
Great Western Hall (former Mechanics Institute), 103 Main Street, GREAT WESTERN



GW 32 - Shire of Northern Grampians - Stage 2 Heritage Study, 2004

Location

103 Main Street GREAT WESTERN, NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Municipality

NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Heritage Listing

Northern Grampians Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 31, 2004

The Mechanics Institute complex, 103 Main Street, Great Western, makes a significant architectural and cultural contribution to the Great Western township. The first section of the building was constructed in 1884 with the larger hall added in 1891 by the Ballarat Architects Figgis and Molloy. The hall still serves the people of Great Western as a public hall.

The Mechanics Institute complex is **architecturally** significant at a **LOCAL** level. The smaller, recessed building demonstrates original design qualities of a rudimentary Victorian style. These qualities include the simple gable roof form, main gable ventilator in the upper reaches, horizontal timber flying gable members, and central timber

door with flat arched brick voussoirs above. Other intact qualities include the brick wall construction, and the three segmentally arched, timber framed double hung windows along the side, adorned with brick voussoirs.

The larger Institute hall demonstrates original design qualities of a regionalist, rudimentary Federation Queen Anne style. These qualities include the crowning simple Dutch gable parapet with cement rendered trimmings and details on the main gable end (curvilinear pediment and orb, central pilastered panel with the title "Mechanics Institute", shell motif sloping sides, decorated cement scrolls, and heavily moulded and projecting cornice). Other intact qualities include the slightly projecting tripartite bay of round and segmentally arched windows separated by brick pilasters (with stepped cement pedestals on a cement stringcourse at window sill height and simple stepped cement capitals), timber framed four lighted windows with arcuated highlights, brick window voussoirs with cement rendered keystones, vestigial brick window pilasters with moulded cement rendered capitals (at the springing of the window arches) and pedestals, brick wall construction, gable roof form and the parapetted flat roof foyer at the side (with double timber doors, flat arched brick voussoirs, and cement rendered cornice).

The Mechanics Institute complex is **historically** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It is associated with the development of Great Western as a township.

The Mechanics Institute complex is **socially** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It is recognised and valued as a literary and cultural centre in the Great Western township.

Overall, the Mechanics Institute complex 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	105083
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

The Mechanics Institute complex, 103 Mian Street, Great Western, makes a significant contribution to the architectural and cultural amenity of the Great Western Township. The two brick buildings that comprise the Institute complex dominate the site.

The earliest part of the Institute complex is the recessed, brick, rudimentary Victorian styled building. It is characterised by a simple gable roof form, clad in recent corrugated zincalume and having a recent ridge ventilator. The main gable end has a simple ventilator in the upper reaches, with the flying gable having early timber horizontal members with a recent steel flagpole attached. A central timber door is situated on the main gable end and is adorned with flat arched brick voussoirs. The side of the building has three segmentally arched, timber framed double hung windows, adorned with brick voussoirs. The rear of the building has an introduced parapetted brick skillion addition.

Projecting at the front of the recessed gable is a skillion porch with double timber and glazed doors. This skillion is located behind the flat roofed brick foyer that forms part of the larger hall.

The larger brick Institute hall is designed in a regionalist, rudimentary Federation Queen Anne style, as especially identified in the main gable end, with its crowning simple Dutch gable parapet with cement rendered trimmings and details. This parapet is adorned with a curvilinear pediment and orb, below which is a central pilastered panel with the title "Mechanics Institute" flanked by shell motif sloping sides. The base of the parapet is flanked by decorated cement scrolls, between which is a heavily moulded and projecting cornice.

Below the parapet is a slightly projecting tripartite bay of round and segmentally arched windows separated by brick pilasters supported by stepped cement pedestals on a cement stringcourse at window sill height. The pilasters also have simple stepped cement capitals. The timber framed four lighted windows with arcuated highlights are adorned with brick voussoirs and cement rendered keystones, and vestigial brick window pilasters with moulded cement rendered capitals (at the springing of the window arches) and pedestals.

The main gable roof form of the larger Institute hall is clad in recent corrugated zincalume, and has ridge ventilators. The parapetted flat roofed foyer at the side has double timber doors, accentuated by flat arched brick voussoirs, and a projecting cement rendered cornice.

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/>