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23 June 2004
Ref: 2004-041

Mr Royce White
Manager
Wollondilly Shire Council

Dear Royce

Re; School of Arts Building at Menangle. Inspection for Adequacy.

I went yesterday with Paul Fairweather to inspect the subject building.

From discussion, with Paul I understand that Council is considering the future of this hall and has a number of options available to it. Council is concerned with safety issues if it continues being used but still requires a venue until a decision is made on upgrading or either replacement or alternative facility.

I have therefore considered below only the minimum repairs that would be necessary for continuing use of the building. In some areas further works may be required once access is possible to restricted areas.

Building Structure:

1. The building I believe dates back to the 19th Century although much of it has obviously been reconstructed since that time
2. Foundations consist of brick piers with some sections of dwarf brick walls supporting a floor on timber bearers and joists and timber framed external walls.
3. Walls are clad with a mixture of timber boards and Hardiplank-type panels. Internally, cladding consists of various materials including fibro. Two main cross walls separate a central hall from the front ablutions block and rear storage room.
4. The roof consists of timber rafters and battens supporting metal cladding. Prevention of roof spreading at eaves line is achieved by the use of steel rods and collar ties.

Existing Damage and Suggested Rectification Work.

An obvious lack of maintenance over the years is reflected in the deterioration of the building's exterior and the exposed foundation area, although some upgrading has been carried out internally. Some of the critical areas are:

1. Foundation area

Two sections of dwarf brick wall are unstable, the one on the east side also forming part of the external wall cladding. These should be removed and reconstructed with brick foundations bedded well into natural subgrade.

It will also be possible to check the underfloor area beneath the stage for adequacy of piers or bearers. A check should be made generally under the floor replacing or packing piers where required.

2. Flooring.

In association with foundation investigation loose floorboards in two areas near the stage should be removed to enable rectification of piers or bearers.

3. Walls and Roof

Fixings of all rafters to wall top plates at ridge lines to be checked for adequacy and additional triple grips added where necessary. Where cross walls provide bracing to roof all connections to be checked for adequacy. Additional steel cave ties similar to those existing are required to replace damaged collar ties and otherwise provided every 4th rafter. All lintels over doors and windows to be checked for termite damage and replaced where necessary.

4. External (including Drainage Upgrading)-

4.1 Guttering to be connected to existing or new drainage pipes and in turn connected into rear of gutter at road.

4.2 Overland flow to be collected in swales at rear of property behind hall and along both sides of hall to be collected at road boundary in rainwater pits before being piped to road.

Constructing swales will enable regrading to ensure ground falls away from building and prevents the flow of storm water under the building foundations as occurs at present.

We suggest that swales be turfed and led into two small sections of concreted channels through restricted areas.

4.3. External steps to be repaired and all rubbish around the building should be removed

5. Generally-

More detailed inspections can be carried out at start of rectification works with removal of wall and flooring panels. Other minor works may be required at that time.

However if the aim is to repair the building to ensure structural stability it is not envisaged that major costs would be involved, It would be prudent however for regular inspections to be made to check for any further deterioration of the building rectifying as required

The building could then be considered to have the same safety risk as an equivalent building in this location.

Yours sincerely



MFI(Aust)CPFing NIPER-3

DAVID HUNT