

Statement of Significance

as prepared by Black Mountain Projects Pty Ltd

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Wollondilly Shire Council Heritage Advisory Service

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The General Manager, Wollondilly Shire Council
Attention: Robyn Cooper, Land Use Planning & Environment
Robyn.Cooper@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au

ADVICE SUBJECT: Menangle Hall - requested heritage assessment.
CLIENT: Sophie Perry

Dear Sir

Thank you for requesting heritage advice. The requested heritage assessment is attached.

Menangle School of Arts Hall has been assessed as of local significance, both as an integral part of the Menangle heritage conservation area and as a valued part of the history of the local community. It is recommended to be locally listed.

Kind regards
Dr Peter Kabaila
Heritage Adviser

MENANGLE HALL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

Name of the item

Menangle School of Arts Hall

Other or former names

None

Address (and legal property description if available, ie lot and dp number)

Lot 1, DP 308388, Station Street, Menangle.

Current listings

Menangle Conservation Area, WSC LEP 1991

PHOTOS

For photos refer to Council archive of scans, stored on 'Trim'.

DESCRIPTION

Designer

Unknown

Builder/maker

Unknown

Year started

C1890 to 1904

Physical description including fabric (i.e. building materials)

Dilapidated in 2012.

Construction methods employed for Menangle School of Arts Hall were traditional and the structural design was conservative. It remains in basic, altered, not fully-stable condition. Engineering inspections have raised concerns as to the stability of the building generally. Some isolated masonry piers which support timber bearers and joists have subsided, requiring props. Subsidence has caused the area adjacent to the raised stage to drop and cause bowing to floors in this area. Discontinuity of framing and timber damage has resulted in damage to the Hall. Dry rot damage is evident in timber window frames and some of the timber wall plates.

Exterior.

The original built fabric needs work to:

- Fitting of ant caps to piers throughout
- Re-levelling the floor structure via use of new isolated brick piers
- Structural timber damage
- Damaged timber work to windows
- Gutters and flashings
- Panelling at street facade
- Repainting. Paint scrapes should be carried out to determine the original colour scheme.

Interior.

The interior requires work to:

- Window trim and frames
- Damaged wall linings
- Flooring where out of level.
- Repainting. Paint scrapes should be carried out to determine the original colour scheme.

Modifications/dates

Exterior

Since its construction, changes include:

- Extension of the hall at the rear towards the southern and western boundary.
- Renewal of sections of side and rear wall cladding.
- New rainwater goods.

- Removal of metal roof ridge ventilations.
- Renewal of double hung timber windows on the eastern facade.
- New side exit doors, landings and balustrades.

Interior

- Modern interior refurbishments, fitments and fixtures to male and female toilets, c.1984
- New 'Bio-box' projection room, c.1984
- New kitchenette, c.1984
- New tongue and groove timber flooring, 1994
- New partitioned office space at the southern area of the Hall, c.1984.
- Generally those areas of the Hall not directly affected by 1960s, 1984 and 1994 alterations remain intact.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

www.menangle.com.au

2010, Wayne McPhee & Assoc. *Heritage Impact Statement for proposal to demolish*. Report to Wollondilly Shire Council.

Council photo collection stored on Trim.

HISTORICAL NOTES

The corrugated iron roofed single storey timber framed School of Arts Hall is sited adjacent to the Menangle Store, fronting Station Street.

There is some disagreement on whether the Hall was constructed in the 1890s, or in 1904 when the Menangle store was built, the construction date falls well into the Federation Period (c1890 – c1915). Its exact date of construction, the name of the architect and builder is unknown. A newspaper article dating from 2002 stated that the Hall was built by 1893. Its original architectural details suggest the 1890s.

The Hall was constructed by the Macarthur-Onslow family for use by the local inhabitants of the village. The School of Arts hall was an important social centre for Menangle. The building was used for fund raising for the Menangle Roman Catholic Church. The Australian Land Army also used the Hall during the Second World War.

The Hall was used for local dances, church bazaars, Agricultural Bureau meetings and shows of fruits, vegetables and flowers, voting day, wedding receptions, occasional cinema, public meetings and Christmas parties. There was a library and billiard room attached.

The Menangle General Store constructed in 1904, is adjacent and to the west of the School of Arts Hall. Activity generated by local trade at the corner shop gave increased prominence to this area of the town.

School of Arts Halls tend to date back to the early 1900s, when Government encouraged their formation for community interaction. In the late 1920s and in the 1930s, the School of Arts at Menangle was used for functions such as dances and production of plays and musicals.

Following establishment of the Theatres and Public Halls Act 1908, the Hall was modified to provide additional side exits to improve safety to the occupants.

As the local population increased during the 20th century, modifications were carried out, including:

- Alterations and additions c.1960 to provide new double hung windows on the southern facade, damaged due to weather exposure.
- Major refurbishments to the hall during 1984 to provide new internal fibro linings, new male and female toilets, kitchenette and projection room.
- Alterations c.1994 to provide new hardwood tongue and groove flooring through the main body of the hall, concrete landings and steps to the western exit doors.

The Hall has undergone three distinct changes:

Phase 1: Construction and early use Federation Period

Phase 2: Major refurbishments c 1984

Phase 3: Disrepair c. 2000 to 2012

During 1984, alterations to the building on its north and west sides changed some of the Federation architectural details. These reduced the aesthetic and historical significance of the Hall. To the north and at its entry facade, the Hall has retained its integrity. It had continuity of community use from c.1890 to c.2000. While the Hall changed over time, the exterior yard remained an open area, without planting. Despite alterations, the Hall has essentially retained its Federation Period character.

SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

Historical

High local historical significance, both as an integral part of the Menangle Village Precinct and as a valued part of the history of the local community. Architecturally reflects the history of public halls in small agricultural centres.

Association

Associated with the Macarthur family.

Aesthetic

The Hall provides an important contribution to the heritage streetscape of Station Street, situated at the core of Menangle Heritage Conservation Area.

The single-storey timber hall was constructed in the Federation Period as a social meeting place for the residents of Menangle. The architect and building contractor are unknown, although it is reasonable to believe that work was carried out by a local cottage builder for the Macarthur family, given the village was part of their estate.

Sited within a rectangular plot of land addressing Station Street, this single-storey Federation-style structure was designed in the late 19th century. This style of construction was prevalent in New South Wales c.1850-1890.

Early photos of other timber structures in the locality from the 'Star Collection' indicate a consistent, simple built form, found typically throughout New South Wales in Federation times:

- Isolated brick piers with lime mortar, no ant caps, hardwood bearers and joists
- Tongue and groove flooring
- Feather-edged weatherboards, hardwood
- Panelled 'stone' proportioned facing boards to the street facade, this being the only 'decoration' to the exterior of the building
- Battened fibro gable end with rectangular timber ventilator to street facade and finial at ridge to fascia junction
- Twelve pane, painted timber, double-hung windows
- Lugged and braced side and rear exit doors
- Custom orb profile corrugated iron roofing with quad gutters and round downpipes.

The Hall exhibits an overall form and detailing type of Federation style cottage and small scale commercial structures in NSW. Interiors are plain and free of decoration. The street facade is symmetrical, having a monopitch verandah extending towards Station Street and sheltering two double-hung windows, equally spaced around the central entry door.

Technical

Not significant under this criterion.

Social

Not significant under this criterion.

Research

Low technical significance for demonstrating construction technology of the Federation period.

Rarity

Moderate rarity as an unusually intact local example of an early community hall type prevalent during the Federation period.

Representativeness

Good example of a Federation period hall.

Intactness

Substantially intact.

The Federation Hall was constructed on land which was originally part of the Camden Estate. The existing single storey, timber-framed structure is in a partially intact form. The exterior, except at its eastern façade, part of its northern façade and new roof cladding, has suffered change by way of additions and alterations, although some of its original architectural features are evident at its western and street façade. The interiors have also suffered change, especially in relation to significant alteration works carried out, c.1984 and 1994. The interior spatial arrangement of the Hall at the front or northern area has changed to accommodate male and female toilets, kitchenette and projection room. The aesthetic quality of the gabled façade at Station Street, exterior walls and roof form is evident. The rear, southern rooms, have been altered to form two office spaces, c.1984.

The side access in the level surface area at the east of the Hall continues to provide pedestrian access and vehicular and hard surface for vehicles. Two in-ground reinforced concrete septic tanks are present at the north east area

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

The Menangle School of Arts Hall is of local significance, both as an integral part of the Menangle heritage conservation area and as a valued part of the history of the local community.

It is an intact example of a Federation period community hall. Architecturally, it includes all stages of evolution of the site, dating back to its original construction in the Federation Period.

The Hall and its setting are historically associated with the early settlement of Menangle during the 1890s and its subsequent subdivision and development. The Hall demonstrates many architectural details of the Federation Period and is representative of an area of land developed as part of the MacArthur family estate.

The Hall forms an integral part of the early settlement, subdivision and development of Menangle. Although altered a number of times over the course of the 20th century and suffering some neglect, it has retained its aesthetic qualities.

The Hall provides an important contribution to the heritage streetscape of Station Street, situated at the core of Menangle Heritage Conservation Area.