

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** WANNON SHIRE OFFICES (FORMER)

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** 54 Whyte Street COLERAINE

**STUDY NUMBER:** 012

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

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**PRECINCT:** Coleraine

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** Southern Grampians Shire

**ALLOTMENT:** 8      **SECTION:** 3      **PARISH:** PARISH OF COLERAINE

**ACCESS DESCRIPTION:**

CFA 430J. Located on the north side of Whyte Street, between Henty and Read Streets in the centre of Coleraine.

**SIGNIFICANCE RATING:** Local



Wannon Shire Offices (former) Whyte Street, Coleraine. Looking north-east from Whyte Street

**Image Date:** 01/02/02

**EXTENT OF LISTING:**

To the extent of: 1. All the buildings and land on the original Shire Hall Reserve.

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## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

The former Wannon Shire Offices consist of municipal offices, Council Chamber, hall and strongrooms, constructed in three principal stages. The offices and chamber, in rendered brickwork ruled as ashlar, were completed in 1875, with a verandah and additional brick room added in 1891. The hall was added in 1913, while strongrooms are later additions. The roof is corrugated iron, the walls carried on a bluestone plinth at floor level, and the windowsills are of bluestone. The architectural composition is symmetrical, with central rooms flanked by high gabled pavillions on each side. A verandah of decorative chamfered timberwork spans the central rooms at the front of the building. The gable details of each pavillion feature internally exposed timber trusses and ceilings, and timber Gothic mantels. However, the building is effectively astylar because of its standard symmetry and absence of specific ornament.

## **HISTORY:**

Prior to 1870 most of the area comprising the former Shire of Wannon was controlled by the Hamilton and Dundas Roads Board, which in turn was controlled by the Victorian Public Works Department. In 1864, western parts of the area were included in the newly proclaimed Shire of Glenelg. Some eastern parts were included in the Shire of Dundas. In 1868 and again in 1870 two unsuccessful attempts were made to create a separate Shire of Wannon. On 15th March 1872 the Shire of Wannon was proclaimed and Gazetted.

The first meeting of the Wannon Shire Council took place in the Coleraine Courthouse on 17th July 1872. Subsequent council meetings were held at the Courthouse, while Shire business was officially conducted at the office of the Coleraine Albion newspaper in Whyte Street.

The first President of the newly formed Shire was Mr. Adam Turnbull, jnr, of Winninburn. A further six councillors were appointed: Dawson McKebery, Isaac G. Gray, James Cuzens, Henry C. Frederick, Thomas Taylor and William Vale.

The first plans for council chambers at Coleraine were present to the Council on 12th November 1873, by the engineer Mr F Farrell. These plans were deemed to be too costly, and amended plans were approved subsequently. The council chambers were constructed in 1874 at a cost of 1400 pounds. The plans did not include provision for a Town Hall, and no such building has ever been constructed in Coleraine.

Allotment 8 Section 3 was temporarily reserved from sale as the site for the offices on December 15, 1873, and permanently reserved on November 5, 1877. Tenders were called in January 1874, and Mr J Jobling's tender of 847 pounds 18 shillings was accepted. Construction commenced in May 1874 and was completed in 1875 at a cost of 1,400 pounds.

In April 1891 a brick room was added by Mr T Williams of Coleraine as an engineers room, and a verandah was erected along the front of the secretary's and engineer's room. In 1913 an additional hall was built on the east side for further facilities. The strongrooms are later additions. In 1961 new shire offices were opened, and the former offices were used as the Shire works depot and a band practice room until a new works depot was built.

## **THEMATIC CONTEXT:**

Theme 7: Governing

7.6 Administering Australia

7.6.1 Developing local government authorities

## **CONDITION:**

The buildings are in fair to good condition.

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## INTEGRITY:

High degree of integrity.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The former Wannon Shire Offices are located at 54 Whyte Street, on the north side of Whyte Street between Henty and Read Street in the centre of Coleraine. The offices are constructed of rendered brick, and were built in three stages, in 1874, 1891 and 1913. The single storey building is a symmetrical composition consisting of central rooms with centrally placed chimney, and front verandah of decorative chamfered timberwork, flanked on each side by a high gabled pavillion. Each pavillion features internally exposed timber trusses and ceilings, and timber gothic mantels. The verandah was added in April 1891, as was a brick room for the use of the engineers. A hall was added on the east side in 1913, while the strongrooms were added at a later date.

How is it significant?

The former Wannon Shire Offices are of architectural, historical and cultural significance to the township of Coleraine.

Why is it significant?

The former Wannon Shire Offices of architectural significance as a sober and substantial structure, enlarged over time, to represent the role of municipal government in the Shire, and as a landmark. Historically the offices are important for their role in the development of Coleraine and the establishment of the Shire of Wannon in 1872. Culturally, it was an important site of community activity.

## COMPARISON:

072 Eucalyptus Centre (former Shire Offices), 69-71 Whyte Street, Coleraine  
235 Shire of Mount Rouse Council Chambers, Martin Street, Peshurst

**ASSESSED BY:** TFH

**ASSESSMENT DATE:**

23-Jul-03

## 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 |
|--------------------------------|---|------|------|
| Department of Lands and Survey | Township of Coleraine (Parishes of Coleraine and Konong Wootong County of Dundas) | 1873 |      |
| 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 |      |
| Malcolm Troeth                 | The Cultural Landscape of Coleraine   | 1988 | 160  |