

**Statement of significance: 104-106 Macpherson Street, Nhill, April 2023**

<p><b>Heritage Place:</b> Lowan Shire Hall (Former) 104-106 Macpherson Street, Nhill</p>	<p><b>PS ref no:</b> HO28</p>
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**What is significant?**

The former Lowan Shire Hall, designed in 1888 by Lowan Shire Engineer Mr D'Alton and extended c.1900, at 104-106 Macpherson Street, Nhill is significant. The interior to the extent of the strong room and the ceiling within the hall also contributes to the significance of the place.

Objects that contribute to the significance of the place include furniture, records and ephemera associated with the Lowan Shire Council including the original Council table, chairs and Mayor's chair, and the 'Peace Loan' plaque beside the front entrance.

Alterations and additions (other than specified above) are not significant.

**How is it significant?**

The former Lowan Shire Hall is of local historic, representative, and social significance to Hindmarsh Shire.

**Why is it significant?**

The former Lowan Shire Hall is historically significant for its associations with establishment and development of local government in the Wimmera as the second oldest municipal building in Hindmarsh Shire. The Lowan Shire headquarters were originally based at Dimboola where the first shire hall was constructed in 1877. In 1882 the Lowan Shire headquarters was moved to Nhill and this building was constructed in 1888 following severance of Dimboola Shire from Lowan Shire in 1885. It remained the Lowan Shire headquarters until 1962. Since then, it has been occupied by the Nhill Historical Society and is now known as the Nhill Historical Centre. (Criterion A)

The former Lowan Shire Hall is of representative significance as a fine and intact example of nineteenth century rural shire hall. Internally, it retains a characteristic layout with a central hall and meeting space, flanked by smaller rooms used as offices by council employees, and the original strong room for storing important council records and documents. The significance is enhanced by objects integral including the council table and chairs, and the 'Peace Loan' plaque beside the front entrance. Notable architectural details include the

vaulted timber ceiling with timber trusses to the central hall, and the timber truss work and finials to the gable ends. (Criterion D)

The former Lowan Shire Hall is of social significance as a building that has served the communities of Nhill and the Wimmera region for over 130 years as municipal offices, a town hall and meeting place, and now as the home of the local historical society and its archives. It is a building that local people associate strongly with history and identity of Nhill and is highly valued as an important heritage building within the town. (Criterion G)

**Primary source**

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*Hindmarsh Heritage Assessment Study 2023*