

# Heritage building needs \$1m

## Pātea

Jane Matthews

After five years of closure, with its future undecided, an integral part of a small South Taranaki town's streetscape may be saved – at the cost of nearly \$1 million.

The 1930s Hunter Shaw Building in Pātea was closed in 2013 after it was found to be earthquake prone and it has since been discovered that strengthening the building will cost around \$950,000.

It was unanimously agreed at Monday's South Taranaki District Council (STDC) Policy Development Committee meeting that the council would like to commit \$500,000 to the brick

building's strengthening, but the plan would need to be adopted at the next council meeting.

In 2015 the council agreed to get the building up to 67 per cent of the New Building Standard at a cost of \$350,000; however, a recent seismic update revealed that to upgrade merely the front of the building will cost nearly \$1m.

A report recommended that STDC proceed with the full cost of around \$950,000 or contribute \$350,000, as agreed three years ago, and find the rest of the funds externally.

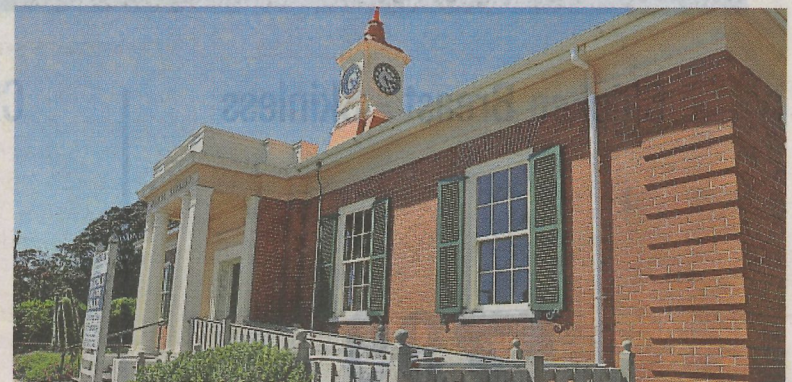
South Taranaki Mayor Ross Dunlop argued there had to be a way to make the heritage building safe without spending as much money. "I'm supportive of preserving and saving this build-

ing," Dunlop said. "But I struggle with \$950,000."

Dunlop and other councillors suggested perhaps less money could be spent on the "cosmetics" of the inside of the building, while still achieving the safe status.

However, STDC's group manager of engineering services, Brent Manning, said it wasn't all about cosmetics and there was no other way to achieve safety without the planned "lateral bracing" on the inside.

Egmont Plains ward councillor Bonita Bigham agreed on the overall cost appeared to be a lot but said the project would be good for Pātea. "Yes, it's a lot of money, but what else are we trying to do for Pātea and the mana of their community?"



The Hunter Shaw Building in Pātea needs to be earthquake strengthened.

Pātea ward councillor Robert Northcott said the building was part of the "unique streetscape of Pātea".

Dunlop eventually proposed, with the encouragement of particular councillors, that STDC would add \$150,000 onto their previously agreed contribution of \$350,000 and they would look for

external funding for the remained of the costs.

The group manager of community services, Fiona Greenhill, who proposed the report, reminded councillors that the council would not have to find the money as it would come from the current Earthquake Prone Buildings' budget.