

The City of Newcastle

Management Plan

City Hall Conservation Management Plan

Adopted 12 August 2008

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NEWCASTLE CITY HALL

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Prepared for Newcastle City Council
Final Draft April 2008



Government
Architect's Office

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NSW Dept. of Commerce Report Number: 08042

Preface

Lord Mayor of Newcastle

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 AIMS OF THE STUDY

All property assets, including those with heritage values, need to change from time to time to suit user needs and to ensure a viable future. The aim is to manage such change so that heritage significance is conserved and ideally enhanced. Conservation Management Plans are prepared to guide the future care and use of heritage places.

A draft of the Newcastle City Hall Conservation Management Plan (CMP) was completed for Newcastle City Council by the Department of Public Works and Services in 2001. In 2008 the Heritage Group within the NSW Government Architect's Office was commissioned to review the 2001 Draft CMP to produce this updated document.

This CMP takes the opportunity to reconsider how such a document can be of most use to Newcastle City Council and other stakeholders. In this case the users of the CMP are understood to be:

- Asset managers of the Newcastle City Hall
- Project managers and consultants planning new works to the City Hall
- Builders and other tradespeople carrying out upgrades and maintenance
- Development control planners assessing proposed works to the City Hall
- Development control planners assessing impacts of adjacent development on the City Hall
- Strategic planners considering new strategic planning documents which may impact on City Hall or its setting.
- Community members interested in the history and significance of the City Hall
- Councillors and other approval body representatives making decisions about appropriate changes to Newcastle City Hall on behalf of the community.

1.2 STUDY AREA

The study area comprises the City Hall and its immediate curtilage. Comment is made on the larger setting of City Hall within the Newcastle Cultural and Civic Precinct. The extent of the study area (curtilage) and the Newcastle Cultural and Civic Precinct (setting) is shown on the diagram at Figure 2.

1.3 LAYOUT OF THIS CMP

This CMP has been prepared in accordance with the methodology set out in *"The Conservation Plan: A Guide to the Preparation of Conservation Plans for Places of European Cultural Significance"*, by J.S. Kerr and published by the National Trust of Australia (NSW) 1991. It is also generally consistent with the guidelines to the *"Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (The Burra Charter)"*.

The process for conserving heritage items embodied in a CMP is as follows:

1. Understand the place from documentary and physical evidence.
2. Assess its significance.
3. Consider opportunities and constraints including condition and appropriate uses.
4. Prepare conservation policies to guide future use, maintenance and development while retaining important aspects of heritage significance.
5. Give guidance on implementing such policies.

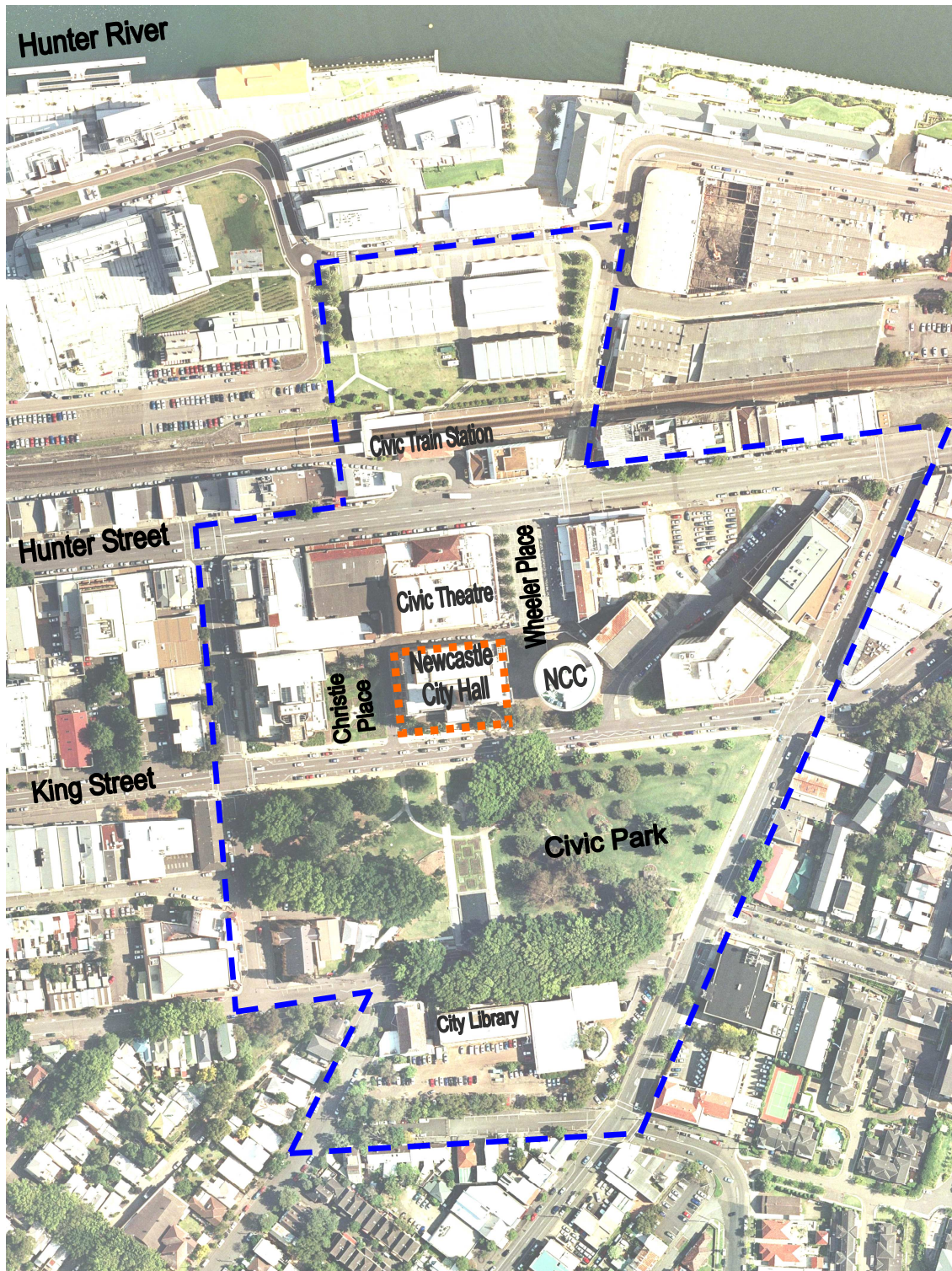


Figure 1: The study area or curtilage for this Newcastle City Hall CMP is shown by the orange dotted line. The blue dashed line represents the curtilage of the Newcastle Civic and Cultural Precinct for which a Master Plan was prepared and adopted by Newcastle City Council in 2004. This area can be considered as an appropriate “heritage setting” for Newcastle City Hall.

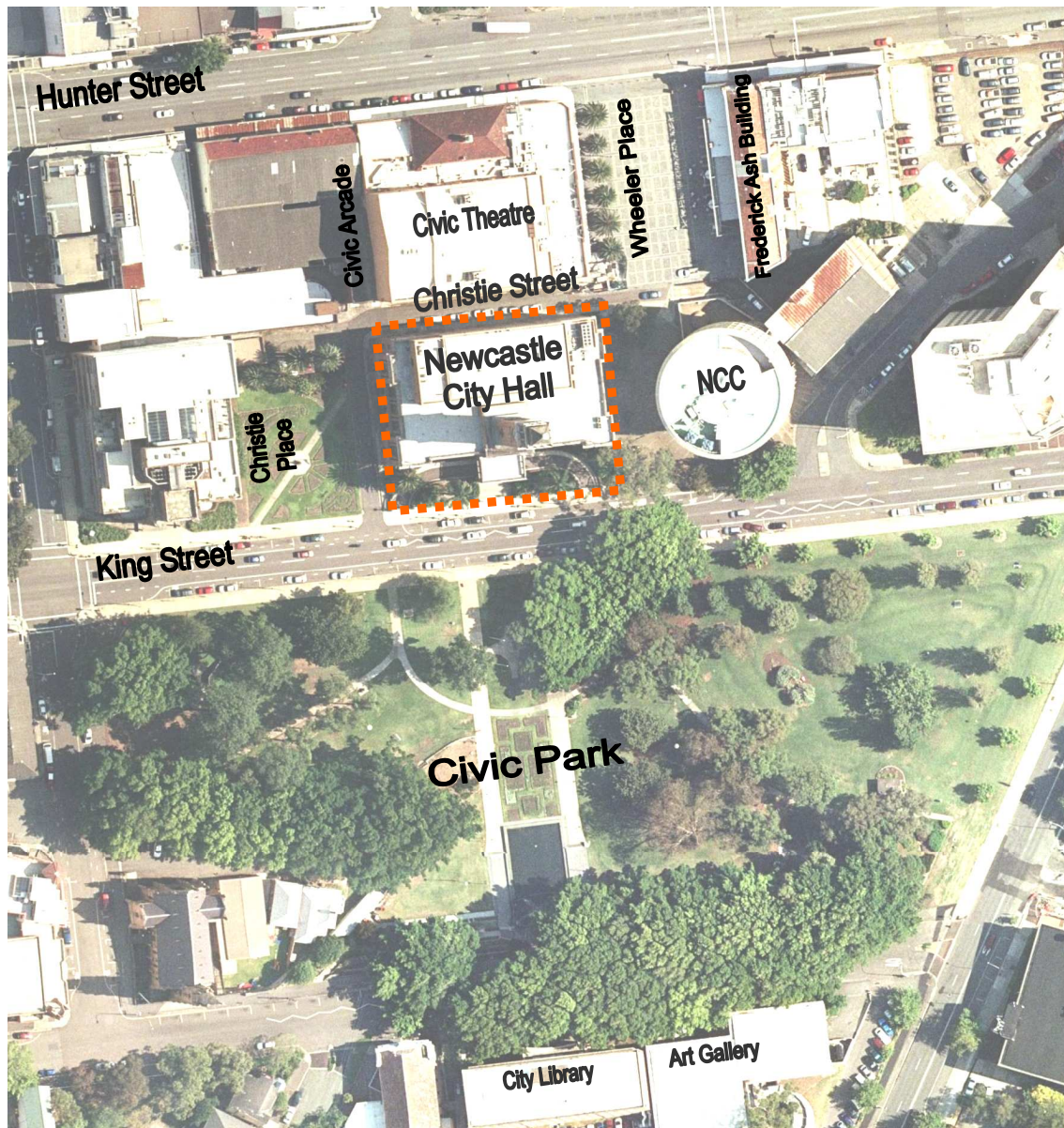


Figure 2: The study area or curtilage for this Newcastle City Hall CMP is shown by the orange dotted line.

It is the last two steps in the process – conservation policies and their implementation – which are the primary tools for asset managers, property officers, development assessors and their consultants and contractors who are charged with the care of heritage places. Therefore this CMP is presented in a format for ease of use rather than in the sequence of research and analysis. The diagram at figure x outlines the layout of this CMP.

The primary **Part 1** of this review of the 2001 CMP for Newcastle City Hall concentrates on:

- confirming the heritage values of Newcastle City Hall and the ranking of significance of elements and spaces
- clearly stated appropriate conservation policies taking into account current opportunities and constraints; and
- giving guidance on implementing the conservation policies.

Part 2 contains the Inventory Sheets. The inventory sheets focus on understanding the significance of elements and provide guidance on maintenance and other building works within Newcastle City Hall. These are of most use when works are proposed to a specific material or element or in a specific space. They list the relative significance of fabric so that changes to fabric of High and Moderate Significance can be avoided or minimised. The appropriate individual Inventory Sheets should be attached to consultant engagements and works orders associated with City Hall.

Part 3 contains the detailed history, description and condition of the City Hall, together with the comparative analysis with similar heritage places and the detailed assessment of significance. Appendices in Part 3 assist in the detailed heritage assessment and comparative analysis. The full list of references for Newcastle City Hall is also included.

Information on the significance of the wider Civic Precinct in which Newcastle City Hall is situated, and guidance on change in that area, previously contained in the 2001 draft of the City Hall CMP, have been removed as the information is now covered in the separate Newcastle Council documents being:

- The Newcastle LEP 2008
- Civic and Cultural Precinct Master Plan 2004 (NSW Government Architect's Office)
- The Civic Park Plan of Management
- Christie Place Master Plan (2000)
- Newcastle Civic & Cultural Precinct Historical Development 2002 by Cynthia Hunter



*Figure 3
View of Newcastle City
Hall looking East 2008.*

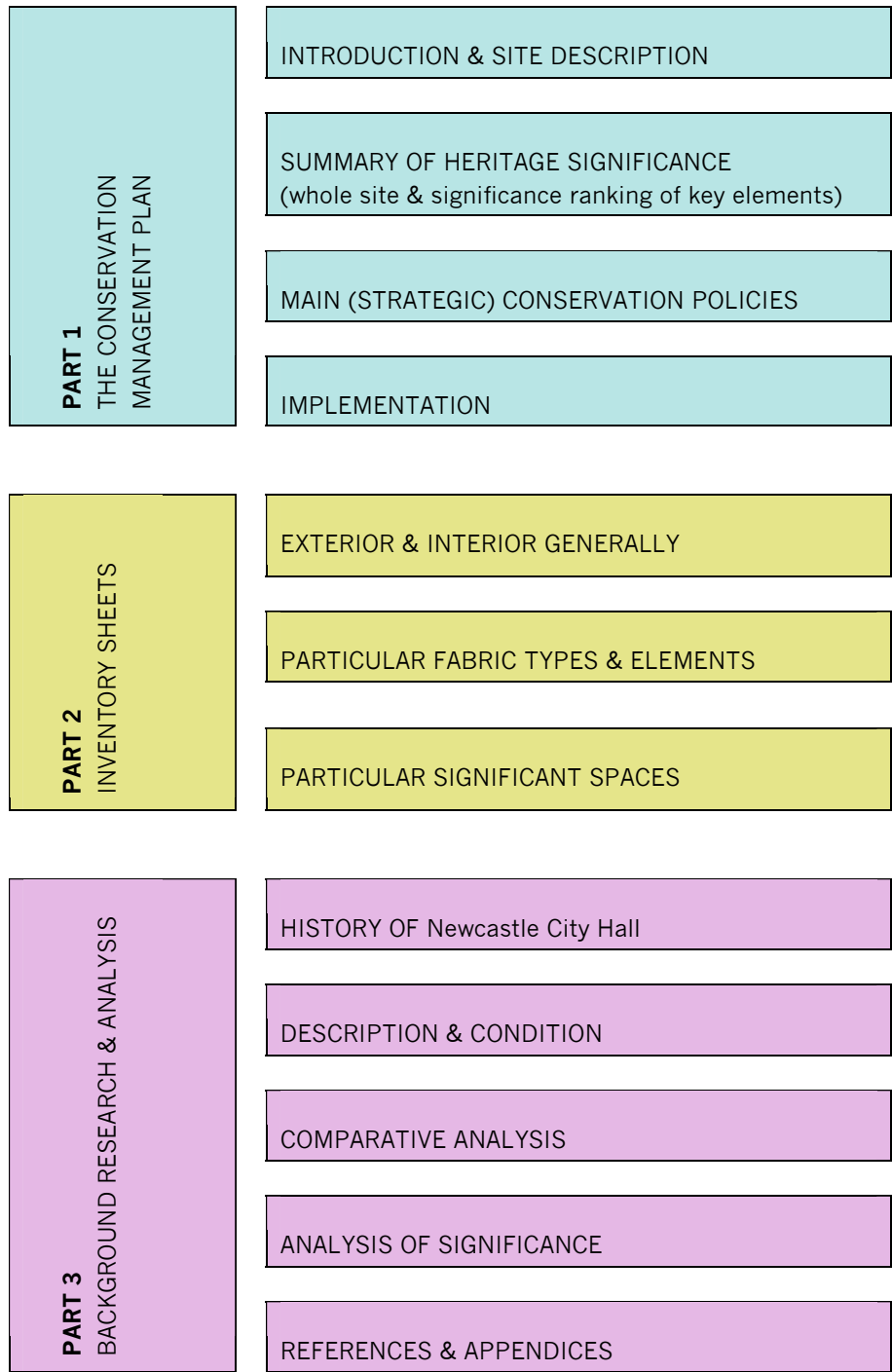


Figure 4: Diagram showing the layout of this CMP.

1.4 SITE DESCRIPTION

Opened in 1929, Newcastle City Hall is one of Newcastle's most unique and prestigious buildings. Its architecture includes sandstone walls and columns, marble staircases, a clocktower and sweeping staircase and ballroom. Built at a time of optimism about the future before the onset of the Depression, City Hall was seen as a Town Hall worthy of the 'second city' in the State of New South Wales, and in keeping with its civic importance as a leading industrial centre in the Southern Hemisphere.

Commissioned to be built by newly elected Mayor Morris Light in 1925, Newcastle City Hall became home to an amalgamation of eleven Municipal Councils and parts of two shires into a newly formed Newcastle City Council.

Newcastle City Hall was designed by acclaimed American architect Henry Eli White (architect of the Civic Theatre). The Australian architect S. N. Kenworthy, the influential designer J. V. Rowe and the artist Fred Sutherland collaborated on the interiors.

Newcastle City Hall has been described in stylistic terms as *Inter-War Academic Classical*¹. The continuation of the classical architectural tradition was still considered entirely appropriate for major public buildings during the 1920s and 1930s in Australia. The Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture states:

The impressive city halls in Brisbane and Newcastle tended to follow precedents established in the mid-nineteenth century, where the strong vertical mass of a central tower from a relatively low, 'quiet' building and the drama is prevented from getting out of hand by the reassuring familiarity of the classical orders used correctly.



Figure 5: Perspective of Newcastle City Hall by White. *Building Magazine* 1928(?).

The originally proposed exterior wall finish was coloured renderwork in imitation of sandstone.

¹ A pictorial Guide to identifying Australian Architecture p154-157

Newcastle City Hall is a three storey brick building with a steel and reinforced concrete structure and stairs. The external wall cladding and elements such as the porte cochere, the clock tower, balconies, balustrades and external stairs are clad in a skin of Sydney 'yellowblock' sandstone which is "pinned" into the structural concrete and brickwork with mild steel rods. Stone was the most popular material for town halls since it was obviously grander than brick and render, though considerably more expensive. Externally grilles, window and door frames in City Hall are of steel. The steel trusses roofing the Concert Hall support a coffered cast fibrous plaster ceiling.

The highly original interiors provide evidence of refined historical stylism coupled with the craftsmanship of early twentieth century plaster, paint and other decorative techniques.

Alterations were made to upgrade ventilation in 1932 and in 1936 a mechanical ventilation system was installed in the Concert Hall. Floor and roof repairs were recorded in 1952; work included relaying part of the Concert hall and stage floors.

Following the transfer of staff and administrative offices to the new City Administration Centre in 1977, the Council considered the future usage of the City Hall. Although the building was nearly fifty years old, it was architecturally very sound & large enough to be adapted to provide a civic venue for a multitude of purposes. It was agreed that the City Hall should be converted into a multi-purpose Function/Conference venue to fulfill all these requirements. A Newcastle firm of architects, Suters and Busted Pty. Ltd., were commissioned and tenders invited for the conversion of the interior. The successful tenderer was a Newcastle firm of builders, R.W. Black Pty Ltd and, in January 1980, the physical building work commenced. The existing Concert Hall and Banquet Rooms were retained & upgraded; the former office space within the building was converted into Function/Conference Rooms and Reception Areas with carpeting, air-conditioning and all catering facilities. Striking murals by John Olsen and John Montifiore were added to the entry & interior of the Concert Hall. Some stonework repairs were undertaken in 1983.

The Council Chambers have been completely redecorated and the Lord Mayor provided with attractive offices and Reception Rooms. Recent works include the provision of additional handrails to the main stairs.

In 2003 the roofing membrane was upgraded and the rainwater system renewed.

Newcastle City Hall continues to be adapted in a sympathetic manner to meet contemporary standards of amenity, access and safety – ensuring its viability into the future.

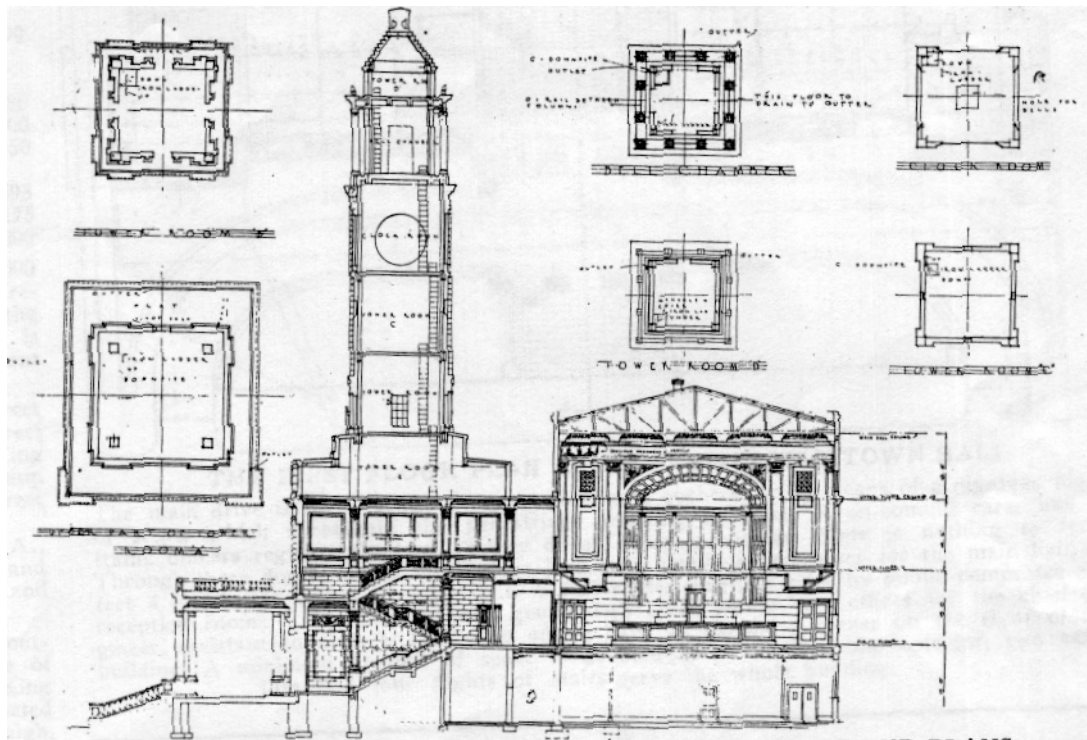


Figure 6: A Sheet from the original 1929 drawings showing cross section through the Clocktower and Concert Hall.

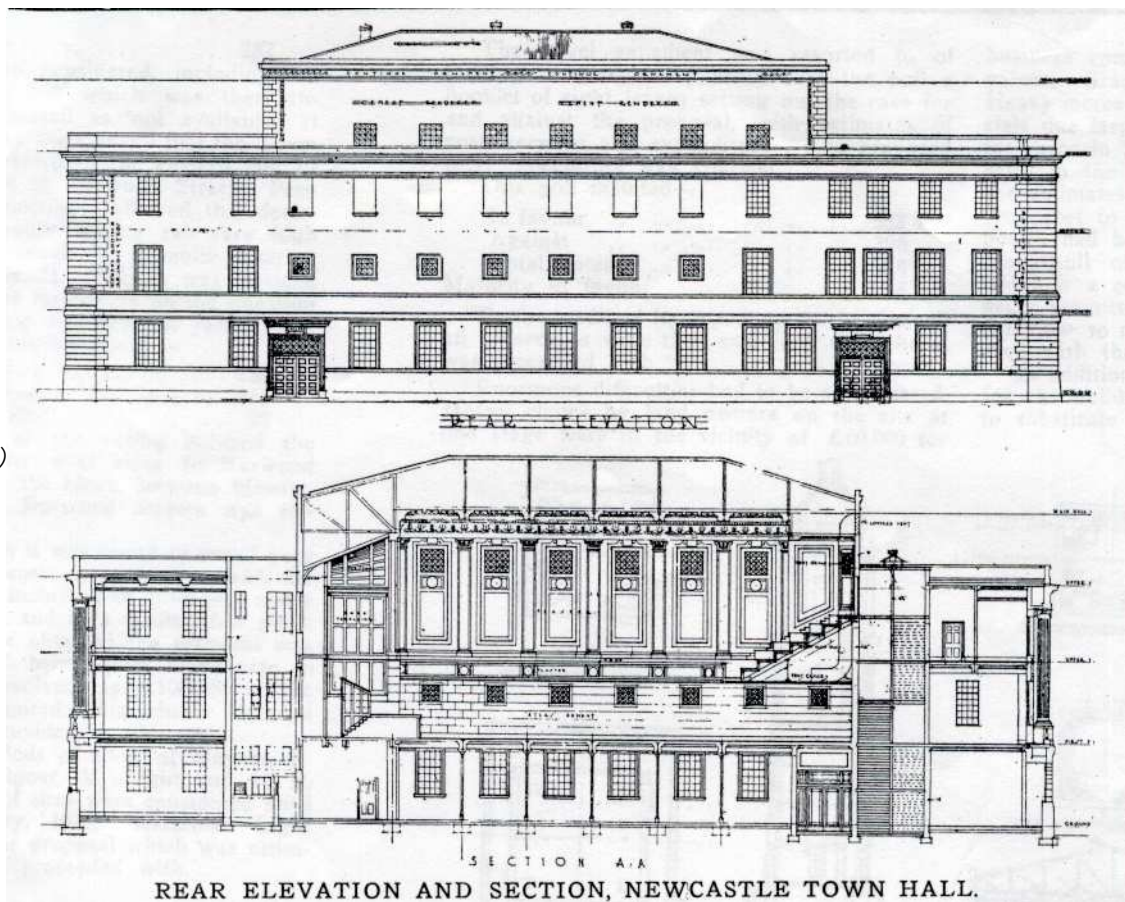


Figure 7: A Sheet from the original 1929 drawings showing Rear (Christie St) Elevation & Concert Hall long section.



Figure 8: The Concert Hall in 2002.



Figure 9: Clock Tower in 2001



Figure 10: Original Decoration still evident 2001.

2.0 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

This section is a summary arising out of the Analysis of Significance in Section 4, Part 3 of this CMP and from analysis of information in the relevant Inventory Sheets in Part 2.

2.1 SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR NEWCASTLE CITY HALL

Newcastle City Hall is important to the history of the Newcastle for its associations with growth and development of the Hunter Region and the increased power of local government in the early twentieth century. The building at the centre of Newcastle's civic & cultural precinct is the result of the ambition of successive mayors and other community leaders to leave their mark on Newcastle. The building reflects the changing social and aesthetic values in regional Australia.

From the time of its construction in 1929, City Hall has been the venue for many important historic changes and events in Newcastle including the increasing role of women in public affairs. It is a place for expression of local government politics and cultural activities including patriotic marches and rallies, disaster relief campaigns; public commemorative ceremonies and memorial and religious services. Newcastle City Hall continues as a focus for the development of national and international relations. The building and its setting are intimately related to the broader issue of regional and national identity.

The building has a long association with the people of Newcastle region as a location for social and community functions. It is an important tangible link between the citizens of Newcastle and the seat of their local government. It is the venue for conventions, trade promotions, public meetings, naturalisation ceremonies, social gatherings and cultural events.

Newcastle City Hall is an excellent example of an early twentieth century Inter-War Classical style public building. Built during a boom period prior to the depression, City Hall is evidence of the refined application of historical stylism coupled with craftsmanship. It has the characteristics of buildings of the late twenties, a blooming of historically based architecture before the advent of 'modern' design. It can be ranked with other major Inter-War Classical buildings in Australia².

Newcastle City Hall is masterpiece of both functional architecture and civic scale and precise detail executed in Sydney yellowblock sandstone. In Newcastle the city's historic architecture is largely Victorian. City Hall on the other hand is Newcastle's most important example of neo-Classical Twentieth Century architecture. It is an imposing landmark, indicating the Civic Centre of Newcastle.

The construction of Newcastle City Hall and the Civic Theatre complex was the catalyst for the transformation of this part of the city centre into a precinct of monuments, cultural and public buildings. It provided the impetus for the creation of a series of streets and urban open spaces and parks known as the Civic Precinct. The Civic Precinct includes: Civic Park; Christie Place; Christie Street; and Wheeler Place, formerly Wheeler Street.

² Including: the Commonwealth Bank in Martin Place; the Central Block of the State Library in Sydney; the Shrine of Remembrance, St Kilda Road, Melbourne; and City Hall Brisbane, Queensland.

City Hall is associated with the works of, Henry Eli White, a major architect and engineer chosen on account of his prominence and experience in the building of theatres and public halls. Many of these buildings are of State and National significance in Australia and New Zealand. The original decoration of the interiors demonstrates a highly original and influential style. They are an important collaboration between White, the NSW architect S.N. Kenworthy and the influential designer J.V. Rowe³. The building also demonstrates the collaboration of artists and artisans including the decorative work of Fred Sutherland.

The building demonstrates the use of building materials popular in the 1920s and 1930s: Australian marble, polished Queensland maple joinery; linoleum tiles as a decorative finish; large aggregate terrazzo; red 'ironite' cement flooring; white plaster; and grey cement render finishes. The bulk of the interior decoration was minimalist - strikingly white or ivory walls (imitation 'travertine' plasterwork) complemented with ivory trim and ceilings or white ceilings. Designs or techniques of exceptional interest include: sprayed textured wall finishes such as copper bronze; glazed and stippled decorative finishes; and hand painted line work.



Figure 11: Newcastle City Hall Council Chambers c.1930.



Figure 12: Newcastle City Hall Council Chambers 2001.

2.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIVIDUAL PARTS OF NEWCASTLE CITY HALL

The tables below provide the broad grading of significant elements and spaces within Newcastle City Hall.

In reading this section it should be remembered that items, which are exceptional, high or moderate heritage significance, could still be altered if there is no prudent and feasible alternative to their preservation in-situ. The significance ratings flag the need to:

- carefully consider all sympathetic alternatives;
- demonstrate and document the necessity for the alteration or change (including the consideration of alternatives);

³ Rowe designed the interior joinery and was a Lecturer in Fine Arts at Sydney Technical College and as a principal designer for Wunderlich. He is credited with introducing Art Nouveau to Australia.

- prepare a detailed recording (photographs and measured drawings) prior the change occurring; and
- consult with the community explaining the need for change.

Levels of Significance

As noted above the overall heritage value of Newcastle City Hall is considered to be of HIGH heritage significance to the State of NSW. Spaces, elements or fabric of Exceptional significance would be fabric suitable for management at a National (Commonwealth Government) level – or even international level. Currently there are no spaces or fabric within the Newcastle City Hall curtilage that have been assessed as meeting this ‘exceptional’ criterion. This could change in the future if further information and analysis of history and fabric becomes available.

Specific issues of setting; particular spaces and specific elements and fabric which form part of Newcastle City Hall have been graded as having HIGH heritage significance as these are more intact and/or are demonstrative of a key part of the building’s historic, aesthetic, technical or social significance.

Elements of MODERATE heritage significance are also worthy of conservation but can be subject to slightly more adaptation. This may be because they have previously been altered resulting in a slight loss of heritage values. They can also be spatial elements, elements or fabric which relate to issues of moderate importance in the history and social assessment of Newcastle City Hall.

Elements of LOW or NEUTRAL value within the Newcastle City Hall contribute to the overall whole, but sympathetic change or replacement can be tolerated without a loss in overall heritage value of the place. Other elements can be INTRUSIVE to the overall heritage value of the place and their careful removal or modification is encouraged.

Section 3.4 in this Part of the CMP provides broad policies for the different levels of significance. Differing conservation approaches apply depending on whether the use, spatial quality, element or fabric is of High, Moderate or Low/Neutral heritage significance, or whether it is considered Intrusive to the heritage values of Newcastle City Hall. Where the significance of a use, space, element or fabric has not been assessed, this should occur before deciding whether change is appropriate.

2.2.1 Exterior & Setting

Item	Significance	Inventory Sheet
CITY HALL OVERALL (setting, spaces and fabric)	HIGH	-
Overall existing use of City Hall	HIGH	-
City Hall’s position in the Civic and Cultural Precinct and its relationship with surrounding public spaces.	HIGH	9

Item	Significance	Inventory Sheet
EXTERIOR DETAILING OVERALL (including tower)	HIGH	1
Configuration of the openings	HIGH	1
Painted and rendered detail on the South Facade	MODERATE	3
Steel windows and decorative cresting	HIGH	7
Steel doors and decorative cresting	HIGH	7
Window grilles	LOW/NEUTRAL	7
Paneled timber doors, lanterns and framework	HIGH	6
Blind windows.	HIGH	3
STONE CLADDING OVERALL (including tower)	HIGH	3
Form and detailing of all external parts	HIGH	3
Yellowblock fabric	HIGH	3
Ashlar coursing	HIGH	3
Rusticated quoins and other rusticated cladding	HIGH	3
Window entablature and pediments	HIGH	3
String courses	HIGH	3
The plinth course and plinth string course	HIGH	3
Cornice	HIGH	3
Frieze carvings	HIGH	3
The Ionic columns	HIGH	3
Balcony balustrading and copings	MODERATE	3
Upper sills with moldings	HIGH	3
Spandrel panels and incorporated carvings	HIGH	3
Parapet and copings	HIGH	3
Parapet carvings	HIGH	3
Lamp post plinths and pedestals.	HIGH	10
CLOCK TOWER (setting, spaces and fabric)	HIGH	1, 3
Continuing use as a belfry.	HIGH	1
Landmark value	HIGH	9
Use as an icon and symbol	HIGH	-
Form and detailing	HIGH	1, 3
The Clock (Faces, numerals and hands Clock bell, bell mounting and clock mechanism).	HIGH	11
MAIN ENTRANCE / PORTE-COCHERE	HIGH	1, 3, 12
Use as entrance / roof terrace / ceremonial balcony	HIGH	12
The Roman Doric columns	HIGH	3, 12
Column pedestals	MODERATE	3, 12
Replacement balustrading and copings to the stairs	MODERATE	3, 12

Item	Significance	Inventory Sheet
Replacement balustrading and copings to the upper terrace	MODERATE	3, 12
Synthetic stone balusters	NEUTRAL	3, 12
Entrance ramp	HIGH	12
Lamp post yellowblock pedestals (replaced)	MODERATE	10
Morris Memorial Lamp Posts (2) including bronze plaques and lamps	HIGH	10
Entrance Ramp Lamp Posts (8) including lamps	HIGH	10
Street Lamp Posts (8) including lamps	HIGH	10
Mature Phoenix Palms (age to be confirmed)	MODERATE	9

2.2.2 Interiors

The following is a summary for the overall heritage value of the significant spaces inside Newcastle City Hall. Detail of the individual elements within each space is included in the relevant Inventory Sheet in Part 2 of this CMP.

	Item Inc. use, spatial characteristics & any original decoration	Significance	Inventory Sheet
1.	Entrance Hall Stairs	HIGH	13
2.	East & West Entrances, Lobbies & Corridors	HIGH	14
3.	Concert Hall & Galleries (First & Second Floors)	HIGH	16
4.	Concert Hall Roof Space including chandelier winches & walkways.	HIGH	16
5.	Banquet Room (Ground Floor)	MODERATE	15
6.	Banquet Room Columns	HIGH	15
7.	Council Chamber	HIGH	17
8.	Lord Mayor's Office	HIGH	18
9.	Lord Mayor's Reception Room	HIGH	19
10.	Men's & Women's Toilets (Ground Floor) Overall	MODERATE	4
11.	Most other areas (see plans at Figure 13 - 20)	MODERATE	-

2.2.3 Joinery, Artworks, Services & Furnishings

	Item	Significance	Inventory Sheet
12.	John Olsen Memorial (Main Entrance)	HIGH	13
13.	Coat of Arms (Main Entrance)	HIGH	13
14.	Evidence of former decoration all spaces	HIGH	4

	Item	Significance	Inventory Sheet
15.	Panelled timber doors, louvers & framework	HIGH	6
16.	Decorative ceilings & cornices	HIGH	4
17.	Original Light Fittings (Ceilings and walls)	HIGH	8
18.	Terrazzo Flooring (E & W Entrance Lobbies)	HIGH	5
19.	Marble Flooring (Entrance Hall)	HIGH	5
20.	Panelling (Stage)	HIGH	6, 16
21.	Montifiore Mural (Concert Hall)	HIGH	16
22.	Synchronised Clocks (Council Chamber, Mayor's Office, Lord Mayor's Reception Room)	HIGH	11
23.	Council Chamber Furniture	HIGH	17
24.	Marble, Tiles and Joinery in Ground Floor Toilets	HIGH	4
25.	Most other elements	LOW/NEUTRAL	.

Figures 13 – 20 follow showing the ranking of significance of the various spaces and elevations at Newcastle City Hall.



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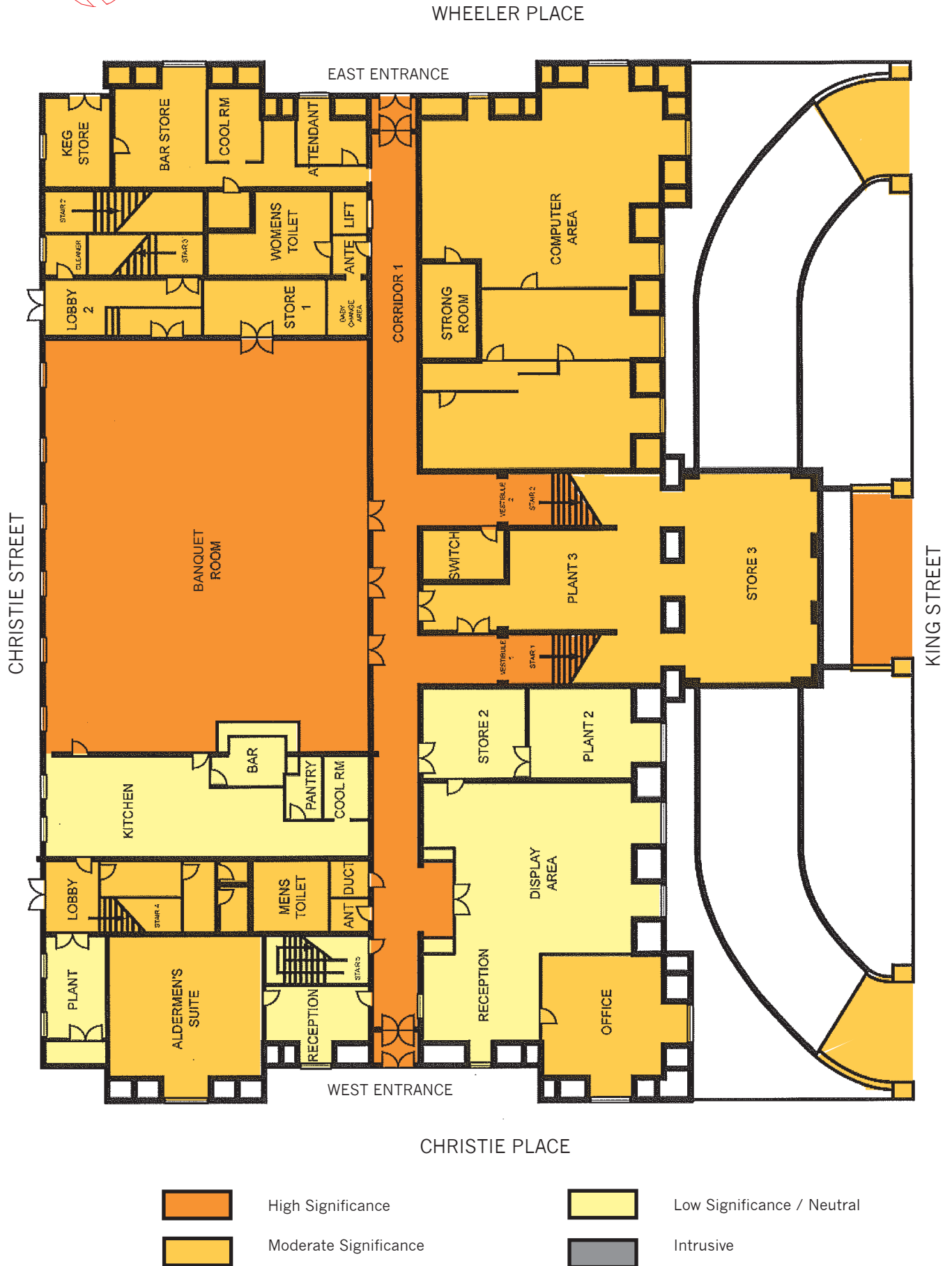


Figure 13: Newcastle City Hall Ground Floor Plan showing levels of significance



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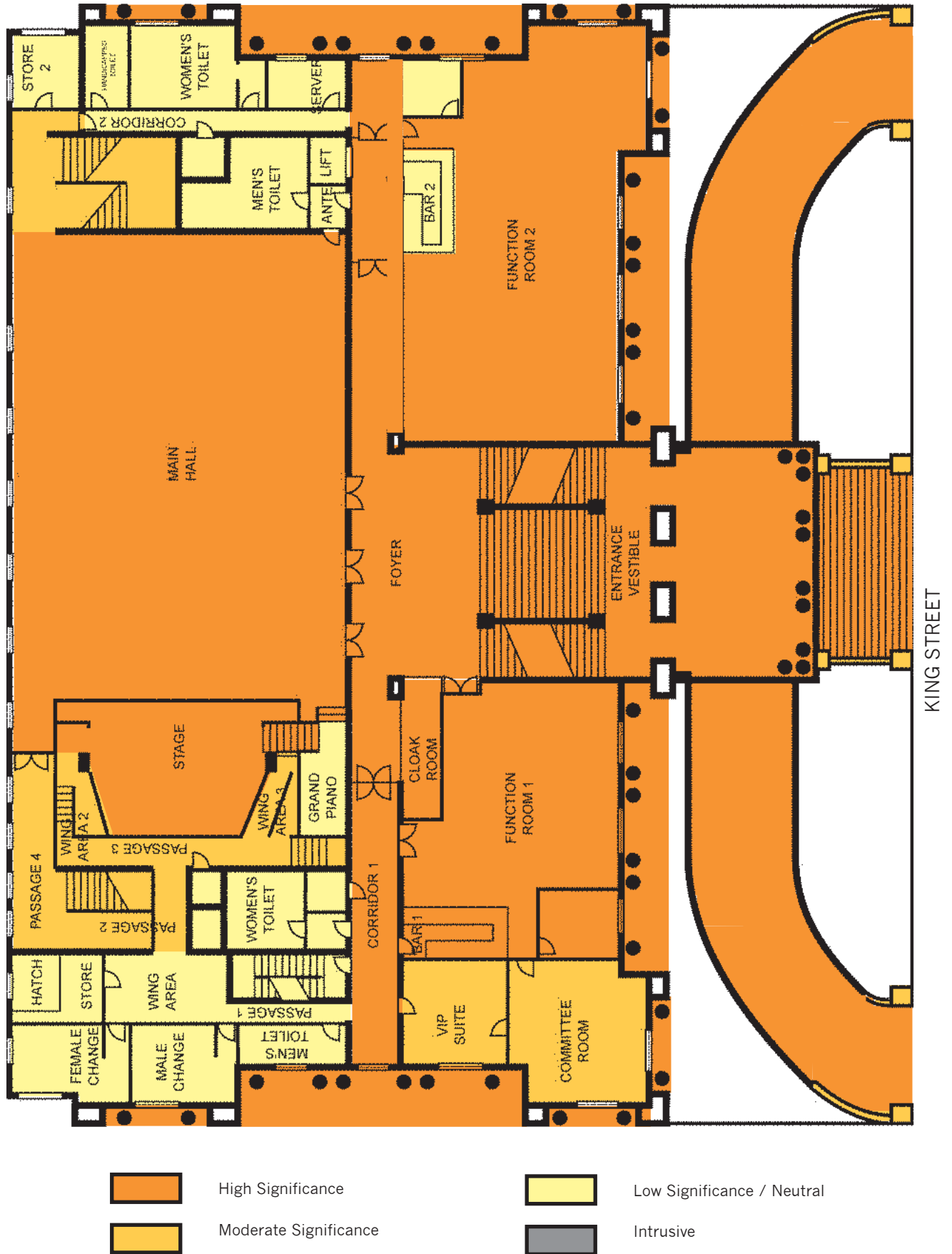


Figure 14: Newcastle City Hall First Floor Plan showing levels of significance



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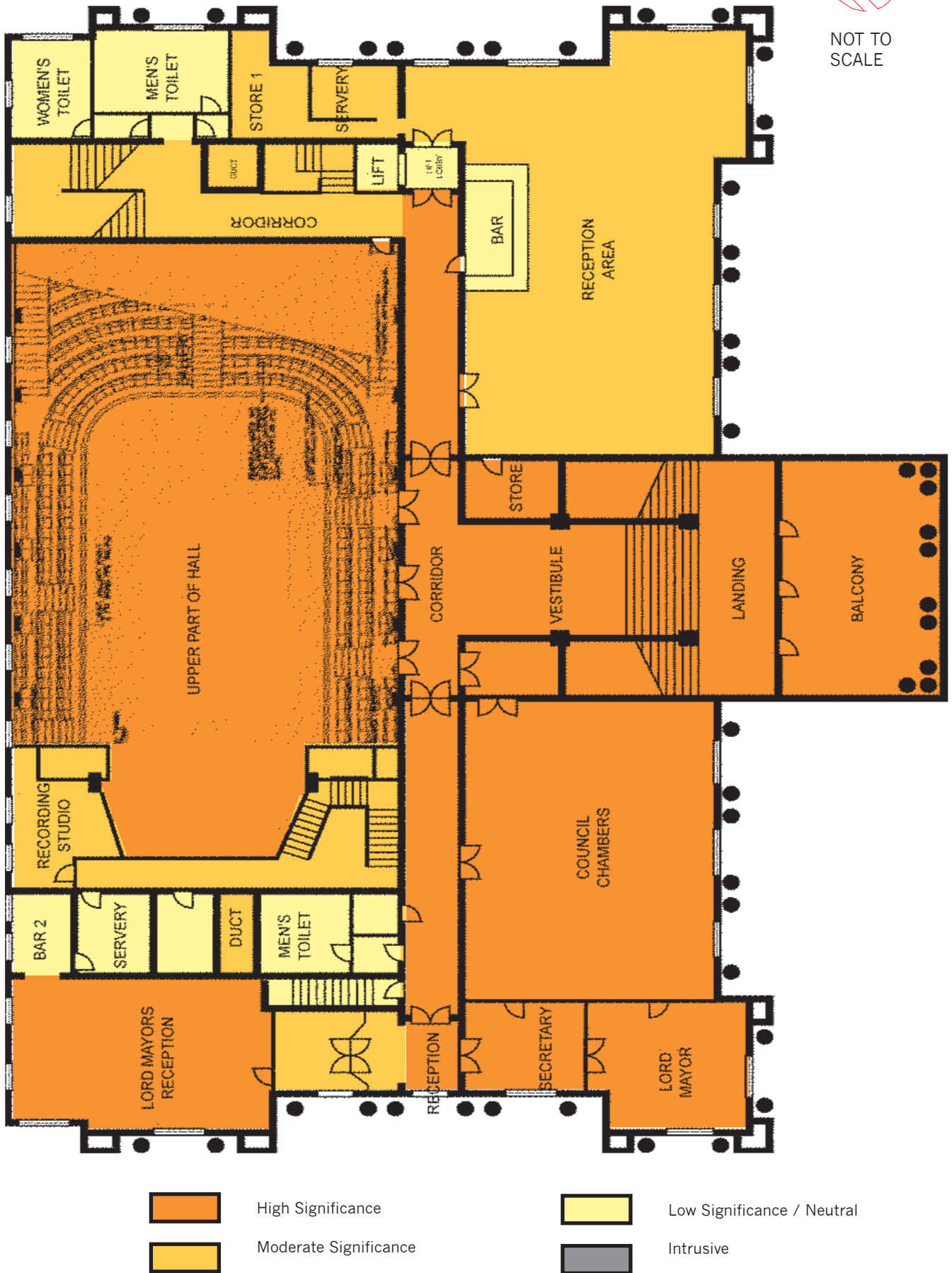


Figure 15: Newcastle City Hall Second Floor Plan showing levels of significance



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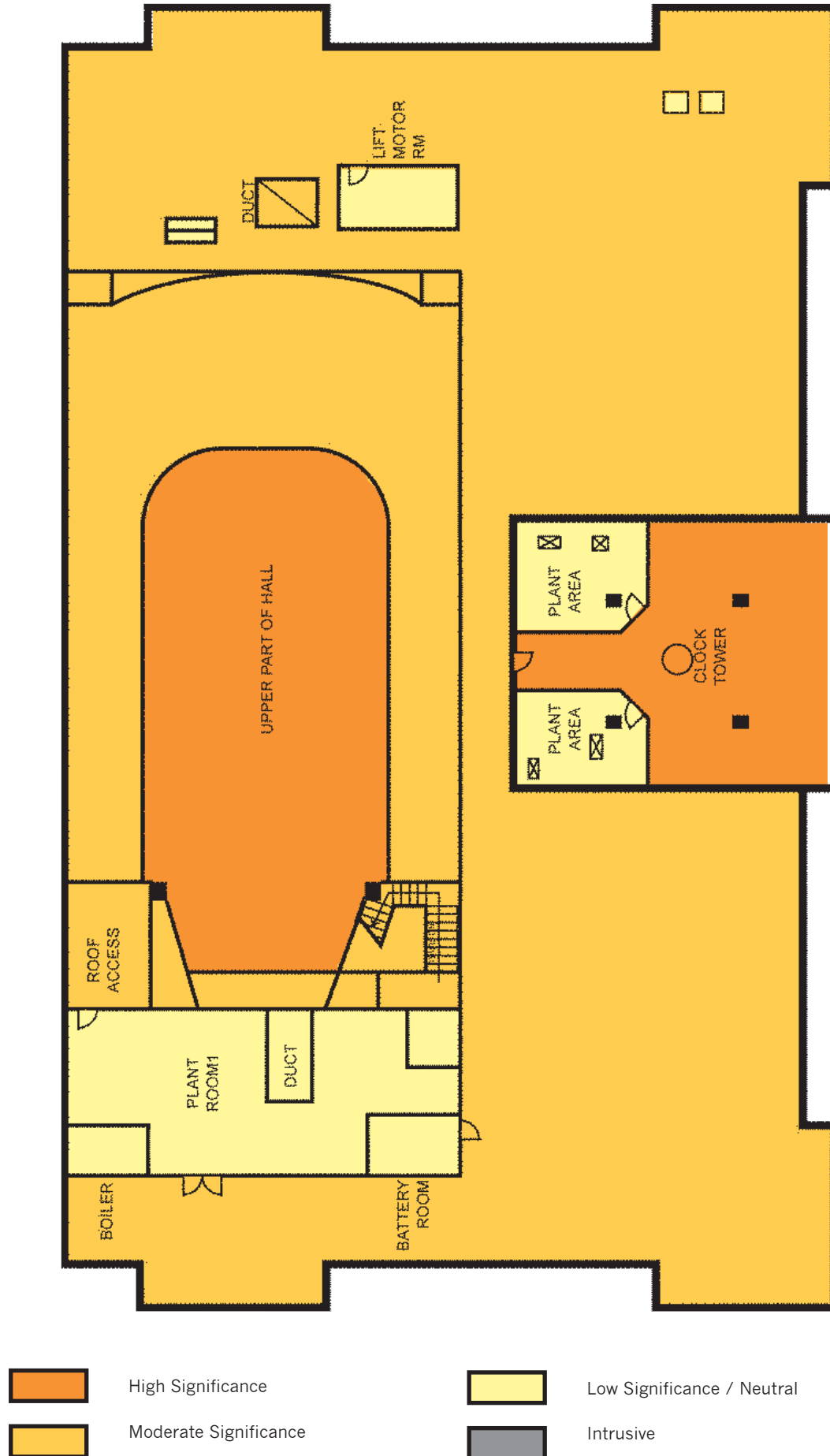


Figure 16: Newcastle City Hall Roof Plan showing levels of significance

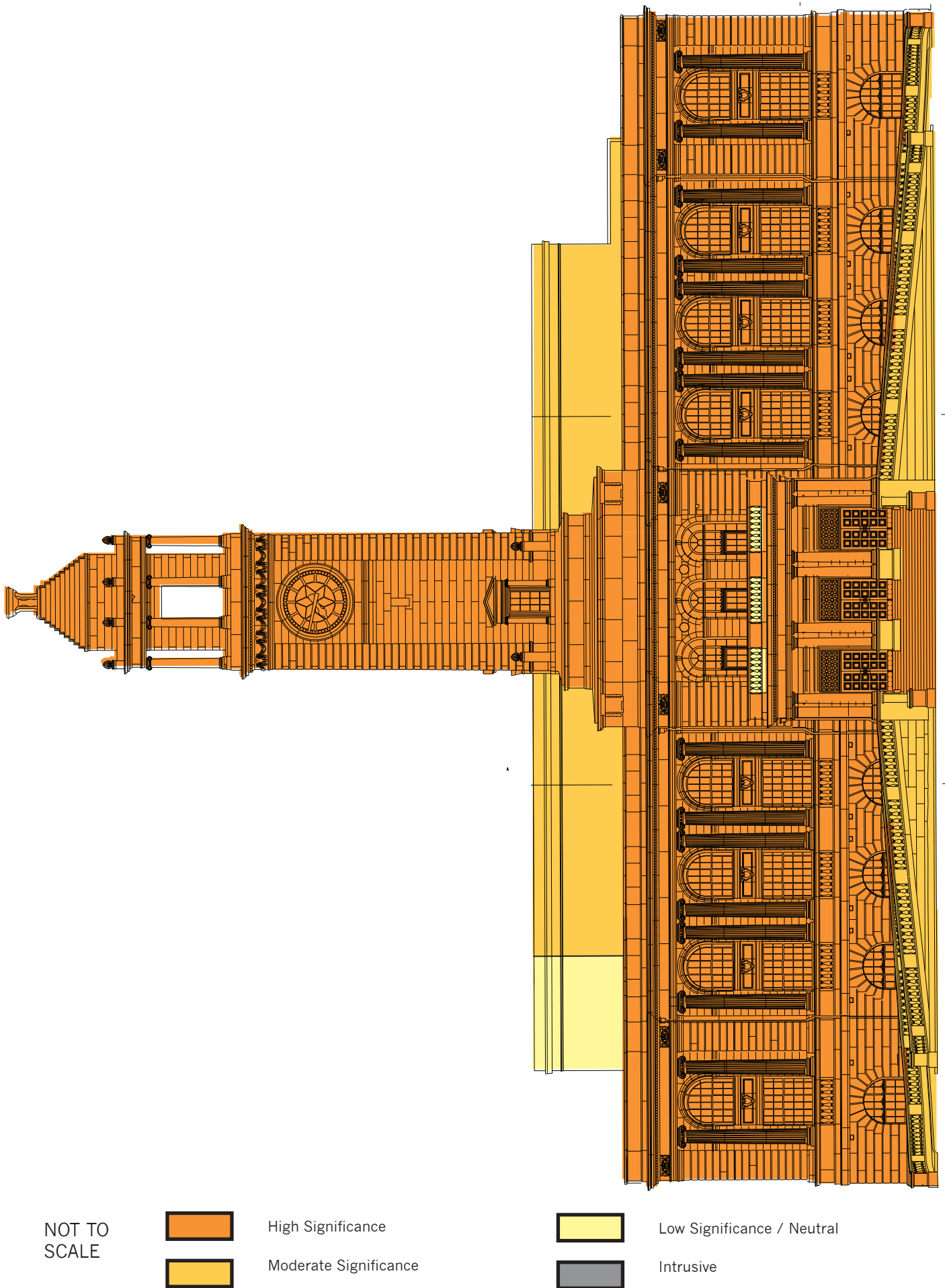
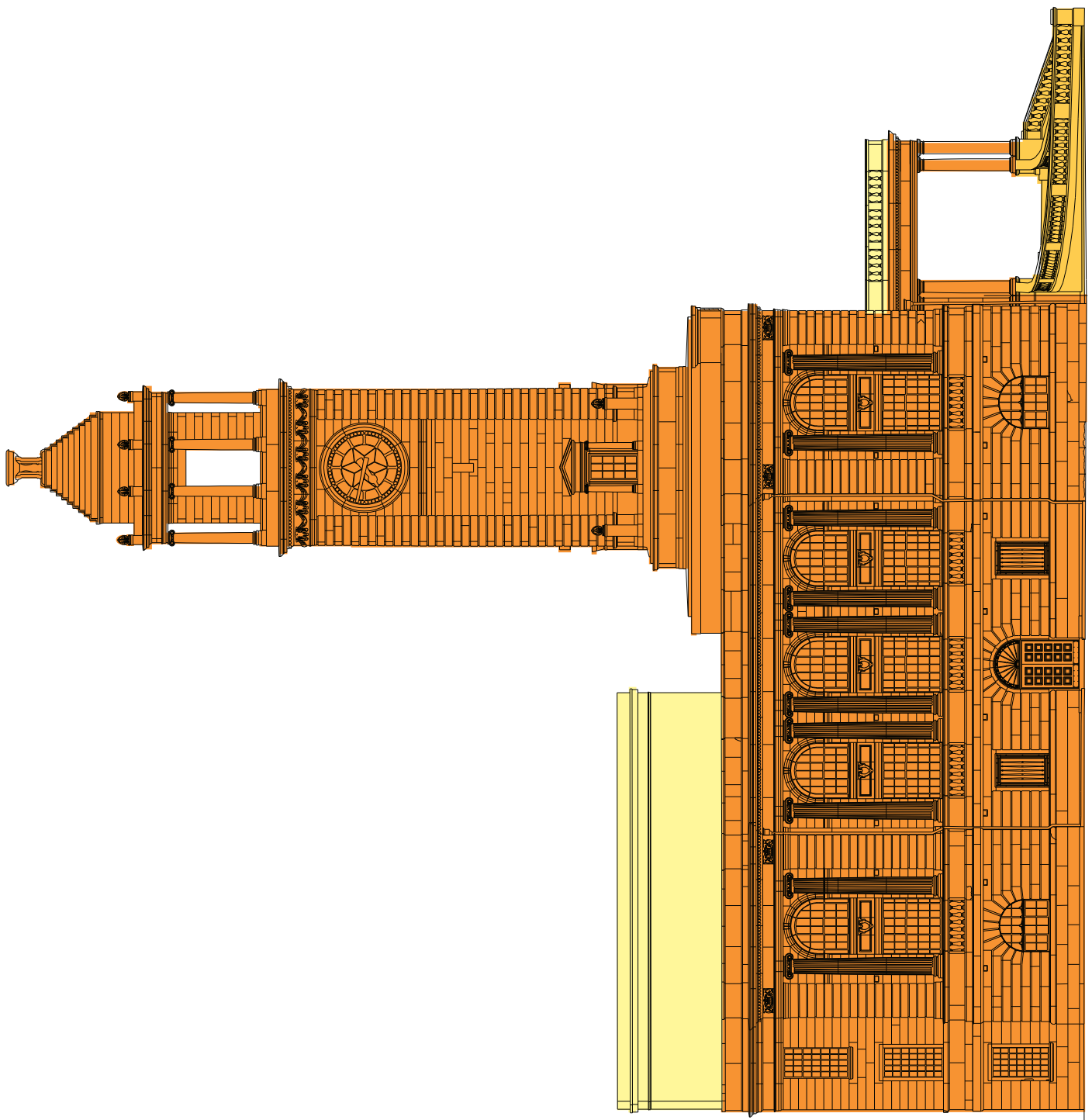


Figure 17: Newcastle City Hall South (King Street) Elevation showing levels of significance



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High Significance



Moderate Significance



Low Significance / Neutral



Intrusive

Figure 18: Newcastle City Hall West (Christie Place) Elevation showing levels of significance

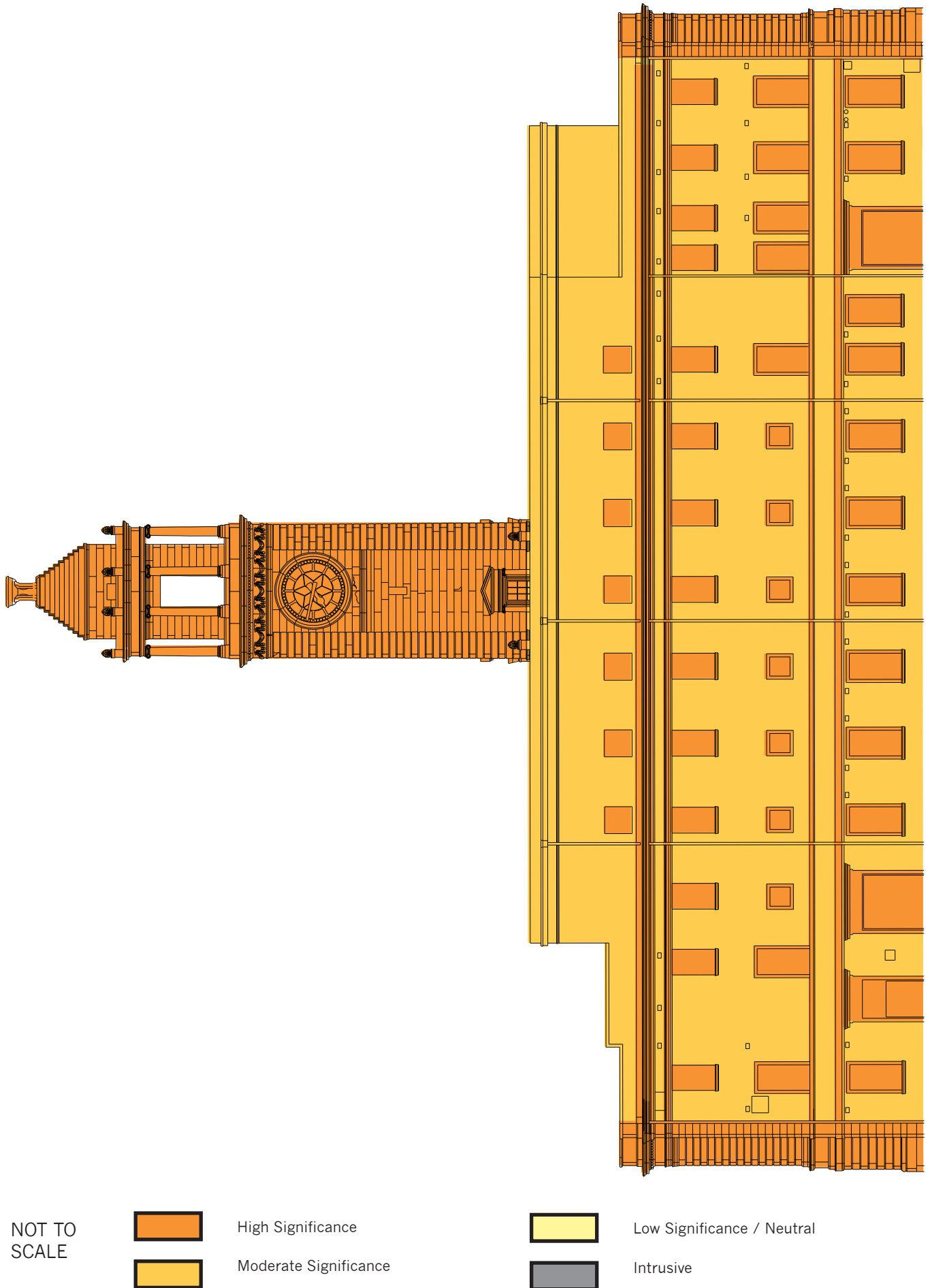


Figure 19: Newcastle City Hall North (Christie Street) Elevation showing levels of significance

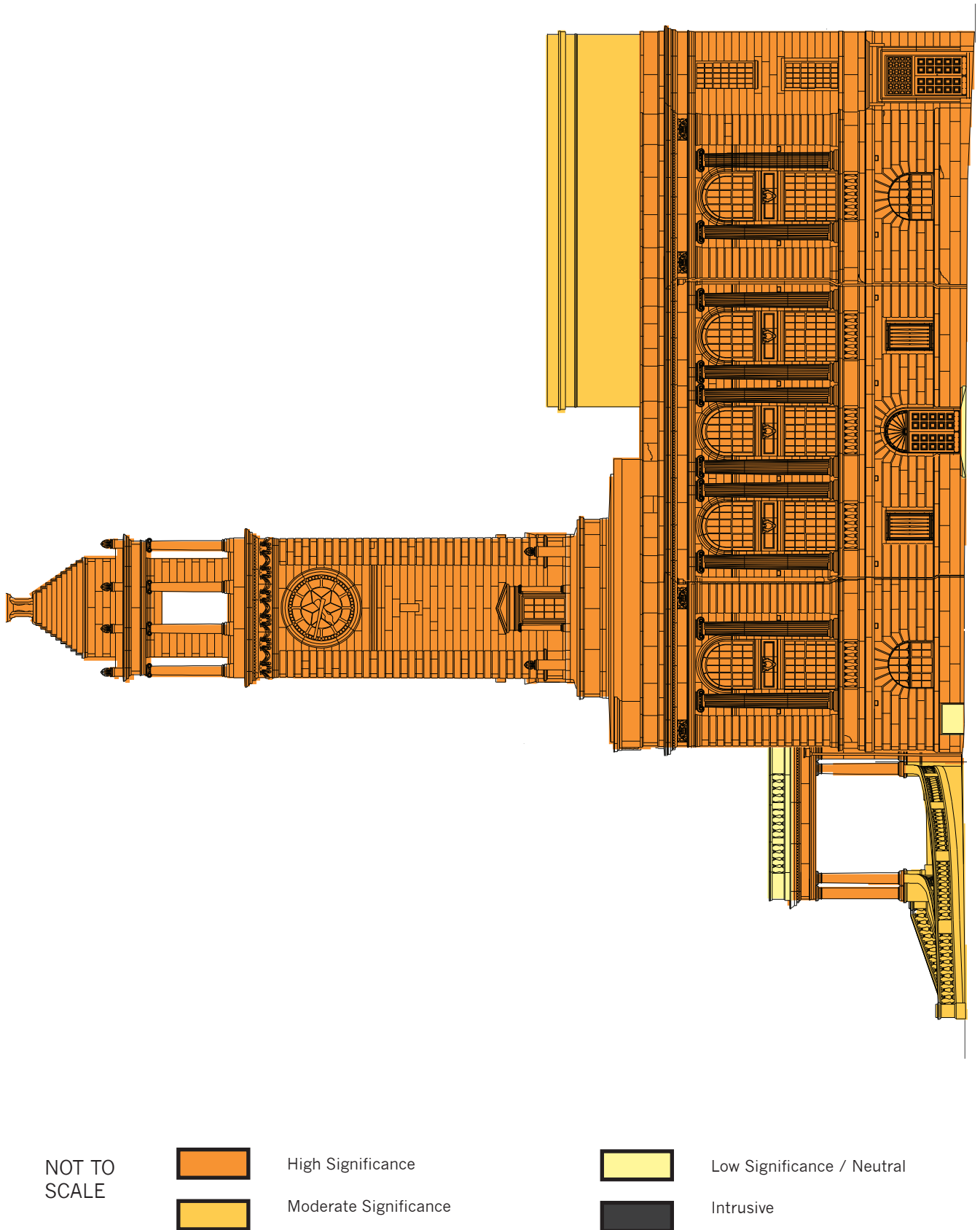


Figure 20: Newcastle City Hall East (Wheeler Place) Elevation showing levels of significance

3.0 CONSERVATION POLICIES

3.1 USING THESE CONSERVATION POLICIES

The heritage conservation policies below are intended to guide the asset management of Newcastle City Hall so that its heritage values are retained or enhanced. The conservation policies in this Part 1 of the CMP give strategic guidance. More detailed conservation policies and recommendations, for more specific parts of Newcastle City Hall, are provided in the Inventory Sheets in Part 2.

The conservation policies throughout this CMP reflect the principles given by the Australia ICOMOS Charter 1999 (the Burra Charter), which is the primary guideline used throughout Australia to conserve places of cultural heritage significance.

*Conservation Policy*¹.

All development including maintenance programs, new works, and adaptive re-use should be undertaken with reference to:

- *the principles of the Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance: [The Burra Charter](#)⁴; and*
- *the conservation policies of this Conservation Management Plan including those in Part 2 Inventory Sheets.*

When work is being planned on part of the Newcastle City Hall then the relevant conservation policies from this document (Part 1 of the CMP), together with the relevant, specific Inventory Sheets (Part 2 of the CMP) should form part of the project brief for that work.

3.2 MANAGEMENT OF THE HERITAGE ASSET

Significant building complexes such as the Newcastle City Hall, which have multiple uses and varied resourcing requirements, need a management structure to ensure that changes are coordinated for positive outcomes, including the retention and enhancement of heritage values. Asset Management at Newcastle City Hall is provided by the Asset Management team within the 'City Services' Group at NCC. It is important that this Group assumes the primary responsibility for promotion of the conservation policies in this CMP and overviews all implementation processes.

Leasing, functions and events at the City Hall are managed by the "civic Precinct" team within Newcastle City Council which also manages the Civic Theatre, Playhouse and Wheeler Place. The Manager of the Newcastle Civic Precinct has a pivotal role in determining, promoting and managing the future sympathetic uses of the Newcastle City Hall, however the primary responsibility for its heritage conservation should rest with the Asset Manager, City Services.

In addition there will be other sections of Newcastle City Council which need to be informed about this CMP and who may need to be consulted when change is proposed, partly because of the

⁴ http://www.icomos.org/australia/images/pdf/BURRA_CHARTER.pdf

valuable contribution they can make to resolving conflicts between the need for change and heritage impacts.

Conservation Policy 2.

A person in a senior asset management position within NCC (the Newcastle City Hall asset manager) should have the primary coordination role for the heritage conservation of Newcastle City Hall including protection, maintenance and adaptation.

Conservation Policy 3.

The Newcastle City Hall asset manager should continue to liaise closely on issues concerning the conservation of Newcastle City Hall with: the NCC facilities and event management (currently the Manager of the Newcastle Civic Precinct); NCC Projects; and NCC Planning.

3.3 PLANNING MAINTENANCE & MANAGING CHANGE

Specialist Advice & Expertise

The resolution of the various issues concerning viability, operational matters, maintenance, repair and proposed new works together with heritage conservation aims can often seem a daunting task. Sometimes good intentions can be misguided and may actually cause more harm than good. For example when installing a new mechanical or electrical service there may be less impact if it is exposed as a new tidy installation (that may be superseded in 10 years) rather than going to extensive lengths to conceal the service. In addition some contractors can be biased in their choice of maintenance solutions for heritage fabric. For example cleaning of sandstone with some chemicals can irreparably damage the stone. Independent specialist advice from consultants experienced in heritage conservation works for similar sites are required in these situations.

It is appropriate to involve an experienced conservation architect in the early planning, design and construction stages of any project at the City Hall and within the Civic Precinct, to review the impact of the proposal on the significant fabric of the buildings and the sites. The involvement of a Conservation Architect will also be required during the preparation of a Development Application submission.

Conservation Policy 4.

- Seek independent expert heritage advice appropriate to the heritage conservation issue under consideration.*
- Inform all consultants, contractors and tradespeople of the significance of Newcastle City Hall and its fabric via suitable heritage induction sessions prior to their involvement.*

Conservation Policy 5.

Where repairs (excluding exempted works), or development (including alterations, additions, demolition or new work) at the City Hall are proposed, these modifications should be reviewed before and during the works by a heritage consultant with the relevant qualifications and experience (usually a heritage architect).



Figure 21: Chandelier Cleaning (NCC Photo)

Conservation Policy 6.

Conservation works should be undertaken by skilled and experienced tradespeople who have proven heritage experience & expertise and (where possible) are accredited in their trade/specialization. The work should be executed under the supervision and direction of an experienced tradesperson, heritage architect or materials conservator as appropriate.

Assessing Heritage Impact

This CMP can give early guidance on what level of change is acceptable and where it is preferable to make changes. Changes which have a positive impact on heritage significance are encouraged.

For example changes may:

- minimise deterioration of significant fabric
- allow a use or a decorative scheme more sympathetic to original forms & finishes
- allow spatial arrangement of rooms to be returned to their original configuration
- allow removal of intrusive accretions.

At an early stage an assessment of the relative heritage impacts for a number of options to achieve the proposed outcomes should be made. This information will be useful when a more formal 'statement of heritage impact' is required.

There will be many minor works at Newcastle City Hall, including maintenance works, that have little or no heritage impact, and for these works the approval and oversight of the NCH Asset Manager (and, where necessary, a heritage consultant) will be sufficient. The "Heritage Impact Assessment" pro forma at Section 4.4 of this CMP provides a mechanism to check impacts.

Conservation Policy 7.

New work (whether internal, external or adjacent) should not adversely affect the heritage significance of City Hall and its curtilage. Ensure that impacts on heritage significance are fully considered during initial project planning and throughout the design or maintenance process.

Conservation Policy 8.

All proposals for works should have a 'heritage impact assessment' prepared in accordance with the pro forma at Section 4.4 of this CMP. Such an assessment should be prepared and archived whether or not its preparation is a statutory requirement.

Minor maintenance and other works at Newcastle City Hall do not require a Development Application. These include⁵:

- *maintenance of an item to retain its condition or operation without the removal of or damage to the existing fabric or the introduction of new materials;*
- *cleaning including the removal of surface deposits, organic growths or graffiti by the use of low pressure water (less than 100 psi at the surface being cleaned) and neutral detergents and mild brushing and scrubbing.*
- *replacement of services such as cabling, plumbing, wiring and fire services that uses existing service routes, cavities or voids or replaces existing surface mounted services and does not involve damage to or the removal of fabric or moderate, high or exceptional significance;*
- *repair (such as refixing and patching) or the replacement of missing, damaged or deteriorated fabric that is beyond further maintenance, which matches the existing fabric in appearance, material and method of affixing and does not involve damage to or the removal of significant fabric.*
- *repainting or recoating in the existing paint or coating system where it:*
 - *does not require does not involve the disturbance or removal of earlier paint layers other than that which has failed by chalking, flaking, peeling or blistering;*
 - *involves over-coating with an appropriate surface as an isolating layer to provide a means of protection for significant earlier layers or to provide a stable basis for repainting; and*
 - *employs the same colour scheme and paint type as an earlier scheme if they are appropriate to the substrate and do not endanger the survival of earlier paint layers.*
- *restoration of an item by returning significant fabric to a known earlier location without the introduction of new material.*

⁵ This List Is based on the Department of Planning document: [The Standard Exemptions For Works Requiring Heritage Council Approval](#)

- *minor works judged by the NCC Asset Manager to be of a minor nature which will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the Newcastle City Hall.*

Where there is any doubt the advice of an independent heritage architect should be sought.



Figure 22: Ceiling Detail 2001 showing 1980s colour scheme. Original decorative schemes were more restrained in such spaces.

Approvals (The Approvals Process)

A Development Application (DA) is required for other works that have (or have the potential to have) a substantial impact on the heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall⁶. Newcastle City Council (and possibly in the future, the Heritage Council), is required to assess the impact of the proposal on City Hall, the Civic Precinct, and any potential archaeological deposits.

A Statement of Heritage Impact will be required to accompany each Development Application. This statement should indicate the impact of the proposal on the significant spaces, the fabric and the site features. It should also indicate the heritage benefits of the proposal, such as the removal of intrusive fabric, or recovery of significance in a particular area.

A Statement of Heritage Impact should refer to the levels of significance of the fabric established by this Conservation Management Plan. If a proposal is contrary to the policies contained within this CMP then the Statement of Heritage Impact should provide justification for the proposal.

⁶ Newcastle LEP 2008

Conservation Policy 9.

Applications for approval should be prepared for development which will (or may) have a substantial impact on heritage significance, as required by legislation.

More information on DA requirements including Statements of Heritage Impact can be obtained from the NCC Planning Department and the [NSW HO website](#).

Compliance with Codes and Regulations

The Building Code of Australia (BCA) is the operative building ordinance for the continuing use and re-use of Newcastle City Hall. The BCA regulates issues such as structural adequacy, fire resistance, access and egress, fire fighting equipment, mechanical ventilation and certain aspects of health and amenity. Other ordinances which may apply include: The Occupational Health and Safety Act; Workcover Rules; Disability and Services Access (Disability Discrimination Act and Disability Services Act); EPA (Environmental Protection Act - Disposal of Waste, Fuel and Chemical Storage, Pollution, Wastewater Management); and the Dangerous Goods Act.

The current disability access into City Hall is through the western lower ground floor entrance from Christie St. While this allows for a disabled access parking space, it required disabled users to negotiate a shared pedestrian and traffic zone. The access and egress to City Hall for people with a disability requires review.

It is recognised that heritage buildings may pose complex and difficult problems in terms of strict compliance with codes and regulations. A performance based or engineered solution may be devised to minimise any impacts on the heritage values. Where there is difficulty arriving at alternative performance based solutions to meet the BCA the advice of the Fire Access and Services Advisory Panel of the NSW Heritage Council (FASAP) may be able to assist.

Conservation Policy 10.

When considering compliance with Codes and Regulations seek to avoid or minimise their impact on significant fabric. Consider seeking advice from independent specialist consultants and/or the Heritage Council's Fire Access and Services Advisory Panel (FASAP) to arrive at a 'performance based' or 'engineered' solution.

Conservation Policy 11.

Review the means of equitable access and egress to City Hall for people with a disability. Give preference to those solutions which have minimal impact on heritage values.

See also CMP Inventory Sheet 8 Services and Security.



Figure 23: Steel Spiral stair in NCH Clock Tower 2008



Figure 24: Inside face of the NCH Clock 2008

Liaison and Consultation

For works which may impact on the community's or other stakeholder's appreciation of the heritage values of Newcastle City Hall early consultation is recommended. For example early briefings could be held with managers of neighbouring properties, the Hunter Regional Branch of the National Trust of Australia (NSW)⁷ and Newcastle Historical Society.

In the past the community has played a key role in the establishment, development and use of City Hall. The community needs to participate in and be informed about all major heritage related decisions in City Hall and its curtilage. Newcastle City Council needs to be informed about and understand the community's changing expectations and needs.

In particular the Development & Environment Group in NCC should be consulted and informed at an early planning stage of any proposed changes which may impact on the heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall.

Conservation Policy 12.

Asset, event and maintenance managers involved with Newcastle City Hall should continue to liaise with relevant officers of NCC Planning to ensure that issues which may impact on the heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall (and other planning issues) are addressed at an early planning stage. Consider a pre DA briefing with the NCC Development & Environment Group.

Conservation Policy 13.

⁷ The National Trust of Australia (NT) is a non-government, community organisation dedicated to the conservation of Australia's heritage. The National Trust compiles and maintains a register of places of heritage significance in NSW, known as the *Register of the National Trust of Australia*. Although the National Trust has no statutory power, its state and local bodies (in this case the Hunter Branch) can have a strong influence on community support, particularly in regard to the possible threat to a structure or place from insensitive development or the destruction of items of cultural and heritage significance. Newcastle City Hall is classified by the NT as part of City Hall Group. The classified group includes City Hall (including 23 lamp posts 1929, H.E. White), Civic Centre (1929, H.E. White), Nesca House (1937-39, E. Sodersten, additions 1959, 1967), Christie Place and Civic Park.

The community, including neighbours, tenants and other stakeholders, should continue to be involved in City Hall's heritage management by being informed and given the opportunity to comment.

This community consultation may occur as part of the statutory Development Approval process, however additional consultation should also be considered.

Recording

Records help us understand a heritage place and how it has been changed over time. Such information informs future decisions about making changes to avoid heritage impacts, particularly avoiding accumulative minor changes that gradually erode heritage values.

Recording should be undertaken whenever modification to significant fabric occurs, including during maintenance works. It is likely that recording of the modification or removal of significant fabric will be a requirement of statutory development and heritage approvals. Recording is also a requirement when implementing standard exemptions under Section 57 (2) of the Heritage Act, 1977.

The recording should be undertaken in accordance with Guidelines prepared by the NSW Heritage Office. A photographic record before and after is generally sufficient; however, in the case of major modifications involving demolition of significant fabric a more thorough extant recording should be undertaken.

The reasoning behind the selection of a particular conservation approach and the methodology and scope of each conservation project should be recorded. In particular works such as stonework maintenance should be recorded so that the condition of the stone and the effectiveness of repairs can be regularly monitored.

At the end of any project all of the records, including the progress photographs, samples and any field notes should be archived.

Conservation Policy 14.

Prepare an archival recording of works which have significant impacts on heritage fabric in accordance with the [NSW Heritage Council guidelines](#) (photographs and/or drawings).

Conservation Policy 15.

Ensure that a record of the methodology (decision making process), scope of works and progress of all works, including work as executed documents, is kept and permanently archived. Fabric maintenance and repair methodologies (particularly new techniques) should also be recorded and monitored.

3.4 LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE & DESIGN INTEGRITY

In planning new facilities the intention of the original design and the original use should be taken into consideration, as should the level of significance of the fabric and the extent to which it has already been modified.

Most of the spatial qualities, elements and fabric at Newcastle City Hall have been assessed for its relative heritage significance. These are outlined at Section 2.2 of this CMP. The information is also repeated in the relevant Inventory Sheets in Part 2.

Differing conservation approaches can apply depending on whether the use, spatial quality, element or fabric is of Exceptional, High, Moderate and Little/Neutral heritage significance, or whether it is considered Intrusive to the heritage values of Newcastle City Hall. Spaces or fabric of exceptional significance would be fabric suitable for management at a National (Commonwealth Government) level. Currently there are no spaces or fabric within the Newcastle City Hall curtilage that meet this 'exceptional' criteria, however the overall heritage value of Newcastle City Hall is considered to be of High heritage significance (or of Significance to the State of NSW).

Where the significance of a use, space, element or fabric has not been assessed, this should occur before deciding whether change is appropriate.

Conservation Policy 16.

Ensure that new work impacting on uses, spatial qualities, elements or fabric of Exceptional, High or Moderate heritage significance:

- *considers impacts on the overall heritage status and presentation of the Newcastle City Hall;*
- *considers the significance of the any former uses, spatial qualities, elements or fabric impacted on, including those adjacent and minimises loss of such significance;*
- *considers the integrity or degree of intactness of the spatial qualities or fabric impacted on;*
- *conserves or re-instates original detail where possible;*
- *is identifiable as new work (eg is a modern design which respects the existing significant spatial qualities and fabric); and*
- *is as reversible as possible⁸.*

Modification to significant areas of fabric in an irreversible and/or unsympathetic manner for short term or temporary uses should not be permitted.

Conservation Policy 17.

Uses, Spatial Qualities, Elements and/or Fabric of EXCEPTIONAL / HIGH heritage significance

<i>EXCEPTIONAL / HIGH</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<i>Retain uses of high significance Introduction of additional uses should not result in a loss of significance.</i>	<i>Retain significant use unless to do so would be detrimental to the heritage significance of the space or fabric. See also Section 3.9 on significant and compatible uses.</i>

⁸ Reversible means that the new work can be removed in the future with no or minimal damage to significance values or significant fabric.

<i>EXCEPTIONAL / HIGH</i>	Notes
<i>Retain spatial qualities of high significance. Introduction of new work should not result in a loss of significance.</i>	<i>For example proposals to subdivide a space of high significance by new walls, mezzanines or false ceilings should not be supported. Loss of the spatial qualities of the setting and urban or landscape areas of high significance should be avoided. Minor changes should be temporary and reversible.</i>
<i>Retain elements of high significance.</i>	<i>Conserve such elements in-situ (eg clock mechanism). Only consider removal if it is in the interest of the element's and/or the place's long term conservation and work towards reinstatement of the element in its former position of high significance.</i>
<i>Retain fabric of high significance.</i>	<i>Conserve highly significant fabric in-situ. Only consider removal if it is in the interest of the fabric's or the place's long term conservation and work towards reinstatement or reconstruction of the fabric in its position of high significance. Do not obscure significant fabric by new work. If change must occur it should be reversible.</i>

Conservation Policy 18.

Uses, Spatial Qualities, Elements and/or Fabric of MODERATE Significance

Conservation Policy - MODERATE	Notes
<i>Uses of moderate significance can be changed where necessary to ensure the long-term viability of more significant uses.</i>	<i>New uses should be compatible with the significance of Newcastle City Hall as a whole. See also Section 3.9 on significant and compatible uses.</i>
<i>Spatial qualities of moderate significance can tolerate more changes than spaces of exceptional or high significance, but the same principles apply.</i>	<i>Changes to spatial qualities should respect adjacent heritage values and should be as reversible as possible, particularly as type of intervention required may change over time.</i>
<i>Aim to retain most of the elements of moderate significance.</i>	<i>Changes to elements of moderate significance should still be minimised and should be as reversible as possible.</i>
<i>Aim to retain most of the fabric of moderate significance.</i>	<i>Changes to elements of moderate significance should respect adjacent heritage values and should be as reversible as possible.</i>

Conservation Policy 19.

Uses, Spatial Qualities, Elements and/or Fabric of LITTLE or NEUTRAL Significance

Conservation Policy - LITTLE OR NEUTRAL	Notes
<i>Uses of little or neutral significance can be changed where necessary to ensure the long-term viability of more significant uses or to provide for a</i>	<i>New uses should be compatible with the significance of Newcastle City Hall as a whole. See also Section 3.9 on significant and compatible uses.</i>

<i>more compatible use or reinstate a former significant use.</i>	
<i>Spatial qualities of little or neutral significance can tolerate more changes than spaces of exceptional, high or moderate significance, but the same principles apply.</i>	<i>Changes to spatial qualities should respect the overall heritage values of Newcastle City Hall and aim to enhance heritage values. Where possible recreate original spatial qualities.</i>
<i>Elements of little or neutral significance can be retained or removed. Ensure any making good or replacement elements respect adjacent heritage values.</i>	<i>Changes to elements of little or neutral significance should respect the overall heritage values of Newcastle City Hall and aim to enhance heritage values. Where possible reinstate missing significant elements.</i>
<i>Fabric of little or neutral significance can be retained or removed. Any making good or replacement fabric should respect adjacent heritage values.</i>	<i>Where possible restore significant fabric to its original location or reconstruct match the original.</i>

Conservation Policy 20.

Uses, Spatial Qualities, Elements and/or Fabric which are INTRUSIVE

Conservation Policy - LITTLE OR NEUTRAL	Notes
<i>Uses that are intrusive should be changed when the opportunity arises to provide for a more compatible use or reinstate a former significant use.</i>	<i>See also Section 3.9 on significant and compatible uses. Where possible reinstate a former significant compatible use.</i>
<i>Elements that are intrusive should be removed when the opportunity arises. Any making good or replacement elements should respect adjacent heritage values.</i>	<i>For example modern signage or services installations can sometimes be intrusive elements on a façade or in an interior. Where possible return significant elements to their significant location.</i>
<i>Fabric that is intrusive should be removed when the opportunity arises. Any making good or replacement fabric should respect heritage values.</i>	<i>For example surfaces originally intended to be unpainted may have been painted. In some cases a return to original significant fabric cannot be achieved, however solutions that achieve respect for heritage values should be pursued. Where possible restore or reconstruct missing significant fabric.</i>

3.5 EXCAVATION WORKS AND ARCHAEOLOGY

The Newcastle Archaeological Management Plan⁹ lists only two areas of archaeological potential in the vicinity of City Hall. Christie Park immediately adjoins the City Hall and is the site of the former main foundry building. Wheeler Place adjoins the Civic Theatre Complex and was the site of the 1896 Black Diamond Hotel. The City Hall and adjacent City Administration Centre are not identified as having archaeological potential in the Plan. The Administration Centre has three levels of basement car parking, but as noted above the City Hall is built at ground level. For this reason and without evidence of the level of disturbance to the foundry complex when it was demolished, the City Hall site should be considered to have some archaeological potential. Further more detailed assessment would be required if its precise nature needs to be established. Archaeological deposits are not expected within the building itself due to its date and construction type.

There may also be archaeological material in the roof space (but not in floor voids as this is a concrete framed building).

In summary, it is considered that the City Hall site has some archaeological potential for disturbed remains of the Rodgers Foundry complex. Given that potential remains of the Rodgers foundry complex are likely to be disturbed and the City Hall site covers only a small part of the area occupied by the foundry, the heritage significance of archaeological remains within the City Hall site is likely to be low. The following policy recommendations will assist to manage archaeological issues as they arise.

Conservation Policy ²¹ *Archaeology*

- *given the likely disturbed nature of the site, proactive archaeological assessment and investigation is not considered necessary. Nevertheless, allow for the possibility of uncovering archaeological finds when undertaking excavation work on the ground floor of the City Hall site. If more certainty is required an archaeological assessment could be prepared during the planning stages of any excavation work;*
- *if finds are uncovered, have them assessed in-situ by an archaeologist before deciding how they should be managed;*
- *if uncovered finds are to be removed, ensure the required approval under the NSW Heritage Act is in place.*

⁹ The Newcastle Archaeological Management Plan Volumes 1 and 2 prepared in February 1997 by Suters Architects Snell Pty Ltd covers both the Civic Precinct and City Hall Site.

3.6 EXTERNAL MAINTENANCE STRATEGIES

Maintenance is an important process in the conservation of heritage items. The cyclical maintenance program at Newcastle City Hall should include actions which effectively maintain significant fabric. This will include regular cleaning and repair of the roof and roof drainage system.

Regular inspections (minimal annually) will reveal the need for any catch – up maintenance. Such inspections should include a checklist of issues that impact on heritage fabric (see Section 4.3).

Cyclical and catch-up maintenance should be closely co-ordinated with the policies in this Conservation Management Plan. The latest heritage conservation philosophy and technology should be applied to maintenance issues. One-page guidelines should be prepared covering typical cyclical and catch-up maintenance actions as they relate to the heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall. In addition the CMP Inventory Sheets should be actively used to guide works. Guidelines should be updated regularly, particularly as philosophy and technology changes. At times expert advice may be needed to resolve catch-up and cyclical maintenance issues.

Conservation Policy 22.

Newcastle City Hall should continue to have an active Cyclical Maintenance Strategy to ensure conservation of the significant fabric in accordance with this CMP. Where there have been recent catch-up maintenance works (eg new roof membrane or extensive façade repairs) the strategy should include (as a minimum) a 5 yearly inspection and a checklist so that the condition of fabric and services is recorded and monitored. It should also allow to record maintenance and repair strategies for significant fabric on the Inventory Sheets or other appropriate method.

Conservation Policy 23.

The relevant Inventory sheets¹⁰ should also be attached to Internal Memos and External Work Orders to give guidance on a sound heritage conservation approach to new maintenance works.

Landscape Issues Generally

The original forecourt landscape treatment was turf with a Phoenix palm on each side between the vehicular ramp and the building. A self-sown palm has grown on the western side and several eucalyptus trees have been planted in the bed adjoining Wheeler Place. Flowering shrubs and ginger plants have been introduced into the beds on either side of the steps.

Soil levels in garden beds next to the base course of the building have risen above the level of the damp-proof course. Rubbish collects in the narrow space between the vehicular driveway and building.

The existing landscape around Newcastle City Hall therefore needs review to assess:

¹⁰ For this system to be effective works orders with the heritage attachments need to be prepared even when the work is being carried out in house. Other one-page guidelines can also be attached (eg noise and dust control).

- Age and condition of early plantings (eg Phoenix Palms)
- Appropriateness of other existing plantings (eg Cocos palms)
- Appropriate ground treatment next to external walls to ensure good stonework conservation

Conservation Policy 24. *Landscape Generally*

Future landscape proposals for Newcastle City Hall should consider:

- *Conservation of significant entrance details, heritage lampposts and other existing monuments.*
- *Removing plantings from being immediately adjacent to the sandstone walls of City Hall.*
- *An 'air drain' or similar where it is not possible to lower pavements below the original dpc.*
- *Provision of surface drainage away from the building and sub-soil drainage next to the building.*
- *Appropriate paving sympathetic to the heritage values of Newcastle City Hall and the Civic Precinct generally, including, where required, pavements designed to support maintenance and delivery vehicles.*
- *Whether any of the existing plantings have heritage value and if so is their condition such they be conserved or do they need to be replaced.*
- *Removing inappropriate self-sown and other plantings.*
- *Only installing irrigation systems where the misting or over-spray will not wet the sandstone.*
- *Using shade tolerant, hardy ground covers and / or sandstone gravel in garden beds to reduce the need for watering.*
- *New landscaping, sculptures, monuments, street furniture and light fixtures should not be visually intrusive nor have a negative impact on heritage fabric.*

See also proposed new landscape design at Policy 24 below. The Setting & Landscape Issues are brought together in CMP Part 3: Inventory Sheet 9. Setting & Landscape

Structural / Seismic Stability

Newcastle City Hall is a steel and concrete framed building with Sydney yellowblock sandstone cladding. All the floors and roof are reinforced concrete and there is a timber framed trussed structure over the Concert Hall. The Concert Hall Gallery is supported off steel girders.

Following the 1989 Newcastle earthquake, reports were prepared to assess the impact of damage on City Hall. There was concern regarding the stability of high-level balustrading and decorative elements such as finials and acroteria. These elements were tied back into the main structure of the building and damage to the structure made good. The tower was also structurally strengthened.

Reports prepared at the time of the earthquake did not investigate the condition of brick cavity ties, the condition of cramps fixing the stonework cladding, nor the durability of structural stone elements (for example columns). The stone fixings, and possibly some concrete reinforcement, have corroded. More recently it has been determined that extensive replacement of the steel fixings is required to ensure the conservation of the brick, sandstone and concrete fabric. The potential impact of any future earthquakes will need to be assessed to inform the way these steel

ties are replaced. This work should be incorporated into the proposed programmed stonework conservation.

Conservation Policy 25.

Conserve the original structural members in situ where possible. The replacement of structural and fixing elements should only be undertaken where the deterioration of the elements is hastening the deterioration of the surrounding fabric – i.e. through the processes of rusting, concrete cancer or rot.

Conservation Policy 26.

Design seismic strengthening, when required, to minimise the impact on significant fabric of the building during installation and in the long term. The strengthening should meet the requirements of the relevant Australian Standard. In particular consider the stability of the existing and proposed fixings of façade facings and elements.

Façade Conservation

To retain the Cultural Significance of Newcastle City Hall it is essential that the form of the building and the detail of the main facades and the tower be retained.

No alterations or additions to the roofscape or facades should be undertaken that would obscure or obliterate original detail. Access provisions for maintenance of the facades and tower should be designed to be unobtrusive and should not alter the roofscape.

The stonework fixings are corroded and a program of replacement of fixings and some stone is required to ensure the conservation of the brick, sandstone and concrete fabric.

Conservation Policy 27.

Conserve the external facades and the tower identified as having high significance including:

- *retention of the configuration of the fenestration and other metalwork*
- *repair or replacement of damaged elements, to match the original in material and detail*
- *removal of intrusive fabric*
- *continuous monitoring, care and maintenance*
- *conservation of the carved stone details, cornices, capitals, friezes*

Conservation Policy 28.

Investigate the condition of wall ties, concrete reinforcement, stonework cramps and fixings, structural stone elements and the temporary repairs (patching) undertaken in 1990. Analyse the impact of the condition of these elements and the impact of their ongoing corrosion on cultural significance.

Conservation Policy 29.

Ensure any façade areas known to have problems are monitored and are regularly inspected for safety and the long-term resolution of problems prioritised including:

- *the stability of the tower structure and cladding*

- *stone cladding fixings generally*
- *cracked or fractured sandstone elements*
- *corroding steel windows*
- *concrete cancer in the entrance*

See also the Newcastle City Hall Inventory Sheets on particular materials, elements and spaces in Part 2 of this CMP.

3.7 INTERNAL MAINTENANCE STRATEGIES

The interiors of Newcastle City Hall were carefully designed to suit their uses and the fashion of the period. Many of the spaces are given HIGH significance ratings.

The original wall and ceiling decorative schemes of the Concert Hall and Upper Gallery were quite complex. Similar decoration was located in the Main Entrance Lobby, Council Chamber and Mayors Reception Room. It is recommended that a detailed research project be undertaken, prior to the design of any future decorative schemes for these rooms. This requires on site investigation as well as a study of the available documentary evidence, such as historic photographs. Although early photographs are not coloured they will provide an indication of the number of colours used and in which location.

Many rooms were altered in 1980. The majority of areas generally had little decoration or their configuration had been changed. In these rooms a colour scheme that was clearly not based on historic precedent was employed at that time. The evidence of the earlier decorative schemes remains intact beneath.

Do not burn, strip or scrape off all of the layers of paint during the preparation for new paintwork.

Conservation Policy 30.

Before carrying out work to a significant interior space:

- *Undertake a thorough investigation of the former spatial qualities and decorative schemes of that space including:*
 - *a study of documentary evidence;*
 - *the preparation of a “scraped” band that includes all divisions of the walls and ceiling¹¹ to determine previous colours and finish techniques;*
 - *preparation of a record of the BS, AS or Munsell equivalents of colours scraped;*
 - *determining a scheme that relates to the principal phase of decoration of the space.*
- *Ensure the records and analysis of past significant interior decorative schemes are archived*

Conservation Policy 31.

The following applies to spatial qualities in Newcastle City Hall of heritage significance:

¹¹ See NSW Heritage Council Guidelines on Conserving Paint Finishes.

- *Where possible re-establish or retain the authenticity of each space including significant volumes, openings, decorative schemes, services and furnishings.*
- *Do not permit the full height partitioning of any of the spaces or further subdivision to make new corridors.*
- *Minimise new internal openings. If a new opening is absolutely necessary it should be located with reference to the architectural and decorative vocabulary of the two spaces which it is to connect.*
- *Do not completely obliterate evidence of existing original openings.*
- *Retain the volume of the staircases.*
- *Spaces that have previously been enlarged or reduced may be retained in their current configuration or returned to their original configuration as desired.*
- *Where one space has encroached on the adjacent in a manner that has been assessed as being intrusive the original configuration of each room should be re-instated.*
- *Contemporary interpretations of historic interior decorative schemes may be undertaken provided the new scheme is sympathetic to the heritage significance of the space (eg respects period detailing).*

For example retaining the parquetry flooring in the Council Chamber is conservation of original fabric while the timber flooring in the Banqueting Room is a recreation of a historic scheme.

Conservation Policy 32.

Ensure that the redecoration schemes of the spaces and fabric of high heritage significance:

- *Conserve the remaining original finishes such as painted decoration and floor finishes*
- *Respect the overall interior style (Inter-war Academic Classical)*
- *Respect the architectural elements and divisions (dado, main body, frieze)*
- *Allow evidence of significant earlier schemes to be retained under new schemes (eg preparation for new paintwork should not obliterate evidence of past decorative schemes lying underneath)*
- *Do not introduce conjectural reconstruction with historic styling or motifs*
- *Seek to reconstruct known missing significant elements where possible (eg reproduce the historic carpet in Council Chamber)*

Conservation Policy 33.

Seek to retain and conserve the original tiles, joinery, and marble partitions in their original configuration in the ground floor toilets.

See also the Newcastle City Hall Inventory Sheets on particular materials, elements and spaces in Part 2 of this CMP.



Figure 25: Ground Floor Ladies Toilets in 2001. If the use of the space needs to change to make loading and kitchen areas more viable, then consider re-using some of the original fittings in the new WC facility. An archival record should also be made of the space prior to change.

3.8 MOVABLE HERITAGE, ARTWORKS, FURNISHINGS AND PLAQUES

Newcastle City Hall has many items such as artworks and furnishings which contribute to the heritage significance of the place, and some which may be of heritage significance in their own right.

There are a great number of memorial plaques inside City Hall. This practice of aldermen and other dignitaries inscribing their names in the history of the building in the form of plaques, tablets and later bronze medallions, has been one of the most consistent ways of commemorating milestone events and responding to social change.

The City of Newcastle Coat of Arms has evolved over time; a painted coat of arms is located on the underside of the stairs above the first floor landing. There is a proliferation of Coat of Arms decals throughout the complex.

City Hall contains murals painted by John Olsen and John Montefiore. It is desirable that they remain in situ and details regarding their creation and the individual artists and their association with Newcastle and City Hall be recorded. There are also numerous paintings, a tapestry and fabric artworks. Should the condition of the artworks deteriorate specialist advice regarding suitable treatment should be sought.

City Hall has numerous items of furniture and sculpture, including items related to sister city links, clocks, bells, ornaments and artefacts either purchased or donated. Any elements temporarily

removed should be entered into an inventory to facilitate future reinstatement and/or an understanding of their provenance and originality.

All original elements removed from their original location within Newcastle City Hall should be retained and stored. These items should be catalogued, photographed and labelled prior to storage. These items should be stored in a secure centralised location. The stored items can be used to replace like elements which have been damaged or destroyed.

Where possible, elements held in store which can be returned to known former locations, should be reinstated as a matter of priority. Two cast ceramic stage vases used for formal events in Newcastle City Hall are currently located in the chair store/basement. A full inventory of basement items needs to be carried out.

Conservation Policy 34.

- *Provide an inventory of any significant movable heritage, artworks, furniture and monuments associated with Newcastle City Hall. Include registration, cataloguing and labeling of all items and security, monitoring and maintenance strategies.*
- *Where an item of significance has to be removed as the sole means of ensuring its survival, relocate it to a new appropriate location or store for future reinstatement. If it cannot be located on site consider Newcastle Region Art Gallery or Newcastle Regional Museum*
- *Prior to removal or relocation of such items ensure its original location and condition is recorded and archived.*
- *Seek specialist and experienced advice as required on movable heritage items. For example the Regional Art Gallery could oversee the cataloguing and maintenance of movable heritage, artworks, furniture and monuments.*
- *Develop a policy for the design and location of new sculpture, monuments, plaques; Coats of Arms; and decals generally. Such a policy can be part of the Newcastle City Hall signage policy.*

See also the Newcastle City Hall Inventory Sheets on particular materials, elements and spaces in Part 2 of this CMP including:

- Synchronised Clock System (Inventory Sheet 11)



Figure 26: Newcastle Coat of Arms now behind the Montifiore Mural.

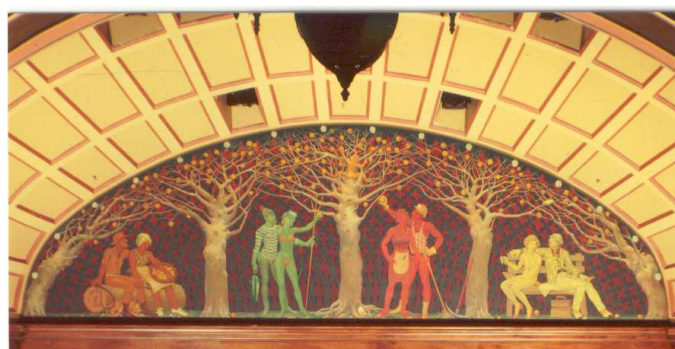


Figure 27: Montifiore Mural in NCH Concert Hall 2001

3.9 SIGNAGE

Signage at NCH can be found internally and externally. It relates to naming of the spaces and functions, directional signage, regulatory signage and interpretive signage. Signs can be permanent or temporary.

There is no tradition for exterior signage - the building style expresses its function.

In the interior there are particular traditions and practices for signs. Signage for room function is in etched glazing. There is also painted lettering on doors and many different types of modern signage, which are uncoordinated, usually decals attached to glazing. Some signage is in an inappropriate 'reproduction' art deco style.

A signage policy should be developed for all forms of signage at City Hall and should include appropriate forms and fixings as well as the layout, font and appropriate colours. Once signage policy has been developed a manual can be prepared that contains examples of appropriate signs, sample layouts, fonts, colours and materials, and their method of fixing. A vocabulary of signs for different purposes should be developed, for both temporary and permanent signs. The signage manual should be developed in conjunction with a graphic and/or industrial designer. The manual should also clearly set out the process for approvals.

Conservation Policy 35. Signage

All temporary or permanent signage should be under the control of the asset manager with responsibility for NCH. New signage proposals and any Signage Manual should include input from a professional graphic designer and should address the following:

- The approval process and possible exempt and complying signage*
- A vocabulary of new permanent and temporary signs designed to a high quality including sizes, fonts, colours and materials. Provide sample sign layouts. Re-interpretation of traditional styles may be considered e.g. gold lettering. Adopt a consistent approach for each type, e.g. exit, toilets, room number or name, public directions.*
- Details of fixings or self – supports. Do not fix permanent signs to significant elements or fabric including sandstone, timber joinery, decorative plaster and paint, lampposts or flagpoles. Where possible consider free standing or 'shingle' signage solutions.*
- Provision of tactile signage for the visually impaired where appropriate*
- Appropriate forms for 'work in progress' signs.*
- Rationalisation of existing signage and avoiding clutter of signage*
- Location of signs should reflect configuration and architectural vocabulary of existing i.e. not across mouldings or panels.*
- Design and manufacture a range of temporary signs that complement the character of City Hall. Identify range of needs for signage, e.g. Public direction, Announce events, Programs, Seating arrangements.*
- Do not use makeshift temporary signs or multiple types of signs*

- *Signage to allow for changing text for different events. System to be high quality, well designed, and may be modern but must relate to the spaces in which it will be used and shouldn't overpower character of space.*

Conservation Policy 36 - Temporary Banners & Flags

The use of temporary banners and flags on the exterior of City Hall is a traditional use and should continue. Minimise the impact of temporary signage on the building fabric by designing a banner display system and fixing, preferably free standing; fixed to fabric of low or neutral significance or fixed into joints.

For example see the banner support system employed at the Australian Museum Sydney.

Conservation Policy 37 - Existing Signs

Existing signs, which are part of the original fabric, should be treated as follows:

- *Retain and conserve (including maintenance, repair and replacement if necessary) - even if current function changed.*
- *Record each noting scale and in detail to enable recreation. (if broken or damaged)*
- *Do not add new signs mimicking the original features or art deco styling.*

3.10 NEW WORKS & USES GENERALLY

See also policies relating to Planning & Managing Change above.

Significant and Compatible Uses

The use of Newcastle City Hall for the operation of the NCC in terms of administration, council meetings and other formal and informal NCC functions is seen as an integral part of its purpose and heritage significance. The use of the Newcastle City Hall as the publicly accessible venue for the democratic functions of NCC and for hire by the individuals and groups is also an integral part of its heritage significance of the place.

City Hall hosts Newcastle City Council meetings in the ornate and historic top floor council chamber, the Lord Mayor's offices are adjacent while the venue provides meeting rooms for council committees, consultative processes and community information sessions. Other official uses include ceremonial occasions, citizenship ceremonies, hosting of visiting dignitaries and community forums.

City Hall Concert Hall and to a lesser extent, the Banquet Hall (former Supper Room) are venues for international, national and local performances, temporary exhibitions, banquets, weddings, conferences, political and other large scale meetings and a range of other events held by, or involving the citizens of Newcastle.

It is assumed Newcastle City Hall will continue as the primary venue for the traditional functions for which it was designed and constructed – as it has continued for nearly 80 years. However there is precedent in Australia and overseas for town and city halls being adapted as more generic community event venues or even for their use by private commercial operations. This can occur for

example if councils are amalgamated and town halls become undersized or redundant. Changing technologies can also impact on the suitability of structures for their original use.

Although the overall traditional use of the Newcastle City Hall may continue, change of use for individual spaces may be considered from time to time, to accommodate improved disabled and goods access or new building services for example. Such changes to accommodate new customs, legislation and technology should be undertaken in spaces of lesser significance where possible. However continuing support for the traditional uses often found in such secondary spaces, such as cloakrooms and chair storage, are important. As stated elsewhere such changes should also be reversible.

Burra Charter Articles 7.1 and 7.2 give important guidance on significant use and compatible use.

Conservation Policy 38. Conserve Significant Uses

The current and traditional use of Newcastle City Hall for many of the primary democratic functions of NCC should continue (including Council Meeting Room and Lord Mayor's Rooms and the Cultural Events) for as long as possible.

For example the following purpose built chambers should continue the function for which they were designed:

- *Council Chamber.*
- *Mayor's Reception Room.*
- *Banquet Room (Supper Room).*
- *Town Hall.*
- *Entrance Vestibule and Porte Cochere.*

Conservation Policy 39. New Uses

- *Any proposals for change of use should only consider compatible uses; that is uses which involve no, or minimal, negative impact on the heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall. This CMP should be a guide to considering whether there are impacts.*
- *Any change of use of all or part of the Newcastle City Hall should provide for continued public accessibility on a day-to-day basis to a major proportion of the current public places. Less accessible parts of the Newcastle City Hall should be made available for public inspection on an annual basis.*
- *Changes of use of individual spaces to accommodate new customs, legislation and technology should be undertaken in spaces of lesser significance or should impact only on fabric of lesser significance where possible. Such changes should also be as reversible¹² as possible.*

¹² "Reversible" means that the action can be removed in the future with no or minimal damage to significance spaces or fabric.

Public Access

Public access is generally available to the hallways, toilets, main entrance and stairs. The Concert Hall and Banquet Room are not accessible except when in use for a particular function. The Council Chamber, Mayor's office and reception rooms are only accessible by invitation.

Conservation Policy 40. Public Access

Paths, entrances and corridors should remain open to the public where possible.

3.11 SPECIFIC POSSIBLE NEW WORKS

At the time of writing this 2008 CMP a number of proposed functional changes and maintenance works were being considered for Newcastle City Hall. These are discussed below and include:

- New Landscape Strategy
- Improvement of Loading Access
- External Balcony Refurbishment
- New Lift Access
- Concert Hall Improvements
- Future Uses and Structures on the Roof
- Other Works

This discussion of currently proposed works and their related policies do not negate the need for Development Approval where the works may impact on the heritage significance of City Hall. However, should City Hall be placed on the State Heritage Register, they could form the basis of Site Specific Exemptions under Section 57 (2) of the NSW Heritage Act, 1977.



Figure 28: Lantern – a gift from Sister City Ube, Japan. Photo 2008.



Figure 29:: Seat end from Concert Hall Gallery Seating 2001

New Landscape Strategy

While some of the plantings around City Hall may be associated with the original landscape design, many are self-sown or are of inappropriate varieties. Currently there is no cohesive design for the paving around City Hall. Both the plantings and the paving need review to ensure they are not contributing to deterioration of the façade stonework. Any new landscape design needs to relate to the surrounding civic precincts and ensure conservation of the building fabric and significant monuments.

Conservation Policy 41. New Landscape Strategy

Prepare and implement a comprehensive landscape strategy for Newcastle City Hall in accordance with the Landscape Conservation Policy 24 above.

Loading Access

A project is currently being considered to improve access for event set-up and for maintenance vehicles to both City Hall and the Civic Theatre. This will require modifications to Christie Street and to the rear of City Hall. In order to provide an all weather facility the loading area is to be roofed in a new contemporary steel structure. Although this loading facility will have some visual impact on City Hall when viewed from Christie Street and Christie Place it is considered essential to the viability of both Newcastle City Hall and the Civic Theatre as venues appropriate to visiting international performances. The new facility will take pressure off such delivery vehicles using the main entrance ramp / porte cochere. Pavements will need to be upgraded to take the impact of the loads. This upgrade should be coordinated with the Landscape Strategy at Conservation Policies 24 and 41 above. When the adjacent site containing Civic Arcade is redeveloped, opportunities to provide underground loading access should be explored (including removal of the currently proposed canopy).

Conservation Policy 42. Loading Access

- Access for goods vehicles should be designed to not detract from the amenity of Christie Place or Christie Lane. It should provide for deliveries and pick up/set down only.*
- The widening of Christie Lane and any modification of Christie Place, including alterations to adjacent garden beds or pavements, should be preceded by an analysis of their the impact on City Hall and Christie Place and any landscape elements of heritage significance.*
- Any canopy associated with a loading facility should be free standing, removable, and of an elegant contemporary design responding to the architectural rhythm of Newcastle City Hall and the Civic Theatre. Care must be taken to ensure rainwater from the canopy does not wet the facades causing salt damp and other deterioration.*

City Hall Balcony Refurbishment

The City Hall Balcony (east) is well used for small functions and for visiting dignitaries to greet community gatherings below. The membrane on the balcony is failing causing fabric deterioration below. In addition the balcony detailing does not meet safety requirements. There is a seat around the balcony edge on a steel frame (c.1970s?), which has an intrusive impact on the

Newcastle City Hall. It is proposed to replace this seat detail with a clear glass balustrade set well back from the stone balustrade (but keeping the steel frame - partly to allow maintenance access). The steel frame currently has galvanised bolts and these should be replaced with 316 stainless steel or equivalent.

Conservation Policy 43. Balcony Upgrade

Prepare and implement a design to upgrade the Newcastle City Hall balcony including replacement of existing surface with a new waterproof, trafficable deck, and removal of the existing perimeter seat. Any fixings work (including replacement of existing fixings) should be 316 stainless steel or equivalent.



Figure 30: Façade Detail 2007 showing recessed façade areas. The sandstone is in better condition in these areas however the balconies formed at the base of the recesses have drainage problems.



Figure 31: Façade Detail 2007 showing deterioration of sandstone due to failure of sandstone steel fixings and past failure of rainwater system. Landscaping around the perimeter of NCH also needs review.

External Façade Repairs

As noted above the façade of Newcastle City Hall is in urgent need of conservation works. In particular the mild steel fixings tying the stone cladding to the structure are corroding in many areas, causing the stone cladding to crack and exfoliate. There are also issues with: loss of carved detail below overhangs from falling damp; corrosion of the steel windows and frames; and drainage from recessed sections of the facades. A program to begin a long-term repair and maintenance regime and to improve the presentation of the Newcastle City Hall is a priority for NCC. These issues are further discussed at Inventory Sheets 1 Exterior Generally and 3 Stonework 7 Renderwork.

Conservation Policy 44. *External Façade Repairs*

Prepare and implement a façade conservation program for the external façade of Newcastle City Hall including replacement of corroded steel fixings with 316 stainless steel; new lead flashings to overhangs; replacement of lost stone detail; conservation of steel windows and frames; and resolution of the drainage from the façade recesses.

New Lift Access

Currently Newcastle City Hall has only one passenger lift at the eastern end of the building. There is no lift dedicated for use by the main kitchen on the ground floor or for loading and unloading for events in the upper level function areas. Suters Architects (2007) have developed a new scheme which provides for a new multi-purpose lift at the western end of the building, close to both the loading dock and main kitchen. This new lift will also give access to the roof level. The spaces impacted on by the new lift are all of low or neutral heritage significance with the exception of the Ground Floor Men's Toilets. Both the Men's and Women's Toilets on the ground floor contain original marble toilet partitions, wall tiles and mirrors which are considered to be of heritage significance. As the Women's Toilet is not affected by the proposal and can be conserved in-situ, it is considered acceptable to alter the Men's toilet spaces in order to improve the viability of the Newcastle City Hall as a premier function venue. Consideration should be given to relocation of the marble toilet partitions and the mirrors to the new Men's toilet facility. The lift will also require loss of original structural fabric due to new floor and roof penetrations; however this is a small area within the whole building and is therefore acceptable in order to increase the viability of Newcastle City Hall. Carried out in accordance with this CMP care will be taken to make sure the changes do not create fabric conservation problems in the future.

Conservation Policy 45. *New Lift*

The proposal for a new lift in accordance with sketch plans prepared by Suters Architects in 2007 is supported by this CMP as it impacts mainly on spaces of low or neutral significance and ensures future viability of Newcastle City Hall as a premier function and performance venue. Care shall be taken that the changes do not create new fabric conservation problems in the future. Consideration should be given to relocation of the marble toilet partitions and mirrors from the existing Ground Floor Men's toilets to the proposed new Ground Floor Men's toilet facility.

Concert Hall

A number of improvements are planned for the Concert Hall including:

- Repainting
- Review of Gallery Seating
- Electrical and Lighting Upgrade

The Concert Hall is a space of High Significance, and many elements and finishes within the Concert Hall are also of High Significance. Therefore any changes to the Concert Hall need to respond to the Conservation Policies in this CMP and the CMP Inventory Sheet for the Concert Hall. It is appreciated that the Concert Hall Gallery Seating needs upgrading for safety and comfort and to allow for larger audience numbers. Consideration should be given to keeping a

representative sample of the original seating. Elsewhere a similar solution to that used in the Newcastle Civic Theatre is considered acceptable – i.e. retention of the seat ends and replacement of the seats and seat supports with new sympathetic elements.

Conservation Policy 46. *Concert Hall Improvements*

Improvements to the Concert Hall can be considered to increase its viability as premier performance space provided it takes into account the conservation policies in this CMP (Including Inventory Sheet 16). For example conservation policies 32 Retention of decorative finishes and 14 Archival Recording would apply). If the Gallery Seating needs upgrading consider retaining a small representative sample of the original and also recycling the seat ends on the new seating mechanism (as carried out in the Civic Theatre).

Other Work

A number of other improvements are planned at Newcastle City Hall. These will only impact on spaces and materials which has low or neutral significance. They include:

- Kitchen Refurbishment including improved services & equipment
- New Banquet Hall Flooring
- Toilet Refurbishments
- Improved Maintenance Access (eg to roofspaces)
- Computer Centre Relocation

Conservation Policy 47.

Other works in spaces or affecting fabric of low significance or which are neutral or intrusive are to be undertaken in accordance with the conservation policies in this CMP to ensure they do not have unforeseen impacts on adjacent spaces or materials which are of High or Moderate Significance. Opportunities should be taken to enhance heritage significance as part of the Works.

Future Uses and Structures on the Roof

It is possible that in the future consideration will be given to additional structures on the roof, including creation of a trafficable floor, a balustrade to meet contemporary safety regulations and possibly even a rooftop function area. This CMP does not address the functional, safety, structural or financial feasibility of such rooftop development. In heritage terms such changes are feasible provided they do not result in unacceptable visual intrusions nor result in extensive intervention and/or fabric conservation problems.

Conservation Policy 48. *Roof-top development*

Any consideration of roof top development should ensure that:

- *it does not result in visual intrusion (i.e. is set well back from parapet lines and employs modest forms and materials); and*
- *it does not result in extensive intervention and/or fabric conservation problems (eg falling damp from roof penetrations or stone deterioration from inappropriate fixings)*

3.12 PROTECTING & PROMOTING CONSERVATION

Statutory Listing of the City Hall

“Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts” are currently listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5. They are also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

As this CMP has assessed the Newcastle City Hall as having aspects of State Heritage Significance the nomination of City Hall and its subsequent listing on the State Heritage Register is appropriate.

Newcastle City Council has previously nominated Newcastle City Hall to the NSW Heritage Council for listing on the State Heritage Register under the NSW Heritage Act 1977. Discussions in February 2008 with the NSW Heritage Office indicated that independent consultants are currently reviewing this nomination as part of a general review of State significant items identified in Newcastle by previous studies. The Heritage Office also indicated that a larger Newcastle Civic Precinct is more likely to be considered favourably for listing on the State Heritage Register.

Conservation Policy 49 Local Government Heritage Controls

- *Newcastle City Hall (including associated lamp posts) should continue to be listed as a heritage item under the appropriate Newcastle City Council statutory planning instrument. The curtilage and Statement of Significance should be reviewed in accordance with this 2008 Review of this CMP.*
- *Newcastle City Hall should continue to be part of a Heritage Conservation Area protected under a planning instrument that includes as a minimum Civic Park, Wheeler Place, Christie Street and Christie Place.*

Conservation Policy 50 The NSW State Heritage Register

- *Newcastle City Hall (including associated lamp posts) should be considered for inclusion on the State Heritage Register in accordance with the curtilage and Statement of Heritage Significance in this 2008 Review of this CMP.*
- *If the Newcastle City Hall is placed on the State Heritage Register request that the Heritage Council also consider exemptions in accordance with Section 57(2) of the NSW Heritage Act 1977 for maintenance (sections 3.6-3.8) and for new works to the extent identified in this Conservation Management Plan (sections 3.9-3.10) in addition to the Standard Exemptions under the Heritage Act.*

The Setting, Views and Vistas

Newcastle CBD is markedly linear, about 3 km long and generally less than 0.5 km wide. It has grown westward from its east end, where the Coal River convict settlement began in 1804.

Newcastle City Hall sits within the Newcastle Civic and Cultural Precinct to the west of the initial European settlement. It can be considered as the centrepiece of the Precinct.

City Hall and its clock tower were designed to be a Newcastle landmark. It is identified as one of seven primary landmarks on the Newcastle Register of Landmarks. Primary landmarks are structures that have a special role in forming and reinforcing the identity and perception of the city centre.

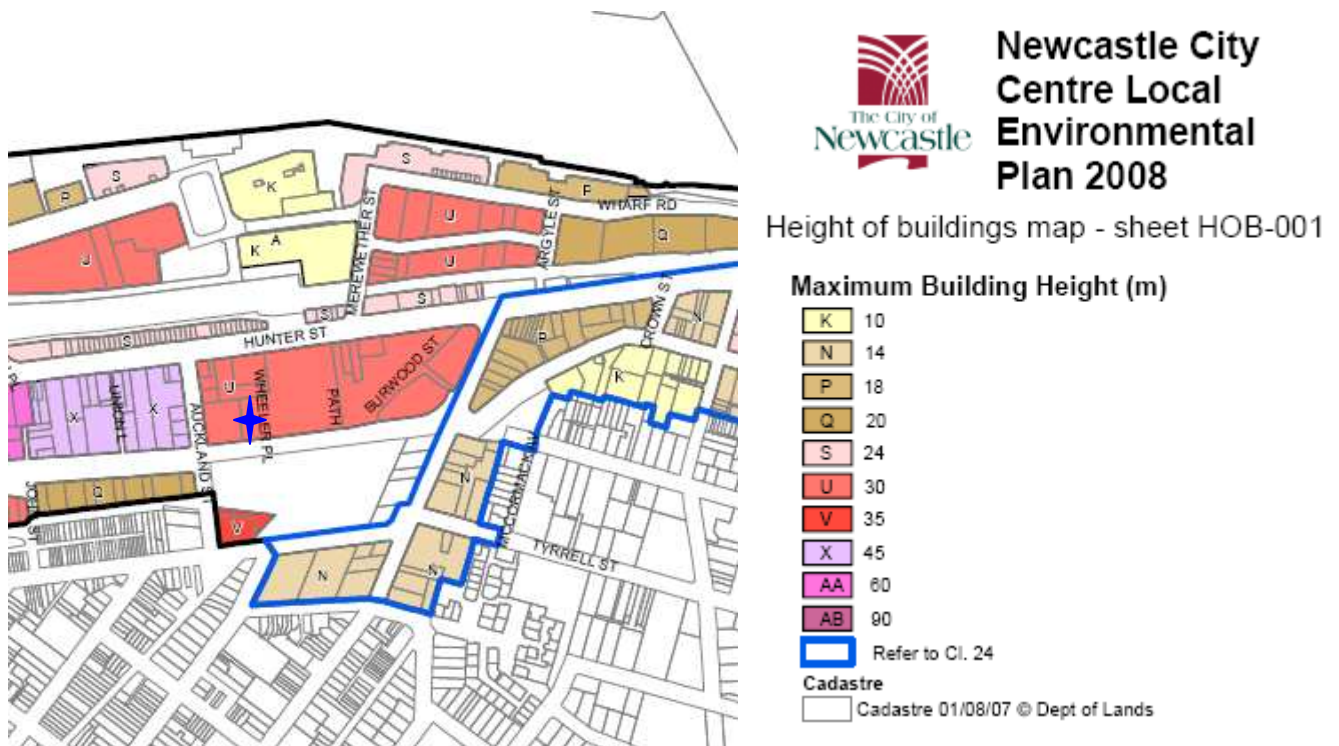


Figure 32: Detail from the 'height of buildings map HOB-001' from Newcastle LEP 2008. The location of Newcastle City Hall is represented by the blue 4-pointed star.

NCC adopted a Master Plan for the Civic and Cultural Precinct in 2004 which considered the importance of the City Hall to central Newcastle and provides guidelines to promote sustainable development in the vicinity that respects the landmark values of the City Hall. The recently gazetted Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2008 provides restrictions on adjacent development which also consider the setting of City Hall, including a height limit of 30 metres (a similar height to the circular Newcastle City Council Offices on Wheeler Place). These current LEP controls are considered satisfactory given that the nearest development site (the Civic Arcade and properties to the west) is a similar distance from Newcastle City Hall as the 10 storey NCC Offices on Wheeler Place.

Civic Park and Christie Place were created in response to the presence of the Newcastle City Hall - the City Hall and the Park are strongly linked in an historical sense in addition to their urban design relationship. These issues are reflected in the current Management Plan for Civic Park and in the Master Plan for Christie Place (AJ+C Landscape in June 2000).

Conservation Policy 51.

NCC should continue to respect the heritage values of Newcastle City Hall and its setting when establishing guidelines and statutory planning provisions and when considering development on and

around the Newcastle City Hall site. In particular such guidelines, statutory planning provisions and development considerations should recognise:

- *The landmark status of the City Hall as the centrepiece of the Newcastle Civic and Cultural Precinct (i.e. Newcastle City Hall should not be dominated by adjacent new development)*
- *The landmark status of the City Hall tower and views to the tower from surrounding areas*
- *The special urban design and historic relationships between Newcastle City Hall, Civic Park, Wheeler Place and Christie Place, including the strong axial relationships.*
- *The presence of fully accessible public open space on all sides of the Newcastle City Hall.*

Conservation Policy 52.

Any development within the Newcastle Civic and Cultural Precinct which is likely to impact on the heritage significance of City Hall should be accompanied by a Statement of Heritage Impact prepared by the proponent in accordance with NCC guidelines.

Ownership, Leasing and Use

The heritage values, maintenance and presentation of properties such as the Newcastle City Hall can suffer if they are subject to differing management regimes or strata subdivision.

Conservation Policy 53.

The continuing traditional public use of Newcastle City Hall is of such heritage significance that it the property should remain under a single title and management.

Leasing of parts of Newcastle City Hall on an event by event basis now regularly occurs. It is possible that in the future longer term leases may be considered. In all cases such leases should be informed by the provisions in this CMP and have sufficient force to ensure continued compliance.

Conservation Policy 54.

Any leasing arrangements should be subject to the relevant provisions of this CMP and have sufficient force to ensure continued compliance.

Interpretation

The heritage values of Newcastle City Hall are a rich part of the history of the City of Newcastle. Although much of the building is regularly available to the public, its heritage value is not always fully appreciated. Interpretive activities and materials could add to the visitor experience. These could include:

- Publication/s on the history and heritage of Newcastle City Hall (including web based publications)
- Discrete interpretive signage coordinated with other signage requirements for Newcastle City Hall
- Guided tours.

The interpretation should also be linked to the interpretation of the Newcastle Civic and cultural precinct as a whole.

Care should be taken not to 'over-interpret', particularly interpretation in the form of signage. Thematic Interpretation is a method where key messages are evolved about a place based on its heritage values and management issues to stimulate an appropriate level of visitor interest and care for a place.

Limited oral history was undertaken by the historian as a result of an advertisement for photographs of the interior of City Hall. A structured oral and social history should be undertaken to establish the significance of the Civic Precinct development enhance the City Hall Conservation Management Plan. The community, former staff, tenants and other stakeholders should be interviewed, including former Mayors, Town Clerks, architects and the builders.

Conservation Policy 55.

Develop an interpretive strategy for Newcastle City Hall. Consider the following:

- *How best to communicate the history and significance of City Hall to visitors.*
- *a professional oral and social history of City Hall.*
- *Coordinate research and interpretive strategies with a strategy for the Newcastle Civic and Cultural Precinct. Consider a thematic interpretation approach.*

See also Conservation Policy 35 Signage.

3.13 ADOPTION & MANAGEMENT OF THIS CMP

Newcastle City Council requires that this CMP be a document which provides practical advice to the place managers and asset managers who are responsible for the use, care and future of the Newcastle City Hall.

In addition the CMP will also assist planners and other stakeholders in assessing the impacts of proposed works on the heritage significance of City Hall.

The CMP should also be a publicly accessible document to enable the Newcastle community to learn about the heritage values and heritage management challenges of the Newcastle City Hall.

If the Newcastle City Council formally adopts the CMP then those using the document are more likely to follow its recommendations.

In February/March 2008 a preliminary draft of this CMP was circulated to the following for comment:

- NCC Manager Civic Precinct Newcastle
- NCC Venue Services Coordinator
- NCC Asset Management Unit

- NCC Building Projects
- NCC Business Services
- NCC City Project Management
- NCC Strategic Planning and Development
- The National Trust of Australia (NSW) Hunter Region
- The Heritage Council of NSW
- Newcastle Historical Society

Conservation Policy 56.

The Newcastle City Council should formally adopt this Conservation Management Plan as a basis for the future asset management of Newcastle City Hall.

Conservation Policy 57.

Once endorsed by the Newcastle City Council this Conservation Management Plan should be distributed as outlined below:

- *NCC Corporate Services (for placement on the NCC website)*
- *NCC City Services*
- *NCC Strategic Planning & Development*
- *The National Trust of Australia (NSW) Hunter Region*
- *The Heritage Council of NSW (NSW Heritage Office Library)*
- *Newcastle Historical Society*
- *NSW Department of Commerce Library*

In accordance with legal obligations copies of the complete Conservation Management Plan will also be lodged with:

- *The State Library of NSW*
- *National Library of Australia*
- *Newcastle Library*

Conservation Policy 58.

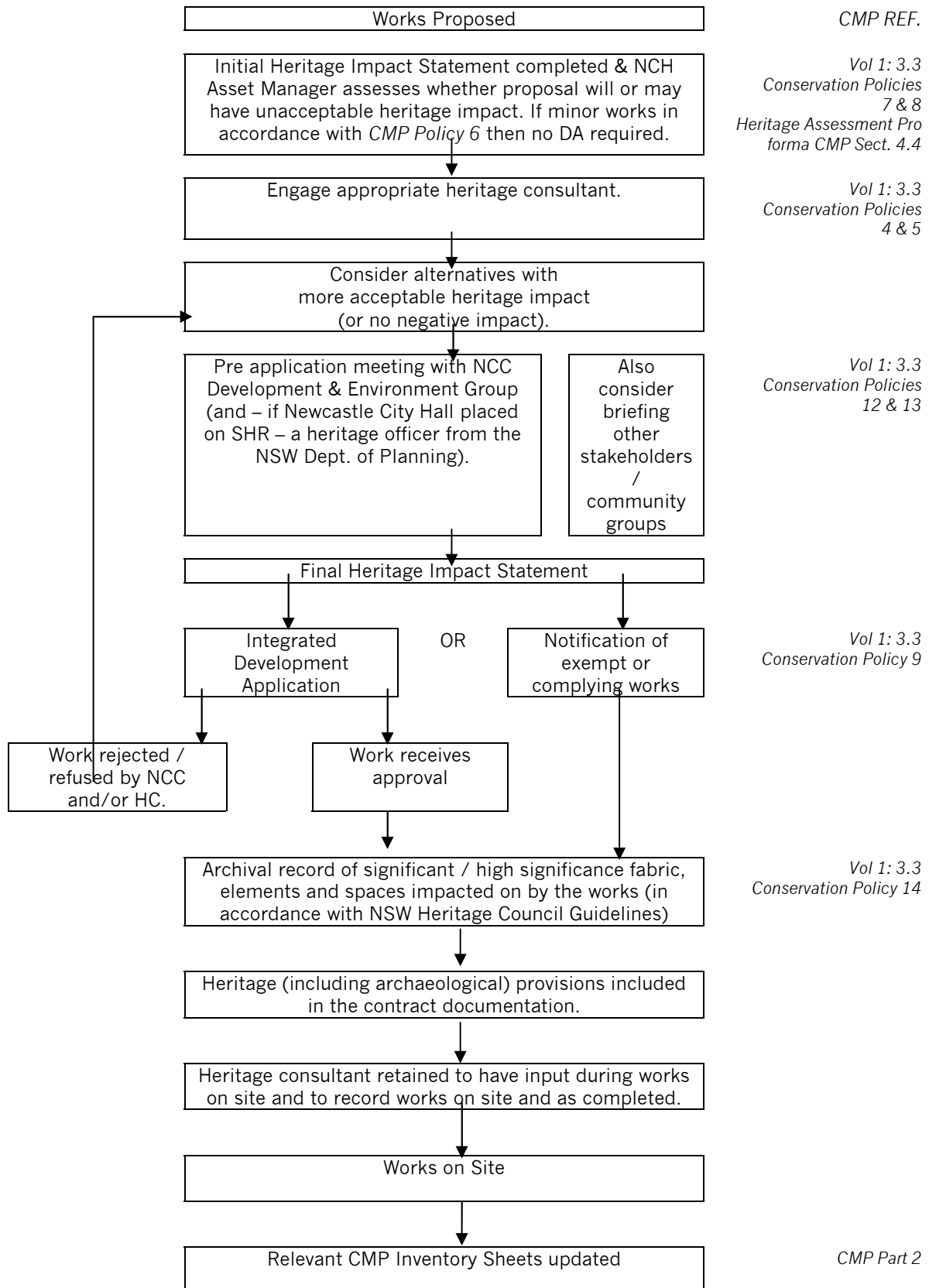
This CMP should be reviewed at least every 10 years or as new information comes to hand.

The CMP Inventory Sheets should be updated as new work is carried out.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 CHANGE PROCESS DIAGRAM

This process reflects both the current situation where the Newcastle City Hall is listed as a heritage item under the Newcastle LEP 2008 and its future listing on the State Heritage Register.



4.2 NEW WORKS CHECKLIST (including major maintenance works)

Actions to be undertaken prior to the works occurring:

#	ACTION	CMP REFERENCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.	Is it minor works? Significance of spaces and fabric impacted on (including adjacent spaces & fabric) established?	<i>Vol 1: 3.3 Conservation Policies 6, 7 & 8</i>	
2.	Consultants with relevant heritage experience involved in project?	<i>Vol 1: 3.3 Conservation Policies 4 & 5</i>	
3.	Relevant Policies of CMP considered?	<i>List.</i>	
4.	Heritage Impact Statement required?	<i>Vol 1: 3.3 Conservation Policies 6, 7 & 8</i>	
5.	Would project and its impact be better understood through condition assessment, more accurate measured drawings or other additional research?		
6.	Where the work will impact on fabric or spaces of Moderate or High Heritage Significance have several alternatives been explored to ensure there is no prudent or feasible alternative (i.e. a solution with less or no heritage impact)?		
7.	Consider opportunities for interpretation of the history and significance of Newcastle City Hall and the Civic precinct.	<i>Vol 1: 3.12 Conservation Policy 33</i>	
8.	Pre application meeting with Newcastle City Council Heritage advisor (and – if Newcastle City Hall placed on SHR – a heritage officer from the NSW Dept. of Planning).	<i>Vol 1: 3.3 Conservation Policy 12</i>	
9.	Consider also a briefing with relevant community groups (eg National Trust & Historical Society).	<i>Vol 1: 3.3 Conservation Policy 13</i>	
10.	Fabric or spaces to be altered recorded with drawings and/or photographs in accordance with Heritage Council guidelines?	<i>Vol 1: 3.3 Conservation Policy 14</i>	
11.	Final Statement of Heritage Impact prepared.		
12.	Development Approval obtained (or reason project is exempt or complying documented). If Newcastle City Hall placed on SHR then Heritage Council approval may also be required (or a notification of exempted works).	<i>Vol 1: 3.3 Conservation Policy 9</i>	
13.	If excavation involved, archaeological provisions included in the works order and/or specifications.	<i>Vol 1: 3.5 Conservation Policy 21</i>	
14.	DA (or Heritage Act) conditions of consent concerning heritage issues included in the project?		
15.	Works Order or specifications require particular works to be carried out by tradespeople with relevant qualifications and experience.		
16.	Works Order or specifications allow for recording during construction		

After completion of works:

17.	Update relevant Inventory Sheets in CMP.	<i>CMP Part 2</i>	
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4.3 MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

This is a simple maintenance checklist is for use by the NCC asset manager responsible for Newcastle City Hall. It is suitable for inclusion with a more holistic maintenance checklist.

#	ACTION	FREQUENCY (MINIMUM)	CMP REF.	DATE LAST INSP.
1.	Remove self-sown plantings from against façade and balustrading.	3 monthly	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 9.</i>	
2.	Check roof gutters and downpipes for blockages.	3 monthly	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 1.</i>	
3.	Check roof membrane for leaks.	6 monthly	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 1.</i>	
4.	Check kitchen and sanitary plumbing & drainage for leaks & overflows which may contribute to damp in the building fabric.	6 monthly	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 1.</i>	
5.	Check fire sprinkler, A/C & irrigation services for leaks which may contribute to damp in the building fabric.	6 monthly	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 8.</i>	
6.	Check early warning fire system and fire fighting equipment.	In accordance with Fire Brigade requirements.	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 8.</i>	
7.	Check security systems.	In accordance with security company requirements.	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 8.</i>	
8.	Inspect external render and repair to match existing (including render mix) as required.	Yearly	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 3.</i>	
9.	Inspect mortar to stonework and re-point to match existing (including mortar mix) as required.	Yearly Frequency will decrease following implementation of full façade conservation strategy.	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 3.</i>	
10.	Inspect external stonework condition and remove loose stone where in danger of falling.	Yearly Frequency will decrease following implementation of full façade conservation strategy.	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 3.</i>	
11.	Check main clock and synchronised clock mechanism.	2 yearly	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 11.</i>	
12.	Check paint finishes on external metalwork / timberwork and consider repainting if fabric deteriorating.	5 yearly	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 1.</i>	
13.	Check wear and tear on steps and landings and repair to match existing as required.	5 yearly	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 5.</i>	
14.	Check internal painted finishes and consider repair & repainting if fabric deteriorating.	10 yearly	<i>Part 2: Inv. Sheet 4.</i>	

4.4 PRELIMINARY HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

Prepared by (name and contact details):

.....

Description of proposed works (where, what, how):

.....

Relevant dates (statement prepared, works to start and finish):

.....

Alternatives considered (and why discarded):

.....

	Space, fabric, element - affected (consider also adjacent spaces, fabric & elements)	Significance (see CMP Vol 2)	Impact (known or possible)	Steps to be taken (to ameliorate possible negative impacts).
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

Drawings / photos / other attached:

Statutory Development Approval Required?

Signed & dated proponent:

.....

Signed & dated NCH Asset Manager

.....

5.0 CMP INFORMATION

5.1 PROJECT TEAM & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This 2008 review of the Newcastle City Hall CMP was undertaken by Mary Knaggs, Senior Heritage Architect, Heritage Group, Government Architect's Office, NSW Department of Commerce. Caitlin Allen, Archaeologist for the GAO Heritage Group provided input on the archaeology policies. Other people from the GAO Heritage Group who assisted with this project were Vivian Sioutas and Desmond Corby. Bruce Pettman, Principal Heritage Architect, reviewed this CMP. The GAO Landscape Group provided input on the Landscape Policies.

The 2001 Draft CMP was prepared by: Anne Higham, Chris Marks, and Challis Smedley of the then GAO Heritage Design Services; John Carr, architect with the Newcastle Office of the Dept of Public Works and Services; and David McBeath (OHM Consultants).

The history of Newcastle City Hall was prepared in 2001 by Rosemary Melville, Historian, Hunter History Consultants. It is included in Part 2 of this 2008 CMP.

The authors of this 2008 CMP review acknowledge the assistance of the following individuals and organisations that helped with their time and other resources during the preparation of this report:

- Grahame Wilson, Project Manager NCC
- Sarah Pearce, Heritage Officer NCC
- Greg Dickinson, Coordinator Architectural Services NCC

The 2001 CMP also acknowledged the assistance of the following people:

- Bill Swift, City Hall Manager
- Oscar Aguiar, Asset Management Officer NCC
- Susan Young, Coordinator Landscape Architectural Services NCC

5.2 TERMS & ABBREVIATIONS

Many of the conservation terms in this CMP have the meaning given in the *Australian ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance* (Burra Charter). They are shown in italics in this section.

A/NSW	Archives Office of NSW
<i>Adaptation</i>	Modifying a place to suit proposed compatible uses.
BCA	Building Code of Australia
Burra Charter	The Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter 1999.
CMP	Conservation Management Plan
<i>Compatible use</i>	A use involving no change to the culturally significant fabric, changes which are substantially reversible, or changes requiring minimal impact.
<i>Conservation</i>	All the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance. It includes maintenance and may according to circumstance include preservation, restoration and adaptation and will be commonly a combination of more than one of these.
DPW&S	Dept. of Public Works & Services (now the Office of Public Works & Services in the NSW Department of Commerce.
DUA&P	Dept. of Urban Affairs & Planning
<i>Fabric</i>	All the physical material of the place.
GAO	Government Architect's Office (NSW)
HDS	Heritage Design Services (now the GAO Heritage Group)

HO	NSW Heritage Office
ICOMOS	International Council of Monuments and Sites
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
<i>Maintenance</i>	The continuous protective care of the fabric, contents and setting of a place, and is to be distinguished from repair. Repair involves restoration or reconstruction and should be treated accordingly.
ML	Mitchell Library
NC/A	Newcastle Public Library Archives
NCC	Newcastle City Council
NCH	Newcastle City Hall
NMH	Newcastle Morning Herald
NT	National Trust of Australia (NSW)
<i>Preservation</i>	Maintaining the fabric of a place in its existing state and retarding deterioration.
RAIA	Royal Australian Institute of Architects
<i>Reconstruction</i>	Returning a place as nearly as possible to a known earlier state and is distinguished by the introduction of materials (new or old) into the fabric. This is not to be confused with either re-creation or conjectural reconstructions which are outside the scope of the charter.
REP	Regional Environmental Plan

Restoration Returning the existing fabric of a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material.

SCC/A Council of the City of Sydney Archives

SHR State Heritage Register

**Newcastle City Hall CMP
Part 2**

**Inventory Sheet 1
Exterior Generally**

Introduction

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. This Inventory Sheet deals with broad issues for the exterior and in particular with roofing and drainage.

See also Inventory Sheets 3. - 8. for the conservation of particular significant materials and finishes; and Inventory Sheet 9 Landscape & Setting.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally.

Newcastle City Hall is a three storey brick building with a steel and reinforced concrete structure and stairs. The external wall cladding and elements such as the porte cochere, the clock tower, balconies, balustrades and external stairs are clad in a skin of Sydney 'yellowblock' sandstone which is "pinned" into the structural concrete and brickwork with mild steel rods. Stone was the most popular material for town halls since it was obviously grander than brick and render, though considerably more expensive. Externally grilles, window and door frames in City Hall are of steel. The steel trusses roofing the Concert Hall support a coffered cast fibrous plaster ceiling.

The stonework and renderwork are dealt with in Inventory Sheet 3. and the steel windows in Inventory Sheet 7.

Tower

The Tower roof is constructed of timber clad with copper sheet in a stepped format. It is surmounted by a large copper cupola and a lightning conductor. This fabric appears to be in a good condition although a close inspection is required. There is also a built up membrane roof over the base of the tower. The clock is dealt with at Inventory Sheet 11 Synchronised Clock System

Roofing, Gutters, Rainwater heads and Downpipes

The roof over the Concert Hall is clad in metal roofing. The main roof is a concrete structure with a waterproof membrane (originally a bituminous membrane). There is a perimeter box gutter behind the stone parapet. These gutters feed into copper rainwater heads and copper rainwater pipes fixed to the outside of the building. The entire rainwater system was upgraded in 2003.

Balcony Drainage

The recessed balconies at first floor level behind the main stone columns have a waterproof membrane on concrete slab which drains into an internal downpipe. This system has failed causing 'falling damp' problems in the rooms under the balconies. The main balcony over the porte cochere is dealt with at Inventory Sheet 12.

Significance

The entire NCH is listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5 (known as "Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts"). It is also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

The exterior of the City Hall has HIGH significance as a fine example of an Inter-War Classical government building. It has landmark significance for the inner city of Newcastle.

Setting	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 9.
Form and design	HIGH	
Clocktower	HIGH	
Metal roofing	LOW / NEUTRAL	
Membrane roofing	LOW / NEUTRAL	
Downpipes and rainwater heads (form)	HIGH	
Stonework	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 3.
Renderwork	MODERATE	Inventory Sheet 3.
Steel Windows & Doors	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 7.
Joinery Doors (East & West Entrances Ground Level)	HIGH	Inventory Sheets 6. & 14.
Landscaping (overall)	LOW	Inventory Sheet 9.

Conservation Policies***Exterior Conservation Policy 1.***

The heritage significance of the exterior form and fabric of Newcastle City Hall should be conserved. Where new works (including maintenance and repair works) will have a negative impact on heritage values an assessment of heritage impact should be prepared including consideration of less intrusive solutions.

Exterior Conservation Policy 2.

Urgent inspection and scheduling of repair works is required for the City Hall Tower including repairs to the roof and clockface and a review of the seismic strengthening. As with other areas the removal of the corroding mild steel stone cladding fixings is also a priority.

Exterior Conservation Policy 3.

Urgent façade repairs are required at Newcastle City Hall including removal of corroding steel stone cladding fixings, and treatment of corrosion in the steel windows. Other works include removal of asbestos repointing, stonework repointing generally; and resolution of rising and falling damp situations. Issues of bird control and façade lighting also need consideration.

Exterior Conservation Policy 4.

Cyclical maintenance should continue to be implemented for the NCH exterior, including regular cleaning of the gutters, downpipes and drains. An annual inspection of the exterior is recommended to allow scheduling of catch-up maintenance, including repainting of some elements.

Exterior Conservation Policy 5.

If major changes to the exterior are proposed prepare a Statement of Heritage Impact.

List of Works / Studies

- 1929 Construction and finishing of NCH exterior
- 1980s Some facade repairs including lead flashings, epoxy repairs and use of coloured Wondabyne stone. These repairs have proved unsuccessful.
- 1990s Seismic strengthening to the tower following Newcastle Earthquake.
- 2002 Main roof membrane replaced, all copper gutters renewed.

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)

**Newcastle City Hall CMP
Part 2****Inventory Sheet 2
Interior Generally****Introduction**

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. This Inventory Sheet deals with broad issues for the interior.

See also Inventory Sheets: 1. Exterior Generally; Inventory Sheets 3. - 8. for the conservation of particular significant materials and finishes; Inventory Sheet 9 Landscape & Setting; and Inventory 10. – 19. for particular significant Elements and Spaces.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally. The interiors of Newcastle City Hall were carefully designed to suit their uses and the fashion of the period. Many of the spaces are given HIGH significance ratings.

The original decorative schemes of the Main Hall and Upper Gallery were quite complex. Similar decoration was located in the Main Entrance Lobby, Council Chamber and Mayors Reception Room.

In 1980-81 Newcastle City Council undertook a \$3 million refurbishment programme. Office staff occupied the building until 1977, when they were moved to the adjoining City Administrative Centre. The interior of the City Hall was redesigned to function as a function and conference centre. Air conditioning was introduced as well as a sound system, sound mixing facilities, new lighting, microphone points and the stage was extended. An additional Reception Room, holding 120 people was created on the second floor. The roof of the Porte Cochere was paved and perimeter seating introduced.

Movable Heritage Items

NCH has many items such as artworks and furnishings which contribute to the heritage significance of the place, and some which may be of heritage significance in their own right.

There are a great number of memorial plaques inside City Hall. This practice of inscribing their names in the history of the building in the form of plaques, tablets and later bronze medallions, has been one of the most consistent ways aldermen have responded to structural change and important events.

The City of Newcastle Coat of Arms has evolved over time; a painted coat of arms is located on the underside of the stairs above the first floor landing. There is a proliferation of Coat of Arms decals throughout the complex.

City Hall contains murals painted by John Olsen and John Montefiore. It is desirable that they remain in situ and details regarding their creation and the individual artists and their association with Newcastle and City Hall be recorded. There are also numerous paintings, a tapestry and fabric artworks. Should the condition of the artworks deteriorate specialist advice regarding suitable treatment should be sought.

City Hall contains numerous items of furniture, items related to sister city links, clocks, bells, ornaments and artefacts either purchased or donated. Two cast ceramic stage vases or stage decorations for floral displays used for formal events in NCH are currently located in the chair store/basement.

Significance

The entire NCH is listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5 (known as "Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts"). It is also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

The interior of the City Hall has HIGH significance as a fine example of an Inter-War Classical government building. Many of the interior rooms have HIGH historic and social significance for their role in the history of local government in the Newcastle region and for their ongoing traditional and ceremonial uses.

Interiors Generally	HIGH	
Form and design	HIGH	
Original Interior Wall & Ceiling Finishes	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 4.
Original floor finishes	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 5.
Original timberwork & joinery	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 6.
Original Metalwork inc. Steel Windows & Doors	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 7.
Synchronised Clock System	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 11.
Entrance Vestibule & Stairs	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 13.
Eastern & Western Entrances	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 14.
Banquet Hall (former Supper Room)	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 15.
Concert Hall & Gallery	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 16.
Council Chamber	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 17.
Mayor's Office & Secretary	MEDIUM	Inventory Sheet 18.
Mayor's Reception (former Committee Room)	HIGH	Inventory Sheet 19.

Conservation Policies

Interior Conservation Policy 1.

The heritage significance of the exterior form and fabric of Newcastle City Hall should be conserved. Where new works (including maintenance and repair works) will have a negative impact on heritage values an assessment of heritage impact should be prepared including consideration of less intrusive solutions.

Interior Conservation Policy 2.

- *Ensure any significant movable heritage, artworks, furniture and monuments associated with NCH are recorded and conserved including registration, cataloguing and labeling of all items and monitoring and maintenance strategies.*
- *Where an item of significance has to be removed as the sole means of ensuring its survival, relocate it to a new appropriate location or store for future reinstatement. If it cannot be located on site consider Newcastle Region Art Gallery or Newcastle Regional Museum*
- *Prior to removal or relocation of such items ensure its original location and condition is recorded and archived.*
- *Seek specialist and experienced advice as required on movable heritage items. For example the Regional Art Gallery could oversee the cataloguing and maintenance of movable heritage, artworks, furniture and monuments.*
- *Develop a policy for the design and location of new sculpture, monuments, plaques; Coats of Arms; and decals generally. Such a policy can be part of the NCH signage policy.*

Interior Conservation Policy 3.

Before carrying out work to a significant interior:

- *Undertake a thorough investigation of the former spatial qualities and decorative schemes of the spaces of heritage significance and of high heritage significance at City Hall including:*
 - *a study of documentary evidence;*
 - *the preparation of a "scraped" band that includes all divisions of the walls and ceiling¹;*
 - *preparation of a record of the BS, AS or Munsell equivalents of colours scraped;*
 - *determining the scheme that relates to the main phase of decoration of the room*
- *Ensure the records and analysis of past significant interior decorative schemes are archived*

Interior Conservation Policy 4.

The following applies to spatial qualities in Newcastle City Hall of heritage significance and of high heritage significance:

- *Retain the authenticity of each space including significant volumes, openings, decorative schemes, services and furnishings.*
- *Do not permit the full height partitioning of any of the spaces or further subdivision to make new corridors.*
- *Minimise new openings. If a new opening is absolutely necessary it should be located with reference to the architectural vocabulary of the two spaces which it is to connect.*
- *Retain the volume of the staircases.*
- *Spaces that have previously been enlarged or reduced may be retained in their current configuration or returned to their original configuration as desired.*
- *Where one space has encroached on the adjacent in a manner that has been assessed as being intrusive the original configuration of each room should be re-instated.*

¹ See NSW Heritage Council Guidelines on Conserving Paint Finishes.

- *Contemporary interpretations of historic interior decorative schemes may be undertaken provided the new scheme is sympathetic to the heritage significance of the space (eg respects period detailing)*

For example the parquetry flooring in the Council Chamber is conservation of original fabric while the timber flooring in the Supper Room is a recreation of a historic scheme.

Interior Conservation Policy 5.

Ensure that the redecoration schemes of the spaces and fabric of high significance:

- *conserve the remaining original finishes such as painted decoration and floor finishes*
- *respect the overall interior style (Inter-war Academic Classical)*
- *respect the architectural elements and divisions (dado, main body, frieze)*
- *allow evidence of significant earlier schemes to be retained under new schemes (eg preparation for new paintwork should not obliterate evidence of past decorative schemes lying underneath)*
- *do not introduce conjectural reconstruction with historic styling or motifs*
- *seek to reconstruct missing significant elements where possible (eg reproduce the historic carpet in Council Chamber)*

Interior Conservation Policy 6.

Retain and conserve the original tiles, mirrors, and marble partitions in their original configuration.

List of Works / Studies

- 1929 Construction and finishing of NCH interior
1980s Adaptation of interior as a function centre with many administrative functions being relocated to the (then) new circular administration building on Wheeler Place.
2003 NCH Interiors Review by Sutera Architects.

Useful References

- NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)
NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 2.1: Rising Damp](#)
NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 5.1: Wood Preservation](#)
NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 5.2: Timber Repairs](#)
NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 5.4: Repair of Tongue and Groove Floorboards](#)
NSW Heritage Council Maintenance Series 7.1: Plaster Finishes
NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 7.2: Paint Finishes](#)
NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 8.1: Fire and Heritage](#)
NSW Heritage Council [Movable Heritage Principles](#)

**Newcastle City Hall CMP
Part 2****Inventory Sheet 3
Stonework & Renderwork****Introduction**

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 1. Exterior Works generally; 7. Metalwork and Steel Windows; 9. Landscaping; 10. Lampposts; and 12. Porte Cochere & Front Steps.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It was originally documented as a brick and concrete building with rendered classical detailing. After the building was commenced on site this was changed to stone cladding rather than render. The stone used was Sydney Yellowblock sandstone (possibly Bondi Sandstone) fixed using steel ties embedded in the concrete and in the brickwork. There are no known documents detailing the original stone fixing system.

The depth of the stone cladding on the facades varies as the stone steps up the wall:

- Stone cladding 100 – 300mm for tower on reinforced concrete frame
- Full stone construction 380 mm at the parapet
- Full stone construction 900 mm at the cornice
- Stone cladding 380 mm at the entablature and string course below the balustrade
- Stone cladding 150 -300 mm at the wall planes
- Stone cladding 225 mm at the podium

Bondi sandstone is characterised by a high clay content and without strong secondary quartz grain overgrowth. The clay component can occur either as inter-granular material that forms a layer over quartz grains or as discrete particles or pellets. Repeated wetting and drying or salt attack can result in extensive breakdown of the binding matrix and decay the stone. Bondi has proved to be less durable than other Sydney yellowblock sandstones in aggressive marine environments. The stone used in the 1920s was of good quality but by the 1970's it began to deteriorate in places and a program of repair and replacement was required. Work was undertaken because rusted steel fixings were causing cracks and failure of the stone.

The rear (north) façade is render on brickwork and on concrete. It is of plainer detailing than the remainder of the building (a stripped classical style).

Significance

This Conservation Management Plan identifies the significance of the stonework/renderwork:

- its architectural design
- the use of sandstone for its symbolic and aesthetic qualities (a late design change from the documented cement render finish to the entire façade)
- the use of yellowblock sandstone which is now rare (now no longer quarried). Yellowblock buildings are also relatively rare in the Newcastle region
- the quality and amount of ornamentation
- The marked difference between the front and side facades which are viewed across wider public spaces to the less decorative rear (north) façade fronting the narrow Christie Street

Policies***Stone/Render Conservation Policy 1.***

Before embarking on stone / render conservation works make sure the following analysis is up to date:

- *CAD drawings numbering each façade and each stone and other façade element including the steel fixings.*
- *Recording of open joints, cracking, porosity decayed and damaged areas, exfoliation, salt damage, attachments, biological growth and stains.*
- *Understanding of local weather patterns and their impact.*
- *Analysis of proposed replacement stone to ensure the best possible match.*
- *Analysis of original mortars and renders to ensure an appropriate match.*
- *Salt deposits should be investigated and samples should be taken for analysis.*
- *Coordination of the stone/render conservation works with other façade repairs such as balcony drainage and steel window conservation.*

Stone/Render Conservation Policy 2.

Replacement stone should be good quality stone of high durability, matching the existing yellowblock in colour and texture. Independent, expert advice on stone selection should be sought prior to the purchase of stone from any quarry. The performance in a marine environment of any stone selected for replacement in City Hall must be established prior to its use.

Stone/Render Conservation Policy 3.

Current conservation works required include:

- *Replacement of all existing mild steel stone cladding fixings with 316 grade stainless steel fixings.*
- *New lead weatherings of the correct weight & detail to all overhanging cornices. Provide a folded drip, free from the edge of the stone.*
- *Investigation of the condition of brick and other façade ties.*

Stone/Render Conservation Policy 4.

The following practices should not be used:

- Stone consolidants (unless they are a last resort and extensive research and testing has been carried out).
- Water repellent treatments.
- Stone colouring.
- Hard cement mortars.
- Galvanised or mild steel fixings on the exterior (only 316 stainless steel should be used).

Maintenance Strategy**Stone/Render Conservation Policy 5.**

Implement a clearly defined preventative and cyclic maintenance program including regular inspection, making-safe, recording, repair, maintenance and replacement of sandstone. Include trials and/or approved samples as necessary of:

- Repointing methods and mortar mixes
- Render repair methods and render mixes.
- desalination where required (eg possibly near ground level and on the underside of overhanging cornices).
- proposed method / frequency of cleaning stone & control of biological growth.
- graffiti control.
- pigeon control.

Current Condition & Recommendations

As indicated by Brenda Franklin it is likely that the carbon steel stone cladding ties will continue to weaken the strength of the adjacent stone and spalling will eventually occur. The time frame for the deterioration that has occurred and which will continue to occur is affected by: the orientation of the façade; the thickness of the stone; presence of overhangs; whether these overhangs have effective flashings; and the condition of the mortar joints

However repointing and new cornice flashings will not stop continued horizontal damp penetration. If we do not remove and replace all the metal fixings in the stonework then it can be expected that spalling will continue within 5 years of completion of any partial repair project. This would be unacceptable including concerns with: ongoing safety concerns; continued loss of significant fabric; ongoing high maintenance costs; continued disruption during 'makesafes' and repairs; and community misunderstandings about the cost and disruption for partial vs full repairs.

The stones in the recessed areas of each façade do not demonstrate at the same rate of deterioration and it is possible that these areas do not have to have every fixing replaced. However it will be necessary to remove some of the stones to check on the deterioration before this decision can be made.

To assess the best method of replacing the corroded ties with new stainless steel it will be necessary to carry out a trial area to the a full height of the façade where all the construction details for the stone cladding can be assessed including those around steel windows.

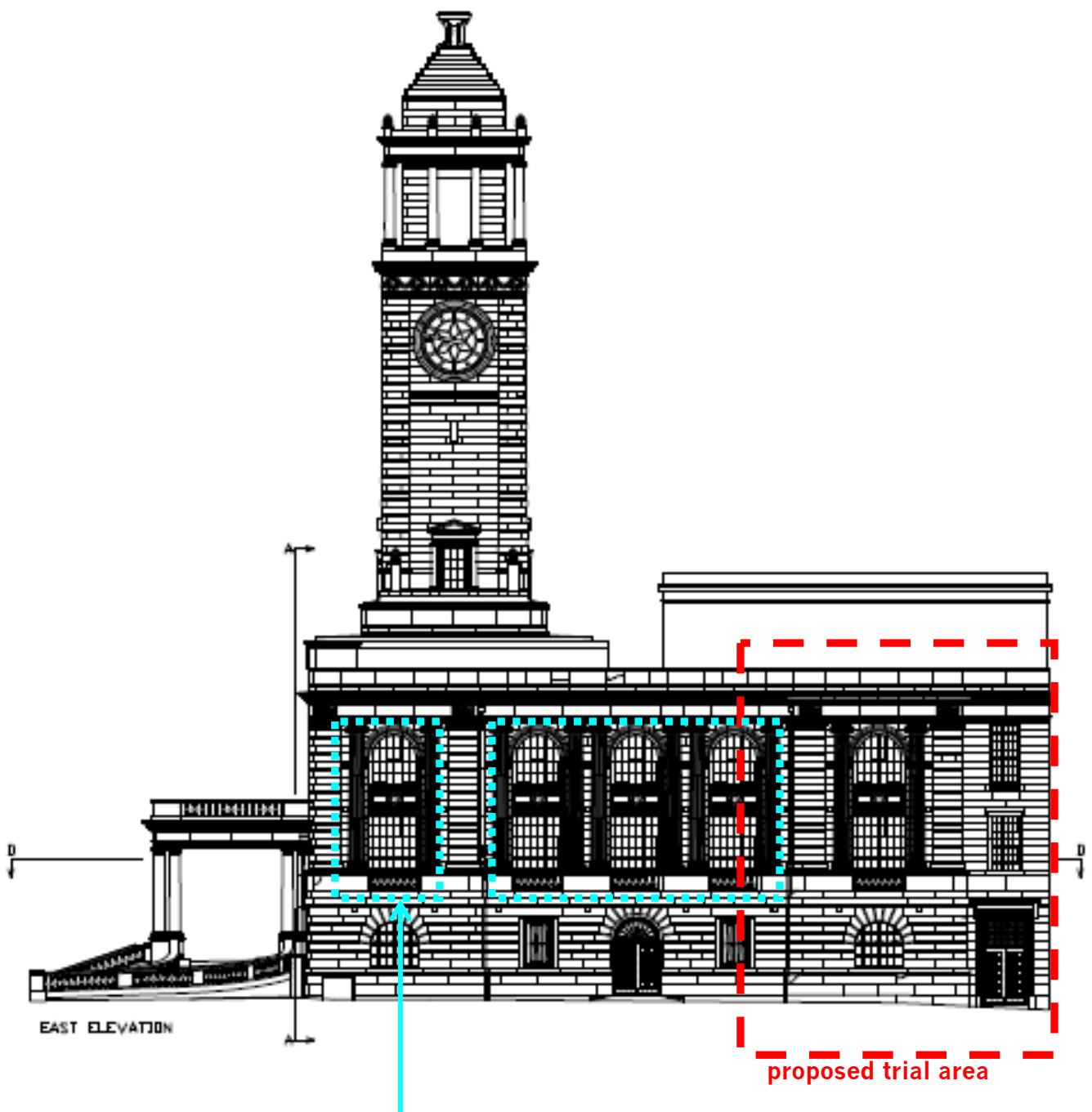
It is understood the condition of the entire east façade was carefully recorded in 2001/02. Using a section of the east façade for the sample area and re-assessing condition will enable confirmation of the rate of deterioration. The northern section of the eastern façade is proposed as it will have the least impact on the operation of the building.

The cornices and parapets are solid stone for the full depth of the wall (approx. 900mm at this point). The undersides of the top cornice have eroded considerably due to salt decay from falling damp. Although lead flashings were placed above these cornices in the 1980s, the flashings were not installed correctly and the stone has continued to decay. Much of this stone is severely damaged and portions have been removed in the regular make safe inspections. The cornice detail has eroded to such that it will be necessary to replace the full stone. This will require removal of the balustrade. (if the whole stone facing is to be removed and reconstructed this removal will facilitate a top down approach).

Repointing is generally required throughout the building. Some past repairs have been in mortar containing asbestos. These mortars will have to be removed by specialist operators before any other repair works can be undertaken.

Recommendations

1. Across much of the Newcastle City Hall facades (the exception being the recessed areas) it is recommended to dismantle most of the stone cladding and re-erecting it using stainless steel fixings using a top down approach. As much stone as possible would be reused, with the damaged stonework being replaced with new stone cladding to match existing stone properties.
2. An initial sample area of façade repair should be carried out prior to embarking on the whole project so that the best conservation methods can be established. A suggested trial area is shown on the diagram below.
3. McCafferey's stone (Pymont yellowblock) from the Minister's Stone Stockpile would be the most suitable replacement stone (where existing stone can not be re-used). Quantities can be estimated now and confirmed after the trial area of façade conservation has been carried out. The fact that most of the stone required will only need to be around 150 mm thick will be a good economical use of this important stone conservation resource. A formal request to be able to use this stone needs to be made to the Minister for Commerce.



Blue dotted lines represent recessed areas of façade where extent of stone removal and replacement may be partial rather than full. These areas also require changes to the balcony waterproofing and drainage at first floor level.

List of Works / Useful References

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 1980s | Some stone repairs including lead flashings, epoxy repairs and use of coloured Wondabyne stone. These repairs have proved unsuccessful. |
| 2000 | <i>Investigation of Salt Contamination</i> in NCH Façade (Dec 2000) CSIRO (Jack Heiman). Extent and magnitude of salts was less than expected but there were some sections where it was significant. Major contaminant is gypsum. Chloride and Nitrate salt not in large percentages. Widespread desalination may not be necessary but localised treatment may be required. Some results may be connected with corrosion of metal stone ties. Southern elevation had no signs of salt build up. |
| 2001 | A section of the eastern façade (toward the south elevation) was assessed for condition and a schedule of stone replacement (with some synthetic repair) was prepared (GAO Heritage Design Services DPWS). |

- 2001 *Stone Analysis* (Nov 2001) by UTS (Brenda Franklin) determined that it is most likely "Bondi" sandstone. The stone "has the mineralogy and fabric of typical Sydney 'yellow block' sandstone; shows slight degree of weathering close to the surface of the block but is fresh and almost unweathered within the body of the stone". A sample of extremely weathered stone from a window frame was also analysed. The original fabric of the rock had been disrupted and the rock strength was extremely low. A sample of stone adjacent to the concrete structure was also tested and it was found that there was no observable reaction between the concrete and the stone. The stone was almost 'unweathered'. A sample of stone from adjacent to a metal fixing was also analysed. Brenda concludes that the analysis supports the fact that the rusting metal clamps are having a significant affect on stone strength for up to 10 – 25 mm from the metal fixing, even in stones where failure had not yet occurred. Brenda also considered possible replacement stone. Of those available at the time only two in storage by OPWS were suitable (ie meeting both technical and aesthetic parameters): St Patrick's Redevelopment Site Sandstone (although size of blocks would be limited); and McCaffrey's Stone.
- 2001 *Analysis of the metal fixings* for the stonework done by Access UTS in 2001 found: the fixings are carbon steel with no coatings (eg no galvanised finish); the section is 10 x 8.5 mm with rounded corners; in areas corroded in stone the sound fixing had reduced from 10 mm to 7.5 mm; the corrosion products forming in the stone are causing stresses to such an extent that the stone will crack; the steel embedded in well compacted concrete is fairly stable. In high porosity concrete and in cracked concrete corrosion of steel will also cause concrete failure. In the opinion of the author (Prof. R W Jones), given the age of the building, the fixings likely to have shown corrosion problems would have done so by now as evidenced by one or more rust staining of the outer surface of the stone, cracks or spalling, or regions indicated by high loss of tie integrity as detected by ND impulse radar testing. In these regions it is recommended that the fixings be replaced with stainless steel (T316) fixings.
- 2001 Several methods of non-destructive testing (eg infrared) were carried out in 2001. These methods did not give any new information to the analysis of the façade condition. The position of the stone fixings can be determined by metal detection.
- 2002 In early 2002 the GAO Heritage Group, together with Hari Gohil from Shreeji Consultants, carried out a survey of the Eastern Façade. The information from the survey is on A4 drawings showing the condition of each stone compiled in ring binders.
- 2002 *Photogrammetry drawings* were prepared by a contractor for NCC and a *database* of each stone was prepared in OmniCAD. The GAO Heritage Group advised on the numbering system for the database.
- 2002-2008 *Yearly inspections* of façade by DOC Heritage Building Services and a structural engineer and removal of loose and dangerous deteriorated stone elements
- 2008 *City Hall Recommended Conservation Approach* (GAO Heritage Group March 2008)

NSW Heritage Council [Technical Note: Repointing Mortar Joints - Some Important Points](#)

NSW Heritage Council [Technical Note: Treating Biological Growths on Historic Masonry](#)

NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 2.3: The Need for Old Stone Buildings to Breathe](#)

**Newcastle City Hall CMP
Part 2****Inventory Sheet 4
Interior Wall & Ceiling Finishes****Introduction**

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 2. Interior Works Generally; 5. Floors & Floor Finishes; 6. Timberwork & Joinery; 8. Services & Security; and Inventory Sheets 12. - 21. for particular significant spaces.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. T

Plasterwork

The use of decorative plaster work is a characteristic of Henry White buildings. Decorative cast fibrous plaster wall decoration and coffered ceilings are located in four areas; the Main Hall and Upper Gallery, the Mayor's Reception Room, Council Chamber and Main Entrance Lobby. The decorative plaster work finish was described by the NH on 12.12.1929, "*The walls are finished off in a special treatment of plaster. All is beautifully laid out to represent a trachite finish.*" The original finish is still visible below the stage; they no doubt meant a travertine not a 'trachite' finish. 'Trachyte' is green Australian stone traditionally used in combination with Sydney yellowblock sandstone and red, grey or black Australian granite. The plaster finish used in the Main Entrance Lobby and Main Hall was known as "*Travertine No 1.*"

New cast plaster air gratings were introduced in 1932. 13 on the second floor with 35 on both the first and ground floors. These cast plaster vents should be retained.

The decorative plaster on the Upper Gallery balustrade was also lowered in 1980. Further relocation of decorative panels is not acceptable.

Painting

Some painted decorative elements of the building are rare and unusual and have exceptional value such as the research resource.

A percentage of the plaster decoration was painted over in 1980. The decoration was framed and highlighted inappropriately and has broken up the architectural form of the interiors. This coating should be removed in the Main Hall and Upper Gallery, Main Entrance Lobby, Council Chambers and Mayor's Reception Room. Free reinterpretation of significant original decoration in contemporary colours is not appropriate.

Marble

The stair balustrade, handrail and skirtings in the main stairs and entrance lobby are constructed from Caleula marble (the floors and stairs in the Main Entrance are Sicilian Marble - see IS 5). The ticket box shelf and trim were also originally Australian marble. The records of its disposal or relocation have not yet been located. Marble toilet partitions are still located in the ground floor men's and women's toilets.

Significance

This Conservation Management Plan identifies the significance of the NCH interior for its fine architectural design and interior detailing in the Classical revival tradition. The design consciously sought to use local or Australian materials where possible. Plaster and painted elements in the significant interiors are unusual and are of HIGH heritage significance.

The following policies only apply to the Spaces of High Significance being: The Porte Cochere; Entrance Hall (First Floor); East & West Lobbies & Corridors (Ground, First & Second Floors); Concert Hall & Gallery (First & Second Floors); Banquet Room (Ground Floor); Council Chamber; Lord Mayor's Office; Lord Mayor's Reception Room; and evidence of original finishes in WCs (Ground Floor) and Computer Room.

Policies

The original NCH wall & ceiling finishes (including plasterwork, Ground Floor WC tile & marble work, evidence of former paint schemes, evidence of linoleum wall linings) require careful conservation; these skills are not generally available in the building industry in Australia.

Wall & Ceiling Finishes Conservation Policy 1.

The authenticity of City Hall form, built elements, details and decoration must be retained

Wall & Ceiling Finishes Conservation Policy 2.

Retain and conserve: the cast plaster decoration; plaster air gratings and vents; original polychromatic painted plaster decoration (now painted over); marble balustrades, handrails and skirtings in the Entrance Stair & Lobby; and the marble toilet partitions in the Ground Floor WCs.

Wall & Ceiling Finishes Conservation Policy 3.

Ensure design and detail of the original paint finishes to the decorative plaster is researched, analysed and recorded. Reveal / reconstruct the original finishes where possible in particular to the Concert Hall and Upper Gallery, Main Entrance Lobby, Council Chambers and Mayor's Reception Room.

Wall & Ceiling Finishes Conservation Policy 4.

The following practices should not be used on the wall & ceiling finishes in the Significant Interiors:

- Chasing walls and ceilings for new services.
- Grit or sand blasting.
- Hard cement plasters, mortars & renders in repair work (match the original process).

Recommendations

1. When funds permit research, analyse and record the original interior wall & ceiling finishes in more detail, and reveal / reinstate them - particularly in the Concert Hall and Upper Gallery, Main Entrance Lobby, Council Chambers and Mayor's Reception Room.

List of Works / Useful References

1929	Original plasterwork, paint and other finishes.
1932	Plaster air vents added.
Mid 1900s?	Gradual loss of original finishes under new paint finishes and fitouts.
1980	Reorganisation of some spaces & over-painting of original finishes as part of the adaptive reuse of NCH as a function centre.

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)

NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 7.1: Plaster Finishes](#)

NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 7.2: Paint Finishes](#)

**Newcastle City Hall CMP
Part 2****Inventory Sheet 5
Floors & Floor Finishes****Introduction**

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 2. Interior Works Generally; 4. Wall & Ceiling Finishes; 6. Timberwork & Joinery; 8. Services & Security; and Inventory Sheets 12. - 21. for particular significant spaces.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. The structure of the building is reinforced concrete floors and columns.

Timber Flooring

Timber floors were confined to the 'primary' public spaces, The Main Hall, the Supper Room and Mayor's Reception Room, former Committee Room. The flooring in the Supper Room has been replaced due to 'splintering'. The replacement floor was thinner T&G flooring which has cupped and failed due to damp. The flooring in the Main Hall has been partially replaced.

Parquet Flooring

The blackwood parquetry surround in Council Chamber Room is original fabric.

Carpet

Gross and Co tender for carpet accepted subject to supply in London. Bebarfalds Ltd. quote for carpets and runners received and accepted 7.8.1929, £847/17/2. Telegraph from Mr. White Templeton's advise carpet probably delivered 14.11.1929. The design of the original carpets in the Council Chambers and from the former Lady Mayoress's Room has been identified. Reproduction of replacement carpets in the original design is acceptable.

Marble

The floors and stairs in the Main Entrance are Sicilian Marble; the skirtings, stair balustrade & handrail are Caleula marble (see also IS 4).

Red Ironite Flooring

Red Ironite, a red oxide coloured seamless cement topping popular in the 1920s in hospitals and public buildings including St Mary's Cathedral. This material was used as the finished floor in the 'secondary' public spaces, that is the three rear stairs to the Main Hall and associated passage areas as well as the ticket and storerooms below the main stairs. Remnants can be seen in the current below stage area and under the carpet tiles of the rear /northwest stair. The topping has worn through to expose the 'grey' concrete below. The remnants should be retained in the understage areas as evidence of the original design. The stair surface will continue to need to be covered as a non-slip, low maintenance surface is required.

Cement Flooring

Cement flooring is shown as the floor finish in most of the office areas. Evidence provided by two photographs archived at the City Library indicates that smooth trowelled cement floors were the floor finishes in 1930. Evidence of the change to floor finishes in these rooms is still being researched. Cockle Creek Cement supplied by Gibbs, Bright & CO was used on this project (as well as the St James and State Theatres). Most of these rooms were carpeted in 1979 with a strong geometric design prepared by Alison Main of MS & J. A dark green carpet with strongly patterned motif was laid in 2001. Remnants of the 1979-80 carpet remain in the sound recording room.

Terrazzo Flooring

Terrazzo was the original flooring material for the 'primary' public spaces and wet areas. That is the corridors on all floors, east and west entrance lobbies (ground floor), Christie Place vestibule to the Supper Room, Wheeler Place vestibule (ground floor), foyer to the Main Hall (first floor), reception lobbies, toilets and associated ante rooms. White and Rowe designed the terrazzo in Stanton House foyer in gradings from dark to light and from the largest to the smallest aggregate. The aggregates in the lobbies at City Hall are unusually large giving a mottled appearance where the terrazzo can be seen. (Further investigation is required.) (The mottle is reminiscent of mosaic floors).

Concrete and terrazzo floors were chased for telephone conduits; these conduits have rusted disrupting all floor finishes where they were laid.

The only exposed remaining terrazzo floors are the east and west ground floor entrance lobbies. These floors have been patched when the original recessed rubber doormats were removed.

Ceramic Floor Tiling

In 1980 coved terrazzo floors in all the bathrooms were all tiled in square white tiles with a black patterned border. A white glazed ceramic tile has been introduced to cover the terrazzo cove. In 2001 there were problems with adhesion of the tiles to the original terrazzo. Replacement and/or repair of floor tiles will be required. It is inappropriate to introduce the new or replacement tiles with 'art deco' or other historic styling in an attempt to enhance the significance of the 1920s bathroom interiors.

Floor Linoleum Flooring to the Main Hall Gallery

Remnants of linoleum flooring can be found beneath the row seating in the upper gallery. Take samples of the remnants for recording purposes. It is not known if the change from linoleum to carpet has had a negative or positive impact on the acoustic performance of the hall. Check the impact of this change before replacing the carpet and before undertaking work on new sound systems to the Main Hall.

Significance

This Conservation Management Plan identifies the significance of the NCH interior for its fine architectural design and interior detailing in the Classical revival tradition. The design consciously sought to use local or Australian materials where possible. Original floor finishes in the significant interiors are of HIGH heritage significance.

Policies

The original NCH floor finishes require careful conservation, and the introduction of new floor finishes should be carefully considered.

Floor & Floor Finishes Conservation Policy 1.

The authenticity of City Hall form, built elements, details and decoration must be retained.

Floor & Floor Finishes Conservation Policy 2.

Retain and conserve: original timber floors; the Blackwood timber parquetry surround in the Council Chamber Room; original 'Red Ironite' flooring (now mostly covered over); original terrazzo flooring in the WCs (now tiled over); and marble floors and skirtings in the Entrance Stair & Lobby.

During repair, minor alteration or extensive cleaning, only use tradespeople with experience in conservation of the particular floor material or finish (eg marble stairs).

Where necessary protect original floor finishes from degradation due to over-use or inappropriate use (eg delivering equipment for events across marble floors)

Floor & Floor Finishes Conservation Policy 3.

New flooring finishes should be laid on a removable underlay placed over the historic or original substrate.

Floor & Floor Finishes Conservation Policy 4.

Ensure replacement timber flooring is durable high grade timber of similar aesthetic appearance and design to the original flooring.

Floor & Floor Finishes Conservation Policy 5. Carpets

- *Ensure the design and colour of replacement carpet in the major spaces with significant decoration is not intrusive and has a minimum impact on significant fabric.*
- *Ensure the design and colour of replacement carpet in spaces without original significant decoration is compatible with carpet and colour schemes in the significant fabric. Carpets with overpowering decorative are not appropriate.*
- *Ensure the composition, colour, pattern and carpet detail do not create additional OH&S risks or fire risks.*

Floor & Floor Finishes Conservation Policy 6.

Before replacing flooring materials or acoustic and sound system modifications in the Concert Hall check the impact of fabric changes, for example from original linoleum floors in the Gallery to carpet.

Recommendation

The above policies should be considered when considering new floor finishes or reinstatement of original floor finishes.

List of Works / Studies

1929	Original floor structure & finishes.
Mid 1900s?	Gradual loss of original finishes.
1980	Reorganisation of some spaces including new floor finishes over original finishes as part of the adaptive reuse of NCH as a function centre.

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)
 NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 5.1: Wood Preservation](#)
 NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 5.2: Timber Repairs](#)
 NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 5.4: Repair of Tongue and Groove Floorboards](#)

**Newcastle City Hall CMP
Part 2****Inventory Sheet 6
Timber & Joinery****Introduction**

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 2. Interior Works Generally; 4. Wall & Ceiling Finishes; 8. Services & Security; and Inventory Sheets 12. - 21. for particular significant spaces.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. The building features polished Queensland maple doors, louvres architraves, frames and skirtings, together with some painted timber joinery. The double joinery doors in the main hallways and lobbies feature semi-circular fanlights.

Some of the furniture in the Council Chambers are 'built-in' polished joinery items. There are also some polished joinery framed mirrors in the Ground Floor WCs. External windows and some external doors are steel construction (see IS 7) - eg doors out onto the balcony over the Porte Cochere.

New joinery, second doors with seals and acoustic doors were added in 1980. Many original doors were modified at this time to incorporate return air louvres.

Significance

This Conservation Management Plan identifies the significance of the NCH interior for its fine architectural design and interior detailing in the Classical revival tradition. The design consciously sought to use local or Australian materials where possible. The remaining original timber joinery at NCH is of HIGH heritage significance.

Policies***Timber & Joinery Conservation Policy 1.***

The authenticity of City Hall form, built elements, details and decoration must be retained.

Timber & Joinery Conservation Policy 2.

- *Retain and conserve original timber joinery including doors, louvres and door frames.*
- *During repair, minor alteration or refinishing only use tradespeople with experience in conservation of the fine timber joinery.*
- *Where necessary protect original timber joinery from degradation due to over-use or inappropriate use (eg delivering equipment for events). Such protection can include simple kick plates and internal bollards.*
- *Detailing of any new material or elements on significant joinery (eg kick plates) should be done in such a way that they could be removed without irreparable damage to significant fabric.*

Timber & Joinery Conservation Policy 3.

Any new joinery items should be date stamped to enable later conservators to identify what is original and what is not. New joinery for a polished finish should be constructed from polished Queensland maple.

Timber & Joinery Conservation Policy 4.

Conserve the timber joinery by: regular inspections; reinstatement of missing elements; repair of damaged elements; and regular repainting (if it was intended).

Recommendations

The above policies should be considered when: maintaining timber and joinery; considering changes to timber joinery or inserting new timber joinery.

List of Works

1929 Original timber joinery & finishes.
1980 New joinery, second doors with seals and acoustic doors were added. Many doors were modified to incorporate return air louvres. All part of the adaptive reuse of NCH as a function centre.

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)
NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 5.1: Wood Preservation](#)
NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 5.2: Timber Repairs](#)
NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 5.4: Repair of Tongue and Groove Floorboards](#)

**Newcastle City Hall CMP
Part 2****Inventory Sheet 7
Metalwork including Steel Windows****Introduction**

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 1. Exterior Works Generally and Inventory Sheets 12. - 21. for particular significant spaces.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. Original features still in existence include the steel windows and doors; bronze balustrading; and the spiral staircase in the tower and the lampposts.

Spiral Staircase

Cast iron spiral stairs supplied by James Connolly were fitted to the tower as part of the original construction. The stair comprises cast iron treads threaded onto a central spindle. A handrail is fixed to the cast treads. The stairs are in a good condition.

Steel Windows & Doors

All external windows and some external doors are steel framed. There are several fenestration frame formats used, their design relation to the form of the relevant openings, for example arched frames.

The windows have operable casement and hopper windows and these should be maintained in an operable and structurally sound condition as the locks and hinges form part of the frames structural integrity. Steel framed casement windows in the tower are missing casement stays. These should be repaired. As the building is now air conditioned the windows may be permanently closed using reversible locking methods.

The ground floor windows and fanlights over the exterior doors have had security grilles fixed to the exterior of each window and the cast iron grilles should be maintained in situ.

Significance

This Conservation Management Plan identifies the significance of the NCH interior for its fine architectural design and interior detailing in the Classical revival tradition. The design consciously sought to use local or Australian materials where possible. The original steel windows and doors and other original metal elements (such the bronze balustrade and spiral stair) are of HIGH heritage significance. The later external metal security grilles are sympathetic and are of LOW/NEUTRAL heritage significance.

Policies***Metalwork Conservation Policy 1.***

The authenticity of City Hall form, built elements, details and decoration must be retained.

Metalwork Conservation Policy 2.

- Retain and conserve original metalwork elements in their present position and in an operable condition including doors, windows; the bronze balustrade; and the tower spiral staircase.*
- During repair, minor alteration or refinishing only use tradespeople with experience in conservation of the heritage metalwork.*
- Detailing of any new material or elements on significant metalwork (eg hardware) should be done in such a way that they could be removed without irreparable damage to significant fabric.*

Metalwork Conservation Policy 3.

- Prepare a condition survey of each window. The survey should include details of all components including fixings, grilles, decorative surmounts and glazing.*
- Conserve the metalwork by: regular inspections; reinstatement of missing elements; repair of damaged elements; and regular repainting (if it was intended).*
- Investigate the best method of treating corrosion of the steel frames to the metal fenestration which is built into the external faced. Consider sympathetic measures to minimise or prevent future corrosion in the reveals.*
- Repair and/or replace all missing sections such as stays, locks, and hinges where necessary to maintain the structural integrity of the frames. Where portions of the frame have to be replaced, the repair should use the same section steel and be seamlessly fixed in position to maintain an air and water seal.*
- Continue regular inspections and cyclical maintenance of metal elements to prevent loss of fabric through corrosion.*

Metalwork Conservation Policy 4.

- If additional security grilles are to be installed into other openings or replacement is to occur, the existing cast iron type grilles should form the design prototype.*
- Any introduced new metalwork items that match original details should be date stamped to enable later conservators to identify what is original and what is not.*

Recommendations

The above policies should be considered when: maintaining metalwork; considering changes to metalwork or inserting new metalwork.

List of Works

1929 Original metalwork & finishes.
C1980 Some external metal security grilles added at ground floor

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)
NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 3.1: Metalwork](#)

**Newcastle City Hall CMP
Volume 2****Inventory Sheet 8
Services & Security****Introduction**

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 1. Exterior Works Generally; 2. Interior Works Generally; and Inventory Sheets 12. - 21. for particular significant spaces.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally. The building does not contain conventional ceiling or floor spaces. The concrete framing and beams are exposed with decorative fibrous plaster elements (coffered ceilings) and mouldings (cornices) added in the public spaces. As a result it is not possible to run services in concealed spaces except where service risers or suspended ceilings incorporated in the 1980s mechanical ventilation system are available. Where ever possible new services should run in the suspended ceilings. The surface mounting of services is preferable to chasing either rendered concrete, rendered brick or stonework. The service lines should then be painted out to blend in with the wall surface. Fixings should be either in the joint lines or locations where fixings already exist. Internally services should be concealed along the top of skirtings or in carefully designed ducted skirtings to minimise the impact of successive fixings to the skirtings. Three types of skirting exist, hard cement render, timber or marble skirtings.

Conduit

Cable conduit has been laid on to all of the offices. The conduit has rusted near the surface of all original finishes which have been disrupted either cracking or lifting the toppings. Where new carpet or other flooring has been laid and the disruption would cause excessive wear or failure of the flooring material, conduit has been removed and the surface patched. In plant areas that have not been resurfaced the rusted conduit is either visible or disruption of the floorings is evident.

Ventilation System

The original ventilation system of the Main Hall, Banquet Room and internal rooms adjacent to the ventilation shafts was replaced by mechanical ventilation in 1980. Many original openings and vents were bricked up and rendered, timber louvre return air grilles were installed in doors. An additional plant room was added on the roof; the second lift shaft was eliminated and adapted to accommodate mechanical ventilation ducting.

Sprinkler Services

Sprinkler services were incorporated into suspended ceilings in 1980. In the Council Chamber the sprinkler lines have been discretely exposed.

Light Fittings

There are six styles of original internal lights identified in NCH. These remaining original lights are in their original locations and are a significant element in the interior design of the building. A number of spare glass light shades for the lights are stored in the basement.

Chandeliers in Main Hall

The two chandeliers consist of a main central pendant luminary and six torches on arms radiating out from the centre and fixed to an upper bronze decorative ring bracket. These lights are lowered by winches located in the main roof. These lights are part of the original interior decoration and building design. Identical chandeliers are found in Brisbane City Hall.

Bracketed Lights in Stair Wells and Main Hall

These lights are supported on a lattice bracket from the wall, the bracket has a similar design to the main stair balustrade metal work. A single inverted light hangs from the bracket with an opalised spherical shade. Identical bracket lights are found in Brisbane City Hall.

Inverted Pendant Lights in Main Hall Gallery

These three lights are part of the original interior decoration and building design. They are ornamental single inverted lights supported by four bronze links to a decorative crested ring which supports the glass shade. The domed glass is opalised.

Inverted Pendant Lights in Main Entrance Foyer

These lights are part of the original interior decoration and building design. They are single inverted lights supported by a single bronze chain to a decorative crested ring which supports the glass shade. The glass is opalised with stencilled decoration.

Inverted Pendant Lights in Mayor's Reception Room

These three lights are part of the original interior decoration and building design. They are single inverted lights supported by a single bronze chain to bronze ring mount which supports the glass shade. The glass is opalised with stencilled decoration.

Inverted Ceiling Lights in Entrance Lobbies

These two lights are part of the original interior decoration and building design. They are single luminaries fixed to the ceiling by a bronze bracket/rose. The glass is opalised and etched.

Security and Public Access

On the one hand, public access to facilities needs to be carefully managed in order to ensure the safety of visitors, the security of equipment and the preservation of amenity. On the other hand it is difficult to justify the alienation of community heritage places from public access. Additional internal and external security patrols and closed circuit TV are unfortunately a feature of all public buildings and urban parks today.

Scaffold for maintenance creates an additional security hazard, particularly on stone buildings as it is in place for an extended period of time. No amount of 'built' security will deter determined vandals and thieves. A twenty four hour a day on site security presence is recommended during scaffolded stonework conservation.

The ground floor windows and fanlights over the exterior doors have had security grilles fixed to the exterior of each window. These cast iron grilles are sympathetic; should be maintained in situ; and should form the model for any future grilles required.

In general the building fabric should not be modified to solve security problems, a non-interventionist solution should be employed. It may be more appropriate to employ additional security guards rather than by locking entrances or fixing additional grilles that limit egress from a building in the event of an emergency.

Ordinance Compliance

The Building Code of Australia is the operative building ordinance for the conservation, continuing use and re-use of NCH. The BCA covers those aspects of the building which are controlled by legislation such as structure, fire resistance, access and egress, fire fighting equipment, mechanical ventilation and certain aspects of health and amenity. Of these, the most critical issues will be the inclusion of fire safety and egress provisions.

The requirements for compliance of a building, with the BCA are based on the class of building. The classification of the building is determined by the purpose for which it will be used. Where parts of the building are to be used for different purposes each part of the building must be classified separately.

The review of fire services at the City Hall should be integrated into any proposed schemes for adaptive re-use. The arrangement of any new services should be carefully planned so as to minimise the impact on significant fabric.

It is recognised that heritage buildings often pose complex and difficult problems in terms of BCA and DDA compliance. Where compliance with the BCA may compromise the architectural integrity of the building and diminish the Cultural Significance, advice and alternative solutions may be negotiated through the Fire Advisory and Services Panel of the NSW Heritage Council. A fire engineered solution may be devised to minimise any impact on the building fabric.

Services & Archaeology

Proposed alterations or additions to in-ground services should take into consideration any potential archaeological deposits.

Significance

This Conservation Management Plan identifies the significance of the NCH interior for its fine architectural design and interior detailing in the Classical revival tradition. The design consciously sought to use local or Australian materials where possible. Some services within NCH have heritage significance and are worthy of conservation. They include light fittings and the synchronised clock system (IS.11) of HIGH heritage significance. The later external metal security grilles are sympathetic and are of LOW/NEUTRAL heritage significance.

Policies

It is recognised that future upgrading of City Hall infrastructure will be required. New services should either be confined to areas of little or no significance or areas already designated for or containing services. Within significant spaces the services should be confined to areas that have already been modified. The careful design of services in these areas is required to integrate the services in an unobtrusive manner.

Services Conservation Policy 1.

The authenticity of City Hall form, built elements, details and decoration must be retained.

Services Conservation Policy 2.

The upgrading of services at NCH should:

- *Minimise the impact on significant fabric*
- *Locate services in areas designed for, or previously damaged by services or concealed spaces (except where such existing installations are intrusive and should be removed in the future)*
- *Where possible locate services in spaces and on fabric that are of low/neutral significance*
- *Not involve the chasing of significant fabric, particularly the stonework & plasterwork*
- *Allow for matching of exposed services to their surrounds*

- When fixed into significant fabric, use fixings which do not damage such fabric. (eg use 316 grade stainless steel fixings)

Services Conservation Policy 3.

Record evidence of early or original services if they are to be removed or obscured to accommodate new work

Services Conservation Policy 4.

- Ensure that the upgrading of services is undertaken in a way that minimises the impact on significant fabric by:
- Location services in areas designed for, or previously damaged by, the installation of services or in concealed spaces;
- Not chasing services into face brickwork, stonework and decorative plasterwork;
- Painting out exposed services to match the colour of the surface on which they are mounted.
- By using fixings that do not damage buildings fabric.

Services Conservation Policy 5. Original Light Fittings

- The original light fittings should be maintained in their present positions. Their design should be used for any future lighting requirements. No alteration to the original lights should occur without a heritage impact statement being prepared.
- An inventory of glass shades, decorative crests, and other 'spare' parts to light fittings should be undertaken and sources of replacement items identified. This information should be incorporated into NCH maintenance manual.

Services Conservation Policy 6.

Where air conditioning is necessary use:

- Ducted systems where concealed spaces are available in which to locate plant and ducts.
- Well designed coil or similar units within spaces where ductwork and plant cannot be concealed and its installation would damage significant fabric.

Services Conservation Policy 7.

Increase the level of security personnel in the building and/or on site in preference to modifying significant fabric. Security devices are appropriate in areas where they are not intrusive and do not damage fabric.

Services Conservation Policy 8.

Seek advice from a relevant consultant experienced in heritage issues and/or Heritage Council's Fire Advisory and Services Panel, when there is any conflict between the installation of services to meet the BCA or other Codes and Standards and impacts on heritage significance.

Services Conservation Policy 9.

Where new services involve ground floor excavation on disturbance of the Concert Hall ceiling space comply with the relevant archaeological conservation policy 21 in Volume 1 of this CMP.

Recommendations

The above policies should be considered when: conserving significant service or installing new services or security.

The security issue of graffiti is dealt with in Inventory Sheet 3 Stonework & Renderwork.

List of Works

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1929 | Original services include ventilation shafts. |
| 1980 | New mechanical ventilation, air conditioning, fire sprinklers and other services upgrades inserted. |
| 2007 | Sketch Plans prepared for new lift access through the NCH, together with an upgrade of kitchen and bathroom facilities. |

Useful References

- NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)
 NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 8.1: Fire and Heritage](#)

**Newcastle City Hall CMP
Part 2****Inventory Sheet 9
Setting & Landscape****Introduction**

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 1. Exterior Works Generally; 3. Stonework & Renderwork; 5. Metalwork; and 10. Lamp Posts.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally.

Setting

City Hall and its clock tower were designed to be a Newcastle landmark, clearly identifiable when viewed from the surrounding streets and from The Hill.

City Hall tower is identified as one of seven primary landmarks on the Newcastle Register of Landmarks. Primary landmarks are structures that have a special role in forming and reinforcing the perception of the city centre.

NCC adopted a Master Plan for the Civic and Cultural Precinct in 2004 which considered the importance of the City Hall to central Newcastle and provides guidelines to promote sustainable development in the vicinity that respects the landmark values of the City Hall. The recently gazetted Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2008 provides restrictions on adjacent development which also consider the setting of City Hall, including a height limit of 30 metres (a similar height to the circular Newcastle City Council Offices on Wheeler Place). These current LEP controls are considered satisfactory given that the nearest development site (the Civic Arcade and properties to the west) is a similar distance from NCH as the 10 storey NCC Offices on Wheeler Place.

Civic Park and Christie Place were created in response to the presence of the NCH - the City Hall and the Park are strongly linked in an historical sense in addition to their urban design relationship. Mayor Wheeler saw Henry White as a man of vision. These issues are reflected in the current Management Plan for Civic Park (NCC) and in the Master Plan for Christie Place (AJ+C Landscape in June 2000).

Vehicular Ramp

A vehicular ramp up from King Street to the main entrance mid way between the ground and first floor levels has made an imposing entrance including a porte-cochere. Central steps lead up to the main entrance from the King Street pavement. The impact of large vehicles and trucks has damaged the sandstone balustrade of the vehicular ramp on more than one recorded occasion.

The original topping to the front steps has been re-rendered. The top render is very porous and failing. The growth of moss and algae is disfiguring and creates an OH&S issue. Replace the topping and the original render with a new non-slip render that is not visually intrusive.

The bitumen surface to the vehicular ramp has been re-topped raising the level above the cement rendered pavement at the top of the stairs. This has created an OH&S issue. Compaction of the bitumen has caused spalling of concrete on the underside of the stairs where cover over the reinforcement was deficient.

Entrance Steps

The main entrance steps have been covered in a contemporary granolithic cement topping, it is cracked and drummy in many places. This surface is shaded and algae, moss and other biological growths are an ongoing maintenance problem. It is recommended that this failed topping be replaced with a less porous, non slip rendered surface.

Portico Landscaping

The portico landscaping is in four sections, two gardens fronting onto King Street and two narrow strips of garden between the ramp and the base of the building. The two front sections have remnants of perimeter shrub dwarf flowering shrubs from successive landscaping schemes, the shrubs next to the portico or porte cochere are becoming so tall they obscure the ramp.

There is a substantial palm tree with an advanced seedling palm in the western garden next to the building. They are both too close to the building and the ramp and are damaging the structure, drainage and fabric. A ground cover of ferns is found in the narrowest part of the garden, between the ramp and the basecourse.

In the eastern garden bed between the ramp and City Hall there is a stone Lantern, a gift from the sister city of Ube, Japan. Also planted in this area are several large eucalyptus trees. They are also inappropriately located. Plants in the narrowest part of the garden have been cut back and only the stumps remain.

City Hall East and West Landscaping

There is a narrow strip of garden on both the east and west sides of the building base course. This garden has risen in level due to the landscape treatment, particularly where the bamboo and some large trees were

planted. The soil level is now above the level of the original ground line and the damp proof course of the building.

Generally

The original forecourt landscape treatment was turf with a phoenix palms on each side between the vehicular ramp and the building. A self-seeded palm has grown on the western side and several eucalyptus trees have been planted in the bed adjoining Wheeler Place. Flowering shrubs and ginger plants have been introduced into the beds on either side of the steps.

Soil levels in garden beds next to the base course of the building have risen above the level of the damp-proof course. Rubbish collects in the confined space between the vehicular driveway and building.

The existing garden beds around NCH need review to assess:

- Age and condition of early plantings (eg Canary Island Palms)
- Appropriateness of other plantings (eg Cocos palms)
- Appropriate treatment against external walls for stonework conservation

While some of the plantings around City Hall are likely to be associated with the original landscape design, many are self-sown or are of inappropriate varieties to the period of building. Currently there is no cohesive design for the paving around City Hall. Both the plantings and the paving beds need review to ensure they are not contributing to deterioration of the façade stonework. Conservation of existing heritage lampposts and monuments around City Hall need to coordinate with any new landscape design. The design must also relate to the surrounding civic precincts.

Pavements

A pre-war photograph of Nesca House shows pre-cast concrete paving units in a regular pattern on both sides of King Street. Pre-cast concrete pavement is still in place on both sides of King Street, however, it has generally been covered with bitumen or is poorly repaired in concrete. The King Street pavements are in poor condition. Similar pavement is found along the axis of Civic Park.

The pavement in Christie Park is also concrete but features joints expressed as sandstone inserts that result in a more formal appearance. The sandstone inserts are gang saw Maroubra or Paddington sandstone with a 'mottle' similar to that on the Nesca House stone.

To the east, a pedestrian plaza was created in 1977 linking the new Civic Administration Building to City Hall. This plaza was named Wheeler Place and its design was radial. Constructed using concrete pavement with a washed pebble finish.

No history of a pavement policy has become evident.

Loading Access

A project is currently being considered to improve access for event set-up and for maintenance vehicles to both City Hall and the Civic Theatre. This will require modifications to Christie Street and to the rear of City Hall. In order to provide an all weather facility the loading area is to be roofed in a new contemporary steel structure. Although this loading facility will have some visual impact on City Hall when viewed from Christie Street and Christie Place it is considered essential to the viability of both NCH and the Civic Theatre as venues appropriate to visiting international performances. The new facility will take pressure off such delivery vehicles using the main entrance ramp/porte cochere. Pavements will need to be upgraded to take the impact of the loads. This upgrade should be coordinated with the landscape review at Policy x above. When the adjacent site containing Civic Arcade is redeveloped, opportunities to provide underground loading access should be explored (and this reduction and removal of the currently proposed canopy).

Monuments & Plaques

City Hall and its setting contain numerous items of sculpture either purchased or donated. Policies on the placement of plaques, memorials, sculptures, and the relocation of monuments and memorials are required for all the urban spaces in the Civic Precinct. The significance and condition of each of the existing plaques and memorials items should be assessed.

Services & Archaeology

Proposed alterations involving excavation (eg in-ground services, new monuments, new mature plantings) should take into consideration any potential archaeological deposits. It is noted that Christie Place is given High archaeological potential in the Newcastle Archaeological Zoning Plan.

Significance

"Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts" are currently listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5. They are also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

This Conservation Management Plan identifies the significance of the NCH for its fine urban design qualities in the Inter-War Classical tradition.

The setting of NCH in the Newcastle Civic and Cultural precinct and its relationship to significant heritage places and spaces such as Civic Park, Civic Theatre, Christie Place, Christie Street and Wheeler Place (formerly street) is of HIGH heritage significance. The relationship between NCH and the Civic Theatre is also historically significant.

While most of the landscaping around NCH is of LOW/NEUTRAL significance, a few existing plantings (Canary Island Palms) may be related to original plantings and are of HIGH heritage significance. Planting beds and irrigation which abut the sandstone walls are INTUSIVE because of the contribution to damp in the building generally and salt decay of the stone cladding.

The Lamp Posts are an essential part of the exterior design of Newcastle City Hall and contribute strongly to its overall State heritage significance as a fine example of early 20th century classical civic architecture and as the centrepiece of the Newcastle's civic and cultural precinct. They are of HIGH heritage significance. The Lamp Posts at the three main entrances commemorate the driving force of Mayor Morris Light (1924-25) in the having the City Hall and Civic Theatres constructed.

Policies

It is recognised that future upgrading of City Hall landscaping will be required.

Setting / Landscaping Conservation Policy 1.

The heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall setting, use, form, built elements, details and decoration must be retained. Where new works (including development in the vicinity, maintenance and repair works) will impact on heritage values an assessment of heritage impact should be prepared including consideration of less intrusive solutions.

Setting / Landscaping Conservation Policy 2. NCH Setting

NCC should continue to respect the heritage values of NCH and its setting when establishing guidelines and statutory planning provisions and when considering development on and around the NCH site. In particular such guidelines, statutory planning provisions and development considerations should recognise:

- *The landmark status of the City Hall as the centrepiece of the Newcastle Civic and Cultural Precinct (i.e. NCH should not be dominated by adjacent new development)*
- *The landmark status of the City Hall tower and views to the tower from surrounding areas*
- *The special urban design and historic relationships between NCH, Civic Park, Wheeler Place and Christie Place, including the strong axial relationships.*
- *The presence of fully accessible public open space on all sides of the NCH.*

Setting / Landscaping Conservation Policy 3. NCH Landscape

A Landscape Master Plan for NCH and its immediate environs should be prepared. The Master Plan and any future landscape proposals for NCH should consider:

- *Provision of surface drainage away from the building and sub-soil drainage next to the building.*
- *An 'air drain' or similar where it is not possible to lower pavements below the original dpc.*
- *Appropriate paving sympathetic to the heritage values of NCH and the Civic Precinct generally.*
- *Whether any of the existing plantings have heritage value and if so is their condition such they be conserved or do they need to be replaced.*
- *Conservation of significant entrance details, heritage lamp posts and other existing monuments.*
- *Removing garden from being immediately adjacent to the sandstone walls of City Hall.*
- *Removing inappropriate self-seeded and other plantings.*
- *Installing irrigation systems only where any misting or over-spray will not wet the sandstone.*
- *Using shade tolerant, hardy ground covers and / or sandstone gravel in garden beds to reduce the need for watering.*
- *Replacement pavements designed to support maintenance and delivery vehicles and to visually enhance City Hall, Christie Place, Christie Street and Wheeler Place.*
- *Landscaping, sculptures, monuments, street furniture and light fixtures should not be visually intrusive nor have a negative impact on heritage fabric.*
- *The cause of failure of the granolithic topping on the main entrance steps. Replace the topping with a new surface.*

Setting / Landscaping Conservation Policy 4. Loading Access

- *Access for goods vehicles should be designed to not detract from the amenity of Christie Place or Christie Lane. It should provide for deliveries and pick up/set down only.*
- *The widening of Christie Lane and any modification of Christie Place including alterations to adjacent garden beds or pavements should be preceded by an analysis of their the impact on City Hall and Christie Place and any landscape elements of heritage significance.*
- *Any canopy associated with a loading facility should be free standing and of an elegant contemporary design responding to the architectural rhythm of NCH and the Civic Theatre. Care must be taken to ensure water from the canopy does not wet the facades causing salt damp.*
- *When the adjacent site containing Civic Arcade is redeveloped, opportunities to provide underground loading access should be explored (and this reduction and removal of the currently proposed canopy).*

Setting / Landscaping Conservation Policy 5. Archaeology

Where new landscape elements or external services involve ground excavation comply with the relevant archaeology policies (x).

Recommendations

The above significance assessment and conservation policies should be considered when carrying works to the setting or landscape of Newcastle City Hall.

The security issue of graffiti is dealt with in Inventory Sheet 3 Stonework & Renderwork.

List of Works / Documents

1929 Original landscaping.
1929 Lamp posts installed.
19xx Chrisite Place created.
19xx Civic Park created.
1970s Wheeler Place created.
1980 Wheelchair access to Eastern entrance of Wheeler Place.
Xx Newcastle Civic Park Plan of Management.
2003 Newcastle Civic and Cultural Precinct Master Plan.
2008 Proposal for new Loading Dock facility.

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)
NSW Heritage Council

Newcastle City Hall CMP Part 2

Inventory Sheet 10 Lamp Posts

Introduction

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 1. Exterior Works Generally; and Inventory Sheets 9. Setting & Landscape.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally.

Lamp Posts

There are three types of cast iron Lamp Posts in place around City Hall, all designed by Henry Eli White and installed in 1929:

- Entrance Lamp Posts (6 No): These paired cast iron posts sit atop the stone balustrades which edge the steps and the entrance ramp. The posts have short fluted candelabrum shafts with large square bases. The capitals at the top of the shafts are decorated with a combination of lotus and acanthus leaves. The circular fluted bases sit on top of a double square plinth with decorative corner brackets. Memorial tablets are fixed to the southern side of the bases. Each lamp has a large central elliptical globe surrounded by four single spherical ball globes on short armatures. The *“two specially designed lamp standards at the entrance to the Town Hall”*¹ were dedicated as “Memorial Lamps” honouring the memory and services of Alderman Morris Light.
- Entrance Lamp Posts at Kings Street and Christie Place (8 No). These metal lamp posts have yellowblock pedestals. They have a white spherical shade. The two pairs of lamps at the east and west entrances have short fluted candelabra shafts with single spherical globes. The capital is decorated with papyrus leaves and the bottom of the shaft with acanthus leaves. The base of each lamp is decorated with four small lion heads in a circular medallion.
- Memorial Street Lamp Posts and Plaques (6 No). These are taller, more slender cast iron posts and have an elliptical glass shades which sits inside an elegant cast iron frame. They have been relocated on at least three occasions. Initially street lamps were lined up in pairs on both sides of King Street and Wheeler Street. Two symmetrically in front of NESCA House, two in front of Christie Place, two in front of City Hall. They were redistributed when the City Administration Building was built, when Wheeler Place was constructed and when the King Street vehicular lighting was upgraded on the southern side of King Street.

The Lamp Posts were repainted in 2000 (?) based on research into their original colour schemes. In 1980 the original paint finishes were stripped from the Lamp Posts.

Sandstone plinths at the base of all City Hall Lamp Posts have little weathering but are heavily infested with biological growth. The edges of these stones have also had a history of impact damage.

Significance

“Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts” are currently listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5. They are also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

The Lamp Posts are an essential part of the exterior design of Newcastle City Hall and contribute strongly to its overall State heritage significance as a fine example of early 20th century classical civic architecture and as the centrepiece of the Newcastle’s civic and cultural precinct. They are of HIGH heritage significance. The Lamp Posts at the three main entrances commemorate the driving force of Mayor Morris Light (1924-25) in the having the City Hall and Civic Theatres constructed.

Policies

Lamp Post Conservation Policy 1.

- *Institute a cyclic maintenance program for the NCH Lamp Posts, giving special attention to the corrosion of the metalwork. Allow to repaint approximately every 5 years*
- *During preparation for repainting take care not to remove evidence of the original or other early colour schemes.*

List of Works / Documents

1929 Original landscaping.
1929 Lamp posts installed
2000? The lamp posts repainted based on evidence of original colour schemes.

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)
NSW Heritage Council [Maintenance Series 3.1: Metalwork](#)

¹ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 12 December 1929.

**Newcastle City Hall CMP
Part 2****Inventory Sheet 11
Synchronised Clock System****Introduction**

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 1. Exterior Works Generally; 2. Interior Works Generally; and Inventory Sheets 12. - 21. for particular significant spaces.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929.

The synchronised clock system is part of the original fabric of the building and consists of the following elements:

- Digital Master Clock
- Original Master Clocks x 2 (There are two master clocks located in the basement that would have originally controlled all the clocks NCH.)
- 4 Tower Clocks with illuminated
- Cast iron and glass dials
- Bell & Striker
- 15 Office & Hall Slave Clocks
- Spare Parts

The synchronised clock works using a system of electrical timekeeping in which a high-precision master-clock operates a circuit of impulse dials at half minute intervals. The system is one of the best, most reliable and most accurate of modern horological mechanisms, and is steadily becoming more and more popular as its qualities become better known.

As well as being widely adopted for driving large numbers of dials in big buildings, master-clocks of the impulse type are being increasingly installed as "regulators" by horologists, both professional and amateur, on account of their fine timekeeping and easy maintenance. These advantages arise from their simple construction, the correct theoretical design, and the fact that they draw their power from a battery of dry-cells or accumulators, which renders them completely independent of the mains power supply.

There are a number of makes of master-clocks and impulse dials, but most of them are very similar in general principles. The Synchronome, based on the designs of the late F. I. Hope-Jones, F.R.A.S., a pioneer in electric clock construction, is manufactured by the Synchronome Company, Ltd.

The mechanism of both master-clock and dial is very simple. In the master-clock a pendulum, beating seconds, carries on its rod a gathering click which steps over one tooth of the 15-toothed ratchet-wheel every time the pendulum swings to the left. As the pendulum returns to the right, it then moves the wheel forward one tooth. This, of course, means that the wheel makes one complete rotation every 30 seconds.

Other Buildings with Synchronised Clock Systems

A comparative analysis of synchronised clocks is difficult to carry out as many of the systems were terminated when the buildings use changed. They are not considered rare but many early examples of Synchronised Clock Systems have important technological and research heritage significance. All systems were custom built to meet the particular requirement of the buildings. Some notable systems installed during the same period and are still in use are:

- Old Parliament House - Canberra
- Central Station - Sydney
- Brisbane City Hall - Queensland

Condition

The condition of the Master Clock System is good, well maintained and delivers an efficient time keeping to the NCH offices and the Tower Clocks. The four Tower Clock dials have a considerable amount of corrosion between the cast iron segments and the caulking has become brittle. The opalised glass in the dial has been broken in one segment and has been replaced with an incompatible match of white Perspex, this needs to be replaced with a matching glazed section.

Significance

"Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts" are currently listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5. They are also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

The NCH clock system is an integral part of the building fabric and has a HIGH level of significance. The clock has technical, social, aesthetic and historical significance. The clock system maintains a public roll as a landmark and an hourly toll of the bell. It includes the master clock, tower clock, all synchronised interior slave clocks, spare parts and bell.

Conservation Policies***Synchronised Clock Conservation Policy 1.***

The authenticity of Newcastle City Hall setting, form, built elements, details and decoration must be retained.

Synchronised Clock Conservation Policy 2.

Prepare a condition report and conserve the tower clock dials. A matching dial glass should be sourced and an adequate supply should be maintained for repairs. Develop a conservation program for the clock fabric that is coordinated with a stonework conservation program. The clock system should be regularly maintained in functioning order, including accurate time keeping, hour chimes and night time illumination.

Synchronised Clock Conservation Policy 3.

The original master clocks presently stored in the basement should be conserved and housed in an appropriate environment.

Synchronised Clock Conservation Policy 4.

A log book for the clock system should be maintained. It should document all servicing and any alterations to the clock system and suppliers.

Synchronised Clock Conservation Policy 5.

The internal slave clocks should be retained in their present locations and in good condition. Any alteration to their position should be only carried out after statutory approval is obtained supported by a council endorsed heritage impact statement.

List of Works / Documents

1929 Synchronised Clock System installed in NCH.

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)

Newcastle City Hall CMP Part 2

Inventory Sheet 12 Porte Cochere & Entrance

Introduction

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 1. Exterior Works Generally; 2. Interior Works Generally; and Inventory Sheets 3. - 8. for the conservation of particular significant materials and finishes.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally.

On King Street, a vehicular and pedestrian ramp and a wide flight of steps lead to a central foyer midway between the ground and first floors. This impressive entrance is enclosed in a porte-cochere. The flat roof of the porte-cochere provides a terrace off the main staircase mid-way between the first and second floors. The glazed landing leading onto this terrace provides an additional milling and ceremonial space that enhances the grandeur of the main staircase. This ingenious planning device defines an imposing entrance and helps to break the height and bulk of the building. The scale is further reduced by means of a flight of steps from King Street.

The front steps and the balcony are traditionally used on civic occasions to address the community. The ramp provides an appropriate ceremonial vehicular entrance.

Porte Cochere

The Porte Cochere is supported by sandstone Roman Doric style columns, the balustrade above the entablature has circular turned balusters. The balusters are extremely slim and in 2001 had been largely replaced by various synthetic stone balusters. Sandstone pedestals in the Porte Cochere and balustrading to the vehicular ramp were in a poor condition in 2001.

The balcony (roof of the Porte Cochere) is accessed through doors on the 2nd floor landing. It was originally finished with three layers of malthoid, topped with a layer of bitumen and surfaced with gravel. In 1980 the roof of the Porte Cochere was paved and perimeter seating introduced. This system has now failed and a new solution is being detailed in 2008 by Suters Architects.

Vehicular Ramp

The vehicular ramp leads up from King Street to the main entrance mid way between the ground and first floor levels. The impact of large vehicles and trucks has damaged the sandstone balustrade of the vehicular ramp on more than one recorded occasion.

The bitumen surface to the vehicular ramp has been re-topped raising the level above the cement rendered pavement at the top of the stairs. This has created an OH&S issue. Compaction of the bitumen has caused spalling of concrete on the underside of the stairs where cover over the reinforcement was deficient.

Entrance Steps

Central steps lead up to the main entrance from the King Street pavement. These main entrance steps have been covered in contemporary granolithic cement topping which is cracked and drummy in many places. The area is shaded and algae, moss and other biological growths are an ongoing maintenance problem & OH&S issue. It is recommended that this failed topping be replaced with a less porous, non slip rendered surface that is not visually intrusive.

The water penetration of the finish to the front steps is also causing corrosion of the reinforcing in the slab below (ceiling to the store room).

Significance

The entire NCH is listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5 (known as "Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts"). They are also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

The porte cochere and entrance steps are the focus of the Newcastle civic axis, a place representing the 'heart of the city'.

The City Hall entrance steps and porte cochere have a long association with the people of Newcastle in particular Lord Mayor's and Alderman. They have a significant use for reception of dignitaries and delegations. The steps and balcony provide a place for review of parades and ceremonies.

Porte cochere & balcony form & 'carved' details	HIGH
Existing finish to front steps (failing)	LOW
Sandstone balustrade to Front Steps	MODERATE
Roman Doric columns	HIGH
Column pedestals (replacement fabric)	MODERATE
Synthetic stone balusters (replacement fabric)	LOW

Replaced balustrading and copings (stairs and balcony - fabric)	MODERATE
Lamp posts	HIGH
Lamp post pedestals (replacement fabric)	MODERATE

Conservation Policies

Porte Cochere / Main Entrance Conservation Policy 1.

The heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall Porte Cochere, Entrance Steps & Balcony should be conserved. Where new works (including maintenance and repair works) will have a negative impact on heritage values an assessment of heritage impact should be prepared including consideration of less intrusive solutions.

Porte Cochere / Main Entrance Conservation Policy 2.

See also Conservation Policies in the Inventory Sheets for Stonework & Renderwork; Metalwork (IS:7); Services & Security (IS:8); Setting & Landscaping (IS:9).

List of Works / Studies

- 1929 Construction and finishing of the Porte Cochere, entrance steps, entrance ramp and balcony.
1951 A drunken army driver attempts to drive a military truck up the main ramp, damaging stonework on the eastern side of the ramp. The area was patched in cement coloured to look like stone¹.

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)

¹ Town Clerk to Commanding Officer, 12th National Service Battalion, Singleton, 13 November 1951. NCC Correspondence Bundle 2.

Newcastle City Hall CMP Part 2

Inventory Sheet 13 Main Foyer & Stairs

Introduction

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 2. Interior Works Generally; and Inventory Sheets 3. - 8. for the conservation of particular significant materials and finishes.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally.

The main entrance foyer is accessed under the porte cochere at the level midway between the ground and first floors. Flights of stairs lead up and down. The walls of the main entrance foyer are ashlar coursed textured render. The original cast fibrous plaster coffered ceiling and pendant lights are intact.

The landing flooring, treads and risers are white Sicilian marble. Raised plaster ornament decorates the landing walls. The balustrades, skirtings, trims and panelling to the columns are mottled Caleula Australian marble. The balustrade also features geometric bronze panels framed by the marble.

The current colour scheme dates from 1980. The walls were originally finished in a 'travertine' effect. 'Climbing Sun over the Hunter' is a 1981 mural by John Olsen located at the top of the stairs outside the Concert Hall.

A new central bronze balustrade was added to the wide upper flight of stairs c.2000.

Significance

The entire NCH is listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5 (known as "Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts"). It is also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

The Main Foyer and Stairs are an integral part of the original design of NCH and is an excellent example of an Inter-War Classical interior. The evidence of the original paint finishes demonstrates refined historical stylism and use of what are now rare decorative techniques. They are also an integral part of the historic and social significance of NCH.

Form and design	HIGH
Evidence of original finishes inc. 'travertine' finish to walls	HIGH
Plaster relief ornament	HIGH
Coffered plaster ceilings	HIGH
Original inverted pendant light fittings	HIGH
Marble flooring and marble stairs	HIGH
Caleula marble panelling to columns, skirtings, handrails & balustrades	HIGH
Bronze panels to stairs	HIGH
Central bronze handrail (c.2000)	LOW/NEUTRAL
Metal windows and doors	HIGH
Joinery – panelled timber doors and framework	HIGH
'Climbing Sun' Olsen mural	MODERATE
Coat of Arms	HIGH

Conservation Policies

Main Foyer & Stairs Conservation Policy 1.

The heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall Main Foyer & Stairs should be conserved. Where new works (including maintenance and repair works) will have a negative impact on heritage values an assessment of heritage impact should be prepared including consideration of less intrusive solutions.

Main Foyer & Stairs Conservation Policy 2.

Consider investigating and revealing/reinstating original wall and ceiling finishes.

See also Conservation Policies in the Inventory Sheets for Metalwork (IS:7); Services & Security (IS:8); Setting & Landscaping (IS:9).

List of Works / Studies

1929	Construction and finishing of the Main Lobby and Stairs.
1980	Position of entrance doors relocated.
1980	New colour scheme
2000	Central handrail to wide upper flight of stairs

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)

Newcastle City Hall CMP Part 2

Inventory Sheet 14 Eastern & Western Entrances & Lobbies

Introduction

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 1. Exterior Works Generally; 2. Interior Works Generally; and Inventory Sheets 3. - 8. for the conservation of particular significant materials and finishes.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally.

There are side entrances to the ground floor of NCH to the east (Wheeler Place) and west (Christie Street). The eastern end has been altered to allow wheelchair access. There are current plans to also allow wheelchair access from the western entrance.

The original configuration of the Eastern and Western lobbies includes: fibrous plaster domed ceilings; central light fitting; inner and outer pairs of joinery doors; and terrazzo flooring. The terrazzo flooring has been patched where the recessed rubber floor mat has been removed.

Significance

The entire NCH is listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5 (known as "Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts"). They are also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

The City Hall Eastern and Western Entrances and Lobbies are an integral part of the original design and strongly link NCH to the adjacent public spaces. They provide the main entrance to the ground floor Banquet Hall which has strong social significance for the people of Newcastle.

Joinery doors and fanlights	HIGH
Terrazzo flooring	HIGH
Domed ceiling	HIGH
Light fittings	HIGH
Sandstone surround to entrances	HIGH
Cast iron screen to fanlight (sympathetic & good security)	LOW/NEUTRAL

Conservation Policies

Eastern & Western Entrances Conservation Policy 1.

The heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall Eastern and Western Entrances and Lobbies should be conserved. Where new works (including maintenance and repair works) will have a negative impact on heritage values an assessment of heritage impact should be prepared including consideration of less intrusive solutions.

Eastern & Western Entrances Conservation Policy 2.

*Consider investigating and revealing/reinstating original wall and ceiling finishes.
Consider investigating and reinstating the recessed rubber (or similar) floor mats.*

See also Conservation Policies in the Inventory Sheets for Stonework & Renderwork; Metalwork (IS:7); Services & Security (IS:8); Setting & Landscaping (IS:9).

List of Works / Studies

1929 Construction and finishing of the eastern and western entrances and lobbies.
1980? Recessed rubber floor mats removed and terrazzo patched.
1980? Eastern entrance modified to provide wheelchair access.

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)

Newcastle City Hall CMP Part 2

Inventory Sheet 15 Banquet Hall

Introduction

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 2. Interior Works Generally; and Inventory Sheets 3. - 8. for the conservation of particular significant materials and finishes.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally.

The Banquet Hall is situated on the ground floor and was originally known as the 'Supper Room'. The original colour scheme was very simple in shades of white and ivory.

The room was modified in 1980, however the original spatial arrangement and the four steel columns with lotus capitals supporting the reinforced concrete beams remain intact. A dropped plasterboard ceiling was added at this time to conceal mechanical ventilation, down lighting, and the sprinkler system. The original timber flooring was replaced.

Significance

The entire NCH is listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5 (known as "Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts"). It is also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

The Banquet Hall (former Supper Room) is an integral part of the original design of NCH and is a fine example of an Inter-War Classical interior. The evidence of the original paint finishes demonstrates refined historical stylism. The Banquet Hall continues to be used as a venue for civic receptions, cultural events, social gatherings, and commercial functions. It is therefore also an integral part of the historic and social significance of NCH.

Form and design	HIGH
Columns with Lotus Capitals	HIGH
Synchronised clock	HIGH
Evidence of original finishes.	HIGH
Existing lowered ceiling	LOW / NEUTRAL
Joinery skirtings, doors, louvres and framework	HIGH
Flooring	LOW / NEUTRAL

Conservation Policies

Banquet Hall Conservation Policy 1.

The heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall Banquet Hall should be conserved. Where new works (including maintenance and repair works) will have a negative impact on heritage values an assessment of heritage impact should be prepared including consideration of less intrusive solutions.

Banquet Hall Conservation Policy 2.

Consider investigating and revealing/reinstating original wall and ceiling finishes.

List of Works / Studies

1929	Construction and finishing of the Main Lobby and Stairs.
1980	Dropped plasterboard ceiling added.
1980	Flooring replaced.
1980	New colour scheme

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)

**Newcastle City Hall CMP
Part 2****Inventory Sheet 16
Concert Hall, Gallery & Roofspace****Introduction**

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 2. Interior Works Generally; and Inventory Sheets 4. - 8. for the conservation of particular significant materials and finishes.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally.

Concert Hall

Formerly the Main Public Hall or Ball Room, the Concert Hall on the first floor of NCH seats 800 people (362 in the gallery) and is 23.3m long by 16.375m wide. The interior decoration was treated with some regard for the dignity and importance of the purpose of the building, and the ornament gets richer as it ascends, so that the ceiling appears to be the dominating feature of decoration.¹ The original wall finishes were painted over in 1980.

The Hall retains all its original light fittings including massive bronze chandeliers suspended from the coffered fibrous plaster ceiling which still retains its original colour scheme.

Mechanical ventilation was installed in 1936 and upgraded in 1980.

Concert Hall Gallery

The concert hall gallery accessed from the second floor is supported on a steel girder spanning the full width of the hall. The gallery seats 362 in the original seats with upgraded upholstery. The seats, supplied by J. Mackie & Co. have decoration and the Council's Coat of Arms carved on the outside of all row end seats. The original linoleum flooring was replaced with new carpet in 1980 and 2001.

The upper interior of the hall is divided into six bays, treated architecturally with pilasters and panels, the upper portion of which were originally ventilation grilles, are now blind grilles. The whole is crowned with an imposing cornice with a honeysuckle frieze in classic manner, to match the general treatment.²

Handrails and carpet were introduced to the Gallery in 1980. The previous floor finish was linoleum.

Stage / Dais

Above the proscenium is a mural by local artist John Montifore known as "earth, air, fire & water". This replaced the original NCC coat of arms in 1981. The Concert Hall stage was enlarged in 1980.

Original Decorative Techniques

The techniques used were common to many of White's other buildings at this time. In the main body of the hall the original 'ashlar' wall treatment to the wall was a Travertine texture effect and the walls were 'antiqued' mottled stonework with copper tinted pilasters and 'bronze 'renaissance style' chandeliers.³

Well-planned fibre plaster relief ornament was placed between panels of flat painted details Adamesque in character and sprayed decoration. Each side of the circular medallions is a vertical plaster seed-pod margent ornament. The latest methods of applying paint by medium of a paint spraying machine was used in combination with traditional line and stencil work. The spray method gave toned stippling effects. Bronze and aluminium powders⁴ were largely blown on before the materials were dry. The search for colour photographs of the "old copper tint" on the pilasters is ongoing.

Moulded plasterwork was also treated in a similar way, after application, the glazing tones were wiped off, the effect made the mouldings more three-dimensional.

Spray Gun Decorative Finishes - Stippled decorative finishes were applied to ceiling, wall and balustrade frieze panels. The edges of these panels are toned to a darker shade. On the frieze and panels is a centre ornament in outline with touches of contrasting colour on main features. The ornamentation "was entrusted to an English artist now resident in Australia, Mr Fred Sutherland"⁵. Small stencil motifs were found in the corners of the ceiling panels above the gallery.

Roof Space including structure & fittings

The riveted steel trusses used in the roof above the Concert Hall are in an excellent condition and have been well maintained. The truss system supports the wide span required by the main hall (theatre/ballroom) and all of the ceiling plasterwork has been hung from timber attached to the trusses.

¹ Building, 12 April, 1930, p.107.

² Construction and Local Government Journal, 27 April, 1928, p.8.

³ National Trust Listing, February 1981.

⁴ *The Modern Demand for Colour* by James Perrott. The Decorator and Painter for Australia and New Zealand, 1 June 1928, p.261-3.

⁵ 5 Newcastle Morning Herald, 12 December 1929.

Two hand driven cast iron chandelier winches are located in the roof space above the main hall and are used for the purpose of cleaning and maintaining the chandeliers.

The roof space is in original condition with timber duck boards used as walkways

Significance

The entire NCH is listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5 (known as "Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts"). They are also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

This Conservation Management Plan identifies the significance of the NCH for its fine public interiors including evidence of original decorative techniques and furnishings. The Concert Hall is of HIGH heritage significance as an excellent example of an intact public interior from the early 20th century in the Inter-War Classical tradition. The Concert Hall is the traditional place of public ceremonial use for the Newcastle city area including civic receptions, social and charity functions, cultural events, public meetings, trade promotions, conventions and naturalisation ceremonies. It is a key venue for orchestral and other performances in Newcastle city.

Continued use as a performance venue and function centre	HIGH
Wall and ceiling materials	HIGH
Ceiling finishes	HIGH
Evidence of original decorative finishes elsewhere	HIGH
Original light fittings including main chandeliers, wall lights & inverted pendent lights.	HIGH
Timber flooring	MODERATE
Joinery including panelling to stage & doors	HIGH
Gallery Seating	HIGH
Montifore Mural	MODERATE
Synchronised Clock System (see IS:10)	HIGH
Concert Hall roof space and structure including steel roof trusses & duck boarding	HIGH
Cast iron chandelier winches	HIGH

Conservation Policies

It is recognised that future upgrading of City Hall Concert Hall will be required.

Concert Hall Conservation Policy 1.

The heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall Concert Hall including original decoration (exposed and covered over) must be conserved. Where new works (including maintenance and repair works) will impact on heritage values an assessment of heritage impact should be prepared including consideration of less intrusive solutions.

Concert Hall Conservation Policy 2.

Before carrying out work to the Concert Hall or Gallery:

- *Undertake a thorough investigation of the former spatial qualities and decorative schemes of the spaces of heritage significance and of high heritage significance at City Hall including:*
 - *a study of documentary evidence;*
 - *the preparation of a "scraped" band that includes all divisions of the walls and ceiling⁶;*
 - *preparation of a record of the BS, AS or Munsell equivalents of colours scraped;*
 - *determining the scheme that relates to the main phase of decoration of the room*
- *Ensure the records and analysis of past significant interior decorative schemes are archived*

Concert Hall Conservation Policy 3.

In the NCH Concert Hall & Gallery

- *Retain the authenticity of the space including the volumes, openings, evidence of original decorative schemes, services and furnishings.*
- *Minimise new openings. If a new opening is absolutely necessary it should be located with reference to the architectural vocabulary of the space.*
- *Contemporary interpretations of historic interior decorative schemes may be undertaken provided the new scheme is sympathetic to the heritage significance of the space (eg respects period detailing)*

Concert Hall Conservation Policy 4.

Ensure that the redecoration schemes of for the Concert Hall & Gallery:

- *conserve the remaining evidence of original finishes such as painted decoration and floor finishes*
- *respect the overall interior style (Inter-war Academic Classical)*
- *respect the architectural elements and divisions (dado, main body, frieze)*
- *allow evidence of significant earlier schemes to be retained under new schemes (eg preparation for new paintwork should not obliterate evidence of past decorative schemes lying underneath)*
- *do not introduce conjectural reconstruction with historic styling or motifs*
- *seek to reveal or reconstruct missing significant elements where possible (eg decorative wall finishes)*

⁶ See NSW Heritage Council Guidelines on Conserving Paint Finishes.

Concert Hall Conservation Policy 5. Roof Space

- All roof space fabric should be conserved insitu and retained in a usable state.
- The roof space and in particular the ceiling should be cleaned free of building rubble and dust.

See also Conservation Policies in the Inventory Sheets for Wall & Ceiling Finishes (IS:4); Floors & Floor Finishes (IS:5); Timberwork & Joinery (IS:6); Metalwork (IS:7); Services & Security (IS:8); Synchronised Clock System (IS:10).

List of Works / Studies

- 1929 Construction and finishing of the Concert Hall, Gallery & Roof Space.
1936 Mechanical ventilation installed.
1952 Relaying part of the main hall and stage floors
1980 New mechanical ventilation, AC and other services.
1980 Wall finishes painted over
1980 Carpet and handrails installed in the Gallery
1981 Montifiore mural installed in proscenium over earlier coat of arms.

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)

Newcastle City Hall CMP Part 2

Inventory Sheet 17 Council Chamber

Introduction

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 2. Interior Works Generally; and Inventory Sheets 3. - 8. for the conservation of particular significant materials and finishes.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally.

The Council Chamber on the second floor is 51 feet long by 34 feet wide. The beams appear to be supported on Ionic capped pilasters. The original coffered fibrous plaster ceiling and polished parquet floor with inset carpet are intact. Timber pelmets were removed and suspended light fittings and sprinklers were introduced in the 1980s. Subsequently decorative wall panels and brass rails were introduced between each of the pilasters.

The current colour scheme and carpet are inappropriate. The original design intentions can be established from photographic evidence and by paint scrapes.

Original 1929 furniture includes the Mayor's daiz; semi-circular council table; public gallery; administration bench; administration table; Bella Vista table; chairs selected by J.V. Rowe; and numerous ceremonial artefacts. The room also contains chairs from the Watt Street Council Chamber.

Significance

The entire NCH is listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5 (known as "Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts"). It is also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

The Council Chamber has HIGH aesthetic significance as an integral part of the original design of NCH and is a fine example of an Inter-War Classical interior. The evidence of the original interior decoration demonstrates refined historical stylism including fine joinery and plasterwork. The Chamber has HIGH social and historical significance as a highly intact early 20th century council chamber with a continuity of use. As the seat of local government in Newcastle it represents the development of local government in NSW and the emergence of Newcastle in the early 20th century as a major international industrial centre. It is associated with Newcastle Lord Mayors including Morris Light and the first female Lord Mayor, Joy Cummins. It is the principle setting in the region for important public, cultural, civic and ceremonial events.

Form and design	HIGH
Continuing use as a Council Chamber	HIGH
Decorative fibrous plaster ceilings	HIGH
Parquet flooring	HIGH
Joinery including skirtings, doors, louvres and frames	HIGH
Synchronised clock	HIGH
Evidence of original finishes.	HIGH
Furniture and ceremonial artefacts	HIGH

Conservation Policies

Council Chamber Conservation Policy 1.

The heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall Council Chamber should be conserved. Where new works (including maintenance and repair works) will have a negative impact on heritage values an assessment of heritage impact should be prepared including consideration of less intrusive solutions.

Council Chamber Conservation Policy 2.

Consider investigating and revealing/reinstating original wall and ceiling finishes.

List of Works / Studies

1929	Construction and finishing of the Council Chamber.
1980s	Timber pelmets were removed and suspended light fittings and sprinklers were introduced
1980s	New colour scheme
1990s	Decorative wall panels and brass rails introduced between pilasters
2001	New interior decoration

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)

Newcastle City Hall CMP Part 2

Inventory Sheet 17 Council Chamber

Introduction

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 2. Interior Works Generally; and Inventory Sheets 3. - 8. for the conservation of particular significant materials and finishes.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally.

The Council Chamber on the second floor is 51 feet long by 34 feet wide. The beams appear to be supported on Ionic capped pilasters. The original coffered fibrous plaster ceiling and polished parquet floor with inset carpet are intact. Timber pelmets were removed and suspended light fittings and sprinklers were introduced in the 1980s. Subsequently decorative wall panels and brass rails were introduced between each of the pilasters.

The current colour scheme and carpet are inappropriate. The original design intentions can be established from photographic evidence and by paint scrapes.

Original 1929 furniture includes the Mayor's daiz; semi-circular council table; public gallery; administration bench; administration table; Bella Vista table; chairs selected by J.V. Rowe; and numerous ceremonial artefacts. The room also contains chairs from the Watt Street Council Chamber.

Significance

The entire NCH is listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5 (known as "Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts"). It is also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

The Council Chamber has HIGH aesthetic significance as an integral part of the original design of NCH and is a fine example of an Inter-War Classical interior. The evidence of the original interior decoration demonstrates refined historical stylism including fine joinery and plasterwork. The Chamber has HIGH social and historical significance as a highly intact early 20th century council chamber with a continuity of use. As the seat of local government in Newcastle it represents the development of local government in NSW and the emergence of Newcastle in the early 20th century as a major international industrial centre. It is associated with Newcastle Lord Mayors including Morris Light and the first female Lord Mayor, Joy Cummins. It is the principle setting in the region for important public, cultural, civic and ceremonial events.

Form and design	HIGH
Continuing use as a Council Chamber	HIGH
Decorative fibrous plaster ceilings	HIGH
Parquet flooring	HIGH
Joinery including skirtings, doors, louvres and frames	HIGH
Synchronised clock	HIGH
Evidence of original finishes.	HIGH
Furniture and ceremonial artefacts	HIGH

Conservation Policies

Council Chamber Conservation Policy 1.

The heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall Council Chamber should be conserved. Where new works (including maintenance and repair works) will have a negative impact on heritage values an assessment of heritage impact should be prepared including consideration of less intrusive solutions.

Council Chamber Conservation Policy 2.

Consider investigating and revealing/reinstating original wall and ceiling finishes.

List of Works / Studies

1929	Construction and finishing of the Council Chamber.
1980s	Timber pelmets were removed and suspended light fittings and sprinklers were introduced
1980s	New colour scheme
1990s	Decorative wall panels and brass rails introduced between pilasters
2001	New interior decoration

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)

Newcastle City Hall CMP Part 2

Inventory Sheet 18 Mayor's Office & Secretary

Introduction

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 2. Interior Works Generally; and Inventory Sheets 3. - 8. for the conservation of particular significant materials and finishes.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally.

The Mayor's Office on the second floor was adapted from the Alderman's Room in 1980. A new opening was made through to the secretary's office. The windows and joinery are original.

The Secretary's Office was adapted from the Alderman's Ante Room in 1980. The original windows and the door through to the Council Chamber are intact.

In both rooms there are some significant paintings and a 'slave clock'.

Significance

The entire NCH is listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5 (known as "Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts"). It is also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

The Mayor's Office and the adjacent Secretary's Office have HIGH significance as an integral part of the original design of NCH which is a fine example of an Inter-War Classical government building. The rooms have a long association with the seat of local government in Newcastle.

Form and design	HIGH
Inverted pendant light fittings	HIGH
Decorative fibrous plaster coffered ceilings	HIGH
Joinery including skirtings, doors, louvres and frames	HIGH
Synchronised clock	HIGH
Evidence of original finishes.	HIGH
Artworks and ceremonial artefacts	HIGH

Conservation Policies

Mayor's and Secretary's Offices Conservation Policy 1.

The heritage significance of Newcastle City Hall Council Chamber should be conserved. Where new works (including maintenance and repair works) will have a negative impact on heritage values an assessment of heritage impact should be prepared including consideration of less intrusive solutions.

Mayor's and Secretary's Offices Conservation Policy 2.

Consider investigating and revealing/reinstating original wall and ceiling finishes.

List of Works / Studies

1929	Construction and finishing of the rooms as Aldermen's Room and Antechamber.
1980s	New colour scheme
2001	New interior decoration

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)

Newcastle City Hall CMP Part 2

Inventory Sheet 19 Mayor's Reception Room

Introduction

These Inventory Sheets are prepared to give specific guidance on important issues at Newcastle City Hall. See also Inventory Sheets: 2. Interior Works Generally; and Inventory Sheets 3. - 8. for the conservation of particular significant materials and finishes.

Background / Description

Newcastle City Hall was built in 1928-1929. It features many original uses, spatial qualities, fabric and features externally and internally.

The Mayor's Reception Room is on the second floor. It was adapted from the former Committee Room in 1980. The fibrous plaster coffered ceiling; light fittings and joinery are original.

The rooms were carpeted and a new colour scheme was added in 1980. An opening was also made to a new bar, kitchen and bathroom in the former dressing room spaces. The ante-room wall was removed and the ante-room ceiling was lowered to conceal air conditioning.

The room contains some significant furniture and memorabilia. A mural, 'Milestone Dove' by Yoshitatsu Yanagihara, dates from 1973.

Significance

The entire NCH is listed as a heritage item of State heritage significance in the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008 Schedule 5 (known as "Newcastle City Hall & Lamp Posts"). It is also within Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area identified in Schedule 5.

The Mayor's Reception Room has HIGH significance as an integral part of the original design of NCH which is a fine example of an Inter-War Classical government building. The room has a long association with the seat of local government in Newcastle.

Form and design	HIGH
Inverted pendant light fittings	HIGH
Decorative fibrous plaster coffered ceilings	HIGH
Joinery including skirtings, doors, louvres and frames	HIGH
Synchronised clock	HIGH
Evidence of original finishes.	HIGH
Artworks and ceremonial memorabilia	HIGH
J. Mackie & Co Pty. Ltd. Presentation QEII table and chair	HIGH
'Milestone Dove' by Yoshitatsu Yanagihara	HIGH
Carpet finish	LOW
Existing colour scheme	LOW

Conservation Policies

Mayor's Reception Room Conservation Policy 1.

The heritage significance of Mayor's Reception Room (former Committee Room) should be conserved. Where new works (including maintenance and repair works) will have a negative impact on heritage values an assessment of heritage impact should be prepared including consideration of less intrusive solutions.

Mayor's Reception Room Conservation Policy 2.

Consider investigating and revealing/reinstating original wall and ceiling finishes.

List of Works / Studies

1929	Construction and finishing of the rooms as Committee Room with ante-room
1980s	New colour scheme and carpet
1980s	New wall openings and ante-room ceiling lowered.
2001	New interior decoration

Useful References

NSW Heritage Council [Conservation Products & Services Directory](#)

1.0 HISTORICAL OUTLINE

1.1 EARLY HISTORY OF NEWCASTLE

Newcastle is located at the mouth of the Hunter River, approximately 160 kilometres north of Sydney. It was founded in 1801 as a place of secondary punishment for convicts who had re-offended after transportation to New South Wales. This first attempt at settlement was abandoned in January 1802, apparently for want of an effective leader. A permanent settlement was established in 1804 following a convict rebellion at Castle Hill when thirty offenders, considered too dangerous to remain within contact of the main settlement, were transported to Newcastle where they were primarily engaged in mining coal and cutting cedar. Discipline and day to day running of the town, which grew to a population of 1169 in 1821, was the responsibility of the Commandant but government throughout the Colony was highly centralised under the rule of the Governor.¹

In order to maintain the isolation of the penal station the Hunter Valley remained closed to free settlers but by 1821 agitation was increasing for the release of the fertile valley land. This coincided with a decline in Newcastle's effectiveness as a place of punishment, as it became increasingly difficult to find profitable work for the convicts and large numbers of escapee convicts were now able to find their way back to Sydney. The transportation of convicts to Newcastle ceased in 1823 but the last Commandant, Captain Francis Allman, retained that title until the end of 1826 when the position was abolished and he became the first Police Magistrate at Newcastle.²

The 1820s were years of stagnation but in 1830 the Australian Agricultural Company began mining its 2,000 acre grant adjacent to the township of Newcastle. Coalmining activities in Newcastle were monopolised by the A.A. Company until 1847, when rival companies began to move into the area. The isolated townships which grew around the new mines later became independent municipalities, which eventually amalgamated in 1937 to form Greater Newcastle.

1.2 BEGINNINGS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The development of free settlement in New South Wales brought with it an increasing demand for public services and the Government sought to pass the associated financial burden to the community. Governor Bourke attempted to arouse interest in some form of local government as early as 1832 but for several reasons, not the least being antagonism towards direct taxation, his proposals did not come to fruition.³

A Newcastle District Council was formed in 1843 but community apathy was so widespread that Councillors were often appointed by the Government because no nominations had been received. However, when the Municipalities Act was passed in October 1858 there was considerably more

¹ D. O'Donnell, *The History of Early Newcastle 1800-1870*, Newcastle, 1969.

² W. Goold, *The Birth of Newcastle*, Newcastle, 1981, passim.

³ F.A. Larcombe, *The Development of Local Government in New South Wales*, Melbourne, 1961, p.79.

interest and a large number of residents signed the necessary petition to form the Municipality of Newcastle.⁴ The town's first Mayor, James Hannell, was elected at the inaugural meeting of the new Council, held at the Court House on the corner of Hunter and Bolton Streets on July 24, 1859.

Between 1871 and 1876 the surrounding towns of Hamilton, Lambton, Waratah, Wickham, Wallsend and Plattsburg became municipalities and the remaining towns of Adamstown, Merewether, Carrington, Stockton, and New Lambton achieved municipal status between 1885 and 1889.⁵ Within time, each municipality constructed Council Chambers, which were generally small but impressive buildings often designed by prominent local architects.

1.3 1859: NEWCASTLE'S EARLY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Newcastle Council continued to meet in a room in the Court House, and Council business was transacted in small room at the Borough Markets until 1874 when the two functions were brought together under one roof, in the convict built former Commissariat Store in Watt Street. For many years this building had served as a Post Office but it became vacant in 1872 following construction of a new Post Office in Hunter Street.⁶

In 1884 the City Engineer, John Sharp, designed the first purpose-built Chambers for the Newcastle Borough Council. Located in Watt Street, the building contained a meeting hall and offices for the Mayor and Town Clerk on the ground floor with other offices upstairs.⁷ A balcony on the first floor, above the central doorway, was designed "to be used when it [was] necessary to address the ratepayers"⁸. It was erected in front of the old convict-built structure which was then used as a store room and spare office until it was demolished in May 1923.⁹

This building was used for its designed purpose until the completion of the City Hall in 1929. It is now occupied by the United Services Club.

1.4 1888-1909: MOVES FOR A TOWN HALL

Although the new Council Chambers contained a meeting hall it was apparently inadequate, as only four years after it was built the first moves towards the construction of a Town Hall were made. An Improvements Committee was delegated the task of investigating the possibility of developing the Council's Market Square property in a way that would render it "remunerative and ornamental to the citizens generally". For legal reasons this did not eventuate but in October 1890 a Town Hall reappeared on the agenda with the announcement of a design competition with prize money of £100.

⁴ Ibid., p.31.

⁵ J. Docherty, *Newcastle: the Making of an Australian City*, p.137.

⁶ E. Scott Holland to J. Glassop, Town Clerk, Newcastle, 4 May 1923.

⁷ B. Maitland and D. Stafford, *Architecture Newcastle*, 1997, p.66.

⁸ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, n.d., cited in *ibid.*

⁹ "The First Council Chambers, Newcastle". File note, Newcastle Buildings File, NRPL.

Council expressed a desire to combine a Town Hall with an arcade of shops, which would produce an income to finance the operation and maintenance of the Town Hall and to assist with loan repayments. Well known local architect, Frederick Menkens, won the competition, with a design for a two storeyed building containing 42 shops on the ground floor – ten facing Hunter Street and the remainder with frontages to an internal arcade. The upper floor contained 30 offices, a Town Hall with stage, Council Chambers and offices for the Mayor, Town Clerk, Inspector and Committees. This project did not proceed for several reasons, one of the more decisive being Council's inability to raise a loan for the required £74,000.

The issue was revived in 1908, and another competition was proposed in the following year but the plan was again abandoned.

Council continued to be based in the Watt Street building but the already cramped conditions were soon to become more restricted.

1.5 1919: THE NEED INTENSIFIES

Before the passage of the Local Government Act (1919) the powers of local government were limited to assisting the administration of the 1898 Public Health Act, cattle slaughtering, road building, pipe laying, the control of nuisances and the regulation of balconies and common lodging houses.¹⁰ Newcastle Council was also responsible for the generation and distribution of electricity from its Sydney Street powerhouse, erected in 1890.

Under the new legislation, the powers of local councils were increased considerably. Mandatory powers, such as those concerned with the appointment of certain servants and the proper management of funds, were limited. However, there was a wide range of permissive functions and services which could be undertaken by councils should they so desire. These included construction, maintenance and drainage of public roads, wide ranging public health issues, control and maintenance of public recreation facilities, building and housing approvals, town planning and provision of public utilities, social services and cultural facilities.¹¹

It is not clear how enthusiastically Newcastle Council embraced these functions but its activities increased to the point where the Council Chambers were extended and the administrative staff of the four departments (Town Clerk, Electrical Engineer, City Engineer, Health Inspector) were scattered through four separate buildings in Watt Street.¹²

¹⁰ J. Docherty, *Newcastle: the making of an Australian City*, p.137.

¹¹ G. Larcombe, *The Development of Local Government in NSW*, p.92.

¹² *The Builder*, 29 December 1929, p.2.

At the same time, the city's growing population was placing pressure on the inadequate facilities available for public meetings and gatherings, intensifying the need for a Town Hall. The establishment of BHP's steelworks in 1915 brought not only steelworkers to the city, but people seeking employment at the State Government dockyard at Walsh Island, in subsidiary industries and the growing service sector. By 1921 the population of the Newcastle area reached 84,372, an increase of 30,000 over the preceding decade.¹³

1.6 1920: THE COMMUNITY BECOMES INVOLVED

To Build or Not To Build?

In an attempt to gain office space without incurring excessive capital outlay, an approach was made to the Government in 1919 by the Mayor, Robert Gibson, who proposed an exchange of the Council Chambers in Watt Street for the Police Station building in Hunter Street. The Government rejected the idea, so Council returned to the idea of building a Town Hall.

Heralding a long and drawn out process of community consultation and debate surrounding the acquisition of a Town Hall, Newcastle Council turned to its constituents for guidance. A referendum of ratepayers was held in January 1920 to judge community support for raising a loan of £30,000 to acquire a site and build a Town Hall. Votes were lodged by 682 people, who favoured the expenditure by a majority of 232. John Brown, head of the J & A Brown empire of mines, railways and ships, was approached concerning the possible acquisition of his property in Hunter Street which included the vacant "Black Diamond Hotel". Brown, however, declared his unwillingness to sell "for family reasons".

East or West?

Thwarted in its attempt to acquire Brown's site, the Council turned its attention to locations further east in the city. This prompted a public outcry which led to a second referendum in September 1920 to decide whether the Town Hall should be built at the east or west end of Newcastle, the Burwood Street intersection being the boundary between east and west. It seems that ratepayers were more concerned with the cost than they were with the location of their proposed Town Hall, for only 450 cast a vote compared to 682 on the previous occasion. The result was a success, by 26 votes, for supporters of the East End location.

Fourteen possible sites were then selected and a decision finally made in May 1921 to acquire land bounded by Hunter, Darby, King and Burwood Streets. The City Engineer prepared plans which, like the earlier Menkens design, included a number of shops to provide an income to assist in the costs of running and maintaining the Town Hall. Council, however, had not anticipated the high costs of resuming the Royal Hotel and compensating other existing businesses on the site, so the file was closed on yet another Town Hall proposal.

¹³ Docherty, *Newcastle: the making of an Australian City*, Sydney, 1983, p.4.

Ten alternative sites were later selected, then reduced to three – the existing Council Chambers site in Watt Street, the corner of Auckland and Hunter Streets, and the site now occupied by the City Hall and Civic Theatre.

Apparently exhausted by the problems of land acquisition and funding, the Council resolved in June 1923 to postpone the issue until resolution had been reached on the current proposal to amalgamate the area's eleven Municipal Councils to create a Greater Newcastle.¹⁴ The implications of that proposal included the centralisation of administrative services, with a corresponding increased need for office space. However, a stronger influence in the decision to postpone may have been the prospect of increased financial power with the consolidation of assets and income of the Municipalities. This loss of momentum proved to be temporary, as eighteen months later the election of a new mayor provided the catalyst for the long-awaited realisation of a Town Hall for Newcastle.

1.7 1925: A TOWN HALL FOR NEWCASTLE

Morris Light (1859-1929)

Morris Light, elected as Mayor of Newcastle in December 1924, was a man of vision and determination. He was born in Kovno, Western Russia in 1859 but fled in 1879 to escape increasing Jewish persecution. After spending some time in Scotland he arrived in Australia in 1886. He settled in Carrington and established a series of furniture stores in the Hunter area, finally moving to Hunter Street West where his shop became known as "The House of Lights". Among his proudest achievements was the introduction of consumer credit to Newcastle by offering finance to his customers under his own interest free terms. Some idea of the success of Light's business can be judged from the generosity of his unmarried daughter, Reta (1898-1989), who bequeathed \$1.5 million to Newcastle University's Auchmuty Library. As stipulated in her will, the endowment financed the acquisition of books, periodicals, microfilms and musical scores.

For 35 years, Light served on Carrington and Newcastle Councils, his efforts on the Carrington Council leading to the introduction of electric street lighting in the area. He also promoted the electrification of Newcastle's tram service and was a strong advocate for electrification of the Newcastle to City rail link and the creation of a children's park at Centennial Park. His greatest achievement, however, was the realisation of the City Hall and Civic Theatre complex – an issue which was an important plank in his election campaign.¹⁵ Unfortunately he did not live to see the buildings completed, as he died of pneumonia on 26 July 1929.

¹⁴ J. Glassop, "A Town Hall for Newcastle: A History of the Movement", in *City of Newcastle Souvenir, Civic Week, 1929*. Newcastle, 1929, n.p.

¹⁵ "Miss Reta Light (1898-1989) – Benefactor of the University of Newcastle Libraries", Newcastle University Archives and Rare Books website.

The Plan Approved

In February 1925 Light began to formulate a scheme for building a Town Hall and offices, together with an Art Gallery and Museum. This was later modified to encompass a Town Hall, theatre and shops. To avoid reviving the east-west argument, he suggested that a site be chosen near the centre of the city.¹⁶ To oversee the project, eight Aldermen were appointed to a Town Hall Special Committee, which considered advice from experts in all areas before deciding on a course of action.

The need for a Town Hall was undeniable, according to a Council document produced at the time. Previous Councils were accused of not keeping pace with the growth of the city because of their failure to provide adequate accommodation for administrative staff. Lack of a suitable venue for large public meetings was also raised, as was the need to hold large civic receptions in the street because the Council Chambers were overcrowded.

When a Mayor extends a Civic Reception to distinguished visitors, after boasting the City of Newcastle, its civic activities, the enormous revenue, the great assets of the City Council, the great strides the Electric Supply Department has made, but when it comes to the question of a Town Hall, a Mayor has to drop his head down in shame, and has to admit apologetically that the Newcastle Council has not a Town Hall, or offices worthy of the name.¹⁷

On 29 June 1925 the Committee's report was adopted, recommending selection of the present site, construction of a Town Hall, theatre and shops or business premises and appointment of Mr. H.E. White as Architect. It also proposed that the sum of £175,000 be borrowed to finance the project.

1.8 THE PROPERTY

In July 1927 the Council resumed just over 2 ½ acres of land, including the site which John Brown had previously refused to sell. Included in the resumed parcel were Lots 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, part of 14, 67, 68, 69 and 70, Section A, which were originally part of the Australian Agricultural Company's 2,000 acre estate.¹⁸ Newcastle City Hall stands on Lots 10, 11 and 12. Wheeler Place occupies Lot 9, while Christie Place occupies Lots 13 and 14.

The Australian Agricultural Company was granted 2,000 acres in the Newcastle area in 1828 for the purposes of coalmining, which the company continued to pursue in the area until 1916. As well as its coal profits, the company earned money from land sales after 1853, when it began to subdivide and sell town allotments.¹⁹

¹⁶ Undated newspaper clipping, Newcastle Region Public Library, Local Studies Department.

¹⁷ "Proposed Town Hall and Municipal Theatre", 19 June 1925, Newcastle City Council correspondence files.

¹⁸ *The NSW Government Gazette*, No.98, 22 July, 1927, p.3662.

¹⁹ P. Pemberton, *Pure Merinos and Others: The "Shipping Lists" of the Australian Agricultural Company*, Canberra, 1986, p.38.

The allotments which were later resumed for the Town Hall/Civic Theatre complex were sold by the company between 1856 and 1864. Lots 9, 13, 67, 68, 69 and 70, were originally bought by James Brown but had passed to his son, John.²⁰ Lots 11 and 12, on which the City Hall stands, as well as Lots 10, 14 and 15 were bought by Archibald Rodgers, who also acquired Lot 13, originally purchased by James Brown.²¹

The firm known as Archibald Rodgers was established in Carrington in 1854 by two brothers who migrated from Scotland in 1852. In 1870 the name was changed to Rodgers Bros. and the business moved to the King Street site. The swampy land had to be covered with six feet of fill in preparation for building the new engineering works which included a blacksmiths shop, fitting and machine shop and a moulding shop. In the foundry building, 14" square ironbark supports carried a 10 tonne crane. In 1878 Rodgers Bros. built the first locomotive in Newcastle for E.C. Merewether's Burwood colliery.

1.9 H. E. WHITE: THE ARCHITECT

Great interest surrounded the selection of an architect for the Town Hall, theatre and shops complex. To achieve the best possible results in the theatre and the hall of the Town Hall, the council was anxious to engage an architect with experience in theatre design. The favoured architect was H.E. White, a recognised expert whose design for the St. James Theatres and offices was currently under construction in Sydney for the Ward-Fuller Theatrical firm. However, other architects were also keen to offer their services.

The Secretary of the Institute of Architects, Sydney wrote to the council recommending that, yet again, a competition be held. While at the local level, architect T.J. Pepper, whose design had been accepted for the Town Hall competition in 1910, was strongly in favour of the appointment of a local architect. He called on the council to honour its policy of decentralisation by allowing a Newcastle firm to prove its worth against its Sydney counterparts. This view was supported by Alderman Gibson, who expressed regret that he "could not see eye to eye with the Mayor, who favoured the recognised expert in theatre design, H.E. White. What was the good of boosting Newcastle", he asked, "unless they gave their own architects a chance?".

In response, the Mayor said that "nothing would give him greater pleasure than to recommend a local architect, but having regard to the ratepayers' purse, he was safeguarding their interest in recommending a man of such great experience and ability as Mr. White. The Institute of Architects were trying to get the job, but the calling of competitive designs would mean delay ... the council would be delegating their powers to two assessors, and would not have any say in the designs at

²⁰ NSW Land Titles Office, Fol.668, Vol.109, Fol.669, Book 109, Fol.670, Book 109, Fol.722, Book 984.

²¹ NSW Land Titles Office, Fol.319, Book 61; Fol.671, Book 109; Fol. 944, Vol.90; Fol.728, Book 212.

all". Alderman Cornish, determined that this Town Hall project should not meet the same fate as its predecessors, and pointed out that "The citizens now had the opportunity of getting something they had desired for the past twenty five years and it if was not taken it would be held up for another 25 years".²²

The decision was made to engage White. In August 1925 he submitted the Town Hall plans, which were then placed on public display in the Hunter Street window of Scott's Store.²³ Plans for the theatre and shops were presented soon after. White's ability to achieve contrasting styles to reflect the different functions of the two buildings was later commended by a Newcastle journalist:

*So great is the contrast between the Town Hall building and the Civic Theatre that it is hard to realise that they were planned by the same architect. Each is quite distinctive in its own style. Dignity and classic charm are the characteristics of the former. On the other hand, the interior of the Civic Theatre gives an impression of luxurious beauty, to which the soft warm colours beautifully blended, a wealth of decorative working Spanish style, an interpretation in the walls of antique, mottled stonework, and glowing lights in a myriad changing hues contribute.*²⁴

White's career began in the early 1890s when he left primary school to work for his father's building firm in Dunedin, New Zealand. After spending some time on the Western Australian goldfields he returned to his father's business but enrolled at night school to study architecture and structural engineering. He established his own business in 1904, demonstrating his abilities soon afterwards with the successful tender for the construction of a tunnel associated with the Waipori Falls hydro-electricity scheme.²⁵

In 1907 White developed a passion for theatre, which was to become a strong influence in the development of his career. Frustrated by the impact of poor theatre design on his enjoyment, his interests turned to improving acoustics and lines of vision. According to White, there were "three great essentials" of theatre design – vision lines, acoustics and ventilation. "A good theatre", he commented, "is one where everyone can see well, hear well from a comfortable seat and where the system of ventilation carefully provides against excessive hot or cold".²⁶

The remodelling of a small theatre in Christchurch for John Fuller in 1907 marked a turning point in White's career. Over the following seven years he rebuilt or remodelled over fifteen theatres in New Zealand, becoming the official architect for several theatrical firms the entry into theatre design began in 1907. The reputation which later drew White to the attention of Newcastle City Council was well established by 1915, when a critic noted that:

²² *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 14 July 1925.

²³ "Newcastle City Council: Plan of Proposed Town Hall", File note signed by J. Glassop, Town Clerk, n.d. Newcastle City Council correspondence files A2538.

²⁴ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 30 November 1929.

²⁵ *ibid.*, p.10.

²⁶ M.F. Gardiner, "Henry Eli White", B. Arch. Thesis, November 1974, p.7.

*his opinions on all questions within his chosen sphere are accepted as the ultimate authority in the Southern Hemisphere by the greatest theatrical managements in the Commonwealth and New Zealand.*²⁷

In 1913 White's interests turned to Australia with the design of two theatres for the Rickards Tivoli circuit – one in Brisbane and one in Melbourne and at the end of World War I he moved his family to Sydney. His subsequent work included Bunnerong Power House but the main focus was on theatre design. Examples include the Theatre Royal, Union Theatres, Capitol Theatre (based on sketches of John Ebersson), the Elizabethan Theatre, St James Theatre, the State Theatre and Shopping Arcade in Sydney, Palace Theatre, Bijou Theatre and Princes Theatre in Melbourne, Regent Theatre in Geelong and the Wintergarden Theatre in Ipswich.

1.10 1926: THE FINAL DEBATE

It is doubtful whether significant resistance would have been voiced to the construction of income-producing shops in conjunction with the Town Hall, but the proposal to include a large theatre drew intense opposition. One of the more vocal opponents was the Manager of the Victoria Theatre, leased by Sir Benjamin and Mr. John Fuller. Through the local press, an unceasing opposition campaign was conducted against the proposed theatre and a petition was circulated to gain support for a poll. Once again, the Council turned to its constituents for guidance²⁸.

A Poll of Ratepayers was held on 6 March 1926, at which voters were asked to indicate their preference for a Town Hall, Theatre and Shops, or a Town Hall only.

To prepare voters for the event an eight page pamphlet setting out anticipated costs, revenue and expenditure. Details of the case against the proposed scheme were prepared by Aldermen Wheeler and Castleden and the case in favour of the scheme was prepared by the Mayor (Alderman H.P.Cornish) and Alderman O'Neill.

The group in favour of including a theatre and shops pointed out that Newcastle had only one theatre, recently re-designed and opened as a picture theatre. Together with the fourteen proposed shops, the theatre would provide a steady income to assist in repayment of the loan money. Moreover, the new complex would "vastly improve the City in general, and that otherwise shabby looking neighbourhood in particular".

Those opposing the more ambitious proposal saw the construction of a Town Hall as a necessity which was the "unanimous wish of the ratepayers". The theatre and shops, however, would involve

²⁷ cited in *ibid.*, p.17.

²⁸ J. Glassop, "A Town Hall for Newcastle"

additional expenditure which would affect the borrowing power of the Council for many years. Moreover, doubts were expressed concerning the Council's ability to manage and control the complex.²⁹

On polling day, the *Newcastle Morning Herald* carried nearly a full page of advertisements supporting the rival proposals. J.C. Williamson Ltd. expressed their support for a new theatre which would allow them to stage regular performances in Newcastle, while opponents of the theatre depicted a white elephant trampling "the poor ratepayers", and uprooting a tree marked "confidence, personal credit, trust, private enterprise, ownership, faith, citizens' rights, established business, honour, freedom".³⁰

At the end of voting, 1,034 ratepayers had registered their interest, with a majority of 136 favouring the inclusion of the theatre and shops.³¹ Council successfully applied for approval under the 1919 Local Government Act to raise a loan of £200,000 and resumption of land began soon afterwards.

After decades of frustrated planning, Newcastle's Town Hall was at last to become a reality, and tenders were prepared for the construction of the complex. A poem published in *Newcastle Construction* captured the sentiments of many Novocastrians at the time. Titled "It Is About Time", the author highlighted the positive image created by Newcastle's natural attributes, contrasted against the difficulties of negotiating business in the city:

*A shock comes to that party
Arriving bright and hearty,
When he finds the council Chambers on a hill quite tall;
He climbs, and so gets tired
So this phrase is fired –
"It's a pity that this city has no grand Town Hall!"³²*

1.11 1927: THE PLAN PROCEEDS

Charles Davis & Son: Builders

Although the design of the Town Hall and Theatre/shops complex was let as a single contract, separate tenders were called for the construction of the two buildings. In selecting a builder for the Town Hall, Council was obviously influenced by cost but, in contrast to the selection process for the architect, preference was given to local contractors and suppliers for construction.

²⁹ *Proposed Town Hall, Theatre and Shops*, Booklet published by Newcastle City Council, 1 March 1926.

³⁰ Undated newspaper clipping, Newcastle Region Public Library, Local Studies Collection.

³¹ Returning Officer's Report, Poll of Ratepayers, 8 March 1926. Newcastle City Council Correspondence.

³² *Newcastle Construction*, 18 February 1926.

The successful tenderer was the firm of C. Davis and Sons of Newcastle, which submitted the lowest tender of £82,927. The highest tender of £99,560 came from James Walker. Of the eleven tenders received, six came from Newcastle, three from Sydney and two unknown. The local firm of W. Stronach, which submitted a tender of £91,986 for the Town Hall, was later awarded the contract for construction of the Theatre/shops complex, to cost £71,863.³³

Charles Davis was a well-established and respected builder in Newcastle when he was engaged to build the Town Hall. He left school at 13 to work as an apprentice bricklayer in his father's building business and became a master builder in 1902. He and his brothers Arthur and James became partners with their father in 1903, establishing the firm of C. Davis and Sons which became one of the largest businesses of its kind in NSW.

Among the firm's larger contracts were the AMP block (£50,000), remodelling of the Council's Market Street buildings (£32,000), the Commonwealth Steel building (£25,000), Commercial Bank (£12,000) and several hotels, including the Rawson, Crown and Anchor and Oxford.³⁴ His domestic work included "Braeside" at Waratah, designed by well known local architect Frederick Menkens.

1.12 NOVEMBER 1927: AN EXPENSIVE VARIATION

In November 1927 Council decided, apparently with little debate or hesitation, to change the building material for the Town Hall from brick and cement to freestone.³⁵ The possibility of this variation was first recorded in October 1927, when Newcastle City Council meeting minutes recorded the acceptance of Davis's tender of £82,927, subject to a firm price being submitted for stone facing or terracotta.³⁶ Within three weeks the decision had been made, increasing the cost by £26,480. At this stage the project was suspended until Government approval was given for an additional loan of £81,000 to cover the cost of the stone and increased costs related to land acquisition and rising costs of labour and materials.³⁷

Given the history of community consultation on significant issues relating to the Town Hall proposal, it can only be assumed that Council decided not to invite further delay at this stage of the project. The variation was apparently well accepted by ratepayers, as surviving records do not reveal significant opposition from the community.

³³ Minute of Newcastle City Council meeting, 14 November 1927.

³⁴ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 25 January 1941.

³⁵ Minute of Newcastle City Council meeting, 14 November 1927.

³⁶ Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 24 October 1927.

³⁷ Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 14 November 1927 and *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 21 April 1928.

1.13 MARCH 1928 – DECEMBER 1929: CONSTRUCTION PERIOD

Pouring the foundations of Cockle Creek concrete reinforced with BHP steel began on 7 March 1928. Seven tonnes of steel was used in one area at the base of the tower.³⁸

Existing overhead high tension mains in the vicinity of the site were undergrounded to allow an unimpeded view of the Town Hall, and a substation constructed to the west of the building.³⁹

Laying the Foundation Stone

The foundation stone, of polished trachyte with an axed margin, was laid on 20 April 1928 by the Governor, Sir Dudley de Chair, who travelled by train to Newcastle. A large crowd which had assembled in Watt and Scott Streets to greet him was entertained by the School Band, under the direction of Mr. Kerry. On arrival, the Governor was greeted by the Mayor, Alderman R. Gibson, the Town Clerk, Mr. J. Glassop and members of the Council. The Boy Scouts, under Commissioner B.B. Rodd, formed a guard of honour and after inspecting the guard, the Governor was taken for a short drive around the city before lunch at the Newcastle Club.



Figure 1.
Laying of Foundation Stone
by Sir Dudley de Chair
20 April 1928 NC/A

During the afternoon ceremony, he spoke of Newcastle's natural resources and the "enterprising and industrious character of its people". He went on to declare the proposed Town Hall to be "one of the noblest structures of the kind which as been erected in the State", and praised the local politicians who "so unselfishly and patriotically gave of their best in the interests of municipal government". He then laid the foundation stone, of polished trachyte with the axed margin:

The Mayor thereupon presented a silver trowel to the Governor, and invited him to lay the stone. This was done in a business-like way. Tapping the slab down gently to the level required by Mr.

³⁸ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 8 March 1928

³⁹ Electrical Engineer and Manager to Town Clerk, 27 August 1928. NCC Correspondence A2643.

Davis, one of the contractors, His Excellency remarked that he had pleasure in declaring the stone true and faithfully laid.

A second silver trowel was then handed to the Mayor, who laid a matching memorial stone which recorded the names of the Mayor and Aldermen of the council and the Town Clerk. A large sealed bottle, containing a copy of the *Newcastle Morning Herald*, and other documents, was placed on the base by Mr. Davis. The ceremony concluded with musical entertainment by the Steel Works Band and the Schools Band.⁴⁰

Construction Progresses

As a general policy in construction of the Town Hall, Council preferred to use local materials, suppliers and contractors. For example, cement was purchased from the Cockle Creek works of the Sulphide Corporation⁴¹, and when it was discovered that the tender specified the use of “British steel” and “English steel”, steps were taken to substitute locally made BHP steel where possible. However, it appears that local steel was more expensive so BHP was asked to bear half the extra cost of using their product. The request was granted, resulting in a reduction of £250 on the cost of local steel accepted.⁴²

Local firms involved in the construction of the Town Hall included Edmunds and Moir (electrical work), J. Mackie & Co (gallery chairs as well as stalls and dress circle chairs for the Civic Theatre)⁴³, and W. Neve (supply of three settees and eight easy chairs⁴⁴, renovation of existing meeting room and office furniture).⁴⁵ Linoleum, laid over 1-ply bituminous material, and paper-felt under the gallery linoleum was supplied by W. Winn & Co.⁴⁶ Parquetry, in blackwood rather than the originally specified jarrah, was laid by the builder. Carpet was supplied by Templetons and purchased from Bebarfalds in Sydney

Although the Council had initially agreed that the Town Clerk would be responsible for interior decoration, it was later agreed to seek professional advice for some areas of the building.⁴⁷ J.V. Rowe, Lecturer in Fine Arts at Sydney Technical College and recognised furnishing expert was engaged to undertake the interior decoration but, for reasons unspecified by the Council, his “powers did not extend to linoleum, chairs, pianos, servery utensils and fridges”.⁴⁸ Previous projects completed by Rowe included the Rose Bay Golf Club and the Automobile Club in Sydney.

⁴⁰ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 21 April, 1928.

⁴¹ Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 27 February 1928.

⁴² Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 12 March 1928.

⁴³ *Newcastle Sun*, 11 November 1929.

⁴⁴ Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 28 October 1929.

⁴⁵ Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 30 August 1929.

⁴⁶ Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 16 September 1929.

⁴⁷ Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 31 July 1929.

⁴⁸ Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 12 August 1929.

1.14 1929 OFFICIAL OPENING

On 14 December 1929, a little over a year and a half after laying the foundation stone, the Governor, Sir Dudley de Chair, returned to Newcastle to open the Town Hall. The adjacent Civic Theatre was opened on the same day by the Premier, Mr. T.R. Bavin. Before declaring the building open the Governor he unveiled two ornamental lamps, one covered with the Australian flag and the other with the Union Jack, which were erected in memory of Alderman Light. Recognised as the driving force behind the Town Hall/Civic Theatre scheme, Morris Light did not live to see the buildings completed.⁴⁹ Alderman Bert Light, who succeeded his father to the Council, thanked the Governor for unveiling the memorial.

After delivering his address the Governor was presented with a large silver ink-stand by the Mayor, who then unveiled a tablet in the main vestibule to commemorate the official opening. The public was then invited to inspect the building:

Women and children and grown men surged up the main steps and into the building. The crowd was so dense that progress was very slow. Toes were stood on, and women had to fight hard not to be crushed. Some tried to go back, but the retreat was impossible. The only way out was to go on and through the building to the doors at the other side.⁵⁰

All the workmen engaged on the Town Hall and Civic Theatre buildings were invited to the official opening functions.⁵¹

Civic Week Celebrations

To mark the opening of the Town Hall and Civic Theatre, and to make it an event “worthy of the occasion” the Council declared a week of celebrations, to be known as “Civic Week”. The programme included sporting events, an aerial pageant, schools displays, military tattoo, surf carnival, shop window competitions, and a procession, together with commercial and manufacturing exhibitions. Organisations, businesses and industries throughout the region were invited to participate and the Railway Commissioners were asked to make trains available to transport people from Sydney and country areas to Newcastle.

As well as being a celebration, the week was seen as an opportunity to showcase the city’s attractions and to attract trade to the area. A representative of the Motor Traders’ Association reflected the enthusiasm of many similar groups when he commented that his people “would be in it with their ears back” and would do everything possible to make the week a success.⁵²

⁴⁹ *Newcastle Construction*, 14 December 1929.

⁵⁰ *Newcastle Sun*, 14 December 1929.

⁵¹ *Newcastle Sun*, 12 November 1929.

⁵² *Newcastle Sun*, 15 October 1929.

For its part, the Council undertook to spend £1,000 on street displays, the like of which had never been seen in the City. The Town Hall and Civic Theatre were outlined with electric lights and illuminated by 20 floodlights, with 5,000 watt floodlight projectors. Ten of the lights were placed in King Street, five in Wheeler Place and five from the vacant land on the western side of the Town Hall. The Civic block was festooned with a total of 3,600 lamps and coloured electric light flags waved from every pole. The block was also decorated with 2,500 yards of pendant flagging. Elaborate decorative arches spanned the four corners of the block:

The four arches will each be 24 feet high, and their pillars will be four feet square, covered with bronze-coloured metal. One arch will span King-street at the corner of King and Auckland streets, and its design will centre round the words, "Welcome to Newcastle", which will be written with lights. Another arch will span King-street at the corner of King-street and Wheeler-place, and will have "Newcastle, 1859-1929" written on it.

A third arch, with the words "Civic Week" on it, will span Wheeler-place at the corner of Wheeler-place and Hunter-street, and the fourth, with the motto, "Advance Newcastle", will span Auckland-street and the corner of Hunter and Auckland Streets.⁵³

At one stage it seemed as though the entire programme of celebrations would be cancelled, following a riot at Rothbury Colliery which resulted in the wounding of six miners and policemen and the death of a young miner. After considerable debate, strong support was voiced for continuing with all celebrations except the ball.⁵⁴

As a lasting memory to Civic Week, the *City of Newcastle, Souvenir, Civic Week* was published. Including outlines of the early history of the city and municipalities, a review of civic activities and details of various organisations, public services, industrial and maritime concerns, it remains a valuable aid to understanding the city at that time.⁵⁵

1.15 THE BUILDING

Described in *Newcastle Construction* as a "purposeful, dignified, chaste, but inexpensive" building, Newcastle Town Hall.⁵⁶ The *Newcastle Morning Herald* spoke of the building in glowing terms:

Of classic design, in which the lofty porte cochere and noble Ionic columns are prominent, the Town Hall faces placid King-street as though ignoring the bustle and dust of Newcastle's main traffic artery. The warm buff of the Sydney freestone is in keeping with the dignity of the building, of which it forms so attractive an exterior.

⁵³ *Newcastle Sun*, 28 November 1929.

⁵⁴ Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting 16 December 1929

⁵⁵ *City of Newcastle, Souvenir, Civic Week*, Newcastle, 1929,

⁵⁶ *Newcastle Construction*, 12 December 1929.

The newspaper went on to describe the interior of the building – its stairs of Sicilian marble, balustrade of coloured marble and passages “in chaste white plaster” which conveyed an impression of spaciousness. Panel beam ceilings and the extensive use of polished Queensland maple were also noted. Of particular interest was the architect’s treatment of “the mercenary element suggested by the ticket box at the top of the flight”, which was subdued by the manner in which it blended with its surroundings.⁵⁷ Constructed of polished marble and inlaid grills, the ticket box was made by Mr. John Ross, of Stockton.

From the main vestibule, its walls “plastered with granolithic”, stairs led down to the large Supper Room with kitchen facilities and loudspeakers, anticipated to be “an excellent and profitable letting proposition”.⁵⁸ Included in the furniture in this room were 400 folding, curved back oak chairs with upholstered seat and back, joined in sets of three. These chairs were described as “Sample No.5”, supplied by Sydney Art Mantel Works. A number of spring seat chairs were also purchased from the same company for use in the Supper Room. Also on this level were the Town Clerk and City Engineer’s Departments, contractors’ rooms and services.⁵⁹

The main staircase rose from the vestibule, providing access to the first floor, occupied by the Department of the City Electrical Engineer, Mr. Guy Albutt. The rear section of this floor, and the corresponding area on the floor above, were occupied by the main hall, notable for its lack of pillars to interrupt the audience’s view to the stage. In a report of the opening of the Town Hall, the main hall was described as having “a charm of its own”:

Here is the supreme attraction. Mr. White, whose work is heralded from many parts of this State, has surely nothing to which he can point with greater pride. There are roominess, airiness and artistry. Nothing is wanting. It is a hall of grandeur, and pleases instantly. The walls rise to a height of 46ft., and the dimensions of the room are 54ft. by 83 ft. – a vast hall within a hall – the ornamentation side of which was entrusted to an English artist now resident in Australia, Mr. Fred Sutherland....

The superstructure is entirely supported on stout steel girders extending the full width of the hall.

Unlike other areas of the Town Hall, the Main Hall, with seating for over 1,000 people, was described as being:

ornate in much the same manner as the Civic Theatre, although the design is altogether different as is the colour scheme. An impression of rich old ivory with old blue as the complementary colour is conveyed ... and the pilasters are of an old coper tint. Specially treated, the woodwork of the doors and of the attractive stage, is novel and attractive. Bronze chandeliers, in the style of the Renaissance period, are suspended from the panelled ceiling.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 30 November 1929.

⁵⁸ *Newcastle Construction*, 27 April 1928, 24 June 1929.

⁵⁹ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 12 December, 1929.

⁶⁰ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 30 November 1929.

Another contemporary source spoke of

*“a wealth of warm colours from floor to ceiling. To enter it is like going into a Spanish garden or a palace in a book of fairy tales! Ornate, and yet subdued, it will be admirably suited for either concerts or dances, and is sure to please everybody”.*⁶¹

It may have been more accurate to speculate that the Main Hall would suit “most”, given complaints about the inadequacy of the stage. Although the architect had already suggested the removal of centre stairs to the dais, extensions on each side of the stage to provide two entrances and exits, and extensions for the full width of the dais, local musical societies expressed their “disgust” that the Council did not provide adequately for them in the Town Hall and theatre scheme. Two movable platforms for use on the stage were constructed by the builder, and for the Civic Week celebrations to mark the opening of the Town Hall it was necessary to erect a temporary structure to extend the stage area by 30ft. x 10ft. The Council’s crest was placed above panelling at the back of the stage in the Main Hall

Three pianos were purchased for the Town Hall, two Australian made upright grand pianos from Beale and Co. and a horizontal Bechstein “B” grand piano purchased from W.H. Paling & Co. but there is no record of their location within the building.⁶²

On the second floor of the Town Hall, the legislative functions of the Council were carried out, in Chambers described as being “perhaps a little more ornate as to ceiling than other rooms”, with “a solid dais on which Mayors yet unborn are destined to lead the City Parliament”.⁶³ In this significant space, the skills of the Architect were drawn on for the design of the meeting room, the panelled wall behind the Mayoral chair and dais with overhead canopy, and a half-circle table.⁶⁴ Carving of the Coat of Arms and the four Caps was carried out by Messrs. Franklin & Co. of Sydney.

The council table forms a semi-circle in front of the maple dais of the Mayor at the top of which the council crest is carved. Opening off this are the offices of the mayor and the aldermen and across the corridor from these is the committee room in which the detailed business, not for publication, will be discussed.

*There is also a large mayoral reception room and other large rooms which, when the staff of the Electric Supply Department is transferred to its proposed new buildings, may be let to lodges or similar societies for their meetings.*⁶⁵

⁶¹ *Newcastle Sun*, 14 December 1929.

⁶² Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 20 January 1930.

⁶³ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 30 November 1929.

⁶⁴ Newcastle City Council Minutes, 22 July 1929.

⁶⁵ *Newcastle Sun*, 14 December 1929.

Furniture in the Council Chambers was of polished maple and the floor featured inlaid carpets with parquet surroundings. The floor at the entrance to the chamber was covered with rubber.⁶⁶

The portico roof, accessed through doors on the landing, was finished with three layers of malthoid, topped with a layer of bitumen and surfaced with gravel.

The Tower Clock

A staircase leads to the roof, (where the Architect had recommended the placement of one large flagpole and four smaller ones⁶⁷) and to the clock tower. Rising to a height of 150 feet, it became a visible landmark, indicating the Civic Centre of the city.

The clock was initially to be a gift to the City in appreciation of the services rendered by former Newcastle Mayors, whose names were to be placed on an honour roll at the entrance to the tower. The cost was to be borne by surviving ex-mayor and the relatives of those who had passed away, with funds to be raised by a committee which was formed to manage the proposal.⁶⁸ It soon became apparent that the committee would be unable to raise the required £850 for the purchase of the clock so the cost was subsequently borne by the Council.⁶⁹ The honour roll, which was to have carried over 70 names, was never produced.

The decision to install a clock in the tower was announced in the local newspaper in October 1929. It was predicted that the clock would rival “the booming notes of London’s famous Big Ben”, no doubt a reference to the Council’s stipulation that it have “a deep and sonorous” tone.⁷⁰

The clock and bell were supplied by Prouds, together with 15 small electric clocks which were synchronised with the tower clock.⁷¹ Prouds were unable to complete installation of the tower clock for the opening of the Town Hall, but it was in operation soon afterwards.

The builder was asked to fix the required beams in the clock tower, and to fix the cast iron rings in the clock faces. He was also responsible for the timber, bolt, wire rope, leading block, cat runs and winches for raising and lowering of the large electric light fittings in the main chamber.⁷² On the recommendation of the Architect, James Connolly and Sons of Sydney were contracted to provide the spiral staircase at a cost of £320.⁷³

⁶⁶ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 11 October 1929.

⁶⁷ Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 24 June 1929.

⁶⁸ Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 13 May 1929 and *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 18 July 1929.

⁶⁹ Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 23 September 1929.

⁷⁰ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 15 October 1929, Newcastle City Council Minutes, 11 October 1929

⁷¹ Newcastle City Council Minutes, 30 September and 28 October 1929, “Information Regarding the City Hall Clock”, File note, March 1972, NRPL. Local Studies

⁷² Newcastle City Council Minutes, 11 November 1929

⁷³ Newcastle City Council Minutes, 24 June 1929

The tower clock has become part of the social fabric of Newcastle and is, from time to time, the subject of requests to Council for information. Generally these requests come from school groups and people wanting to know the sizes of the clock faces for competitions but on one occasion the information was sought "to settle a bet".⁷⁴

A response to one such request in May 1948 gives a comprehensive description of the clock at that time:

Dials (4) 10 feet in diameter.

Hands hour hand 5 feet in length, minute hand 6 feet in length.

Bell ½ tonne weight strikes each hour -no chimes.

Master clock on ground floor controls the tower clock and all other clocks throughout the City Hall.

Striking mechanism is controlled by a ¼ H.P. motor.

Hands on each dial controlled by a 6 H.P. motor.

Current to all clocks is provided by a 35 H.P. nickel-iron Edison battery.

This battery is on a floating charge from a rectifier of 1 ampere.

*Maintenance is carried out weekly.*⁷⁵

According to Council's Senior Building Inspector, about the only question which could not be answered easily was "How many pieces of glass are there in each face?". He estimated between 60 and 70 pieces.

In 1979 the noise of the striking clock became the subject of a court hearing following a complaint by a local resident. As a result of the protest, the Town Clerk was notified by the State Pollution Control Committee (SPCC) that he could be prosecuted under the Noise Control Act if the clock was allowed to chime between 10 pm and 6 am. The local residents' group expressed its dissatisfaction at the attitude of the SPCC, claiming that the majority of residents wished to retain the sound of the clock. The Council's appeal against the ruling was successful, and the bell in the tower continued to ring.

City Hall Portico Landscaping

Plans from 1930 show a proposal to remove the Phoenix Palm from the City Hall portico gardens and to replace them with liquid amber trees. The palms were removed and remnants of perimeter dwarf flowering shrub plantings are still evident.

⁷⁴ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 15 May 1958.

⁷⁵ Town Clerk to Mr. K.E. Haughton, 11 May 1948, Newcastle City Council correspondence files, A1643.

In front of the City Hall is a stone lantern, a gift from the sister city of Ube, Japan. The lantern is located in the garden bed between the portico ramp and North Wheeler Place.

1.16 DEVELOPMENT OF THE CIVIC PRECINCT

Civic Park

Today Civic Park is a major urban space within the Newcastle CBD contributing to the character and settings of some of Newcastle's key cultural and public buildings including the City Hall. The history of Civic Park is outside the commission of this study but it has been necessary to prepare an outline as it emphasizes the civic importance of both the City Hall and the creation of this unique precinct of public and cultural buildings around Civic Park. Morris Light's concept was to build a Town Hall and offices together with an Art Gallery and Museum. This was later modified to encompass the Civic Theatre including an exhibition hall and 14 shops, public open spaces (Christie Place and Civic Park) and new roads (Wheeler Place and Christie Street).

The construction of Newcastle City Hall and the Civic Theatre was the catalyst for the transformation of this part of the city centre into a precinct for cultural and public buildings.

At one stage during the construction of the Town Hall, White stood with the Mayor (Wheeler) on the site and looked across the road to where there were a number of broken down shops and buildings. White declared the shops must go and advised the Council to resume the land. To-day this is Civic Park, one of the few areas of park close to the city centre.

The park site had been part of the Australian Agricultural Company's holdings on the west side of the old city centre. Through it ran colliery lines running from the waterfront coal loading facilities to the AA Company's mines. The route of the rail lines can still be seen in the alignment of Burwood Street and the old tunnel underpass beneath Laman Street. The AA Company sold the land at the beginning of this century, and it was occupied by timber yards.

Fires in both the Andrew Cook Timberyards in the early 1920's and in Breckenridge Timberyard in 1929 were the catalysts for the transition of the land to public park. The land west of the railway line was resumed by the Newcastle Electric Supply and to the east by the Newcastle City Council soon after the fires.

The City Engineer, Mr Cummins, and the Superintendent of Gardens, Mr Coleman were responsible for garden design and maintenance in 1929. Council resolved to create a Park on the western end of the present park site. W. Grant of the Sydney Botanic Gardens was commissioned to prepare a layout. The "large block of land facing the Town Hall and bounded by the railway line of A.A.Co, King, Auckland and Laman Streets" was cleared, levelled and grassed.⁷⁶ Fig trees (*ficus hillii*) were planted along Auckland and Laman Streets in 1930. From 1930 to 1937, public access to the park was prevented.

⁷⁶ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 12 December 1929.

In late 1936, it was decided that the remainder of the land west of the railway line should be acquired. This proposal lay dormant until 1947. When it was suggested that this area be acquired for the construction of government buildings, "Council decided that it would be detrimental to the aesthetic qualities of the civic precinct if buildings were constructed in park grounds."

In 1937 the Newcastle City Council recommended to the Chief Electrical Engineer's Department, to take "immediate action" to remove the "slum conditions" from land adjoining the Town Hall.⁷⁷ The Council's commitment was reiterated in 1939 with its opening of this additional administrative building, for its electricity supply division. The amalgamation of the 11 Boroughs of Greater Newcastle into Newcastle City Council further reinforced the regional importance of the site.

The AA Company eventually sold the narrow strip of land to Newcastle City Council for a nominal sum in 1958.

In 1949, a precinct plan was prepared by the Town Planner for Northumberland County Council establishing a site for the War Memorial Cultural Centre (now Newcastle Region Library) at the south end of the axis established by City Hall and its tower.

In 1949 during the visit to Newcastle by Governor Northcott to lay the foundation stone of Newcastle War Memorial Cultural Centre, the eastern side of the Civic Park is a turfed paddock with axial footpath. By 1955, this paddock was converted to a car park.

In 1964 Newcastle City Council acquired the sites along Darby Street occupied by G.H. Varley and the Newcastle Building and Investment Co. for the purposes of community open space and road widening. This completed the parcel of land that today comprises Civic Park. Drawings of the Civic Park Waratah sandstone rockery are dated 1963. It was constructed before the fountain was installed. The sites along the Darby Street edge of the park were acquired in 1964.

The Captain Cook Memorial Fountain designed by Margel Hinder was planned and built between 1961 and 1966. It was officially opened during the James Cook centenary celebrations in 1970. It has since become an icon, a symbol of the City Of Newcastle. The National Trust describes it as being of National Significance.

A Memorial Grove, designed by Sydney architect, Augustus Aley, for the Newcastle Groups of the Garden Club of Australia was dedicated in 1961 in the south-eastern corner of the park in the

⁷⁷ Minutes of Newcastle City Council meeting, 2nd February 1937.

1960s. It incorporates memorial plantings and plaques. Nearby is an RAAF Memorial as well as the Naval Memorial. A War Memorial commemorating both World Wars is also located on the main axis. A memorial to district servicemen killed in the Vietnam War is located in the north-western section of the park. Many trees are associated with special tree planting ceremonies.

The whole Park was dedicated as a public reserve in 1978 on the recommendation of the Council Entertainment Committee. A Heritage Places Plan of Management was prepared for the Civic Precinct including Civic Park in 1997. In 1981 Civic Park was classified by the National Trust. Civic Park was identified as a Heritage Item in the Heritage Study of the Newcastle Central Business Area, prepared for Newcastle City Council in 1988 and is listed as having local significance in Draft Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2000.

Christie Street

The design and construction of the Town Hall and Civic Theatre complex resulted in the creation of a private right of way, known as Christie Street.

In 1954 an agreement was reached between the owners of Lots 71 and 72 and Newcastle City Council, whereby the owners of Lots 71 and 72 were granted right of pedestrian access along the northern side of Christie Street in return for a small, triangular portion of land covering 8/10^{ths} of a perch. This agreement provided a rear pedestrian access to the Civic Arcade (Lots 71 and 72) but expressly forbade use of the footway for “the passing of animals, carts, wagons and wheeled and other vehicles or motors of any description whatsoever”.⁷⁸ Council’s acquisition of the south-west corner of Lot 71 was undoubtedly driven by the desire for improved vehicular access in Christie Street.

Christie Street was again the subject of an access-related agreement in 1961, between Newcastle City Council and Nock and Kirby Limited, whose property adjoined Christie Street. In return for the sum of ten shillings, Council agreed to allow Nock and Kirby a right of carriageway “for egress only”. At that stage, a rooftop carpark on the Nock and Kirby Limited building was accessed from Hunter Street and exited via Christie Street. However, use of Christie Street was limited “to types of vehicles such as motor cars and light weight motor vehicles of the utility truck type”.⁷⁹

Christie Street remains a private road but according to current Land Titles records, the pedestrian right of way and the right of carriageway for egress only remain valid.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ NSW Land Titles Office, Fol. 746, Book 2306.

⁷⁹ NSW Land Titles Office, Fol. 799, Book 2715.

⁸⁰ NSW Land Titles Office, Title Search, Computer Folio 1/225689.

Christie Place

The design and construction of the Town hall and Civic Theatre complex resulted in the creation of an open space, that was later named Christie Place.

In 1929 the City Engineer, Mr. Cummins, and the Superintendent of Gardens, Mr. Coleman, were responsible for garden design and maintenance. A press clipping titled “The dream of Years” records “Wheeler Place has been constructed on the left and lawns have been made on the right.”

The 1930 photos of the Town Hall show Christie Place level and turfed with young palm trees planted at approximately 9 metre centres around the perimeter. A palm tree is placed centrally in each of the forecourt garden spaces.

By 1941 the area comprised “garden plots and lawns traversed by a concrete pathway”. At this time, Council decided to name the area “Christie Place” as a tribute to the late Alderman R.H. Christie, who had served on the Council continuously from 1917 until 1935, acting as Mayor from December 1934 – December 1935. His father, Colin Christie who also served as an alderman during the last decades of the 19th Century and as Mayor during 1890.⁸¹ However, no sign was erected to indicate this and in 1950 a son of R.H. Christie wrote to Council regarding the matter, pointing out a further family link to the area, as his father had been born in the family home which once stood on the site of the park.⁸²

In 1979 the Shortland Centenary Memorial Fountain, Newcastle’s only existing physical link with its 1897 centenary, was moved to Christie Place from Reid Park (now a parking area for Royal Newcastle Hospital).⁸³ The fountain was originally installed at the beachfront, but was moved to Reid Park in 1938.⁸⁴ A reproduction of *Historical Records of Newcastle*, by Windross and Ralston, was placed beneath the fountain in Christie Place.⁸⁵

In 1981 Christie Place and the Shortland Centenary Memorial Fountain were classified by the National Trust. Christie Place and the Shortland Centenary Memorial Fountain were identified as Heritage Items in the Heritage Study of the Newcastle Central Business Area, prepared for Newcastle City Council in 1988. Christie Place is listed as having local significance in the Draft Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2000. A Heritage Places Plan of Management was prepared for the Civic Precinct including Christie Place in 1997.

⁸¹ Chief Clerk to Town Clerk, 11 December 1950, Newcastle City Council File 320/107.

⁸² Chief Clerk to Town Clerk, 20 November 1950, Newcastle City Council File 320/107.

⁸³ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 23 February 1979.

⁸⁴ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 3 November 1966.

⁸⁵ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 4 April 1979.

Shortland Memorial Fountain, Christie Place (1897)

The Shortland Memorial Fountain, designed by R. Caites, has a square base of Melbourne bluestone. The Sydney sandstone fountain has a square base with half bowls on each of the faces designed to receive water from the mouths of gape mouthed lions. The lions are attached to pedimented entablatures enclosing a pillar decorated with eastern zig-zag motifs. The pillar is surmounted by a foreshortened stylised Corinthian column. White marble commemorative tablets are mounted at the base. The fountain is well detailed and executed, with elaborate ornamental features. Aesthetic significance of the fountain has been diminished by the loss of its original detail. The drinking fountain movement was at its height in the 1850s and 60s. Most memorial fountains of the late 19th century were dedicated to mayors. The majority of memorial fountains are 20th century. They either commemorated the Jubilee or are associated with World War I.

The James Robertson Fountain (1890) in Coogee is similar in form to the Shortland fountain but simpler in decoration. Newcastle has one other significant 19th Century sandstone drinking fountain, the Newcastle Borough Council Fountain, erected in 1879 in Scott Street and now in King Edward Park.

The Shortland Centenary Memorial Fountain is a unique surviving element of late 19th Century Newcastle.

Wheeler Place (formerly Wheeler Street)

Today Wheeler Place comprises three discreet areas:

- South Wheeler Place, the area between City Hall and the Administrative Centre;
- The Undercroft adjacent to the Fred Ash Building; and
- North Wheeler Place, the area bounded by the Civic Theatre, Bennett Building and Hunter Street.

The proposal for the construction of City Hall and the Civic Theatre complex included the construction of a new street. "This proposal survived a good deal of opposition, as it embraced commercial proposals in respect to erection of shops. The provision of a theatre had its opponents also, as well as the question of the site selected." A referendum returned approval for the scheme. On June 29, 1925 Newcastle City Council decided to proceed with the new street.

In 1929 the street was constructed on the eastern side of the City Hall and Civic Theatre complex and was named Wheeler Street after the Mayor at the time.

The other frontage to proposed new streets will provide access on the Eastern side of the building to the Ground Floor direct, and this street brings the Town hall buildings well into view from Hunter Street and the railway line. Being just off the main (Hunter) street, it will avoid the dust,

*smoke, grit, and noise of passing trains, trams, and heavy traffic, and yet be within 200 feet of the main thoroughfare.*⁸⁶

In 1977 a pedestrian plaza was created linking the new Civic Administration Building to City Hall. This plaza was named Wheeler Place and its design was radial. Constructed using concrete pavement with a washed pebble finish, the street furniture was contemporary. The 1929 lampposts were relocated and replaced with contemporary lighting posts. Fiberglass bench seating was introduced and the eastern entrance to the City Hall was modified to provide an access ramp. New landscaping included bamboo and eucalyptus trees and a narrow garden bed next to City Hall. The ground levels were raised above the level of the base of City Hall (that is also above the damp proof coarse level). This has had a negative impact on City Hall fabric both aesthetically and physically.

Marilyn McGrath's bronze statue called 'The Corm' was commissioned for Wheeler Place Plaza. It was given to the people of Newcastle by BHP Newcastle Steelworks to mark the 50th Anniversary of Newcastle City Council in 1980.

A master plan, the "Urban Design Plan, Newcastle Civic Area", was prepared as part of the Honeysuckle Redevelopment, Newcastle. The study expanded the Civic Precinct to include the Honeysuckle Heritage Precinct. The redevelopment of this Civic Precinct is part of the urban renewal of Newcastle City being undertaken by the Honeysuckle Development Corporation (HDC). The HDC is responsible for the redevelopment of 50 hectares of land along 3 kilometres of waterfront as part of the strategy to revitalise the centre of Newcastle.

In the 1990s a pedestrian plaza was created linking the Civic Theatre to the Bennett Building and Hunter Street and a Plan of Management for Wheeler Place was developed and adopted in 1999. It describes the space as linking, in a north south direction, the proposed cultural and entertainment facilities of the Honeysuckle development with the civic facilities of Civic Park, Art Gallery, Library and the Conservatorium of Music. In the east-west direction, Wheeler place joins the Civic Theatre and the civic, ceremonial, convention and conference services of the City Hall with the art wall and proposed restaurants, hotel and City Administrative Centre of the civic site.

1.17 1938: FROM TOWN HALL TO CITY HALL

The idea of amalgamating the eleven municipalities in the Newcastle area was first raised in the 1890s and had surfaced from time to time without resolution. With the growth of heavy industry after 1915 and the resulting suburban growth, the inefficiencies of a fragmented local government became more apparent, providing the necessary impetus for reform. Several councils, however, voiced strong opposition to change. One of the more contentious issues was problem in agreeing

⁸⁶ City of Newcastle, Civic Week Souvenir, 1929.

whether a uniform rating system should be introduced, as land values and hence general rates varied from council to council. The debate receded during the depression of the 1930s but by the middle of the decade it had resurfaced and in December 1937, the municipalities were abolished and Greater Newcastle came into being.

As a result of the amalgamation, Newcastle's Town Hall became the centre of local government. In recognition of the building's change in status and to commemorate the establishment of the Greater Newcastle Council, the Mayor, Alderman Arthur Griffiths, suggested that the Town Hall be known in future as the City Hall. His proposal was approved unanimously by Council on 24 March, 1938.⁸⁷

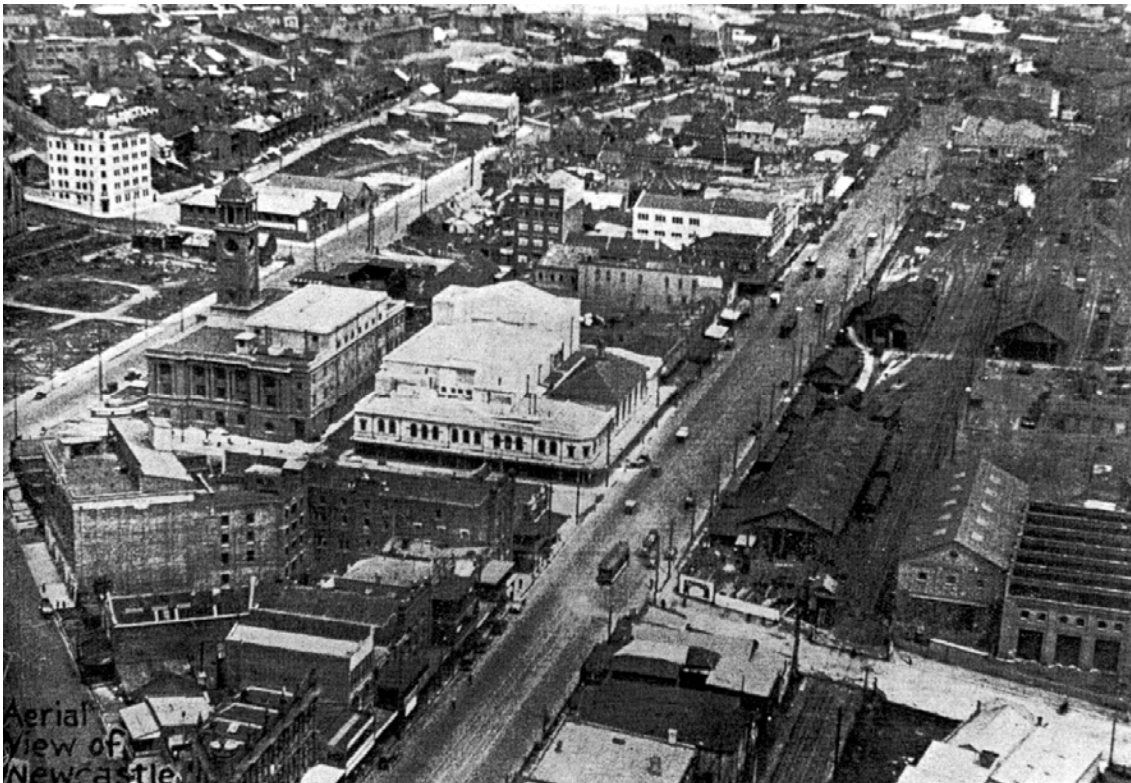


Figure 2: Aerial of Newcastle prior to the construction of NESCA House in 1939 (NCH)

1.18 1939: CONSTRUCTION OF NESCA HOUSE

Prior to 1939, the Council's Electricity Supply Department was located in fragmented accommodation. Some sections were housed on the first floor of the City Hall, others a block away, and the section dealing with range hire and cooking demonstrations was separated from the administrative section by several streets. The organisation's retail shop was completely segregated from its other functions. The inefficiencies of this arrangement were overcome in 1939

⁸⁷ Newcastle Morning Herald, 25 March 1938.

with the construction of the Newcastle Electricity Supply, Council Administration (NESCA) House, on the corner of Auckland and King Streets.⁸⁸

The creation of the Greater Newcastle Council had centralised the administrative functions of eleven municipalities, placing a heavy burden on office space in the City Hall. The departure of the Electricity Supply Department to its new quarters alleviated the problem considerably, but over the next thirty years, overcrowding was to become a significant issue.

1.19 1939-45: THE WAR YEARS

As the centre of local government and administration, the City Hall was the scene of much activity during the war years. In 1940 there were five rooms or halls available for letting – the Supper room, the Main Hall, No.1 Committee Room, No.2 Committee Room and the Reception Room. Organisations of a charitable or patriotic nature tended to be given free use of the rooms but during the war the demand from these groups rose by about 50%. It was estimated that the resulting loss of letting fees was almost as great as the rates from the suburb of Carrington. Council therefore decided to allow two free meetings per month to each group, and to create an additional room by erecting a partition in the area occupied by the Health Department.⁸⁹

With the largest public hall in the area, the City Hall was the natural place to stage recruiting rallies. In July 1940 the Director General of Recruiting, Brigadier-General Lloyd, spoke at a rally which was the culmination of a march through the city streets.⁹⁰ Six weeks later, the Governor took the salute at the City Hall during a parade of returned soldiers and over a thousand members of the Voluntary Aid Detachments.⁹¹ Other wartime activities held at the City Hall included a civic religious service, an “Empire at War” display, and patriotic concerts. A request to hold meeting of the Anti-Conscription Committee, however, was denied by the Mayor because he believed the gathering to be disloyal – a ruling condemned by the Trades Hall Council.⁹²

In recognition of the alliance between the British Empire, the Soviet Union and the United States of America, following Hitler’s invasion of Russia, the Red Flag was raised on the north-eastern corner of the City Hall on 24 October 1941. Two new flagpoles were erected to allow the Union Jack and the flags of America, the Soviet Union and Greece to be hoisted daily. A member of the Newcastle Trades Hall Council commended the council’s decision to fly the Soviet flag, which highlighted “bad example” set by the Trades Hall Management Committee which did not yet have a Red Flag to fly above its headquarters.

⁸⁸ Booklet, “Commemorating the opening of the New Administrative Building of the Electric Supply Department, Newcastle, NSW, 8 September 1939.

⁸⁹ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 6 June 1940.

⁹⁰ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 18 July 1940.

⁹¹ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 28 August 1940.

⁹² *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 1 January 1943.

In March 1941, the NES headquarters was moved into No.1 Committee Room at the City Hall.⁹³ As the threat to Australia mounted following the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbour in December 1941, local authorities intensified their preparations for a possible invasion of Newcastle. In January 1942 the main door of the City Hall was bricked up as a precaution against blast⁹⁴ and later in the year disaster simulation exercises were carried out in various parts of the city. On one occasion, Charles Davis returned to the site of his firm's greatest accomplishment in the city, but in a vastly different capacity. As supervisor of three squads from the Master Builders' NES demolition and rescue organisation, Davis was in charge of the "rescue" of several people from the "blitzed" City Hall. One victim was the Mayor, Alderman Young:

Caught in his office when the building was "badly damaged" by a bomb, he found every avenue of escape blocked. The only route by which he could reach the street was through a window high up in the base of the clock tower. He took it, and was slid to earth – not too gently – in a bosun's chair. The master builders called in a "quick" ride.⁹⁵



Figure 3: Newcastle & Hunter District Society Ball in the Concert Hall, 19 September 1947, NMH.

⁹³ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 7 March 1941.

⁹⁴ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 8 January 1942.

⁹⁵ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 16 November 1942.

1.20 POST-CONSTRUCTION REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Surviving records are fragmented, and this makes it difficult to comprehensively document alterations and repairs to the building since its construction. However, the following gives an idea of the range of building issues which have arisen over the years.

Structural Work

Four months after the building was completed, settlement cracks began to appear in the eastern wing in April 1930. In May seepage was noticed in the lavatories on the ground and first floors, and subsidence of 1/8" became apparent on the western and eastern sides of the tower. Subsidence was also noticed in the walls of the Enquiry Office. In October 1930 dampness appeared in decorated panels, and the exterior wall over the flat roof on the southern side of the hall was coated with a waterproof material.

In 1936 a mechanical ventilating system was installed in the Main Hall. A representative of Vincent Ventilating and Air Conditioning Co. visited the City Hall in January 1937 to test the operation of the new system:

There was an audience of about 300 present, and the heat of these people was quickly dispersed during the short run of the plant, and the officials of the Ball were very pleased with the improvement secured. The resulting atmosphere was in marked difference to that present in the Lower Hall, where the Burns dinner was in progress, where the audience odour and heat was very marked.⁹⁶

The war years brought a change of focus to the City Hall, but after 1941 maintenance and repair work continued. Building work included tuck-pointing the sandstone facings on the southern, eastern and western walls in 1943 and painting of the parapets which were showing signs of severe weathering.⁹⁷

In 1947 repairs were made to cracks in the marble work on the outer strings of the main stair balustrade. Quotes were received for the supply and fixing of a deep "King Edward" marble which would match the existing marble. Council decided on the much cheaper alternative of floating and setting the facings, as the cracking was caused by a fracture in the structural concrete and no guarantee could be given that the cracks would not occur.⁹⁸

One of the more interesting repairs to the fabric of the building was carried out in November 1951. After a concert at the City Hall on the evening of 2 November, an army driver, apparently under the

⁹⁶ T. Vincent to Town Clerk, 22 January 1937, Newcastle City Council Correspondence File A2643

⁹⁷ Town Clerk's Reports, 14 April 1945. NRPL, File A2643.

⁹⁸ City Architect to Designing Engineer, Memo dated 30 June 1947. NRPL, A2643

influence of alcohol, attempted to drive a military truck up the main ramp. Unable to control the vehicle, he damaged the stonework at the eastern entrance to the ramp. According to a witness, the intoxicated soldier was about to drive to Sydney but the view of a bystander was that "it [would] take him all his time to get to Fort Scratchley". At the expense of the Army the damaged area was patched with concrete, stained to harmonise with the sandstone.⁹⁹

Interior Work

Interior work in the main hall and stage area included the installation of a handrail in front of the ticket box in 1941 to prevent crowding in the area which could lead to people slipping on the main stairway.¹⁰⁰ In the following year, it was felt necessary to renew the green and yellow heavy cotton chenille curtains across the proscenium and under the gallery in the Main Hall. Owing to the scarcity of materials and the manpower problem, only two firms responded. Bebarfalds offered to supply a heavy rust coloured velvet, lined and weighted, while W.Winn & Co. offered a green velvet of slightly lighter quality. It is not clear whether either offer was accepted.¹⁰¹

The original cloak room had 345 compartments, but by 1944 was converted for office space and the number of compartments reduced to 134. In March 1944, the cloakroom accommodation was deemed inadequate for the crowds attending dances at the City Hall, and so an additional 96 compartments, constructed of Oregon sides and masonite partitions, were provided.¹⁰²

As a result of complaints by the ABC about the quality of the stage lighting, improvements were made in 1945.¹⁰³ Further improvements were made to the stage in 1953 following a request from the Newcastle branch of the Arts Council that the stage be enlarged to allow performances by a full ballet company or a complete orchestra. It was pointed out that the Civic Theatre was unavailable for such events because of the high revenue it was returning to the council from a lease for motion pictures.¹⁰⁴ The floor of the stage was relaid and a new front section fitted, attached to tubular steel bars which slide forward to allow for the extension to be installed at any time. Cream paint was removed from the panelling at the back of the stage, and restored to the original wood. The maple panelling was then stained and polished. The floor of the main hall was also relaid at this time, in the same pattern as the old floor.¹⁰⁵

Council/Administrative Accommodation

In 1946 plans were prepared for the construction of temporary office accommodation on the roof of the City Hall. The specification called for stud walls with external covering of fibrolite sheeting

⁹⁹ Town Clerk to Commanding Officer, 12th National Service Battalion, Singleton, 13 November 1951. NCC Correspondence Bundle 2.

¹⁰⁰ City Engineer to Town Clerk, Memo dated 25 February 1941, NRPL, Correspondence Bundle 2.

¹⁰¹ Comptroller of Assets and Stores to Town Clerk, Memo dated 25 July 1942. Correspondence Bundle No.2.

¹⁰² Town Clerk's Report, 31 March 1944. NRPL A2643.

¹⁰³ Newcastle Representative, Australian Broadcasting Commission, to Town Clerk, 14 June 1945. NRPL, A2643.

¹⁰⁴ E. Sparke, Newcastle Branch of Arts Council to Town Clerk, 24 June 1952. NCC Correspondence Bundle 2.

¹⁰⁵ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 13 February 1953.

and internal covering of caneite. The raised floor was to be of wood and the flat roof covered with malthoid. It would appear that the proposal to provide three additional offices went ahead, as in the following year, correspondence relating to a contract for repairs to the City Hall roof referred to a deduction for 43 1/3 sq.yds. for "the area where the offices were erected".¹⁰⁶

In 1952 alterations to the lighting in the Council Chamber were recommended by the Acting Electrical Engineer and Manager, in response to a request by Alderman Breen. The light intensity was found to be inadequate so it was proposed to replace the nine suspended incandescent fittings, "each having one 200 watt lamp enclosed in an art amber tinted dome shade", with "a 4/40 watt fluorescent fitting of the barrier type suspended by rods from the ceiling". Installation of the new lights involved cutting holes in the false ceiling so as to allow the fixing of the anchorage in the concrete ceiling above.¹⁰⁷

Following an "exhaustive tour of the building" in May 1959, Alderman Skelton informed the Council that working conditions for the staff was "appalling". The City Engineer's Department was badly cramped in the clerical, machinery and accounting sections and it was suggested that the Engineers be given the use of the Aldermen's Room. Declaring that room to be "only a dungeon" Alderman Skelton said that he "would not be a party to putting any of the staff in it" and suggested that No.1 Committee Room be brought into service as office space and the council chambers and staff room on the second floor be made available for meetings. It was also suggested that plans be prepared for office accommodation at the Abattoirs to allow that department to move out of the City Hall.¹⁰⁸

Facilities used by the public were also becoming inadequate. A letter to the Editor of the *Newcastle Morning Herald* in 1966 called for a facelift of for "McDougall's Mansion", a reference to the Lord Mayor at the time. "Hostess" pointed out the inadequacy of the toilet facilities, the shabbiness of the Supper Room and the poor kitchen facilities. "Most visitors to Newcastle go to the City Hall", she wrote," which is in a sense our 'lounge room' so how about a brighter welcome?"¹⁰⁹

1977: Construction of City Administration Centre

The pressure of increased administrative responsibilities and staffing levels on the available accommodation in the City Hall finally was finally relieved in 1977 with the construction of a \$5.8million Civic Administration Centre, linked to the City Hall by a pedestrian plaza. With construction of this building the administrative function of the City Hall ceased.

¹⁰⁶ City Engineer to Works Committee, 14 October 1947. NCC Correspondence Bundle 2.

¹⁰⁷ Acting Electrical Engineer's Report to Town Clerk, 1 April 1952. NRPL A2643.

¹⁰⁸ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 20 May 1959.

¹⁰⁹ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 4 May 1966.

1.21 1980: REFURBISHMENT

After consideration of a range of options for a new role for the City Hall, Council decided that it should remain the focus of civic life, with facilities for Lord Mayoral activities, full council meetings and meetings of council committees. Apart from minor maintenance work, very little work had been done on the building since construction. Local architects Suters & Butseed Pty. Ltd. and local builder R.W. Black Pty. Ltd. were engaged to carry out a refurbishment of the building, which received an award from the Royal Australian Institute of Architects as one of the best examples of building recycling in NSW in 1981.¹¹⁰

In a summary of the project's scope, architect Brian Suters outlined the design approach for the refurbishment:

1. *Retention and enhancement of the dignity and richness of the main Auditorium, Council Chambers and Grand Staircase, whilst incorporating the new services, including air conditioning, so that they were totally inconspicuous.*
2. *Development of a compatible and consistent atmosphere in the new areas by stylistic reference to geometric and decorative forms related to the late twenties era.*

It was also noted that the brief included refurbishment of the Council Chambers, the provision of sprinklers and new lighting, "with a freshening and softening of its existing classical feeling".¹¹¹ Reception rooms were provided for the Lord Mayor, while an aldermen's suite on the ground floor was capable of accommodating 20 people.

The entry staircase was opened up "to fully reveal the ceremonial grandeur of the main auditorium", where the stage was fully equipped with recording studio facilities, stage extension and dressing/assembly rooms for performers. All public areas were air-conditioned and equipped with public address systems and bar facilities. Up-to-date kitchens were provided, allowing for catering for up to 900 people while now vacant office spaces were transformed to create facilities for civic functions, banquets and balls, naturalisation ceremonies, school functions and a wide range of concerts, from ABC and Musica Viva recitals to productions by local theatrical groups.¹¹²

Colour was seen as a significant part of the refurbishment. The predominant colour chosen was green, replacing the original "washed out and subdued green", with accents of golden-browns and creams, which also featured in the earlier scheme. The original grey cement rendered walls, some of which had been covered with linoleum tiles in the 1950s, were refinished and painted.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ *Newcastle Post*, 21 October 1981.

¹¹¹ Architect's Statement: Refurbishing of Newcastle City Hall. 1 September 1981. Suters Architects file 1035/505.

¹¹² *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 6 April 1981.

¹¹³ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 15 May 1981.

An attempt was made to re-establish the relationship between the City Hall and Civic Park by focussing attention on the park through the arched southern windows and in completion of the paving to the roof of the entrance portico.



Figure 4: Olsen Mural in 2001



Figure 5: John Montefiore at work on the NCH Concert Hall Mural in 1980 (NCH)

Two new artworks were commissioned as part of the refurbishment programme. Leading Australian artist John Olsen, who was raised in Cooks Hill, was engaged to produce a mural for the main foyer. He was chosen because of his experience in mural work, having painted the mural in the foyer of the Opera House in 1973. Olsen described his City Hall mural as “representing a cornucopia that was Newcastle”. Aware that his work would be controversial, Olsen declared before the unveiling that he would be “leaving town this afternoon”.¹¹⁴ As the mural was to be donated by the Kern Corporation, it was unveiled by an executive of the company. His instant disapproval led to a withdrawal of Kern Corporation’s sponsorship of the project, leaving the Council to pay the artist’s fee of \$18,000.¹¹⁵

The second work was by local artist John Montefiore, who was commissioned to create a mural for the area above the stage where the council’s coat of arms was previously displayed. Scenes within the painting represent Newcastle’s economic base – agriculture, industry, commerce and the sea, coloured by the elements of air, earth, fire and water. A central tree bears the child of the future.¹¹⁶

1.22 1999: RENAMING OF ROOMS

In 1999 it was decided to rename the City Hall function rooms. After inviting recommendations from both the City Councillors and the local community, the following changes were made:

Ground Floor Newcastle Room - formerly No.5 Committee Room

¹¹⁴ Newcastle Morning Herald, 12 May 1981.

¹¹⁵ Information provided by W.B. Lewis, 20 August 2001.

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*

Waratah Room (Floral Emblem of NSW) - formerly No.6 Committee Room

Banquet Room - formerly Supper Room

First Floor Mulubinba Room (Aboriginal name for the area deriving from a fern which grew prolifically) - formerly No.1 Function Room.

Concert Hall – no change

Cummings Room (in honour of Joy Cummings (Australia's first female Lord Mayor) who was in office at the time of refurbishment - formerly

No.2 Function Room.

Second Floor Hunter Room (Governor of NSW, River, Region, Main Street) - formerly No.3 Function Room

Concert Hall Gallery – no change

Council Chambers – no change

Lord Mayor's Reception Area – no change

Brass plates were fixed to the walls to identify each room.

1.23 ROLE OF THE CITY HALL

Newcastle City Hall served as seat of Local Government and centre for Council's administrative functions from 1929 until the construction of the new Administrative Centre in 1977.

It was also the venue for civic receptions for visitors to the city, including members of the British Royal family, foreign dignitaries and representatives of Newcastle's Japanese sister city, Ube. When local football team, the Knights, won the Rugby League grand final, thousands of Novocastrians flocked to the City Hall to catch a glimpse of the winning team members as they waved from the first floor balcony. Official functions such as naturalisation ceremonies were also held at the City Hall.

As a centre for community welfare, it has been used for vaccination clinics and a collection centre for food and clothing for victims of natural disasters. For many years a children's library was housed in the building.

Prior to the refurbishment, charitable and community groups were regular users of the various committee rooms, while the Lady Mayoress held an annual "At Home" for representatives of local

charities. These functions were held in the Lady Mayoress's Room which, in the 1950s, was furnished with cane furniture, autumn-toned carpet, a large Chinese vase and several paintings. This was a traditional event for the Lady Mayoress, whose role was primarily social. The degree of social activity and her involvement in community activities varied, reflecting the commitment and interests of the individual Lady Mayoress.

The City Hall continues to provide a stage for musical and theatrical events, both professional and amateur as well as events such as jazz festivals and band competitions. The City Hall has been a traditional setting for balls, which were particularly popular during the 1950s and 1960s and until the late 1970s regular Saturday night dances were run by the Council, with local surf lifesavers acting as bouncers. Council records reveal that in 1958 there were 321 balls, dances, concerts and exhibitions in the Main Hall, and 149 socials, banquets and bazaars in the Supper Room. Although there were several halls available for such functions, the City Hall was the only hall available, apart from theatres, providing a seating capacity of over 800.

The main auditorium has been used for commercial purposes such as antique sales and for large gatherings such as union rallies, and is always booked as a precautionary measure in case events such as Anzac Day ceremonies cannot be held in Civic Park due to bad weather.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ Information provided by W.B. Lewis, 21 August 2001.

2.0 PHYSICAL ANALYSIS

2.1 SUMMARY OF THE PHYSICAL FABRIC

The survey and analysis of the physical evidence of the cultural significance of Newcastle City Hall has been recorded in the form of an inventory (refer Part 2). The inventory includes sheets for rooms or a suite of rooms and for external elements. Each sheet includes a brief history of the space or element, a physical description, a statement of significance, a schedule of significant fabric and detailed policies. Condition has not been assessed although comment has been made in some cases. This section summarises generally the nature of the physical fabric of Newcastle City Hall.

2.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

Newcastle City Hall has been described in stylistic terms as *Inter-War Academic Classical*.¹¹⁸ The continuation of the classical tradition was still considered entirely appropriate for major public buildings during the 1920s and 1930s in Australia.

Built during a boom period, at a time of optimism about the future before the onset of the Depression towards the end of 1929, the City Hall was seen as a Town Hall worthy of the 'second city' in the State of New South Wales, and in keeping with its civic importance as the leading industrial centre of the Southern Hemisphere.

Australian architecture during this time was highly eclectic and generally rather conservative although this period coincided with the formative years of the Modern Movement in architecture in Europe. The City Hall design is impressive in spite of, or, perhaps, because of, its restrained treatment.

*The impressive city halls in Brisbane and Newcastle tended to follow precedents established in the mid-nineteenth century, where the strong vertical mass of a central tower from a relatively low, 'quiet' building and the drama is prevented from getting out of hand by the reassuring familiarity of the classical orders used correctly.*¹¹⁹

Only a handful of Australian civic buildings qualify for inclusion in the *Inter-War Academic Classical* style.

City Hall is a freestanding building in a unique civic precinct of great significance; it has a largeness of scale appropriate to public buildings. It is essentially a conservative expression of community aggrandisement.

¹¹⁸ A Pictorial Guide to identifying Australian Architecture, p.154-157.

¹¹⁹ A Pictorial Guide to identifying Australian Architecture, p.154.

2.3 CONSTRUCTION

Newcastle City Hall is a three storey structure. Following modern practice at the time the building is constructed with a steel frame with reinforced concrete floors, stairs, etc. The steel trusses roofing the Main Hall supports a coffered cast fibrous plaster ceiling.

The external wall cladding and elements such as the porte cochere, the clock tower, balconies, balustrades and external stairs are built of Sydney 'yellowblock' sandstone. Stone was the most popular material for town halls since it was obviously grander than brick and render, though considerably more expensive.

Externally, metal grilles, window and door frames were used in City Hall. Alterations were made to upgrade ventilation in 1932 and in 1936, a mechanical ventilation system was installed in the Main Hall. Floor and roof repairs were recorded in 1952, including relaying part of the main hall and stage floors. Stonework repairs were undertaken in 1983. The first major changes to the building were undertaken in 1980-1. The changes are outlined in the following room descriptions.

2.4 PLANNING

City Hall is accessible from all four frontages. The building is rectangular in plan, facilitating axial planning. On King Street, a vehicular and pedestrian ramp and a wide flight of steps lead to a central foyer midway between the ground and first floors. Stairs from this main entrance foyer lead directly to all the principal spaces, the Council Chamber, Concert Hall, Concert Hall Gallery, Banquet Room, Mulubinba Room, Cummings Room and Hunter Room as well as the terrace over the Porte cochere.

The ground floor is entered by steps leading down from the main foyer, and directly to the Banquet Room or former Supper Room. A cross corridor provides direct access to both Christie Lane and Wheeler Place through two small lobbies. This corridor is repeated on all three floors.

Here, as elsewhere, the planning is ingenious in the maximum accommodation that is served with a minimum of circulation ... A minimum amount of space is devoted to circulation, one corridor, two small lifts and four flights of stairs serve the whole building.¹²⁰

Two vertical ventilation shafts originally serviced internal toilet facilities. During refurbishment in 1980 one of the lifts became a service duct, the ventilation ducts became service ducts and an additional fire stair was introduced. Three narrow passageways and a new corridor were also introduced on the first floor. The Concert Hall and Gallery are placed directly above the Banquet Room.

¹²⁰ *Building*, 12 May, 1928, p.77.

2.5 THE FACADES

Newcastle City Hall is a three storey *Inter-War Academic Classical* building designed by architect H.E. White. Three major facades are faced with Sydney yellowblock sandstone. The building has an imposing tower with symmetrical pavilions featuring coupled Roman Doric and Ionic orders on the three main facades. The upper two storeys are treated as a single storey united by massive Ionic columns.

On the southern King Street façade a Porte cochere is supported by sandstone Roman Doric style columns; the balustrade above the entablature has circular turned balusters. The balusters are extremely slim and have been largely replaced by various synthetic stone balusters. Sandstone pedestals in the Porte cochere and balustrading to the vehicular ramp are in a poor condition.

The upper two storeys of the major facades are treated as a single storey united by the Ionic columns. The ground floor is treated as a rusticated plinth.

The design is simple, logical and effective, showing that a pleasing elevation may be produced without labouring detail or overdoing ornamentation.

The rear elevation, which backs onto Christie Lane, is painted cement render, a deep continuous base course is broken by two original escape doors and a new escape introduced in 1980. Sandstone quoins return on both ends, three moulded string courses and a cornice are the only ornamental features. The two rows of small square openings with grilles that originally provided ventilation to the Concert Hall and its Upper Gallery were bricked up and rendered in 1980, forming blind windows. On the second floor level White designed his elevation without the variety which openings afford.

A vehicular ramp leads up to the main entrance midway between the ground and first floor levels. This impressive entrance is enclosed in a porte-cochere. The flat roof of the porte-cochere provides a terrace off the main staircase mid-way between the first and second floors. The glazed landing leading onto this terrace provides an additional milling and ceremonial space that enhances the grandeur of the main staircase. This ingenious planning device defines an imposing entrance and helps to break the height and bulk of the building. The scale is further reduced by means of a flight of steps from King Street.

The porte-cochere replaced the pedimented entrance portico that is an important feature of the majority of civic buildings in this style.

Many other classic revival city halls and civic buildings raise the building from a strongly expressed often-rusticated base at street level. In Australia, classic revival buildings of the Inter-war period generally have a more monumental scale expressed by giant order, for example the Commonwealth Savings Bank in Martin Place, Sydney. The Newcastle City Hall is a masterpiece of both functional architecture and civic scale and precise detail.

A system of flood lighting installed for special effect enhances the yellowblock sandstone façade and reinforces the landmark qualities of the building.



Figure 6: View of the steel doors opening onto the Balcony above the porte cochere (Photo 2001)

2.6 THE CLOCK TOWER

The City Hall clock tower is an imposing landmark, indicating the Civic Centre of Newcastle. The tower is a reinforced concrete and steel framed structure clad in Sydney yellowblock sandstone ashlar with rusticated quoins. Rusted mild steel cramps fixing the sandstone to the concrete frame have rusted and are causing the stone to crack and spall. Some failed stones were repaired and partial indents inserted by Gosford Quarries in 1983. To date, several proposed cornice repair drawings have been located but no condition report or extent of work has been found. A report may be found in the microfilmed records, if Newcastle City Council locates the records. Additional repairs were undertaken in 1994 to damage sustained by the building as a result of the 1989 Newcastle earthquake.

The tower has an entablature supported by twelve fluted Ionic columns. The bases of the columns were repaired with sandstone indents in 1983. Rusted fixings associated with earlier safety rails have been left in the interior stonework and are causing additional cracking and loss of stone fabric. The column plinth stones and both cornices have been covered with incorrectly detailed lead weathering which are failing. The upper cornice is weathered and there has been some minor loss of stone. Several corner anthemion antefix stones have been replaced, although they are lighter in colour than the original stones.

The frieze of swags of looped drapery appears to be in a fairly good condition except at one corner where the wind eddying around the tower would seem to be having an impact. The cornice provides some protection, however, all tower elements are more vulnerable to weathering as they are exposed on all sides and located close to both the ocean and river.

At the base of the tower a window on each façade opening has an architectural frame, consisting of two columns supporting an entablature and pediment, or aedicule.

Access to three upper tower rooms and the bell chamber is provided by a spiral cast iron staircase. The stepped copper clad roof structure and urn are supported by a timber framed structure. This structure also houses the bell that is supported by reinforced concrete beams incorporated into the roof slab. A steel ladder provides access to Tower Room D, the roof space. The original master control clocks are now stored in the under stair storeroom.

The roof is crested with a large copper cupola which is both a landmark decorative item and a lightning conductor.

The copper appears to be in good condition although a close external inspection is required.

Repair procedures undertaken following the 1989 Newcastle earthquake were intended to reinstate the strength of the building to an equivalent standard which existed immediately prior to the earthquake. During inspection of the building following the earthquake CMPS & F Pty Ltd¹²¹ reported that:

Structural damage to the building was generally confined to the clock tower; accordingly this area is dealt with in detail in this report. Structural damage to the main building is assessed as superficial ... Damage recorded in this report is that which was visible, however, there are other areas which may have been damaged during the earthquake or may be a problem in a future earthquake. These are:

- *condition of brick cavity ties.*
- *condition of cramps fixing stonework.*
- *stability of parapets.*
- *stability of decorative columns around the facade of the main building and at the level of the bell in the clock tower.*

The report refers to photographic records of the stone undertaken in 1983. These records are not currently available and should be found. Repairs to the concrete floors on all levels of the clock tower predate the 1989 Newcastle earthquake.

Stabilisation of the clock tower parapet, walls and acroteria was between 1993 and 1994. Corner acroteria were replaced and the copings repointed. Cracked brickwork at the base of the clock tower was also repaired. Patching was carried out on the south elevation of the upper tower (3 patches), on the west face of the upper tower (2 patches). These synthetic stone repairs are in a poor condition. New flag pole brackets were introduced and the back of the parapets were re-rendered. The file states that the replacement sandstone were to be from Gosford Quarries Debden Quarry, however, this stone quickly oxidises to a rich golden colour. The replacement stones are now grey in colour, either another stone was substituted (and/or possibly temporarily artificially coloured) or the Debden stone was bleached by acid cleaning. Artificially coloured sandstone should not be substituted for yellowblock sandstone.

The aim of the repairs undertaken was to return the tower structure to its strength before the earthquake. Reports prepared at the time of the earthquake did not investigate the condition of brick cavity ties, the condition of cramps fixing stonework nor the durability of structural stone elements for example columns. The fixings and reinforcement are corroded; extensive investigation is required to ensure the conservation of the brick, sandstone and concrete fabric. The impact of any future earthquake will need to be reassessed once analysis of the metal

¹²¹ File S1713/File II EQ541299.

corrosion is assessed. This work should be undertaken in conjunction with proposed any stonework conservation.

Assess the impact of short term repair methods, normal weathering and seismic incident on both the stability of the building fabric and the integrity of the fabric of cultural significance.

2.7 INTERNAL DECORATION

The interiors provide rare evidence of a refined historical stylism coupled with craftsmanship and techniques of twentieth century paint technology. The line decoration is carried out in the style of Robert Adam with its delicate characteristics of festoons and scrolls. The soffits of the upper ceiling provide evidence of the decoration evident in early photographs which are concealed elsewhere by the intrusive paint scheme of 1980. The original colours and finishes of the wall and ‘ashlar’ treatment are still intact below the stage extensions of the stage.

Interior decoration is perhaps more subject to the vicissitudes of fashion than most things. Like dress, when we see the products of even two or three decades past, they form great fund for mirth and we think how humorous they are in comparison with those existing at the particular enlightened moment, yet probably the existing vogues will appear more ridiculous by comparison in a few years than the older ones.¹²²

[Newcastle was] up to the minute with the decoration of their new building ... copper tinted pilasters and the type of ornament employed.

The main hall of the Town hall building is ornate in much the same manner as the Civic Theatre, although the design is altogether different, as is the colour scheme. An impression of rich old ivory, with old blue as a complementary colour is conveyed by the latter, and the pilasters are of an old copper tint. Specially treated, the woodwork of the doors and the attractive stage is novel and attractive. Bronze chandeliers, in the style of the Renaissance period, are suspended from the panelled ceiling.¹²³

There were three categories of interior finishes-all inexpensive when compared to the lavish finishes of Sydney and Brisbane City Halls. The finishes are different for the major public spaces, the secondary public spaces and the office areas and fire stairs.

The major public spaces (the Concert Hall and Gallery, the Council Chamber, the Mayor’s Reception Room and the Main Entrance Foyer) feature the use of polished Queensland maple joinery and furnishings, coffered fibrous plaster ceilings and plaster relief ornaments coupled with techniques of twentieth century paint technology. Floorings were timber, timber parquetry,

¹²² *Building*, 1 October 1930, p. 78.

¹²³ Newcastle Morning Herald, 30 November 1929.

linoleum, delicately patterned carpets or Sicilian marble. The remaining original finishes, materials and furnishings are outlined in the room descriptions below and in the Inventory Sheets attached in Part 2.

The secondary public spaces include the Banquet Room, east west corridors, lavatories and all spaces with wood or terrazzo floors. Walls were either white plaster or cement render in lesser spaces. Ceilings were fibrous plaster with simple cornice moulds. Warm stone like linoleum tiles were introduced as a wall lining in the corridor and some office spaces at an unknown date. The linoleum tiles were removed in all spaces except the entrance to the computer area in 1980 and replaced with a glazed Muraflex Spatter finish. In 1980 the terrazzo floors were covered with ceramic tiles in the lavatories, and Perelli rubber flooring elsewhere. The ground floor corridor has been subsequently covered with excessively shiny vinyl sheeting. Corridors on the upper floors are now carpeted with Perelli rubber elements remaining where door seals are in operation. Remnants of the original finishes remain in areas adapted as plant or store rooms.

The offices and fire stairs had either concrete floors or red ironite toppings on concrete floors. Wall finishes were white plaster in the offices with Queensland maple joinery including picture rails (largely removed in 1980). Ceilings were fibrous plaster with simple cornice moulds. Walls in these areas were generally coated with a glazed Muraflex Spatter finish in 1980. Remnants of the original finishes remain in plant, store and below the stage.

The Banquet Room, main corridors, secondary public spaces and lavatories comprised of warm toned terrazzo, and had less decorative features.

2.8 DESCRIPTION OF INTERIOR 'ROOMS'

Concert Hall

Formerly the Main Public Hall or Ball Room, the Concert Hall seats 600 people and is 23,300mm long by 16,375mm wide. Situated on the first floor, the lower portion of the hall, below the gallery, is continuous except for the blind ventilation grilles. The 'ashlar' treatment to the wall was a Travertine texture effect. The techniques were being used in many of Whites other buildings at this time.

The interior is treated with some regard for the dignity and importance of the purpose of the building, and the ornament gets richer as it ascends, so that the ceiling appears to be the dominating feature of decoration.¹²⁴

The walls are 'antiqued' mottled stonework with copper tinted pilasters and 'bronze' renaissance style' chandeliers.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ *Building*, 12 April, 1930, p.107.

¹²⁵ National Trust Listing, February 1981.

Concert Hall Gallery

Situated on the second floor, the concert hall gallery is supported on a steel girder spanning the full width of the hall. The gallery seats 362 in the original seats with upgraded upholstery. The seats, supplied by J. Mackie & Co. have decoration and the Council's Coat of Arms carved on the outside of all row end seats. The original linoleum flooring was replaced with new carpet in 1980 and 2001.

The upper interior of the hall is divided into six bays, treated architecturally with pilasters and panels, the upper portion of which were originally ventilation grilles, are now blind grilles.

The whole is crowned with an imposing cornice with a honeysuckle frieze in classic manner, to match the general treatment.¹²⁶

The decorative work in City Hall was very simple throughout, compared with White's Sydney theatres, including the Capitol, State, Rosebay Wintergarden, St James and Civic Theatre, Newcastle, which were all being constructed at this time. Although the interior of the Civic Theatre is described as being:

... managed with more restraint than we find in most of the examples of modern theatre work, for its mouldings and embellishment are hardly more than what is necessary to outline the various features; the main decorative success being possibly due to a rigid adherence to graceful proportions and a harmonious scheme of colour. The effect is one of subdued ornament and a repose rare enough in this class of interior.¹²⁷

Plaster Relief Ornament - Well-planned fibre plaster relief ornament was placed between panels of flat painted details Adamesque in character and sprayed decoration. Each side of the circular medallions is a vertical plaster seed-pod margent ornament.

The latest methods of applying paint by medium of a paint spraying machine was used in combination with traditional line and stencil work. The spray method gave toned stippling effects.

Metallic Powders - Bronze and aluminium powders¹²⁸ were largely blown on before the materials were dry. The search for colour photographs of the "old copper tint" on the pilasters is ongoing.

Wiping Off - Moulded plasterwork was also treated in a similar way, after application, the glazing tones were wiped off, the effect made the mouldings more three-dimensional.

¹²⁶ Construction and Local Government Journal, 27 April, 1928, p.8.

¹²⁷ *Building*, 12 April 1930, p105.

¹²⁸ 'The Modern Demand for Colour' by James Perrott. *The Decorator and Painter for Australia and New Zealand*, 1 June 1928, p.261-3.

Spray Gun Decorative Finishes - Stippled decorative finishes were applied to ceiling, wall and balustrade frieze panels. The edges of these panels are toned to a darker shade.

Outline Decoration - On the frieze and panels is a centre ornament in outline with touches of contrasting colour on main features. The ornamentation "was entrusted to an English artist now resident in Australia, Mr Fred Sutherland".¹²⁹

Stencil Decoration - small stencil motifs were found in the corners of the ceiling panels above the gallery.

Dais / Concert Platform

Situated on the First Floor, the platform is 8,510mm wide by 670mm deep. It was enlarged in 1980.

Newcastle Room

Former Committee Room 5, situated on the Ground Floor.

Waratah Room

Committee Room 6, situated on the Ground Floor.

Banquet Room

Formerly the Supper Room, the Banquet Room is situated on the Ground Floor and is 22,310mm long by 16,375mm wide. The original interior was severely plain, white plastered walls with maple joinery including a picture rail and a chair rail (these were both removed in 1980).

Bronze bracket lights identical to the wall lights in the Concert Hall were situated on all walls. Pendant light fittings hang from the ceiling in all six bays. Four steel columns with lotus capitals supported the reinforced concrete beams and slab above. The original location of these elements can be seen in illustrations in the 1930s. Supplementary spotlights and additional wall vents were added at some stage as well as window fans (these were later removed in 1980 when the room was upgraded). At this time, the original servery was replaced with a commercial kitchen and bar.

¹²⁹ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 12 December 1929.

A dropped plasterboard ceiling conceals mechanical ventilation, down lighting and sprinklers. The original flooring was replaced with tongue and grooved boarding that has failed due to dampness. It is programmed for replacement. The original boarding detail is to be reinstated.¹³⁰



Figure 7: Photograph of NCH Stair Lobby with original decoration.

Foyers, Corridors and Stairs

On entering the ground floor lobbies and hallway the most striking effect would have been the large aggregate terrazzo flooring. The only remaining terrazzo flooring is found in the entrance lobbies and some plant room areas on the ground floor.

The walls of the Main Entrance Foyer are finished in 'Travertine' effect textured ashlar with skirtings, trims and panelling to columns of a marked-mottled variety of Australian marble with green streaks, probably Caleula marble from near Orange. Marble balustrades are displayed to advantage, without conflicting ornamentation to detract from the beauty of the marble and metalwork. The impressive flight of steps and landing floors are white Sicilian marble.

¹³⁰ *Building Manager*, July 2001.

Linoleum tiles lining ground floor walls and columns were removed in 1979. The walls were then sanded and patched with Watty Formfill 100 Type B Putty rolled over the entire wall area to produce a texture. Once set, this was coated with a plasticised heavy duty Muraflex Seamless Coating manufactured by Watty Ltd. This coating was then coated by spray application with a coat of Muraflex Satin Finish Glaze. This finish was used to remove the 'institutional' feel of the linoleum lining. The use of linoleum and vellum wall linings was a 'modern' approach popular in the 1920s and 1930s. It is uncertain whether this linoleum was original fabric, further research is required. The use of the textured Muraflex coating was an attempt to introduce a contemporary 1980s product with the characteristics of Henry White's 'theatre baroque styling' used in his public halls rather than the more austere and refined 'stripped classical' styling of his 'modern' City Hall interiors.

No 1 and No 2 Committee Rooms

These rooms were created in 1980 by subdividing an open office area. They function as individual meeting rooms or ante-rooms to the Function Room. The rooms have original windows and doors but otherwise contemporary finishes.

A tapestry "The Sack of Basing Hall" is located in Committee Room 1, it formerly hung in the Reception Room.

Mulubinba Room

Former Number 1 Function Room, Public Common Room and Lady Mayoress's suite, the Mulubinba Room is situated on the First Floor. This room is 13,685mm long by 8,435mm wide and was created in 1980 by subdividing an open office area and demolishing the former Lady Mayoress's Rooms. The room has contemporary finishes and includes a built in bar and seat, however it still retains its original windows and doors.

Cummings Room

Former Number 2 Function Room, Engineers and Drawing Office, Cloak and Lounge Room, the Cummings Room is situated on the first floor. This room is 18,900mm long by 10,250mm wide and was created in 1980 by demolishing the Cloak and Lounge Rooms. The room has contemporary finishes and includes a built in bar, however it still retains its original windows.

Hunter Room

Former Number 3 Function Room, Mayor's and Chief Clerks Offices, the Hunter Room is situated on the second floor. This room is 19,000mm long by 10,250mm wide and was created in 1980 by demolishing the wall between the Mayor's and Chief Clerk's Offices. The room has contemporary

finishes and includes a built in bar, timber dance floor, store room and servery, however it still retains its original windows.

Council Chamber

Situated on the Second Floor, this chamber is 51 feet long by 34 feet wide. The beams appear to be supported on Ionic capped pilasters and a coffered fibrous plaster ceiling. Extensive use is made of polished Queensland maple in the joinery and furnishings, designed by S.V Rowe. Original polished parquet flooring with carpet inset and suspended 1980s light fittings. The carpet and colour scheme is intrusive.

The semi-circular Queensland maple council table in front of the Mayor's maple dais has been reversed and a dining table from BHP Director's Cottage Bella Vista, Mayfield has been incorporated into the layout to provide additional seating. The dais platform and the public gallery joinery were modified in 1980. The original maple picture rails and window pelmets were also removed at this time.

The original coffered fibrous plaster ceiling is painted in the 1980s style and the original colour scheme should be investigated. Fabric covered wall panels have been added since 1980. Original fabric includes decorative plaster ceiling, windows, doors, joinery and furnishings. There is microphone and computer cabling attached to furnishings.

Ante Room to Council Chamber

Situated on the second floor, this room is generally in its original configuration except for the colour scheme. The table is an original item from NESCA House.

Lord Mayor's Reception Area

Formerly a Committee Room, this area is situated on the Second Floor and is 3,370 mm wide by 8,000mm long. The coffered fibrous plaster ceiling and original light fittings in this room are generally intact and the colour scheme dates from 1980. An opening has been made to a new bar, kitchen and bathroom, which were former dressing room spaces. The ante-room wall has been removed and the ceiling lowered in this area to facilitate mechanical ventilation. Original fabric includes the ceiling and windows and numerous artworks and memorabilia.

A table and chair presented to the City of Newcastle by J.Mackie & Co. Pty. Ltd. that was used by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II & His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh to sign the Official Visitors Book on the occasion of their visit to Newcastle on 9th February 1954 is situated in this room.

Lord Mayor's Room

Formerly the Aldermen's Room, the Lord Mayor's room is situated on the second floor. There is a new opening in this room to the Secretary's office, although the windows and door to the Council Chambers are original, and some original paintings exist.

Lord Mayor's Secretary

Formerly the Ante Room to the Aldermen's Room, this room is situated on the Second Floor. There are new openings to the Reception area and the Mayor's Room, although the windows and door to the Council Chambers are original and some original paintings exist.

East and West Lobbies

Both lobbies are situated on the ground floor, the original configuration and fabric includes the fibrous plaster domed ceiling, light fitting, both pairs of doors and the terrazzo flooring. The terrazzo has been patched in the area that housed a recessed rubber door mat.

Women's and Means Toilets

Both toilets are situated on the Ground Floor. Original fabric includes marble toilet partitions, wall tiles and mirrors. Note the floor tiles are not original and date from 1980. They have been laid over terrazzo and there is an adhesion problem.

Lift Cars

No record of the lift cars has emerged to date.

Theatre Roof and Mechanics

The roof space above the main hall contains significant heritage items that demonstrate the original format of the hall and the production of theatrical shows at the City Hall before the introduction of air conditioning.

The riveted steel trusses used for the roof are in an excellent condition and have been well maintained. The truss system supports the wide span required by the theatre and all of the ceiling plaster work has been hung from timber attached the trusses.

Two chandelier winches are located in the roof space of the City Hall theatre and are used for the purposes of maintenance of the chandeliers.

The roof space is in a very original condition with timber duck boards used as walkways.

1980-1 Restoration

In 1980-81 Newcastle City Council undertook a \$3 million refurbishment programme. Office staff occupied the building until 1977, when they were moved to the adjoining City Administrative

Centre. The interior of the City Hall was redesigned to function as a function and conference centre. Air conditioning was introduced as well as a sound system, sound mixing facilities, new lighting, microphone points and the stage was extended. An additional Reception Room, holding 120 people was created on the second floor. The roof of the Porte Cochere was paved and perimeter seating introduced.

In 1981 the refurbishment was awarded the Royal Australian Institute of Architects Merit Award for building recycling. Press clippings at the time state:

The interior of the building was not considered to have a remarkable quality or unity but the jury said that in refurbishing the interior the architects had chosen to re-incorporate the themes of the 1920s.¹³¹

The souvenir public publication issued for the re-opening of City Hall¹³² confirms this approach:

At all times, it was desirable, to reinforce the period style, and to avoid a clinical modern idiom. This approach can be seen in the design of the bars, light fittings, furniture, carpet, ceilings and the concealment of mechanical services.

Colour design has been an all-important element in the overall concept of the interiors. Whilst the colours have been changed, as a break with the buildings recent past, they still relate to the colours of the 1920s period. Where a washed out and subdued green has been discarded, green has been retained as a molding colour. Likewise the golden browns and creams are an accentuation of earlier colours in the building.

The Newcastle Herald¹³³ also reported:

Newcastle now has a 'new' Town Hall ... its interior has been completely redecorated, providing Newcastle with a 'new look' Town Hall."

The entry marble staircase has been opened up, so that the grandeur of the ceremonial approach to the main auditorium is revealed. Coupled with the expansion of the staircase area has been the use of warm and regal colours, which have subdued the grimness of the original grey cement render.

Linoleum tile wall coverings were also removed, seen by the architects of the early eighties as being "too institutional" in style.

¹³¹ Newcastle Post, 21 October 1981.

¹³² Re-opening of the City Hall Newcastle, 11 May 1981.

¹³³ Newcastle Herald, 12 May 1981.

2.9 ARTWORKS, SCULPTURE AND MEMORIALS

New original works of art were commissioned by NCC as part of the 1980 refurbishment.

"Climbing Sun Over the Hunter" (1980) by John Olsen, who was raised at Cooks Hill. This mural at the top of main stairs outside the Concert Hall was unveiled at the re-opening of the City Hall. It caused controversy when first displayed to the public. It met its promise of being as controversial as Margel Hinder's *Cook Memorial Fountain* in Civic Park and Lyndon Dadswell's *Man and Woman* sculpture in the Cultural Centre.

"Proscenium Mural" (1981) John Montifiore, a local artist, painted the mural in the Concert Hall replacing what was originally an open grille (lining had been added to the back at some stage) with centrally placed Newcastle Coat of Arms infilling the arch over the stage. The mural was based on scenes in the Newcastle district, linking each one of the four elements of air, earth, fire and water.

"The Corm" (1980) by Sandra McGrath, a local sculptor. An appropriately scaled sensual bronze sculpture in south Wheeler Place placed on an inappropriate base of pebblecreted concrete.

"Milestone Dove" (1973) Yoshitatsu Yanagihara in the Mayor's Reception Room.

"The Sack of Basing Hall" a tapestry located in Committee Room 1 formerly hung in the Reception Room.

"A Jacobite Proclamation" & the Hannell Portraits.

Newcastle City Council has also commissioned artists to create other artworks and sculpture in the Civic Precinct.

"Music, Literature and Art" (1957) by Paul Beadle two Ravensfield stone reliefs on the axis, adjacent to the front door of Newcastle City Library.

"Two figures" (1957) by Lyndon Dadswell a monumental memorial on the axis inside the library foyer look reverently at the dedication on the wall: 'In minds ennobled here the noble dead shall live'.

"Captain Cook Memorial Fountain" (1961-66) by Margel Hinder an outstanding bronze sculpture and fountain that enhances the City Hall axis in Civic Park. It has become an icon, a symbol of the City Of Newcastle.

In front of City Hall is a stone Lantern and outside the Newcastle Region Art Gallery is *"Space = Time II"*, (1981) three futuristic stainless steel cones by Minami Tada, both presentations by the sister city of Ube, Japan, which highlights the industrial economies of both cities."¹³⁴

2.10 CURTILAGE

City Hall Portico Landscaping

The portico landscaping is in four sections, two gardens fronting onto King Street and two narrow strips of garden between the ramp and the base of the building. The two front sections have remnants of perimeter shrub dwarf flowering shrubs from successive landscaping schemes, the shrubs next to the portico or porte cochere are becoming so tall they obscure the ramp.

There is a substantial palm tree with an advanced seedling palm in the western garden next to the building. They are both too close to the building and the ramp and are damaging the structure, drainage and fabric. A ground cover of ferns is found in the narrowest part of the garden, between the ramp and the basecourse.

In the eastern garden bed between the ramp and City Hall there is a stone Lantern, a gift from the sister city of Ube, Japan. Also planted in this area are several large eucalyptus trees. They are also inappropriately located. Plants in the narrowest part of the garden have been cut back and only the stumps remain.

City Hall East and West Landscaping

There is a narrow strip of garden on both the east and west sides of the building base course. This garden has risen in level due to the landscape treatment, particularly where the bamboo and some large trees were planted. The soil level is now above the level of the original ground line and the damp proof course of the building.

Christie Place

Christie Place is a well established level garden of annual flower beds and turf enclosed to its north by a substantial group of palm trees and to the east by City Hall and to the west by NESCA House. The space is open to King Street. The park is crossed diagonally by a concrete paved pathway, there is a drinking fountain placed centrally on this pathway.

¹³⁴ *Public Sculpture in Australia*, Michael Hedger, p.119.

Shortland Memorial Fountain (1897)

Shortland Memorial Fountain, designed by R. Cates, has a square base of Melbourne bluestone. The Sydney sandstone fountain has a square base with half bowls on each of the faces designed to receive water from the mouths of gape mouthed lions. The lions are attached to pedimented entablatures enclosing a pillar decorated with eastern zig zag motifs. This is surmounted by a foreshortened stylised Corinthian column. White marble commemorative tablets are mounted at the base. The fountain is well detailed and executed, with elaborate ornamental features. Aesthetic significance of the fountain has been diminished by the loss of its original detail.

The Shortland Fountain has one remaining bubbler of the original four that were fitted to the each side of the memorial. The bubbler fitted is a modern chrome fitting that is detrimental to the significance of the memorial from an aesthetic and conservation view point

Lamp Posts

The lamp posts attached to City Hall and located in King Street are currently listed as City Hall and Lamp Posts. These lamps are placed outside City Hall and form a group of lights that identify the precinct and the entrances to the building.

In 1979 the National Trust recorded "ornamental cast iron lamp posts are located as follows: six on the southern footpath on King Street, seven on the northern footpath of King Street, six forming part of City Hall King Street and two each at the east and west entrances - a total of twenty three."

The cast iron lamp posts on the southern side of King Street have subsequently been relocated to Christie Place on the west side of Christie Lane.

City Hall Lamps (1929)

The three pairs of lamps at the base of the King Street steps and each end of the vehicular ramp have short fluted candelabrum shafts with large square bases. The capitals at the top of the shafts are decorated with a combination of lotus and acanthus leaves. The circular fluted bases sit on top of a double square plinths with decorative corner brackets. Memorial tablets are fixed to the southern side of the bases. Each lamp has a large central elliptical globe surrounded by four single spherical ball globes on short armatures. The lamps are currently painted green with red and gold highlighted decoration featured. The *"two specially designed lamp standards at the entrance to the Town Hall"*¹³⁵ were dedicated as "Memorial Lamps" honouring the memory and services of Alderman Morris Light.

¹³⁵ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 12 December 1929.

The two pairs of lamps at the east and west entrances have short fluted candelabra shafts with single spherical globes. The capital is decorated with papyrus leaves and the bottom of the shaft with acanthus leaves. The base of each lamp is decorated with four small lion heads in a circular medallion.

Sandstone plinths at the base of all City Hall Lamp Posts have little weathering and are heavily infested with biological growth. The edges of these stones have also had a history of impact damage.

The original paint scheme has been stripped from the lamps. The colours and the highlighted decoration date from 1980. The original colour schemes should be researched.

Civic Precinct Street Lamps (1929)

These 1929 street lamps have tall shafts with elliptical globes, they have been relocated on at least three occasions.

Initially street lamps were lined up in pairs on both sides of King Street and Wheeler Street. Two symmetrically in front of NESCA House, two in front of Christie Place, two in front of City Hall. They were redistributed when the City Administration Building was built, when Wheeler Place was constructed and when the King Street vehicular lighting was upgraded on the southern side of King Street.

3.0 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

3.1 SOURCES OF THE DESIGN – THE EVOLUTION OF CITY AND TOWN HALLS

The earliest structures that fulfilled the function of town hall were communal buildings that were often used for both religious rites and meeting rooms or council chambers for the assembly of the governing body of the community. Examples can be found in the Melanesian Islands and among the town-dwelling Indians of North America. The independent cities of ancient Greece built well defined structures for specific civic purposes. In the Roman states examples of municipal buildings and municipal government can also be found. For example in Pompeii, one end of the forum was occupied by three public buildings with a common façade – the centre one being *the curia*, or town council chamber, the other two being the executive offices of *the duumvirs* and *the aediles*. Thus the purpose of the central building was legislative and that of the others executive.

During the early medieval period there was little need for municipal buildings as strong municipal governments had not developed. The modern tradition of government architecture began with the emergence in the twelfth century of strong city governments. The earliest architectural expression of medieval independence was the belfry with bell that summoned the citizens to the public square or meeting place for the consideration of some emergency, to elect magistrates or to deliberate on the affairs of the community. The tower in which the bell was hung was itself a symbol of power in the Middle Ages. It also served as the record office of the city where important documents were safe. Gradually added to the tower and belfrey, as the functions and processes of municipal government increased were other spaces such as offices, meeting halls and storage rooms.

In Italy, Belgium and France by the middle of the twelfth century a distinct building type was beginning to emerge. The rise of commercial enterprise resulted in cities acquiring, besides wealth, rights and independence. In Belgium this wealth and independence found architectural expression in municipal buildings that surpassed those of any other country; amongst them are some of the finest examples of both town hall and guild hall. Guild Halls for the trade guilds seem to have been erected first and though primarily trade buildings provided halls and rooms for government functions. In Belgium, the oldest of the town halls appears to be Bruges. It dates from 1377. Brussels Town Hall, built exclusively as such, was begun in 1401 and completed in 1455.

The growth of independent towns in Germany also led to the erection of many impressive town halls or 'Rathausen' during the Middle Ages. In France town halls, known as "*Hotels de Ville*" were initially an arcaded market on the ground floor with the governmental proportion above, with a belfrey at the side. In Europe by the sixteenth century, as a result of increasing wealth the buildings are no longer shared with market and trade groups.

The town halls of the Renaissance merely styled in classical dress the building types that had been developed earlier. It can also clearly be demonstrated that municipal buildings in the modern

tradition are founded on the medieval town hall. That is, town halls illustrate stylistic rather than functional developments.

In England during the Middle Ages there is almost a total absence of Municipal buildings. The whole country was feudalised after the Norman Conquest and neither municipalities nor guilds could assert themselves. English Town Halls are a relatively recent phenomena, dating from after the Municipal Corporation Act of 1835. Municipal Corporations were also established in the colonies, with the Sydney Municipal Council being incorporated in 1842.

Town Halls in France have always aspired to monumental grandeur and have always included a large often lavish *salle des fetes* for official receptions and similar functions. English town halls also always included a large auditorium for cultural as well as civic activities. Sometimes the auditorium and administrative functions were housed in separate wings, each having its own outside entrance, but connected by internal lobbies. The halls have generally been used as multi-purpose spaces, their use providing an important direct link between the citizens and the seat of their local government.

As cities grew in population and municipalities became larger the ratio of the executive and administrative departmental areas has changed proportionally. It often became necessary to decentralise the administrative departments and house them in municipal office buildings. The city hall proper has become a smaller, though more important, public area to accommodate the more democratic and ceremonial functions of city government. The city or town hall symbolises the cultural, social and economic character of the community.

The importance of the utilitarian requirements in the program for a modern town or city hall is self-evident. Of equal importance, if not so obvious, are the aesthetic considerations. Here it is interesting to observe, from our brief historical survey, the dominance accorded the spiritual and emotional values in the designs of the earlier town and city halls. These values we should and can unquestionably retain. As vital today as it was yesterday in a well-designed town or city hall is the organic embodiment of a true spiritual dignity representative of the community and its times.

The basic elements of a town hall consist of a large public meeting room or council chamber, with seating arranged to accommodate the public and press as well as councillors. Other facilities for the mayor, aldermen and town clerks, meeting or committee rooms as well as accommodation for executive departments; town clerks staff, accounts, engineers traffic, public health, parks etc are also provided.

In New South Wales the powers of the Council were greatly enlarged by the Local Government Act of 1919, resulting in the growth of administrative staff. In Newcastle the staffs of four departments, the Town Clerk's, Electrical Engineer's, City Engineer's and Health Inspector's were

scattered in four separate buildings in Watt Street until the new town hall was completed. This made administration difficult. A new Town Hall was built in 1928, it followed the precedents established for town halls in the mid-nineteenth century in plan and form.

3.2 NEWCASTLE CITY HALL

Newcastle City Hall is a monumental building functioning as an aesthetic focal point given symbolic importance by a tall floodlit clock tower. It was built in association with a Theatre, Exhibition Hall and shops complex, two new streets and two new urban (park) spaces. To mark the opening of the new buildings the Council declared a week of celebrations, known as Civic Week. The souvenir booklet commemorating Civic Week and the opening of the complex stated “Nothing like them will be found outside of the capitals.” Numerous publications expressed sentiments similar to that of the Newcastle Truth, proclaiming the:

Town Hall, creditable to the second city of the State, in keeping with its claim to be the greatest industrial centre of the Southern hemisphere, and emblematic of the great potentialities of this marvellous district.

It was anticipated that the building would be only large enough for fifty years, comparisons were made to Sydney Town Hall which was seen as already inadequately cramped.

The construction of City Hall was the catalyst for the transformation of that part of the city centre into a precinct for cultural and public buildings. As Newcastle expanded successive administrative buildings were added; NESCA House in 1937-39, the Northumberland County Offices in 1951, and the City Administration Centre in 1972-77. Henry White’s vision for Civic Park and Christie Place has become a major urban space in the Newcastle CBD. Morris Light’s plans for the City Hall and Civic Theatre complex to be the focus for Newcastle’s cultural development have been fulfilled with addition of the Cultural Centre (now Newcastle Region Library), the Art Gallery, Conservatorium of Music and Concert Hall, and more recently the addition of Newcastle Universities Music Department.

In Australia, only Adelaide has such a clearly identifiable precinct of monuments, cultural and public buildings. Adelaide’s civic precinct was a 19th century development and is laid out as a street precinct rather than being developed around a central park.

3.3 COMPARISON WITH OTHER CITY AND TOWN HALLS

The 1920s was an economic boom period in Australia. According to the Queensland A & B Journal, the fact that five major cities were simultaneously either rebuilding or remodelling their town halls exemplified “their ideals of civic pride and their rapid commercial expansion”.¹³⁶

¹³⁶ A & B Journal of Queensland, 10 December, 1926, p.70.

In Australia only a handful of civic buildings qualify for inclusion in the Inter-War Academic Classical style. The most prominent of these buildings is the Brisbane City Hall, Brisbane, designed by Hall & Prentice, and built between 1921-1929. The Brisbane City Hall is generally acknowledged to be the grandest and most expensive city, or town hall in Australia and was known at the time as “The Million Pound Town Hall” as it cost almost that amount (£980,000).¹³⁷ It is a dramatic juxtaposition of tall tower and classical base, continuing a Victorian tradition of town hall planning. Its plan has been compared to Glasgow City Chambers.

Because the Town Halls in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth had been built between 1866 and 1888, their costs of construction had been less than 10% of Brisbane outlay. Nevertheless, the Brisbane City Hall was a major undertaking in the 1920s, probably ranking second in scale to the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, which cost £9.5 million pounds.¹³⁸

The size of this civic project is highlighted by the fact that although Brisbane was one of the last of the traditional city or town halls built in Australia, there were several Civic Centres built during the 1950s and 1960s, and it was not until 1975 that the \$2 million Ipswich Civic Centre matched the cost of Brisbane City Hall of almost half a century earlier.¹³⁹

The ten storey Government (Commonwealth) Savings Bank of NSW in Sydney’s Martin Place (1922-1928) cost £ 1.5 million and was then the most expensive building yet constructed in Australia. This Ross and Rowe building is similar in style though due to its massive scale is classified as Inter-war Beaux-Arts in style.

In 1928 the A & B Journal of Queensland could no longer contain its enthusiasm for comparison with the other Australian capitals, and wrote:

A comparison of the heights of the various City Halls in Australia shows that the height of the tower of our own City Hall will be 302ft. against Sydney 188ft and Melbourne 136ft with Adelaide 145ft the length of the building also shows that Brisbane City Hall will have a length of 323 ft. against Sydney 310 ft. and Melbourne 107 ft., while the width is 297 ft. against Sydney’s 186 ft. and Melbourne’s 108 ft. The height is 60ft compared to Sydney’s 90 ft. and Melbourne 70ft. The estimated cost is Brisbane £705,044, Sydney £488,959, Melbourne £255,000, Adelaide £1,548.

¹³⁷ Civic Palaces, Marc Fiddian, p.70.

¹³⁸ Civic Palaces, Marc Fiddian, p.72.

¹³⁹ Civic Palaces, Marc Fiddian, p.96.

Newcastle City Hall's tower is 144 ft., its length is 184 ft., its depth is 109 ft. and the final cost was £305,000. Newcastle Construction in comparison was proud its Town Hall was "Purposeful, dignified, chaste, but inexpensive."¹⁴⁰

T.R. Hall the architect for Brisbane City Hall toured America in 1922. Hall's preferred use of a classical design, as the most appropriate for a City Hall, would have been reinforced by his American experience.¹⁴¹ The trip was taken at his own expense, "with the object of making the new building the last word in building construction and arrangement."

In March, 1927 Henry White also toured America. White said, in reviewing his visit:

*...an educational point of view, the trip for me has been a most beneficial one, from which my future work will benefit.*¹⁴²

White had offices in Brisbane, as well as Sydney, Wellington, Auckland, and Melbourne. The staff of Henry White's Brisbane office is not known, however, it would seem likely that they were acquainted with both the staff and the design of Brisbane City Hall as there are many proprietary items in common.

3.4 THE UNITED STATES INFLUENCE

In 1915 and again in 1925, McKim, Mead and White, one of the foremost proponents of the classical style, published monographs of their work including over 100 drawing plates. The drawing styles for Brisbane and Newcastle City Halls, both combine plan, elevation and section of structural and decorative elements, and are similar to the drawings published by McKim, Mead and White.

The upper two storeys of Newcastle City Hall are treated as a single storey united by Ionic columns with the ground floor treated as a rusticated plinth. This device prevents the classical detail on the building looking distorted.

The firm of McKim, Mead & White, one of the best-known architectural practices in America in the early twentieth century, used a similar device to break down scale in their buildings of classical design. Notably City Hall, New York (steps and colonnaded porch on a rusticated base), Rhode Island State House (steps double storey columns colonnaded balcony and the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences (steps double storey porch with pedimented portico).

¹⁴⁰ *Newcastle Construction*, 27 April 1928.

¹⁴¹ *The Brisbane City Hall Conservation Plan*, Bruce Buchanan Architects Pty Ltd., 1992, p.101.

¹⁴² *Sunday Times*, 10 July 1927.

The correct use of orders rather than the monumental scale expressed by giant order is the main difference between Inter-War Academic Classical and Inter-War Beaux-Arts styles as described in *Identifying Australian Architecture*. Of White's other buildings, only the demolished St James Theatre, Sydney (1926-1928) was built in the Inter-War Beaux-Arts style. However, its lavish interior was far from simple neo-classical with elaborate decoration, a flamboyant combination of Moorish, Egyptian, Chinese and Louis XV effects. The Fox Film Corporation Building, Sydney (1926) was also Inter-War Academic Classical in style.

White's earlier work also had other American influences. The Brisbane Tivoli built in 1913-15 represented a new departure in construction and introduced the Spanish Mission style of architecture popular at the time in America. At its time of construction it was the only theatre in the British Empire with a large roof garden theatre.

Los Angeles City Hall (1927-1928) is another American building that should be compared to both White's Stanton House and Newcastle City Hall. It's architects John Austin, John Parkinson & Albert Martin wanted to create a building that was free from the constraints of any particular style of architecture. John Austin wrote in 1928 that their design, with its stepped back tower and flanking wings, was "Modern American".¹⁴³

3.5 COMPARISON WITH OTHER TWENTIETH CENTURY CIVIC DEVELOPMENT

Spectacular and elaborate town halls were a feature of 19th and early 20th century local governments. Colin Cunningham, in *Victorian and Edwardian Town Halls* (1981) shows that hundreds of elaborate town halls were built in Great Britain:

*These town halls were a monument to the golden age of local government and to the strength of local communities.*¹⁴⁴

*Spectacular town halls can be seen in many parts of Australia with Sydney Town Hall being one of the best examples. The Sydney Town Hall was designed as an expensive symbol of local pride, a focus for the belief in progress and superiority and a monument to councillor's egos.*¹⁴⁵

In Australia, the most elaborate and grand buildings were constructed because of the population boom after the 1880s economic expansion fuelled by the discoveries of gold.

Newcastle Town Hall built in the inter-war period is a rare example of a major civic development at this time. Many other municipalities created by amalgamations in 1923 missed out on major public buildings. In North Sydney for example, each local authority felt it was the centre of the area. Proposals to build three town halls became the focus for the local amalgamation debate.

¹⁴³ Iconic, *Stories of L.A's Most Memorable Buildings*, Gloria Koenig, p.56.

¹⁴⁴ North Sydney 1788-1988, p.266.

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p.266.

There were many plans for a new central town hall and civic centre before 1926 but the scandal over the Sydney City Town Hall weakened the town hall building movement. Sydney City Town Hall, completed in 1889, had cost the vast sum of £488,959 ... The saga over the building did great damage to the image and competence of local government throughout Sydney. Commenced in 1868, the building was noted for its faulty foundation work and shoddy workmanship. Succeeding mayors and architects squabbled over designs for nearly twenty years, providing material for many newspaper columns. The building became a subject of mirth throughout Sydney, a symbol of vast waste and extravagance. The saga of municipal incompetence became a focal point for the Greater Sydney movement which started soon after the town hall was completed.

The huge amount of money spent on the Sydney Town Hall was particularly resented at the time. Sanitation was very primitive in the central City and poor conditions contributed towards the spread of sickness. The vastness of the town hall in the midst of working -class slums and squalor symbolised local waste and lack of vision. It was a sign of progress and sound administration not to have a town hall or, if one were built, it was to be of frugal design.¹⁴⁶

North Sydney eventually acquired "a site for a town hall for £7,500 but the parsimonious council was shocked to find that a town hall would cost £40,000. It decided instead to convert the old private hospital on the site to a council chamber, which included a 'small' town hall' at a cost of only £14,724." In 1944 North Sydney acquired further properties in order to build a civic centre on the site. Progress was slow, and by 1959 they had a plan, and in the early 1960s the Stanton Library was constructed.

In 1969 tenders were called for a civic centre development. The developments proposed were vast. As developments were scaled down it became less attractive to the local community because it was not economic for the developer to provide a library and council offices free to council. The project failed partly because the council of the time was neglectful of informing the public. North Sydney had not yet adopted open government: most meetings were closed and the many plans being proposed created an air of great confusion. This confusion fed the natural suspicion against monument-seeking councillors, especially when the councillors alleged that the developer was acting as benefactor and giving the local community expensive facilities for no cost.

The council decide to build a new office block adjacent to the Stanton Library in 1987 and much of the disputed site is now open space, a recreation centre and parking station. Air rights for the site have been sold to enable development elsewhere in the central business district and the

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p.271.

council raised almost \$20 million from this activity. It will be difficult to develop the site, valued at probably nearly \$1,754 million in land value, because of the sale of these air rights.¹⁴⁷

In contrast Newcastle had a long drawn out process of community consultation and debate surrounding the building of a new Town Hall. A referendum of ratepayers was held in January 1920 to judge community support for raising a loan to acquire a site and build a Town Hall. The election of Morris Light as Mayor of Newcastle in December 1924 was the catalyst for the long-awaited realisation of a Town Hall. An important part of his election campaign was the realisation of a Town Hall and Theatre complex. The Council published a booklet titled "Proposed Town Hall, Theatre and Shops" posting it to every ratepayer to familiarise them with their proposals while the business community waged a ceaseless campaign in opposition to the civic complex through the local press. In 1926 the community was asked to indicate their preference for a Town Hall, Theatre and shops, or a Town Hall only. The majority voted in favour of the inclusion of a theatre and shops. The Civic Theatre was the first theatre in Australia to be controlled by a municipality and also the oldest continuing 'live' theatre in NSW.

The development and expansion of the Civic Precinct has continued since this time. Council's vision for the future long term development of this place is outlined in the Urban Design Plan Newcastle Civic Area.

Newcastle and Brisbane were not the only Australian municipalities building new town halls in the mid 1920s. Lismore and North Sydney were building new Council Chambers and Melbourne was remodelling their nineteenth century town hall. In 1925 remodelling and enlarging of Melbourne Town Hall, which had been gutted by fire, was undertaken by Stephenson & Meldrum. Though larger in scale its interiors are similar in style. (A list of twentieth century town halls is included in the appendix.)

Built between 1926 and 1928, Lismore Municipal Building, is an example of a two storey Inter-War Free Classical Style building designed by William James Gilroy. Photographs of the layouts of Brisbane, Lismore and Mosman Council Chambers were presented to Newcastle Council and discussed on 10th June 1929. The interior joinery in Lismore Council Chamber is similar in style to the design and motifs employed by S.V. Rowe in Newcastle.

Mosman Council Chambers was a two-storeyed brick, stone and slate roofed building, designed by James Peddle, erected on the corner of Military and Myahgah roads for a cost of £1100, and was opened in 1900.

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p.278.

Provisional Parliament House, Canberra, ACT was designed by John Smith Murdoch in 1927. An influential building effecting classical orderliness without overbearing scale. It is Inter-War 'stripped' Classical in style. 'Stripped' classical was often used in America and Britain for public and institutional buildings which in earlier times would have worn the full canopy of classical detail. Australian Inter-War Stripped Classical is well demonstrated by the 'temporary' parliament House in Canberra. The clarity of shape, the regular composition, the dazzling whiteness and the pleasantly human scale of this building make it a success storey in Australian public architecture. This building, though not a Town Hall is a public building and is mentioned in this section as the interiors are not dissimilar to those of the less decorated interiors of Newcastle City Hall. The use of linoleum as a wall covering is also found here.

By the end "of the first decade of the century, the reaction against extravagance in taste and cost helped bring in simplified Classical forms".¹⁴⁸ Budget constraints resulted in some of the Newcastle Town Hall interiors having simplified forms with minimal decoration. St Marylebone Town Hall, London (1911-18) designed by Edwin Cooper is another example stripped classical town hall similar to Newcastle City Hall in form and scale.

¹⁴⁸ Edwardian Architecture, A Handbook to Building Design in Britain 1890-1914, Alastair Service, p.186.

4 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 BASIS OF ASSESSMENT

The basis of this assessment is the methodology and terminology of the Burra Charter, the Criteria for listing on the State Heritage Register and The Conservation Plan. The Statement of Cultural Significance has been developed from understanding of the historical development of the place, and from an understanding of the extant fabric of the building and its context.

This assessment is intended to enable decisions on the future management of the place to be based on an understanding of its significance. It is important that the future decisions do not jeopardise the cultural significance of the place.

A Statement of Significance has been developed for the City Hall as a whole. Refer to the inventory sheets in Part 2 of the document for gradings of individual site elements including Christie Place, the Shortland Memorial Fountain and Memorial Lamp Posts.

4.2 LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE: GENERAL

Article 23 of the Burra Charter states that:

Work on a place must be preceded by professionally prepared studies of the physical, documentary and other evidence, and the existing fabric recorded before any intervention in the place.

Once the place has been studied, the cultural significance can be assessed. Article 1.1 of the Burra Charter defines cultural significance as the aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations.

4.3 THE STATE HERITAGE REGISTER (SHR)

In 1999 evaluation criteria for assessment of cultural significance were developed by the NSW Heritage Council in association with amendments to the NSW Heritage Act 1977. They were developed with the goal of national consistency and community understanding, and replace the previously used State Heritage Inventory (SHI) assessment criteria.

The SHR criteria were gazetted following amendments to the Heritage Act that came into force in April 1999. Assessments in this Conservation Management Plan were made using the new criteria for listing on the SHR. Criteria are outlined in the NSW Heritage Manual, Final Approved Text, Assessing Heritage Significance, ISBN 1 876415 26 6 HO 99/09. Under each criterion a place is assessed to be of STATE (NSW), LOCAL or NO heritage significance.

A place assessed to be of STATE heritage significance under one or more criteria is considered to be of state significance generally. Such places should be listed on the SHR. A place assessed to be of LOCAL heritage significance under one or more criteria is considered to be of significance to the region or locality. A place assessed to be of NO heritage significance has not been considered of state or local significance under any criteria.

Criteria for listing on the SHR

HISTORIC	a) An item is important in the course or pattern of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the local or natural history of the local area).
	b) An item has strong or special association with life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).
AESTHETIC	c) An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).
SOCIAL	d) An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
SCIENTIFIC	e) An item has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the local or natural history of the local area).
RARE	f) An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW cultural or natural history (or the local or natural history of the local area).
REPRESENTATIVE	g) An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cultural or natural places; or item. - cultural or natural environments. or a class of the local area's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cultural or natural places; or item. - cultural or natural environments.

4.4 LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE

This Conservation Management Plan identifies and grades building and other site elements in terms of their significance. The recommended treatment for each level of significance is explained in the General Conservation Policies. The gradings are intended to enable decisions on the future conservation and development of City Hall Precinct to be based on a reasonable understanding of

the significance of its various areas, items and qualities. The assessment is an important factor in determining how an area or item is treated when future development or maintenance is planned.

It should be noted that items that are visually intrusive and damage the character and spatial quality of the place may be both identified as having levels of some significance and intrusive.

a) An item is important in the course or pattern of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the local or natural history of the local area).

Newcastle City Hall and its site, including Memorial Lamp Posts, have HIGH historic significance; as it is:

- Associated with growth and development of local government. In NSW the powers of Council were greatly enlarged by the Local Government Act of 1919, resulting in the growth of administrative staff. In Newcastle this was the catalyst for the construction of the new Town Hall. The amalgamation of the area's eleven Boroughs of Greater Newcastle into Newcastle City Council brought increased financial power, the consolidation of assets and income from the Municipalities. Council decided to erect "A Town Hall worthy of this, the 'second city' in the state of NSW, and in keeping with its civic importance as the leading industrial centre of the Southern Hemisphere." The Town Hall was renamed City Hall to commemorate the amalgamation in 1938.
- Associated with the day to day running of local government.
- Associated with significant historical events. During World War II it became NES Headquarters, and a focus for patriotic activities including marches and a recruiting rally.
- Associated with Flood Relief Campaign and post war vaccination campaigns.
- Associated with significant cultural landscapes. Associated with the Civic Precinct Heritage Place including Civic Park, Christie Place and Church Walk Park. Associated with Wheeler Place civic site redevelopment as City Centre.
- Demonstrates overlays of the continual pattern of human use as a focus for regional administrative and cultural use. The principal setting in the region for public ceremonial, and in particular civic receptions, social gatherings, cultural events, naturalisation ceremonies, commemorative services and commercial functions.
- Associated with the development of the Civic Precinct a notable group of historic and public buildings forming an important precinct with Civic Park as the centre piece and City Hall tower as focus on the main axis of this place
- Physical fabric provides rare evidence of a refined historical stylism coupled with craftsmanship and techniques of twentieth century paint technology.
- Physical fabric provides rare evidence of a refined historical stylism coupled with craftsmanship and techniques of twentieth century paint technology.

b) An item has strong or special association with life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Newcastle City Hall and its site, including Memorial Lamp Posts, have HIGH significance; as it is:

- Associated with the election of Morris Light as Mayor in 1924, the driving force behind the movement to build City Hall and the Civic Theatre complex. The Lamp Posts are erected in his memory.
- Associated with the Town Hall Special Committee.
- Associated with the works of the Lord Mayors and the Council and its association with the day to day running of Newcastle City Council since 1929.
- Associated with the appointment of Joy Cummins as the first woman 'Lord Mayor' in Australia.
- Associated with the desires of mayors and successive generations to leave their mark on the City Hall and Civic Precinct that led to changes to the building adding meaning to its historical evolution
- Associated with important historical figures, including Royalty, Governor-Generals, world figures, national figures, mayors, architects, engineers, visiting dignitaries.
- Associated with the works of, Henry Eli White, a leading architect and engineer chosen for his prominence and experience in the building of theatres and public halls. Many of these buildings are of State and National significance in Australia and New Zealand.
- Associated with the works of J. V. Rowe a prominent and influential designer, chief designer for Wunderlich & Principal of East Sydney Technical College.
- For its association with the Sister Cities of Ube, Japan and Arcadia, California and their visiting delegations.
- For its association with BHP and the support of local industry including the use of local materials, suppliers and contractors on the construction of City Hall despite being at increased cost.
- For its association with artists, sculptors, crafts people and artisans, involved in the execution of the works.
- As the site of a wide range of receptions, performances and recorded concerts, from school functions, local musical societies to world famous stars, a wide range of concerts including regular ABC and Musica Viva recitals as well as band competitions.
- Associated with World War II, site of NES Headquarters, and a focus for patriotic activities including marches and a recruiting rally.
- Associated with Anzac Ceremonies in the Newcastle Region.
- Associated with naturalisation ceremonies.

- Christie Place is associated with the founding of Newcastle in 1797 by Lieut. John Shortland as the 'Shortland Centenary Fountain' first erected 1897 by the Mayor of the Newcastle has been relocated as the centre piece of the place.
- It received a Royal Australian Institute of Architects Award in 1981.

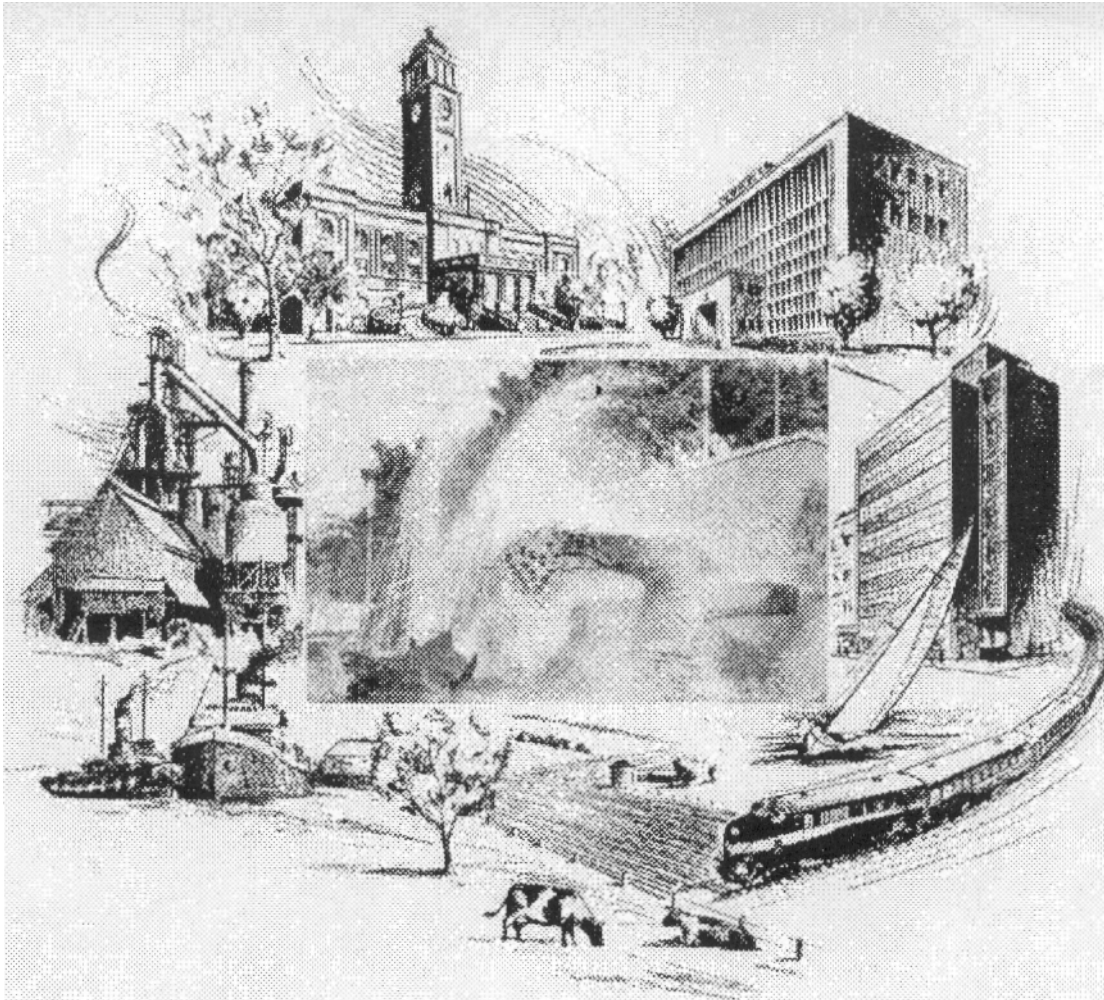


Figure 10: "Icons of Newcastle" published in the Newcastle Herald in the 1970s

c) An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).

Newcastle City Hall and its site, including Memorial Lamp Posts, have HIGH significance:

- Despite several alterations and additions, it is a rare and excellent example of an Inter-War Classical style town hall with modern steel and concrete framed structure.
- Distinctive aesthetic attributes in form and composition City Hall is the organic embodiment of a true spiritual dignity representative of the community and its times.
- Demonstrates a highly original and influential style, and an important partnership and late work of a leading architect, Henry Eli White and designer J.V. Rowe.

- The City Hall clock tower makes the building a landmark and focal element in the City skyline.
- A monumental public building of symbolic importance it functions as the aesthetic focal point of the Civic Precinct.
- It is a major item of 20th century architecture in Newcastle and an essential part of Newcastle's architectural heritage. Demonstrating changing taste in design-evident in the successive stages of internal decoration and redecoration.
- Demonstrates technical innovation through the design of the early operating automatic clock tower with synchronised internal clocks and a bell that chimes on the hour-contributing to the city's character and a working man's time piece providing for those who could not afford a watch.
- Associated with the Electricity Supply Department and Shortland County Council
- Contains symbolic decorative motifs and coats of arms, related to the use of the building as a town hall

d) An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Newcastle City Hall and its site, including Memorial Lamp Posts, have HIGH significance; as it has:

- Associations as the site of important secular events, cultural, civic, ceremonial or public including the principle venue for community balls, weddings.
- Associated with the use by a wide range of performers both amateur and professional.
- Associated with the advent of women into public affairs and local politics, recognised by the provision of a Lady Mayoress' reception room, with associated ladies lounge, cloak room and lavatory accommodation. Associated with the work of prominent women in public affairs including the role of 'Lord Mayor'. Associated also with the traditional role of a Mayor's wife as hostess and sponsor for charities. Associated with the first Australian female 'Lord Mayor', Joy Cummings.
- Associations with community. City Hall clock tower is a major civic landmark and skyline element. It continues to be a symbol of the City of Newcastle and an important community meeting point for celebration and in disasters. It has been identified as a primary landmark dominating the Civic Precinct, an element of the City Structure which gives a sense of focus and order to the Newcastle CBD as a whole, and which helps build up a mental picture of its organisation.
- Important to the community's sense of place/identity. City Hall has always been used as a multi-purpose space, its use providing an important direct link between the citizens of Newcastle and the seat of their local government.

- Has characteristics of an important class or group of items. Built during a boom period prior to the depression, City Hall is evidence of the refined application of historical stylism coupled with craftsmanship. It has the characteristics of buildings of the late twenties, a blooming of historically based architecture before the advent of 'modern' design. In Newcastle the city's historic architecture is largely Victorian. The City Hall is the best example of the city's historically based Twentieth Century architecture.
- Is a significant variation to a town hall its facilities being a commercial venture associated with the first municipal live theatre, exhibition hall and shops complex.
- Occupies an important central civic site providing a focal point and landmark in the Newcastle streetscape with views from the immediate environs and The Hill.
- Is outstanding because of its integrity and the esteem in which it is held. In 1981 City Hall Restoration was awarded the Royal Australian Institute of Architects Award.

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6. APPENDICES**6.1 WORKS OF HENRY ELI WHITE**

Drawing Date	Construction Date	Building	Place/Comments/Style
	1907	Opera House (Remodel existing theatre)	Auckland NZ
	1907	Fuller's Christchurch Theatre (Remodel existing)	Christchurch NZ White's first theatre
	1910	Princess Theatre	Dunedin NZ
	1911	Palace Theatre (Remodel)	Auckland NZ
	1912	Theatre	Nelson NZ
	1912	His Majesty's Theatre	Blenheim NZ
	1912	His Majesty's Theatre	Wanganui NZ PDX 809 Folder B 23 dwgs
	1912	Royal Theatre	Timaru NZ
	1912	St James Theatre formerly His Majesty's	Wellington NZ Edwardian Baroque PDX 809 Folder C 53 dwgs
	1913	Royal Theatre (Remodel existing theatre)	Wellington NZ
	1913	Kings Theatre (Remodel existing theatre)	Auckland NZ
	1913	His Majesty's (Remodel existing theatre)	Dunedin NZ
	1913	"Wonderland" Park, Auckland Exhibition	Auckland NZ
	1914	Kings Theatre (Remodel existing theatre)	Dunedin NZ
	1914	Alhambra Theatre	Auckland NZ
	1914	Kings Theatre	Te'Aroha NZ
	1914	Palais de Danse (Remodel existing)	Wellington NZ
	1914	Strand Picture Theatre	Christchurch NZ PDX 809 Folder J 7 dwgs
	1915	Residence Mr. R. Lock	Island Bay NZ
	1915	Residence	Rona Bay NZ
	1915	City Reservoir	Christchurch NZ
	1915	City Power House	Dunedin NZ
	1915	NZ Farmers Fertilizer Works	Auckland NZ
	1915	Municipal Theatre	Hastings NZ (1400 seats) Spanish Mission style
	1915	Theatre	Gisborne NZ
	1915	Theatre	Napier NZ
	1915	Princess Theatre (Remodel)	Sydney
	1915	New Adelphi - called Grand Opera House Later known as Tivoli Theatre (Remodel)	Sydney
	1915	Strand Theatre	Newcastle
	1915	Tivoli Theatre	Brisbane Converted by others 1927
	1915	Strand theatre (Remodel)	Brisbane
	1915	Majestic Picture Theatre	Brisbane
	1915	Theatre	King William Street Adelaide

Drawing Date	Construction Date	Building	Place/Comments/Style
	1916	Regent Theatre	George St Sydney PDX 809 Folder G 6 Dwgs
	1916	Majestic Theatre	Newcastle PDX 809 Folder D 23 Dwgs
	1916	St James Theatre (for John Fuller & Sons)	Auckland NZ Ref Building 12 March 1929
	1916-17	Club Hotel (former Midland Hotel)	Lambton Quay, Wellington NZ Spanish Mission style building demolished in the 1980s
	1917	The Plaza (formerly The Strand)	Christchurch NZ Plans in Mitchell
	1917	Tropical Theatre	Gympie Queensland
	1919	Grand Opera House (Remodel)	Sydney
	1919	Majestic later known as the Elizabethan	Newtown Sydney Demolished
	1919	National - later known as the Mayfair (Remodel)	Sydney
1920s		Auckland Exhibition	Auckland, NZ PDX 809 Folder Q 8 Dwgs
	1920	His Majesty's Theatre (Remodel existing theatre)	Brisbane
	1921	Theatre Royal (Remodel)	King Street Sydney Building 11 August 1923 PDX 809 Folder L Dwgs
	1921	J C Williamson Theatre (Sketches)	Bathurst Street Sydney PDX 809 Folder K 23 Dwgs
	1922	Princess Theatre (Remodel)	Melbourne
	1923	Union Theatres	George St Sydney PDX 809 Folder M 25 Dwgs
	1924	Bundaberg Tropical Theatre	Bundaberg, Queensland
	1924	Mount Morgan Tropical Theatre	Mount Morgan, Queensland
	1924	Wintergarden Theatre	Rockhampton Queensland
	1924	Ipswich Theatre	Ipswich, Queensland PDX 809 Folder N 31 Dwgs
	1924	Maryborough Tropical Theatre	Maryborough, Queensland AHC listing
	1925	Townsville Tropical Theatre	Townsville, Queensland AHC listing
1926	1928	Wonderland Park	New Zealand PDX 809 Folder T 69 Dwgs
1926	1928	St James Theatres & Offices (demolished)	Elizabeth St Sydney Building, 12 March 1926 Robert Adams style Drawings & specification in Mitchell PDX 809 Folder H 23 Dwgs
1926		Regent Theatre	

Drawing Date	Construction Date	Building	Place/Comments/Style
	1926	Smith, Son & Rees Building (Warehouse extensions)	142-148 Goulburn Street, Sydney
1926		Fox Film Corporation Office Building	97 Goulburn Street, Sydney
	1927-8	Hippodrome later known as the Capitol Theatre	Building 12 July 1926 Haymarket, Sydney 3371 seats Based on sketches John Eberson (Remodel) DX 809 Folder R 7 Dwgs
	1927	Bunnerong Power House (demolished)	South Sydney Building 12 May 1928
1927		Wintergarden Theatre (demolished)	Rose Bay, Sydney Building 12 May 1927 SMH 20 March 1928
	1927	Palais Theatre	St Kilda, Melbourne 2854 seats Building 12 March 1929 PDX 809 Folder O 48 Dwgs
1923	c1927	Palace Theatre (Remodel)	Melbourne Building 12 May 1927 Robert Adams style
1927	1929	The State Theatre in association John Eberson	Market Street, Sydney 2800 seats Building 12 March 12 June 1929 Cinema Baroque/Gothic Hall PDX 809 Folder I 17 Dwgs & specification AHC listing
1927		The State Shopping Arcade	Market Street, Sydney PDX 809 Folder E 7 Dwgs
	1929	Capitol Theatre adapted for talkies	Sydney
1927	1929 1927-29	Theatre and Tea Gardens Newcastle City Hall	Manly, NSW King Street, Newcastle 1000+ seats Building 12 Sept 1925, 12 May 1928 PDX 809 Folder S 11 Dwgs
1925	1929	Civic (Theatre) Centre	Hunter Street, Newcastle 1628 seats Plans in Mitchell Building 12 April 1930
	1929	Photos Henry White & 40 Staff	Sydney Building 12 June 1929
	1930	Majestic Theatre	Christchurch, NZ
	1930	Theatre	Mosman, NSW
	1930	Theatre	Bondi Junction, NSW
	1930	Theatre	Masterton NZ

Drawing Date	Construction Date	Building	Place/Comments/Style
	1930	Tivoli Theatre	Wellington NZ
	1930	New Canterbury Hall	Canterbury NZ
	1930	Bijou Theatre	Melbourne PDX 809 Folder P Spec Notes
	1930-31	Hengrove Hall	Macquarie Street, Sydney Builder 12 May 1929 SCC listing
	1930-31	Chatsworth House	Phillip Street, Sydney Façade only remains
	1930-31	Stanton House (demolished)	Pitt Street, Sydney First ANZ Bank Building 11 October 1930
	1930	Dilworth School Competition Drawings	Wiri NZ
	1930s	The Paragon	Katoomba, NSW Rooms the work of G N Kenworthy
	1930-31	Chalfont Chambers (mutilated)	Phillip Street, Sydney Building 12 May 1928
	1930-31	Barkley House	William Street, Sydney Building 12 May 1928
	1930-31	Princess Theatre	Melbourne Building 12 March 1926
	1930-31	Remodel of National Amphitheatre	Melbourne
	1930-31	Theatre	Lithgow, NSW
	1930-31	Jansen Company Factory	Parramatta, NSW
	1930-31	Printing House, 'Referee' and 'Sunday Times'	Sydney
	1934	St Stephens Presbyterian Church	Macquarie Street Sydney RAIA Register
	1939	Limestone and Dolomite Claim	Cow Flat, Georges Plains near Bathurst

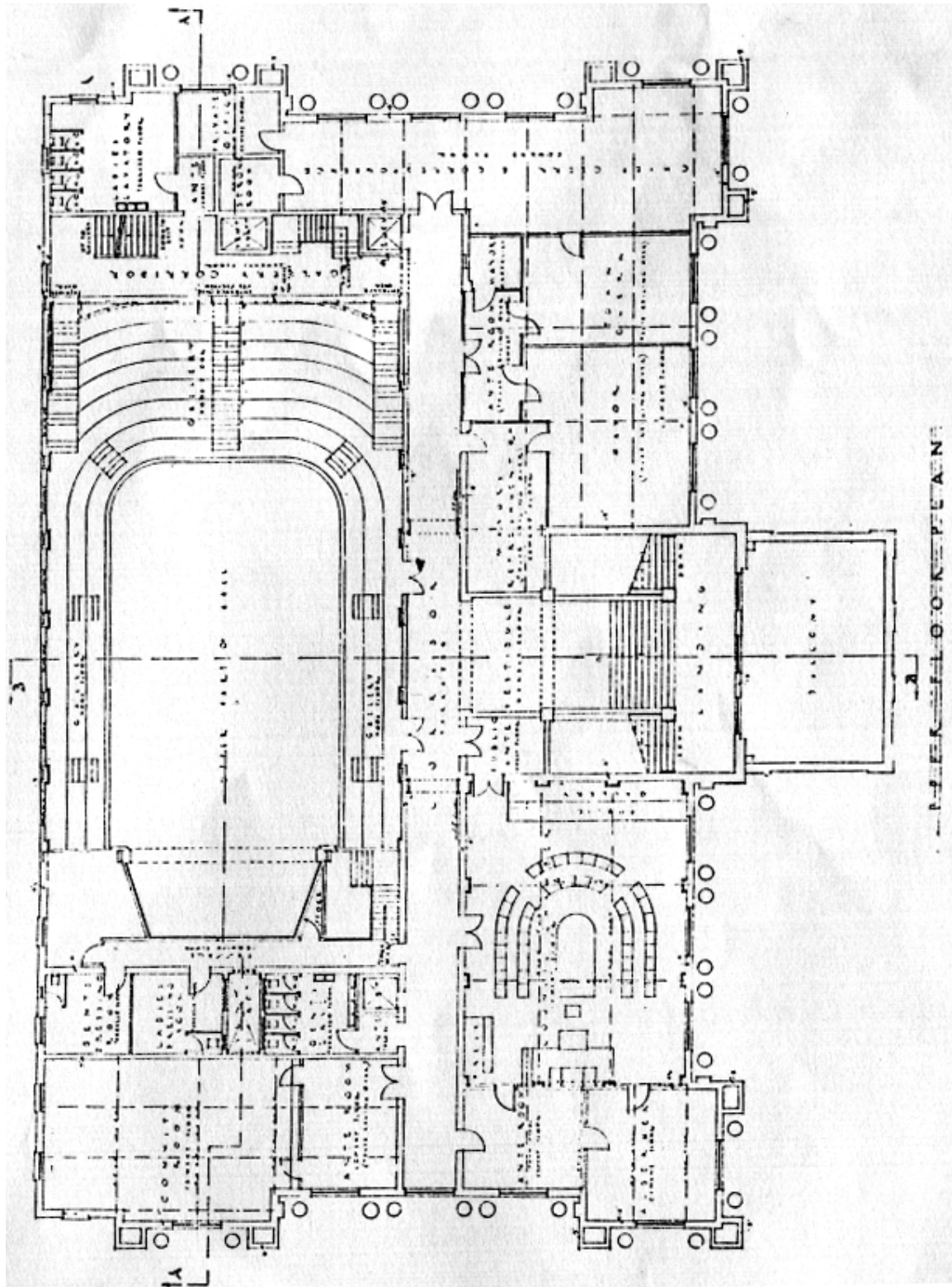
LIST OF NEWCASTLE MAYORS AND LORD MAYORS SINCE 1859

1859	J HANNELL	1887	G W WEBB	1916	M J MORONEY	1943	E DUNKLEY	1971	D G MCDUGALL	1859-1861	R H TIGHE
1860	J HANNELL	1888	HENRY BUCHANAN	1917	M J MORONEY	1944	R NORRIS	1972	D G MCDUGALL	1861-1865	T DULLING
1861	J HANNELL	1889	HENRY BUCHANAN	1918	R G KILGOUR	1945	R NORRIS	1973	D G MCDUGALL	1865-1876	J BURROWS
1862	J HANNELL	1890	COLIN CHRISTIE	1919	R G KILGOUR	1946	R NORRIS	1974	G C ANDERSON	1877-1918	E S HOLLAND
1863	R D BISHOP	1891	F W T GIBB	1919	R GIBSON	1947	H D QUINLAN	1975	J A CUMMINGS	1918-1936	J GLOSSOP
1864	R D BISHOP	1892	J R RODGERS	1920	R GIBSON		LORD MAYORS	1976	J A CUMMINGS	1936-1948	G WELLS
1865	J WARD	1893	A F MOORE	1921	R G KILGOUR	1948	H D QUINLAN	1977	G C ANDERSON	1948-1950	W A MILLER
1866	S KEMP	1894	A ASHER	1922	H P CORNISH	1949	H D QUINLAN	1978	J A CUMMINGS	1950-1977	W BURGESS
1867	W BROOKS	1895	W B SHARP	1923	H P CORNISH	1950	H D QUINLAN	1979	J A CUMMINGS	1977-1992	W B LEWIS
1868	J HANNELL	1896	THOM SMITH	1924	R G KILGOUR	1951	F J PURDUE	1980	J A CUMMINGS		GENERAL MANAGERS
1869	J HANNELL	1897	D MILLER	1925	M LIGHT	1952	T ARMSTRONG	1981	J A CUMMINGS	1992-1997	W H GRANT
1870	W A SPARK	1898	W B KIDD	1926	H P CORNISH	1953	F J PURDUE	1982	J A CUMMINGS	1997-1998	R CILBEANS
1871	J HANNELL	1899	A TIMBURY	1927	R GIBSON	1954	F J PURDUE	1983	J A CUMMINGS	1998	Acting Mayor
1872	A P TIGHE	1900	D MILLER	1928	R GIBSON	1955	F J PURDUE	1984	J A CUMMINGS	1999	J. D. D. -
1873	A P TIGHE	1901	W J ELLIS	1929	H L WHEELER	1956	D G MCDUGALL	1985	D GEDDES (Acting)		
1874	E A WHITE	1902	W CANN	1930	T BLACKALL	1957	C K JONES	1986	J E MCNAUGHTON		
1875	E A WHITE	1903	W CANN	1931	C J PARKER	1958	D G MCDUGALL	1987	J E MCNAUGHTON		
1876	J F SHAW	1904	J GILBERT	1932	C J PARKER	1959	E DUNKLEY	1988	J E MCNAUGHTON		
1876	D LUDLOW	1905	M J MORONEY	1933	W M SHEDDEN	1960	F J PURDUE	1989	J E MCNAUGHTON		
1877	GEO WALLACE	1906	A H JAMES	1933	R G KILGOUR	1961	F J PURDUE	1990	J E MCNAUGHTON		
1878	GEO WALLACE	1907	A H JAMES	1934	R G KILGOUR	1962	F J PURDUE	1991	J E MCNAUGHTON		
1879	GEO WALLACE	1908	A COOK	1935	R H CHRISTIE	1963	F J PURDUE	1992	J E MCNAUGHTON		
1880	S CHAPMAN	1909	J C REID	1936	H FENTON	1964	F J PURDUE	1993	J E MCNAUGHTON AM		
1881	JOSEPH CREER	1910	J C REID	1937	H FENTON	1965	F J PURDUE	1994	J E MCNAUGHTON AM		
1882	THOMAS BROOKS	1911	H M SHEDDEN	1938	A GRIFFITHS	1966	D G MCDUGALL	1995	G J HEYS		
1883	W LAING	1912	H M SHEDDEN	1939	G W JENNER	1967	D G MCDUGALL	1996	G J HEYS		
1884	S KEIGHTLEY	1913	H M SHEDDEN	1940	J E WIGGINS	1968	D G MCDUGALL	1997	G J HEYS		
1885	C W MORGAN	1914	J C REID	1941	W E YOUNG	1969	D G MCDUGALL	1998-1999	G J HEYS		
1886	JOHN THORN	1915	R G KILGOUR	1942	W E YOUNG	1970	D G MCDUGALL	1999	J S TATE		

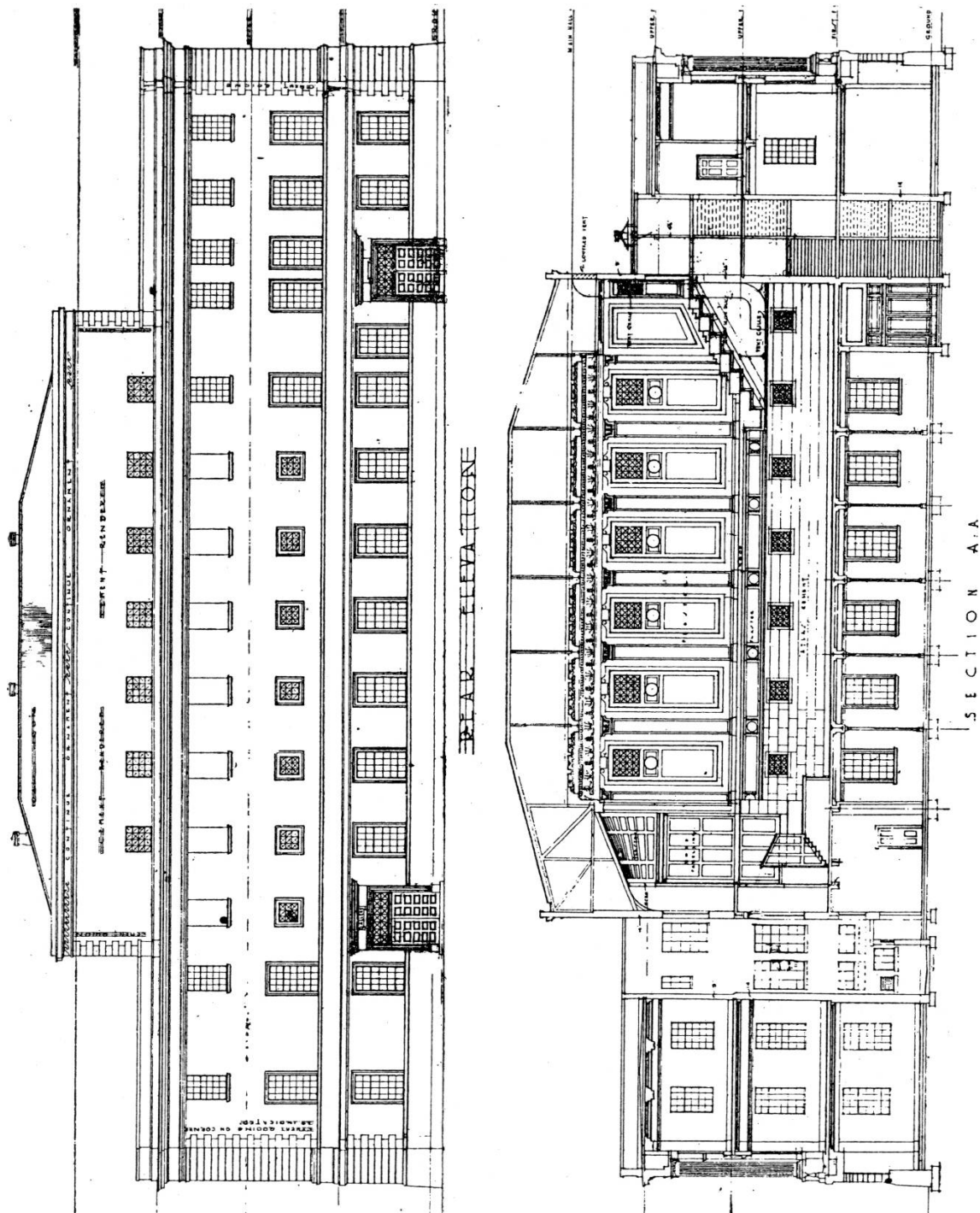
LIST OF AUSTRALIAN TOWN HALLS BUILT 1863 - 1940

Date	Place	Architect	Style
1863	Portland VIC		
1863	Adelaide SA	Edmund Wright	Victorian Free Classical
1864	Launceston TAS	Peter Mills	Victorian Academic Classical
1865	Port Adelaide SA		
1866	Hobart TAS		Victorian Free Classical
1867-70	Perth WA	R R Jewell & J Manning	Victorian Free Gothic
1872	Bendigo VIC	William Charles Vahland	Italianate
1872	Ballarat VIC		
1873/87/90	Fitzroy VIC		
1880	South Melbourne VIC	Charles Webb	Victorian Academic Classical
1883	Parramatta NSW		
1885	Collingwood VIC	George Johnson	
1885	Fremantle WA	Grainger & D'Ebro	Victorian Free Classical
1888	Goulburn NSW		
1873 1889	Sydney NSW		Second Empire
1886	East St Leonards NSW		
1888	Warwick QLD	Willoughby Powell	Classic revival
c1892	Croydon QLD		
1892	South Brisbane QLD	John Hall & Son	Victorian
1892	Annandale Council Chambers NSW		
1892	Armidale NSW		
1892	Glebe NSW		
1892	Leichhardt NSW		
1898	Castlemaine VIC		Victorian
1900	Toowoomba City Hall QLD	Willoughby Powell	Classically detailed
1900	Mosman Council Chambers NSW	James Peddle	Federation Arts & Craft
1907	Albury NSW (now Region Art Centre)		Federation Free Classical
1908	Kalgoorlie WA		
1908	Maryborough QLD	Hall and Dods	
Additions			
1934			
1911	York WA	Powell & Cameron	Federation Free Classical
1911-2	Sandgate QLD	Thomas Ramsey Hall	Federation
1912	Mackay QLD	A Rigby	
1912	Geelong City Hall VIC		
1912	Paddington NSW		
1912	Marrickville NSW		
1925	Melbourne VIC (enlarged)		
1926	North Sydney Council Offices		

Date	Place	Architect	Style
1926-8	NSW Lismore Municipal Building	William James Gilroy	Inter-War Free Classical
1922-29	NSW Brisbane QLD	Hall & Prentice	Inter-War Academic Classical
1928	Newcastle City Hall NSW	Henry Eli White	Inter-War Academic Classical
1928	Manly NSW		
1928	Tamworth NSW		
1933-4	Gladstow QLD	Roy Chipps	Free Classical
1935	Southport QLD	Hall and Phillips	Art Deco
1934-36	Richmond VIC	H R Johnson	Inter-War Free Classical
1935-6	Maribyrnong VIC	Joseph Plottel	Inter-War Free Classical
1937	Goondiwindi Civic Centre	QLDGF Addison & HS MacDonald	Art Deco
1937-8	Petersham NSW	Rudder & Grout	Inter-War Stripped Classical
1938	Council Chambers City of Port Adelaide SA		Inter-war Functionalist
1940	Mosman Council Chambers NSW		

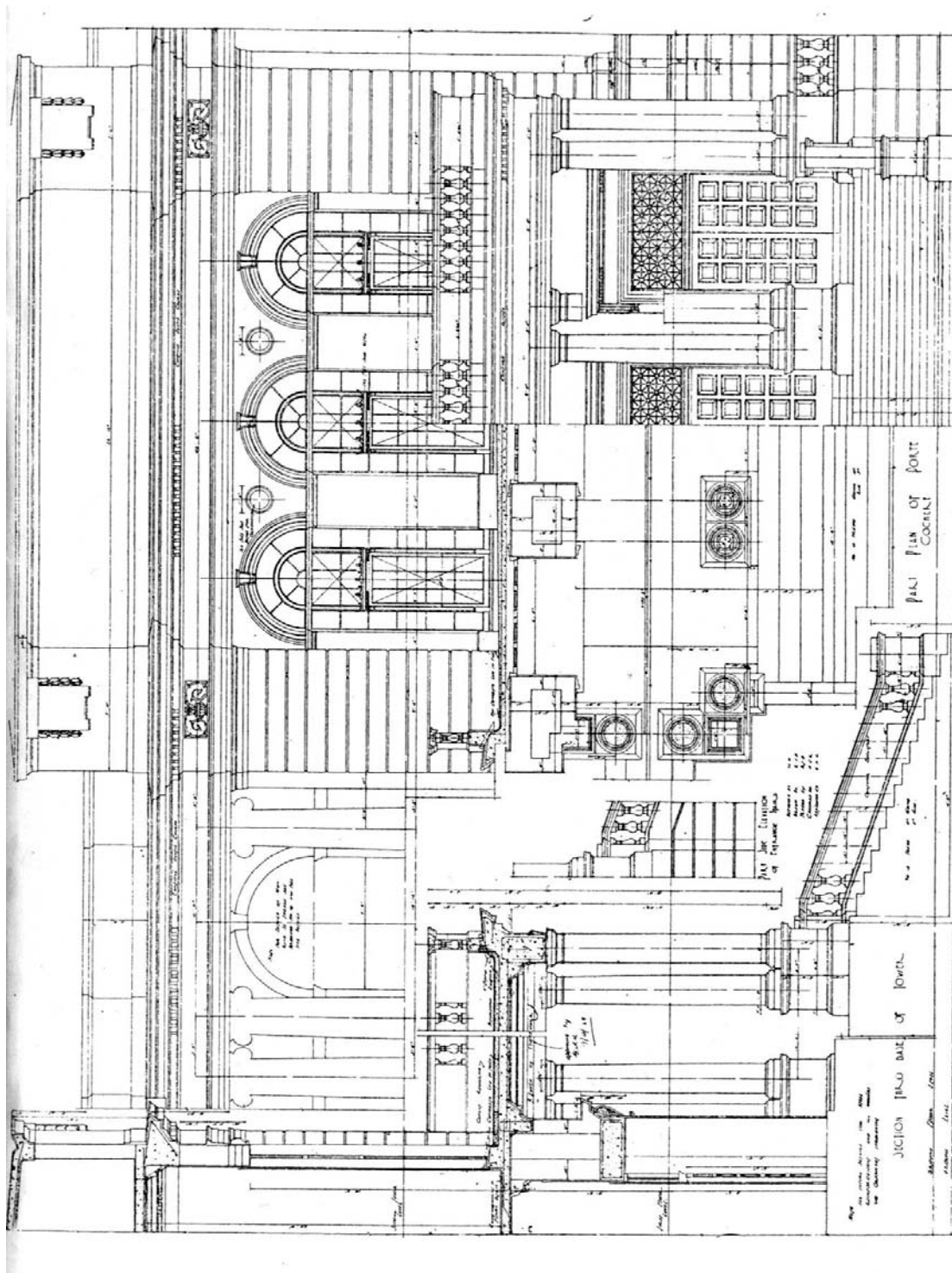


Upper Floor Plan 1929



Rear Elevation & Section AA 1929

Note the original intention for a rendered ashlar finish to all elevations (later changed to sandstone facings on East, West and South Facades).



Façade Details 1929

Note the original intention for a rendered ashlar finish to all elevations (later changed to sandstone facings on East, West and South Facades).