

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: COLERAINE COURTHOUSE (FORMER)

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: 78 Whyte Street COLERAINE

STUDY NUMBER: 004

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

OTHER NAME/S OF PLACE: COLERAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRECINCT: Coleraine

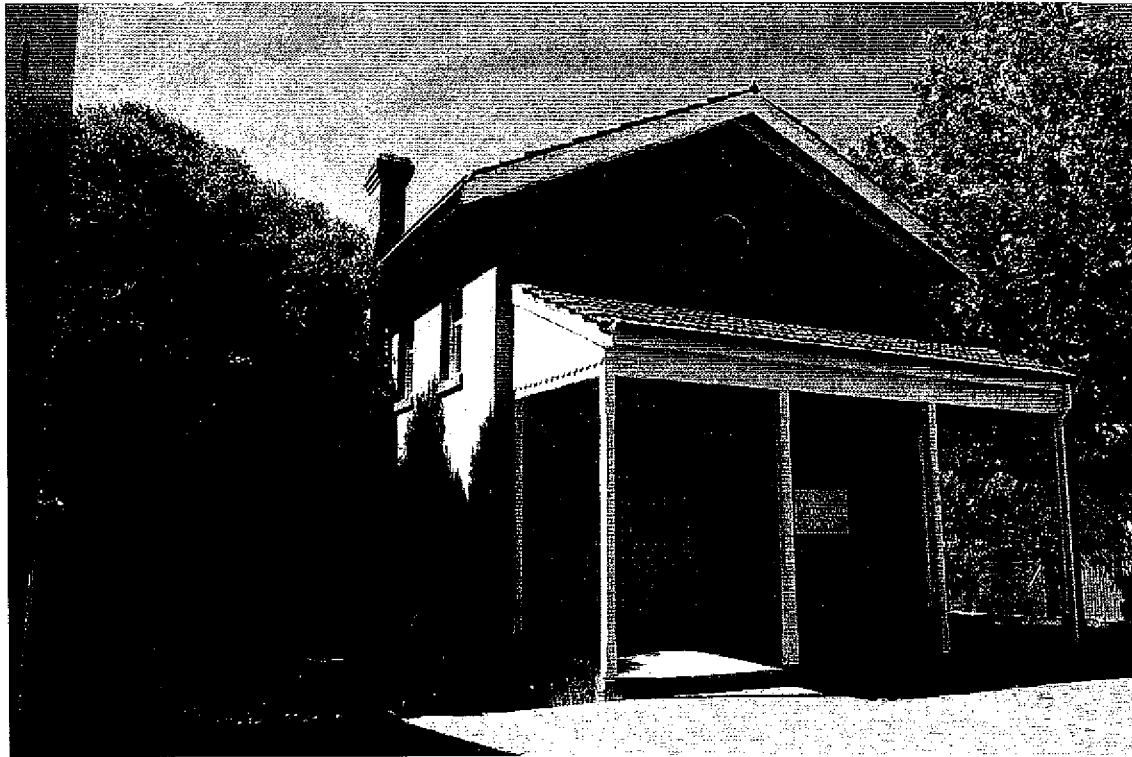
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: 10 **SECTION:** 2 **PARISH:** PARISH OF COLERAINE

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 430J G4 No 2; VR 228 C9. Located on the north side of Whyte Street, between Winter and Henty Streets Coleraine.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



Coleraine Courthouse (former), Whyte Street, Coleraine.

Image Date: 01/02/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All of the main courthouse building including both the exterior and interior and all other buildings on the land, and all of the land in allotment 10 section 2, Township of Coleraine.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The building is a typical single storey court house with a central room and offices at the rear on both sides. The building is symmetrical and has a notionally Palladian form and the usual Italianate style. It is built of face brick, probably for economy rather than any aesthetic consideration, on a bluestone plinth. There is a skillion timber verandah across the façade. High level windows light the main chamber and there are fireplaces on both sides with marble mantles. These are back to back with corner fireplaces in the offices. A door on the western side of the main chamber provided prisoners with access to the dock. The main chamber is roofed with a vaulted ceiling and exposed trusses. The original roofing material including on the verandah has been replaced by terra cotta tiles. The verandah floor has been replaced with concrete.

The bench for the magistrate, the witness box and other fittings, as well as loose furniture survive.

A war memorial has been constructed in the forecourt.

HISTORY:

The first Court sessions in Coleraine were held in a back building of the Koroite Inn and later at the Coleraine Hotel, prior to the construction of the Courthouse (Troeth, 76).

The Public Works Department accepted the tender of Thomas Walder and Co. of Ararat on September 28, 1870 for the construction of a Courthouse. The contract was for 1164 pounds, 17 shillings and 2 pence, for completion by February 13, 1871. On April, 1871 James Bell of Ararat was contracted for furniture and fittings for a sum of 46 pounds, 12 shillings. Construction was completed in December 1871 and the Court House was used for the first time on Tuesday January 9, 1872 (ibid.).

The original working drawing of the Court House is dated July 18, 1870 and signed C. B. The design of the Court House is attributed to Charles Barrett, a clerk of works and draftsman in the Public Works Department at that time.

Michael Challenger (55) notes that most of cases heard were for drunkenness which "even by nineteenth century standards was rife in Coleraine".

The Courthouse stopped functioning in the 1970s, and is currently used by the Coleraine and District Historical Society as a office and to house their collection.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme: 7 Governing
7.6 Administering Australia
7.6.4 Dispensing justice

Theme 8: Developing Australia's cultural life
8.5 Forming Associations
8.5.1 Preserving traditions and group memories

CONDITION:

The building and its contents are in very good condition.

INTEGRITY:

High degree of integrity, externally and internally

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

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What is significant?

The former Coleraine Courthouse, located at 78 Whyte Street, in the centre of Coleraine is a substantial single storey, symmetrical, face brick building designed and built by the Public Works Department in 1871. Like its immediate neighbor, the Post Office, it was a standard PWD design. It includes a central courtroom, adjacent offices and high level fenestration typical of judicial buildings. Beyond an open courtyard facing Whyte Street, now with a war memorial, there is a simple timber verandah. Many of the original furnishings and furniture survive, including the magistrates bench, the witness box, shelving used by the clerk of the court, the pews and the original mallet. The building retains a very high degree of integrity and is in good condition.

How is it significant?

The former Coleraine Courthouse is of architectural and historical significance to the community of Coleraine and Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The former Coleraine Courthouse is of architectural significance as one of only two brick courthouses in the study area, and as a typical example of the Public Works Department oeuvre. The intactness of its nineteenth century interiors, including a complete set of timber courthouse furniture, provides an accurate interpretation of its former use as a practicing court. It has further architectural significance as one of a group of substantial civic structures in Whyte Street which form a focus for the Coleraine community.

The former Coleraine Courthouse is of historical significance because it was the location for the administration of justice for the district for over a century. The forecourt, containing the town's war memorial, is an important civic ceremonial space. Located in a prominent position next to the post office, the Coleraine Courthouse has further historical significance as a landmark site, and is one of a group of buildings forming the focus of the town.

COMPARISON:

090 Courthouse (former), 35 Glendinning St, Balmoral

347 Courthouse (former), Martin St, Peshurst

ASSESSED BY: TFH

ASSESSMENT DATE:

4/06/2001

EXISTING LISTINGS:

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR Include in RNE Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

REFERENCES:

Author	Title	Year	Page
Malcolm Troeth	The Cultural Landscape of Coleraine	1988	76 - 77
Bruce Trethowan	The Public Works Department 1851 - 1900 An Architectural History, Research Report	1975	
Department of Lands and Survey	Township of Coleraine (Parishes of Coleraine and Konong Wootong County of Dundas)	1955	
G. McGaffin	The Wannon Shire Centenary 1872-1972 : A brief History of the Shire of Wannon	1972	50
Michael Challinger	Historic Courthouses of Victoria	2001	66