
Former Stawell Shire Hall, 50-52 Longfield Street, STAWELL



SL 157 - Former Stawell
Shire Hall, 50-52 Longfield
Street, STAWELL

Location

50-52 Longfield Street STAWELL, NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Municipality

NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO12

Heritage Listing

Northern Grampians Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 24, 2004

The former Stawell Shire Hall, 50-52 Longfield Street, Stawell, forms part of a coherent group of government, civic and community buildings that have significance for their close associations with the foundation of the town. The site was reserved and gazetted in 1865 for a shire hall. The former Shire Hall building contributes to the

Victorian streetscape and has an intact Italianate front facade that represents the 1866 design and construction. Other later additions have been carried out in an unsympathetic manner, as denoted by the face brick parapeted extension to the left.

The former Stawell Shire Hall, 50-52 Longfield Street, Stawell, is **architecturally** significant at a **LOCAL** level. Although partially altered, it still demonstrates original design qualities of a Victorian Italianate style. These qualities include the striking parapeted facade fronting Longfield Street, with its three-bayed window and door openings all symmetrically arranged. Other intact qualities include: the round-headed windows and doors with the moulded stucco architraves and surrounds crowned by moulded projecting cornices; vermiculated keystones flanked by decorative motifs; crowning parapet with its moulded projecting cornice at its lower reaches, projecting stucco work forming recessed panels and roundel motifs, and a crowning centrepiece decorated by scrolls, a large roundel motif and the title and date: "Shire Hall", "1866"; projecting rectangular panels along the base; plain lower stringcourse; flanking piers at the corners with projecting longitudinal rectangular panels; elegant narrow stringcourse forming the lower reaches of a plain entablature, with simple stylised floral motifs at the ends. Internally, the original spatial layout is still discerned near the front of the building, with original internal walls extant about the central foyer, drawing office, general office and strong room. Other features on the site that contribute to the significance of the place include the large mature exotic trees and the timber flag pole.

The former Stawell Shire Hall is **historically** significant at a **LOCAL** level. The site is associated with the early infrastructure development of the Township of Stawell at Pleasant Creek (Stawell West) from 1860. The building and site are also associated with the development of local government, particularly the Shire of Stawell (first formed in 1864 and reformed in 1869 with the excision of the Borough of Stawell), and this building was the centre of the Shire's administrative activity until 1995. The building is also associated with the designers/Shire Engineers, J. McLaren (original 1866 building) and J. D'Alton (1873 chamber extension).

The former Stawell Shire Hall is **socially** significant at a **LOCAL** level. Although no longer used as a Shire Hall, the building is still recognised by the Stawell community for its former purpose as the location of local government.

Overall, the former Stawell Shire Hall is of **LOCAL** significance.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Northern Grampians - Shire of Northern Grampians - Stage 2 Heritage Study, Wendy Jacobs, Vicki Johnson, David Rowe, Phil Taylor, 2004;
Hermes Number	112342
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

The former Shire Hall building is set on a site with mature exotic trees along the perimeters. The remaining trees are two *Lagunaria Patersinia* (Norfolk Island Christmas trees) in the front of the building, the *Photinia Glabra* on the west and a *Quercus Robur* (English Oak) to the south west of the building. The trees are said to have been donated in 1880 by Mr. William Guilfoyle, Curator of Botanic and Domain Gardens, Melbourne 1873 - 1909. The building forms part of a coherent group of government, civic and community buildings located in the centre of the original Township of Stawell at Pleasant Creek. It has a front setback of approximately 5 metres, which includes a central concrete pathway and flanking lawn areas, together with a timber flag pole.

The single storey, rendered brick, Victorian Italianate styled former Shire Hall building is characterised by a striking parapeted facade fronting Longfield Street. This three-bayed facade has symmetrically arranged timber framed, two paned, double hung windows about a central doorway. These openings are round-headed and have moulded stucco architraves and surrounds crowned by moulded projecting cornices. Vermiculated keystones punctuate the arches and are flanked by decorative motifs.

The crowning parapet is a significant feature of the design. It is characterised by a moulded projecting cornice at its lower reaches, projecting stucco work forming recessed panels and roundel motifs, and a crowning centrepiece decorated by scrolls, a large roundel motif and the title and date: "Shire Hall", "1866". Other early decorative features of the design including the projecting rectangular panels along the base, plain lower stringcourse (interrupted by the windows and door) and the flanking piers at the corners of the facade which also feature projecting longitudinal rectangular panels. An elegant narrow stringcourse forms the lower reaches of a plain entablature above the openings, with simple stylised floral motifs at the ends.

Although the Longfield Street facade of the building is distinctive, the building has suffered from some unsympathetic alterations and additions. These alterations include the incorporation of the front aluminium framed and glazed double door openings, and the rendering of the brick walls. The recessed face brick and parapetted additions to the left of the building represent the 1962 changes.

Internally, some of the original spatial layout can still be discerned, although a number of alterations have been carried out. The original internal wall structure is still extant at the front of the building: forming the foyer, drawing office, general office and also the strongroom. Other internal partition walls and a mezzanine floor have been introduced in the centre of the interior, while other walls and spaces have been substantially altered at the junction of the original building and the later 1962 additions.

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>