



**OATLANDS GAOLER'S RESIDENCE, SUPREME COURT HOUSE
& COMMISSARIAT USE POLICY**

Approved by:
Approved date:
Review date:Council
March 2023
March 2026

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the use of the Oatlands Gaoler's Residence, Supreme Court House and Commissariat for community purposes and for furthering the objectives of the Southern Midlands Historic Heritage Strategy (SMHHS) and Southern Midlands Arts Strategy (SMAS) as they relate to those buildings and their use.

2. OBJECTIVE

This policy specifically seeks to further the following broad program objectives:

- Continue to make the buildings available for community-based events/uses with a particular focus on heritage/arts/culture.
- Scope business opportunities for the sustainable and suitable use of the buildings, in-line with other local and multi-regional heritage, arts and tourism initiatives and other relevant stakeholders/interest groups.

Overall, the objective of this policy is to seek maximum appropriate use of the buildings and associated collections and to encourage heritage/arts/cultural use of the spaces for the benefit of the community.

3. BACKGROUND

In July 2010, Council endorsed the *Oatlands Gaol Use and Development Plan*, which set the broad usage parameters of the building and site, following the restoration and interpretation project. That document proposed use of the building as:

- Heritage collections storage and curatorial space
- Office for Council's Heritage Projects staff, and office space ancillary to the Centre for Heritage at Oatlands
- Accommodation and office space for visiting interns/students
- An archaeological interpretation space (further to the Oatlands Gaol Interpretation Plan)

On the 17th October 2011, Council endorsed a User Policy for the Gaoler's Residence which included policies for the use of the Supreme Court House. That policy was reviewed in August 2018 and the current policy is a further review.



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Further to the Oatlands Commissariat Master Plan 2013, in 2016, Council obtained funding for the restoration and refurbishment of the Oatlands Commissariat and shop/cottage at 79 High Street Oatlands for use as the Heritage Hub (a community co-operative model) as well as use by the Centre for Heritage at Oatlands as administration and teaching space. Since that time, the Heritage Hub initiative has wound-up, and the shop/cottage is now used as the *AiRSpace* further to Council's Artist in Residence Policy. The Commissariat remains available for Centre for Heritage use. Use of those buildings was guided by the Oatlands Commissariat and 79 High Street User Policy, endorsed by Council in August 2018.

The current policy has expanded the previous Oatlands Gaol and Supreme Court House User Policy to include the Oatlands Commissariat. With the previous endorsement of the Artist in Residence Policy, which has partially superseded the Oatlands Commissariat & 79 High Street User Policy, the principles of that policy as they relate to the Commissariat have been merged into the current policy document as use of that building is generally consistent with the Gaolers Residence and Supreme Court House.

4. POLICY

4.1 Nature of use

The Gaolers Residence is to be used as the administrative centre for Council's Heritage Projects Program and as a shared space to be used for public access, heritage interpretation and community events with a heritage research/interpretation arts/crafts and cultural focus. Use for Council's AiR program may occur consistent with the associated policy. The future use of the gaol yard itself is guided by the Oatlands Gaol Master Plan.

The Supreme Court House is to be used primarily as heritage interpretation space as well as a shared use with community events with a focus on larger group events (e.g. seminars, reunions, performance etc.).

The Commissariat is to be used primarily as heritage interpretation space as well as a shared use with community events, as well as training space on an as-needs basis for the Heritage Education and Skills Centre. There is a desire to utilise the historic woodfired oven on an occasional shared-user basis, particularly if this involves public participation.



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4.2 Management and staffing

The management responsibility of the buildings is to be within the Heritage Projects Program, with monthly reporting to Council. Staffing for management/administration is to be sourced from that program.

Council will not necessarily provide day-to-day/on-site staffing although will provide administrative support to the user groups to do so. Subject to workload, Council's Heritage Projects Program staff may provide some staffing presence at the Gaoler's Residence.

Council is to ensure the maintenance, security, safety and where possible equitable access requirements of the buildings.

These buildings are to utilise the Oatlands Key system for daytime public access.

4.3 Return to Council

Council has a recurring budget to cover baseline outgoings for each building (excluding staffing). Provided the objectives of this policy are being demonstrably met, Council does not seek a financial return for use of the buildings however a break-even bottom line is desirable.

Should any profit be made by Council, this is to be reinvested into the buildings (e.g. works, interpretation, infrastructure) and/or associated objectives (e.g. promotion or staffing).

4.4 Eligibility criteria for use of the buildings

Exhibitions

Use of exhibition spaces in the buildings will be made available free-of-charge for not-for-profit purposes on a negotiated duration basis (including for AiR exhibitions consistent with the Artist in Residence policy).

Exhibition space may be made available on a commercial basis provided that the proposal is considered culturally appropriate for the building, and preferably fits with the mandates of SMC's Heritage or Arts Programs (as outlined in the SMHHS and SMAS). Council, via the General Manager, reserves the right to charge a fee for any commercial use of the buildings (in-line with Council's schedule of fees for hall use) in this instance.



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Accommodation

Residential accommodation in the Gaolers Residence may be made available free-of-charge to the following:

- Artists in Residence (consistent with the Artist in Residence Policy – in instances where 79 High Street is not available – e.g. concurrent residencies).
- Not-for-profit and/or academic researchers undertaking research on Southern Midlands heritage collections or sites.
- Persons working on Council owned work sites as a contractor, where Council would normally provide/pay for accommodation.
- Persons participating on Council's heritage (or other) programs as a volunteer.
- The building is not to be used for Council staff accommodation.

Gatherings

The buildings may be used free-of-charge for not-for-profit gatherings which have a heritage/arts/cultural theme, such as seminars, meetings, performance, reunions, recitals, demonstrations etc. Council, via the General Manager, reserves the right to charge a fee for any commercial use of the buildings (in-line with Council's schedule of fees for hall use) in this instance.

Office space

Use of office space by complimentary organisations or other Council staff may be negotiated on a cost-sharing basis provided this does not unduly inhibit community use and access.

Other events

The General Manager has the discretion to allow other uses of the buildings for occasional public events that do not precisely fit this policy, provided these will not result in detriment to the buildings or collections, are consistent with good heritage practice, do not negatively impact public perceptions of the buildings and not adversely affect the reputation of Council. Council reserves the right to charge a fee for other uses, consistent with fees and charges for other Council owned halls.

Council, via the General Manager, reserves the right to place time limits on any use of the buildings by any particular user/group.

Users may be asked to provide evidence of sufficient Public Liability insurance.

'User Manuals' are to be provided for each building to guide the appropriate use, safety and security of the buildings and collections. These manuals are to be developed and maintained by the Heritage Projects Program.



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5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Oatlands Gaol Master Plan 2009 (SMC)
- Oatlands Commissariat Project Master Plan 2013 (SMC)
- Oatlands Gaol Use And Development Plan 2010 (SMC)
- Oatlands Gaol Interpretation Plan 2011 (SMC)
- Oatlands Gaoler's Residence User Manual (SMC)
- Oatlands Supreme Court House & Collections, Public Access and Interpretation Plan 2006 (People and Place)
- Oatlands Supreme Court House Interpretation Project – Implementation Strategy 2008 (SMC)

6. DOCUMENT ADMINISTRATION

This Instruction is a managed document and is to be reviewed every three years or as directed by the General Manager.

This document is Version 3 effective March 2023. The document is maintained by the Heritage Projects Program for the Southern Midlands Council.