



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

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SECURITY UPGRADE FIT FOR A KING STREET COURT

One of NSW's most historic courthouses has just had a major 21st century security upgrade to ensure the safety of those who use the court and cement its place in Sydney's legal landscape.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said the \$2.1 million dollar enhancements to King Street Courthouse demonstrate the Government's commitment to safeguarding people and to improving the delivery of justice across NSW.

"Features such as electronic perimeter security, airport-style walk-through scanners with integrated temperature detectors to help with the management of COVID-19 and x-ray equipment are critical to keeping our courtrooms operating safely and efficiently," Mr Speakman said.

"Multiple entrances to the court complex have been reduced to two with a new glazed security wing added where a previous addition had stood for decades."

The original sections of the courthouse, along with the nearby Hyde Park Barracks and St James' Church, are historically significant as the three remaining buildings in the area designed by Australia's first trained architect, convict Francis Greenway.

The Courthouse played a key role in the early colonial legal system and Governor Macquarie's vision for Sydney, with remnants of convict-built foundations unearthed during work at the site.

When in 1813 Governor Macquarie sent plans to London with a request for funds, they were denied as 'penal colonies had no need of fancy buildings'. Macquarie set about raising the money with a £60 personal gift and £500 from colonial funds. That totals around \$75,000 in today's money, a relative steal for construction in Sydney's CBD.

"These security upgrades will ensure the building continues to make history as a suitable facility for trials and other hearings," Mr Speakman added.

The upgrade is funded from the \$100 million Sustaining Critical Infrastructure Program announced in the November 2020 budget, boosting access to justice at courthouses across the state with new audio-visual link equipment, courtrooms and other facilities.

The King Street and St James Road court complex has heard many high-profile matters, including the 1996 trial of backpacker murderer Ivan Milat.