

Town hall renovation work gets the lead out

By NATHAN SIMPSON

Men in suits will be replaced by men in biohazard gear as the removal of lead dust and asbestos gets underway at Wollongong Town Hall this month.

A team of dust and asbestos removers will arm themselves with protective clothing to carry out the work in the town hall's ceiling spaces, commencing the start of renovation works.

Wollongong City Council's administrators accepted a tender for the removal last week - the first step in the planned reopening of the grand town hall.

The town hall has had a rich and proud history.

Unfortunately its doors have been closed in recent times - and its demolition was also on the cards.

However, earlier this year council allocated more than \$1.5 million through its 2008-12 Management Plan to fund detailed investigations, designs and initial works as part of a staged refurbishment.

Council also received a \$2 million grant from the State Government in September towards the cost of reopening the town hall.



The first stage of renovation works to the Wollongong Town Hall will commence with the removal of lead dust and asbestos.

Picture: KEN ROBERTSON

Council administrator Gabrielle Kibble said the council had also engaged the NSW Department of Commerce to project manage the lead dust and asbestos removal works on its behalf.

"The town hall has regional importance, acoustic quality and strong community support. These works will be undertaken as soon as possible to reopen this significant local venue," Mrs Kibble said.

Beasy Pty Ltd will undertake the contracts works after being assessed by the NSW Department of Commerce.