

**ITEM NO:** 32

**SUBJECT:** INDEPENDENT HERITAGE ASSESSMENT OF 27 HOPE STREET,  
BLAXLAND

**FILE NO:** F12701 - 20/229587

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**Delivery Program Link**

*Principal Activity:* Using Land

*Service:* Land Use Management

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**Recommendations:**

1. *That the Council notes the content and recommendations of the independent heritage assessment for 27 Hope Street Blaxland (Enclosure 1), and*
  2. *That the Council endorses the inclusion of the 27 Hope Street Blaxland site in the Planning Proposal to proceed with the local heritage listing of this site in Schedule 5 of the Blue Mountains Local Environmental Plan 2015.*
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**Report by Director Environment & Planning Services:****Reason for report**

This report provides detail on the outcomes of the independent heritage assessment for the proposed new heritage listing of 27 Hope Street, Blaxland. This proposed listing has been deferred from the Heritage Review (Amendment 5 to LEP 2015), pending the outcome and recommendations of this independent heritage assessment.

**Background**

Council has been carrying out a review of Council's heritage inventory, the Heritage Review, proposed Amendment 5 to LEP 2015.

A report was presented to the 29 September 2020 Council meeting, detailing the outcomes of the public exhibition of the planning proposal, and seeking adoption of the final draft of the planning proposal. The Amendment seeks to update the heritage schedule and mapping of LEP 2015, by the inclusion of new items, the deletion of existing items, and the modification of some existing items within the heritage schedule.

The Council resolved at the meeting of 29 September to adopt the planning proposal for draft Amendment 5, however, the proposed new listing of 27 Hope Street, Blaxland, was resolved to be deferred from the planning proposal, until an independent heritage assessment determined the heritage significance of the property. Under section 3.36(3) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, Council may defer an item from a planning proposal.

**Commissioning of report and outcomes**

The commissioning process for the independent heritage assessment was carried out by Council. Council sought tenders in the form of fee quotations from three well known heritage firms to carry out the assessment. The three firms were Lucas Stapleton Johnson Architects, City Plan Heritage, and Paul Davies Heritage Architects.

Two responses were received, from City Plan Heritage and Lucas Stapleton Johnson Architects. The successful tenderer was City Plan Heritage, who provided the lowest quotation for the report, and were able to complete the report in the projected timeframe. Lucas Stapleton Johnson Architects provided a significantly higher quotation, and would not be able to complete the independent assessment within the required timeframe.

The Director of City Plan Heritage visited the site and inspected the property in conjunction with the property owners on 2 November 2020. Council representatives did not attend.

Council provided the consultant with the following documents as part of the independent review, prior to the site inspection:

- The existing draft heritage inventory sheet for the draft heritage item
- Current photographs of the property
- Documents relating to the progress of the draft listing through the Heritage Review (draft Amendment 5 to LEP 2015), including objections from the owners (in both stages of consultation), responses to the objections by Council (in both stages, including an analysis of the Council's site inspection in Stage 2), and resulting recommendations
- The Council report on the Heritage Review Amendment presented to the 29 September 2020 Council meeting
- The Council minute from the 29 September meeting (including the requirement for the independent heritage assessment)

The consultant scope did not include a title search, which related to a key aspect of the owner's objections. The owners had stated in their objection that the association with Reverend Charles Stubbin was not proven or significant, partly on the grounds that there appeared to be gaps in the historical information. A title search was mentioned within the heritage inventory sheet as needing to be completed to clarify the date of Stubbin's purchase of the land and the date the house was built.

Council engaged the Blue Mountains Historical Society to conduct further research and the compilation of primary sources to assist the independent heritage assessment process and provide further certainty. The additional research provided by the Blue Mountains Historical Society included a full title search dating back to the original land grant of 1874, and a search of the Valuer-General's records (found between 1939 and 1982). This information was then sent to the consultant for incorporation into the assessment report.

### **Independent assessment of heritage significance – City Plan Heritage**

The complete independent assessment report prepared by City Plan Heritage is provided at Enclosure 1.

The consultant reviewed the following matters:

- The historical significance of the property to Blaxland and the Blue Mountains area, based on the new historical information provided by the Blue Mountains Historical Society;
- A comparative analysis of heritage listed weatherboard dwellings in Blaxland, the Blue Mountains and broader Sydney area, and existing research into the significance and rarity of timber dwellings in the Sydney Metropolitan Area;
- Noted the importance of holiday houses and country retreats as a key NSW heritage theme;
- Used the standard NSW heritage assessment criteria (as set out in "Assessing Heritage Significance" prepared by the NSW Heritage Office and encompassing the values in the Australian ICOMOS 'Burra Charter', commonly accepted as generic values by Australian heritage agencies and professional consultants), to make an updated assessment of

cultural heritage, and utilised the standard inclusion and exclusion indicators for each of the criteria.

The report then provides a detailed and revised statement of significance, provided below, incorporating the seven key criteria for heritage significance as detailed above.

Historical significance (Criterion a)

“Constructed c1908 on the original land grant to William Deane of Penrith in 1874, the weatherboard cottage at 27 Hope Street, Blaxland, is a remnant of the early twentieth century development that occurred as holiday retreats and accommodation for wider Sydney metropolitan residents who wanted to escape the heat of the city and the suburbs during summer and across the year over some weekends.

“The cottage is one a few surviving examples of cottages and houses dating from the 1900s and 1910s in Blaxland when the lower Blue Mountains was becoming favourable as a holiday destination. The site is also representative of the successive land subdivisions resulting from the increased development pressure and changes in the nature of the accommodation from holiday destination to permanent residences.”

Historical associational significance (Criterion b)

“The property has historical associations with a longstanding direct and indirect connections with ministers including Reverend John Samuel Austin of Newcastle, Wesleyan Minister, who had acquired the ownership of larger land including the subject site in 1901, and with the Anglican church through Rev Charles Stubbin who became the owner of the property in 1908.

“Stubbin family retained the ownership of the property for more than 55 years up until 1964 using the property as the family's mountain retreat. It is believed that the existing weatherboard cottage was built by Stubbin, a professional builder who later became an Anglican priest. Since it was adjacent to the large holdings of another Anglican minister, Joshua Hargrave, and his extended family, 27 Hope Street consolidated the clerical character of south Blaxland throughout the first half of the twentieth century.”

Aesthetic significance (Criterion c)

“The weatherboard cottage is a good example of modest early twentieth century cottages purposely built as holiday retreats and accommodation in the Blue Mountains region. It has retained most of its typical Federation era detailing and elements that makes it easily recognisable as an early cottage within the changed context of Blaxland close to the main shopping centre.

“These include the original hipped roof form with two small gablets to the east and west and a broken back portion extending over an L-shape wide veranda together with a gabled roof over the projecting bay to the east featuring a bay window with multipaned coloured glazing and raked hood. The veranda with its simple but elaborated decorative frieze and brackets is the most distinctive feature of the cottage providing clear recognition of its Federation era cottage characteristics. The mature vegetated and treed nature of the site adds to its setting within the streetscape of Hope Street.”

Rarity values (Criterion f)

“The cottage is a rare surviving representative example of purpose-built modest weatherboard cottages of the early twentieth century in Blaxland that retains its Federation cottage characteristics and detailing easily recognisable as elements of typical weatherboard cottages of the period and its type proving a tangible evidence to the community's sense of place.”

### Recommendations of the Independent Heritage Assessment

The consultant report makes the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. *Based on the findings of this heritage assessment throughout this report, it is concluded that the property at 27 Hope Street in Blaxland meets the criteria at a local level for historical, associational, aesthetic, rarity, and representative heritage values. It is, therefore, recommended to be included on the Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Blue Mountains LEP 2015 as a heritage item.*
2. *It is also recommended that the listing to be extended to the internal structural elements of the cottage where the weatherboard battened and beaded wall linings survive in order to ensure structural integrity of this rare surviving Federation era weatherboard purpose-built holiday retreat.*
3. *The research identified that the cottage was known as 'The Rest' in the 1930s and this could be used as the listing name for this potential heritage item.*
4. *It is also noted that the site is within the Blaxland R3-BX04 Village Precinct which aims to 'encourage restoration of traditional architectural forms and details for existing early 20th century cottages'. Listing of the cottage at 27 Hope Street will ensure preservation of the built heritage environment and enhance the desired built character of the locality.*
5. *Although not part of the scope of this heritage assessment, it is considered that the listing of the property on Schedule 5 of the LEP will not prevent its future development in line with the objectives of the clause 7.3 (4) of the Blue Mountains LEP 2015 provided that any future development is located to the rear of the cottage, be lower than the main ridge height of the cottage, and be compatible with the general scale, bulk and architectural character of the existing Federation weatherboard cottage. The mature vegetated and tree lined setting of the site should be maintained and enhanced to ensure its important contribution to the built heritage stock and streetscape of Hope Street and Blaxland is maintained.*

### Sustainability Assessment

Effects	Positive	Negative
Environmental	Council has a commitment to protect the environmental heritage of the Blue Mountains, including historic buildings of significance. This report recommends including an important historical building on the Council's Local Environmental Plan 2015, to provide protection against demolition	Nil
Social	Protection of a heritage significant property in Blaxland is of social benefit to the community in preserving cultural heritage of the Blue Mountains.	Nil
Economic	Nil	The owners of the property have objected to the proposed heritage listing, claiming it will impact their ability to put medium-density housing on the subject lot.

Effects	Positive	Negative
Governance	Council has a commitment to protect heritage properties and the cultural heritage of the Blue Mountains. The recommendation of the report provides guiding advice on this in a specific instance, for 27 Hope Street, Blaxland and Blaxland and the Blue Mountains more generally.	Nil

#### Financial implications for the Council

There are no financial implications for the Council.

#### Legal and risk management issues for the Council

There are no legal and risk management issues for the Council.

#### External consultation

The attached report by City Plan Heritage was prepared as an external and independent heritage assessment.

The Blue Mountains Historical Society provided additional primary source material used in the preparation of the consultant report.

#### Conclusion

An independent heritage assessment by an external heritage consultant has found that the property and building at 27 Hope Street, Blaxland meets the criteria for inclusion on the Blue Mountains Local Environmental Plan 2015 heritage schedule.

It is recommended that the property at 27 Hope Street, Blaxland be re-included in the draft Planning Proposal for Amendment 5 to LEP 2015 (the Heritage Review), to be listed within LEP 2015 as a heritage item.

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**Does this paper need to go to a briefing session OR have Ward Councillors been briefed?:** No

#### ATTACHMENTS/ENCLOSURES

1	Independent Heritage Assessment 27 Hope St, Blaxland	20/252812	Enclosure
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