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HERITAGE ADVISORY MEMO

No. 77

date: 3 March 2020

ITEM 1: Former Courthouse – 9A Hill St, Uralla

In December 2019 Council resolved to:

Schedule a workshop on the possible options and refurbishment requirements for the Uralla Courthouse.

Council's Director of Infrastructure and Development, Terry Seymour, requested that I advise as to:

- a) *the heritage status of the Uralla Court House*
- b) *the historical value of the court house*
- c) *any legal constraints on the redevelopment of the building*

Heritage status of the Uralla Court House:

The property is listed as a heritage item of local significance in Uralla LEP 2012 (I36). The building is also within the Uralla CBD Conservation Area (C003).

The property has also been identified as a heritage item in the Uralla Community Based Heritage Study (Stage 2) 2012 (SHI 2540021).

Historical value of the Court House:

The building was designed by Colonial Architect James Barnet and was constructed in 1885.

From the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) Inventory Sheet the Statement of Significance, in part, states:

The courthouse (former) continues to be a definitive statement of the power and status of the law in the 1880s. It is a refined classical core design by Colonial Architect James Barnet, echoing 16th Century Italian influences, built with Uralla red bricks and Uralla granite for the steps. Internally it is well-crafted 19th Century joinery.

As a well-known landmark on its corner location, it makes a major contribution to both streetscapes, as a member of a civic group and an important architectural link with the Central Business District, the post office. Police station complex and the Uralla Railway Station.

Any legal constraints on the redevelopment of the building:

The author is not aware of any legal constraints on the redevelopment of the building other than the standard applications Council would require of any person who wishes to redevelop a site. Any application should be accompanied by a Statement of Heritage Impact.

The basic principles of changes to heritage buildings and heritage sites should be based on the following principles:

- do as much as is necessary and as little as possible,
- an understanding of heritage significance, and
- the level of change should respect the heritage significance of the item or area.

All features of heritage significance should be conserved or reinstated and any unsympathetic alteration should be removed and the original features and elements reconstructed as closely as possible.

Adaptive reuse

There are many examples of former Court Houses being adaptively re-used. Some new uses for these buildings have included professional office space, commercial uses and community museums.

Adaptive reuse of heritage buildings is a change where a new use is introduced as the building has ceased to be used for its original function or is no longer suitable for the original function.

As a guide any adaptive reuse and/or changes to this site and building:

- Should retain the general appearance of the building such that its original role can be readily interpreted.
- Should retain all significant architectural qualities of the building and structure and particularly features that contribute to the streetscape and the heritage significance of the place.
- If significant fabric is unavoidably removed it should be stored on site for possible future reinstatement.
- Should involve minimal change to the significant fabric of the place.
- Should respect significant associations and meaning of the place.
- Must be readily reversible and should not compromise the inherent flexibility of the place and its potential for other uses.
- Where incorporating additions, plant and equipment or services which are required to facilitate adaptive reuse, should be concealed from view within the broader streetscape, and
- Must have regard to the relevant legislation of the *National Construction Code* (NCC) and other relevant Australian Standards.

From the OEH Inventory Sheet the Physical Description is stated as:

Built of brick in Flemish bond, it has a rendered façade with classical features including a pediment portico and cedar joinery internally. Granite steps, a rail and circular entrance led to central large timber doors, and either side high windows with semi-circular upper sashes, same as the fan light over the central door. The roof is high pitch gable clad in corrugated galvanised iron with high brick chimneys, complete with pots, on the east side, on the ridge and north side with external flues. There is decorative brickwork over the windows. The high brick wall on the western side has timber double hung windows. The south eastern corner is enclosed with timber double hung windows with a skillion roof over the verandah.

The smaller extension on the eastern side has a semi-parapet, causing little architectural balance. The large western wall of the holding yard is constructed of brick. There are two court yards; two toilet blocks for male and females.

There is a plaque attached to the front wall reads 'The Honourable Terry Sheahan BA, LLB, MP, Attorney General of New South Wales unveiled this plaque on 7th November 1985 to commemorate the centenary of the Uralla Court House 1885-1985'. At rear are the former stables and a brick garage with single and timber double doors with fibro frontage.

From the OEH Inventory Sheet the Recommended Management is stated as:

- *encourage a more sympathetic perimeter fence*
- *encourage an Asset Maintenance Plan, including detailed inventory of internal fixtures, fittings and finishes*
- *reinstate original details and elements e.g. colour scheme, roof water drainage elements and internal finishes.*



Undated image of former Court House (Hill St)



Hill St frontage



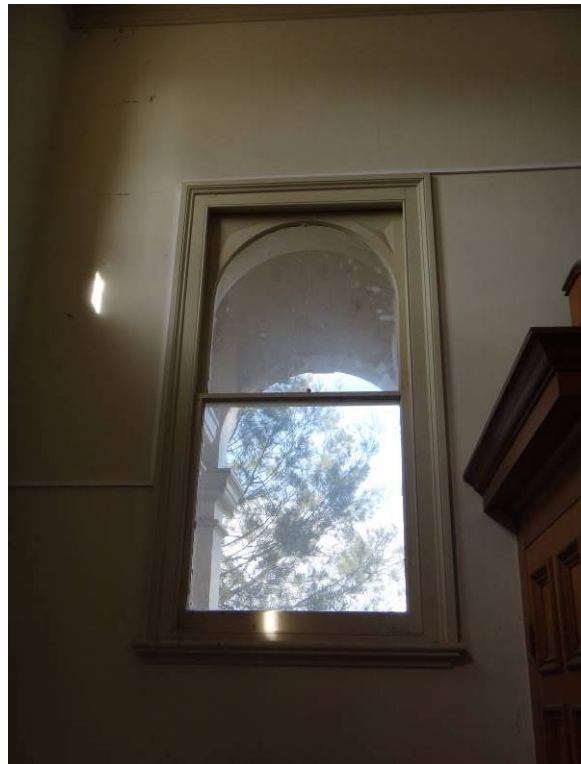
Former stables



Typical external toilet

SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS OF THE BUILDING FABRIC





FURNISHINGS RELATING TO COURT ACTIVITY



M. McKay



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ITEM 2: Band Rotunda – Alma Park, Uralla

A Scope of Works (SOW) for refurbishment of the Band Rotunda at Alma Park was prepared. It is believed that the rotunda was constructed in 1938 and opened in 1939.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in green ink that reads 'M. McKay'.



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ITEM 3: Next Heritage Advisor visit

The Heritage Advisor's next visit will be 7 April, 2020.

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads 'M. McKay'.