

## BRIGHT COURT HOUSE AND LOCKUP



BRIGHT COURT HOUSE  
AND LOCK-UP SOHE 2008



BRIGHT COURT HOUSE  
AND LOCK-UP SOHE 2008



1 bright courthouse



Bright Courthouse Front



bright courthouse lockup



bright lockup



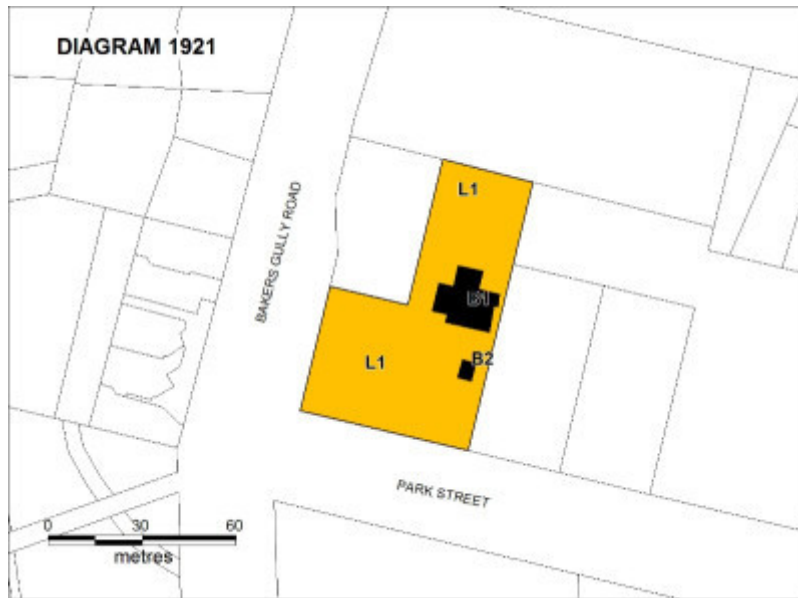
Bright court house  
architectural plan



Bright court house  
architectural plan



Bright court house  
architectural plans



H1921 bright court house revised plan

---

## Location

1-3 PARK STREET BRIGHT, ALPINE SHIRE

## Municipality

ALPINE SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1921

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO9

## VHR Registration

August 20, 1982

## Amendment to Registration

October 8, 2009

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

---

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 21, 1997

What is significant?

Bright Court House is a single storey brick building constructed as a court of petty sessions for the Buckland goldfields in 1861 to a design by the Public Works Department architect JJ Clark. Bright Log Lockup is a small building of horizontal log construction with a shingle hip roof covered with corrugated galvanised iron, located at the rear of the court house. It was built in 1860 and moved to its present position in 1873 from the former Police Camp.

How is it significant?

Bright Court House and Log Lockup are historically and architecturally significant to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Bright Court House and Log Lockup are historically significant because they are associated with the early history of law and order in Victoria and with the extension of centralised government to the goldfields towns as they were established in the 1850s and 1860s. The Bright Court House is historically significant as a rare and intact example of a small country goldfields court. It was a symbol of the extension of the power of the State government to impose justice on a small and remote goldfields community and demonstrates in its fabric part of the story of Victoria.

The Bright Court House is architecturally significant as a small scale public building designed by the notable Public Works Department architect, J.J. Clark.

The Bright Court House is architecturally significant in that its design was the prototype for at least 20 other court house in the State in terms of plan form, massing and the style of the front elevation, especially the treatment of the court room gable and the front verandah.

The Bright Log Lockup is architecturally significant as a rare example of primitive log construction in Victoria. It is of State significance as a rare example of a particular type of vernacular building construction seldom used in Victoria. Its log construction was a response to the necessity of providing secure accommodation for prisoners where there was a scarcity of building materials. It gains added significance in its relationship with the adjacent court house of similar date.

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below.

Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### Specific Exemptions:

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.

Construction dates	1860,
Architect/Designer	Clark, John James,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	LOCKUP, LOCK-UP,
Hermes Number	157
Property Number	

---

## History

Contextual History:

Gold was mined in the Ovens Valley from the early 1850s but the reason for the growth of the township of Bright was due to the discovery of quartz reefs along Morse's Creek in 1858. The nearby Buckland alluvial goldfield never became a permanent settlement. The settlement at Morse's Creek was surveyed in 1862 and re-named Bright. (Brian Lloyd and Kathy Nunn. Bright Gold. Brighton East, Vic., Histec Publications, 1987. P. 48)

The residents of Morse's Creek had to go to the Buckland to obtain business licences, miner's rights and to register claims or have disputes settled. Late in 1860 a meeting at nearby Growler's Creek (now Wandiligong) pressed the Government for a courthouse and a resident magistrate and in June 1861, Morse's Creek was gazetted as a place for a Court of Petty Sessions. In December 1861 a contract was let to Grieg and Wilson for a Court House at Morse's Creek in ten acres of land reserved for police purposes. In March 1862 the Court of Mines transferred from Buckland to Morse's Creek. In August 1862, Arthur Currie Wills was appointed Warden and Magistrate. The first survey of the town was carried out in 1862. (Lloyd and Nunn, p. 23)

The Bright Log Lockup was constructed in 1860 next to the police station at the Police Camp. This was reported in June 1860 in the Ovens and Murray Advertiser (Lloyd and Nunn p. 40) It was relocated from its original position to its present site behind the Court House in 1873. The police camp was closed at that time and the

existing buildings moved up to the permanent court and police reserve. (VPRS 977/1 Police Contracts 1859-1879)

## Method of Construction

Vertical slab construction was frequently used for building in the colonies but horizontal log construction was rarely used in New South Wales or Van Diemen's Land. It was not much used in Melbourne either but was popular in the gold rush period in Victoria and derived from North American building practices. The police found it the best method of building secure lockups in country areas where brick or stone was not readily available but timber was plentiful and the prisoners themselves could provide the labour. (Miles Lewis. Victorian Primitive. Melbourne, Greenhouse Publications, 1977. P. 6) At Bendigo a digger without a licence was fined £6 10s, or in default two days cutting logs to build the lockup. The structure was described by an inmate as "built of rough bush logs, notched into each other at the ends, so as to have them flush and close together, floor, wall and ceiling being of the same construction, with a roof of stringy bark all over" (Miles Lewis, Victorian Primitive Melbourne, 1977, p 23)

## The Architect

Clark, John James , 1838-1915 was born in Liverpool in January 1838, educated at the Collegiate Institute there and migrated to Australia in 1851. On 26 April 1852 he joined the Public Works Department of Victoria. He visited Europe in 1858, and returned to Melbourne to design and supervise the construction of the Treasury Building. He continued to work in the PWD until 1879 , when he went into private practice in Melbourne, winning several architectural competitions. In 1881 he set up an architectural practice in Sydney in partnership with his brother, and continued to win competitions for several town hall designs. In 1883, he became Government Architect for Queensland. In 1886 he recommenced private practice. In 1896 he was appointed in charge of Hospitals and Asylums in the Western Australian Public Works Department. He moved back to Brisbane in 1899 and continued to enter architectural competitions for major buildings such as that for the Melbourne Hospital, for which he was awarded the second prize and the contract.

The Bright Court House is one of a group of small court houses constructed in the initial phase of court building by the newly formed Public Works Department of Victoria. Clark was responsible for the design of six courts. The first was Williamstown (1857), now demolished. Port Melbourne, constructed in 1860, is the earliest Clark design to survive and is on the Heritage Register. (H1318) Two other designs by Clark, both dated 1863, are on the Heritage Register: these are at Kilmore (H1471) and Newstead (H1705). The remaining Clark design was constructed at Rutherglen in 1863 but its facade has been considerably altered.

## .History of Place:

The Bright Court House was erected in 1861 as the court of petty sessions serving the Buckland gold district. The design was prepared in the Public Works Department by J J Clark. The contractors were Greig and Wilson. The original design consisted of two offices for the Magistrate and Clerk of Courts set back on either side of the main court room. The building was extended in 1862 to provide a warden's office. A separate building at the rear provided quarters for the courthouse keeper in 1862. Further additions were made at the rear in 1866 for other government offices. Later minor changes included the provision of a toilet in 1974.

The Bright Log Lockup was constructed in 1860 next to the police station (demolished). This was reported in June 1860 in the Ovens and Murray Advertiser (Lloyd and Nunn p. 40) It was relocated from its original position in the Police Camp to its present site behind the Court House in 1873.

## Plaque Citation

This court of petty sessions for the Buckland goldfields in 1861 was designed by Public Works Department architect JJ Clark. The Log Lockup (1860) is a rare example of primitive log construction.

## Assessment Against Criteria

a. The historical importance, association with or relationship to Victoria's history of the place or object  
The Bright Court House and Log Lockup are associated with the early history of law and order in Victoria and with the extension of centralised government to the goldfields as they were established in the 1850s and 1860s.

The Bright Court House is historically significant as a rare and intact example of a small country goldfields court. It was a symbol of the extension of the power of the State government to impose justice on a small and remote goldfields community and demonstrates in its fabric part of the story of Victoria.

b. The importance of a place or object in demonstrating rarity or uniqueness  
The Bright Court House is a rare example of a small public building designed by the notable Public Works Department architect, J. J. Clark.

The Bright Log Lockup is architecturally and historically important as a rare example of primitive log construction in Victoria. It is of State significance as a rare example of a particular type of vernacular building construction seldom used in Victoria. It gains added significance in its relationship with the adjacent court house of similar date. Its log construction was a response to the necessity of providing secure accommodation for prisoners where there was a scarcity of building materials.

c. The place or object's potential to educate, illustrate or provide further scientific investigation in relation to Victoria's cultural heritage  
N/A

d. The importance of a place or object in exhibiting the principal characteristics or the representative nature of a place or object as part of a class or type of places or objects  
The Bright Court House exhibits the principal characteristics of a nineteenth century court house intended for a court of petty sessions.  
The Bright Log Lockup is representative of the log lockups constructed on the Victorian goldfields in the 1850s and 1860s to secure prisoners.

e. The importance of the place or object in exhibiting good design or aesthetic characteristics and/or in exhibiting a richness, diversity or unusual integration of features  
The Bright Court House design was the prototype for at least 20 other court house in the State in terms of plan form, massing and the style of the front elevation, especially the treatment of the court room gable and the front verandah.

f. The importance of the place or object in demonstrating or being associated with scientific or technical innovations or achievements

g. The importance of the place or object in demonstrating social or cultural associations

## Extent of Registration

EXTENT:

1. All of the land marked as L1 on Diagram 1921 held by the Executive Director, being the land known as Crown Allotment 2005 Township of Bright.

2. The following buildings marked on Diagram 1921 held by the Executive Director:

B1 Court House

B2 Lockup

---

*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/>*