

## PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF THE FORMER MORAWA SHIRE OFFICE BUILDING AND MORAWA TOWN HALL

The Former Morawa Shire Office (1929/30) and the Morawa Town Hall Building (1939) are significant heritage buildings in the Morawa townscape, and also in the State of Western Australia with the buildings being elevated to the State Register of Heritage Places in 2004.

### Form

The buildings have significant presence in their own right, so it was felt that any new development should not seek to overpower the existing buildings.

As the existing Inter War Pre Classical/Functionalist style of the buildings is characterised by plain surfaces, simple geometric shapes and contrasting horizontal vertical and horizontal motifs, it was felt that the form of any new building should be understated but drawing on the same general lines as the existing buildings.

Heritage policy supports the use of contrasting materials in these situations; however the proposed materials still stay within the expectations of the style.

The transparency of the new front facade and foyer space was intended to provide vision of the courtyard created between the two buildings to create a point of interest for passers-by in Prater Street who might then be drawn into the place.

### Function

The two buildings together have a substantial floor area, and rather than construct large amounts of new floor area it was felt that the Shire would be better served by improving the functionality of the existing buildings and adding small areas of new building in order to facilitate this. This was accommodated through:

- **Common Entry** - The Town Hall and Shire Office have different floor levels and both buildings are difficult to service with compliant universal (disability) access that does not compromise the appearance of the buildings. By introducing a common new entry foyer the differing floor level is able to be bridged and compliant universal access introduced through the main entry, which is very important. The foyer also serves as the division for security between the Hall and Office buildings meaning each half of the building can be utilised separate of the other without compromising security.
- **Common Ablutions** - The existing ablutions do not meet current code requirements and require replacing. Given the nature of the use of the buildings, by combining ablutions for both buildings replication was avoided and the numbers of fixtures rationalised. We also felt it was important for the use of the Hall that the toilets were able to be accessed without having to do so from within the Hall.

As they have been laid out, it is possible for them to be used simultaneously by users of both the Hall and Lesser Hall and the spaces within the Shire Office building without disruption to other users.

- **Courtyard** - By converting the previous dead space between the two buildings into an active courtyard space it effectively provides the facility with an additional outdoor room.

Opening up the east wall of the Hall to a deck area in the courtyard allows the space to be used as a break-out space for functions in the Hall.

Linking the space to the Cafeteria space created in the Shire Office building allows that facility to spill out into the courtyard with seating and tables.

The link directly through from the Foyer allows users to enter directly to the Courtyard as a stand-alone function space, or then on into others spaces as an alternate entry.

- Storage - The addition of storage adjacent to existing spaces means that existing building areas previously unusable because they served as storage are now freed up for their intended uses.

In particular, the existing Hall Foyer would be available to serve both the Hall and Lesser Hall. The converted Council Chambers would be available for use by multiple different groups as their equipment could be stored outside of the space and would not be an impediment to other user groups.

The linking of the buildings through the courtyard and new foyer means that it is possible for the whole facility to be treated as one venue for large events such as the Morawa Art Show and Exhibition; or otherwise treated as a venue of smaller spaces for multiple different simultaneous uses.

### **Parking**

The layout of the vehicle parking areas has been formalised to accommodate not only the larger 4WD and SUV vehicles common in the regions but also caravans and large RVs.

Priority has been given to preserving as many of the existing trees as possible.



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Bruce Sherwood - Principal