



MEDIA RELEASE

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National Trust expresses concern about Balranald's heritage items

The National Trust has expressed its concern to Balranald Shire Council about the lack of heritage items on the Balranald Local Environmental Plan 2009. Schedule 5 'Environmental Heritage' includes only one heritage item in the town of Balranald – The Balranald Fire Station at 123 Market Street.

Graham Quint, Advocacy Manager, said: "As 'the oldest settlement on the Lower Murrumbidgee', gazetted in 1851 it is difficult to accept that only one place of historic, aesthetic and/or social significance survives within Balranald, worthy of recognition as a heritage item."

The Trust has examined its archives in relation to Balranald and it does appear that the town has lost some of its most significant buildings over the years including: -

- the 1898 W. Vernon designed 'Sergeant's Residence' in Bank Street
- the old toll house on the bank of the Murrumbidgee River near Balranald Bridge
- the 1888 Colonial Architect designed Court House, cnr Market & River Streets

However, a significant number of places worthy of consideration for listing on the Schedule of Items of Environment Heritage do survive and they include, for example: -

- the pre 1887 Masonic Hall in Mayall Street (now Art Gallery)
- the Theatre Royal, licensed in November 1933, included on the Movie Theatre Heritage Register and currently being restored
- Balranald Railway Station (circa 1926)
- The AJS Bank, Court Street
- Catholic Church and School, c1875
- St Barnabas Anglican Church, 1873
- Balranald Goal, 1887
- Bridge House Hotel, Court Street, 1873

Graham Quint added: "In addition, we are aware of the former Yanga Homestead being acquired by the NSW Government for its natural and ecological values and the Lake Mungo National Park is a World Heritage Area. These cannot be omitted from the Schedule for the LEP."

In 2002, the National Trust produced its State of the Heritage Report based on information supplied by Councils across New South Wales. Regrettably, Balranald Shire Council did not respond and consequently the Trust is not aware whether Council has commissioned a comprehensive Heritage Study to support the preparation of its heritage list.

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