

Two Mills were in newspapers in early August 2009... coincidentally one community (Albury) was in an uproar about one being demolished, whilst the other (Corowa) was poised for an exciting new community development. Compare the stories... and wonder.

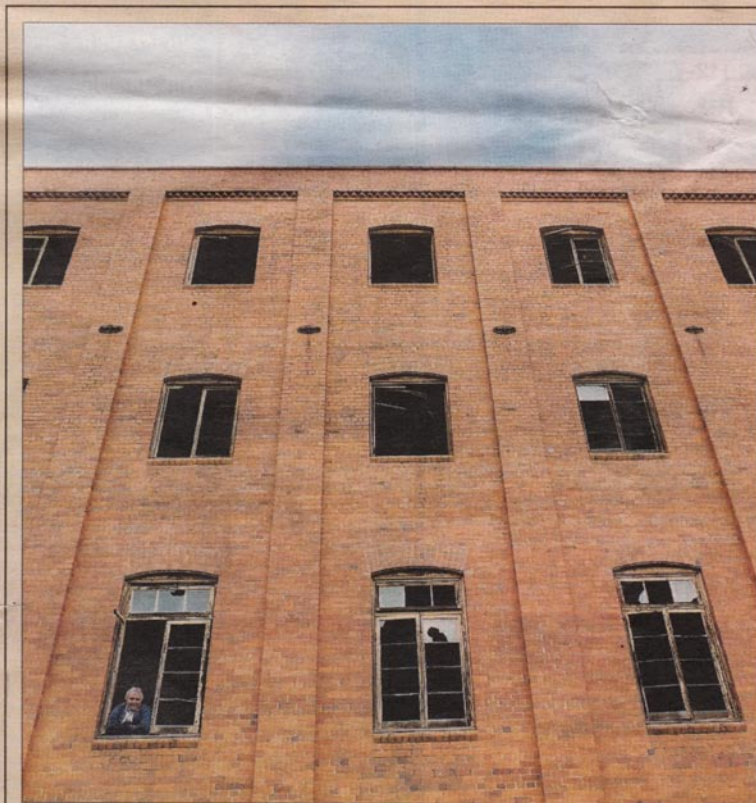


Albury...



Corowa...

Read on...



Spend a dollar and earn a mill

COROWA'S flour mill might just be the best-value real estate around. Corowa Shire Council is offering to sell the four-storey, heritage-listed building for

just \$1 — providing the new owner undertakes repairs and turns it into a drawcard for the Murray River town. Report, Page 7.

Picture: KIM WOODS

THE FOOTY CLUB NO ONE W



Flour power: Gary Poidevin says the Corowa Council hopes to turn the old mill into a major tourist attraction.

Corowa's dollar dazzler

By KIM WOODS

SPEND a dollar in the Murray river town of Corowa and an historic four-storey flour mill could be yours.

Corowa Shire Council is offering the heritage-listed 1920s red brick building, which has been decommissioned for almost 40 years, for \$1.

But, there's a catch.

The successful bidder must provide \$100,000 surety to repair the roof, gutters, doors and windows of the badly dilapidated building within three years.

Built near the town centre in 1920, the mill was a major employer for 50 years, processing three tonnes of flour an hour by 1950.

Flour was exported to Britain, Malaya, Borneo, Indonesia, the Middle East and North America.

Milling stopped in 1970 and the building lay dormant until Bunge Australia bought it in the late 1980s for warehousing grain.

It has massive oregon beams and intricate brick work.

The mill was part of a deal the council negotiated with Bunge in 2001 for land to build a water treatment plant.

Mayor Gary Poidevin said many groups had ideas for the mill — from a working tourist flour mill to a large resort — but were "unable to match their ideas with money".

"We came up with the idea of selling the mill for \$1 to give ownership of the title and a \$100,000 surety that certain things would be done within three years."

Two parties have shown interest and the council is due to decide the mill's fate next week.

Local consortium, Ground Revol-

ution, hopes to restore the mill and use it for vocational, educational, retail and tourism services.

Neil Druce, operator of the Junee Licorice and Chocolate Factory, also has plans for the building.

Mr Druce converted a vermin-infested flour mill at Junee into an award-winning tourist attraction that now draws about 85,000 visitors a year.

He envisages chocolate production and a whiskey distillery for the Corowa mill.

"That building is just stunning," Mr Druce said.

"I haven't as yet asked the council if GST is included in the \$1 sale price.

"But, if we don't spend \$3 million on restoring the building, we are just not going to get there.

"It's a big project and one that will be inspiring for everyone."

WE'LL KNOCK MILL DOWN

Demolition, redevelopment bid for 100-year-old building



BY HOWARD JONES

ALBURY'S tallest and biggest industrial landmark, the 100-year-old flour mill in Young Street, is set to be razed if council approval is given.

Allied Mills yesterday lodged an application with the city council to completely demolish the mill, pictured left, so that a cleared site can be sold for a redevelop-

ment visible from the Hume Freeway.

No proposal for its future is made but the company's consultant, Habitat Planning, says it is a key commercial site and "represents a substantial investment and development opportunity for the Albury CBD".

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Heritage disappearing

3 Albury icons already destroyed

BY HOWARD JONES

GOING, going, going ... The Albury flour mill is the fourth heritage item in Young Street to face demolition in 13 years.

First went the Victorian gothic-style station master's house in 1996, demolished by the rail authorities without regard for the heritage listing.

Next came the Dalgety woolstore removed in 2004 for the Bunnings Warehouse store, with council approval.

Third came the Wilson Street footbridge, demolished in 2006 as part of the freeway project and moved to Picton railway museum.

Albury historian Bruce Pennay said yesterday the concrete "honeycomb" silo towers built in 1912 should at least be retained as heritage items.

Dr Pennay said he recognised the difficulties of retaining all the structure and acknowledged the owners' argument that the mill had been altered much over time.

"The original silos of 1912 are best viewed from the freeway, from where so many people now encounter the city," he said.

"They may be of state significance as their unusual ribbing and futuristic head house make them something of an engineering feat.

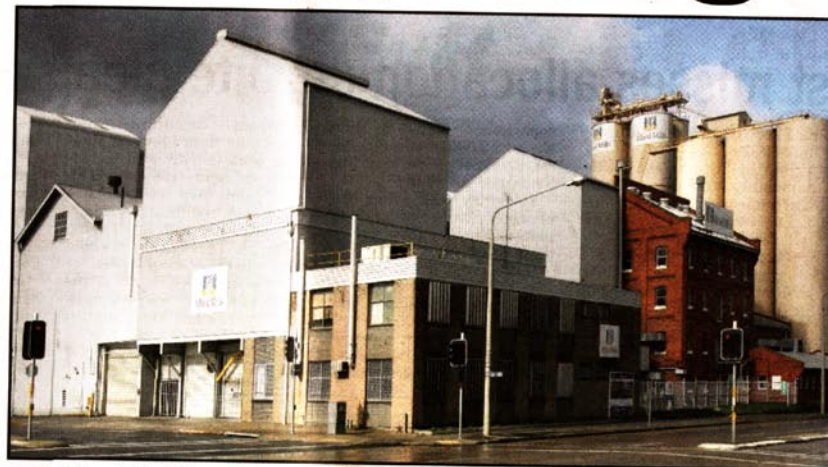
"These silos were the first concrete silos in NSW and became the precursor of the many concrete silos that were built after World War I.

"They are part of the beginnings of that revolutionary method of bulk grain handling."

Dr Pennay said the flour mill and silos were part of the important Albury railway precinct.

"I would hope that the alternatives to demolition that the developer has to present do include a compromise that retains the original silos of 1912," Dr Pennay said.

Habitat Planning recommends any items from the demolition be reused or recycled where possible and that site development should display its history.



● Allied Flour Mills in Young Street, Albury, will be demolished if its owner gets its way. Picture: RAY HUNT

Demolition call on 100-year old building

From page 1

Albury Council is seeking public comment by August 24, after which it will assess objections and determine if city councillors will decide the application.

Demolition would spell the end of the heritage-listed brick building erected in 1909-10 as the Burrows family's Hume Flour Mills, and unusual concrete silos hidden behind later structures.

Allied Mills ceased milling operations in January after opening

a \$90 million mill at Picton and has failed to sell the 1.34ha site, which is part freehold and part leased from the Australian Rail Track Corporation.

An expression of interest process by Colliers International drew little interest except from people keen to buy a cleared site.

"Redevelopment of the site was not considered feasible given it would require a substantial outlay for recycling the buildings prior to any development or use commencing," Habitat Planning states.

Allied Mills has already picked a preferred demolition contractor but must obtain consent from the council, especially as the mill carries a low-level heritage listing.

Demolition costs have been estimated at more than \$600,000.

As with the woolstore, Allied Mills promises to ensure most materials removed will be recycled in local building projects.

The submission says the heritage significance is limited because of unsympathetic changes made over the years.

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Saturday, August 8, 2009

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14° TOMORROW Clearing
15° MONDAY Showers
14° TUESDAY Showers

AUSTRALIAN MADE AUSTRALIA