

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT FOR SCHEDULED HERITAGE BUILDING:
MOSGIEL CORONATION HALL AT 97 GORDON ROAD



Google Street View (Image Capture August 2023)

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Temporary 2GP Scheduled Heritage Building Reference No:	BX116
Address:	97 Gordon Road, Mosgiel, Dunedin
Building Name:	Mosgiel Coronation Hall
Located within a Heritage Precinct:	No
HNZPT List Reference & Description:	N/A
Heritage Covenant:	No
Building Use at Time of Record:	Community hall
Condition of Property:	Not known to be at risk because of condition

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

Historic/Social	Meets criteria
Spiritual/Cultural	Meets criteria
Design	Meets criteria
Technological/Scientific	Does not meet criteria

RECOMMENDATION:

The building meets one or more of the significance criteria from Policy 2.4.2.1.b and is recommended for inclusion in Appendix A1.1 of the 2GP.

RECOMMENDED PROTECTION

[Tick]	Features	Details
✓	Building envelope	Entire external building envelope excluding rear (skillion roof) component.
	External/ancillary elements	
	Internal elements and/or rooms	Not considered as part of this desktop assessment. Owner may nominate interior elements for protection.
✓	Excluded elements	Rear skillion roof component

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Designed in an Edwardian style by notable Dunedin architect E. W. Walden, and completed in 1912, the Mosgiel Coronation Hall is a substantial and notable historic building within its local context. It represents an important cultural building type and has remained a community focal point for over 100 years. The Mosgiel Coronation Hall has historic, social, cultural, and design significance. The building retains a fair level of authenticity and integrity.

This building typology is underrepresented on the schedule, however, the Mosgiel Coronation Hall is comparable in age and quality to scheduled heritage buildings within Dunedin. It also compares on a national level with recognised heritage places of similar type.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Architectural Period	Edwardian (1902-1914)
Style	Edwardian
Era/Date of Construction	1911-1912
Architect/Designer/Builder	Edward Walter Walden (Architect) J. Lindsay (Builder)
Historic Use & Cultural Associations	Mosgiel library, Borough Council offices, caretaker's residence, community hall, and cinema.
Primary Construction Materials	Masonry, face brick, render, timber door and window joinery [including aluminium joinery].
Notable Architectural Characteristics	Typical period detailing including decorative render detailing on front elevation, timber joinery, concrete lintels and bond beams, and roof ventilators.

Previous site development

The exact nature of prior site development is unclear, but land records indicate that it passed to the council as part of the subdivision of the surrounding Section 12, Block II, East Taieri District around the

turn of the century.¹ The subdivision at this time potentially suggests that the land was vacant beforehand but may also be the disposal of a block of land leased as various lots.

Design and construction

The Coronation Hall was constructed in 1911-1912 to house the Mosgiel Borough County offices, a public library, and a public hall. Little information has been identified about the lead up to the construction of the Coronation Hall, but the key motivating factors appear to have been the destruction of the East Taieri Rifles Volunteer Hall by fire in 1911² and a government grant of £250 for public works to commemorate the coronation of King George V in the same year.³ The Volunteer Hall served as a community space, so the timing of the grant was fortuitous, and it is assumed that the addition of council facilities to the hall building was an opportunistic decision by the councillors.

The building was designed by the architect E. W. Walden and built by J. Lindsay for a cost of £2,890.⁴ A newspaper article describes its construction and layout at the time of its opening:

*In the front: here is the public library, 21ft x 9½ft; the reading room, 21ft x 17¼ft; the public offices, 19ft x 9½ft, with a strong room. The council chamber measures 27½ft x 21ft, and the committee room 21ft x 19ft. Behind these is the hall, 64ft x 50ft, seated at present for 620 persons, and so built as to carry a gallery later on. A modern stage is provided, this being 50ft x 17½ft, and there are two spacious ante-rooms. Above is the caretaker's residence. The structure is of brick. A portico adds much to the appearance of the building.*⁵

Walden's styling on the façade is reminiscent of his other buildings in Dunedin,⁶ with cement render used to create reasonably restrained detailing emphasising the fenestration, central entrance, and floor levels. It is likely that there originally was additional detailing around the parapet that has been removed, but there are no early historic photographs of the building to confirm this. The overall style can be described as an Edwardian style that includes some traditional elements (e.g., the rusticated pilasters and moulded string courses) while anticipating the more 'stripped back' designs of the 1920s and 30s.

Today the building is one of the most substantial historic buildings at the south end of the Mosgiel town centre.

¹ Archives New Zealand, R22756321, R.846.

² Kirk, W. R. 1985. *Pulse of the Plain: A History of Mosgiel*. Mosgiel: Mosgiel Borough Council. Page 73.

³ *Evening Star*, 6 June 1911, Page 2.

⁴ *Evening Star*, 19 July 1912, Page 10.

⁵ *Evening Star*, 19 July 1912, Page 10.

⁶ 'Sweeting's,' 'Whitcombe & Tombs Building,' and 'McCarthy's Buildings.' *Built in Dunedin*.

<https://builtindunedin.com/>. Accessed 12 June 2024.



An aerial view of Mosgiel in 1974 showing the large Mosgiel Coronation Hall circled (Aerial photograph taken by Whites Aviation; PA-Group-00080: Whites Aviation Ltd: Photographs, WA-72036-F)

Later history and development

The building served as the Borough Council office until 1979, and by the late 1970s/early 1980s the building was used as a cinema. It was reportedly in a poor condition by the end of the 1990s and a major repair and renovation project, supported by a mixture of community and DCC funding, altered much of the building's interior fabric c2001. In 2020 the roof was replaced alongside some additional refurbishment and painting, and the 1960s-era auditorium seats were replaced in 2023.⁷



Mosgiel Coronation Hall c. 1975-1985 (Hocken Collections, Box-255-004)

⁷ DCC Archives, Alts to bldg. redevelopment of Coronation Hall (4201845); *The Star*, 4 May 2023, <https://www.odt.co.nz/the-star/revamped-hall-looks-great> .

Notable people/Themes

E. W. Walden

Edward Walter Walden was born in 1870 and was trained as an architect by James Hislop, with whom he later entered into partnership in the 1890s. The partnership was involved in designing buildings in Dunedin, Christchurch, Napier, Timaru, and Wellington, and appears to have been well patronised by corporate clients for commercial buildings. Notable examples of Walden's work include the Hallenstein Building in the Octagon and the DIC/Cashfields in Christchurch (demolished following the 2010/2011 earthquakes). Walden continued the firm after the death of Hislop in 1904, designing other major Dunedin commercial buildings like Whitcombe and Tombs on Princes Street and Sweeting's and McCarthy's Buildings on Lower Stuart Street. Walden's designs consistently follow the Edwardian style described above, primarily featuring a restrained use of render detailing for decorative effect.⁸

J. Lindsay

There is limited information available about the builder, J. Lindsay. Newspaper articles indicate that he was trading as a building contractor and working in Green Island by at least 1906, when he built the local Presbyterian Sunday School.⁹ He also appears to have become involved in local politics around the 1900s,¹⁰ and was mayor of the Green Island Borough from 1911 to 1913 and 1915 to 1919.¹¹

Community Halls

The Mosgiel Coronation Hall is part of an architectural tradition of community hall building in New Zealand. Most New Zealand towns typically feature a community hall dating from between the 1900s and the 1950s. These buildings, designed as a space to host community gatherings and events can take a variety of shapes and sizes, and exist in a varying state of repair, depending on the size of the population served and the degree of resources available for their construction and upkeep. Many are associated with royal coronations or were constructed as war memorials. The continuing utility of these buildings has ensured that they endure as long as a community remains intact. Their relative ubiquity, long pedigree, and ideocratic vernacular design features, as well as the fact that they serve as the setting for important events (weddings, dances, political meetings, theatre performances), imbues them with cultural and community esteem. As noted by Frey and Newman in their exploration of community halls: "Community halls hold within their walls the sounds of the past... They are both a symbol of a bygone age and a thread of community continuity in our culture."¹²

In this context the Mosgiel Coronation Hall sits at the more well-resourced and formal end of the spectrum, featuring council offices, and overseen by a professional architect. This reflects Mosgiel's historic status as a satellite town to Dunedin.

⁸ 'Sweeting's,' 'Whitcombe & Tombs Building,' and 'McCarthy's Buildings.' *Built in Dunedin*. <https://builtindunedin.com/>. Accessed 12 June 2024; Wellington City Council. 2016. 'Hislop and Walden.' *Wellington Heritage*. <https://wellingtoncityheritage.org.nz/architects/hislop-and-walden>. Accessed 14 June 2024.

⁹ *Evening Star*, 10 February 1906, Page 6.

¹⁰ *Otago Daily Times*, 19 August 1909, Page 1.

¹¹ Healey, K. n.d. *The Green and the Gold: The Story of Greater Green Island*. Dunedin: Green Island Jaycees.

¹² Frey, M. and S. Newman. 2012. *On a Saturday Night: Community Halls of Small-Town New Zealand*. Christchurch: University of Canterbury Press, Page 7-8.

Despite their significance as a notable New Zealand building type, it appears that no community halls are present on the schedule (except the atypically grand Dunedin Town Hall and Port Chalmers Municipal Chambers).

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

HISTORIC/SOCIAL

The building demonstrates heritage values within this criterion. The Mosgiel Coronation Hall has historic significance for its association with the Mosgiel Borough Council until 1979. Throughout its lifetime, the hall has social significance as a Mosgiel community centre. The significant investment into the building over the past 20 years demonstrates that it is still valued by the community today.

SPIRITUAL/CULTURAL

The building demonstrates heritage values within this criterion. The Mosgiel Coronation Hall is a building type representative of Pākehā culture in small-town New Zealand. It is the local example of a widespread building type that provides a space for important cultural practices like weddings, dances, political meetings, and theatre performances. Its relative age provides a sense of continuity to these practices and the Pākehā culture from which they have emerged.

DESIGN

The building demonstrates heritage values within this criterion. The Mosgiel Coronation Hall is an example of notable Dunedin architect E. W. Walden's restrained Edwardian style employed on a substantial public building. The building retains a fair level of authenticity and integrity.

TECHNOLOGICAL/SCIENTIFIC

The building does not demonstrate heritage values within this criterion.

REFERENCES

Publications

Frey, M. and S. Newman. 2012. *On a Saturday Night: Community Halls of Small-Town New Zealand*. Christchurch: University of Canterbury Press.

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Kirk, W. R. 1985. *Pulse of the Plain: A History of Mosgiel*. Mosgiel: Mosgiel Borough Council.

Newspapers

- Accessed via PapersPast (<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/>) and the ODT website (<https://www.odt.co.nz/>).

Evening Star.

Otago Daily Times.

Websites

Murray, D. 2012. 'Sweeting's,' 'Whitcombe & Tombs Building,' and 'McCarthy's Buildings.' *Built in Dunedin*. <https://builtindunedin.com/>. Accessed 12 June 2024.

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