



WILCANNIA, NSW

COMMUNITY BASED HERITAGE SURVEY

2017

McDougall & Vines, Conservation and Heritage Consultants

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CONTENTS

	Page
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background	
1.2 Existing Heritage Initiatives in Wilcannia	
1.3 The Study Process	
1.4 The State Heritage Inventory (SHI) data format	
1.5 Previous Heritage Survey and Sources of Information	
1.6 Three Year Heritage Strategy	
2.0 THEMATIC HISTORY OF WILCANNIA	5
2.1 Brief Background History	
2.2 Historic Themes	
2.3 Built Environment Time Line	
2.4 Housing Types in Wilcannia	
3.0 HERITAGE SURVEY FINDINGS	17
3.1 Assessing Significance	
3.2 Existing LEP Heritage Provisions	
3.3 State Heritage Significance - Recommendations	18
3.4 Local Heritage Significance - Existing and Recommendations	19
3.5 Conservation Area Recommendations	21
3.6 Heritage Advisory Service, Ongoing Building Improvements and Heritage Funding Incentives	
3.7 New Development	
3.8 Street Trees, Stone Kerbing, Landscaping and Fences	
3.9 Wilcannia Post Office	
3.10 Heritage Interpretation, Town Identity and Promotion	
3.11 Deteriorating Buildings in the Town Centre	
3.12 Knox and Downs Site, Reid Street, cnr Myers Street	
3.13 Archival records	
3.14 Public Consultation and LEP Revisions	
4.0 INDIVIDUAL BUILDING ASSESSMENTS	29
REID STREET	
21 Reid Street, Wilcannia Council Chambers	
25 Reid Street, Former Shop	
29 Reid Street, Former Garage	
30 Reid Street, Old Sandstone Shop	
37 Reid Street, Wilcannia Athenaeum	
38 Reid Street, House	
39 Reid Street, Wilcannia CDEP Building (fmr West Darling Transport	
40 Reid Street, Row of Shops	
41 - 43 Reid Street, Steam Engine	
44 Reid Street, cnr Myers St (Former) Knox & Downs Store	
45 Reid Street, cnr Myers, Wilcannia Post Office & Residence	
46 Reid Street, cnr Myers Street, Wilcannia Club Hotel	
48 Reid Street, Shop	
49 - 63 Reid Street, Baker Park and War Memorial,	
50 Reid Street, Butcher Shop	
52A Reid Street, Shop	
54 Reid Street, Shop & House	
56 Reid Street, Shop	
58 Reid Street, Building Wall	
60 Reid Street, Wilcannia Auto Repairs	
64 Reid Street, cnr Cleaton Street, Queens Head Hotel,	

65 - 67 Reid St, Former Court House Hotel, cnr Cleaton Street
 66 - 68 Reid Street, Wilcannia Court House, cnr Cleaton Street
 70 - 72 Reid Street, Wilcannia Police Station and Gaol
 71 Reid Street, Rich & Company Bond Store
 73 Reid Street, Old Fuel Store
 Behind 73 Reid Street, House, Riverview
 74 – 76 Reid Street, Police Residence (adjacent to Police Station)
 75 Reid Street, Cottage
 77 Reid Street, Attached Cottages
 81 - 33 Reid Street, Sandstone Houses
 97 - 99 Reid Street, Sandstone Houses

OTHER STREETS

87

BARRIER HIGHWAY

Wilcannia Bridge
 Wilcannia Wharf

BYRNES STREET

2 - 4 Byrnes Street, House
 26 - 30 Byrnes Street, House

CLEATON STREET

26 Cleaton Street

HOOD STREET

19 – 21 Hood Street, House, Hillside
 93 Hood Street, Wilcannia Central School

95

MENINDEE ROAD

Wilcannia Cemetery

MYERS STREET

18 Myers St, Supermarket
 24 – 26 Myers Street, stone houses

ROSS STREET

1 – 7 Ross Street, Wilcannia Hospital
 6 – 8 Ross Street, Steam engines and water tower
 19 – 23 Ross Street, House, former Brewery Residence
 29 – 31 Golf Club, former Brewery

102

WARRALI AVENUE

St Theresa's Mission School

WOORE STREET

48 – 50 Woore Street, Former Convent
 80 – 82 Woore Street, St James Anglican Church

106

OUTSIDE TOWNSHIP

Big Ampí Windmill, Big Ampí Station, 50 km's East of Menindee on the Ivanhoe-Menindee Road
 S32 28.09 E142 53.79, Lot 4742 DP 762609

5.0 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

112

Acknowledgements

The authors of this report acknowledge the assistance and advice from the following people:

- Chris Elliot, who was engaged as a sub consultant to undertake historical research to add to the existing information about the histories of buildings and places in the town.
- Michael Boyd – Central Darling Shire
- Other property owners who provided input into the history of their properties as noted on the Building Data Sheets
- Jacqui Hilditch, who kindly provided information on Edward Dickens and his historical associations with Wilcannia
- Anthony Hanna, Senior Heritage Information Officer, Heritage Databases, Heritage Division, Office of Environment and Heritage

Funding for this study has been provided jointly by the NSW Government Heritage Grants Program, administered by the NSW Heritage Branch and the Central Darling Shire.

Photographs

All photographs were taken by Elizabeth Vines, unless otherwise indicated. All historic photos have been sourced.



Current View of Reid Street looking east, near intersection with Myers Street (March 2017)

Front Cover:

Top: Wilcannia Post Office and Residence

Centre: LHS - sandstone residences, 77 Reid Street RHS – Baker Park War Memorial

Bottom: former Court House Hotel, Reid Street

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Wilcannia is a small town located within the Central Darling Shire in north western New South Wales. It was the third largest inland port in the country during the late 19th century, at the time of the inland river boat trade on the Murray-Darling river system. At the 2011 census, Wilcannia had a population of 604.

This report has been prepared at the request of the Central Darling Shire Council to provide an updated heritage assessment of the built heritage of the township of Wilcannia in the Central Darling Shire. A previous heritage study had been undertaken in 1996-98 by Godden Mackay Pty Ltd, *Central Darling Shire Cultural Resource and Tourism Study 1996*, and this current Heritage Survey has referred to the findings of this earlier study. Additional primary research has been undertaken to add to the information on individual places.

All aspects of cultural heritage – indigenous and non-indigenous – are significant to the community. However, this report does not cover indigenous heritage in Wilcannia as this is currently being assessed as a separate study.

The report follows the NSW Government Office of Environment and Heritage - Heritage Information Series – “Community Based Heritage Studies – A Guide “ (2013) which states:

- *A major premise of the community-based approach is that it provides an affordable means for communities to make a valuable contribution to the heritage study, with appropriate guidance from a heritage consultant.*
- *Members of the community work alongside the consultant for the duration of the project. They undertake research, nominate items and consider recommendations for managing and promoting their local heritage items in the future.*
- *Unlike other heritage study methodologies, ongoing community involvement gives an opportunity for the community to understand heritage management and council processes and to take substantial ownership of the study and its findings. This can reduce the likelihood of community conflict when the study recommends its list of heritage items to for the council to include in its local environmental plan (LEP).*

Funding for this project has been provided by the NSW Heritage Grants program and the Central Darling Shire.

1.2 Existing Heritage Initiatives in Wilcannia

The Central Darling Shire established a Heritage Advisory Service in 2007 and this service provides free architectural advice for property owners within the Shire area. The focus of this service has been on the upgrade of buildings within the centre of Wilcannia, and advice has also been provided in Menindee and White Cliffs. Since the introduction of this service, the town has seen progressive improvements of buildings, with new owners purchasing property. In addition, the service provided the impetus for Council to apply for Federal Government Economic Stimulus Package funding, with successful applications receiving funding for conservation works for two major buildings in the town centre: the former Post Office and the Wilcannia Council Chambers.

Associated with the Heritage Advisory Service is a Local Heritage Fund. Currently the Council contributes \$2 : \$1 funding (\$15,000 Council contribution, with \$7,500 contribution from the New South Wales Heritage Grants program), to stimulate conservation works within the Shire area. To date this has been focused on undertaking stone conservation and verandah repairs to buildings within the centre of Wilcannia.

Local community members (and the Wilcannia Community Tourism Association Incorporated) are actively involved with encouraging building upgrades and general community projects which retain the town's unique heritage. A current project being pursued is the reconstruction of the old wharf remains on the Darling River Banks.

1.3 The Study Process

The aims of the study were:

- To locate, research, evaluate and record Wilcannia's heritage places
- To visit and review all existing known items and review their listings on the LEP
- To provide the council and owners of heritage properties with directions for the management of heritage and to encourage its place in the future of Wilcannia
- Consider ways in which this history and the accessible heritage places can play a part in cultural tourism of the town

A public meeting was held in October 2016 in Wilcannia at the local Golf Club to present the aims of the study to interested parties from the local community.

In addition, the Heritage Survey outcomes have been greatly assisted by the input of local historian Chris Elliot, as a sub consultant for this project.

1.4 The State Heritage Inventory (SHI) data format

The NSW State Heritage Inventory (SHI) software package and existing SHI listings for the Central Darling Shire (and therefore items in Wilcannia) have been accessed as part of this report. Updated data entry into the SHI is proposed once the Shire has accepted the final report, and will be managed by Elizabeth Vines from McDougall and Vines.

In order to make the information on Wilcannia's heritage items accessible to the local community, individual building data sheets have been prepared as part of this report. As noted above, the information from these sheets will be uploaded onto the SHI.

1.5 Previous Heritage Reports and Sources of Information

Previous reports have been referred to including the Godden Mackay Pty Ltd, *Central Darling Shire Cultural Resource and Tourism Study 1996*, Redfern 1998 and the *Wilcannia, NSW, Main Street and Town Centre Interpretation Report*, November 2010. In addition, there have now been several conservation plans prepared for individual buildings in Wilcannia and the *Wilcannia Conservation Guidelines* May 2008. These are included in Section 6 – Sources of Information.

1.6 Three Year Heritage Strategy

The Central Darling Shire has a "Three Year Heritage Strategy 2014 – 2017" which outlines the objectives for heritage management in the Shire. The preparation of this report and undertaking a Community Based Heritage Survey is in line with Objective 2.0 of the Heritage Strategy – which outlines the need to Identify, List and Legally Protect Heritage Items in the Local Government Area.



View down Reid Street, March 2017



*Map showing location of Wilcannia in New South Wales
(source:wwwweb)*



MAP OF THE TOWN CENTRE



AERIAL PHOTO OF WILCANNIA AND DARLING RIVER