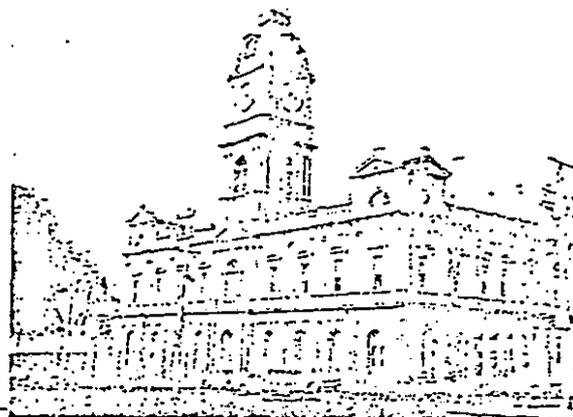BUILDING TITLE TOWN HALL
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA CITY OF BALLAARAT

NATIONAL ESTATE PROJECT No.
DOCUMENTATION OF LISTED HISTORIC BUILDINGS IN VICTORIA

DESIGNATION   H.B.P.C. REGISTER No.   NATIONAL TRUST (C) ☒ FILE No

BUILDING TYPE TOWN HALL AND OFFICES
BUILDING NAME TOWN HALL
STATE VICTORIA
LOCAL GOVT AREA CITY OF BALLAARAT
STREET STURT   No.
SUBURB, TOWN BALLARAT
CITY BALLAARAT POSTCODE 3350
RURAL
NEAREST CENTRE   Km.

TITLE REFERENCE   Vol   Fol
DIRECTORY
NEGATIVE FILE FILM 7/FRAME 36

PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION
DATE OF SURVEY/INSPECTION JULY 1978

OWNERSHIP   ORIGINAL CITY OF BALLAARAT
                 PRESENT CITY OF BALLAARAT
                 ADDRESS TOWN HALL, STURT STREET.

ARCHITECT/PRACTICE EXTERIOR - J.J. LORENZ; INTERIOR - H.R. CASELLI
BUILDER WILLIAM COWLAND
ARTISANS/TRADES

TENDERS   REFERENCE
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1870-72
ESTIMATE/CONTRACT VALUE £16,767
ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS 1912 ARMSTRONG STREET EXTENSIONS - CLEGG AND
                 MILLER. 1924 - CLEGG AND MORROW. 1970's - L.H. VER

BUILDING CITATION
The design of the Town Hall is the result of a competition held in 1868. The
exterior of J.T.Lorenz's entry and the interior of the design by H.R.Caselli w
chosen by the council. Percy Oakden, as the borough architect, was in charge
amalgamating the two discordant designs. The building was opened in 1872 aft
many changes of plan for the use of the building. The Sturt Street facade is
basically the design of J.T.Lorenz, although the tower is somewhat higher. Th
two storey building has end pavilions and a central clock tower of two levels.
The main building consists of arched openings with rough masonry dressings and
an upper floor of Corinthian pilasters flanking Renaissance windows. Interna
areas of interest include the Council Chamber, Mayor's Room, two halls and the
main staircase. Despite the hybrid design the Town Hall is a building of con-
siderable distinction. The Palladian form with the raised corner pavilions ar
unique in the state. The building is externally substantially intact on the
principal elevation and contains various rooms, halls and other areas which
retain some of the building's original character.
RECOMMENDATIONS
It is recommended that this building be added to the Historic Buildings Regist
the Register of the National Estate, and be specified under Clause 8 of the To
and Country Planning Act (Third Schedule).

DOCUMENTATION SOURCES

01 GOVERNMENT RECORDS
02 LOCAL GOVERNMENT RECORDS
03 ARCHIVES/CATALOGUES
04 ARCHITECTS INDEX
05 ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS/ILLUSTRATIONS
06 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDS
07 NATIONAL TRUST FILE/ HISTORIC BUILDINGS PRESERVATION COUNCIL FILE
08 PRIVATE RECORDS

02 MAYOR'S SPECIAL REPORT, 1881.

05. BALLAARAT CITY COUNCIL: PERCY OAKDENS 1868 COMPETITION
J.J. LORENZ 1868 COMPETITION ENTRY.
VARIOUS WORKING DRAWINGS FOR 1870-72 BUILDING SIGNED
BY PERCY OAKDEN. MAINLY INTERIOR DETAILS.

VERNON COLLECTION! CLEGG & MILLERS DESIGN FOR EXTENSION
OF THE TOWN HALL LABELLED "JOHN BULL JUNIOR" (PRESUMABLY
COMPETITION ENTRY).
CLEGG AND MORROW, REMODELLING MUNICIPAL OFFICES, CI
HALL BALLARAT CONTRACT 27 MAY 1924
CLEGG AND MILLER, ADDITIONS TO BALLARAT CITY HALL, 1911.
CLEGG AND MILLER, PROPOSED HALL IN ARMSTRONG STREET (rio.

06 C1860 STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA LATROBE LIBRARY H:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. MARY SANDOW, THE TOWN HALL BALLARAT, 100 YEARS, BALLARA
CITY COUNCIL, 1970.

2. WITHERS, HISTORY OF BALLARAT, 2nd ed. 1887 p.245

c.1860 Second Town Hall
SLV H26068

ASSESSMENT OF LISTING
CONDITION/INTEGRITY OF BUILDING STURT ST. FACADE SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT.
SIGNIFICANCE OF BUILDING
LANDSCAPE/STREETSCAPE/ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE PART OF RECOMMENDED
AREA A1.1.

DOCUMENTATION JACOBS LEWIS VINES DATE SEPTEMBER 1978.
ARCHITECTS

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TOWN HALL, STURT STREET

BUILDING ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION

HISTORY

The Municipal District of Ballarat was proclaimed on the 18th December, 185
On the 14th January 1856 a public meeting nominated seventeen men for the
seven seats on the Council.   The duly elected Council met, and at their
fourth meeting decided to build temporary Chambers on the present site
which had been allotted for the purpose by the Department of Lands and
Survey.   These first timber Council offices were designed by Samuel Baird,
the Town Surveyor, and was a simple rectangle with two offices and the
Council Chamber.   It was built by Messrs. Doane and Ringrose for £446/10/0.
Attached was a two-roomed messenger's cottage built by the same firm.
This building burnt down on 24 September 1859.

Tenders were called for a new group of Town Hall buildings almost immediatel
with a premium of £75 for the best design.   The specification for the build
ing complex called for a Town Hall, District Police Court and Public Library
and Museum.   The cost of the buildings and fittings was £13,000.— C.D.Cuthbe
a local architect, then employed by the Government being in charge of the
works at gaol was the successful tenderer with a plain utilitarian design.

The foundation stone was laid on 16 August 1860 by Mr. John Robinson Bailey
M.L.A., for Ballarat West.   Only the Municiapl Offices and the Police Court
were erected and these were opened in February 1861.   Work stopped on this
design and apparently the vacant part of the site was leased for shops as
can be seen in photographs.   In 1868 the original plan was abandoned as it
was too expensive to finish.   Council decided to hold another competition
for a Town Hall with as much room as possible to let as shops.   In June
1868, thirteen designs were submitted for judging by the Melbourne
architects Messrs. Terry and Billing.   The first prize being awarded to
H.R.Caselli for a building in two sections – the Municipal Offices having
giant order Corinthian columns in a central portico and an elaborate
balustraded pediment with draped urns and the Armstrong Street section of
shops with simpler fenestration and plain parapet, and of lower height.

NOTE: This history has been adapted largely from Mary Sandow, *The Town
Hall Ballarat, 100 years*, Ballarat 1970.

HISTORY

The second prize was awarded to Percy Oakden, which was a three storey design with very sketchy plain details surmounted by a single level squat clock tower. The Council rejected the Judge's choice and selected the design of J.T.Lorenz for the exterior and the interior of H.R.Caselli. Percy Oakden was appointed as borough architect to amalgamate and amend the plans. The exterior of. the existing building is very similar to J.T.Lorenz's competition entry. There were many differences of opinion regarding the final form and use of the building among the Councillors, and this can be seen in the many drawings prepared by Oakden and still retained by the Council.

Tenders were called on 9 February 1869 and the tender of William Cowland was finally accepted for £16,767 not including fittings and fixtures. The design incorporated parts of the existing offices and Police Court. The foundation stone was laid on 14 January 1870.

The work progressed slowly and the plans were frequently altered. The contract was finally completed in September 1872 at a cost of £17,976/1/9 which was disputed by the Council and, although finally settled, Cowland was never paid the full amount.

The clock tower houses the Alfred Bells, in memory of the visit of Prince Alfred to Ballarat, and a four sided illuminated clock. Fifteen small musical bells, which were to ring a chime every hour, have been removed as they were not audible.

The Armstrong Street corner of the building was the offices of the Commercial Bank until 1965, and after the Police Court was vacated the area was let to the Royal Bank and later as a doctor's office.

In 1912 the three storey extension in Armstrong Street was erected to the design of Clegg and Miller.

The Ballarat Town Hall is a two-storied composition essentially of
the Palladian form of Wilton and Holkham Halls with slightly raised
corner pavilions on to which has been grafted, at the centre, a
typical Town Hall tower rising a further two storeys.   This has a
convex roof and dormers, a widows walk and flagpole.   The main body
of the building consists of a ground floor of arched openings with
rough masonry dressings between similarly rough faced pilasters and an
upper floor of Corinthian pilasters flanking Renaissance windows,
principally with segmental pediments and a Serlian window in a
pedimented bay on the tower axis.   The upper levels of the corner
pavilions are the most distinctive elements of this building, containing
in the faces large lunettes with glazing of a fanlight character,
archivolts with scrolls at the keystones, panelled corner pilasters, a
bracketed cornice and pediments to each elevation capped by pedestals
carrying acroteria.

The building is enhanced by having retained its natural cement render
finish as well as the stone dressings at ground floor level.

The rear elevation of the building has been extensively modernised in a
rather ad hoc manner with many new and contrasting building materials
being rather unnecessarily introduced.

Internally the ground floor has been almost entirely altered over the
years in a number of different building campaigns.   The few remaining
elements of historic and architectural interest are the entry foyer with
the tower and the stairwell and an adjacent meeting room.   There are also
numerous items of period furniture scattered around the ground floor.
The entry foyer has an encaustic tile floor and two pedestal lions dating
from 1892.   Through the inner glass doors is a space where the stair
breaks off to the left, flanked by two columns on each side carrying the
upper floor.   The stairway is fairly coarse with cement balusters in a
broad balustrade, but on the newel posts at the landing there are squat
Corinthianesque columns with figures carrying lamps of some refinement.

BUILDING ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION

The stairwell at the upper landing is the most important interior element of the building. It is rectangular in plan with curved corners taken up by half domed arches for statuary. There are windows in etched glass, including a triple light window with the Ballarat Arms opening at the end where the stair rises. There is a space opening off the main landing between one rectangular opening and one partially arched opening leading to the Mayor's room. The roofing of this stairwell area has a deep cove above an elaborate bracketted cornice with a moulding below pendant bosses and a big well detailed skylight.

Other areas of interest at the second floor level are the Council Chambers and adjacent reception room, the Mayor's room and the hall at the north west corner. The hall at the west corner still features a high and elaborate plaster ceiling and highlight window etched in the City's Coat of Arms. Unfortunately part of this hall has been used as the location for staff toilets which encroach upon the floor space preventing it now being used as a hall. Again there is much early furniture at second floor level. Other items of interest internally are the stairs rising to what was formerly the engineer's office in an attic space and the clock tower itself. This has retained the original paint colours to the extremely narrow geometric stairs. The Alfred Bells, which weigh 4½ tons (1 ton more than St.Patricks) are particularly impressive, all fittings appearing to be original, as is the rough hewn timber structure inside the tower.

In spite of the rather haphazard manner in which the design was chosen and subsequently modified, the Town Hall remains as a building of considerable distinction. (The building originally had to accommodate sub-letting as well as Caselli's interior being grafted onto Lorenz's design by the Borough Architect Percy Oakden.) The Palladian form with the raised corner pavilions are unique to the state, as is the elaborate skylit upper stairwell.

BUILDING ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION

The building is externally substantially intact on the principal
elevations and contains various rooms, halls or other areas internally
that have retained varying degrees of the building's original elaborate
internal character.