A SUBMISSION RELATED TO THE FUTURE OF THE MARTINBOROUGH TOWN HALL:
(By Pamela and Denis Cutler)

In a nutshell, we are of the opinion that:

- Strengthening the existing Town Hall building would not solve the problem;
- Trying to retain some elements could prejudice the outcome;
- It would be better to demolish the existing building for safety reasons and to construct a new facility to modern standards, that meets the current and future needs of the community;
- (3.A) Any new building would probably be better located in a position nearer to the Square;

Option 1:
Earthquake strengthen the existing building to comply with modern standards.

It has been my experience that strengthening an unreinforced masonry building of this type, even with the remedial work that has been carried out on it, will:

a. not be an effective long term solution to the problem,
b. probably cost much more than the estimated figure that has been suggested,
c. leave the Community with a seismic risk building that will eventually require further work.

Unreinforced Masonry Buildings are generally referred to as Earthquake Prone buildings, because that is what they are.

The seismic events in Canterbury over the past fourteen months have clearly shown that buildings constructed in unreinforced brick masonry, even if they have been "strengthened," do not perform at all well in large earthquakes. There is a lot of high level discussion about this at present.

Even if Earthquake Prone buildings come through an initial large seismic event reasonably well, the after-shocks that normally occur locally over the following months generally inflict significant damage to the already weakened buildings. This is very evident in Canterbury.

We draw the Council's attention to what has happened in Canterbury since 4th September 2010, where the initial M 7.1 Darfield quake has been followed by the M 6.3 Christchurch Quake and the M 6.0 one near Lyttleton, along with hundreds of other smaller ones in the general area that are still continuing.

These aftershocks have further damaged buildings that were still considered reasonably sound after the main earthquakes. New assessments are being carried out all of the time, and buildings that were initially considered as satisfactory are now classified as being unsafe.

The level to which High Risk Buildings need to be strengthened is currently being discussed by the relevant authorities and levels that have been previously considered acceptable are steadily being raised by ongoing research and be changes to design criteria.

Over recent years, I have personally found that buildings where I have designed structural strengthening work that was approved at the time, are no longer considered to be of sufficient strength by the Local Authority and further work to a higher standard is now required.

Option 1 (Cont'd):
In other works, what may be acceptable to the Authorities at this time, will probably not be acceptable in a few years time!

It has been my experience that the cost of strengthening earthquake risk buildings can eventually finish up being as much as fifty percent more that even a supposedly reliable estimate.

At the end of the day, the people of the South Wairarapa will be still saddled with an old building with ongoing strength and safety issues, and out-dated facilities that have limitations due to poor accessibility.

Option 2:
Demolish the existing hall but retain some elements (*for sentimental or other reasons*).

The term "Heritage" is being heard quite a lot lately. Heritage is defined in the OED as "**What is or may be inherited**," be it a valuable building, artefact or possession, or something old and patched up.

If any building is required to meet the needs of the community, the retention of some elements out of the existing Hall, may not be appropriate for the updated facility.

If buildings were not well constructed of the most appropriate materials and to the highest design criteria at the time that they were erected, later generations should not have to suffer the consequences.

Option 3:
Demolish the existing hall and build a new one of similar floor area.

Demolishing the existing **High Seismic Risk** building is, to us, the **only realistic option**.

It seems to us that it would be an unnecessary imposition if initial constraints are put on the design by proposing that it will be of similar floor area and function.

Any proposed replacement building should be a living entity, specifically designed to suit the identified and affordable current needs of the community.

If the people of the South Wairarapa decide that a replacement building is needed, it must contain as many of the facilities that they identify as being necessary, within the budget that they can afford.

During discussions with other residents of Martinborough and the surrounding district, comments have been made that there is quite a list of other amenities that the community is lacking.

Facilities that have been mentioned include a replacement for the existing (Earthquake Prone) Library, smaller meeting rooms or other spaces that can be used for displays or markets, a replacement for the Plunket rooms, a Toy Library, etc.

If there is a large earthquake in the area, a suitable, safe community building will be essential.

Option 3.A:
Build a new, replacement building closer to the square, and subsequently demolish the existing Town Hall building.

A replacement building that will meet the current and foreseeable needs of the community at an affordable cost can be located in a more suitable position. It is my opinion and that of my wife Pamela that the layout of the existing Memorial Square is missing a feature building at the eastern corner.

When driving around the north eastern side of the square, a resident or visitor is faced with an open space that contains a not particularly attractive toilet block.

The existing Town Hall is away to the left, facing North West towards the Fire Station on Texas Street.

In our opinion, it would be better come around the northern corner of the square and see an attractive Town Amenities building built in a suitable style to blend in with other buildings nearby?

A new building could be built on this site without having to wait until the existing Hall was demolished, and the construction could be staged to suit the availability of funds.

The area out to the south east, currently occupied by the Hall and its car park, etc, could be landscaped and formed into a landscaped and/or sealed multi-purpose open space.

A copied montage photograph and a sketch proposal were included with our earlier submission.

Option 4.
Demolish the existing hall and do not rebuild it.

As noted above, the existing hall needs to be demolished before people die or are seriously injured in an earthquake, as has regrettably happened in Christchurch in February of last year.

However, the community needs some facilities that are currently lacking in the area, and a suitable replacement building or buildings may have to be provided, at an affordable cost.

Denis and Pamela Cutler.

D.R. CUTLER

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16 November 2011

The Chief Executive Officer
South Wairarapa District Council
P O Box 6
Martinborough 5741
WAIRARAPA

Ref: **The Future of the Martinborough Town Hall, etc:**

Dear Sir/Madam,

This letter is intended as a response to the recent brochure that was sent out by the South Wairarapa District Council, requesting input on the options for strengthening, demolition or replacement of the Town Hall building.

My opinion, as set out on the next few pages, is based on fifty plus years in Consulting Engineering practices and spending the past twenty five years running my own practice as a Civil and Structural Engineer. I have been joined by my wife Pamela in making the submission.

Because of my background, the submission is probably biased towards the structural integrity of buildings and the need for realistic costings in coming to a decision.

In a nutshell, we are of the opinion that:

- It is not worth strengthening the existing Town Hall building;
- Trying to retain some elements could prejudice the outcome;
- It would be better to demolish the existing building and build a new one;
- (**3.A**) the new one would probably be better put in another location;
- Given the lack of suitable alternative venues in the township, the community needs to start planning for new facilities or the replacement of the Hall.

As an addition to our submission, we have made an additional comment on a separate post script page.

Yours Faithfully,

Denis (and Pamela) Cutler:

Option 1:
Earthquake strengthen the existing building to comply with modern standards.

It has been my experience that strengthening an unreinforced masonry building of this type, even with the remedial work that has been carried out on it, will:

a. not be an effective long term solution to the problem,
b. probably cost much more than the estimated figure that has been suggested,
c. leave the Community with a seismic risk building that will eventually require further work.

Unreinforced Masonry Buildings are generally referred to as Earthquake Prone buildings, because that is what they are.

The seismic events in Canterbury over the past fourteen months have clearly shown that buildings constructed in unreinforced brick masonry, even if they have been "strengthened," do not perform at all well in large earthquakes. There is a lot of high level discussion about this at present.

Even if Earthquake Prone buildings come through an initial large seismic event reasonably well, the after-shocks that normally occur locally over the following months generally inflict significant damage to the already weakened buildings.

We draw the Council's attention to what has happened in Canterbury since 4th September 2010, where the initial M 7.1 Darfield quake has been followed by the M 6.3 Christchurch Quake and the M 6.0 one near Lyttleton, along with hundreds of other smaller ones in the general area that are still continuing. These aftershocks have further damaged buildings that were still considered reasonably sound after the main earthquakes.

The level to which High Risk Buildings need to be strengthened is currently being discussed by the relevant authorities and levels that have been previously considered acceptable are steadily being raised by ongoing research and be changes to design criteria. Over recent years, I personally have found that buildings where I have designed structural strengthening work that was approved at the time, are now being re-visited by the Local Authority wanting further work to a higher standard to be carried out.

It has been my experience that the cost of strengthening earthquake risk buildings can eventually finish up being as much as fifty percent more that even a supposedly reliable estimate, as contractors in many trades tend to load their costs.

This is partly because they will usually try to make their own allowances to cover some of the problems that they think are likely to encounter during construction, and most contractors do not generally want to work on old brick buildings because of the risks involved.

At the end of the day, the people of the South Wairarapa will still have an old building with ongoing problems and out-dated facilities that has limitations due to poor accessibility.

Option 2:
Demolish the existing hall but retain some elements (*for sentimental or other reasons*).

The term "Heritage" is being heard quite a lot lately. Heritage is defined in the OED as "What is or may be inherited," be it a valuable building, artefact or possession, or something old and patched up.

If a building is needed to meet the needs of the community, it may not be appropriate to incorporate any of the elements out of the existing Hall, whether it is the existing front façade, the Proscenium Arch, or anything else, if it does not suit the purpose or requirements for the replacement.

If buildings were not well constructed of the most appropriate materials and to the highest design criteria at the time that they were erected, later generations should not have to suffer the consequences.

According to a Book titled "Martinborough," put out by the Martinborough Centennial Book Committee and held in the local Public Library, the present building was built on a labour-only contract by the Town Board. To me, that raises some doubts about the quality of the construction at the time.

I personally know of buildings that were constructed **before 1912** that were better designed and built, to the best methods available at the time. Some of these were built with in reinforced concrete, or had structural steel or concrete frames, etc.

Option 3:
Demolish the existing hall and build a new one of similar floor area.

Demolishing the existing **High Seismic Risk** building is, to us, the **only** realistic option.

It seems to us that it would be an unnecessary imposition if initial constraints are put on the design by proposing that it will be of similar floor area and function.

Any proposed replacement building should be a **living** entity, specifically designed to suit the identified and affordable needs of the community. It also needs to be used regularly, to justify its existence.

If the people of the South Wairarapa decide that a replacement building must contain such facilities as an auditorium, with part of the smaller rooms for meetings or other uses, and a kitchen, then that should be part of a design brief that would be agreed at the time.

During discussions with other residents of Martinborough and the surrounding district, comments have been made that there is quite a list of other amenities that the community is lacking. These include a replacement for the existing Library, the Plunket rooms, a Toy Library, smaller meeting rooms or other spaces that can be used for displays or markets, etc.

At the same time, and as noted in **Option 3.A** below, we submit that a replacement building does not necessarily have to be built in the same location. We are therefore offering **Option 3.A** as a suggestion for consideration by the Council and its planning committee.

Option 3.A:
Build a new, replacement building closer to the square, and subsequently demolish the existing Town Hall building.

A replacement building should be specifically set up to meet the current and foreseeable needs of the community at an affordable cost. It does not necessarily have to be one large single building.

It is my opinion and that of my wife Pamela, that the layout of the existing Memorial Square is missing a feature building at the eastern corner.

When driving around the north eastern side of the square, a visitor is faced with an open space that contains a not particularly attractive toilet block. The Town Hall is away to the left, facing North West towards the Fire Station on Texas Street.

How much better would it be to come around the northern corner of the square and see an attractive Town Amenities building built in a suitable style to blend in with other buildings nearby?

A new building could be built on this site without having to wait until the existing Hall was demolished, and the construction could be staged to suit the availability of funds.

The area out to the south east, currently occupied by the Hall and its car park, etc, could be landscaped and formed into a landscaped and/or sealed multi-purpose open space. We are enclosing page with a couple of copied photo and a sketch plan

Option 4.
Demolish the existing hall and do not rebuild it.

As noted above, the existing hall needs to be demolished before someone dies in an earthquake, as has regrettably happened in Christchurch in February of this year.

We feel that some facilities that are currently lacking in the community need to be provided in a suitable building or buildings.

Denis and Pamela Cutler.

D.R. CUTLER

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16 November 2011

The Chief Executive Officer
South Wairarapa District Council
P O Box 6
Martinborough 5741
WAIRARAPA

Ref: **The risk presented by the Martinborough Library in its current location:**

As an addition to, but not part of our submission about the existing Town Hall Building, we wish to make the following comments.

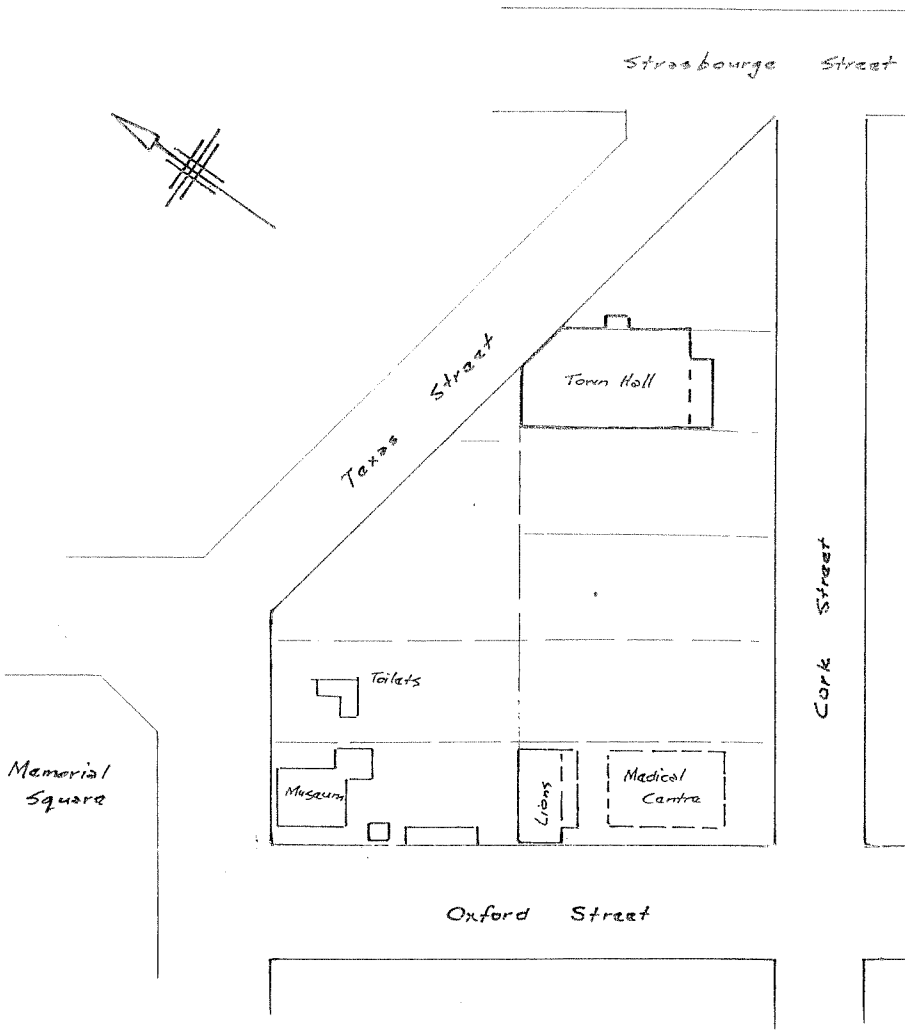
Very relevant to the submission about the replacement of the existing Town Hall Building is the fact that a new location is urgently needed for the **Martinborough Library**, so that it can be moved out of the existing **High Seismic Risk** building in which it is currently situated.

To our knowledge, the building in which the library is located, has unreinforced masonry walls running from front to rear, with no visible strengthening frames to these walls.

It appears that there is no indication of this building (comprising four shops) having been strengthened.

Because of its much higher and fairly constant occupancy rate in the library, it is in our opinion, probably more of a Seismic Risk than the Town Hall building, which is used less frequently.

Denis and Pamela Cutler.



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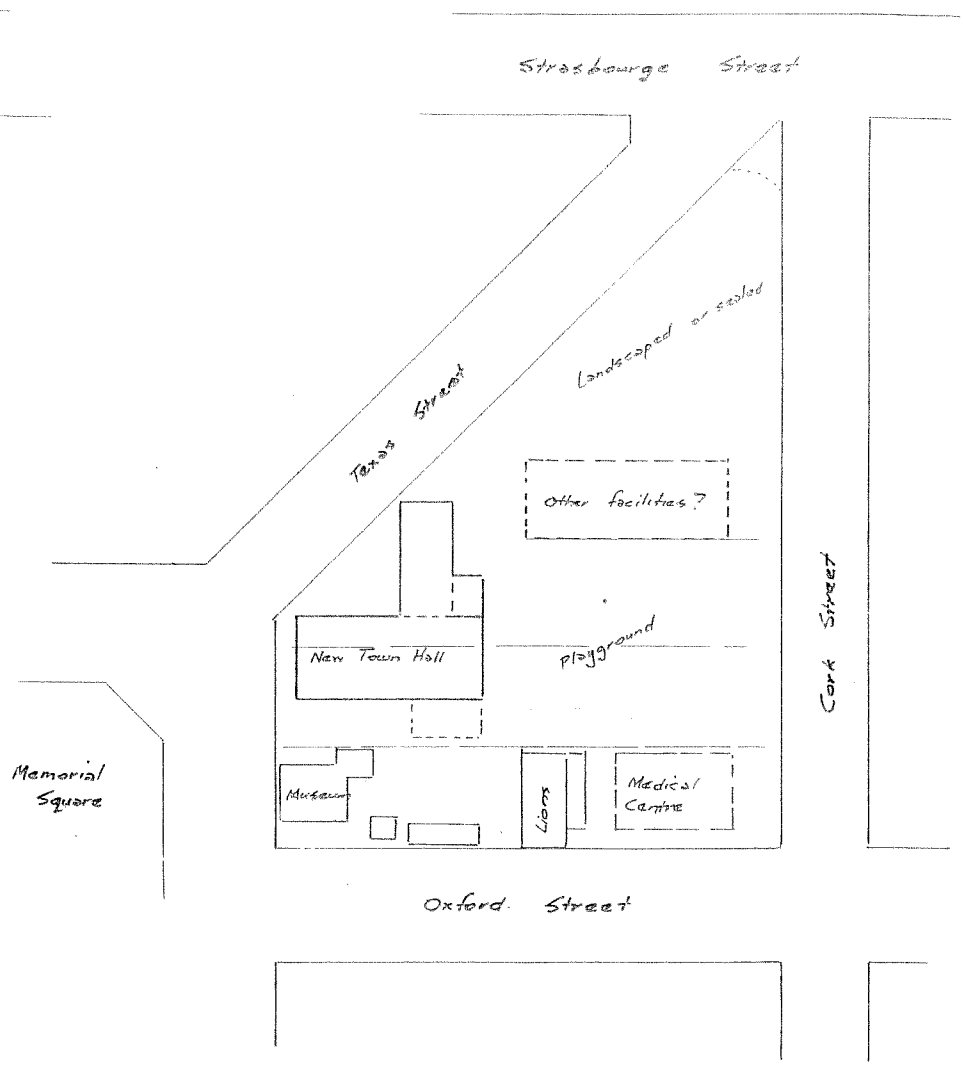
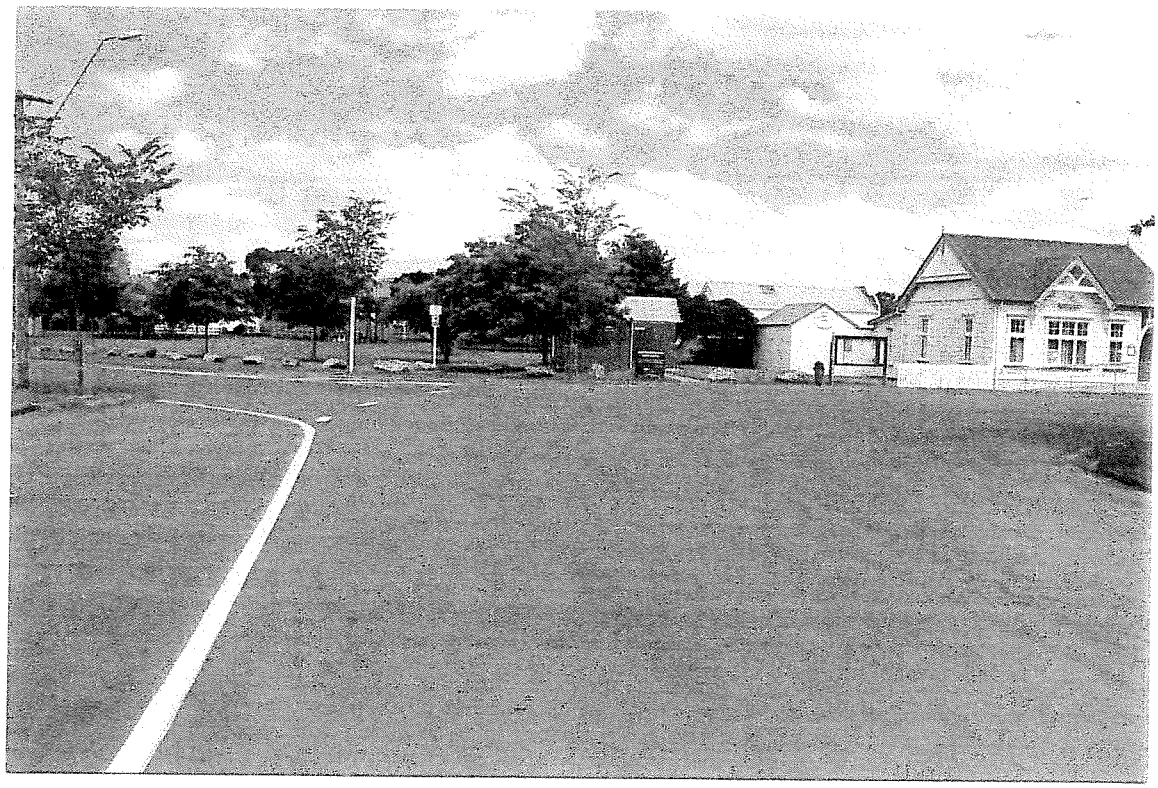


Option 3.A Replace hall in new location

THE MARTINBOROUGH TOWN HALL

Information taken from SWDC aerial photograph. Not to scale



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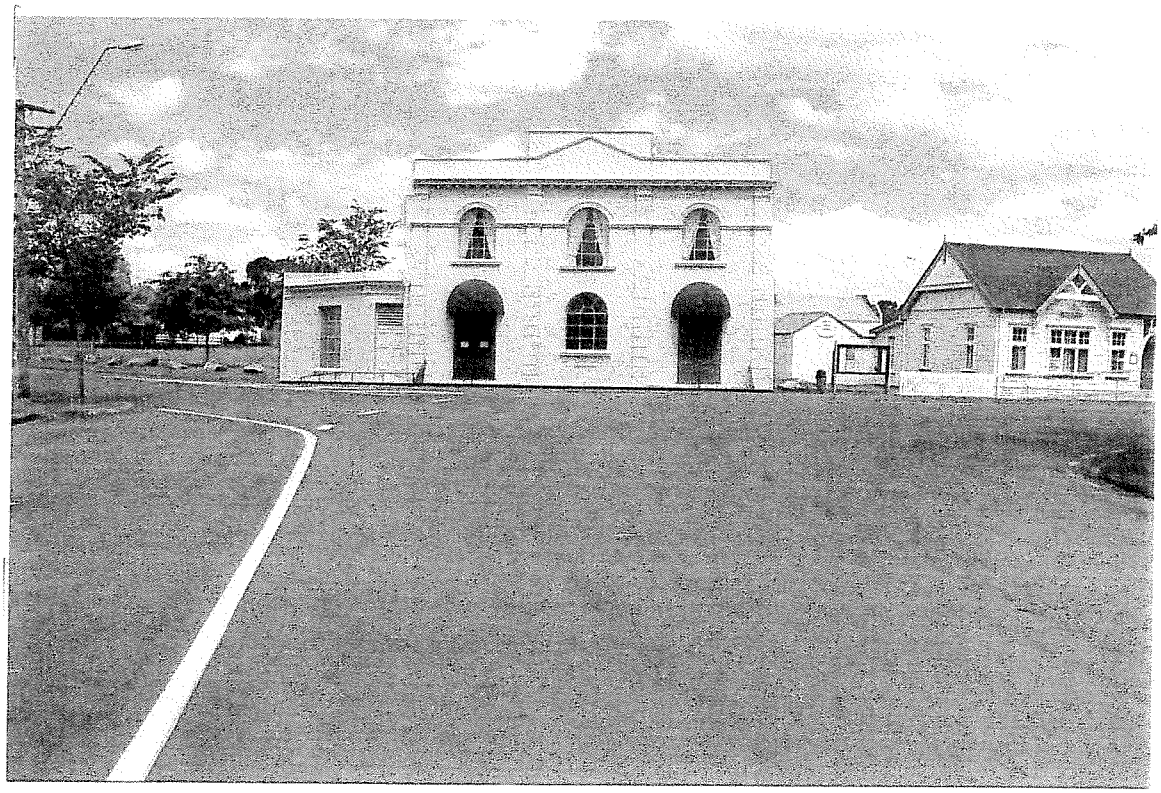

AS IT COULD BE