

# WARRNAMBOOL COURT HOUSE



WARRNAMBOOL COURT HOUSE  
SOHE 2008



1 warrnambool court house gillies street  
warrnambool front view jan1983



h01674 warrnambool courthouse plan

## Location

193-195 TIMOR STREET WARRNAMBOOL, Warrnambool City

## Municipality

WARRNAMBOOL CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1674

## **Heritage Overlay Numbers**

HO178

## **VHR Registration**

August 20, 1982

## **Amendment to Registration**

September 13, 2005

## **Heritage Listing**

Victorian Heritage Register

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## **Statement of Significance**

Last updated on - September 13, 2005

What is significant?

The Warrnambool Court House, a simple bluestone and brick structure, was built in 1870-71 by the Public Works Department. Originally the building comprised a centrally located court room with two rooms for clerks on the western side and separate rooms for magistrates, barristers, and prisoners on the eastern side. The court house furniture was purchased in 1871, specifically for this court house. Many other country courthouses were supplied with furniture from a centrally ordered store of items.

The building today is largely the result of substantial alterations and additions to the north elevation made in 1889 to the design of J. H. Marsden, architect of the Public Works Department. The design in the Victorian Free Classical style featured a highly decorated projected entry, arcade and gabled roof. The 1889 extension included an enlarged court room in the centre of the building; new passageway and jury room to the east; an arcade and relocation of the stairs to the north; and a new library and waiting room to the west side. Major alterations in 1967 involved the addition of a second court room and related rooms.

How is it significant?

The Warrnambool Court House is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Warrnambool Court House is historically important as a reflection of the strength and optimism of the major Victorian coastal township of Warrnambool in the late 1880s, which resulted in the 1871 court house building being regarded as not only inadequate for the town, but much too sombre and unattractive for its times. The building is also historically important as an example of the work of the prominent Victorian Public Works Department architect J. H. Marsden, whose drawings for the building's 1889 alterations have largely contributed to its present form. Although Marsden may have produced his Warrnambool drawings under direction, he later designed many important public buildings in Victoria, including the Melbourne Teachers' College (1888) and Carlton Post Office (1883). As the Warrnambool Court House court room is unusually intact, it is historically important for its potential to illustrate the development of legal infrastructure in the regional centre of Warrnambool during the late nineteenth century. Warrnambool Court House is also significant as a key element in a major precinct of related public buildings at Warrnambool which includes a Customs House (1860), Post Office (1874), Watch House and Police Station (1883), Police Stables (1884), Sergeants' Quarters (1887), and Drill Hall (c.1870).

Warrnambool Court House is architecturally important as a representative example of a Victorian Free Classical style court house with projected entry, arcade and gabled roof. It is one of six surviving buildings in this group which were all erected between c. 1880 and c. 1890, and is typical of the Victorian Free Classical style in its free interpretation of classical elements. The timber fretwork at Warrnambool is also typical of later examples in this group which displayed Federation Style details. The substantially intact court room is noted for its opulent display of original timber joinery and for the remaining furniture dating from the period of construction.

See 2008 Site Monitoring Event and initial survey for details of the Court House furniture collection.

## Permit Exemptions

**General Conditions:** 1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.

**General Conditions:** 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible. Note: All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component.

**General Conditions:** 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: The existence of a Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan endorsed by Heritage Victoria provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan.

**General Conditions:** 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

**General Conditions:** 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable.

**Minor Works :** Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works may submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Construction dates	1870,
Architect/Designer	Marsden, John Hudson,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	1193
Property Number	

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## History

Furniture. The Public Works Department Contract let in 1871-72 no. 60 was for furniture for the new court house at a cost of &pound;96.7.6. This was unusual as frequently court house furniture was bought centrally and sent out to various courthouses as required rather than being specially designed or chosen for a particular court.

### Extent of Registration

1. All the building marked B1 on Diagram 1674 held by the Executive Director:  
B1 Court House (1870-71)
2. All the land marked L1 on Diagram 1674 held by the Executive Director
3. The following objects (27) located within the court house and listed on inventory provided by the Department of Justice dated 31 May 2004. .

Set of 12 chairs

2 chairs with arms

1 lectern for press, with graffiti.

1 drop leaf table

1 small table with leather top and three drawers

1 large table with leather insert

1 large timber table

6 upholstered bench seats

1 timber bench seat.

1 short upholstered bench seat

*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/>*