapa Street, in a gully owned by internationally renowned plant nursery Duncan and Davies.³⁹ The new modern school was complete by April 1969, and whilst classes commenced on April 7th, the official opening wasn't held until October 15th; the school was renamed 'Frankley School' at this time.⁴⁰

Following the shift to Tukapa Street, both the Frankley Road Schoolhouse and teachers' residence were deemed surplus to requirements and sold, on separate titles, to private owners.

³⁰ *Taranaki Herald*, 27 April 1910, page 4

³¹ *Taranaki Daily News*, 26 May 1910, page 4

³² *Taranaki Daily News*, 30 June 1910, page 6

³³ *Taranaki Daily News*, 27 July 1910, page 4; *Taranaki Daily News*, 31 August 1910, page 8

³⁴ *Taranaki Herald*, 23 September 1910, page 4

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Frankley School Jubilee Committee. *Frankley School 125th Jubilee: 1853-1978*. New Plymouth: Stratford Press, 1978.

³⁷ Ibid.

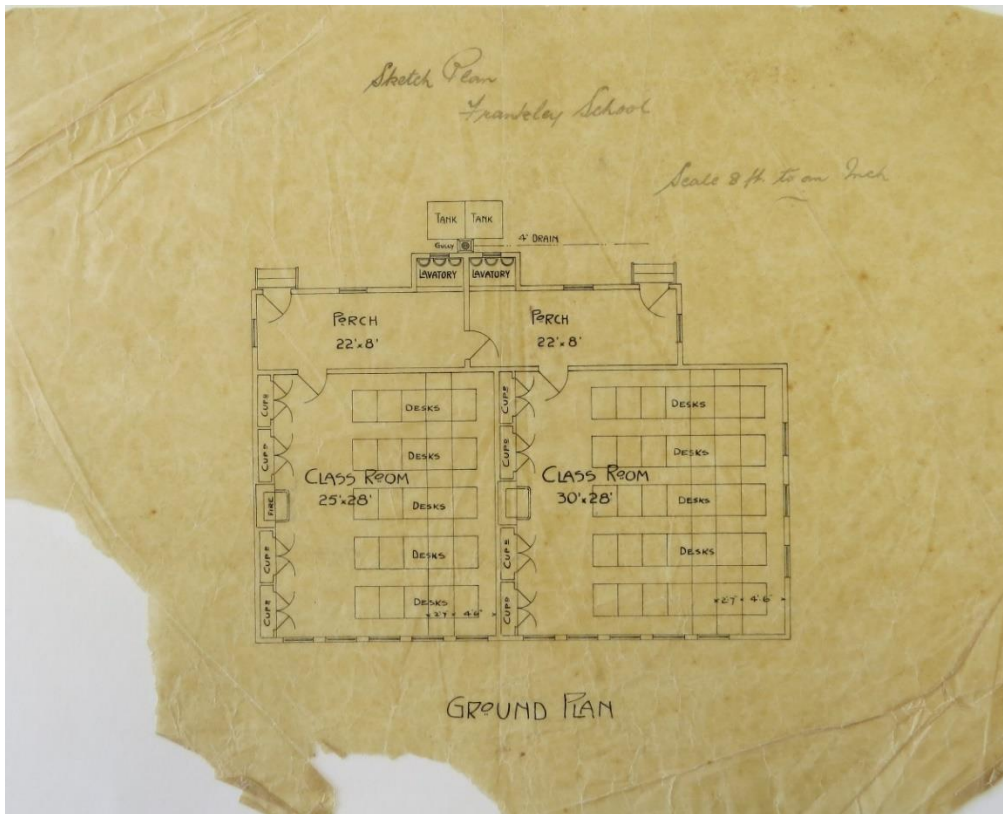
³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

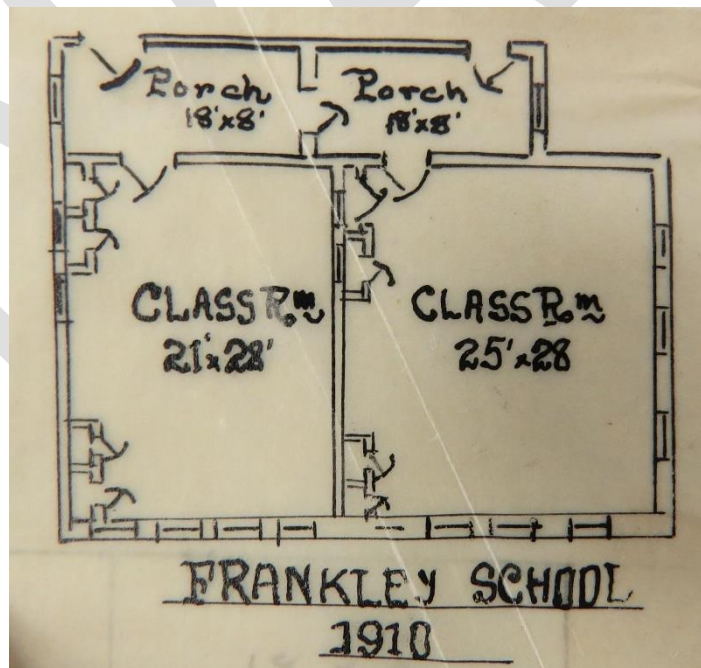
⁴⁰ Ibid.



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[Floor plan of 1910 School as Originally Proposed], Plans of School Buildings – 2 x Plans Frankley Road School and Additions, Sanderson & Griffiths (James Sanderson & Horace Victor Griffiths), circa. 1909-10, Item ID R18854120, Agency ABDU, Accession W3570, Box 367, Archives New Zealand (ANZ).



[Floor Plan of 1910 School as Built] '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).



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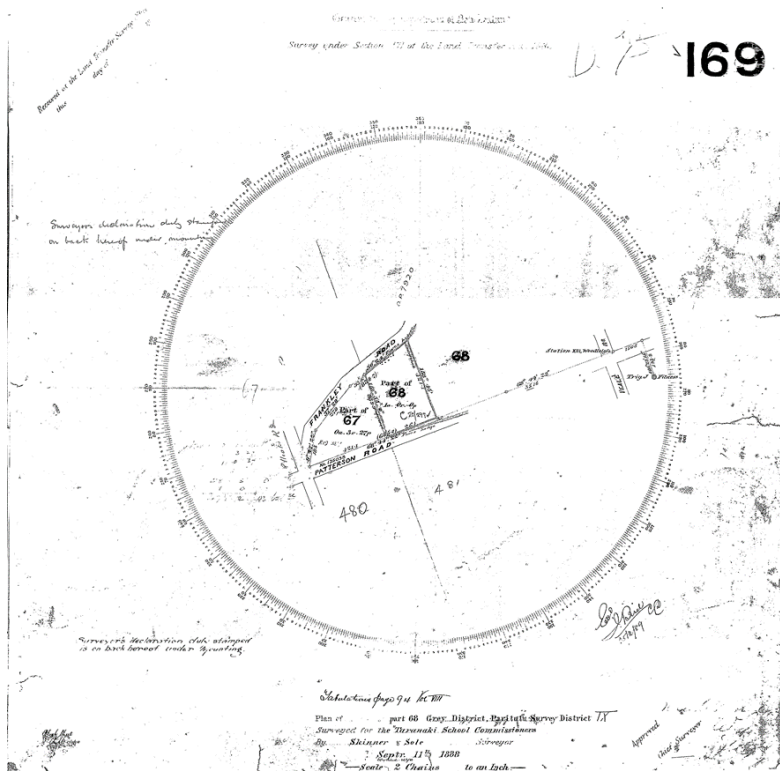
The 'New' 1910 School. Date unknown. From: Frankley School Jubilee Committee. *Frankley School 125th Jubilee: 1853-1978*. New Plymouth: Stratford Press, 1978.



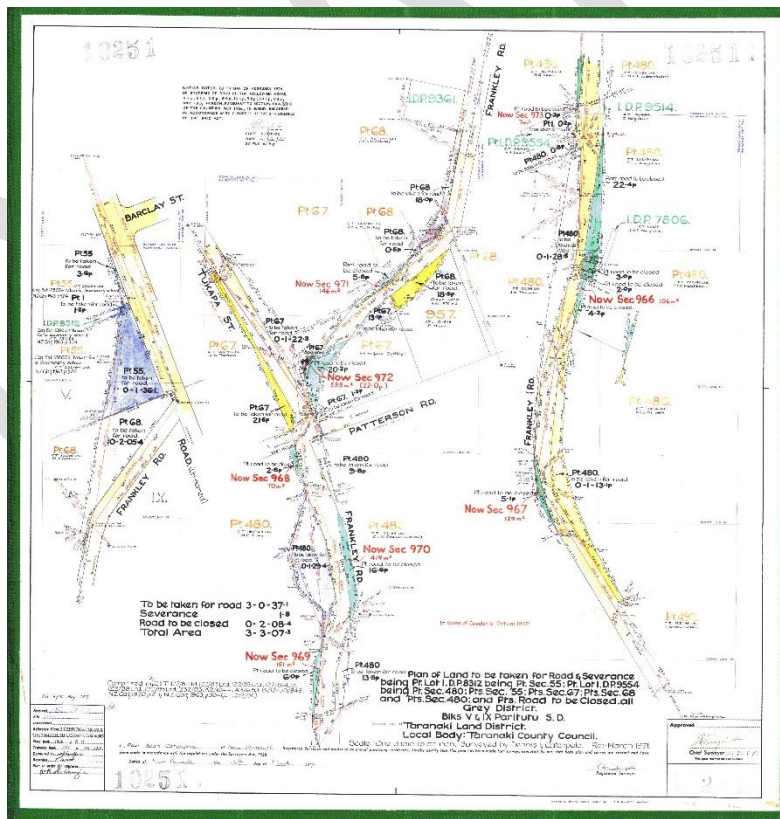
Woods, Bernard. Frankley School, Class Group. 24 May 1968. WD.060370, Puke Ariki (PA)



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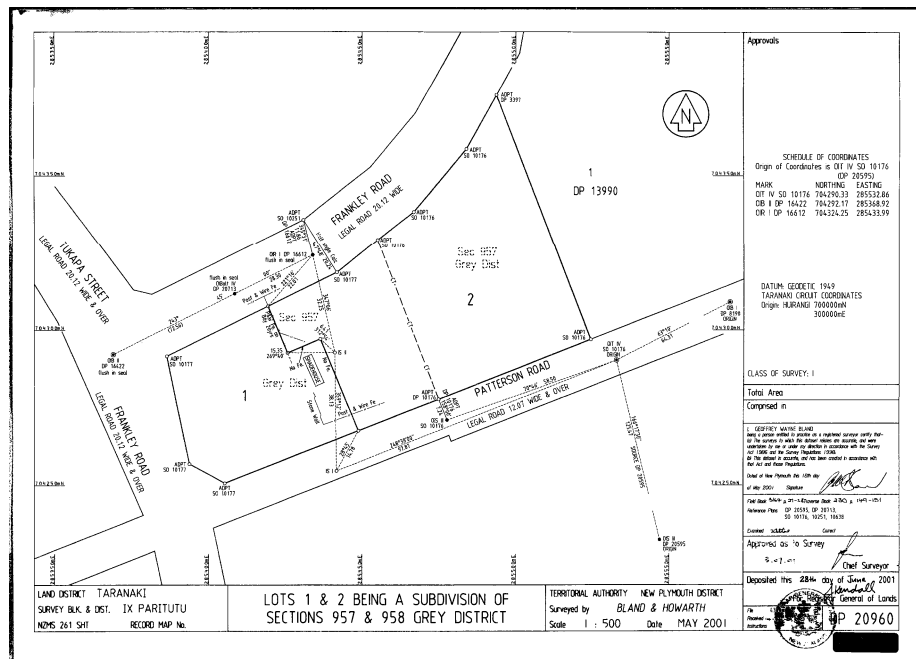
DP169, Land Information New Zealand (LINZ)



SO10251, Land Information New Zealand (LINZ)



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DP20960, Land Information New Zealand (LINZ)

Reference Sources

See footnotes.

Description

The former Frankley Road School 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 neighbouring 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 schoolhouse and residence, 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 schoolhouse. These include the former teachers' residence erected in 1888; 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).

Located at the intersection of Frankley Road and Tukapa Street, the former Frankley Road School is positioned slightly above road level and set-back behind a grassed area planted with shrubs and small trees. Typical of smaller Taranaki Education Board schools of the period, the building is a high-stud gabled structure with rear lean-to. The timber-framed building is clad in scalloped profile rusticated weatherboard, with corrugated steel roof. Two single-flue chimneys (central and eastern), rise through the gable apex and are finished with decorative dentil courses and simple clay pots; the two original steel ventilators have long since been removed.

The main front elevation faces roughly north-west and is chiefly occupied by two sets of four bottom-hung sashes. The south-western elevation incorporates a further three four-light bottom-hung sashes, with a stepped timber ventilator fitted to the upper gable end. The north-eastern elevation incorporates two standard double-hung sashes and a pair of smaller timber sashes. The rear south-eastern elevation is somewhat of an amalgam, including the original main entrance porch and more modern lean-to extensions; windows fitted on this elevation include timber sashes and casements.



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Assessment:

Historical	The Frankley Road School (Former) has historic significance for its long association with the Frankley Road School (now known as Frankley School) and is representative of the significance of education in rural communities during the early decades of the twentieth century. Designed by capable local architects Sanderson & Griffiths (James Sanderson & Horace Victor Griffiths), it is a good example of the work they produced during their tenure as architects to the Taranaki Education Board.	✓
Importance to Community	A well-known local landmark and tangible link to the history of Frankley School and the wider Frankley Road area.	✓
Architecture & Construction	A good example of the types of timber schoolhouses erected at smaller rural schools during the early decades of the twentieth century.	✓
Setting and Context	Well-maintained and visible from Frankley Road, the former Frankley Road School contributes positively to the local streetscape. The building has group value for its association with the nearby Frankley Road School Teachers' Residence (Former).	✓
Archaeology	-	
Representativeness, rarity and integrity	A good and representative example of the types of schoolhouses constructed for the Taranaki Education Board during the early-twentieth century. The building is notable for its high degree of external integrity, the exterior being little altered since first constructed.	✓
Meets threshold for listing (three or more ticks, or two ticks in one criterion)		✓