

MELBOURNE TOWN HALL AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING



MELBOURNE TOWN HALL AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING SOHE 2008



h00001 melbourne town hall and administration bldg swanston street melbourne clock corner she project 2004



h00001 melbourne town hall and administration bldg swanston street melbourne clock she project 2004



melbourne town hall swanston street melbourne ext bluestone



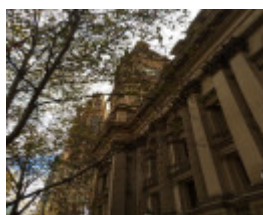
H0001 melbourne town hall and administration bldg swanston street melbourne main entrance she project 2004



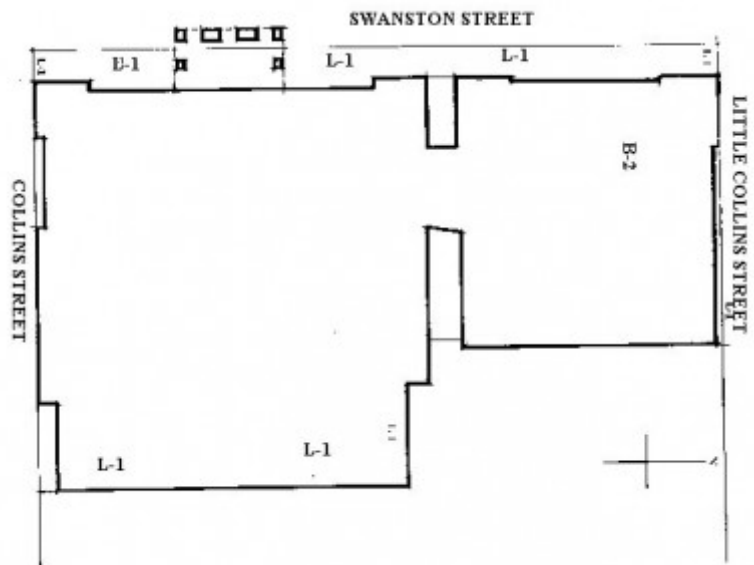
H0001 melbourne town hall and administration bldg swanston street melbourne front she project 2004



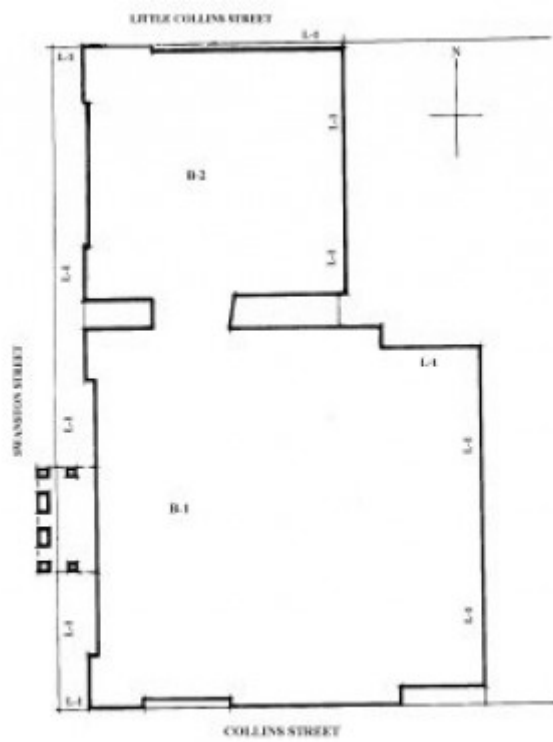
MELBOURNE TOWN HALL AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING July 2016



MELBOURNE TOWN HALL AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING July 2016



melbourne town hall registration plan



melbourne town hall registration plan 2



Melbourne Town Hall Registered Land Plan

Location

90-130 SWANSTON STREET MELBOURNE, MELBOURNE CITY

Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0001

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO746

VHR Registration

October 9, 1974

Amendment to Registration

August 20, 1998

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 23, 2008

What is significant?

Construction of the existing Melbourne Town Hall began in 1867 on the site of the first Town Hall at the corner of Swanston and Collins Streets. Architects Reed and Barnes won a competition for the design of the new Town Hall, and the firm was responsible for the portico which was added to the Swanston Street facade in 1887. An Administration Building was constructed to the north of the town hall in Swanston Street in 1908, and various alterations were made after a fire in 1925.

Reserved by the government in 1837, the site at the corner of Swanston and Collins Streets was issued as a Crown Grant to the Corporation of Melbourne in June 1849 as a site for a town hall. Designed by the City Surveyor, James Blackburn, the first Town Hall was subsequently completed c 1854. By the early 1860s it was already of insufficient size and the foundation stone of its successor was laid by the Duke of Edinburgh in 1867.

The new Town Hall included a public hall, administrative offices, Lord Mayor's rooms and council chambers. Built in a French Renaissance style with slate mansard roofs, this freestone building consists of a rusticated bluestone plinth, a two storey section of giant order Corinthian columns and pilasters, an attic storey and a corner clock tower. The main Swanston Street facade is divided into five parts, with a central and two end pavilions. The central portico, added to this facade some twenty years after the initial construction to provide a grand entrance and balcony, is of a pedimented, temple form, with materials and details used to match the existing building.

From the mid-1880s to the late 1890s, the Town Hall was the venue for several important meetings on the question of Federation. These meetings marked significant advances in the progress of the Federation movement and were attended by many prominent individuals who were intimately involved in the issue. Among the critically important meetings held at the Town Hall were the January 1890 Australian Natives' Association Inter-Colonial Conference on Federation, the series of meetings in mid-1894 to found the Australasian Federation League of Victoria, the public meeting attended by three colonial premiers in January 1895, and the large public meeting of May 1898 that marked the climax of the pro-Federation campaign in Victoria for the first Federation referendum.

In 1888 the Melbourne Council bought the adjacent Police Court building from the government, therefore securing a site for future offices. In 1908 a building was erected on this site to accommodate the administrative staff, including the office of the Town Clerk, and also incorporated committee rooms and a new council chamber. The exterior was designed by J. J. and E. J. Clark, emulating much of the detail of the adjacent building, and the interior was completed by Grainger, Little and Barlow. The council chamber has been the meeting place of the City Council since 1910 and its design displays a post-Federation pride in Australian materials.

A fire in 1925 effected the first changes made to the Town Hall building. The main hall, together with the organ, was destroyed and as a result a new hall, designed by Stephenson and Meldrum, was built. By extending to the adjacent site in Collins Street, a larger hall was constructed and the existing Collins Street facade was extended. An additional, lower hall was also created, a new organ was built by British firm, Hill, Norman and Beard and decorative murals, featuring larger than life size figures, were installed in the main hall, to designs by Napier Waller, in conjunction with J. Oliver and Sons.

How is it significant?

The Melbourne Town Hall and Administration Building is of architectural, historical, scientific (technical) and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Melbourne Town Hall is of architectural significance as a distinguished and important work by the prominent Melbourne architects Reed and Barnes, who designed a number of significant Melbourne buildings. It is also important as a prototype for numerous suburban town halls that were built in the late 1870s and 1880s. The Administration Building is of architectural significance for its functional and stylistic relationship to the Town Hall, which results in a coherent civic centre.

The Melbourne Town Hall is of historical significance as the civic centre of Melbourne since 1867 and for its

association with the Federation movement in Victoria.

The Melbourne Town Hall is of scientific (technical) significance for its organ which is an intact, large and rare example of 1920s British organ-building craftsmanship. As the second largest organ built in the British tradition between World War I and 2, it is now the third largest organ in Australia, those at the Sydney Town Hall and the Sydney Opera House being larger. Few organs of this size are intact from this period, particularly of a secular/concert hall design. As part of the 1925 rebuilding, the intact case, grilles, pipework and console of the organ are architecturally integral to the main hall.

The Melbourne Town Hall is of aesthetic significance for the murals by Napier Waller, which provide an example of this important artist's work.

[Online Data Upgrade Project 2007]

Permit Exemptions

EXEMPTIONS FROM PERMITS: (Classes of works or activities which may be undertaken without a permit under Part 4 of the Heritage Act 1995).

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.

2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of alterations 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 alteration shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible.

3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it.

4. Nothing in this declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

5. Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authority where applicable.

Policy objective:

All works should be in accordance with the conservation objectives of the Masterplan prepared by Allom Lovell and Associates.

Work carried out in areas which are accessible to the public should not be permit exempt. Areas not normally accessible to the public such as office areas and kitchens which have had regular alterations in the past should be able to carry out regular works which have no impact on the overall significance of the building without the need for a permit from Heritage Victoria.

Exemptions:

* All restoration and reconstruction works specifically recommended in Volumes IX and X of the Melbourne Town Hall Overview and Masterplan prepared by Allom Lovell and Associates dated October 1983, provided they are documented by and undertaken under the direction of an appropriately experienced conservation architect.

* The following exemptions apply to rooms in the Administration Building - G12, G13, G15, G16, G17, G 18, G 19, G 21:

Removal and/or installation of office partitions, benches, desks, shelving including any associated wiring or cabling

Interior painting , removal of or installation of carpeting or other flexible floor coverings. Removal and/or installation of light fittings

* The following exemption applies to rooms numbered Town Hall G.3, 2.13, Alterations to the commercial kitchen including removal and or installation of equipment and associated plumbing and wiring.

* The following exemption applies to Rooms Town Hall TH1.18, TH1.19, TH1.20, TH1.21, TH1.22, TH1.23, TH1.24, TH1.25, TH2.21, TH2.22

Interior painting , removal of or installation of carpeting or other flexible floor coverings.

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 Heritage Victoria 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 the Executive Director, 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 all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: A Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan 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 must 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	1867, 1887, 1908,
Architect/Designer	Reed & Barnes, Clarke, John James & EJ,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place, Registered object integral to a registered place,
Hermes Number	813
Property Number	

History

Construction of the existing Melbourne Town Hall began in 1867 on the site of the first Town Hall at the corner of Swanston and Collins Streets. Architects Reed and Barnes won a competition for the design of the new Town Hall, and the firm was responsible for the portico which was added to the Swanston Street facade in 1887. An Administration Building was constructed to the north of the town hall in Swanston Street in 1908, and various alterations were made after a fire in 1925.

Reserved by the government in 1837, the site at the corner of Swanston and Collins Streets was issued as a Crown Grant to the Corporation of Melbourne in June 1849 as a site for a town hall. Designed by the City Surveyor, James Blackburn, the first Town Hall was subsequently completed c 1854. By the early 1860s it was already of insufficient size and the foundation stone of its successor was laid by the Duke of Edinburgh in 1867.

From the mid-1880s to the late 1890s, the Town Hall was the venue for several important meetings on the question of Federation. These meetings marked significant advances in the progress of the Federation movement and were attended by many prominent individuals who were intimately involved in the issue. Among the critically important meetings held at the Town Hall were the January 1890 Australian Natives' Association Inter-Colonial Conference on Federation, the series of meetings in mid-1894 to found the Australasian Federation League of Victoria, the public meeting attended by three colonial premiers in January 1895, and the large public meeting of May 1898 that marked the climax of the pro-Federation campaign in Victoria for the first Federation referendum.

In 1888 the Melbourne Council bought the adjacent Police Court building from the government, therefore securing a site for future offices. In 1908 a building was erected on this site to accommodate the administrative staff, including the office of the Town Clerk, and also incorporated committee rooms and a new council chamber. The exterior was designed by J. J. and E. J. Clark, emulating much of the detail of the adjacent building, and the interior was completed by Grainger, Little and Barlow. The council chamber has been the meeting place of the City Council since 1910 and its design displays a post-Federation pride in Australian materials.

A fire in 1925 effected the first changes made to the Town Hall building. The main hall, together with the organ, was destroyed and as a result a new hall, designed by Stephenson and Meldrum, was built. By extending to the adjacent site in Collins Street, a larger hall was constructed and the existing Collins Street facade was extended. An additional, lower hall was also created, a new organ was built by British firm, Hill, Norman and Beard and decorative murals, featuring larger than life size figures, were installed in the main hall, to designs by Napier Waller, in conjunction with J. Oliver and Sons.

The draft statement of significance and the above history were produced as part of an Online Data Upgrade Project 2007. Sources were as follows:

E W Moorhead. 'Melbourne's Town Halls', *Victorian Historical Magazine*, XXVI (1955), pp 116-120

Miles Lewis. *Melbourne*. The City's History and Development. City of Melbourne 1995

Allom Lovell and Assoc. *Melbourne Town Hall*. Overview and Master Plan. Melbourne 1990

Allom Lovell and Assoc. *Melbourne Town Hall Organ Conservation Analysis and Assessment of Future Works*. Melbourne 1991

Plaque Citation

This French Renaissance style town hall was designed by Reed & Barnes and built in 1867, with the portico added in 1887. After a fire in 1925 the hall was rebuilt to designs by Stephenson & Meldrum with murals by Napier Waller.

Designed by J J and E J Clark and built in 1908 as Melbourne's administrative offices, this has been the meeting place of the City Council since 1910. It demonstrates a post-Federation pride in Australian materials.

This organ by Hill Norman & Beard is a rare intact example of British organ building and is the third largest pipe organ in Australia. It is an integral part of the main hall where it was installed after the 1925 fire.

Extent of Registration

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended in that the Heritage Register Number 1 in the category described as a Heritage place, Heritage object is now described as:

Melbourne Town Hall and Administration Building, Swanston Street, Melbourne, City of Melbourne.

EXTENT:

1. All the buildings (including steps, palisade fences and gates) marked B-1 Town Hall and Organ and B-2 Administration building on Diagram 600138A held by the Executive Director.
2. All of the land marked L-1 on Diagram 600138A held by the Executive Director being all of the land described in Certificate of Title Volume 5180 Folio 944, Crown Grant 1057/215 and General Law Grant No. 60 and Crown Land Act 53 Vic. No. 020.
3. Objects:
Lord Mayor's Chair, c1853 cedar, buttoned leather - Council Chamber; Town Clerk's Chair c1908 - council Chamber; Original Council Chairs c1908 (x4) - blackwood and buttoned leather, elaborately carved; (Council Chamber - x2), Committee Room S18x1, Committee Room S19x1; Couch (bench) c1908 - Blackwood and leather with metal studs - Council Chamber; Desk -c1853 Kindey shaped Mayoral desk with elaborate carved legs, lions claw feet with centre foot rest - Council Chamber; Council Chamber table - 1868 - cedar with red baise top - Council Chamber; Desk c1853 cedar with red baise top, kidney shaped desk, claw feet, elaborate pedestal legs with centre footrest - Council Chamber.

Dated 13 August 1998.

RAY TONKIN
Executive Director

[*Victoria Government Gazette* G 33 20 August 1998 pp.2251-2252]

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/>