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NATHALIA KOSTADT PRECINCT

LOCATION

Precinct Boundaries and Map

The Nathalia Kostadt Precinct incorporates historically significant areas of the 4 north-south streets; Richardson Street, Elizabeth Street, Kostadt Street and Fraser Street, and 2 east-west streets; Nicholson Street and North Street, as well as Muntz Street which runs around the curve of Broken Creek at the southern end of the precinct.

The area within the boundary incorporates historically, socially, aesthetically and scientifically important places and views of Nathalia's historic residential and early commercial areas. These are illustrated on the map in Fig 1 and listed in Table 1.

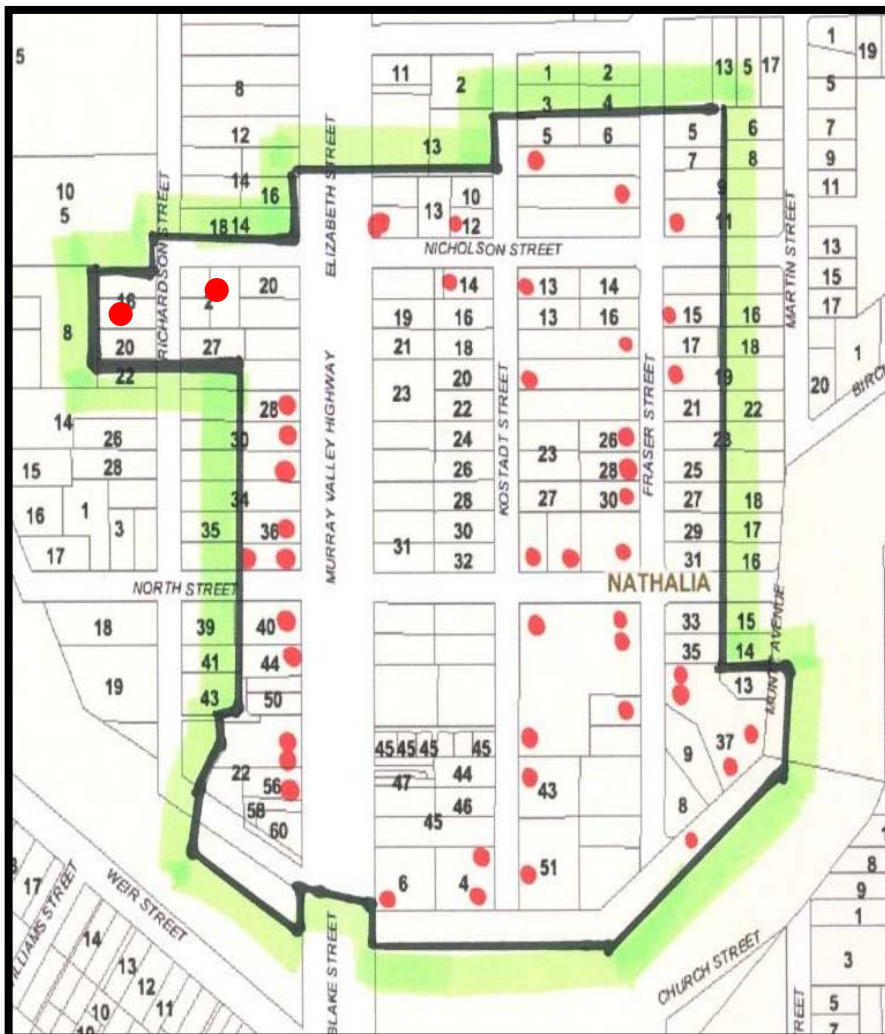


Fig. 1. Nathalia Kostadt Precinct showing 47 significant sites in red.
Source: Lorraine Huddle 2005.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Table 1. List of culturally significant places, their location, DB number and historical context. .

<i>Period</i>	<i>Associated Historical Themes</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Extant Places within the Numurkah Kostadt Precinct</i>	<i>Location</i>
Victorian 1880s to 1900	Early agricultural development; Expansion of Primary production Flourmills and commercial concerns. Development of local institutions. Infrastructure: Railways open 1888. Water Supply from Broken Creek. Street trees	Pre 1888	Early Victorian weatherboard cottages	7, 12 Kostadt St 2 Nicholson St
		1887	Brown, Corke & Co. store, residence and bakery.	56 Elizabeth St.
		1889	Brown, Corke & Co. store	46-54 Elizabeth St.
		1890	Railway Hotel (Remains)	Elizabeth Street
		1891	Bank of Victoria	Elizabeth Street
		1887-90s	Victorian weatherboard cottages	Fraser Street & Kostadt Street
		1890s	Gladstone House	43 Kostadt St
		1896	A E Heighway	6 Muntz Ave
		1890s	Spoon drainage	Elizabeth & Kostadt Streets
Federation 1900s-1914	Consolidation of cultural and religious institutions. Infrastructure: Water Reticulation, Electricity and Fire Brigade.	1911	Anglican Rectory	Muntz Ave
		1919	Anglican Parish Hall	Kostadt St.
		1900s	Federation Houses	Muntz Ave.
				Elizabeth Street
Interwar 1920-30s		1930s	Inter-war brick bungalows	Elizabeth Street
Post War period 1946 - 1960s	Immigration; Soldier Settlement; improved irrigation and influx of new farmers.	1951	Saw Dust Burning Kiln and Palms	Crn Fraser and North Streets.

Refer to Appendix 1 for a List with Photographs.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The basis of the 'Kostadt Precinct' was laid upon the original selection north of Broken Creek owned by the German colonist Henry Kostadt, who was also the town's first publican at the Barwo hotel site in 1876. The Kostadt selection was surveyed by Henry Moorhouse and

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divided into seventy three allotments in 1886.¹ The streets named on this plan were Kostadt, Railway, North, Nicholson and Fraser streets. The road running northwards was named Elizabeth Street and remains the main thoroughfare. While the Elizabeth Street area was part of the old Nathalia, the body of the precinct is thus slightly more recent than the Town Centre precinct around Blake Street. Kostadt built a row of terrace houses along Elizabeth Street, but neither these nor his old Barwo Hotel survive, with some individual Victorian cottages surviving instead along Fraser and Kostadt streets as reminders of this earlier period. Extant houses in Elizabeth Street now date to the Federation and Inter-war periods. The north side of the Broken Creek was particularly associated during this period with the flour mill and bakehouse industries and with the Chinese gardeners who took up land along the river bank. The precinct thus incorporates those areas of Nathalia formally established with the 1886 survey and its extant buildings are associated with the subsequent history of the town.

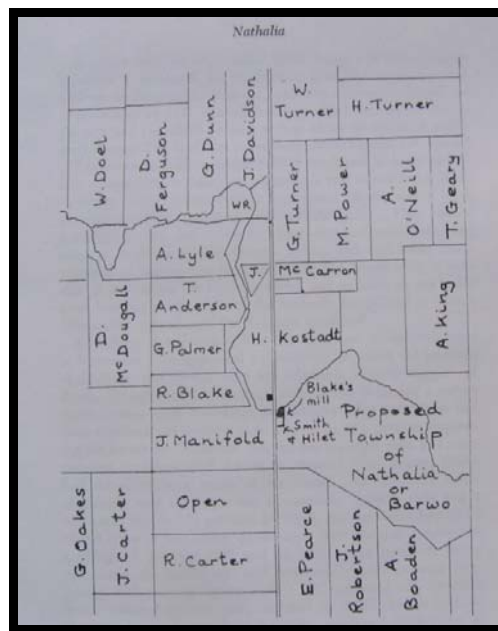


Fig 2 Map showing Landowners in Nathalia area 1877 Source: Hibbins.

The Kostadt Precinct is particularly associated with the period of rapid development and land sales from the late 1880s in anticipation of the opening of the railway line. Around this time the population of the town fluctuated between 300 and 400 people. The opening of the railway in 1888 provided a much anticipated but shortlived boon to the north side of town, with the financial and land sales crash in 1890 badly affecting all Victoria.

In April 1888 the *Nathalia Herald* announced that 'Anyone visiting our little township will be surprised at the number of buildings that are being erected and the character of these buildings proves at a glance that the days of the bark and log hut are passed.'² Nathalia began to feel the Depression in the following year however, with a fall in land sales and trouble for the banks as overseas capital and land speculation collapsed. Small, steady development continued however - by 1891 the population was 689 and by 1901 it was 828. The largest growth in population accompanied the post World War Soldier Settlement schemes in the area, from 954 in 1947 to 1,859 in 1961.³

As an agricultural town, the fortunes of Nathalia were inextricable from those of its farming communities, and the history of the town was particularly affected by droughts such as those

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of 1908 and floods such as that of 1887. During and after the Great War of 1914-18 no less than 39 families left the area because of droughts, explaining the relatively staid population growth in the early twentieth century.⁴

Nathalia was a major centre for wheat and barley growing but had also developed in dairying and orchards. The climate enabled the growers of peaches, apricots and grapes to get their produce to market as early as November. The Nathalia Dairy Company opened a butter factory in 1892 however a large percentage of the shares were unpaid and the company went into liquidation. A second refrigerated factory was established near the flour mill in 1895 with more success. The butter factory later became a milk receiving depot for the Cobram based Murray Goulburn Co-operative Company.

The Nathalia Irrigation League established in 1914 was unsuccessful in having existing and planned irrigation schemes extend to Nathalia and wheat continued to be the main produce from the area. The Nathalia region was forced to wait until 1951 for the construction of irrigation channels from the Murray-Goulburn scheme and the effect on the district was a 70% increase in population between the censuses of 1946 and 1961.⁵ The Kostadt Precinct is thus also significant and earns its title through its association with the early history of Nathalia before the improved irrigation developments in the post war period.



Fig3 46-54 Elizabeth Street, former Brown, Corke & Co. DB 989 & 990 in 1888.
Source: Nathalia Leader.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Urban Design, Views and Foci

Layout and Orientation

Nathalia Kostadt Precinct has a grid layout apart from the southern edge which follows the curve of Muntz Avenue and Broken Creek the later giving a significant and aesthetically pleasing variety to the grid.

The extant buildings, including the commercial buildings, are predominantly aligned with the rectangular allotments and road frontage. These building and street alignments are an important part of this precinct's setting.

Views and Significant Foci

The extensive open space, grass and trees associated with the interface of the Creek as well as the breadth of Elizabeth Street provide important treed vistas within the precinct.

Elizabeth Street has long been graced by lines of trees, since Alfred Binger persuaded the council to line it with trees in the 1890s.⁶ In this sense Elizabeth Street is also a continuation of the tradition of arboreal beautification expressed in Blake Street, and Bromley Street, and in other significant historical precincts in the town.



Fig 4 Peppercorn and Gum trees within a wide gravel shoulder in Elizabeth Street. DB 997

Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2005

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Fig 5. The large two storey unpainted red brick Late Victorian 1891 bank is an important focal point in the precinct, being strategically positioned to address the corner of Elizabeth and North Street and facing toward the main thoroughfare. Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004



Fig 6. A typical picturesque view of the Uniting Church. This photo is looking south from Kostadt Heritage Precinct. Note the importance of the background of predominantly space, trees and sky around the building in creating a strong picturesque setting for the delightful Gothic architecture of this building. Source. Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd. 2004

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Another important focal point within the residential area of the precinct is the Sawdust burning kiln on the sw corner of North and Fraser Streets.



Fig 7 View of the 1951 Sawdust Kiln within the residential area, looking south along Fraser Street towards the trees lining Broken Creek at the southern boundary of the precinct. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd. 2004

Infrastructure such as the wide gravel verges above, differentiate this precinct from a suburban Melbourne street and are an important element in the character of the precinct. Another important feature is the red brick lined gutters surviving in some parts of the precinct.



Fig 8. Spoon Drainage and well preserved Brown, Corke & Co. store at 46-54 Elizabeth Street. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2004

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Culturally significant places

The precinct contains good examples of several architectural styles that represent different periods of Nathalia's past. The Victorian cottages have walls clad in weatherboard, and the roofs in galvanised corrugated iron, as most of Nathalia's houses were in the late nineteenth century, with medium to steep-pitched hipped and gabled roofs with verandahs that give them a distinctive shape. The shops and bank buildings are constructed of more durable materials – brick, stone, concrete and slate – which express the success and sense of permanence at the time.



Fig.9 "Strathmare" 1887 Shop & Residence, 56 Elizabeth Street, Nathalia. Source. Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd.

The oldest building in Elizabeth Street from the early history of the town is the former Brown, Corke and Co. store with bakery at rear at 56 Elizabeth Street. Brown, Corke and Co. opened in Nathalia in 1887. The bakery was built for Daniel Gallagher, baker.⁷



Fig. 10 Brown, Corke and Co. 1889 Store at 46 – 54 Elizabeth Street.

Left. The store in 2004. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd. **Right :** Photo of the store in 1973. Source: SLV

NATHALIA KOSTADT PRECINCT

with the present building dating from 1889 when a new store was built.⁸ This makes the former store among the older and certainly best preserved brick buildings in Nathalia. The interior of the 1889 building has a large lantern light and King Post timber trusses and a basement with pavement lights. The shop front windows are intact as are the leadlights and cast iron valances. Particularly interesting and unique are the crowns fringed by shamrock, rose and thistle emblems in the cast iron valance and brackets on the verandah. These were rare in Victoria and appeared in the 1901 Excelsior Foundry catalogue. Other notable features of this architectural gem are the leadlight windows above the timber doors. Brown, Corke and Co. were also a significant commercial influence in the area, with similar stores in Cobram and Numurkah. However the Nathalia store is the most intact example remaining. It is also a reminder of Elizabeth's Street commercial growth in the late nineteenth century, as the site of most new development in the Precinct.



Fig 11 showing the crowns in the cast iron valance and bracket, basement pavement lights, leadlight signature window above the fine timber 'cricket bat' entry doors reached via an 'ingo' between the original timber shop fronts of the 1889 building. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd. 2004.

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The first Bank of Victoria branch opened in Nathalia in 1889. The two storey brick and bluestone building in Elizabeth Street was deemed 'large enough for a city'⁹ and reflected the confidence of boom time immediately following the opening of the railway. Reflecting



somewhat the history of Nathalia around this time, it opened in time to suffer the financial and land price Depression of the 1890s. The Bank of Victoria later amalgamated with the Commercial Bank of Sydney and finally closed in the 1940s.¹⁰

**Fig 12. Former Bank of Victoria (1891)
40 Elizabeth Street**

Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.

The kiln below was constructed in 1951 of red bricks with bands of iron strapping around the outside, by owners W. D. Barry for the sole purpose of burning off



Fig 13. 1951 Saw Dust Burning Kiln and Palms DB 983 Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.

the saw dust from their Saw Mill on the same site. The mill was built soon after WW2 using machinery surplus from the army. Timber was carted from forests in Barmah and Mansfield. The mill operated for about five years before operations were relocated to Picola. The kiln was used for only a few months, as the surrounding residents complained that soot and ash was corroding their roofs and damaging washing, gardens, etc.¹¹ It is likely that the saw mill was constructed prior to Town Planning controls, and the kiln was constructed in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into the 1939 fires. The very impressive palms probably planted in the 1920-30s are *Washingtonia robusta*, tall and thin, and the short one if it has a thicker trunk is *W. filifera*, or a young *W. robusta*.¹²

The Edwardian and Federation building styles were popular in Nathalia after the period of sustained growth that the town went through in the 1880s. This architecture reflects a general feeling that there had been a break with the past. The Victorian style represented the colonial era, which was not a suitable aesthetic expression in a newly federated nation. As with the churches, the bricks used in these houses reflect the confidence that some of Nathalia's residents had in their place on the land. Bricks also symbolise wealth, so they embody a

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desire to move on from the economic depression that many people had experienced in the 1890s. Examples of these architectural styles can be seen in the appendix in the photo list.

4 Muntz Avenue, former Anglican Rectory (1911) DB 962



The Anglican rectory was built in 1911 and opened on the 4th October by Dr Armstrong, the bishop of Wangaratta.¹³ According to the bishop, "The erection of the rectory was a sign of revival of church work. The rector's home should be all that a Christian man's home should be, and if you place a comfortable roof over his head, you place him in a much more favourable position to carry out the work of the parish." The rectory was thus emblematic of Nathalia's more settled consolidation period in the early twentieth century as it left the heady boom and bust times behind and built up

cultural as well as religious associations.

Fig 14. Former Anglican Rectory (1911), 4 Muntz Ave. Source: Loraine Huddle 2004

Former Anglican Parish Hall (1918) DB 1002

The Anglican Parish Hall on the corner of Muntz Avenue and Elizabeth Street was originally conceived as a Sunday School Hall. It was located close to the Anglican Rectory and the Anglican residents of Nathalia organised a Children's fete which raised £66 towards the cost of the hall. The site is thus associated with the educational as well as religious history of the town. G. O'Malley and Hutchinson were the builders. It was declared open by Joseph Neeld on 17 Sept 1922.¹⁴ The parish hall subsequently became the site of many cultural and social events such as children's and band concerts, wedding receptions, fairs and dances. A new kauri floor was installed for dancing in 1956 and a ceiling installed in 1958. In 1987 the hall passed into the ownership of the Mortimer family as a private residence.



Fig 15. Left: Parish Hall (1918) in 1920 Source: Nathalia Herald. **Right. Former Parish Hall (1918)** Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004

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Victorian Weatherboard Cottages (1890s)



Fig 16. Left. Former Hospital at 42 Fraser Street and modest Victorian house at 7 Kostadt Street (right).

Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.

The Victorian weatherboard cottages, particularly in Fraser Street and Kostadt Street are the oldest residential buildings in the Precinct. The smallest ones, shown on the right above, date to the decade after Henry Kostadt subdivided and sold off his selection north of Broken Creek in 1886,. They were on about 4-5 acres so that they could run a cow and were constructed pre 1888 and are built with red gum weatherboards, but after the arrival of the railways similar houses were built with Baltic Pine weatherboards. They are modest in scale and decoration, but the renovated Victorian house at 42 Fraser Street is particularly large as it was the former private hospital, and the residence of Dr Harbison's..¹⁵

Gladstone House (1890s)

DB 160 and DB 964



Fig 17. Gladstone House, 43 Kostadt Street. C1888-1896. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd. 2004.

Gladstone House, 43 Kostadt Street, is associated with a significant historical individual in the history of Nathalia, Rev. George Gladstone, who lived there in the 1890s. It was built by Heinrich (Henry) Kostadt, in this distinctive transition style. It was the Church of England rectory and was known as St Paul's Parsonage..¹⁶ In 1899 the Anglican minister, Rev. Gladstone, began a campaign against alcohol and dancing which led to his dismissal from the church and a Supreme Court writ against the Bishop. Following his failure to find legal redress, Gladstone and his followers attempted to establish a 'Reformed Church' in Nathalia, splitting the Church of England in the town for several years..¹⁷

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Fig 18. “Hallfields” 6 Muntz Avenue. Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.

The fine example of a Federation style tuckpointed brick house with timber fretwork is on the corner Muntz & Kostadt Streets and was built c1896 for A E Heighway from made from clay on the the site. It has a small cellar and an original timber horse stable, buggy house and groom’s room and wash house. The owner was in partnership with the Muntz Brothers who ran a very successful Stock and Station Agent Company.¹⁸

Interwar Bungalows (1920-30s)

Another aesthetic break with the past can be seen in the design of houses that were built after the First World War. The imperial confidence of the Edwardian and Federation styles was replaced by the idea of ‘Australia Unlimited,’ a slogan used between the end of the war and the 1929 stock market crash. Houses built in this period borrowed design ideas from the United States (the ‘Californian bungalow’), while others were typified by broad gabled roofs, dark terracotta tiles and an earthy appearance. The small number of bungalows is predominantly situated along the more regularly redeveloped thoroughfare of Elizabeth Street and date to the consolidation period of the early 1900s in the history of the town.



Fig 19. 36 Elizabeth Street, Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004

36 Elizabeth Street, which also boasts a ‘unique shed’ at rear. The house and shed were designed and built by building apprentice Jack Bourke. The shed is constructed of red gum timber and Murray Pine floor and used to house feed for a house cow.¹⁹

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They are associated with the movement of commercial workers and retired farmers into the town from the 1920s-30s. For example, 28 and 30 Elizabeth Street were built by Kenneth Tobias. Number 29 was built in 1939 and called “Meldreth” after the English village where he had lived. While the latter was built in 1928 for William Paterson, as the family home of “Town living farmers”. Paterson named it “Pretoria” after the city in South Africa where he had worked in the mining industry.²⁰



Fig 20. 30 Elizabeth Street (1928) Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004



Fig 28 and 30 Elizabeth Street in flood, 1939. Source: Bev Leaf 2006

SIGNIFICANT RESIDENTIAL PLACES

The range of houses in the precinct reflects different periods of residential development in the town. These include Victorian cottages from the 1880s-90s (the earliest period of development), weatherboard Federation houses with corrugated iron roofs and brick interwar bungalows, often with tiled roofs. Overall, the precinct represents the pre-Second World War era of housing development in Nathalia, with the majority of significant sites dating to these early periods in the town’s history from the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. The use of light woven wire, picket, and hedge fences in front of houses in this precinct gives a feeling of openness that has traditionally encouraged property owners to proudly display their homes and gardens to the public. Views across streets, and between properties, strengthen traditional social ties between neighbours and passers by.

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STATEMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE²¹

Nathalia Kostadt Precinct

The other culturally significant places within the precinct, not specifically mentioned in this documentation are listed in Appendix 1 and are documented in the accompanying database. The history and description that precedes this Statement of Cultural Significance is the source of the evidence for the statement below.

The precinct is **aesthetically significant** on a **LOCAL** level. (AHC, D2) It contains excellent examples of several different architectural styles from the Victorian, Federation and Interwar periods. Low front fences made of light woven wire, timber pickets, brick and hedge allow open views of predominantly single storey houses, and other buildings in the precinct. The skyline is punctuated with high pitched gable and hipped roofs, ornate chimneys and exotic trees. There are aesthetically pleasing views along Muntz Avenue, Fraser and Kostadt Streets towards Broken Creek, trees and the church in Kurrajong Precinct, as well as the views of Peppercorn trees along Elizabeth Street. Views to striking architectural features include the Sawdust burning kiln, the former Victoria Bank and Brown Corke and Co stores.

The Nathalia Kostadt Precinct is overall **historically significant** on a **LOCAL** level through its association with the early urban development of Nathalia from 1886 through to the interwar period (1920-30s). It contains a significant commercial site, former Anglican hall and rectory, and predominantly residential development from three main periods in the town's history.

The Precinct contains several extant examples of nineteenth and early twentieth century infrastructure in the spoon drainage outside the former Brown, Corke & Co. store in Elizabeth St and along the southern stretch of Kostadt street; Peppercorn street trees in Elizabeth Street; kiln and palms trees on the SW corner of North and Fraser Streets, which are historically significant on a local level.

The former Brown, Corke & Co. store at 46-54 Elizabeth Street is historically significant on a local level through its association with the early commercial development of Nathalia and the surrounding areas. It is also among Nathalia's earliest surviving brick buildings and early shops, associated with the commercial boom between the arrival of the railway and the 1890 Depression. (AHC A.4) As comparison with old photographs testify it is also aesthetically significant as a splendidly preserved example of the late Victorian country general store with original large windows and cast iron verandah among its notable details. (AHC D.2, E.1, F.2)

The former Anglican rectory and parish hall in Muntz Avenue are historically significant on a local level through their association with the cultural, religious and social life of the area. They are particularly associated with the history of the Anglican community in Nathalia and with the period of building and consolidation of the town in the early twentieth century. (AHC A.4, H.1)

The Precinct contains numerous examples of houses that are significant on a local level through their association with particular periods in the town's historical development. Of these, Gladstone House is also historically significant on a local level through its association with Rev. George Gladstone. (AHC H.1) Many of the houses in Fraser Street, and 2 Nicholson St are extant examples of Victorian weatherboard houses and date to the late 1880s to early 1890s when the precinct was first divided into town allotments. 42 Fraser St is also **socially significant** at a local level for its association with the provision of health services

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during the interwar period in Nathalia. (**AHC G1**). Elizabeth Street on the other hand boasts a number of Inter-War bungalows representative of residential building in the town in the first half of the twentieth century. (**AHC A.4**)

The precinct has **scientific** significance on a **local** level. Building materials such as bluestone, wrought iron, stained glass, are testament to the high level of technical skill that artisans in Nathalia possessed. The use of these materials is becoming rare and their presence forms an integral part of the precinct's fabric.

Overall, Nathalia Kostadt Precinct is culturally significant at the LOCAL level.

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- 1 Hibbins, *A History of the Nathalia Shire* p.92, 101.
2 Hibbins, p.13.
3 See also Thematic Environmental History (2004).
4 Hibbins, p.171.
5 Thematic Environmental History (2004).
6 Hibbin, p.109.
7 Tim Mannion. Nathalia Historical Society.
8 Hibbins, p.110.
9 Hibbins, p.110.
10 *Times Have Changed*, p.45.
11 Tim Mannion and Roger Young, Nathalia Historical Society. August 2006
12 John Hawker, Heritage Victoria. 2006.
13 Ormond et. al., *Holy Trinity, Nathalia*, p.21.
14 Ormond et. al., p.22.
15 Iris Pearce; David McKenzie, 2005. Tim Mannion, Nathalia Historical Society. Aug 2006. Bev Leaf 2006 notes that between 1923-1939, when the house served as a private hospital, staff included Sisters Caldwell, Ellen Mannion and Mollie Everest. Nurse Clarke, who operated out of 42 Fraser Street was also the last practicing home visiting midwife in the area.
16 David McKenzie and Tim Mannion. Bev Leaf and Roger Young. 2006.
17 Hibbins, p.152-3.
18 Tim Mannion. Nathalia Historical Society. Bev Leaf has a photograph of the stable.
19 Tim Mannion, Nathalia Historical Society. Aug 2006.
20 Kathleen Binger 1998, and David McKenzie, 2005.
21 Definitions used are from the *Burra Charter* 1999; historical themes relate to the Principal Australian Themes – Australian Heritage Commission; criteria for Locally Significant places are from the Australian Heritage Commission and in the case of State Significant places, from Heritage Victoria; levels of significance used are State and Local, which directly relate to the two legislative authorities who administer the protection of heritage places, the State Government and Local Government respectively.