

**Request for permit permission to replace the metal clad wooden urns at the Evangelical Lutheran Church complex, Strand Street (erf9245) with fiberglass replicas.**

The metal clad wooden urns on the clock tower of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Strand Street (erf9245) were removed due to their very poor condition during the redecoration and renovation of the front of the building in 2017. The urns were brought down to ground level and placed inside the church building where they could be more fully inspected. There were originally four urns installed in 1820 (one at each corner of the upper clock tower structure) which, due to weathering and lack of proper maintenance over many years as they are rarely inspected due to their location, are now in such a poor state of repair that only a major intervention can be considered.



*Two of the urns on the upper level of the clock tower*



*The one remaining complete urn*

**Expanded Motivation:**

The church front was renovated and redecorated in 2017 which required the installation of scaffolding to reach the top of the clock tower. This afforded the ELC the opportunity to properly inspect the four metal clad wooden urns on the upper level of the clock tower. This revealed that of the four, one had disintegrated leaving only a part of the base, the second and third had significant rot in the upper and centre sections and the fourth was reasonably intact but showing signs of wear.

It should also be noted that at least two of the urns have been replaced at some point in the past with the last known replacement being done in the 1980s. This can be clearly identified by the use of different wood and the change from lead cladding to zinc. It can also be noted that a number of the cast iron decorative rings on the urns have been replaced with mild steel at some point in the past.



*The first urn which has lost the top half and is showing serious rot in the remaining bottom half.*



*The third urn showing loss of metal cladding and serious rot in the top and centre section with the additional loss of one of the cast iron rings from the side.*

At this point it was decided by our heritage consultant, Sally Titlestad, and the Church Council that in order to prevent further deterioration, the urns should be removed and brought to ground level for inspection and assessment. The removal of the urns was carried out by The South African for Heritage Science and Conservation and all the removed material were placed into storage in the Church.

The ELC has contacted a number of heritage restorers and all have stated that it would be possible to repair only one of the urns as the others are so badly damaged that they would require total replacement with the possibility of using some of the remaining parts to refurbish the one remaining urn that is in sound condition. The cost of making exact

replicas using the same wood core and metal cladding would be well in excess of R1million.

The ELC in discussion with our heritage consultant, Stuart Hermansen, then investigated the possibility of having fiberglass replicas made using the one remaining urn as the template. This process is feasible and provides the following advantages:

1. The external view of the church will be returned to the original as it looked in 1820 when the urns were first installed.
2. The fiberglass replicas will be more weather resistant and will require minimal maintenance.
3. The original remaining urn can be renovated and put on display within the church where it can be easily maintained.
4. This is a cost effective long term solution.
5. It removes the possibility of injury to the public from falling debris from the clock tower (the urns are at a height of 30 meters).

### **Conclusion**

In order to maintain as near as possible the original external appearance of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, it is necessary to replace the existing urns which are in a poor state of repair. The best methodology that provides a long term solution is the manufacturing of four replicas of the original urns in fiberglass for placement on the clock tower and the refurbishment of the one good original urn which will be kept in the church.

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Evangelical Lutheran Church