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## REPORT

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### **PROPOSED ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS TO URALLA VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE (VIC) AT BRIDGE STREET URALLA**



FOR

**URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL**

August 2018

## A. PREAMBLE

1. This Report was commissioned by Matt Clarkson, Council Manager of Planning and Regulation. The Architects, Michael McPhillips and Alesya Frost attended a meeting of the Visitor Information Centre Improvement Project Reference Group (PRG) on 20<sup>th</sup> June to clarify and prioritise the Brief, and subsequently presented Concept Design options to the Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> August. The Architects liaised with Trish Kirkland, Councils Director Community and Governance over the course of the Brief and design development. The Architects also liaised with Paul Manias of The Tourism Group, who has been engaged to report on developing tourism potential in the Shire.
2. This Report should be read in conjunction with drawing nos. 1804 SK01, SK02, SK03, SK04 and SK05, and perspective views of two concept options. There are three appendices; Appendix A is a schedule of work.  
Appendix B is an estimate of cost prepared by Ken Brown of Pamberth Pty Ltd.  
Appendix C is an estimate of total project cost and time frames.

## B. THE BRIEF

The Architects were provided with a brief, which was subsequently clarified and prioritised. The main elements of the brief can be summarised as follows;

1. Improve the visibility and attraction of the VIC to tourists.
2. Create a more welcoming front entry and refresh the exterior appearance.
3. Improve external signage
4. Create a more open interior, by removing walls.
5. Provide two options for the south room (previous Coffee shop); as a flexible space for 'pop up' activities that could be zoned off by bifold doors from the VIC, or as a separate dedicated Community Use space.
6. Provide an Office and dedicated Storage area for VIC staff.
7. Improve the Kitchen, with a minimal upgrade for compliance and option for more extensive upgrade.
8. Improve the connection to the Library and playground and Porter Park.
9. Generally upgrade interior finishes and lighting.
10. Improve the displays and develop digital and possibly interactive displays; rationalise the lapidary collection, and reduce display area; provide for display of indigenous artefacts and artefacts from McCrossin's Mill (on loan).
11. Improve the climate control with sun shading and efficient heating/cooling.

## C. EXISTING BUILDING

1. The existing facility is constructed in full masonry with internal and external face brick on a concrete slab. The pitched colorbond corrugated steel roof is supported by steel trusses. A low pitched verandah runs around the northwest and northeast sides of the building and is partly enclosed. Paintwork on the verandah columns and downpipes is faded in parts.  
There are a number of entries into the centre, with the principal entry via double doors at the centre of the street elevation.

Double doors at the northern side are currently blocked off, as are a pair of French doors near the main entrance. The southern space, which was a former coffee shop, can be accessed via a glazed door from the VIC and has a separate entry via the front enclosed verandah as well as rear access via an airlock. There are double doors from the VIC accessing the rear carpark and toilets.

There is a Kitchen at the south end with a servery counter, and access to the rear via a small service yard.

Signage; there are a number of signs fronting the highway; a low angled sign "Uralla Visitor Information Centre", a Tourism Australia 'i' flag mounted on a flagpole, another placard mounted on a power pole, and a moveable 'i' sign near the front entry. There is also an 'i' depicted in render on the front gable parapet. The parapet is showing some render deterioration.

## C. COMPLIANCE WITH CURRENT BUILDING REGULATIONS

### 1. Disabled Access.

Disabled access is required by the NCC, the Access to Premises Standard and AS1428.1 and AS2890.6, for alterations to an existing building that triggers a Development Application. A continuous accessible path of travel is required to any altered part of the building. Given that the proposed alterations will require a Development Application, the following items are not compliant and may require upgrading;

- The front door(s) do not have a clear opening width of 850mm
- The rear accessible toilet does not comply with the current required footprint size, and the approach to the door does not have the required unobstructed space. Enlarging the access toilet will require a replanning of the male and female toilets with considerable expense. As such this is not considered part of the current project. It is recommended that advice be sought from an access consultant. There is an externally accessed disabled toilet in the Library but this would need to be checked for compliance.
- Access from the rear carpark is via a compliant kerb ramp, however the Access carpark is not compliant with AS2890.6. This could be achieved with widening the carpark and installing a bollard.

### 2. The Kitchen

The kitchen, as used commercially should comply with AS4674, Construction and Fitout of Food Premises. Some areas of non-compliance;

- The floor is tiled with some coving at the cabinets which does not however extend right around the floor.
- There is a laminate benchtop at the sink bench, which should be stainless steel for a wet area.
- The stove does not have a commercial rangehood, only domestic.
- There is no dishwasher.

### 3. Fire safety

- Exit signs are installed, however view of the rear exit sign is obstructed by a pendant light.
- There is a current Fire Safety Certificate.

## D. CONCEPT DESIGN

1. Two options for the exterior and interior design have been developed; they are presented as 'Option 1' and 'Option 2', however the external and internal parts are not linked and can be interchangeable.

### 2. Option 1 –

#### a. External.

Travellers from the south, climbing the Moonbi ranges, notice a distinct dropping of temperature and change of scenery; a profusion of granite outcrops as the road winds up into the high country of New England. Around the turnoff to Kentucky the landscape broadens out into typical pastoral country, with 'The amethystine light of New England still seems augmented from beneath both horizons' (At Thunderbolt's Grave in Uralla', by Les Murray).

The town of Uralla is the first settlement encountered in New England, (apart from Bendemeer, which is however off the highway) and as such could be considered as the 'Gateway to New England'.



The Visitors centre is located at the edge of the shopping precinct and is a natural stopping place; signage however is haphazard and poor. Other visitor centres in New England employ the generic 'i' symbol but in competition with other commercial signage;



Armidale VIC signs



Glen Innes VIC

With this in mind we noticed an architectural feature, the lychgate, a roofed entry porch over the gateway found typically in churchyards, such as the one in 28 Bridge Street, now a café 'Naturally Healthy'. The lychgate marks the entry to a precinct and has a welcoming gesture;



We thought that in order to draw attention to the Visitor's Centre, a vertical 'landmark' structure would be desirable, that could reference the architectural form of the lychgate as well as serving as an armature for signage. Use of recycled hardwood would be appropriate for the structure, to reference heritage building such as is found in the interior timber structure of McCrossins Mill. As it happens Council has a stockpile of old bridge timbers from demolished bridges that could be milled to suit. This would be a wonderful repurposing of historic fabric.

We also considered that a lantern under the roof of the structure would be a welcoming gesture; perhaps a design inspired by Uralla's annual Lantern Festival. The 'Tower' would be around 6 metres high, which is the height of the roof of the VIC.



Perspective view of the 'tower'.

To provide shading for exposed north and west facing glass, a steel cantilevered louvre is proposed for the windows along the northeast side facing the driveway; facing the highway, a vertical screen is proposed, formed by hardwood timber posts with steel mesh infill as support for deciduous vines, to shade the west facing windows of the enclosed verandah. The posts will also be milled from the old bridge timber. (not shown in perspective).

Other improvements to the exterior include repainting the Verandah columns, downpipes and fascias; a charcoal colour would harmonise better with the aged timber look rather than the current 'heritage' green.

The area under the tower would be paved.



Example of sun shade louvres

**b. Internal.**

A number of brick walls are removed, to open out the space and provide more floor area for display. The Reception desk is moved to the south with a reduced area; however, an office and store are added in the south room, which also provides for direct external access for staff and volunteers.



Bifold doors with infill display panels replace the existing glazing at the junction of the VIC and the south room, allowing the south room the flexibility to be opened up or closed as required. The existing door and windows between the south room and enclosed verandah are removed, with glazed bifolding doors installed so that the spaces can become continuous if required, depending on the event.

The side doors become the principal entry, with the existing blocked off French doors also serving as an entry; both doors would be upgraded to 920mm leaves as is required for disabled access. The rear doors to the carpark would be similarly upgraded.

The Kitchen in this option has a minimal upgrade; replacement of the existing tiled floor with coved vinyl; replacement of the kitchen sink bench with stainless steel; installation of a commercial exhaust canopy and commercial underbench dishwasher.

The servery window has a roller shutter added for security.

Paul Manias has dealt with new display scenarios in some detail; estimated provisional costs are appended to this report. He advised that video screen displays are good, but interactive displays can be problematic with frequent servicing needed.

Internal finishes and fittings would be upgraded; the dated face brick walls painted, new paint to the ceilings, light fittings modernised and new floor tiles (or vinyl if preferred) installed.

Emergency egress is addressed by reswinging one door and reconfiguring exit paths.

#### **Option 2 –**

##### **a. External.**

This proposal derives from the Tourism consultant, Paul Manias and is developed in his report.

The Thunderbolt statue is removed from its current site to the north, at the end of the bridge, and placed in front of the VIC;



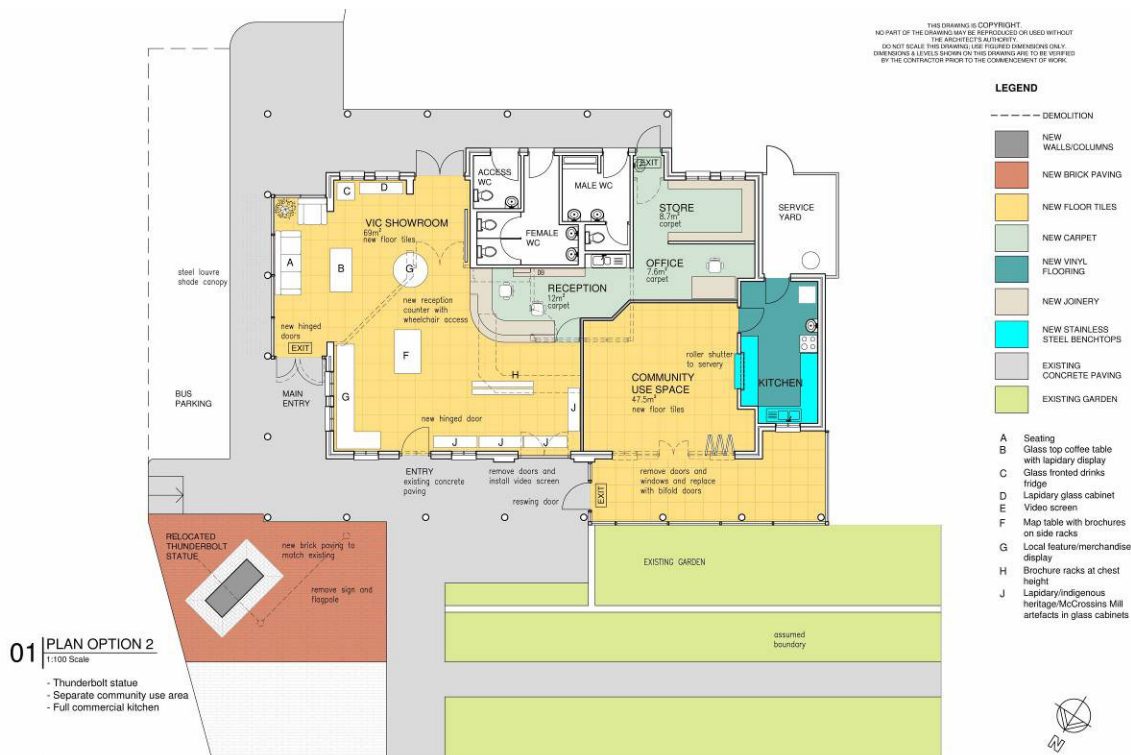


Signage (not shown) would be provided by more conventional means with a steel pole supporting the 'i' sign. Visitors would be able to closely inspect the statue (which is currently fenced off) although being close to the building the statue is not given 'air' which perhaps allows for a better viewing.

In the event the statue remains where it is, it is worth considering improving its curtilage by removing the front fence, allowing the public to walk around it and replacing the weldmesh fence on the creek side of the enclosure with something more appropriate.

**b. Internal.**

The tourism report discusses limiting the area of the VIC to that currently occupied; the southern room would be a separate area for staging events, accessed from the enclosed Verandah at the front. The Office and Storeroom are unchanged from Option 1.



### 3. Garden

A garden area is proposed at the rear at the VIC in the existing grassed area in front of the library. The would be an area for visitors to relax after visiting the centre, as well as a quiet place for library patrons to stop.

A small waterfall would generate the sound of running water which acts as an enticement for visitors. Planting is native species: ground covers, shrubs and small trees; it is proposed that the indigenous community be requested to provide advice and expertise on establishing a small 'bush tucker' garden in the southeast corner of the site, which could have interpretive signage.



Excavation is required as the ground slopes up to the library; a low concrete block retaining wall curves around the Library end of the site, allowing for a small fountain, waterfall and pond.

The timber benches would be constructed from the old bridge timbers stored in the Council depot. The ground is crushed quartz so maintenance will be minimal.

The existing disabled carpark is upgraded to comply with the standard.

### 4. Conclusion

We feel that the proposed structures and refurbishment to the VIC will reanimate the site, provide visitors with a memorable experience and enhance motivation to further explore Uralla and environs.

Michael McPhillips  
**MAGOFFIN AND DEAKIN PTY LTD**  
 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018

## ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS TO URALLA VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

### BRIDGE ST. URALLA

#### APPENDIX A

#### PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE OF WORK

Note;

'Option 1' refers to work relating to

- a. Tower structure.
- b. 'Flexible Space' option for internal plan.
- c. Upgrade of Kitchen to include new covered vinyl floor and new dishwasher and exhaust hood over stove.

'Option 2' refers to work relating to

- a. Relocation of Thunderbolt statue from current location to Information Centre, in lieu of Tower.
- b. Community Use room in lieu of 'Flexible Space'.
- c. Upgrade of Kitchen to include new cabinets and stainless steel benchtops as well as option 1 items.

#### A DEMOLITION

1. Remove existing flagpole, and horizontal sign.
2. Remove water meter and pole lights from proposed Garden area.
3. Remove angled brick wall at Visitor Centre entry and existing Store brick walls.
4. Remove 2 windows and door at northwest wall of proposed Flexible Room and demolish brickwork to form new opening.
5. Remove doors at side Entry, near north corner and main central double doors.
6. Remove floor tiles and carpet in Visitor Centre and tiled floor in Kitchen.
7. Remove airlock door and handbasin at south exit from proposed Store.
8. **Option 2** – Remove Thunderbolt statue and relocate to Visitors centre.

#### B EXCAVATION

1. Excavate for new footings to Tower.
2. Excavate for new footings for Pergola posts.
3. Excavate new garden area approx. 16m<sup>3</sup>.
4. Excavate for Garden retaining wall footings.

#### C SITEWORKS

1. Install new brick paving at Tower approx. 35m<sup>2</sup>
2. Install crushed granite paving to new Garden area on compacted road base approx. 160m<sup>2</sup>
3. Install 100mm topsoil to garden areas.
4. Allow the Provisional Sum of \$5,000 for supply and planting of native plants and installation of waterfall/pond.

#### D CONCRETOR

1. Pour new pier footings for tower, nom. 1200mm deep x 450Ø
2. Pour new column bases, 400 x 400 x 300mm high.
3. Pour footings for pergola posts nom. 400 x 400 x 600mm deep x 5 no.
4. Pour 450 x 300mm deep strip footing for Garden retaining wall, 18 metres long with starter bars for blockwork.
5. **Option 2** – Pour 2400mm long x 1000 wide x 300mm deep footing for statue plinth. Pour 100mm thick RC slab on top of concrete block plinth.

**E BLOCKLAYER**

1. Construct Garden retaining wall with 390 x 190 concrete blocks, core filled with capping blocks.
2. **Option 2** – construct blocks walls 1200mm high x 2100mm long x 820mm wide as plinth for statue

**F STRUCTURAL STEELWORK**

1. Install 4500mm long lintol beam, nom. 250 PFC over new opening to Enclosed Verandah
2. Install 3600mm long beam 150 PFC for Option 1 bifold doors.

**G METALWORK**

1. Supply & install new aluminium framed doors & windows, powdercoated.
  1. Entry door 1; double leaf 920 & 600mm wide x 2014mm high with standard safety glazing.
  2. Entry door 2; 920 x 2040 high with standard safety glazing;.
  3. Bifold doors to Enclosed verandah; 6 leaf x 4200mm opening x 2400mm high with standard safety glazing.
  4. Bifold internal doors; 4 leaf x 3600mm opening x 2400mm high with panel infill for display.
  5. Supply & install new aluminium framed windows, powdercoated, to Reception area; 2 no. 900mm wide x 1200mm high and 1 no. 600mm wide x 1200mm high.
2. Install roller shutter to Kitchen servery window, 1200mm wide x 1 m drop.
3. Install steel louvres for sunshade, 750mm wide x 6500mm long with 150mm channels welded to existing columns & 5 no. 6500mm long x 150 x 5 mm louvre blades.
4. Tower steel brackets and bracing supply; allow the Provisional Sum of \$2,500.
5. Install 50 x 50mm weldmesh infill between timber posts of vertical sunscreen, total area 15m<sup>2</sup>.

**H CARPENTER**

1. Wall frames: 90x45 treated pine. Option 1 – 7 metre total length x 2.8m high.  
Option 2 – 13 metre total length x 2.8m high.
2. Garden timber benches; Old bridge timber 150 x 90mm, 500mm high x 500mm wide total length 15 metres.
3. Option 1 – Tower recycled hardwood components; old bridge timber from Uralla Shire Depot
  - a) Posts – 250 x 250 DAR @ 22 lin.m.
  - b) Beams – 250 x 100 DAR @ 30 lin.m
  - c) Rafters – 150 x 90 DAR @ 18 lin.m.
 The timber can be milled at New England Hardwoods (Glen Innes) to the size required. Allow the Provisional Sum of \$3,000 for milling and freight.
4. Joinery
  - a) Reception desk: allow the Provisional Sum of \$10,000 for supply & install
  - b) Visitor centre display joinery and signage; allow the Provisional Sum of \$25,000 for supply & install.
  - c) **Option 2** – Replace Kitchen cabinets and benchtops; allow the Provisional Sum of \$8,000 for supply & install.

**I ROOFING**

1. Roofing; supply & install ‘Danpalon’ or similar twin walled polycarbonate roof sheet on timber battens to Tower, total area 11 m<sup>2</sup>

**J TILER & FLOOR FINISHES**

1. Ceramic floor tiles; Lay floor tiles supply to Visitor Centre showroom. Allow a provisional sum of \$50/m<sup>2</sup> for supply and \$70/m<sup>2</sup> for laying. Total 117m<sup>2</sup> @ \$120/m<sup>2</sup> = \$14,000
2. Carpet tiles; allow a provisional sum of \$3000 for removal of existing floorcoverings and supply & installation of carpet tiles to Reception/Office/Store.
3. Vinyl; install covered vinyl to Kitchen, allow a Provisional Sum of \$120/m<sup>2</sup> for supply & laying @ 9m<sup>2</sup> = \$1,100.

**K PLASTERER**

1. Plasterboard;
  - a) Sheet new walls with 10mm plasterboard. Install 90mm cornices.
    - Option 1 – 23 m<sup>2</sup> area plasterboard
    - Option 2 – 37m<sup>2</sup> area plasterboard

**L ELECTRICIAN**

1. Install the following extra general power outlets;

<b>GPOs</b>	
Reception	3 x double points
Office	2 x double points
Store	1 x double point
Kitchen	1 x double point

2. Install the following extra lights;

<b>Lights</b>	
Tower	3 x LED lights to 3 no.backlit information signs. 1 LED pendant light. Relocate 2 x existing floodlights
Garden	Relocate wiring for 2 new pole lights Install 2 no. wall lights on retaining wall.

3. Allow the Provisional Sum of \$6,000 for new light fittings (replace existing) to the Visitor Centre showroom and Garden.
4. To Kitchen Install new underbench commercial dishwasher and commercial rangehood canopy. Allow the provisional Sum of \$5,000 for supply only.
5. Install 25 amp 3-phase power for airconditioning system.

**M PAINTER**

1. Repaint existing Verandah columns, downpipes and fascia.
2. Paint new plasterboard walls and internal face brick walls.
3. Repaint existing ceilings.
4. Paint new steel louvre sun shade.
5. Apply oil coat to Tower timbers and vertical sunscreen timber posts.

**N SPECIALIST TRADES**

1. Airconditioning; allow the Provisional Sum of \$17,000 for installation of reverse cycle airconditioning; Daikin premium inverter ducted system (from estimate by Armidale Airconditioning).
2. CCTV; allow the Provisional Sum of \$600 for addition of extra camera to the CCTV system (from estimate by Advanced Inland Security).
3. Video display screens 2 no; Philips 65 inch screen with in built media players; allow the Provisional Sum of \$10,000 (from Estimate by Macsound)

**O SUMMARY OF PROVISIONAL SUMS;**

1. Supply and planting of native plants and installation of waterfall/pond - \$5,000 .
2. Tower steel brackets and bracing supply - \$2,500.
3. Supply of recycled timber for Tower - \$3,000
4. Reception desk joinery - \$10,000
5. Display Joinery & signage- \$25,000
6. New Kitchen cabinets and stainless steel benchtops - \$8,000
7. Ceramic floor tile supply & installation - \$14,000
8. Carpet tile supply & installation - \$3000
9. Vinyl floor supply & installation - \$1,100
10. Supply of new light fittings - \$6,000
11. Supply of new Kitchen appliances - \$5,000.
12. Supply and install reverse cycle airconditioning - \$17,000
13. Augment CCTV system - \$600
14. Supply & install 2 large video screens - \$10,000

**APPENDIX B**  
**ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST**  
Provided by Ken Brown, Pamberth Pty Ltd

## APPENDIX C

### ESTIMATED TOTAL PROJECT COST & TIMEFRAME

ITEM		\$ ex. GST
<b>Estimated Construction cost</b> based on Option 1, including repainting of existing brick walls and ceilings, and supply of old bridge timber for the Tower rather than commercial supply.		273,529.00
<b>Magoffin &amp; Deakin Architects</b> ; 9% of estimated construction cost for full architectural services;		
Concept Design; 25% of fee (Includes this report).	\$6,600.00	
Design development ;15% of fee	\$3,247.04	
Contract documentation; 30% of fee	\$7,385.28	
Tender process and contract administration; 30 % of fee	\$7,385.28	
Total		24,617.61
<b>Structural Engineer</b>	say	4,500.00
<b>Certifier</b> (if private) + LSL	say	3,500.00
<b>Development fees &amp; charges</b>	By Council	-
<b>Subtotal</b>		306,146.61
	GST	30,614.66
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>336,761.27</b>

#### Notes;

- Option 2 estimate is \$326,375.07; allowance of \$2,500 for structural engineer included.
- It is recommended that a Quantity Surveyor be engaged to provide a costing prior to tender.
- The builder has estimated a 16 week construction period.
- Stainless steel benchtops for the Kitchen not included.



