

MEDIA RELEASE

REPAIRS TO GIVE HISTORIC MANNUM INSTITUTE NEW LEASE ON LIFE

Efforts to give the historic Mannum Institute a new lease on life will be further boosted with a 10-year repair and maintenance plan to protect the 138-year-old building from further deterioration and restore it to its former glory.

Critical stormwater and retaining wall works have been earmarked for the next stage of improvements to the Institute, with the Mid Murray Council to consider allocating \$90,000 for the project as a priority in its 2020/21 budget. The works will fix issues at the rear of the building where the Institute is built into the existing cliff face to stop further deterioration to the historic structure.

The works are the first stage in a new 10-year, \$434,000 building maintenance plan to restore the Institute to an appropriate condition for a community facility.

They follow restoration works funded by a Federal Government grant in 2019 to remove termites, update wiring and electrical fittings in part of the building, demolish a failing internal wall, install a new kitchen, treat salt damp and repair the roof.

However, the building's age and complicated structural configuration (including being built into a cliff-face) present a number of challenges for its ongoing restoration which Council needs to plan for so it can preserve the Institute into the future.

Mayor Dave Burgess said the new works were essential to the long-term restoration and usability of the Institute and would allow it in time return to its former place as a hub for the Mannum community.

"For generations, the Institute has been an important centre of activity in Mannum," Mayor Burgess says.

"The community recognised its importance when it supported Council to buy the building in 2018.

"However, in its current condition, the Institute still can't be accessed as widely by our community as we'd like, and as with many historic buildings, it has serious problems that need to be fixed to ensure its future longevity.

"If we don't go ahead with these next works, there is a real risk that the condition of the Institute will deteriorate further – costing far more to fix in the long run, or running the risk that the building won't be able to be used in all of the ways our community would like."

The 10-year plan also includes works to treat salt damp in the remaining parts of the building, stone and brick render repairs, internal maintenance, external painting, asbestos removal and repairs to cracking.

Extra works estimated at \$300,000-\$400,000 are also expected to be needed in addition to the 10-year building maintenance plan to ensure the Institute meets current building and accessibility standards. That includes plumbing and electrical upgrades, installing an accessible toilet, disability access to the front entrance via a first floor lift and fire safety upgrades.

Council will seek external funding opportunities to assist in meeting the cost of the extra works required.

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