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# MANSFIELD COURT HOUSE



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1 mansfield court house side elevation from front feb1985



mansfield court house side elevation front rear feb1985



mansfield court house rear elevation feb1985

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## Location

88 HIGH STREET MANSFIELD, MANSFIELD SHIRE

## Municipality

MANSFIELD SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1474

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO33

## VHR Registration

August 20, 1982

## **Amendment to Registration**

May 23, 1998

## **Heritage Listing**

Victorian Heritage Register

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## **Statement of Significance**

Last updated on - April 22, 1997

What is significant?

Mansfield Court House, a simple, symmetrical building with a dominant double-height courtroom flanked by single storey administrative wings, features a wooden verandah and gable roof of slate. It is made of tuck-pointed solid brick on a rock-faced sandstone and rendered brick base, with rendered sills, string courses, and window and fascia detailing. The building was designed by George W. Watson of the Public Works Department and was constructed in 1879-80 by D Carison of Alexandra. Built as a circuit court, Mansfield is one of the larger court houses designed in the Victorian Free Classical style and includes offices, public areas and prisoner holding rooms that were not regularly provided in earlier or smaller country court houses. Original timber furniture, including the Magistrate's Bench, the Clerk's table, jury box, witness stand, defendants' dock and seating are intact within the courtroom, which has exposed timber trusses and a timber lined ceiling. The timber verandah posts with knee brackets and simple timber frieze above are original features, but its concrete base is a twentieth century modification. An entrance vestibule off the verandah is an unusual feature for courthouses of this type. The vestibule is separated from the courtroom by a single-height panelled timber screen with matching timber-panelled ceiling.

How is it significant?

Mansfield Court House is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Mansfield Court House is historically significant for its association with George W. Watson (1850-1915), who designed the building in 1879 while working as a temporary assistant draftsman in Victoria's Public Works Department. In a distinguished career, Watson progressed to become the PWD's Chief Architect (1910-15) and was responsible for numerous major works, among the most notable of which is the boom style Bendigo Post Office and Law Courts (1892-6). Mansfield Court House is also historically important for its potential to educate present and future generations about nineteenth century court proceedings because the building's original basic plan, including the court room and interior furniture, remains intact and the building continues to function as a court in accordance with its original design intent.

Mansfield Court House is of architectural importance within the large group of Victorian Free Classical style court houses with a verandah as a highly intact and representative example of this group, and as the only court house in the group that was built as a circuit court.

## **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](#).

|                         |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Construction dates      | 1879,              |
| Architect/Designer      | Watson, George W., |
| Heritage Act Categories | Registered place,  |
| Hermes Number           | 689                |
| Property Number         |                    |

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## Extent of Registration

Amendment of Register of Government Buildings  
Mansfield Shire  
Court House, 88 High Street, Mansfield.  
[*Victoria Government Gazette* No. G39 12 October 1988 p3090]

Transferred to the Victorian Heritage Register 23 May 1998 (2 years after the proclamation of the Heritage Act 1995 pursuant to the transitional provisions of the Act)

*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/>