

## STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS (SEE)

### Proposal:

This Application is for the adaptive reuse of the existing 'miner's cottage' at 49 White Street Gulgong into a visitor's centre including tourist information, tea rooms, gifts, and souvenirs.

The house, once known as 'Highfield', has been used only for residential purposes from around the mid-1870s until it fell into disuse in recent years. It is now the only house on Red Hill. The Hill once contained as many as 14 houses. The building is a heritage item and is in the vicinity of the Red Hill Mining Precinct with its the 'Gulgong Mining Experience'. It is proposed that it will be managed in conjunction with that venue. Toilet amenities with disabled accessibility will be added.

Demolition of original or significant fabric will be minimal.

The buildings appearance within the streetscape and its setting will have only minor change.



Figure 1 Front (north) Elevation

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## Drawings

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The following architect's drawings are attached

Dwg 1: Concept Plan

Dwg 2: Existing Floor Plan

Dwg 3: Site Plan

Dwg 4: Roof Plan

Dwg 5: Elevations

Dwg 6: Servery layout

## Zoning & Compliance:

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In the MWC LEP 2012 the land is zoned RE1 Public Recreation.  
and permitted uses include education, café and community facility.

### **The Objectives of the zone are:**

- *To enable land to be used for public open space or recreational purposes.*
- *To provide a range of recreational settings and activities and compatible land uses.*
- *To protect and enhance the natural environment for recreational purposes.*

The proposal for a Community Visitors Centre complies with the objectives. Its purposes are also 'permitted with consent' including:

***Community facilities; Information and education, recreation facilities and cafe.***



### Likely impacts:

The site is not **biodiverse sensitive**. The land is generally cleared, former mining land. Trees in the vicinity include Peppercorns, Conifers and Elms along with shrubbery.



Figure 2: Site plan – aerial view

Minimal excavation for services and verandah posts is planned. The house is sited on grassland and there is no proposal to remove existing vegetation.

A site plan is included in the set of architect's drawings.

### Amenities

Toilet amenities suitable for disabled access are included. The proposal is for unisex toilets, and if the Visitor's Centre is judged as a Café by BCA standards, 1 closet would suit 100 males or 25 females. As a mixed group this amenity would be suitable for 18 women and 25 men.

The Visitors Centre can accommodate 20 people inside, and the outside could accommodate many more depending on chairs and tables and demonstration facilities.

Therefore 2 closets and 2 basins are planned which is suitable for a mixed group of 80 persons.

If this is an overestimation of Visitor numbers, the second toilet could be reserved for staff only.

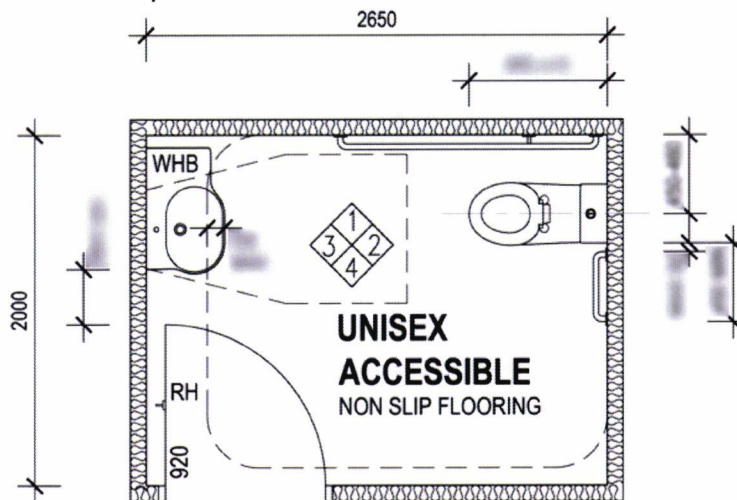


Figure 3 Typical accessible toilet floor plan to comply with AS1428

### Servery facilities:

The facility will be basically serving raw or pre-cooked foods. Foods that do not require cooking on site such as sandwiches, cakes, tea and coffee, milkshakes etc. However, food warming and possibly simple cooking such as scones or biscuits, are possible and an oven has been included.

Trade waste approval will be necessary but as a servery the requirement is likely only to be very minimal such as a sink strainer.

A layout plan is included below. Further detail drawings for the servery will be prepared at the construction certificate stage.

Refer attached drawings.



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### Building Scale and height:

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The existing residence is a single storey building, approximately 5.5 metres in height from ground level and therefore is well within the maximum height allowance.

### Heritage:

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The Red Hill House is a heritage listed item on the MWRC LEP 2012. It is item I 227. A separate document for Heritage Impact is included in the submission. The proposed works will have a minimal effect on heritage significance.

There will be no adverse effect on the amenity, views and solar access to any future neighbouring properties.



Figure 4 View from the west.

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## Access and Parking:

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*Council Aims:*

- *To ensure adequate areas for ingress and egress*
- *To provide sufficient and convenient parking*
- *To minimise adverse effects on the local amenity*

The former house will become a visitor's centre. Access is from the north via a cul-de-sac off White Road and from a carpark to the west. The use of existing parking areas will minimise environmental change. The building will be accessible from the North and the east via French Doors with a minimum opening of 850mm. If a designated accessible parking space is marked, a pathway to the building can be installed.

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## Built Form

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*Council Aim:*

- *To improve the visual quality of the overall built form and street scape*

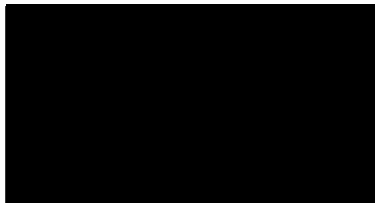
As this is an existing building there will be no external change in its form or presentation except minor alterations with the conversion of 2 windows to French doors and the addition of a small toilet block. This will be designed suitably for this heritage site.

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## Landscaping

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The existing landscape will be maintained. In the future it is hoped that the site can be fenced. A reinstatement of a picket fence across the north boundary and extended to the eastern boundary, with rural fencing to the remainder would be in keeping with the heritage setting.



Barbara Hickson  
Architect  
18<sup>th</sup> November 2020



Investigation of Significance  
Statements of Heritage Impact (SOHI)  
Adaptive re-use of Red Hill House  
Proposed Visitors Centre



Figure 1: image showing front (North) elevation of Red Hill House

**CLIENT: MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**ADDRESS: 49 WHITE STREET, LOT 1 SECTION 80 DP 758482.**

**Date: 18 November 2020**

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## Summary

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This investigation of significance and the following Statement of Heritage Impact is required because owner, Mid-Western Regional Council, intends to change the Red Hill House into a Visitor's Centre. Up until now the house has been used only for residential purposes until it fell into disuse in recent years.

The house is a locally listed heritage item at 49 White Street, Gulgong. It is the only house remaining on Red Hill that once contained as many as 14 houses. The building is now a stand-alone item and is in the vicinity of the Red Hill Mining Precinct with its the 'Gulgong Mining Experience'. It is also in the vicinity of the former Red Hill School, which is a locally listed Heritage item.

The Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI) report covers any effect that may alter the significance of the listed place. However, having an 'impact' on a heritage place does not mean that such a proposal cannot proceed. The description of the impact will enable MWR Council Planning staff, and their heritage adviser, to determine whether the impact is acceptable.



The re-adapted historic cottage will become a visitor's centre with tourist information, tea rooms, gifts, and souvenirs. There is ample existing parking at the site. Toilet amenities with disabled accessibility will be added.

Demolition will be minimal. The main changes to the building fabric will be the widening of some openings to suit disabled access and turning circles. Some fabric must be replaced that has been destroyed by white ants. Intrusive fabric including the bathroom, and the enclosed fibro lined verandah, added to the south of the building in the 1930-50s, will be removed. Historic windows and doors will be relocated within the building to suit new accessibility requirements. The kitchen, which is not historic, will be removed and a new servery and storeroom, installed. As far as possible, all original early fabric will be retained.

The building's appearance within the streetscape and its setting will have only minor change.

The important Aesthetic, Social and Cultural Significance of Red Hill house, and the former Red Hill School, in the vicinity, will remain unchanged. The overall heritage impact due to the proposed adaptive reuse of this building will be minimal. It will also enable the building to be better maintained into the future.

## Listings

**The Red Hill House is a heritage listed item on the MWRC LEP 2012. It is item I 227.**

Its statement of significance reads:

*An early freestanding timber house on Red Hill. The location has great historical significance being on the site of first gold which established the town of Gulgong. The cottage has a double gabled roof with box gutter between. It retains an original chimney.*

*The earliest or original façade faces north down Red Hill towards the town. This is an almost typical Victorian façade with bullnose verandah roof on timber posts, central door and double hung window to each side, however it is not quite symmetrical.*

*This house contributes to the important historical Red Hill Mining site.*

**The item is also within the Gulgong Conservation Area.**

Its statement of significance reads:

*Gulgong is an excellent example of gold rush era town where the aesthetics and layout of the town still reflect the social, geographic and economic forces which created it. It*

*has outstanding aesthetic qualities due in part to its hilltop location with narrow winding streets, original stone kerbing and an everchanging prospect with glimpses of the landscape beyond.*

*There are remaining physical representation the 1860-70 Gold rush era. Key remnant buildings in brick, stone and numerous lightweight materials relate back to the mid-Victorian era of the 1860-70s when the town sprung up quickly and gold seekers flocked to the locality. Museums utilise and interpret some of the earliest structures in the town.*

*Gulgong has important cultural connections from Bernhardt Otto Holtermann (1838-1885), a gold miner, and sponsor of historic photography; to Thomas Alexander Browne, alias Rolf Boldrewood famous for writing Robbery Under Arms; and one of Australia's most famous poets and short-story writers, Henry Lawson to name a few.*

*Also important to the descendants of the many gold miners and business suppliers to the Gold Rush representing numerous nationalities and created a strong sense of community and pride in the past.*

The Red Hill house fits into this statement being a 'physical representation the 1860-70 Gold rush era' relating back to 'the mid-Victorian era of the 1860-70s'.

Also located on Red Hill is another heritage item. The former Red Hill Central School, item I 346. Its statement of significance reads:

*Constructed in 1891-92 by Messrs Stoddart and Casimer of Mudgee, the school consisted of two large full brick classrooms under a gabled iron roof with decorative gables and an attached verandah space. Windows are timber framed double hung. The original design of the building, its development and the associated out-buildings demonstrate much about the way education developed over a century. Internal features of ventilations and heating give specific insights into the methods used for improved physical comfort.*

*The location of the school has great historical significance being on Red Hill, the site of first gold, which established the town of Gulgong. The school served as the public school for over 80 years after which it was readapted to new education purposes and from March 1995 became part of the Red Hill Environmental Education Centre.*

*The building is associated with many teachers and headmasters who were also contributors to the community and the local way of life.*

Possibly residents from the Red Hill house went to the Red Hill School.



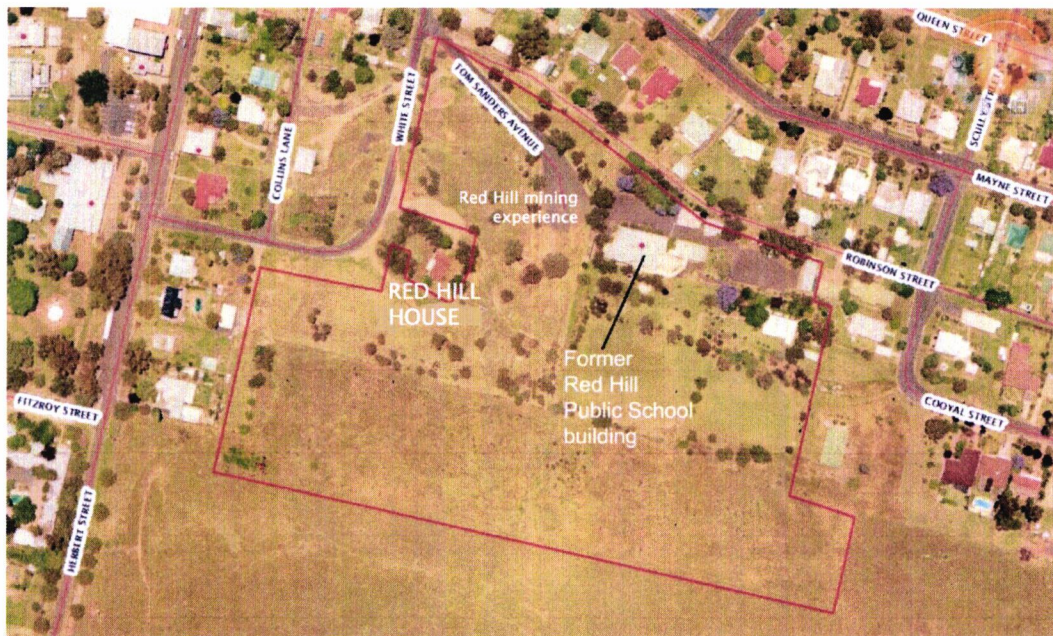


Figure 2 Aerial view showing Red Hill House and former School

## History

Settlers came to the Gulgong region from the 1820s, but it was the gold rush of the 1870s, after Tom Saunders found 14oz of gold on Red Hill, that swelled the population into a booming settlement, reaching 20,000 people by 1872.

The first major gold discovery in NSW was at Ophir near Orange in 1851 and by July that year Dr Kerr had found his hundred-weight nugget at Hargraves, near Mudgee.

Gulgong was gazetted as a goldfield in 1866 with small finds, but when Tom Saunders, one of Richard Rouse's shepherds, discovered gold at Red Hill, the Gulgong gold rush began in earnest.

The new rush was reported in 1870 : *'A new rush has taken place at Gulgong, The returns are reported to be handsome and there are five hundred diggers on the ground. Two boys have brought in a parcel of coarse gold to-day.'*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Empire newspaper 6 May 1870

Within the news of the period there are some specific references to residents on Red Hill. The Sydney Mail: 6 November 1875:

*Gulgong and Mudgee proposed that the Government be requested to appoint a Commission to inquire into the sanitary state of Gulgong, and especially having reference to the house of Mr. Plunkett, on Red Hill. The proposer of this motion, determined to carry out the matter, interviewed by letter the Gold-fields member, Mr. Buchanan.*

In the same article in 1875 it stated at this time there were 14 houses on Red Hill.

The Mudgee Guardian 27 July 1939 notes:

*Mr. Clarrie Gilbert was born At Red Hill, Gulgong, 61 years ago, (1878).*

In February 1904 Mr John Kelly, a local tailor, purchased from Mr Blunt, the right and interest in the mining tenement, of the house and fencing of a quarter acre known as Highfield's, and situated on Red Hill.<sup>2</sup>

John (Jack) Kelly was a bandsman and a tailor. He married Joanna and in 1899 they had a son John, followed by son William (1901) and a son Joseph (1903).<sup>3</sup> (Possibly Joseph did not survive to adulthood as it is stated the family had 2 sons and a daughter). The sons were registered births in Gulgong.

Kelly rented business premises around the town and his Tailor Shop was variously located at 'next to the Theatre' in 1901, 'opposite the Prince of Wales Hotel' in 1903, and in 'Herbert Street' in 1918.

Kelly as a member of the Gulgong band, made uniforms for the members of the Band in 1902.<sup>4</sup>

A Conservation Management Plan for Red Hill, (April 2002) written by Dr A. Cremin, an archaeologist and academic noted the house on the Hill and stated "in 1886 Red Hill was set aside as a mining site which effectively prohibited any purchase on it, and therefore any dwellings." However, we know that there were already houses here in 1875. Presumably, some houses including this one, built before 1886 remained on the Hill for some time after. Mr. Blunt was possibly the first owner of this Red Hill house.

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<sup>2</sup> *Gulgong Advertiser - February 4th 1904*

<sup>3</sup> Birth and Death records.

<sup>4</sup> *Gulgong Advertiser - January 17th 1902*



In 1916 John Kelly became 'the owner of improvements on the land '(i.e. This house on Red Hill) after he applied for 20.5 perches of land, which was successfully obtained.<sup>5</sup> The house was surveyed in 1915 and was fenced with a picket fence to the north. (Its front façade.) The east was a paling fence and the other boundaries post and wire fences.

The Mudgee Guardian and The Gulgong Advertiser noted the death of Mr. J Kelly on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1922

*Although it was well known that Mr. J. Kelly, Sen. was in a dangerous condition the news of his death, which took place on Sunday night, was somewhat unexpected.*

*Mr. Kelly was taken to the district hospital about a fortnight ago and was operated on for appendicitis. He made very little progress towards recovery, although at times there appeared to be a decided change for the better. The deceased, who had been in business as a tailor in Gulgong for many years, was one of those men who, although he did not enter into the public life of the town took a keen interest in its welfare. He took a keen interest, too, in politics and always enjoyed a friendly argument. He was a man with many friends, but not a single enemy.*

*The deceased, who was 53 years of age, leaves a wife and family of two sons and one daughter. The funeral took place at Gulgong on Monday, the remains being interred in the R.C. portion of the general cemetery*

The house and land then passed to his widow Johanna Kelly in 1923, and then to their son William Kelly and Mary Laughton in 1943 (probably his sister).

John Kelly junior also became a tailor. He commenced his apprenticeship under Mr Richard Harrowell, and was associated with many big firms in Sydney. However, he eventually also took up residence in Gulgong along with his wife and daughter and ran his tailor shop in Herbert Street.<sup>6</sup>

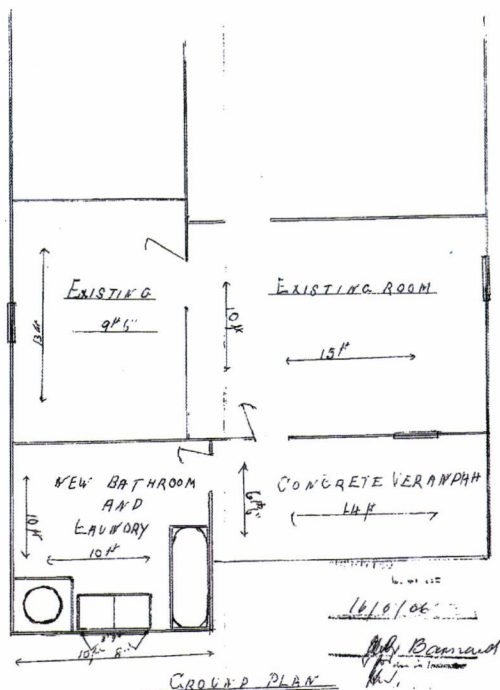
In 1957 the house on Red Hill was sold to Lloyd Alva Donnelly a grazier of Gulgong. During Donnelly's time, in 1966, the house was added to with a rear verandah and a new bathroom.

In 1978 it passed to Kathleen Dale from Goolma. It currently belongs to the Mid-Western Regional Council.

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<sup>5</sup> A Conservation Management Plan for Red Hill, (April 2002) written by Dr Aedeem Cremin.

<sup>6</sup> *Gulgong Advertiser* – 27 August 1918



PLAN OF BATHROOM  
AND LAUNDRY  
FOR  
MR E DONNELLY

16/10/66  
R. V. Sadgona  
Architect

Figure 3 Floor Plan: Bathroom and rear verandah added in 1966 by Donnelly.



Figure 4 Rear view of house showing bathroom and extended verandah.



It seems likely from the fabric of the building and its history there are 5 main stages of construction.

1. The north facing wing. C. 1875-80 (With some freestanding or separated kitchen and ablutions now removed). Owned probably by Mr. Blunt.
2. The next section with a large chimney in the kitchen area was added and owned by John Kelly Tailor in C. 1916.
3. A verandah extension and altered roof lines c. 1930s when owned by John Kelly's widow Joanna Kelly
4. A new back verandah and the installation of the bathroom in June 1966. The house was then owned by Lloyd A. Donnelly and he submitted plans for the works.
5. Rear verandah enclosed. C. late 1970s.

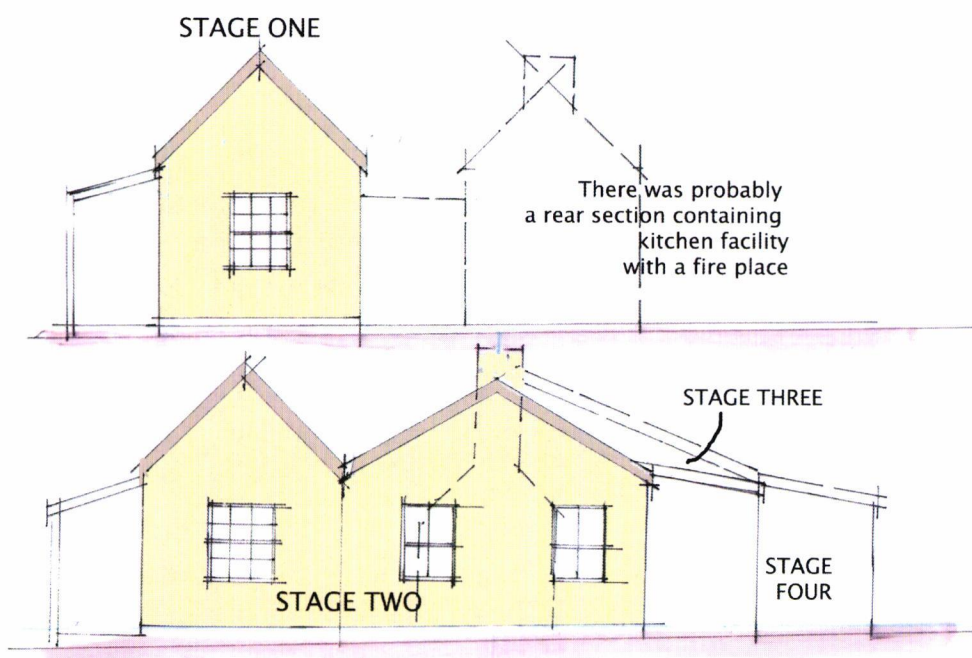


Figure 5 Diagram illustrating main stages of construction.

The above diagram illustrates the main stages of construction which is a combination of historical information and physical evidence. Stages one and two are the historically significant fabric.

## Physical description

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This house presents as a typical Victorian era house that was built in stages as services and economic opportunity changed.

Starting with a gable ended timber framed cottage with weatherboard lining, and a timber stumped floor, the house faced north. Windows were double hung with 6 lights per pane. Additional family space and a generous chimney were added to in the south over the early federation period. This too was timber framed but generally with corrugated iron lining externally, and timber windows, still double hung, but 2 lights per pane. Internal walls were timber framed and board lined.

Further additions in timber frame and some Fc and fibro linings accommodated a bathroom and a renovated kitchen area. The corrugated iron roof was altered and extended at each stage but remained gable ends. (The posts of the verandah at the front were renewed. It is not known if the bullnose iron verandah roof is original, but it does appear to be).

## Understanding significance

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A statement of significance has previously been written but in the light of additional historical information the statement is re-examined below.

This assessment uses the heritage criteria provided by the Heritage Branch of the Department of Planning. In this way we examine the ways the place is of value to the community

### **HERITAGE CRITERIA**

**4.1.1 Criterion (a)** – a place is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history.

This early freestanding timber house on Red Hill represents a period and place when many houses or dwellings were once constructed with a minimum of legality.

The location, Red Hill, has great historical significance being the site of first gold rush which established the town of Gulgong.

**4.1.2 Criterion (b)** - an item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history.



The earliest stage of the construction of this house includes an original façade facing north down Red Hill towards the town, and probably relates to the significant mining period. However, the longest association of the house is with the J. Kelly family of Gulgong tailors.

**4.1.3) Criterion (c)** - an item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).

The building is a modest residence, built over many stages, but presenting as a typical Victorian façade with central door and double hung window to each side, with a bullnose verandah roof. However, it is not quite symmetrical which was usual for the period.

**4.1.4) Criterion (d)** - an item has strong or special association with a community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. No Used

**4.1.5) Criterion (e)** - an item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history. Not used

**4.1.6) Criterion (f)** - an item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history. Not Used

**4.1.7) Criterion (g)** - an item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's.

This house is of typical construction for Gulgong; a light-weight house, timber framed, using what was probably local cypress pine. Over the year's additions were added, each slightly different and representing their own periods.

## REVISED STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

*The north facing wing is an early freestanding timber house on Red Hill, originally a miner's house. Aesthetically it belongs to the Victorian era with its central door and double hung window to each side and a bullnose verandah roof.*

*The location has great historical significance being on the site of first gold which established the town of Gulgong.*

*Additions in the Federation period turned the house into a more substantial house with a generous chimney and represents a period of commercial affluence having been owned and extended by the J Kelly family of tailors.*

## Heritage Objectives

### Heritage objectives for significant places can be summarised as follows

- To conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and places.
- To minimise the alteration of significant fabric of a building or place.
- Minimise the disturbance of a significant site.
- Manage the effect of new developments in the vicinity of a heritage item.

These objectives are met in this proposal. The house will be re-adapted to a new purpose which will encourage suitable repairs and maintenance to be carried out on this heritage item. It will enable community and visitor access, allowing people to more fully appreciate this heritage item and enable it to be brought up to date and relevant for public service and accessibility.



Figure 6 West side view of Red Hill house.



## Statement of Heritage Impact

**Date:** 18 November 2020

**Prepared by** Barbara Hickson Architect and Heritage Adviser PO Box 610 Mudgee NSW.

Phone: 0263721186

**Prepared for:** Mid-Western Regional Council

**Address and property description of the proposed development:** 49 White Street, Lot 1 Section 80 DP 758482.

### **A brief description of proposal.**

The proposal is the conversion of an existing residence, currently unused, into a visitor's centre to serve the community in Gulgong as a tourist facility with refreshments and toilet amenities. It will augment the existing Red Hill mining experience, make excellent use of an existing un-used resource, and provide an additional heritage experience.

<b>1. why the item is of heritage significance</b>	<p>The Red Hill House is of heritage cultural and historic significance.</p> <p><i>The north facing wing was an early freestanding timber house on Red Hill, a miner's house. Aesthetically it belongs to the Victorian era with its central door and double hung window to each side. The location has great historical significance being on the site of first gold which established the town of Gulgong.</i></p> <p><i>Additions in the Federation period to the house turned it into a more substantial house with a generous chimney, representing a period of commercial affluence, having been owned and extended by the J Kelly family of tailors.</i></p>
<b>2. what positive impact will the proposed works have on its significance.</b>	<p>The readaptation to a new purpose which will encourage suitable repairs and maintenance to be carried out and enable community and visitor access allowing them to experience and appreciate this heritage item.</p>
<b>3. what negative impact will the proposed works have on its significance.</b>	<p>It will be no longer used in its traditional role as a residence. Two facades will be altered, converting windows to French doors to enable the required access width. However, this change in appearance will only be a small change and still be in keeping with</p>

	the typical houses of the day.
<b>4. what measures are proposed to mitigate the negative impacts</b>	<p>The changes for readaptation are minimised so that the house and its rooms can still be recognised. One room will be devoted to being a museum exhibit, illustrating its history as a residence.</p> <p>The works will have only minor external changes including the removal of unsympathetic additions to the South. (Removing fibro clad additions and the late 20<sup>th</sup> c enclosed verandah) This will have an overall positive effect on significance.</p>
<b>5. why were more sympathetic solutions not viable.</b>	<p>This is a very sympathetic solution.</p> <p>The house is isolated and no longer a suitable place as a residence.</p>
<b>6. Have all options for retention and adaptive re-use been explored? Can significant elements be retained?</b>	All significant fabric is retained so far as possible. Eg Original windows removed are re-used on the site.
<b>7. Has the advice of a heritage consultant been sought?</b>	This document has been prepared by a heritage Consultant.
<b>8. If demolition is a result of the poor condition of the fabric, can it be repaired?</b>	Some demolition is the result of white ant attack. But generally, this deteriorated fabric is pine lining boards that were not original. The intrusive fabric at the rear is also to be demolished and will improved the aesthetic significance of the house.
<b>9. Is the partial demolition minimised? (e.g. creating large square openings in internal walls rather than removing the wall altogether)?</b>	<p>The partial demolition is minimised. Walls are opened to allow accessibility.</p> <p>Intrusive fabric is removed.</p>
<b>10. Does the proposed use, contribute to the significance of the heritage</b>	Yes. It will also enable community and visitor access, enabling the public to fully appreciate this heritage item.

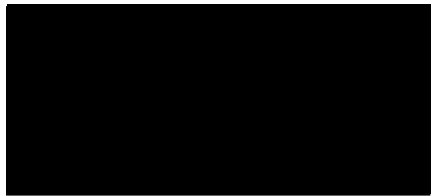


<b>item?</b>	
<b>11. Is the space around the heritage item large enough to allow for the retention of its significance?</b>	There is no change to the perimeter except for addition external toilet facility. This has been designed to fit in with the present aesthetics and materials.
<b>12. Does the new development affect views to, and from, the heritage items in the vicinity?</b>	No Change to views to and from the item. Therefore, no change to the effect on the heritage Item (The School) in the vicinity.
<b>13. Does the new development affect archaeological deposits</b>	Works are not expected to disturb any archaeological deposit. If any deposits are found work should cease and council notified.
<b>14. Existing landscape elements</b>	There are no changes proposed to established landscape elements.
<b>15. Signage</b>	Signage will be minimal. To future separate proposal.

## Recommendations

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- Reuse salvaged original timber lining boards internally where white-ant damaged materials must be removed.
- Archaeology: Include in the construction certificate requirements the standard archaeological clause re the need to notify the Council and their heritage adviser should any relic be exposed in the process of the work.
- An Interpretations Plan: The museum room will allow for an interpretation display. A board describing the significance of Red Hill and the cottage should be incorporated into the final construction plans.
- Re-establish a fence around the property using traditional forms with a picket fence across the North side and picket or rural fence to the other boundaries as per its former use.



Barbara Hickson

ARCHITECT AND HERITAGE ADVISER

18/11/2020