

REPORT ON

‘RUSTEN HOUSE’ BASIC UPGRADE PROPOSALS

INTERPRETATIVE DISPLAY AND HERITAGE FABRIC

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The following heritage conservation proposals flow on from the Heritage Impact Statement assessments prepared by McPhee Architects as commissioned by the Department of Commerce NSW during April 2006.

The heritage conservation proposals herein lead to conserving original intact fabric and movable items as part of the Queanbeyan Hospital Redevelopment proposals, prepared by HSPC (NSW) for the Greater Southern Area Health Service.

2.0 'RUSTEN HOUSE' BASIC UPGRADE PROPOSALS

The site was inspected on 3rd April 2006 by McPhee Architects and it was noted that 'Rusten House' is in poor to fair condition and mostly displays integrity. A number of original built elements have significantly deteriorated, such as the lifting roof iron and a collapsing verandah wall. In addition, there has been a series of external and internal changes, such as the enclosure of the verandahs by the stakeholders to adapt the building to new uses.

2.1 GENERAL

In order to conserve the original layout and form, hospital functions housed in 'Rusten House' should be compatible with the extant original plan arrangement without change.

In this case, room use should suit those spaces available with minimal fabric alteration so as to allow appreciation of the item.

2.2 THE 1859/1861 WING

In order to maintain the built fabric, it is recommended that the following repair works be carried out:

- Refix lifting roof iron and loose flashings on both the main and verandah roofs
- Re-paint deteriorated gable boards using paint scapes to determine original colours
- Remove surface-mounted conduits and re-route in a non-intrusive manner
- Renew loose/deteriorated bottom plate to enclosing wall, south west verandah
- Repair and renew broken fibrous cement sheeting
- Refix roofing iron on the south west extension
- Remove verandah enclosures
- Renew gutter on the south east side
- Remove modern concrete landing and ramp on south eastern side of building
- Repair the eaves soffit on the south eastern side
- Renew timber plinth boards on the south eastern side

- Renew stain finish on the timber floor in the enclosed north western verandah
- Repair roof leak, re-paint ceiling in the south western extension to match existing
- Renew internal paintwork using paint scapes to determine original colours
- Replace three internal doors to match existing
- Unblock and make good fireplaces
- Replace doors from the cupboards either side of the fireplaces.

2.3 THE 1885 WING

- Re-paint deteriorated walls, windows, doors and verandah structure using paint scapes to determine colours
- Renew flyscreen to the north eastern door
- Replace sections of missing timber door mouldings on south western facing door
- Refix roof iron
- Remove modern gas fire to fireplace and make good
- Repair wall cracks internally using non-shrink grout and make good
- Remove surface-mounted conduits generally
- Remove modern lighting and replace with in-context luminaries.

2.4 MINIMUM STANDARDS OF MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

Under the Heritage Act, owners are required to meet minimum standards of maintenance and repair of listed items. The standards are set out in the Regulation to the Heritage Act and relate to:

- Weatherproofing
- Fire protection
- Security
- Essential maintenance.

These are minimum standards to ensure that heritage significance is maintained. They do not require owners to undertake restoration works, but where works are needed, owners may apply for financial assistance through the Heritage 2001 funding program. Where these standards are not met and the heritage significance of the item is in jeopardy, the Heritage Council now has the power to order repairs after consultation with the owner. As a last resort, if negotiations have failed and the owner does not comply with the order, the Heritage Council can arrange for the works to be carried out and charge the expenses to the owner.

It is therefore recommended that the 'basic upgrade' works be progressed.

2.5 FUTURE WORKS 'RUSTEN HOUSE'

In order to secure protection of 'Rusten House', it is recommended that a Conservation Management Plan be prepared which sets out detailed and comprehensive conservation policies and proposals and funding arranged to carry out conservation works.



3.0 INTERPRETIVE DISPLAY PLAQUES AND MEMORABILIA

It is proposed that an Interpretive Display be set up, prior to demolitions of the existing built structures.

3.1 DISPLAYED ITEMS

Heritage items removed from the existing hospital buildings are to be displayed for appreciation by the general public and users of the new hospital.

Two site options for this display are proposed:

- (1) The main entry foyer of the new hospital building, located on a wall and/or enclosed in glass-fronted cabinet, or
- (2) In the 1885 section of Rusten House, occupying that space currently used by CAYHS as a Therapy Room.

It is this author's opinion that, subject to hospital agreement and relocation of the CAYHS therapy function, Option (2) be employed for the display of plaques, historic documents, medical memorabilia, photographs and the like.

Items to be fully identified, recorded and located in the Display Area are as follows, and as noted in the *Queanbeyan Hospital Heritage Study* by M. Pearson, D. Marshall and B. O'Keefe, January 2005:

Memorial Plaques

A series of memorial plaques are placed on internal and external walls throughout the hospital. Others have been removed and in storage in the workshop.

On the first floor of building 'H' in Figure 21, in a corridor outside the conference room, are two Life Member Boards which appear to date from the 1960s.

Inside the main and emergency entrance to the hospital (in 'K' in Figure 1), is a framed collection of photographs of Canberra and Queanbeyan, dated 1926, which is of historical interest. Other framed photographs of historical interest are located on the walls of the Administration building ('A' in Figure 1).

Other plaques include:

- Dedicating the Auxilliary kiosk to Beatrice Mary Corsini (Building K0;
- In appreciation of Matron M.B. Wright and Sister E.V. Shrub, 1972 (not attached, held by Nancy Monk for the Auxilliary);
- Timber acknowledgement board listing items donated by the West Queanbeyan Hospital Auxilliary (Building A);
- Australia Day Community Service Award to Auxilliary, 1995 (Building A);
- Donated painting of the 1933 building (Building A);

- Recognising donations by Alan Nock and Will Donoghoe of the proceedings of the Guinness Book of Records table tennis marathon (not attached – Workshop);
- List of Board of Directors, 1974 (not attached – Workshop);
- Commencement of the new emergency services maternity wards block (K), 1972 (not attached – Workshop);
- Opening of the emergency services maternity wards block (K), 1974 (not attached – Workshop);
- Granite plaque, opening of the Administration block (A), 1964 (not attached – Workshop);
- Opening of Isolation ward as Day Care Centre, 1980 (on outside wall Building O);
- Opening of Rotary Room, Pepper Tree Lodge, 1995 (on outside wall, Building T);
- Opening of Pepper Tree Lodge, 1987 (on outside wall, Building T);
- Descriptive plaques and photo, Rotary Room, Pepper Tree Lodge, 1995 (on inside wall, Building T);
- Recognising Combined Services Clubs donations (Building A).

Other plaques may exist within the hospital. A cloth hanging signed by staff on the final day of 1999 and first day of 2000, hangs in the conference room (Building H). A plaque commemorating Sister Galbraith has been placed on display at the Historical Society Museum.

Historical Documents

A large collection of historical and current plans for the various stages in the development of the hospital are housed primarily in the workshop area, Building W, though these plans are loose and will require collation and compiling. These plans form a primary documentary record of the development of the hospital and are of considerable historical interest.

The Queanbeyan District Hospital also holds a series of minute books of historical importance. These Minute Books contain the minutes of the meetings of the Hospital Committee and later Board and should be conserved.

Historical Medical Equipment

It is recommended here that the Hospital call on past and present medical staff to provide items of interest, which may be placed in glass cabinets for display in the Display Area.

4.0 HERITAGE FABRIC CONSERVATION

The following fabric has been identified as being of value and is recommended for careful removal and relocation:

4.1 Memorial Garden and plaques

4.2 Central brick gable section of the 1933 Ward Building

Item 4.1 is addressed as a separate report by Andrew Davies, Landscape Architect, April 2006, and calls for careful removal and relocation to a new site having a similar aspect near 'Rusten House'.

Regarding Item 4.2, it is noted in the *Queanbeyan Hospital Heritage Study* by M. Pearson, D. Marshall and B. O'Keefe, January 2005, that the gabled former entry section of the 1933 former Ward Block B "should be retained and incorporated into any new development, if this is feasible".

The study team has inspected the gable form with central shield on 3rd April 2006, and concluded that, given the soft mortar construction and its location relative to the proposed works at the site, this heritage item should be 'dismantled', safely stored and relocated elsewhere within the new hospital. The masonry work, with shield, arched brickwork and masonry haunches, comprises approximately 25 square metres of structure.

Two locations are proposed:

- (1) In the main hallway/corridor of the new hospital
- (2) As the entry way to the new proposed chapel.

Either location, with careful work, will satisfy the heritage conservation requirements and will be subject to agreement by the stakeholders.

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