
Mechanics' Institute

Location

270 Sydney Road, Brunswick VIC 3056 - Property No 19369

Municipality

MERRI-BEK CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO154

Heritage Listing

Merri-bek City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 1, 2008

Brunswick Mechanics' Institute is of local historical and architectural significance. It is one of the earliest surviving, and reasonably intact, Mechanics' Institutes built in Victoria in the 19th century. Brunswick Mechanics' Institute is distinguished by its compact plan and building form, with its unusual juxtaposition of front room with a transverse main hall. It is also unusual for its simple yet classically inspired architectural treatment and roof form. The Institute is an integral element of this part of Sydney Road, which includes many civic and church buildings. The building also derives significance from its role as the a community focus for Brunswick.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Moreland - Keeping Brunswick's heritage: A Report on the Review of the Brunswick Conservation Study, Context Pty Ltd, 1990; Moreland - City of Moreland Heritage Review, Allen Lovell and Associates, 1999;
Construction dates	1868,
Architect/Designer	Kelly & Beswick,
Hermes Number	59097
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

The Brunswick Mechanic's Institute is a single storey rendered brick building with a gabled slate roof. The west (front) and south facades are symmetrical, each with ionic pilasters and four arched windows with simple moulded dressings. A central pediment sits above the arched highlighted entrance, which has nail-head and acanthus leaf mouldings above the opening. Windows are timber-framed double-hung sashes. Local bricks were used in the construction.

In 1905 some renovation works (details unknown) were undertaken and in 1910 a new Wunderlich pressed metal ceiling was installed in the hall. In 1926, the original bichrome brickwork was rendered, the raised lettering 'Mechanic's Institute' [sic] and '1926' added at architrave level, the cast iron ridge cresting removed and the original recessed entry infilled. Recent changes have included some minor internal partitioning, installation of false ceilings and bricking up of fire places. The original landscaping included several Moreton Bay Fig trees, which were removed in 1924

Key Architectural Elements: symmetrical Classical Revival facades, identical on west and south facades setback from Sydney Road and provision of landscaped forecourt unusual

Conservation Guidelines: remove brick steel handrails and paved ramps and steps to front door and replace with sympathetic design

Principal Historic Themes: association with local community groups

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/>