



Public Library, High Street		1896	
Use	Public Library	Historic Value	4 out of 5
Materials	Timber structure and cladding, corrugated iron roof	Architectural Value	2 out of 4
NZHPT Registered	Category II Register Number 841	Technical Value	1 out of 2
Valuation No	12340-214-00	Symbolic Value	2 out of 3
Legal Description	Lot 1 DP 16882 Subject to r/w and interest in r/w	Rarity	1 out of 2
		Townscape Value	1 out of 2
		Group Value	- out of 2
		Overall Cultural Heritage Value	11 out of 20
Map Reference	HiN2		

Description

The Hawera Public Library is a single-storey timber building, although it is carefully detailed to give a very convincing appearance of masonry construction. It is classical in design, divided into three bays with a bracketed cornice, and a high stepped pediment and open balustrade at roof level. The central bay used to be the main entrance and is now a bay window in aluminium, flanked on either side by round-headed windows.

There is a modern concrete block addition on the western side forming the new entrance, and another addition at the back. Although internal walls have been removed, the interior layout can still be seen from the original cornices and pressed metal ceilings that remain.

History

The first Hawera Library and Institute was established in the Blockhouse. The original part of the present Library was erected in 1896 after the previous structure became inadequate. On 13 July 1921, the Hawera Library and Institute went into voluntary liquidation and the assets were handed to the Hawera Borough Council. As from 1 August 1921, the library became a municipal library under full control of the Council, as it is to the present day.

Numerous internal changes have been made over time to suit changing circumstances. Gas lamps were installed in 1898; tearooms at the rear of the building were incorporated into the library in 1915; the reading room was converted to a children's library in 1960, and in 1980 plans were approved for additions, including a new room for the children's library, modern staff and workroom facility, and alternations to the main library space.

The building has now served for more than 100 years as Hawera's town library.

Architect

Not known.

Builder

Messrs Maclindoe and Carter, cost was £395.

Statement of Significance

The Public Library has strong social and civic historical importance as it has served as the town library for over 100 years, first run by the Hawera Institute and Library and since 1921 by the Borough Council. Although the authenticity of the design has been lessened by the front entrance being changed to the side, it is otherwise unchanged on its main elevation to High Street, and can be appreciated as an otherwise unaltered classical building from the 1890s. It has modest townscape value given its location on High Street in proximity to two other heritage buildings.

Sources

A P C Bromley (1981), *Hawera District Centenary*

Date

June 1997