

***A report to inform the proposed
Boulia Shire Planning Scheme***

ON

**POTENTIAL PLACES OF LOCAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE
IN THE BOULIA SHIRE**

November 2019

Boulia Shire Council with the assistance of officers of the
Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning

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Executive Summary

The *Queensland Heritage Act 1992* (Heritage Act) requires local governments to identify places of cultural heritage significance within their local government areas.

Local heritage places can be identified by a local government in a planning scheme. A planning scheme can also be used as the regulatory instrument by which a council can exert a degree of management over the future development of local heritage places, in order to protect the cultural heritage values of places.

Boulia Shire Council (Council) has commenced the process of preparing and proposing a new planning scheme, which provides an opportunity to review the one local heritage place presently identified in the Boulia Shire and improve the extent of protection of cultural heritage significant to the local area.

Within the time and resource constraints of the planning scheme project and consequently of this report, a desktop investigation of potential places has been undertaken and Council has decided to identify a total of 7 local heritage places in its proposed new planning scheme.

The places to be identified are generally in the current ownership or management of Council. It was considered important and appropriate to more thoroughly investigate and consult before identifying places which are presently privately owned or used in the operation of a business enterprises or other community service.

This does not prevent or restrict future investigation, assessment or consideration of other potential places of cultural heritage significance from being identified. Consistent with Council's strategic planning objectives, this does represent a staged improvement through the planning framework, for the protection and preservation of the cultural heritage of the Boulia Shire.

Context

On 20 December 2017, Council resolved to make a new planning scheme for its local government area under section 18 of the *Planning Act 2016* (Planning Act). The process for making a new planning scheme is prescribed in the letter issued under section 18(3) of the Planning Act, by its chief executive to Council on 11 April 2018.

Section 112 of the Heritage Act requires local governments to identify places of cultural heritage significance within their local government areas, either in a planning scheme or in a local heritage register. Once identified, a place is referred to as a “local heritage place” for the purpose of the interpreting and applying the Heritage Act and the Planning Act.

Council does not presently have or maintain a local heritage register.

The Bouliā Shire Planning Scheme 2006 presently in effect identifies and provides a degree of regulatory protection to a single local heritage place being the Bouliā Cemetery (Lot 36 on WI10).

The current project to prepare and propose a new planning scheme provides an opportunity for Council to review and reconsider the identification of local heritage places.

The Council’s strategic vision to be reflected in the planning scheme is:

Heritage places and landscapes of cultural significance either in built form or natural sites are of significant importance to the Bouliā shire.

The shire is rich in both Aboriginal, early European and Chinese cultural heritage in the form of landmarks, sacred sites, historic buildings and artefacts. The unique historic, cultural and architectural qualities of places and artefacts are considered valuable and contribute to:

- *the character and identity of the shire*
- *the wellbeing and identity of its people past, present and future;*
- *where culturally appropriate, can serve as a valuable tourist attraction.*

Plan making context

Section 121 of the Heritage Act and Part 8, Schedule 10 of the *Planning Regulation 2017* read together with relevant provisions of the Planning Act mean that where a local government uses a planning scheme to identify local heritage places, the planning scheme should also include relevant provisions for the assessment of proposed development on a local heritage place.

The process for making the new planning scheme, includes requiring the Planning Minister approval any decision of Council to ultimately adopt the new planning scheme. A consideration of the Planning Minister in deciding to give such approval includes whether the planning scheme appropriately integrates the State interest policies. These are stated in the State Planning Policy July 2017 (SPP). The SPP includes a headline statement on cultural heritage:

The cultural heritage significance of heritage places and heritage areas, including places of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage, is conserved for the benefit of the community and future generations.

The SPP then lists 6 state interest policies required to be integrated in planning and development outcomes. In relation to local heritage places these are:

SPP—Cultural heritage, Policy 4

Local heritage places and local heritage areas important to the history of the local government area are identified, including a statement of the local cultural heritage significance of the place or area.

SPP—Cultural heritage, Policy 5

Development of local heritage places or local heritage areas does not compromise the cultural heritage significance of the place or area by:

- (a) *avoiding adverse impacts on the cultural heritage significance of the place or area; or*

(b) *minimising and mitigating unavoidable adverse impacts on the cultural heritage significance of the place or area.*

SPP—Cultural heritage, Policy 6

The conservation and adaptive reuse of local heritage places and local heritage areas are facilitated so that the cultural heritage significance is retained.

Project context

Council has been encouraged to make a new planning scheme, as part of a combined initiative lead by the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning (DSDMIP), together with the local governments that coordinate through the Central Western Queensland Remote Area Planning and Development Board (RAPAD), as well as other rural and remote local governments across Queensland.

The initiative involves preparing new, contemporary planning schemes for up to 15 rural and remote local governments across Queensland, based on a model document developed by DSDMIP and tailored as appropriate to reflect the locational context and achieve the strategic planning objectives of the individual local government.

Regionally based DSDMIP officers are undertaking drafting in accordance with strategic direction and instructions from the local governments and providing plan making guidance to the local governments. The planning scheme ultimately however, is to be owned and endorsed for adoption by the local government.

As part of the Boulia Shire Planning Scheme Project, this document has been drafted by DSDMIP officers but is to be finalised and endorsed by Council.

In drafting this document, DSDMIP officers have:

- liaised with the Department of Environment and Science (DES) to collate a list of potential places for further investigation and consideration with respect to local cultural heritage significance for the Boulia Shire;
- undertaken desktop and online research to collate locational, ownership and historical information about each place;
- provided a recommendation to Council, based on the information collated as to whether each place on the list should be considered for inclusions in the new planning scheme as a local heritage place;
- sought determination from Council as to which places are to be included in the new planning scheme as local heritage places;
- considered the relevant provisions in the pre-consultation draft of the new planning scheme;
- had regard to the State interest policies in the State Planning Policy July 2017.

It should be noted that the DSDMIP officers involved in drafting this document are not qualified cultural heritage experts and do not purport to have undertaken a detailed or on-site cultural heritage survey of the potential places.

It should also be noted that this document has been prepared to inform the drafting of a new planning scheme in the context of a low budget, low resource project for an area considered to bare low planning risks from potential development.

It is intended that the outcomes of this report will deliver an improvement in the recognition and preservation of places of local cultural heritage significance for the Boulia Shire, compared to that afforded by the existing planning scheme in effect.

It is not intended that the outcomes of this report are exhaustive or mitigate the potential for further investigation, consideration and identification of additional local heritage places in the future.

Assessment criteria and statements of cultural heritage significance

When assessing places of local cultural heritage significance, the definition of “cultural heritage significance” in the Heritage Act should be considered:

***cultural heritage significance**, of a place or feature of a place, means its aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific, social or other significance to the present generation or past or future generations.*

It is also appropriate to establish a criteria by which cultural heritage significance can be measured. Drawing on the criteria prescribed in the Heritage Act for assessing places for inclusion in the Queensland Heritage Register as a State heritage place and adopting the guidance for local governments identifying local heritage places in the DES publication [Guideline: Assessing cultural heritage significance – Using the cultural heritage criteria](#) (2013), it is recommended that Council apply the following:

Criteria for assessing local cultural heritage significance of a place

- A. The place or area is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the local government area’s history.
- B. The place or area demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the local government area’s cultural heritage.
- C. The place or area has potential to yield information that will contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the local government area’s history.
- D. The place or area is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places.
- E. The place or area is important because of its aesthetic significance to the local community.
- F. The place or area is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technological achievement at a particular period.
- G. The place or area has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
- H. The place or area has special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organisation of importance in the local area’s history.

When identifying a local heritage place, the following relevant matters about the place should be described:

- enough information to identify the location and boundaries of the place
- a statement about the cultural heritage significance of the place.

The criteria above, which are satisfied by a place identified as a local heritage place in the new planning scheme, can then be used to inform the statement about the cultural heritage significance of the place.

Potential places of local cultural heritage significance

The following is a collation of the desktop and online research results for each of the potential places of local cultural heritage significance compiled by DSDMIP in consultation with DES. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of potential places, but merely comprises those compiled for further consideration within the time and resource constraints of the project. The potential places are addressed in alphabetical order of place name.

Native Police Barracks

Location description/address: Burke River

Real property description: Lot 3560 on SP 256833

Tenure: Reserve

Ownership information: Located on the property named as Strathelbiss

Historical information:

From DES Notes for *QHR Place ID 601230*: nil.

Historic information: source: Boulia Shire Council website:

Qld Police Museum on Feb 6, 2018 @ 11:00am

Boulia was gazetted in 1879 when a reserve for the purposes of a township was set aside in the vicinity of the Boulia Waterhole, by the Burke River.

The first record of a police presence in Boulia is noted at the beginning of 1881, when it appears a police station operated briefly, before closing down and reopening later that year. The station was manned by three constables and one tracker.

Further police support was provided by a detachment of Native Mounted Police led by Sub Inspector Ernest Eglinton. Eglinton patrolled the Burke River area from 1878 until he was appointed Police Magistrate at Boulia on 22 March 1884. He held this post until 1888 when he was transferred to Port Douglas.

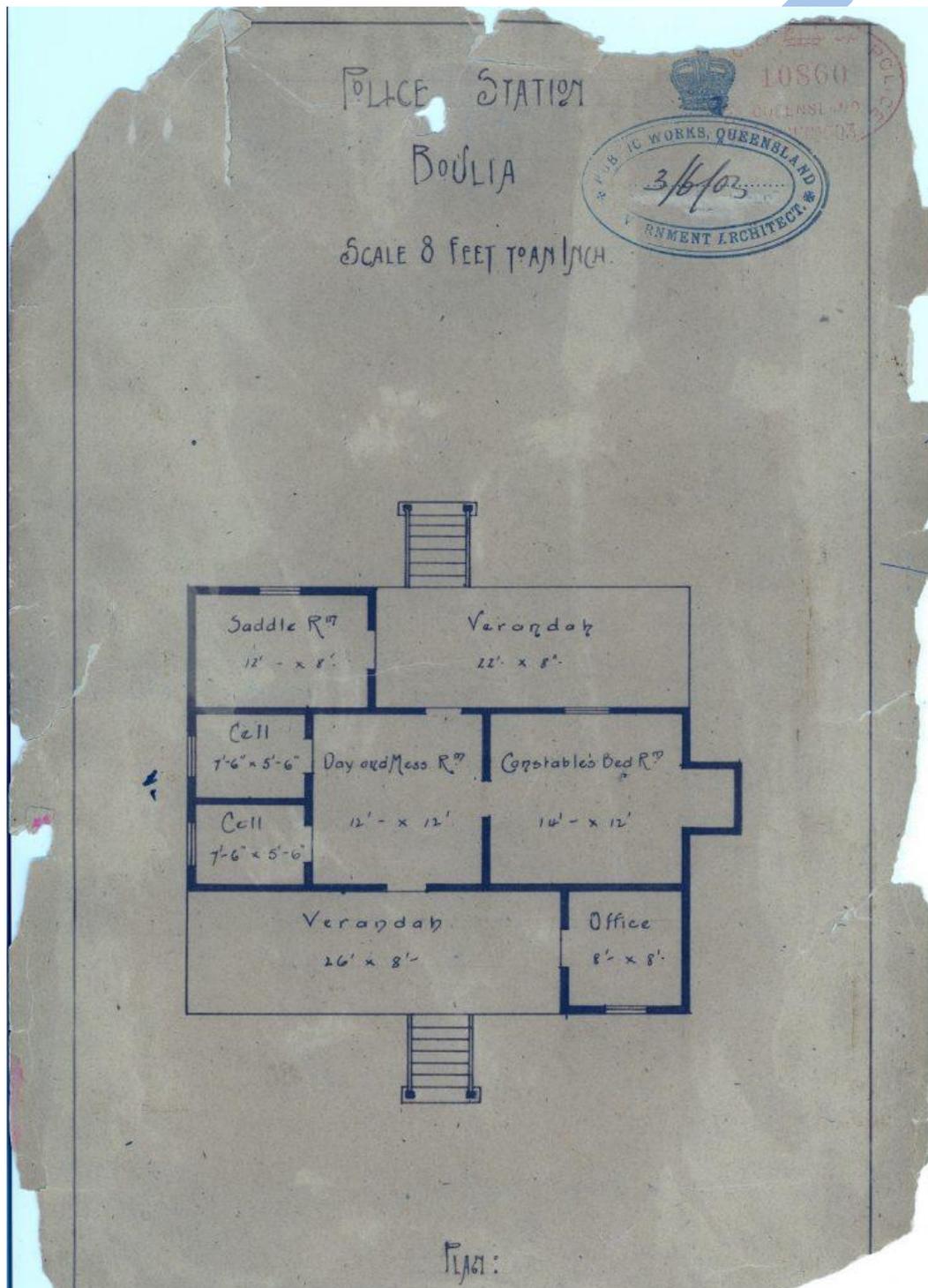
On 29 January 1883, a Reserve for Police Purposes was gazetted in Boulia. The total area was three acres, and comprised of Allotments 3 to 8 of Section 3. A police station was then erected at a cost of £770. On the 8 January 1885, tenders were called for the erection of a new court house on the police reserve at Boulia. The court house was completed by 1886 at a cost of £1,865.

In December 1894, the Commissioner of Police, reported to the Colonial Secretary, that due to the recent decision to transfer the headquarters of the Gregory District from Cloncurry to a more central position at Boulia, accommodation would be needed for the Sub Inspector. It was ascertained that a four roomed weatherboard house, with hipped roof, a 10-foot verandah all round, a detached kitchen and three large tanks would be required. Boulia police station records do not indicate if the building was built.

On the 8 May 1897, Inspector Brannelly inspected the station and found it to be clean and in fair order. He held a parade under arms, where Sub Inspector McNamara, Acting Sergeant O'Connor, and Constables Tracey, Peters and Leonard were present. It was noted that stump caps were required for the court house and barracks to prevent white ants going into these buildings. The police dray also required overhauling and a coat of paint.

In July 1901, the Boulia Divisional Board applied for the transfer of one quarter of an acre of the Police Reserve to the Board. The eastern end of the Police Reserve facing Herbert Street, and adjoining allotment 2 was surrendered without objection.

Sub Inspector John Quilter inspected the station in November 1906, and described the barracks as consisting of four rooms, and two cells, of galvanised iron and weatherboards. The detached kitchen was described as being built of slabs, which was in a tumbledown and dangerous condition as it was propped up all round with large logs. The privy consisted of a few old bags nailed to bush timber, and there was no bathroom. The entire premises were in a dilapidated condition and not worth repairing. New buildings were urgently needed. He also remarked, "As most of the stations in the Boulia District have been sold to a big southern buyer who has removed most of the cattle from the District, and with them a large number of employees, hence crime is on the decrease. The country around Boulia is fairly well watered and grassed at present".



In 1907, Sub Inspector John McGrath reported that a new building was required at Boulia to replace the old barracks and cells which had been eaten away by white ants. New barracks could not be erected for under £700. He noted that the court house at Boulia was large with three offices at the back. He suggested that two of the offices could be occupied by the two constables and used as barracks. He also stated that the court house was only occupied by police as offices. Chief Inspector Urquhart stated that he preferred to keep the police station separate from the court house.

At the end of August 1908, the new barracks and cells built of wood and iron had been completed. There were five rooms, a kitchen and bathroom. The two cells were separate from the barracks.

In June 1912, the Boulia Shire Council requested that the eastern half of allotment 8 of section 3, being part of the Police Reserve of 2 and ¼ acres be reserved for council purposes. The Council required the land to build dray sheds at the rear of the Shire Hall. The land was transferred without objection from Police administration.

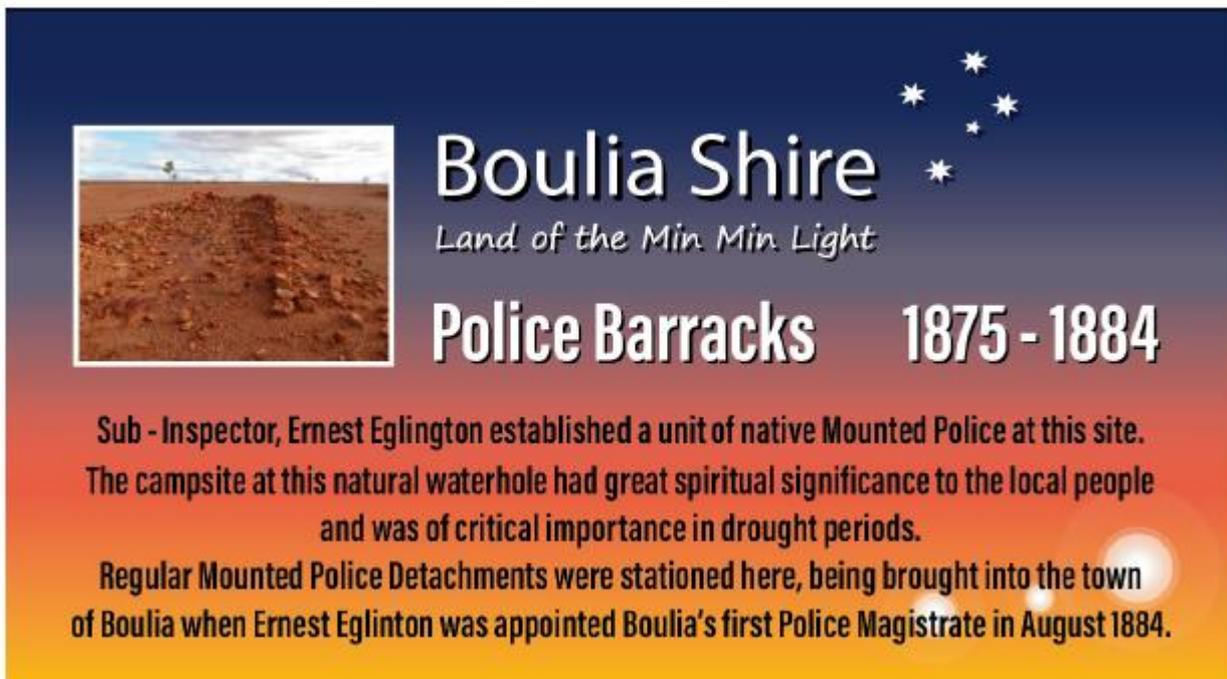
On the 13 October 1921, a damaging storm blew 18 sheets of iron off the old police station barracks, which was used as a storeroom and the tracker's quarters. Some minor damage was done to the newer police quarters, and the closets of both the police quarters and court house were blown over. Constable Hudd and Constable Lewis retrieved 11 sheets of iron and were forced to pull down a part of the back verandah of the old quarters to make up enough iron to cover the roof of the same building.

During 1932 an additional verandah was erected on the eastern side of the police quarters to provide much needed shade during the summer months.

In July 1934, Acting Sergeant Rountree reported on the condition of the police buildings. He recorded the old police barracks as being in a dilapidated condition, but being used to house the Tracker, stores and saddlery. The court house where the police office was housed was in a fair condition after recent painting. The police residential quarters were also in good repair.

Current status:

The remains of the police barracks and signage identifying the site is present.



Boulia Shire
Land of the Min. Min. Light

Police Barracks 1875 - 1884

Sub - Inspector, Ernest Eglinton established a unit of native Mounted Police at this site. The campsite at this natural waterhole had great spiritual significance to the local people and was of critical importance in drought periods.

Regular Mounted Police Detachments were stationed here, being brought into the town of Boulia when Ernest Eglinton was appointed Boulia's first Police Magistrate in August 1884.



A view of one of the surviving stone buildings at the Boulia NMP barracks (photo by Iain Davidson, July 2016)

Assessment criteria:

A. The place or area is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the local government area's history

Recommendation: That this place continues to be identified as a local heritage place in the new planning scheme and that the area be preserved in its natural state.

Boulia Stone House

Location description/address: Pituri Street, Boulia

Real property description: Lot 35 & 36 on B2672 (-22.91363621, 139.907848)

Tenure: Freehold

Ownership information: Boulia Shire Council

Historical information:

This property is identified as a State heritage place on the Queensland Heritage Register (QHR) as place 600039. The QHR listing includes information regarding the history and cultural heritage significance of this place. The QHR listing also includes photographs of this place. The QHR listing can be accessed at <https://apps.des.qld.gov.au/heritage-register/detail/?id=600039#>

Current status:

This place is a State Heritage Place on the Queensland Heritage Register. The QHR listing can be accessed at <https://apps.des.qld.gov.au/heritage-register/detail/?id=600039#>

This site is included in the Boulia Heritage Complex which houses farm machinery, indigenous artefacts, early pioneer history and fossils. Further information is contained on the Boulia Shire Council website <https://www.boulia.qld.gov.au/tourism/boulia-heritage-complex>.



Boullia Stone House from N (2016); Paddy Waterson

Assessment criteria:

The Queensland Heritage Register identifies that this place has State heritage significance based on criteria:

Criterion A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Queensland's history.

Built in the mid 1880s, the house reflects the growth of Boullia and district after the consolidation of properties under the Crown Land Act 1884, is illustrative of the boom in sheep and wool production after the drought, and is evidence of the role of Boullia as a commercial centre for the district since that time.

Reputedly taking four years to build, it is an example of the utilisation of local materials for construction in remote areas, and is part of the late nineteenth century stone building tradition of central Australia which stretched into western Queensland.

Criterion B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of Queensland's cultural heritage.

The Stone House is recognised as one of Boulia's oldest surviving buildings, and is also the only stone building extant in the township. It is greatly valued by the local community as one of their few identified historic places. Because of the role they the house has played in the commercial and public life of the town, this value is demonstrated by its purchase by the local Council, and its establishment as the local museum.

Criterion E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance.

The Stone House is recognised for its aesthetic qualities, and its contribution to the character of the Boulia townscape. Much of the early building fabric still exists, and the external stone walls in particular reflect the colours and textures of the region.

Criterion H

The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organisation of importance in Queensland's history.

Before being bought by the Boulia Shire Council, the house remained in the Jones family for at least 70 of its 90 years, and members of that family still live in the area.

Recommendation:

That this place not be identified as a local heritage place at this time.

The significant heritage values of this place are already protected by other means, namely the Queensland Heritage legislation. This place is a State Heritage Place on the Queensland Heritage Register.

If this place remained intact but was later removed from the Queensland Heritage Register, then consideration of its potential local heritage significance could be reconsidered.

Boulia Cemetery

Location description/address: Diamantina Development Road BOULIA 4829

Real property description: 36 – SP204944

Tenure: Reserve

Ownership information: Boulia Shire Council

Historical information:

From DES Notes on QHR Place ID 650212: 'A small reserve of 9 acres was initially set aside for a cemetery on 26 February 1898. The site was re-gazetted in 1906 and trustees were appointed to manage the cemetery. The site contains many early iron markers supplied by the council. The early cemetery records were lost when the council offices burnt down in 1951. The reserve was resurveyed in 2010, reducing its land area to allow for construction of the Diamantina Development Road....'

Current status:

The Boulia Cemetery is identified as a local heritage place under the current Boulia Shire Planning Scheme 2006

The Boulia Cemetery continues to be used for burial purposes.

Assessment Criteria:

This place has local cultural heritage significance based on its satisfying the following criteria:

- A. The place or area is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the local government area's history.
- C. The place or area has potential to yield information that will contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the local government area's history.
- G. The place or area has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
- H. The place or area has special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organisation of importance in the local area's history.

Recommendation:

That this place continues to be identified as a local heritage place in the new planning scheme.

Hamilton Hotel ruins

Location description/address: 75km NNE of Boulia town centre

Real property description: 1 - HL1

Tenure:

Ownership information:

Historical information:

From DES Notes on *QHR Place ID 650213*: "The hotel had been operating since 1893 as the last in the chain of Cobb & Co mail change stations on the Winton to Boulia Coach run. The hotel served the local shearing industry and was run by Ellen Darge from 1915 and Gladys Hasted from 1919. The hotel was demolished in the early 1990s and in 1996 a plaque commemorating the hotel was unveiled at the site...."

Current status: The site is identified by signage.

Assessment criteria: A. The place or area is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the local government area's history

Recommendation: That this place be identified as a local heritage place in the new planning scheme.

Min Min Hotel ruins

Location description/address: 105km NE of Boulia on the Winton Road -22.77265 140.597702 approx location

Real property description: 4751 - SP279182

Tenure:

Ownership information:

Historical information:

From DES Notes for *QHR Place ID 650214*: "The Min Min Hotel was first licensed in 1887 to William Bennet. A subsequent owner reputedly built a new hotel in 1895 and it operated until destroyed by fire in 1924. The fenced grave at the site is said to be that of an unknown woman who lived at the hotel. An article published in the Sunday Mail in 1941 suggests the hotel was a place where shearers drank their pay cheques and there is more than one burial adjacent to the hotel site to victims of this practice. The area is where the phenomenon of the Min Min light has been seen by travellers...."

Current status: The site is identified by signage

Assessment criteria: A. The place or area is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the local government area's history

Recommendation: That this place be identified as a local heritage place in the new planning scheme.

Urandangi Cemetery

Location description/address: PITURIE, 0.5km N of the town centre

Real property description: 4 - PU8

Tenure:

Ownership information:

Historical information:

From DES Notes on *QHR Place ID 650216*: "The cemetery was reserved in 1890 on the northern outskirts of town. It contains Chinese graves. Urandangie became an arrival point for Chinese crossing by foot from the Northern Territory, trying to evade the poll tax imposed on Chinese immigrants following the passing of the Chinese Immigrants Regulation Act 1877. Chinese also worked as cooks and market gardeners at the hotels in town. In 1923, the cemetery was re-gazetted with the Bouliia Shire Council as trustees. 1932, a local resident, Mr Cavaye wrote to the Bouliia Shire Council regarding the poor state of repair of the cemetery reserve fence. The council agree to repair the fence and also indicated its intention to provide a supply of 100 iron number plates for future use in the cemetery, and possibly to keep records of the burials...."

Current status: This place has local cultural heritage significance based on its satisfying the following criteria

Assessment criteria:

- A. The place or area is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the local government area's history.
- C. The place or area has potential to yield information that will contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the local government area's history.
- G. The place or area has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
- H. The place or area has special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organisation of importance in the local area's history

Recommendation:

That this place continues to be identified as a local heritage place in the new planning scheme
The Urandangi Cemetery continues to be used for burial purposes

Council consideration of recommendations

Having regard to the context in which this report has been prepared and the legislative requirements of council relating to the identification of local heritage places, on 18 December 2019, via a council meeting, Council endorsed the following places to be identified as local heritage places in and through the adoption of the new planning scheme for the Bouliia Shire.

Conclusion

There is presently only one local heritage place identified within the Bouliia Shire being the Bouliia Cemetery.

In its proposed new planning scheme, council will seek to extend protection of cultural heritage values of a further 6 places.

A total of 7 local heritage places will be identified in the planning scheme. It is proposed that this be through the inclusion of Schedule 3 in new planning scheme. The identification of local heritage places will be supported by the strategic framework, overall outcomes in various codes and a specific provision in the General Development Code (PO24) of the planning scheme. This represents an improvement on the current circumstances.

It is acknowledged that public consultation of the draft of the new planning scheme is yet to take place. This will need to be undertaken prior to council being able to proceed to adopting a new planning scheme. Council may in the future investigate and consider additional places (noted in the report or others) for inclusion by way of a planning scheme amendment.