Identifier  Court House, Port Melbourne
Formerly  unknown

Address  115 Bay St
PORT MELBOURNE

Constructed  1860

Category  Public

Designer  John James Clarke, Public Works Department

Amendment  C 74

Comment  Correction of typographical errors.

Significance  (Mapped as a Significant heritage property.)
The Port Melbourne Court House is of state significance. Along with the police station and lock up on the
same site, and the nearby Post Office, it demonstrates the original focus of activity in Port Melbourne on the
foreshore area. The design relates to that of the post office in its use of simple symmetrical massing, gabled
roof and round-headed windows, and illustrates the influence of pattern book and picturesque styles in early
Public Works Department buildings. The building is substantially intact.

Primary Source  Allom Lovell and Associates, Port Melbourne Conservation Study review Vol. 2, 1995

Other Studies  Jacobs Lewis Vines, Port Melbourne Conservation Study, 1979

Description
PRINCIPAL THEME: Infrastructure
SUB-THEME: Court Houses
ORIGINAL OWNER: Victorian Government
CURRENT OWNER: Victorian Government
LOCAL/PRECINCT CHARACTER: AUTHENTICITY
Individual Character (Individual, 70-90% original
different from adjacent)
BUILDING TYPE: Court House
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Victorian Italianate
PRINCIPAL MATERIAL: Brick
PHYSICAL/STYLISTIC DESCRIPTION
The court house has a double-height rectangular main block with a wing projecting to the south side and a front entry porch. The walls are of cream brick with contrasting banding and arch bricks to the round-headed and bullseye windows. The arched entry has a stepped reveal with dentillated bricks. The gabled roof is slated. Flat roofed extensions were constructed in 1957 on each side of the entry porch.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS
Other than for variations of detail, the basic form of the Port Melbourne Court House was used repeatedly in Victorian court houses built from the late 1850s until the 1880s. Among early examples, such as Port Melbourne, built in the 1850s and 60s, a round arched style was usual, with either single arched openings or arcades to the entrance porches. Comparable examples with single front-facing arched entrances are the court houses at Stawell (1859), Creswick (1859), Chiltern (1864) and Taradale (1864). Other notable early court houses with comparable form or elevational treatment include Kyneton (1856) and Ararat (1865) court houses. Among early court houses of this type, Port Melbourne appears to be the only example in the metropolitan area.(7)

History
The Court House occupies part of Allotment 10, Section 5. Section 5 was included in the first subdivision of Sandridge, shown on a plan dated 1849. (1) The whole allotment was reserved for a watchhouse prior to 1860. (2) In 1860 the Court House was built for a cost of £1,000 (3) to a Public Works Department design; the original drawings were initially by John James Clarke. (4) In 1885 - 86, "sundry works" were undertaken to the building (5) and in 1957 the two witness rooms were added to the front.(6)

[Jacobs Lewis Vines, Port Melbourne Conservation Study]

Thematic Context
unknown

Recommendations
A Ward, Port Phillip Heritage Review, 1998
recommended inclusions:
Victorian Heritage Register
National Estate Register
Schedule to the Heritage Overlay Table in the City of Port Phillip Planning Scheme

References
1. Plan of Allotments marked at Sandridge 1849
2. Map of Sandridge 1860
3. B. Trethowan. 'The Public Works Department of Victoria'. Vol. 2. p. 103
5. Public Works Department Summary of Contract Books 1858 - 1894/95
7. B. Trethowan. op. cit. vol. 1. p. 130. vol. 2. p. 103