



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November, 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Victoria Hall is a very fine example of the Victorian Academic Classical style and the decorative elements of its stuccoed facade are aesthetically valued by the community. (Criterion 1.1)

Victoria Hall is a very fine example of the work of prominent architect John Talbot Hobbs whose work is generally recognised as making an important contribution to the built landscape of the State. The design of the hall displays many fine elements, most notably the design of the facade, proscenium arch to the stage, and decorative timber panelling to an impressive, timber-lined ceiling. (Criterion 1.2)

Victoria Hall is a visually dominant element in the eastern streetscape of High Street. This is enhanced by it being one of the only remaining turn of the century buildings in this part of High Street, and by its height, bulk and imposing classical facade which is built directly on the front boundary. (Criterion 1.3)

Victoria Hall is a focal point in the immediate landscape and an essential component in an otherwise undistinguished collection of post 1960s commercial buildings. (Criterion 1.3)

Victoria Hall has strong visual links to *St John's Church* (1882), which is located in the significant King's Square precinct that also includes the *Fremantle Town Hall* (1885). (Criterion 1.4)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The choice of the Victorian Academic Classical style for an Anglican parish hall is indicative of the prominence of the church at this time and the importance of the social role that the church played in the lives of the Fremantle community. (Criterion 2.1)

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter A *Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present* North Ryde NSW, Angus & Robertson 1989.

The hall is a very good example of a building constructed during the goldrush period in Western Australia.

The renaming of the building from St John's Parish Hall to *Victoria Hall* indicates the importance in Western Australia of the diamond jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897. (Criterion 2.2)

Victoria Hall is associated with Archdeacon Watkins of *St John's Church*, Fremantle. Watkins was responsible for a number of major building projects for the Perth Diocesan Trustees of the Church of England including the new *St John's Church* (1882), ten cottages in Cantonment Street and the parish hall (*Victoria Hall*).

Victoria Hall is also associated with prominent Perth architect John Talbot Hobbs who was responsible for the design of many notable buildings in both Perth and Fremantle during the goldrush era. These include *Samson House* (1888), *The Weld Club* (1892), *Newspaper House* (1895), *St George's Hall* (1895-6), and *Moir's Chambers* (1896). (Criterion 2.3)

Victoria Hall is a very good example of a historical style typically used for public buildings during the last decade of the nineteenth century. It is well designed both internally and externally, including notable features such as the proscenium arch to the stage and the timber lined ceiling. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Victoria Hall has played a prominent role in the social life of many Fremantle residents. Since its foundation, the building has had social and community-based uses - including those associated with dance and music. The support shown by the Fremantle community at a rally held in October 1996 indicates the value placed on the building by this community. (Criterion 4.1)

The building is a focal point in the east end of Fremantle and a reminder of the nature of the eastern streetscape of High Street prior to demolition of many buildings in the late 1960s. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Victoria Hall is one of the only remaining goldrush buildings in the east end of High Street. (Criterion 5.1)

Victoria Hall is an excellent example of a community hall. Very few halls remain with the same quality of design and finishes. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Victoria Hall is a good example of an architectural style commonly used for public buildings during the goldrush period. (Criterion 6.1)

Victoria Hall represents the recreational activities popular in the first half of the twentieth century in Western Australia. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The condition of the building is good. It has been well maintained over its lifetime and shows little serious external deterioration. The front facade has some damage to the stucco work and is in need of painting. There is some spalling of the stonework on the western elevation and evidence of moisture penetration of the stone and brickwork on the eastern elevation. The toilet block to the rear is in poor condition.

The condition of the building is good in relation to aesthetic, historic, scientific and social values of the place since it has been well maintained. These values are enhanced by the good condition of the building, particularly the main hall, which has been re-roofed and well maintained internally. There have been minor environmental effects resulting in some damp to walls. The lesser hall has been less well maintained and some sagging of the ceiling is evident. There has been some white ant activity, which has caused damage to the internal timberwork in the basement area, but this now appears to have ceased.

The building could have benefited from a more consistent approach to maintenance, particularly in regard to the repair of the stucco work to the front facade and a more regular program of painting. There does not appear to be any organised program of maintenance in place at present.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The building has a high level of integrity. The original intention of the design has remained intact with the building retaining its use as a hall for public use.

The long term viability or sustainability of the values identified is high. The building is currently leased by tenants committed to the continued use of the hall as a community venue.

The building could easily be restored within a short time frame. While it seems to be sound, a structural engineer would need to look at the roof and floor structures to determine the level of work required structurally. Externally the drainage needs to be improved, particularly on the eastern side to prevent further moisture damage. The front facade requires minor repair

work and painting. The roof to the rear section requires inspection regarding its condition. Internally some work is required, particularly in the lesser hall.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The authenticity of the building is high. Most of the fabric of the original building is intact. The external fabric of the building and the main hall retains a high degree of authenticity.

Additions to the original building have been made. These additions are clearly distinguishable from the original hall due to the use of different materials for their construction. These additions include:

- the area behind the stage consisting of the lesser hall and living quarters;
- the rear store and bathroom; and
- the toilets to the west of the main hall.

There have been some minor changes to the fabric of the building in response to changing uses and needs:

- the original opening to the mezzanine stairs has been altered and a new opening created from the main hall;
- a number of the original external doors appear to have been replaced although original hardware is still extant in some cases;
- the original floor to the stage appears to have been mostly replaced; and
- a suspended ceiling has been added to the room on the east of the entry, although the original ceiling may still be intact.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary and physical evidence has been compiled by Heritage and Conservation Professionals, 329 Murray Street, Perth.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Victoria Hall, located at the eastern end of High Street, Fremantle, is a limestone and brick building constructed in 1896-1897 with additions at the rear (southern end; c. 1926) and to the west (c. 1960). The original building was constructed for *St John's Church* as a parish hall. Also on the site, in the south-eastern corner, is a small limestone and brick toilet block (c. 1897). *Victoria Hall* is located approximately two hundred metres east of King's Square, the historical administrative centre of Fremantle. There are strong visual links between *Victoria Hall* and *St John's Church*, which is situated in the square, on the southern side of High Street.

The first *St John's Church*, dedicated in August 1843, was constructed on the land now known as King's Square. In 1876, the Trustees of the Church offered part of the site, together with a strip of land, to the Town Council. The money obtained from the transfer was to be used by the Trustees as part of the funding for a new church on the remaining northern part of the site, and the Council used the acquired land to extend High Street.¹

Meanwhile, a new church was planned and architect W Smith was commissioned in June 1876 to design the new church. Smith was the professor of architecture at the University of London and plans for the building did not arrive until August of the following year. Building commenced in 1878/9 and was completed in 1882 at a cost of £7,500.² A belltower, a gift from a parishioner, was added to the church in 1906-07. Grainger and D'Ebro designed the *Fremantle Town Hall*, which is also located in King's Square and was completed in 1887.

The City of Fremantle's Heritage database states the significance of *St John's Church* as:

This church has a close association with pioneer families and with the Royal Australian Navy and Merchant services. It is one of the finest examples of ecclesiastical architecture in WA and is an essential element and landmark in Kings Square (formerly St John's Square).³

In 1895, *St John's Church* vestry requested architect John Talbot Hobbs design a church hall. Land was acquired in high street by the Perth Diocesan Trustees of the Church of England in October the following year, under the energetic direction of Archdeacon Watkins. Watkins had been described as

not only a dedicated Priest, but he was a wonderful financier of projects designed to establish the Parish on a sound footing. He had ten cottages built in Cantonment and Point Streets, which proved to be a useful and sound investment...He died in 1907, leaving a firmly established Anglican Parish and a lovely St John's Church...⁴

¹ Considine and Griffiths, Architects, 'Fremantle Town Hall: Conservation Analysis and Plan', April 1993

² *ibid.*

³ City of Fremantle Municipal Inventory Record Number 14, 29 November 1996.

⁴ Lee, *op. cit.*

The building was completed in 1897 and called *Victoria Hall*, although it was originally named St John's Hall.⁵ Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee was celebrated in 1897 and it is likely the name was changed then as a commemoration.

John Talbot Hobbs, the architect of *Victoria Hall*, was born and educated in London. He arrived in Western Australia in 1887 and commenced practice on his own until 1904 when he joined the partnership W J Waldie Forbes and E H Dean-Smith, forming the firm of Hobbs, Smith and Forbes. Hobbs was responsible for many notable buildings during the goldrush era. In Perth, these include: the *King Edward Hotel* (1887); the *Weld Club* (1892); *Burt House* (1893); *Newspaper House* (1895); *St George's Hall* (1895-6); and *Moir's Chambers* (1896). Hobbs was also the architect for a significant number of prominent buildings in Fremantle, many of them in High Street. These include: *Samson House* (1888); *Scots Church* (1890); *Marmions Buildings* (1890); *WA Bank* (1892); *Port Brewery* (1895); and the *Elder Shenton Warehouse* (1903). Hobbs, Smith & Forbes were the architects for the *Swan Brewery Bottling Works* (1905) and *Boan Bros. Department Store* (1905).⁶ He also designed many private residences.

Hobbs found much work in Western Australia during the 1890s. In the decade following the achievement of responsible government in 1890, the population of the colony quadrupled and to cope with this influx, extensive building programs were undertaken in both public works and private buildings. The town centres of both Perth and Fremantle were largely rebuilt and consolidated during this time.⁷ Recently arrived architects, such as Hobbs, along with immigrant engineers, builders and surveyors 'brought with them new ideas and a greater scale and a new fashion in building than that surviving from Colonial times'.⁸ Hobbs' *Victoria Hall* is a good example of the exuberance of the new style.

Apperley, Irving and Reynolds describe the influx of settlers and economic growth following the discovery of gold in Australia in 1850. 'A scholarly brand of classical architecture was the ideal language with which the Victorian age could proclaim its confidence and celebrate its achievements...preferred models were found in the extroverted pomp of imperial Rome and the grandeur of the fully developed European Renaissance'.⁹ They describe the style as an embodiment of 'solidity and permanency' and as essentially non-residential, usually in an urban setting. Characteristics of the style were facades 'richly modelled in masonry or stucco. Roofs were usually concealed by parapets...The more florid Renaissance elements, such as the Roman Corinthian order, were favoured'.¹⁰

Victoria Hall could best be described as fitting the 'Victorian Academic Classical' style, however it was constructed during the Federation period when 'Federation Academic Classical' was often the idiom chosen for urban commercial architecture, especially in Western Australia as it grew and

⁵ Kerr, W. 'Architecture in Fremantle 1875-1915', 1973 (from City of Fremantle Local History Library File).

⁶ Pitt Morison, Margaret 'Immigrant Architects in Western Australia 1885-1905' Battye Library, PR 13589 c.1982, p7.

⁷ Pitt Morison, op. cit., Introduction.

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ Apperley, Irving and Reynolds, op. cit., p.52.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p.55.

prospered following the discovery of gold'.¹¹ This style was a continuation of 'the classical tradition that still pervaded much of the architecture of Britain and the United States as well as Australia'. It was an 'essentially conservative expression of community aggrandisement' characterised by 'symmetrical disposition. Correct use of orders or their components' and 'vigorous modelling of facades' with a 'pedimented entrance portico an important feature'.¹²

Little specific information has been found regarding the use of *Victoria Hall* in the first half of the twentieth century, however documentary and oral evidence suggests that the building was a focal point for a variety of uses with a strong community involvement. An advertisement in *The West Australian* in 1900, for example, notifies of a 'Grand Bazaar!' to be held in the hall with the object of liquidating the debt on the building.¹³

Minute books of monthly meetings held by the St John's Church Vestry indicate some of the variety of uses for which *Victoria Hall* was leased. On Saturday nights from November 1914 until at least 1930, the South Fremantle Football Club leased the building during the football season.¹⁴ On Friday nights in the early 1920s, the hall was used by several Anglican organisations, including the Young Men's Club and the Girls' Friendly Society who called themselves the 'St John's Social Club'.¹⁵

Photographs depict 'The Happy Hour Club' who held dances in the hall on Friday nights in the early to mid 1930s.¹⁶ Other uses referred to in the minute books of St John's Church Vestry include hire by the Boy Scouts and the holding of a boxing contest for the unemployed in 1931. An 'Infants' School Ball' was held in the building in 1936.¹⁷

The Minutes from 27 March 1940 show concern that:

Reference was made to the Victoria Hall having been let for a communist meeting and the possibility of damages arising therefrom. The Canon undertook to see the Lessee, and point out the danger of such lettings.¹⁸

and Fremantle resident Mick Vodanovic recalls that '...his parents did their courting in the hall like a thousand other couples who waltzed the wooden boards'.¹⁹

The cottages built by the church under Archdeacon Watkins had been sold in July 1918 for £6,650. The Rectory and grounds were located further east in Cantonment Street and records state that these were sold in 1926 for the sum of £13,000. However it is probable that only the grounds were sold as the Rectory was eventually demolished by St John's Church in 1963 to make way

¹¹ *ibid*, p.100.

¹² *ibid*, p.103.

¹³ *The West Australian* 27 July 1900 (File copy, no page number).

¹⁴ St John's Church Fremantle, Minute Books of the Vestry. Batty Library MN614 2810/A. Reference to an initial lease in meeting of 9.11.1914 and referred to again in minutes of 16.9.1930.

¹⁵ *ibid*, minutes of 31.5.1922.

¹⁶ 'The Happy Hour Club, Victoria Hall High Street' City of Fremantle Local History Library photographic collection no. 1073.

¹⁷ 'Infants' School Ball' *Fremantle Advocate* 8 October 1936.

¹⁸ St John's Church Vestry minute books *op. cit.*, 27.3.1940.

¹⁹ 'Guardian of Freo's integrity' *The West Australian*, 17 September 1996 (File copy, no page number).

for the construction of a four storey office building.²⁰ With the sale of the land and available funds, discussion arose in 1926 regarding the erection of a new parish hall on land adjacent to the Rectory. However, it was decided to build new quarters and a meeting room at the rear of *Victoria Hall* and architect Ron Oldham was asked to prepare drawings. The new additions were expected to cost around £1,000.²¹ No further reference has been found regarding the construction, but extant building fabric indicates that the extensions were constructed around this time.

By the late 1950s, *Victoria Hall* 'was in disrepair, and too large for parish requirements, as many of the parishioners had built homes further from the city zone. A smaller Parish hall was built at the rear of the old Rectory in Queen Street...' and was dedicated in November 1959.²²

Title deeds show that *Victoria Hall* was leased to Robert and Shelda Wrightson in 1958 and that at the end of their six year lease, the Wrightsons purchased the property.²³ The St John's Church Vestry minute books show, however, that the Wrightsons had been leasing the building from 1947.²⁴ The minute books also show that a wash-house and troughs were built at the *Victoria Hall* residence in 1948.²⁵ The Wrightsons opened a dance studio which remained in use until the early 1970s. It is likely that the toilets on the western side of the building were constructed in the late 1950s or early 1960s.

In 1974, the Fremantle City Council approved demolition of the hall. This did not meet public approval, however. The National Trust advised that the building had been classified, the Builders Labourer's Union put a green ban on the building and the Fremantle Society called for the state government to buy the building for use as a theatre.²⁶ The building was neither demolished nor sold and over the last two decades has had a number of different tenants and uses. Most of the following information has been taken from stories recorded in the local press.

In October 1977, the *Daily News* records debate over colours chosen for the buildings' facade which '...was recently painted a bright red and white - but the colours brought an angry reaction...' most notably from the mayor who '...has criticised several business people for trying to give the city a second grade 'Disneyland' look'.²⁷ *Victoria Hall* was only partially repainted and the new developers, planning a shopping 'emporium', asked the mayor to select the colours and he suggested that advice be sought from the City's consulting architect.²⁸ The emporium was set up in 1978 but was not a successful venture.

By the end of 1979, the building had new tenants who set up 'a modern music and performing arts theatre'.²⁹ The opening show, entitled 'Galah at the Vic',

²⁰ Lee, Bruce *op. cit*; *Daily News*, 15.8.63 included in minute books 2810/6.

²¹ *ibid*, minutes of 16.11.26, 21.12.26 and 18.1.27.

²² Lee, *op. cit*.

²³ Certificate of Title Vol. X0III Fol. 99.

²⁴ St John's Church Vestry minute books, *op. cit.*, 23.7.1947.

²⁵ St John's Church Vestry minute books, *op. cit.*, 24.11.1948.

²⁶ 'Battle Looms over Hall' *Daily News* 22 March 1974 (File copy, no page number).

²⁷ *Daily News* 14 October 1977 (File copy, no page number).

²⁸ 'Colourful Question' *Fremantle Gazette* 1978 (File copy, no page number).

²⁹ 'Good Sounds Sounds Good' *Fremantle Gazette* 20 December 1979 (File copy, no page number).

was a music and dance show incorporating performing pink and grey galahs - by 'young 25 year old director Chrissie Parrott'.³⁰ The venture was unsuccessful and in October 1980 the place re-opened as the 'Fremantle Dance Centre'.³¹

In May of 1982, the hall was opened for 'variety shows' but by September the owners had decided to sell, and the local paper dubbed the building the 'Hall of Fame'. Asking \$385,000, it is described as 'in close to original condition... a large auditorium with a stage, balcony and modern toilet facilities. Beneath the stage is a licenced bar area, and a large meeting room with office space brings up the rear'.³² The building was not sold and is again recorded for sale in 1984, this time for \$350,000. Again, *Victoria Hall* was not sold. The former Princess May Theatre in Fremantle was also for sale at this time.³³

Approval was given in July 1984 to use the hall for 'the wholesaling and retailing of foods and domestic goods' however this was not taken up.³⁴ The next recorded use of the building is by the Salvation Army, who opened a Red Shield Centre in July 1985. The centre included a thrift shop in the hall with the 'lesser hall' for group meetings or hire and space for a family welfare centre.³⁵ The Salvation Army occupied the building until January 1996 when the 'family support centre' was closed as it was no longer able to support the area.

A 'Victoria Hall Association' was formed and the *Fremantle Herald* records in August 1996 a 'Push for people to buy back Victoria Hall'. The article argues that the building is

regarded as one of the city's hidden gems...one of the few remaining period buildings in the city's east end, most of which was bulldozed in the 1960s to make way for modern offices and shopfronts...Local lawyer Peter Nettleton and former publican Mick Vodanovich want locals to band together and buy the hall so it can be used for theatre, dances, public meetings... some \$720, 000 is needed to buy the hall from the Wrightson family.³⁶

The West Australian picked up on the cause and featured Mick Vodanovich's plans to save the hall. Mick, also a musician, is known as the co-founder of Fremantle's art festival and for, ironically, the revival of St Patrick's Day celebrations in Fremantle. The article records that 'Mick and his team are hoping to save Victoria Hall for the purpose for which it was built - as a community hall...the only real bit of Freo history standing outside the West End, he says, happens to be Victoria Hall'.³⁷

A public meeting was called for 5 October 1996. One hundred and fifty performers entertained 'several hundred locals', (mostly 'old Fremantle' as opposed to the 'newcomers') who 'turned out to save the hall from being

³⁰ 'Galah opening a punny show' *Daily News* 17 October 1979 (File copy, no page number).

³¹ *The West Australian* 9 October 1980 (File copy, no page number).

³² 'Variety back at Victoria' *The West Australian* 20 May 1982; 'Hall of Fame' *Fremantle Gazette* 29/9/82 (File copies, no page numbers).

³³ 'Two-Stage Development' *Fremantle Gazette* 12 December 1984 (File copy, no page number).

³⁴ Council notes for meeting 15 July 1985 (File copy).

³⁵ 'Bargains galore at Salvos Shop' *Fremantle Gazette* 30 July 1985 (File copy, no page number).

³⁶ 'Push for people to buy back Victoria Hall' *Fremantle Herald* 24 August 1996 (File copy, no page number).

³⁷ 'Guardian of Freo's integrity' *op. cit.*

sold...' One speaker noted that the 'hall is like a Victorian musical instrument. It has wonderful acoustical qualities. You just need to know how to play it'.³⁸

Victoria Hall has been leased by the Victoria Hall Association since January 1996. Mick Vodanovich occupies the residence at the rear of the building and the hall and basement room are leased to various groups for rehearsals, classes, performances and events.

The following is a summary of ownership details for the property:

- 6.7.1889 Edwin Foss Duffield of Fremantle, gentleman becomes proprietor of Fremantle Town Lot 387.³⁹
- 2.10.1896 Lot 1 of Fremantle Town Lot 387, containing thirty three and four tenths perches, transferred to the Perth Diocesan Trustees of the Church of England.⁴⁰
- 25.3.1964 Transfer to Robert William Ernest Wrightson, Company Director and Shelda Lilian Maud Wrightson, Married Woman, both of 1 Jimbell Street, Mosman Park.⁴¹
- 12.11.1974 Shelda Lillian Maud Wrightson died and probate of her will was granted to Robert Barry Norman Wrightson of 5 Skipton Way, City Beach, Company Director.⁴²
- 23.6.1977 Transfer to Robert William Ernest Wrightson of 29 Goldsmith Road, Claremont, Company Director, three undivided fourth shares, and Robert Barry Norman Wrightson, of 5 Skipton Way, City Beach, Company Director, one undivided fourth share, as tenants in common.⁴³
- 5.9.1980 Transfer to Robert William Ernest Wrightson of 29 Goldsmith Road, Claremont, Company Director.⁴⁴

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

13.2.1 Introduction

Victoria Hall, a stone and brick building with a zincalume roof, is situated on an 845 square metre block. The building has no setback to High Street on its northern boundary and, unlike its neighbours, is freestanding which allows openings on all four sides. There is a small limestone and brick toilet block with corrugated iron roof in the south-east corner of the site.

The symmetrical front facade has detailed classical stucco columns, pediment and mouldings. The lower windows have moulded pediments and sit above a continuous moulded sill which forms a dado. There are circular windows at the upper mezzanine level with stucco drapery moulding surrounds.

The building plan is rectangular. Internally, the mezzanine level is at the northern end and overlooks the large main hall, which has a fine polished

³⁸ 'Vic Hall Verve' *Fremantle Herald* 12 October 1996 (File copy, no page number).

³⁹ Certificate of Title Vol. XXIX Fol. 43.

⁴⁰ Certificate of Title Vol. XOIII Fol. 99.

⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴² Certificate of Title Vol. 460 Fol. 84A.

⁴³ *ibid.*

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

wooden ceiling and painted frieze; the stage is at the southern end of the hall and has a decorative proscenium arch.

13.2.2 Physical Description Of The Site

Victoria Hall is situated on a 49.89 metre by 17.06 metre block which runs north-south between High Street and a rear access lane. Entry is directly from High Street at the pavement level.

The building is set back from the side boundaries and extends almost the full length of the block. To the rear of the block, in the south-east corner is a limestone and brick toilet structure which is no longer in use. Brick toilets have been built within the boundary setback on the western side.

Concrete slab paving has been laid up to the building edge on all sides. There is a chain link fence and gates to the rear and gates to either side at the front.

13.2.3 Physical Description Of The Setting

Victoria Hall is located in High Street, east of King's Square, in a busy commercial area. Nearby buildings are mostly single storey with some two storey buildings. There is one six storey office block set back to the east of *Victoria Hall*.

There are strong visual links from *Victoria Hall* to the *Fremantle Town Hall* and *St. John's Church*, both of which are located in Kings' Square. *Victoria Hall* is prominent when looking east from King's Square as it sits forward of the buildings next to it and rises somewhat higher than these buildings on its western side.

13.2.4 External Fabric Of The Building

Victoria Hall is a good example of the Victorian Academic Classical style.⁴⁵ It is rectangular in plan with a richly modelled stucco facade. It is a limestone building with brick quoins and window reveals. The rear section of the building has been constructed in brick. The half-gabled mansard roof behind the parapet of the front facade has been re-roofed with zincalume.

External Fabric - North Elevation

The street facade (north elevation) is painted stucco with richly modelled classical details. There is a painted rusticated stone base. Paired corinthian columns flank the entrance and rise full height with a classical pediment above. Fluted pilasters define the ends of the facade. The articulated parapet is interrupted by half piers. A continuous moulding at sill level forms a dado.

The central double doors are framed by stucco architraves and have a fixed-pane, obscure glass panel above them. The ground floor windows have timber frames and sashes with stucco architraves and moulded pediments. The three circular windows above have stucco drapery detailing.

External Fabric - West Elevation

The walls to the main hall are face limestone with red brick quoins and window reveals. The head of the windows have a three course radiating arch detail. The stepped stone return to the front parapet has a moulded concrete capping. There are four large timber windows to the main hall with eight fixed panes and two fixed panes in the semi-circular arch at the top. There is

⁴⁵ Apperley, Iving & Reynolds, op. cit., pp.52-55.
Register of Heritage Places - Assessment Doc'n
07/04/1998

also a small double hung window to the northern end. The window sills are concrete rendered brick.

The central stage area, which has a skillion roof, also has face limestone walls with red brick quoins and window reveals. There are two timber doors, an eight-pane double hung timber window and a four-pane obscure glass timber window at the basement level.

The southern end of the western elevation is red brick painted white to window head height. The three four-paned, double-hung timber windows have security grilles fitted; there is one timber door.

There is a small painted brick rear section with a skillion roof. The western toilet block addition is cream brick with obscure glass aluminium windows and recent profile gutters and downpipes.

External Fabric - South Elevation

This elevation is red brick which is painted white to window head height. There is one timber door and two eight-pane timber windows with security grilles. The small addition on the western end is painted brick with a red colorbond skillion roof. There is one small window with fixed-pane obscured glass.

External Fabric - Rear Toilet Block

The walls are limestone with red brick quoins and window reveals and timber louvre windows. There is unpainted render on the eastern wall and painted render on the western wall. The roof is corrugated iron.

External Fabric - East Elevation

The walls to the main hall are face limestone with red brick quoins and window reveals. The head of the windows have a three course radiating arch detail. The stepped stone return to the front parapet has a moulded concrete capping. There are four large timber windows to the main hall with eight fixed panes and two fixed panes in the semi-circular arch at the top. The window sills are concrete rendered brick. There are two double timber panelled doors and one single timber door in this section.

The central stage area which has a skillion roof also has face limestone walls with red brick quoins and window reveals. There is one eight-pane double hung timber window at the higher stage level and a four-pane obscure glass timber window at the basement level.

The southern end of the eastern elevation is red brick. There are two four-paned double hung timber windows and one double timber door with a glass panel above.

A white brick wall has been constructed between the end of the building and the toilet block at the rear with a gate fixed to the southern end.

External Fabric - Roof and Roof Plumbing

The roof over the main hall is a half gabled mansard in form and the rear roofs are skillions. All appear to have zincalume roof sheeting. The small rear addition has a red colorbond roof and the rear toilet block has corrugated iron roof sheeting. The roof plumbing is recent profile gutters with galvanised iron rainheads and downpipes.

External Fabric - Miscellaneous

There are some external lights fitted. There are some external metal vents in walls.

13.2.5 Internal Fabric Of The Building

Note: The room names used in the description of the internal fabric are based on the names given to the rooms in the attached floor plan of Victoria Hall.

Internal- Entry

The entry has timber floorboards and painted rendered walls with deep, painted timber, profiled skirtings. The floorboards are covered with carpet underfelt. The ceiling is stained timber panelling. The original door opening to the mezzanine stairs in the western wall of the entry have been boarded up and an electrical meter box has been fitted in the opening.

Internal- Room 1

This room, to the eastern side of the entry, has carpeted timber floorboards. The walls are rendered and painted with simple skirtings. The suspended ceiling is not original.

Internal- Room 2

This room, to the western side of the entry, has timber floorboards with carpet. The walls are rendered and painted with simple skirtings. There is a hatch to the main hall in the southern wall of this room. There is panelling to the timber ceiling and as a surround to the mezzanine stairs which is painted white.

Internal- Main Hall

The main hall has timber floorboards and painted rendered walls with deep, painted timber, profiled skirtings. The floorboards have been covered with carpet around the perimeter and with vinyl to a kitchen area in the north-west corner.

There is detailed painted timber moulding to the door architraves and painted timber moulded pediments above the doors. This detailing reflects the classical elements of the front facade. The exit doors are painted panelled timber.

The windows to the hall are at a high level. The arched timber architraves continue as a dado at the sill level. A painted, timber framed box has been fixed to the walls below the windows to house electrical wiring and fluorescent lights.

The high, curved, polished timber panelled ceiling has a decorative painted timber frieze. The ornate ceiling roses, painted gold, highlight the patterned timber and board ceiling.

There is an ornate painted, rendered proscenium arch to the stage area at the southern end of the hall.

Internal- Mezzanine

Timber stairs with timber panelling and balustrade are entered from a door at the northern end of the main hall and lead to the mezzanine area. The mezzanine consists of four tiered timber framed sections which have painted timber floorboards. The walls are rendered and painted. The ornate cast iron balustrade has a painted timber top rail.

Internal- Stage

Masonite boarding has replaced most of the original floorboards to the stage. An additional temporary stage extends forward of the proscenium. The ceiling is fluted iron and the walls are rendered and painted. Two windows on either side of the stage have been boarded up.

Internal- Lesser Hall

The lesser hall, at a lower level to the main hall, has timber floorboards and painted rendered walls with painted timber skirting boards. The ceiling is masonite or plaster board sheeting with timber battens. There are decorative metal ceiling vents. The timber stairs to the basement have timber side panelling.

Internal-Basement

The basement, which is under the stage area, has a timber floor with some original timber panelling to the walls. The walls are rendered and painted. The timber stage above forms the roof of the basement.

Internal- Living Quarters

The living quarters on the western side of the lesser hall have timber floorboards and painted rendered walls with painted timber skirting boards. The floorboards have been covered by carpet in the bedroom and vinyl in the kitchen. The bathroom and store to the rear has a concrete floor with floor tiles to the bathroom. The ceiling is masonite or plaster board sheeting with timber battens.

Internal- WC

The toilet block to the rear has a concrete slab floor and rendered walls. It is no longer in use.

Internal- Men's WC and Women's WC

The toilets have tiled floors and face brick cubicles.

Internal - Miscellaneous

There is evidence that the building has been rewired.

13.2.6 Alterations To The Fabric Of The Place

There have been some changes to the fabric of the building in response to changing uses and needs. The original opening to the mezzanine stairs has been altered and a new opening created from the main hall. A number of the original external doors appear to have been replaced although original hardware is still extant in some cases. The original floor to the stage appears to have been mostly replaced. A suspended ceiling has been added to the room on the east of the entry, although the original ceiling may still be intact. The original toilet block is no longer in use.

A number of additions to the original building have been made. These additions are clearly distinguishable from the original hall due to the use of different materials for their construction. The area behind the stage consisting of the lesser hall and the living quarters was constructed c. 1927 and the bathroom at the southern end added c. 1948. The toilets to the west of the main hall were built in the late 1950s or early 1960s. (Ref. documentary evidence)

13.2.7 Appearance And Condition Of The Building

The external fabric of the building is in good condition overall. There is no evidence of cracking or settlement of the building. The front facade has some cracking and damage to the pediment and columns and there is some damage to the moulded dado. The front facade has superficial cracking to the stucco and is in need of painting. There is some spalling of the limestone to approximately 600 mm high on the western elevation. There is damage caused by moisture to some of the lower level stone and brickwork on the eastern elevation which is severe in parts.

Internally the building is in good condition, particularly the main hall. The walls of the lesser hall are in need of patching and painting and the ceiling is showing evidence of some sagging. There is evidence of past termite activity which has caused damage to the timber panelling in the basement.

The rear toilet block has evidence of severe deterioration to the limestone and the timber barge boards and corrugated iron roof are in poor condition. Roofing material on the main building appears to be in good condition.

13.3 REFERENCES

No key references.

13.4 FURTHER RESEARCH
