

## Bendigo Trades Hall

34-40 View Street

**Creation Date:** 1913

**First or Major  
Owners/Occupiers:**

**Architect:** Hurley, W.J.

**Builder:**

**Status:** Highly Significant and Contributory



### *Historical Era (1890-1930)*

**Modern Bendigo:** overall decline of mining with minor boom in the late 1890s when the economic depression sponsored gold seeking. New industries came in the early 1900s and enlarged public and private transport routes allowed a more scattered workforce.

### History

"A Court of Petty Sessions was erected on this site in 1858, with additions in 1860. When the Police Court moved to the Town Hall in 1867, the building was taken over by the Goldfields Warden for hearing mining disputes, which function it fulfilled until the new Courthouse opened in Pall Mall in 1896. The Trades Council had been formed in Bendigo in 1885, but it was not until this courthouse became vacant that it was able to find suitable accommodation. The fact that it was given to the Trades Council caused some dissension locally. With a minimum of alteration it was opened on 31 August, 1896. The old Court had been set well back from View Street with a lengthy and hazardous flight of steps to the portico. In 1913 the Council decided to build the present two-storey front reaching back to the old hall behind. It was built by day-labour and under the supervision of the architect and no doubt making use of its own membership. Whilst the red and cream brick front differs from its stuccoed neighbours, the pseudo-classical ornamentation over the windows makes some concession to its historic location. The old court was later demolished and rebuilt and the additions along the laneway are modern" (ibid, Page 21).

### Description

Resembling 155-161 View Street, in its simple use of cream and red decorative brickwork, the Trades Hall is composed (conservatively) in four bays set either side of a central entrance bay with a raised parapet entablature and segment-arched pediment. Both the upper and lower parapet entablatures are built in cream brick with red brick diamonds set against it. Cream brick pediments over windows, both gabled and segment-arched, repeat the use of terra-cotta in place of the more typical cement mouldings. The 'Trades Hall' name is also in cream terra-cotta. Having evolved from similar inspirations, the trades hall differs markedly from the adjacent fire station in the simplicity of ornamental expression and materials. An early photograph (c1914) shows a similar street tree to that existing today (*op.cit.* Arnold, 1990, Page 17).

At the rear is a gabled and stuccoed wing, presumably the extended 1858 Court of Petty Sessions. The same building is shown in Caire's 1875 photographic view from the Masonic Hall and labelled as the Warden's Court. However, S T Gill's sketch c1860 shows a more modest building with a hipped roof and porch (Arnold, 1988, Plate 66).

### External Integrity

The Trades Hall is generally original, except for fully glazed doors having replaced half-glazed doors and possible changes in glazing details such as replacement of leadlight with clear glazing.

The Court of Petty Sessions may have been rendered at an early date also, minor additions and alterations have been made. The loss of the front elevation was the major change to this building.

### Streetscape

Recommencement of a valuable civic streetscape matching the parapet line and general fenestration of 32 View Street, if not the finish; also, once similar elevation to the former art gallery facade.

The Court of Petty Sessions also has a potential to contribute to the Rosalind Park frontage given restoration.

### *Significance*

- The Trades Hall holds a special place in the city's history, given the broad representation of the Bendigo working and artisan classes, implied by the building's origins and expressed through the bold simplicity of the 'structural ornament' used on the facade;
- its construction parallels a new era of industrial growth in the wake of gold's depletion;
- also, it is a major contributor to a valuable civic streetscape, made more important by the nearby intrusions created by the art gallery and motel.

The former Court House has potentially a high local significance and regional interest because of its age and public function. Its link with Bendigo's gold industry is also important.

### *Conservation Management*

Repaint trim in traditional colours and investigate replacing fully glazed doors with original doors or half-glazed doors adopted from the original (investigate restoration of the former Court House, internally and externally).

REPAINT TRIM IN TRADITIONAL COLOURS.

RESTORE UPPER LEVEL WINDOW GLAZING.



REPLACE FULLY GLAZED DOORS WITH ORIGINAL DOORS OR HALF GLAZED DOORS.

34 VIEW STREET

32

RECOMMENDATIONS:  
RELOCATE/CONCEAL VENT PIPE.