Locality:	**YARRAM**
Place address:	**2-4 CHURCH ROAD**
Citation date	2016
Place type (when built):	Mechanics Institute
Recommended heritage protection:	Local government level Local Planning Scheme: Yes Vic Heritage Register: No Heritage Inventory (Archaeological): No
Place name:	**Yarram Mechanics Institute**

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Architectural Style:	Victorian Free Classical
Designer / Architect:	Not Known
Construction Date:	1885

Statement of Significance

This statement of significance is based on the history, description and comparative analysis in this citation. The Criteria A-H is the Heritage Council Criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance (HERCON). Level of Significance, Local, State, National, is in accordance with the level of Government legislation.

What is significant?

The Yarram Mechanics Institute at 2-4 Church Road, Yarram, is significant. The original form, materials and detailing, externally and internally, as constructed in 1885 are significant.

Later alterations and additions to the building are not significant, including the 1973 entrance porch on the side, and later addition off the north-west (rear) elevation.

How is it significant?

The Yarram Mechanics Institute is locally significant for its historical, social and aesthetic values to the Shire of Wellington.

Why is it significant?

The Yarram Mechanics Institute is **historically significant at a local level** as it illustrates the importance of Yarram as a town centre and cattle market for the whole of South Gippsland, serving the dairying and grazing district. Yarram was the seat of government for the Alberton Shire, and began to commercially develop from the 1880s after the release of private land for sale. The Yarram Mechanics Institute and free library opened in 1886 and is significant as it represents the importance of the mechanics institute movement, and the importance of education in the developing town of Yarram. The institute is important as it has served as a venue for educational lectures, as a meeting place and housed a free public library. It also served as a venue for public meetings, wedding celebrations, farewells, annual events, celebrations, concerts and welcome homes to local soldiers. (Criterion A)

The Yarram Mechanics Institute **is socially significant at a local level** for its continual use as a mechanics institute, and after 1936 as a public hall, serving the local and wider community since its opening in 1886, until present day. The hall continues to serve as a venue for community events, classes, markets, and meetings for the Girl Guides and Boy Scouts. (Criterion G)

The Yarram Mechanics Institute **is aesthetically significant at a local level** as a representative example of a Mechanics Institute in the Victorian Free Classical architectural style in the Shire. Located at the north end of the main road of Yarram, it is one of the first historic buildings viewed before entering the town and has a landmark contribution to the streetscape. The Free Classical style is expressed in the parapeted gabled end to the façade, framed by a bold moulding which creates a pediment effect, with two short engaged piers with corbelled ends at each point. The gabled end retains the words 'Mechanics Institute 1885' carved in relief. Either side of the (missing original porch and entry doors) are semicircular arched timber double-hung windows, with large keystones with a curvilinear detail carved into them, and wide rendered sills with rendered brackets. Also significant is the treatment to the rendered walls of the 1885 hall which is incised with ruled lines to create an ashlar effect. The windows to the north-east elevation of the 1885 hall are (later) timber hopper windows with rendered sills. A single sash window remains on the south-west elevation of the 1885 hall. The significant interior includes the extensive space which is accentuated by a timber-lined coved ceiling with picture rail moulding and classical consoles. (Criterion E)

Statutory Recommendations

This place is recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Wellington Shire Planning Scheme to the boundaries as shown on the map.

External Paint Controls	Yes
Internal Alteration Controls	Yes, hall only
Tree Controls	No
Outbuildings or fences which are not exempt under Clause 43.01-3	No
Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted	No
Incorporated Plan	No
Aboriginal Heritage Place	Not assessed

Map of recommended boundary for Heritage Overlay

KEY

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Title boundary

Mechanics Institute
2-4 Church Rd, Yarram

Project: Wellington Shire Stage 2 Heritage Study
Client: Wellington Shire Council
Author: Heritage Intelligence Pty Ltd
Date: 12/2/16

History

Locality history

The Tarra Creek pastoral run was taken up in the 1840s, in the area that now encompasses the Yarram township. In the early 1850s, John Carpenter built a flour mill and sawmill near the Tarra River, upon which a bridge was soon built. A small township began to develop on private land on the west side of the River, which was first named Barkly, after Victorian Governor Sir Henry Barkly. However, the small township soon became known as Yarram Yarram; the parish name. Yarram is an Aboriginal word though to mean 'plenty of water' or 'billabong'. The town would be called Yarram Yarram until 1924 (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:79; YDHS website)

Yarram was part of the first Shire established in Gippsland – Alberton Shire established 1864 – where a District Road Board was formed in 1855 (Context 2005:38). In 1857, the first store was opened in the town of Yarram Yarram by Charles Devonshire. Soon other stores were established as the town grew, including a shanty on the site of the Yarram Hotel. The development was a result of the marketplace located in Yarram, which served local farmers who preferred the location over the more distant Port Albert (YDHS website). The first mechanics' institute was built in 1860 and a school opened in 1861. All communication during this period was via Port Albert to the south (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:80).

Yarram's growth was constrained by the release of private land for sale. Development within the town gained momentum from the 1880s, with town allotments purchased from private landholders (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:80). One such developer was James Nicol, who owned the land east of Commercial Road, between (just north of) Gipps Street and James Street. Nicol subdivided the land and sold town allotments from 1889. By the 1890s, Yarram had established itself as a commercial centre, servicing an extensive dairying and grazing district. The Yarram Butter Factory (1891) was a major component of the industry in this area of the Shire (Context 2005:12, 38). The township of Yarram Yarram was gazetted in 1893 and in 1897 the Alberton Shire offices were relocated to Yarram, establishing the southern town as a seat of Government (Context 2005:38; YDHS website).

From the early 1900s, large areas of land were selected in the Strzelecki Ranges to the north and west of Yarram for dairying, supplying cream to the butter factory. By 1903, Yarram Yarram also had a Shire hall, four churches, the Commercial and Yarram hotels, Masonic and Rechabite Lodges and a state school. At the centre of the pastoral district, Yarram remained the cattle market for southern Gippsland (*Australian handbook* 1903). The Yarram courthouse opened in 1908, the hospital was officially opened in 1914 and a higher elementary school was established in 1918. In 1921, the Great Southern railway Line from Melbourne reached Yarram (Context 2005:30, 41, 44). The Forests Commission established an office in Yarram in 1945 to manage the reforested lands in the region. From the 1950s, the Housing Commission and several housing co-operatives built many new homes in Yarram. However, the town was affected by the decline of rural industries in the 1970s. The milk factory and railway line closed in 1987 (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:80).

In 1994, Wellington Shire was created by the amalgamation of the former Shires of Alberton, Avon and Maffra, the former City of Sale, most of the former Shire of Rosedale, as well as an area near Dargo which was formerly part of Bairnsdale Shire (Context 2005:39). The town continues to serve as an important regional centre. It is also the location of the regional headquarters for the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:80).

Thematic context

This place is associated with the following themes from the *Wellington Shire Thematic History* (2005):

8. Governing and administering:

- 8.5 Mechanics Institutes

The following is based on information taken from the *Wellington Shire Thematic Environmental History* (Context 2005:42-3):

The mechanics institute movement originated from a series of lectures delivered by Dr Birkbeck in Glasgow to tradesmen, artisans and factory workers – or 'mechanics' as people who worked with machines were known – and it aimed to educate and spread industrial and technical knowledge. The movement became widespread in Victoria in the wake of the gold rushes. Land was reserved for mechanics institutes and residents in developing towns considered that building a mechanics institute was an early priority. Committees were formed in the new communities to build a mechanics institute that would serve as a meeting place, house a library and be a venue for lectures for the purposes of education. The institutes also became venues for public meetings, wedding celebrations, farewells and welcome homes to local soldiers. Deb balls were annual events, as were community Christmas celebrations and concerts. Often the mechanics institute housed war memorials to commemorate locals who served in World War I or II.

Many mechanics institutes survive in the shire. One of the earliest mechanics institute buildings in the shire is the Rosedale mechanics institute, a brick structure that opened in 1874 and extended in 1885. The Briagolong mechanics institute also opened in 1874 (since extended) and is on the Victorian Heritage Register as a place of significance to the State. At Newry, the original mechanics institute and a newer hall stand side by side. The Stratford mechanics institute is still popularly called 'the mechanics', and continues to function as the town's hall. The Glenmaggie mechanics institute was moved to higher ground and survived the town's drowning when the Glenmaggie Weir was built. It is an important reminder of the little town that once served its farming community. When their mechanics institutes were burnt at Binginwarri and Gormandale, the residents rallied and built new ones. At Maffra, the mechanics institute building has been incorporated into the town's library. The Sale mechanics institute, a two storey building dating from 1891, has had a long association with education, first accommodating the Sale School of Mines, Art and Technology, and later becoming part of the Sale Technical School, and is now amalgamated with Sale High School to form the Sale College.

Place history

The first mechanics' institute hall in Yarram was constructed in 1860 (at an unknown location) (Victorian Places).The land for a new hall was donated by John Carpenter (YDHS). The existing mechanics institute hall was built in 1885 for a cost of 727 pounds by builders Mr Avery and Mr Casbolt. The building comprised a stage, dressing rooms and a reading room (Baragwanath & James 2015). The Yarram Yarram Mechanics' Institute was officially opened on St Patrick's Day, 17 March 1886, by F. C. Mason Esq. from Melbourne, followed by a two day fair (*Gippsland Times*, 24 Mar 1886:3; Baragwanath & James 2015). The library was opened soon after (YDHS).

An early photo (date not known) (YDHS) showed the front of the hall from the main street (Figure H1). The original entrance porch could be seen (since removed). It was a projecting porch that reached the height of the gable due to a bio box on top of it, with a round-arched entrance door and small square window above. The pair of short engaged piers with corbelled ends had a small urn at the top of each. The south elevation comprised at least four windows, with a central door, followed by the skillion addition to the rear (with windows). A small timber building could be seen adjacent to the north elevation (may have been attached). The hall was set behind a timber paling fence (on the south-east boundary) with a pedestrian gate in front of the facade (since removed). A mature pine stood inside the fence to the south of the hall) (since removed).

Government grants were received between 1884 (for the construction) and to at least 1906 (Baragwanath & James 2015; *Gippsland Times*, 24 Mar 1886:3). The hall was used for all types of entertainment events. Tarraville's famous contralto, Ada Crossley, held a concert in the hall on her return from England in 1903 and 1908. In 1903, B. G. Collier showed films in the hall, with the Yarram

Fire Brigade holding fortnightly picture shows in 1913. After World War I, billiards and games were installed (Baragwanath & James 2015).

In 1935 a new floor of Tasmanian hardwood was installed and the stage was removed to allow for a larger dance floor. In 1936, the library was closed due to a lack of attendance and the final meeting of the Mechanics' Institute was held on 6 February 1939 (YDHS; Baragwanath & James 2015).

In the late 1930s, the Council passed management of the hall to the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Yarram Hospital, who held Saturday night dances to fundraise. In 1938, management of the hall was transferred back to the Council. Between 1948 and 1953 the hall was leased to the Hospital Board for 1 pound per week, and between 1964 and 1971 it was leased to the Girl Guides (Baragwanath & James 2015; YDHS).

As can be seen in a plan of the original building (Figure H2), the front entrance was through a narrow porch, but additional entrances with double doors were also located on the side elevations. The hall was renovated and the main entrance moved to the south-east elevation in 1972 (with the original entrance porch removed) (YDHS; Baragwanath & James 2015).

In 2015, the hall is managed by the Wellington Shire Council and serves as a Girl Guides and Scout hall. Markets and community classes and events continue to be held at the hall (Baragwanath & James 2015). In 2015, the words 'Mechanic Institute, 1885' remain on the gable of the facade. A flagpole stands to the south of the hall.

Figure H1. An early photo (exact date not known) of the hall with its entrance porch on the facade, (Note the porch appears to have been altered at the top, to accommodate a biobox for movies, but the whole structure was removed, filled in, and a new entry placed on the south-east elevation in 1973) (YDHS heritage trail).

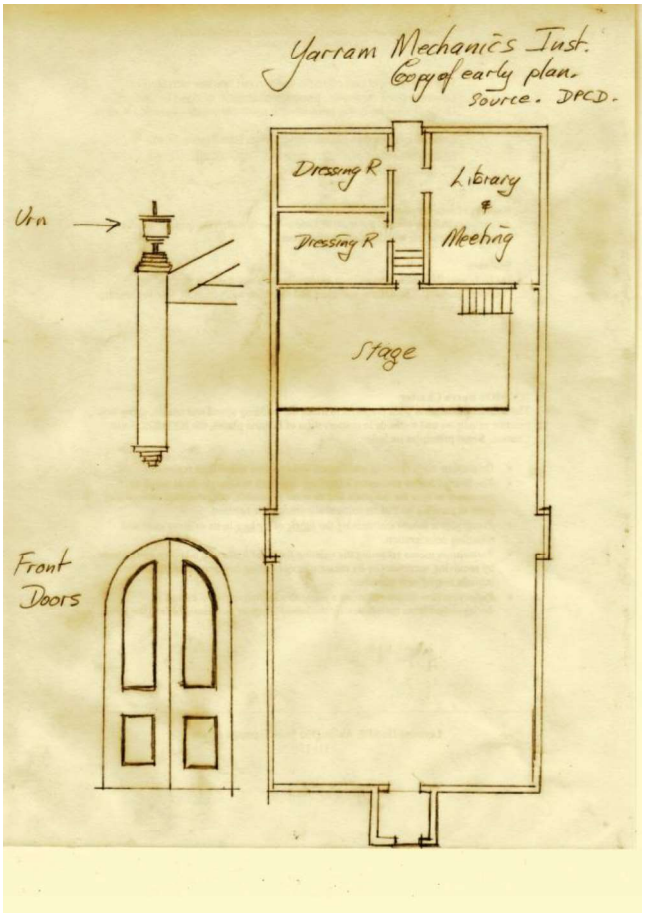

Figure H2. Early plan and details of the original design for the Mechanics Institute. The stage has since been removed, as has the front entry porch, front doorway, and one side doorway (DPCD files, cited at Mechanics Institute Victoria, Prahran).

Sources

Australian handbook (1903), as cited in Victorian Places 'Yarram', <http://www.victorianplaces.com.au/maffra>, accessed Feb 2016.

Baragwanath, Pam & Ken James (2015), *These Walls Speak Volumes : a history of mechanics' institutes in Victoria*, Ringwood North.

Context Pty Ltd (2005), *Wellington Shire Heritage Study Thematic Environmental History*, prepared for Wellington Shire Council

Fletcher, Meredith & Linda Kennett (2005), Wellington Landscapes, *History and Heritage in a Gippsland Shire*, Maffra.

Gippsland Times

Victorian Places, 'Yarram', <http://www.victorianplaces.com.au/yarram>, accessed 21 Jan 2016

Yarram & District Historical Society (YDHS) collection: historical information and photos generously provided by Cate Renfrey, Nov 2015. Including the booklet 'Heritage Trail along Commercial Road, Yarram'.

Yarram & Distrcit Historical Society (YDHS) website, 'The history of Yarram & District', <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~ydhs/history%20of%20yarram.htm>, accessed 16 February 2016.

Description

This section describes the place in 2016. Refer to the Place History for additional important details describing historical changes in the physical fabric.

The Mechanics Hall, built in 1885, is a simple Victorian Free Classical building. The hall is located on the corner of the South Gippsland Highway and Church Road. Located at the north end of the main road of Yarram, it is one of the first historic buildings viewed before entering the town. The hall is set back from the road, in an un-landscaped area. The 1885 hall is in fair condition and retains a medium level of integrity.

Figure D1. The single-storey masonry building was originally rectangular in plan with a gabled roof, with a gabled end to the façade. The roof is clad with corrugated iron and has a long vent to the ridge (Figure D2). The parapeted gabled end to the façade is framed by a bold moulding which creates a pediment effect. The gabled end and entire building is covered with a smooth render (overpainted) and has remnants of incised ruled lines (to create an ashlar effect). The words 'Mechanics' Institute. 1885' are carved in relief in the gabled end. Two short engaged piers with corbelled ends flank the pediment at each end (originally with an urn on each, since removed, see Figure H1). The façade has two semi-circular arched windows with large keystones with a curvilinear detail. The timber sash windows are setback into the wall and have a wide rendered sill with simple brackets. The façade originally had an entrance porch to the centre, which was removed and a new one constructed on the south-west elevation in 1973. A flagpole stands to the south of the hall.

Figure D2. The south-west elevation has a single sash window, to the left of the large 1973 entrance porch. It is not known if the original elevation remains on the interior of the addition.

Figure D3. The north-east elevation has four timber windows and a central entrance of simple double doors. A skillion-roof section (toilet block) is located to the rear (north-west) elevation and is probably a later construction. (appears in an earlier photo, see Figure H1).

Figure D4. The windows to the north-east elevation of the 1885 hall are (later) timber hopper windows with rendered sills. Security grills have been attached to the interior of the windows.

Figures D5 & D6. View of the interior looking towards Church Street (where the front entry door has been blocked up). Note the timber panelled coved ceiling and classical consoles.

Figure D1. The facade of the hall which faces the South Gippsland Highway. The bold parapeted gabled-end is framed by a bold moulding, creating a pediment effect. The original front door and porch have been removed.

Figure D2. The south-west elevation with the 1973 entrance porch (not significant).

Figure D3. The north-east elevation has four timber windows and a central entrance.

Figure D4. A detail of the windows on the north-east elevation, which are (later) timber windows. Note the cement repairs of a large crack.

Figure D5. View of the interior looking towards Church Street (where the front entry door has been blocked up). Note the timber panelled coved ceiling, picture rail moulding and classical consoles.

Figure D6. Detail of console decoration inside.

Sources

All photos taken in 2015 by Heritage Intelligence Pty Ltd as part of Wellington Shire Stage 2 Heritage Study.

Comparative analysis

The 1885 Yarram Mechanics Institute hall is larger and more elaborate than many of the simple rectangular timber halls in some of the smaller towns in Wellington Shire, however, its architectural design has an unusual Classical simplicity for the late Victorian era. Internally, the large hall space is accentuated by a flat timber lined ceiling with coved edges, giving the room a spacious and elegant feeling. There are no other halls in the Shire of similar design.

Many other mechanics institute halls survive in the shire and most of them were originally independent community built and funded halls, with a free library. One of the earliest mechanics institute buildings in the shire is the Rosedale mechanics institute, a brick structure that opened in 1874 and was extended in 1885. The Briagolong mechanics institute also opened in 1874 and since extended, is on the Victorian Heritage Register as a place of significance to the State. At Newry, the original mechanics institute and a newer hall stand side by side. The Stratford mechanics institute is still popularly called 'the mechanics', and continues to function as the town's hall. The Glenmaggie mechanics institute was moved to higher ground and survived the town's drowning when the Glenmaggie Weir was built. It is an important reminder of the little town that once served its farming community. When their mechanics institutes were burnt at Binginwarri and Gormandale, the residents rallied and built new ones. At Maffra, the mechanics institute building has been incorporated into the town's library. The Sale mechanics institute, a two storey building dating from 1891, has had a long association with education, first accommodating the Sale School of Mines, Art and Technology, and later becoming part of the Sale Technical School, and is now amalgamated with Sale High School to form the Sale College.

Boisdale Hall plan and roof form is representative of many halls in small towns in Victoria, however, it is rare in Wellington Shire as the only hall commissioned by a private owner for use as a community facility in his private town, for its hand made bricks from the local quarry, and the use of a Second Empire style square dome. George Henry Cain, architect, is not known to have designed any other community halls, but he was engaged by the Foster brothers, owners and developers of the Boisdale Estate, to design the Boisdale Estate dairy farm houses as well as buildings and workers houses in the Boisdale village, which included the general store, adjoining house and bakery (1902) and the Public Hall (1904).

The complex of halls and memorials at Maffra, was the largest in the Maffra Shire, and it remains the largest in the towns outside the Sale, in Wellington Shire. The 1892 Federation Free Classical design of the Mechanics Institute is a typical example of a well proportioned and detailed design. The 1922 Great War Peace Memorial Hall however, is unique in the Shire, with its Inter War Free Classical design especially with the Mannerist overtones. The plain Inter War Stripped Classical design of the 1925 hall made up for a lack of decoration, by the generous size of the hall and associated facilities. The 1990s extensions at the rear of the complex of buildings are the most sympathetically designed extensions, compared with those on the other historic halls in the Shire.

Management Guidelines

Whilst landowners are not obliged to undertake restoration works, these guidelines provide recommendations to facilitate the retention and enhancement of the culturally significant place, its fabric and its setting, when restoration works or alterations to the building are proposed. They also identify issues particular to the place and provide further detailed advice where relevant. The guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive and a pragmatic approach will be taken when considering development proposals. Alternative approaches to those specified in the guidelines will be considered where it can be demonstrated that a desirable development outcome can be achieved that does not impact on a place's heritage integrity.

1. **Setting** (Views, fencing, landscaping, paths, trees, streetscape)
   1.1. Retain clear views of the front from along Church Street.
   1.2. Ensure services such as power poles, bus shelters, signs, etc are located away from the front elevation.

2. **Additions And New Structures**
   2.1. New structures should be set back beyond the two windows closest to the front façade, so that the scale and design of the 1885 building can be appreciated, as shown in the blue polygon on the aerial map below.
   2.2. However, together with 1.1, appropriately designed and sympathetic extensions could be built to the sides if necessary. E.g. Parts that are in the same view lines as the historic building should be parallel and perpendicular to the existing building, single storey, similar proportions, height, wall colours, rectangular timber framed windows with a vertical axis, but parts not visible in those views could be of any design, colours and materials.
   2.3. If an extension is to have a concrete slab floor, ensure it will not reduce the air flow under the historic masonry building. At present over 60% of the perimeter has no sub floor vents which will result in expensive damage to the walls and subfloor structure in the form of damp, rot and termite attack.
   2.4. Grade the land away from the wall, avoid concrete paths against the solid masonry walls. Install them 500mm away from the walls and 250mm lower than the ground level inside the building, under the floor. Fill the gap between the path and the wall with very coarse gravel to allow moisture to evaporate from the base of the wall.
   2.5. New garden beds
      2.5.1. Grade the land away from the walls, and if garden beds are required, these should be a minimum of 500mm from solid masonry walls, preferably further, and the ground lowered so that the finished ground level of the garden bed is a minimum of 250mm lower than the ground level which is under the floor, inside the building. Slope the soil and garden bed away from the building, and fill the area between the garden bed and walls, with very coarse gravel up to the finished level of the garden bed. The coarse gravel will have air gaps between the stones which serves the function of allowing moisture at the base of the wall to evaporate and it visually alerts gardeners and maintenance staff that the graveled space has a purpose. The reason that garden beds are detrimental to the building, is by a combination of: watering around the base of the wall and the ground level naturally builds up. The ground level rises, due to mulching and leaf litter and root swelling, above a safe level such that it blocks sub floor ventilation, and the wall is difficult to visually monitor on a day to day basis, due to foliage in the way.

3. **Accessibility**
   3.1. Ramps
      3.1.1. Removable ramp construction
         3.1.1.1. A metal framed ramp which allows air to flow under it, to ensure the subfloor vents of the building are not obstructing good airflow under the floor, which will allow the wall structure to evaporate moisture, reduce termite and rot attack to the subfloor structure and reduce rising damp in brick/stone walls.
         3.1.1.2. If it is constructed of concrete next to brick walls this may cause damp problems in the future.
         3.1.1.3. Ensure water drains away from the subfloor vents, and walls and any gap between the wall and the ramp remains clear of debris. Insert additional sub floor vents if the ramp has blocked any of them.
         3.1.1.4. The hand rails on the ramp should not be a feature, which would detract from the

architecture. Plain thin railings painted in the same colour as the walls, so that they blend in, would be appropriate.

3.2. Metal banisters may be installed at the front steps. They are functional and minimalist and they have a minor visual impact on the architecture and therefore they are a suitable design for an accessible addition.

4. Reconstruction and Restoration

If an opportunity arises, consider restoring and reconstructing the following.

4.1. The front porch with a gable roof clad in galvanized corrugated iron (without the biobox on top) and the timber front doors (see Figs H1 and H2.)

4.2. Remove the south extension and repair the south elevation.

4.3. Roofing, spouting and down pipes

4.3.1. Use galvanised corrugated iron roofing, spouting, down pipes and rain heads.

4.3.2. Don't use Zincalume or Colorbond.

4.3.3. Use Ogee profile spouting, and round diameter down pipes.

4.4. Fences and paths

4.4.1. Reconstruct a timber picket fence and gate and path to the front door (see Fig H1).

5. Render/Hard plaster work

5.1. Mortar. Remove the cement patch repairs in the mortar and render, and repair with lime mortar in the brickwork. Traditional mortar mixes were commonly 1:3 lime:sand.

5.2. The rendered walls with coursed ruled 'ashlar' lines, window-sills, and rendered plinth have been painted, however, these architectural features were not designed to be painted, see Figures H1-5. They were a light coloured unpainted render. It is strongly recommended that the paint be removed chemically (never sand, water or soda blast the building as this will permanently damage the bricks, mortar and render and never seal the bricks or render as that will create perpetual damp problems). Removal of the paint will not only restore the elegance of the architecture, but it will remove the ongoing costs of repainting it every 10 or so years. However, if it is decided to repaint the render, it should be one colour only (do not paint the base a different colour) and closely resemble the colour of new render.

5.3. Never seal the render as that will create perpetual damp problems.

6. Care and Maintenance

6.1. Retaining and restoring the heritage fabric is always a preferable heritage outcome than replacing original fabric with new.

6.2. Key References

6.2.1. Obtain a copy of "Salt Attack and Rising Damp" by David Young (2008), which is a free booklet available for download from Heritage Victoria website. It is in plain English, well illustrated and has very important instructions and should be used by tradesmen, Council maintenance staff and designers.

6.2.2. Further assistance is available from the Shire's heritage advisor.

6.3. Roofing, spouting and down pipes

6.3.1. Use galvanised corrugated iron roofing, spouting, down pipes and rain heads. It is preferable to use short sheet corrugated iron and lap them, rather than single long sheets, but it is not essential.

6.3.2. Do not use Zincalume or Colorbond or plastic.

6.3.3. Use Ogee profile spouting, and round diameter down pipes.

9.2. Joinery

9.2.1. It is important to repair rather than replace where possible, as this retains the historic fabric. This may involve cutting out rotten timber and splicing in new timber, which is

a better heritage outcome than complete replacement.

9.2.2. The original external timber doors and windows require careful repair and painting.

7. Damp

7.1. Signs of damp in the walls include: lime mortar falling out of the joints, moss growing in the mortar, white (salt) powder or crystals on the brickwork, existing patches with grey cement mortar , or the timber floor failing. It is imperative that the drainage is fixed first. This will involve the lowering of the ground outside so that it is lower than the ground inside the building, under the floor, grading the ground away from the building, and the installation of agricultural drains, running the downpipes into drainage inspection pits instead of straight into the ground. The cost of these works is minimal compared to injecting a damp proof course and there are no ongoing maintenance costs. The reason for the down pipe pits is that a blocked drain will not be noticed until so much water has seeped in and around the base of the building and damage commenced (which may take weeks or months to be visible), whereas, the pit will immediately fill with water and the problem can be fixed before the floor rots or the mortar falls out, the bricks start to crumble, and the building smells musty.

7.2. Refer to the manual, by David Young, listed below for a full explanation of the problem and how to fix it. Water falling or seeping from damaged spouting and down pipes is also causing severe and expensive damage to the brick walls.

7.3. The subfloor vents in this building are barely functioning, which is primarily because the ground level has built up too high and the attempt to keep them open, by putting a low brick 'fence' around them is inadequate, partly because they fill up with debris. Ensure good subfloor ventilation is maintained at all times to reduce the habitat for termites and rot of the subfloor structure. Subfloor ventilation is critical with solid masonry buildings. Ensure the exterior ground level is 250mm or more, lower than the ground level inside the building, under the floor. Good subfloor ventilation works for free, and is therefore very cost effective. Do not rely on fans being inserted under the floor as these are difficult to monitor, they will breakdown as they get clogged with dust, etc, and there are ongoing costs for servicing and electricity.

7.4. Never install a concrete floor inside a solid masonry building as it will, after a year or so, cause long term chronic damp problems in the walls. Do not install a new damp proof course (DPC) until the drainage has been fixed, even an expensive DPC may not work unless the ground has been lowered appropriately as the soil can provide a bridge over the top of the damp proof course and damp proof course does nothing to prevent sub floor damp. This building 'recently' had a chemical damproof course injected into the walls as the drill holes are visible along the walls just above the rendered plinth, without lowering the ground.

7.5. Never seal solid masonry buildings, they **must be able to evaporate water** which enters from leaking roofs, pipes, pooling of water, storms, etc.

7.6. Use appropriate cleaning materials, agents and methods, on the historic fabric as recommended by the Shire's heritage advisor. The biggest risk to solid masonry buildings is permanent damage by the use of cleaning materials, agents and methods. Sand and water blasting removes the skilled decorative works of craftsmen lime based render covering the brick walls. It is irreversible and reduces the life of the building due to the severe damp that the damage encourages.

7.7. Never use cement mortar, always match the original lime mortar. Cement is stronger than the bricks and therefore the bricks will eventually crumble, leaving the cement mortar intact! Lime mortar lasts hundreds of years. When it starts to powder it is the 'canary in the mine', alerting you to a damp problem – fix the source of the damp problem and then repoint with lime mortar.

7.8. Remove the dark grey patches on the walls. This is cement mortar which will damage the

bricks and longevity of the walls.

7.9. Insert more sub floor vents after the ground has been lowered. There are no vents at all in the front elevation, the rear extension has blocked the subfloor vents at along that wall, and the 1970s extension has blocked the subfloor vents along 60% of that wall which will result in expensive damp, rot, and termite attack to the building.

8. Signage (including new signage and locations and scale of adjacent advertising signage).

8.1. Ensure all signage is designed to fit around the significant architectural design features, not over them.

9. Services

9.1. Ensure new services and conduits, down pipes etc, are not conspicuous. To do this, locate them at the rear of the building whenever possible, and when that is not practical, paint them the same colour as the building or fabric behind them or enclose them behind a screen the same colour as the building fabric, that provides adequate ventilation around the device. Therefore if a conduit goes up a rendered unpainted wall, it should be painted the same colour as the render, and when it passes over say, a cream coloured detail, it should be painted cream.

Resources

Wellington Shire Heritage Advisor

Young, David (2008), "Salt Attack and Rising Damp, a guide to salt damp in historic and older buildings" Technical Guide, prepared for Heritage Victoria.

NOTE: The blue shaded area is the preferred location for additions and new development:

KEY

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Title boundary

Mechanics Institute
2-4 Church Rd, Yarram

Project: Wellington Shire Stage 2 Heritage Study
Client: Wellington Shire Council
Author: Heritage Intelligence Pty Ltd
Date: 12/2/16