



# Maitland Gaol

Draft Heritage Interpretation Plan  
14 September 2023

# Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wonnarua People as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land within the Maitland Local Government Area. Council pays respect to all Aboriginal Elders, past, present and future, with a spiritual connection to these lands.

## **Cultural warning**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this report may contain images or names of First Nations people who have passed away.

# Report register

The following report register documents the development of this report, in accordance with GML's Quality Management System.

Job No.	Issue No.	Notes/Description	Issue Date
22-0199	1	Milestone Progress Report	11/11/22
22-0199	2	Draft Report	17/03/23
22-0199	3	Draft Final Report	22/05/23
22-0199	4	Draft Final Report II	28/06/23
22-0199	5	Draft Final Report III	14/09/23

## Quality management

The report has been reviewed and approved for issue in accordance with the GML quality management policy and procedures.

It aligns with best-practice heritage conservation and management, *The Burra Charter: the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, 2013 and heritage and environmental legislation and guide-lines relevant to the subject place.

## Indigenous cultural and intellectual property

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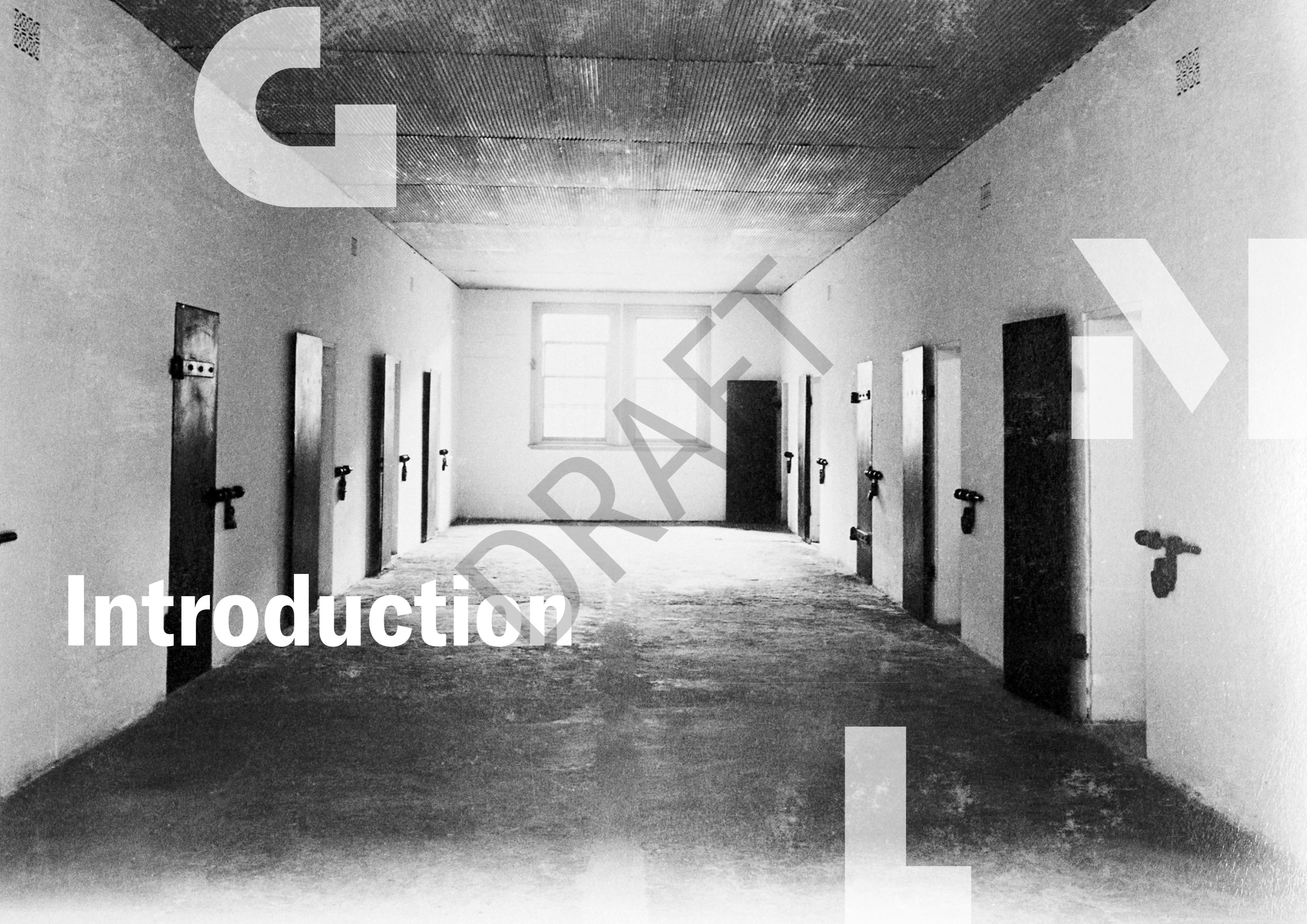
# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>	C-wing	49
Site identification	6	5-wing	52
Project background	7	Visitors centre	55
Methodology	8	Chapel	58
Report limitations	9	Reflection Area	60
<b>Review &amp; analysis</b>	<b>10</b>	Outer walls	62
Current interpretation	11	Ticketing office	64
Audience analysis	12	Exercise yard and walkways	66
Target audience	13	<b>Interpretation devices</b>	<b>68</b>
Background review	14	Tours	69
<b>Stakeholder consultation</b>	<b>17</b>	Digital projections	70
<b>Interpretation framework</b>	<b>20</b>	Visual experiences	74
Interpretive vision	21	Audio	76
How to achieve this vision	22	Multimedia interactive	77
How to breathe life back into the Gaol	23	Architectural lighting	78
Western gatehouse	28	Furnished environments	80
A-wing	30	Interpretive displays	81
Tract cells	34	Interpretive signage and brand identity	82
Hospital	36	New horizons	86
B-wing	39	<b>Endnotes</b>	<b>88</b>
Muster yard	42		
Shower block	44		
Exercise yard	46		

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# Introduction

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# Introduction

**GML Heritage Pty Ltd (GML) has been commissioned by Maitland City Council (MCC) to prepare a heritage interpretation plan for Maitland Gaol (the Gaol). The aim is to bring a contemporary view of the site's significant history and heritage values within the Gaol and to underpin driving visitation to the site as identified in the Maitland Gaol Development Plan.**

## Site identification

The entrance to Maitland Gaol sits on John Street, East Maitland, bounded by Cumberland Street on the northwest and Lindesay Street in the northeast. The town of East Maitland sits between two ridges, and Maitland Gaol sits atop the smaller of those ridges to the north, with views towards heritage and landscape features including the Hunter River. Maitland Gaol also sits alongside the train line and is a 4-minute walk from East Maitland Station and 14 minutes from Victoria Street Station.



Figure 1 Maitland Gaol in its wider context. (Source: Google Maps with GML overlay)



Figure 2 Maitland Gaol in its immediate context. (Source: Nearmap with GML overlay)



Figure 3 Heritage context of Maitland Gaol. (Source: Maitland Local Environmental Plan 2011 with GML overlay)

# Project background

Maitland Gaol is a state heritage item and is the longest continuously operating gaol in New South Wales, being open from 1848 until its closure in 1998. The different policies and social changes that occurred over the Gaol's 150-year history contribute strongly to its historic and cultural value.

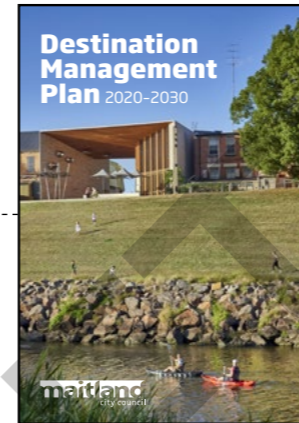
Since 2000, Maitland City Council has been operating the Gaol and providing guided and self-guided tours. Prior to 2020, the Gaol has secured over \$1.8 million in grant funding from state and federal sources to support the site, such as conservation works, accessibility upgrades and general maintenance.

In 2018, Maitland City Council was appointed Crown Land Manager of the site. Council has since prepared a Development Plan and a Masterplan to re-energise the Gaol as a major tourist attraction, as proposed in the wider Maitland City Council Destination Management Plan. Within this plan, cultural tourism was identified as an opportunity for Maitland, being situated two hours north of Sydney by car and sitting at the midway point between metropolitan Newcastle and the Hunter Valley wine region. In 2022, both the NSW and Australian governments committed over \$10 million to develop components of the Development Plan.

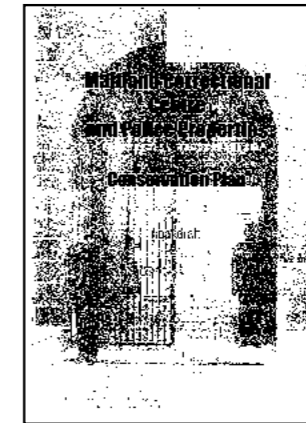
Maitland Place Activation Strategy (2016)



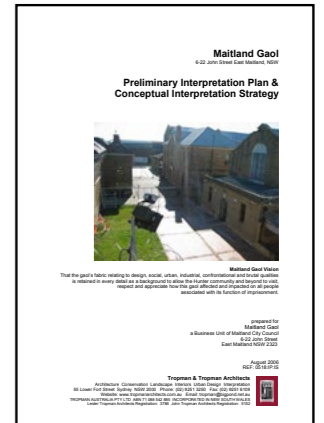
Maitland Destination Management Plan (2020)



Conservation Plan (1998)



Interpretation Strategy (2006)



Maitland Gaol Development Plan (2020)



Maitland Gaol Masterplan (2020)



Landscape Design Application Report (2022)



Heritage Interpretation Plan (this report)

# Methodology

GML has developed this Interpretation Plan through the following steps:

- Undertaking a site inspection of the Gaol and review of historical documentation considering location, setting, current use, associated features, etc.
- Reviewing key project documentation including the Development Plan, Masterplan, Interpretation Strategy (2006), and principles of movement, accessibility and relationship between people and place including diverse users.
- Identifying and developing historical themes that have shaped the current cultural and historical landscape of the Gaol. This includes considering where and how these themes are best exemplified.
- Consulting with key community groups, history and heritage stakeholders and local government to identify key issues and opportunities for interpretation.
- Auditing existing interpretation on site and online.
- Preparing the key messages to be communicated about the narrative and emotional storytelling, which audiences they should reach and how this can be integrated into the design of tours, the landscape and any other multimedia opportunities. This has been presented in this draft report as preliminary experiences and device precedents.
- Collaborating with Esem Projects on multimedia and public art opportunities.

## Primary and secondary source material

Initial primary historical research and review included the following resources.

- Audiovisual:
  - Oral histories and audiovisual material were used to inform the curatorial approach to privileging emotion, voices and experiences of prisoners and officers.
  - Oral history interviews by Frank Heimans ‘Inside Maitland Gaol’.
  - Maitland Gaol App: Escaping Maitland Gaol, Maitland Gaol Revealed, Snitch’s Gaol Exploration.

- 2JJ recorded interview with Raymond John Denning, April 1980.
- *A Current Affair* excerpt on Maitland Gaol closure, 1998.
- Video news excerpt regarding George Savvas's death.
- Royal Commission into NSW Prisons 1976–1978.

- Archival material:
  - Archival material, where digitised, was used in the preparation of the report.
  - NSW State Archives: Prisoner Cards (downloaded).

Initial secondary historical research and review included:

- A broad range of secondary publications and reports were used to develop historical context and inform the development of interpretive devices.
- John Ramsland, *With just but relentless discipline: A social history of corrective services in New South Wales*.
- Pamela Harrison, *Life and Death in Maitland Gaol – the first 20 years 1849–1869 (2014)* and *Confined but free!: The female staff of Maitland Gaol in the 19th century (2021)*.
- Janina Gosseye, Naomi Stead, and Deborah van der Plaats, *Speaking of buildings: oral history in architectural research (2019)*.
- ‘Captured: Portraits of Crime 1870–1930’ exhibition catalogue, NSW State Archives.
- ‘Caring for the Incarcerated’ exhibition catalogue 2017.
- Australian Institute of Criminology (various reports).

Additional non-digitised material which may inform later content development includes:

- Superintendent’s Journal
- Gaoler’s Journals (1918–1931)
- Punishment Book (1907–1951)
- Warder’s Journal (Female Division)
- Register of Letters
- Court Book.

Table 1 Interpretation program.





## Report limitations

### First Nations consultation

Consultation with First Nations communities was not undertaken as part of this report. We acknowledge balanced and sensitive storytelling is crucial for this site. We know that for First Nations communities, deaths in custody are a raw and painful reality. The history of Maitland Gaol and the First Nations prisoners incarcerated on site or employed as trackers by the colonial authorities connects the Gaol with diverse communities across NSW and interstate to Queensland and Victoria over its 150-year span.

As part of the ongoing interpretation it is crucial to commit to understanding and documenting First Nations experiences and connections to Maitland Gaol as an integral part of ongoing interpretation, and to raise awareness of the impact of Australia's penal system on First Nations communities during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

As such Maitland City Council will be undertaking an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study for the site.

### Accessibility

The Heritage Interpretation Plan has identified a suite of interpretive devices including on-site installations and digital experiences. Once endorsed and budgeted, the devices will need to be designed in detail to ensure accessibility to a broad range of audiences i.e. consideration of on-site accessible location, height, language and tone for signage. Consideration of infrastructure such as lift access, inclusive and accessible paths, and lighting needs to be developed further alongside the devices. Some proposed interpretive devices developed for this project would allow for audiences to access an interpretive experience without being on site (i.e. accessing the experience via a home or school computer).

### Paid and unpaid or 'free' visitor experiences

The devices and experiences presented in this report have been developed in response to the interpretive narrative. It is noted that once devices have been endorsed, the Gaol will price each product or experience accordingly. It should be noted that the 'narrative' has been developed to guide the curation of the design and moods of each space. It is not intended to be an end-to-end visitor journey. Specific areas of the Gaol can still be ticketed and experienced separately.

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# Review & analysis



# Review & analysis

## Current interpretation

Visitors currently explore the historic site through experiences tailored to individuals and groups of both adults and children, including self-guided audio tours, guided tours, functions and events, sleepovers, corporate events and team building. Permanent on-site interpretation comprises identification signage and some movable heritage displays.

The current products have been reviewed as part of the preparation of this Heritage Interpretation Plan.

Table 3 Current interpretation products.

Current product	Recommendations
Self-Guided Audio Tour: <i>Maitland Gaol Revealed</i>	The edited oral history interviews are an evocative and historic record of the voices of Maitland Gaol. The audio on this app can be repurposed for soundscapes and directional sound devices.
Guided Tours: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 150 Years Under Lock and Key</li> <li>• Crimes of Passion</li> <li>• Escapes</li> <li>• Justice Precinct Tour</li> <li>• Escapes Night Tour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided tours will be retained as a priority product for the new Gaol.</li> <li>• Tours content should be restructured by the principles of the interpretive framework.</li> <li>• Tours should support storytelling with new interpretive devices and a combination of self-discovery and prompts from the guide.</li> </ul>
Snitch's Gaol Exploration	Content should be superseded with curriculum-based activities on the guided tours.
Signage	Supersede existing site signage. Provide accessible, readable content that also provides 'teasers' for visitors in unpaid areas to encourage purchasing the ticketed experience.
Movable heritage displays (Chapel, hospital)	Redesign and curate current collection displays to align with the new thematic framework.

## Audience analysis

Effective interpretation models consider who the potential audience might be and how they might engage with the site and its heritage values. Interpretation is best when it is layered through subtle changes in design and textures that encourage people to imagine and uncover meaning through time. In responding to this as interpreters, we need to consider how the known and potential future audiences might circulate and orient themselves to the themes and space, their purpose for coming to Maitland and/or the Gaol, and how to best stimulate and capture their interest.

Interpretation will be most successful when it is targeted specifically to audience needs and accessible to a broad audience. Audiences may interact with devices installed on site, but may also seek out information digitally, and engage with the history of the Gaol even after leaving the site.

The current audiences visiting Maitland Gaol can be broadly categorised as follows:

- Visiting friends and relatives (VFR):** Maitland City Council Destination Management Plan notes over 55% of domestic overnight visitors to Maitland are travelling to visit friends or relatives. 'Visiting friends' tend to be child-free groups who spend more on entertainment while 'visiting relatives' are typically older, and friends and family groups with children. Currently, outside of the Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) market, there is little awareness of, and a low desire to, travel to Maitland.<sup>1</sup>
- Tourists:** During the period 2018–2019, tourists from Sydney comprised 17% of visitation to Maitland Gaol, while interstate/international visitors made up 26%. Regional visitors, primarily drawn from the Newcastle, Hunter Valley and Central Coast areas, comprised 46%.<sup>2</sup>
- School groups** seeking activities and learning experiences: In 2018–2019, Maitland Gaol had a total of 6,893 primary and high school visits.



## Target audience

The following breakdown of target audiences has been developed based on Destination NSW's visitor data for the Hunter region and market segments across domestic and international tourists. The preferences of these broad audience types have been considered in the development of heritage interpretation devices.

### Key considerations and opportunities for heritage interpretation

- **Build a digital presence for Maitland Gaol:** Internet is the single most important research tool when planning a trip. The Internet is the most popular information source for domestic and international tourists alike.
- **Capture Hunter Valley food and wine visitors:** Maitland Heritage Interpretation Plan (Sue Hodges Projects) highlights the opportunity to capture some of these visitors through heritage and cultural activities that will extend and complement their food and wine experience. The Hunter Valley was by far the most visited wine region in NSW by domestic overnight wine visitors at 49%.
- **Connect Maitland Gaol to the Priority Destination Hubs:** The Destination Management Plan highlights the importance of not only physical connections between the hubs suggested but virtual reality and online technology as a way to connect themed itineraries and immersive experiences.
- **Grow school-aged audiences:** The school-aged population in the Hunter region is projected to increase from 174,500 in 2016 to 190,000 in 2026, providing Maitland Gaol with a growing market to target with curriculum-based products.
- **Build international and domestic visitor interest:** In 2019, culture and heritage visitors accounted for 63% of international visitors to NSW, 15% of domestic overnight visitors and 9% of daytrip visitors in NSW. NSW received 60% of international, 32% of domestic overnight and 32% of daytrip culture and heritage-based visitors to Australia.

Table 4 Current and target audience for interpretation at Maitland Gaol.

Current audience	Target audience	Relevance to interpretation at Maitland Gaol
<b>Tourists:</b> Domestic overnight visitor and international visitor	<b>Single travellers:</b> They are travellers, not tourists, and a large proportion seek out culture and heritage-based activities (44% of international tourists and 21% of domestic).  Single travellers account for 57% of international tourists to the Hunter region. The primary age group of single travellers is 15–29 years. <sup>3</sup>  <b>Adult couples:</b> Adult couples make up the largest proportion of tourists to the region. They are independent travellers, using their own transport, with more time to spend planning and taking trips.  Similar to single travellers, a significant number of adult couples enjoy cultural and heritage experiences (25% of international tourists, 32% of domestic).  They may also combine their trip to the region with a particular event such as the Bitter and Twisted beer festival. <sup>4</sup>	This type of visitor may prefer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visually engaging content that is easy to consume</li> <li>• interactivity with multiple devices</li> <li>• avenues for further investigation i.e. digital overlay, website</li> <li>• displays of original primary sources and artefacts</li> <li>• guided tours or experiences</li> <li>• information about other local destinations.</li> </ul> This type of visitor may prefer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visually engaging content that is easy to consume</li> <li>• interactivity with multiple devices</li> <li>• avenues for further investigation i.e. digital overlay, website</li> <li>• displays of original primary sources and artefacts</li> <li>• good orientation (signage, plans).</li> </ul>
<b>Visiting friends and relatives (young)</b>	<b>Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR):</b> They are predominantly in the 15–29 year age group. They want party time, bright lights, clubs and pubs.  They may already attend events such as the Bitter and Twisted beer festival. <sup>5</sup>  <b>Family groups:</b> Generally all domestic tourists. Busy families are short on time and are looking to reconnect and recharge. They generally have a budget and look for good value and trips that cater to the needs of the whole family. <sup>6</sup>	This type of visitor may prefer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpretation provided through programmed events and night-time experiences to attract interest from the young regional population.</li> </ul> This type of visitor may prefer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an emphasis on interactive interpretation, tactile and physical experiences</li> <li>• activities that are safe for children</li> <li>• low-level displays</li> <li>• opportunities for joint family learning and play</li> <li>• short bursts of visits, given their time pressures.</li> </ul>
<b>Retirees</b>	<b>Over 55s:</b> This group accounts for over 40% of visitors to the region.  Predominantly couples, they are largely independent travellers using their own transport. They have more time to spend planning and taking trips. They seek out value for money and take their holidays outside school holidays.  These visitors will come almost regardless of the interpretation. <sup>7,8</sup>	This type of visitor may prefer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• balanced modes of delivery of interpretation suitable for elderly visitors, allowing for dwell time</li> <li>• more detailed information</li> <li>• non-digital content (some segments may resist technology)</li> <li>• accessible spaces (lighting, seating, acoustic-sensitive).</li> </ul>
<b>School groups</b>	<b>School groups:</b> Both primary and secondary schools in the Hunter region and surrounding areas seeking education experiences aligned to National and NSW Curriculum.	This type of visitor may prefer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planned activities that align to curriculum outcomes.</li> <li>• Emphasis on interactive interpretation, tactile and physical experiences, particularly for primary school groups.</li> <li>• Guided educational experiences.</li> </ul>

# Background review

Table 5 Summary of key documents.

Maitland Gaol document	Key recommendations/considerations	Implications for Interpretation Plan
<p><b>Maitland Gaol Conservation Plan (1998)</b></p>	<p><b>Heritage fabric</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain the existing components and finishes unless they are intrusive or damaging because they all contribute to the total story of Maitland.</li> <li>If any work involves a change to existing fabric, the existing conditions should be recorded on measured drawings, and photographs are to be held by Maitland City Council.</li> <li>Archaeological control is required on site. This requires a watching brief on all excavation in sensitive areas of known or possible earlier structures and a monitoring process with an archaeologist on call for all other areas. Archaeological investigation is required at the Prison Farm.</li> </ul> <p><b>Interpretive device fixings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signage, interpretation and temporary exhibitions can occur but need not be invasive and can be managed to be effective.</li> </ul>	<p>Interpretive devices need to consider fittings and fixtures that will not impact heritage fabric, including archaeological potential through ground disturbance.</p>
<p><b>Maitland Gaol Development Plan (2020)</b></p>	<p><b>Commercial sustainability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Balance the commercial and community use of existing buildings and spaces, with consideration of their highest and best use (i.e. considering heritage, cultural, social and economic value).</li> </ul> <p><b>Visitor experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a vibrant precinct that encourages repeat visitation and provides attractive and authentic tourism, cultural, social and educational experiences for both visitors and the local community.</li> <li>Paid/ticketed access to products combined with publicly accessible areas.</li> <li>Shift from self-guided to guided tours.</li> <li>Accommodation provision—tendering for the use of the Lt Governor’s and Governor’s Residence.</li> </ul> <p><b>Partnerships and programming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish valued partnerships to support the delivery of quality experiences and products.</li> <li>Event infrastructure—redevelopment of the Store Building to provide enhanced service access for major and regular events.</li> <li>Develop strong, collaborative relationships with internal Council service providers and external partners to implement the Development Plan.</li> <li>Enhance Maitland’s standing as a tourism destination by supporting integrated experiences with regional attractions and enabling the delivery of critical visitor infrastructure (e.g. accommodation).</li> </ul>	<p>Interpretive devices and products should be developed with consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>paid experiences and publicly accessible areas of the Gaol precinct</li> <li>supporting guided tour experiences</li> <li>signature or ‘hero’ experiences that provide a contemporary, innovative product</li> <li>partnerships and programming that provide fresh, compelling and seasonal offerings, and encourage repeat visitation</li> <li>targeting specific audiences from tourists, families, students and local community</li> <li>potential for integration into digital infrastructure, online experiences and content for marketing</li> <li>supporting ongoing strategies for community engagement.</li> </ul>

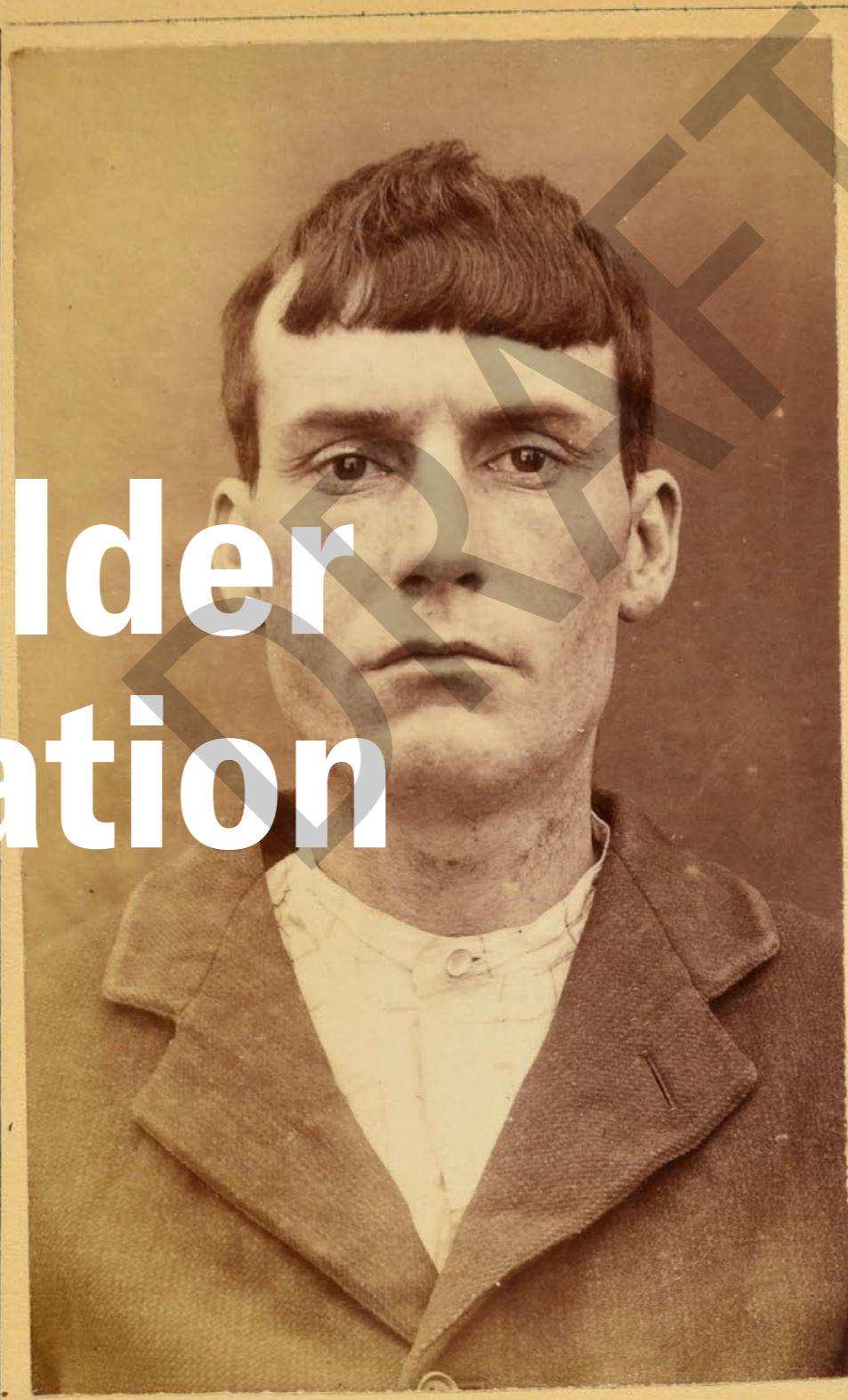
Maitland Gaol document	Key recommendations/considerations	Implications for Interpretation Plan
<p><b>Preliminary Interpretation Plan &amp; Conceptual Interpretation Strategy (2006)</b></p>	<p><b>Interpretation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative interpretation—construction of access stairs to Guard Tower 1 and 6, and installation of contemporary interpretive AV infrastructure throughout the site.</li> <li>• Marketing and community engagement.</li> <li>• Increase awareness of and enquiries for Maitland Gaol’s enhanced products using digital channels.</li> <li>• Support sales and repeat bookings for schools, events and group tourism markets.</li> <li>• Retarget visitors with additional Maitland Gaol experiences and event offers by leveraging CRM capabilities, digital remarketing or print media (upon exiting the Gaol).</li> <li>• Streamline online product sales and venue hire.</li> <li>• Engage with visitor and partner social media channels to support advocacy, engagement and ongoing awareness of experiences.</li> </ul> <p>• Thematic framework based on 36 NSW heritage themes.</p> <p>• Described existing interpretation.</p> <p>• Identified broad devices and interpretive techniques including themed tours and wayfinding signage.</p> <p>• Mapped specific locations including a display in the modern cell block and exercise yard, historical image display, cell displays in A-wing and B-wing, a display above the kitchen, adaptation and re-use of the ‘power control centre’, a sentry box, and provision of online interpretation.</p> <p>• Provided recommendations—some have been implemented since the strategy was developed, others have been superseded by technological change.</p>	<p>GML’s heritage interpretation plan should consider the continuity of select recommendations such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluating, maintaining and monitoring any interpretation implemented on site.</li> <li>• Cataloguing and digitising the movable heritage on site.</li> <li>• Developing a protocol for dealing with sensitive issues such as deaths in custody, in collaboration with current and former staff and former prisoners if possible. This could be extended to victims of crime or their family members who may visit the site.</li> <li>• Identifying and undertaking further oral history interviews or filmed interviews on the site before the Gaol is redeveloped, or individuals pass away.</li> <li>• Updating the Conservation Management Plan and reassessing the site for ongoing use / planned future uses.</li> <li>• Formulating a collections policy for donations and bequests relating to the Gaol. This could help support community engagement and call-outs to individuals formerly connected to the site.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Maitland Gaol Masterplan (2020)</b></p>	<p><b>Key principles:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development potential—new potential development within the constraints of existing heritage buildings on site; removal of intrusive elements in accordance with the Conservation Plan; respond to future needs.</li> <li>• Identity and future expansion—respond to prior planning documentation, allow for future commercial growth of the Gaol, design for mixed uses serving the needs of both visitors and the community.</li> <li>• Improve access and maintenance.</li> <li>• Enhance utility through clever programming and prioritisation of under-utilised buildings.</li> <li>• Respect heritage—consider the limitations and opportunities of the historic significance.</li> </ul>	<p>Interpretive devices, installations and programming need to support master planning principles; balancing the need for greater activation with the limitations of the heritage fabric.</p>

Maitland Gaol document	Key recommendations/considerations	Implications for Interpretation Plan
<p><b>Maitland Destination Management Plan (2020)</b></p>	<p><b>Challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maitland City Council has responsibility for many key local attractions including Maitland Gaol, Maitland Regional Art Gallery, Walka Water Works and Morpeth Museum and has therefore had to take a much more dominant role to activate the visitor economy.</li> <li>• Deterioration of heritage structures and significant unfunded conservation requirements for the Gaol.</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing Maitland Gaol as a destination hub and an iconic tourism destination.</li> <li>• Expanding the Gaol's education products for the Hunter region school market and beyond.</li> <li>• Renewing the core tour offer on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Attracting interest from the younger regional population interested in night-time events.</li> <li>• Introducing more events like the successful Bitter &amp; Twisted Boutique Beer Festival. Consider night-time events, theatre, concerts, outdoor cinema and movie nights.</li> <li>• Encouraging a private investment accommodation offering.</li> <li>• Introducing supporting tourism infrastructure.</li> <li>• Sourcing and attracting co-investment for capital requirements.</li> <li>• Activating outside areas with lighting to create a precinct area including the courthouse, park and railway station.</li> </ul>	<p>Interpretive planning needs to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education products specifically tailored for the Hunter region school market, i.e. aligning with other key school/education products e.g. Tocal Homestead, Walka Water Works and development of pre and post-excursion experiences through online content delivery such as digital walk-throughs and video content.</li> <li>• Flexibility in content development that can be renewed, refreshed, curated i.e. digital platforms that can have a participatory or ongoing community engagement feature.</li> <li>• 'Modes' of Maitland Gaol i.e. daytime programming, night-time programming and products.</li> <li>• Consultation with potential and existing partners i.e. Maitland Regional Art Gallery, the University of Newcastle and Maitland Libraries etc.</li> <li>• Utilising multimedia and digital infrastructure to support night-time programming and presenting the site as an intriguing destination.</li> <li>• Connecting interpretation to other hubs like Morpeth through signage, shared pathways and guided tours.</li> </ul>



1414  
Maitland  
Name Percy Livingstone *also Percy Warner*  
*Valentine Avery*  
*George Kibby*  
*George Graham*  
Date when portrait was taken 10 November 1905

Residence place. Bs Sydney  
Date of Birth 15-9-1872  
Resided in } Ship  
State } Year  
Trade or occupation  
Previous to conviction  
Religion  
Education  
Height, with shoes }  
Height } On committal 144 8  
lbs. } On discharge  
Colour of hair D Bro  
Colour of eyes Brown  
Marks or special features  
:- outside arm freckles  
scar across inside wrist



Stakeholder  
consultation

# Stakeholder consultation

GML has consulted a range of stakeholders from local government, volunteer groups and similar museums/organisations to better understand existing interpretation at the Gaol and priorities for future interpretation initiatives. These included:

- Maitland Gaol staff including tour guides and front of house employees
- Maitland City Council staff and stakeholders including the destination management team, the heritage officer and architects
- Old Dubbo Gaol interpretation team
- NSW State Correctional Services Gaol Museum.

Our consultation consisted of in-person and online workshops, and online surveys.

The following lists summarise the key points taken from all phases of consultation.

## Maitland Gaol staff

- High school content is vital; primary school is seen as less important due to the nature of the content.
- Arrival should always be through the gates.
- Robyn, a tour guide, mentions that she slams the gates.
- Possibility for roleplay brought up, setting a power dynamic between the tour guide and the visitor.
- Have visitors measure themselves like former prisoners were measured—height, head circumference, etc.
- New additions may mean that extra multimedia or interactivity is spread over the different tours.
- New tours could be on themes like women and children, crime and punishment.
- Colour of pink in the cells was originally intended to calm down the prisoners; instead it just made them feel insulted, emasculated.
- The execution cell opens up for content about Charles Hines, as the last man executed, and the executioner.
- During its operation, the Gaol wouldn't have been the quiet, empty space it is now. Walking into the wings there would have been a cacophony of sound.
- Tour guides would need some control over the use of environmental sound, to start it and choose not to use it if it doesn't suit their style or content. For example, different tours may be presenting different things, where the sound may not fit.
- The sound of the opening and closing of the cell doors was seen as something that the prisoner would forever remember.
- In the tract cells, prisoners were sometimes given a tennis ball or pack of cards. Could be used as a prop in a cell. Have a half-finished game of patience on the ground.
- The hospital is a very small space and can be skipped if the group is large, or if they are going slow. However, it expands the experience beyond cells. The hospital is a time capsule of sexual health and the Government's role in duty of care.
- New prisoners would be placed in B-wing while waiting to be classified. Would have lots of 'try-hards' trying to stake their claim in the hierarchy.
- B-wing is the site of the darkest point in the Gaol's history, featuring gags, hoods and other forms of corporal punishment.
- Prisoners were given sheets and a pillowcase.
- Prisoners were able to buy radios in the 1960s. Have a radio in one or two cells playing a program from the era. Set the timeline.
- Hierarchy in the gaol was asserted in the exercise yards, by where you sat, who you spoke to.
- When visitors leave B-wing into the exercise yard they have to leave in single file like the prisoners would have.
- Serious assaults and stabbings occurred in the shower block. It was the only place without officers or cameras.
- There is a duplication of women's content in C-wing and the Chapel. It may be stronger to spend more time on it in the C-wing part of the tour.
- There was a comment on reinstating the padded cell.
- The guides note that there is fatigue in the visitors in the tour towards C-wing and 5-wing.
- The maximum security section and 5-wing could be ideal to speak about the introduction of surveillance technology in the gaol.
- The visitors centre is one of the only links to the outside world. This opens up the perspective of women and children. Feelings of loss, frustration, vulnerability and being so close to your loved ones yet so far occur in the visitors centre.
- Organ concerts were held in the Chapel. Until the 1960s this would've been one of the only places in the Gaol where you heard music.

## Maitland City Council staff

- The Chapel is a good events space that Council would like to rent out.
- If Maitland Gaol continues with the app it will need to be rejigged to align with the new products.
- Spaces like A-wing and B-wing should be seen as experiences in their own right for visitors that don't have an hour to spend on a tour. Ticketed separately.
- Signage is vital for the paid and especially the unpaid experience. Signs in the unpaid section should be used as a teaser to entice people to want to find out more.
- Projections should be programmed and flexible to suit events.
- There will be two entrances: through the gates and through the café. Gates are seen almost as the single most important experience.
- Tactile experiences can help with education and tours for children.
- There will be a walkway connecting Morpeth to the Walka Water Works, which travels past the Gaol. There needs to be a connection between these three sites in programming and partnerships.
- Fabric and experience conservation of the Gaol's current intact state could be achieved through a fly-through of the Gaol in its current site. This would also be useful as an accessibility tool.
- The heritage product is seen as the hero experience of the Gaol. It can also be seen as an architectural attraction that can be linked to other heritage items such as bridges and churches.
- Objects should be considered in public use spaces such as the bar and ticketing areas.
- There is a need for flexible signage in the public spaces for both wayfinding and interpretive purposes.

### Old Dubbo Gaol

- Old Dubbo Gaol aimed to achieve two things: 1) improve dwell time and 2) better integrate a mix of multimedia, sound and signage.
- They have begun to strip back any non-original material where possible.
- When using sounds, they have aimed for a mix of environmental sounds such as the clinking of keys, the sound of water dripping, footsteps and praying.
- Old Dubbo Gaol used historical records of other institutions that were operating concurrently such as the Parramatta Hospital for the Insane to inform them towards an authentic experience.
- A key experience at Old Dubbo Gaol is the interactive within the exercise yard featuring a recording of officers yelling out instructions.
- More subtle techniques, such as that in the Gallows Gallery, don't quite work for everyone and may require more exposition.
- The padded cell is also pointed out as a key moment because it allows a more personal experience.
- Projectors and A/V were hidden where possible.
- Visitors have requested a coffee table book or the ability to buy more information.
- Since the removal of the animatronics the site has lost some levity and has become quite somber.
- Visitors are looking for more interactivity, both through use of phones and through touch and feel.
- Visitors are often looking for an extra layer of information, so Old Dubbo Gaol is now developing an interactive map and touchscreen.
- They are also looking to develop a digital archive in the near future.

### NSW State Correctional Services Gaol Museum, Cooma

- The most popular features on the tour at the NSW State Correctional Services Museum are death masks, gallows, portable cells, interactions with the prisoner tour guides, and things that people have made while inside.
- Changing the perception of the visitor is often the most engaging and lasting part of the experience.
- The museum is the owner of the objects and artefacts. Maitland Gaol is able to loan these items out. This collection is ever-growing and they are not able to display everything that they have.
- There is not a contemporary cataloguing system for these objects.

### Visitor data and exit surveys (2015-2018)

- From 2015 to 2018, the most popular tour by amount of people was the Self-Guided Audio Tour.
- From 2017 to 2018 in comparison to the previous years the '150 Years Under Lock and Key tour' increased in popularity.
- In the exit survey, visitors noted these main things being key improvements:
  - More artefacts, cells dressed with objects.
  - The ex-warder tour and ex-prisoner tours received praise; instead of dates, they focus on stories from inside.
  - Greater access to the site including kitchen, workshops.
  - Smaller tour groups.
  - Signage and wayfinding.
  - More cells opened.
  - More stories about the people of the Gaol.
  - More time for exploration.
  - More interpretive displays.





# Interpretation framework

# Interpretive vision

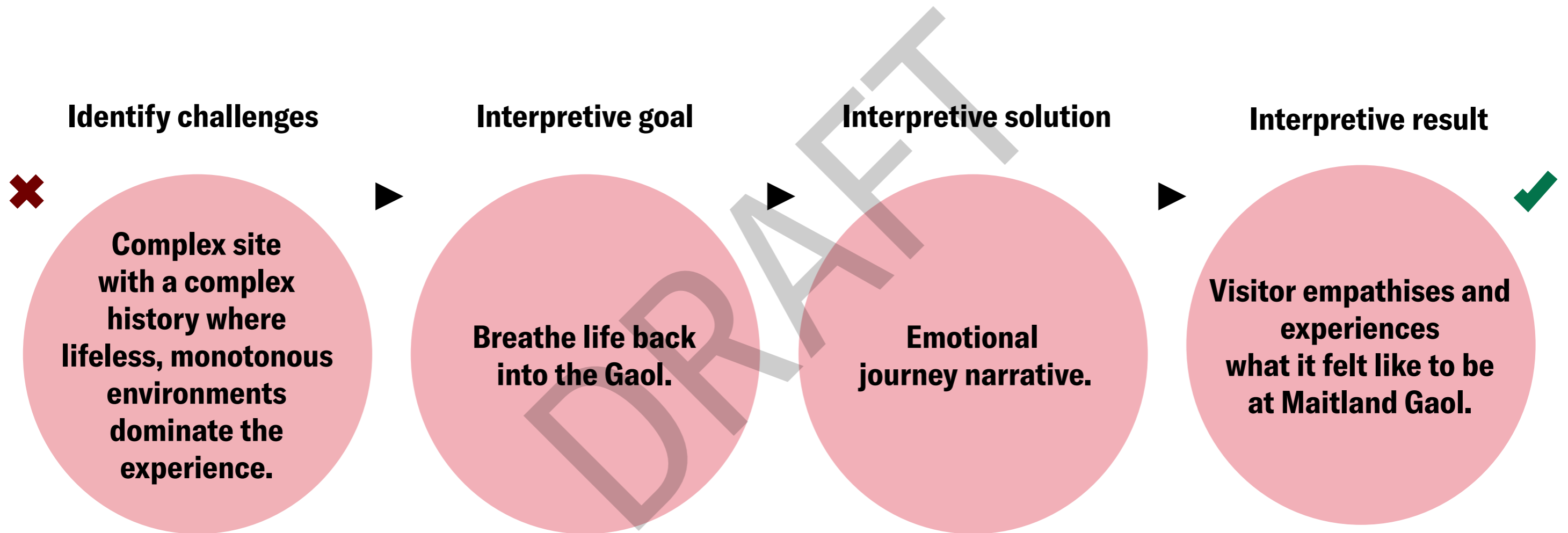
## *What did it feel like to be at Maitland Gaol?*

**Whether you lived, visited or worked at Maitland Gaol, you likely felt some similar emotions. Rather than moralising actions as 'good' or 'bad', exploring emotions humanises the experience of individuals contained in this place.**

*'Visitors enjoy hearing about people more than objects or abstract ideas.'*<sup>19</sup>

To create a memorable experience at the Gaol, storytelling should be led by emotional, tangible and visceral content.

## How to achieve this vision



# How to breathe life back into the Gaol

To help make this interpretive goal a robust, long-term solution, the following interpretive framework has been created.

## 1. Narrative: Emotional journey

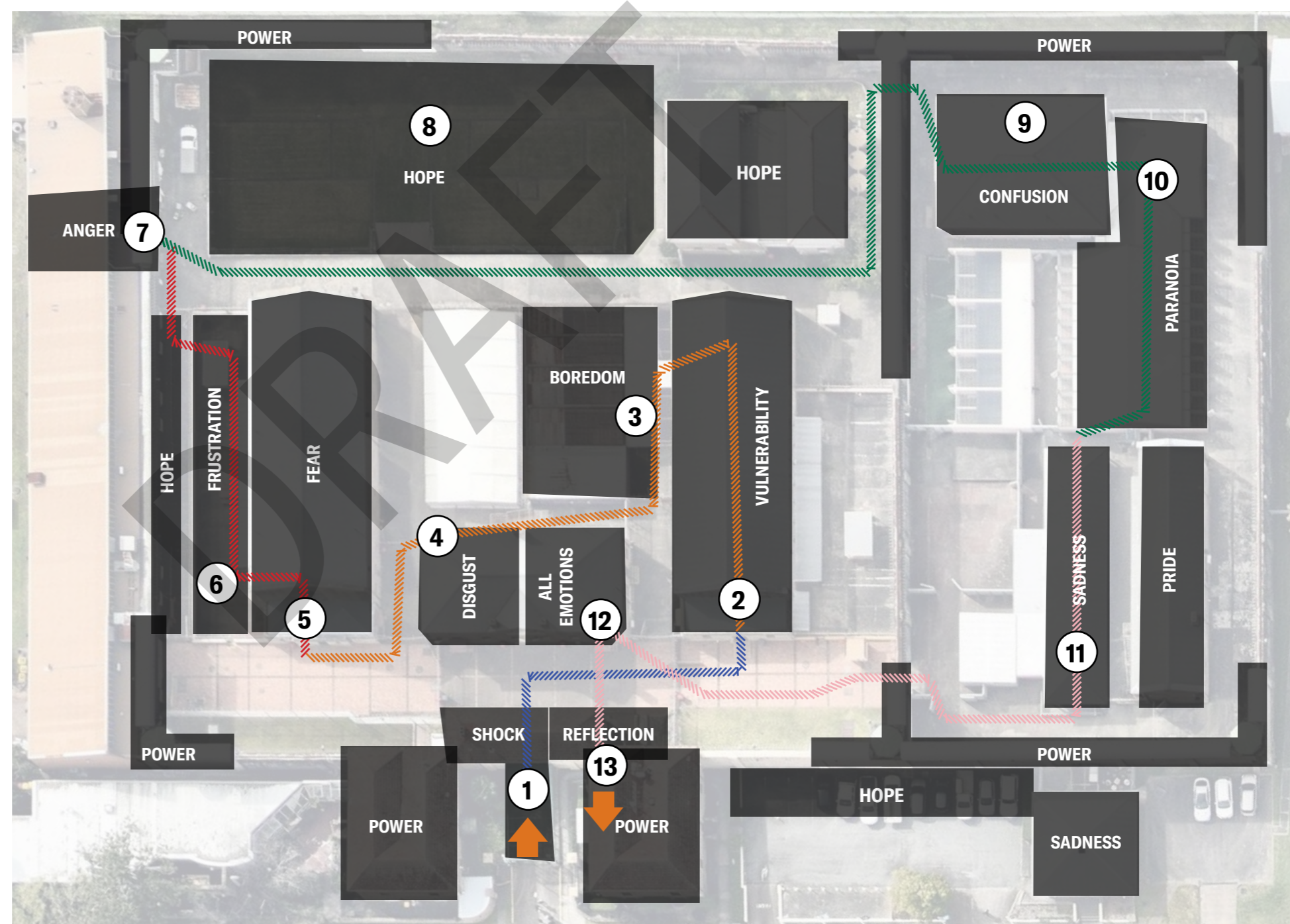
There are many emotions to be experienced in Maitland Gaol. To ensure the experience is not overwhelming, each part of the Gaol has been curated to evoke specific emotions, relating to what that building or area was renowned for.

This journey is also structured around the principles of emotional storytelling, utilising a plot, setting, devices and first-hand accounts from key characters. It creates a visceral and memorable visitor experience of what it felt like to be at Maitland Gaol and departs from the traditional historical timeline structure of storytelling.

It should be noted that the emotional journey provides the guiding vision for the Gaol to develop interpretive products and experiences. The vision provides a 'show, don't tell' approach. Each themed area of the Gaol will be curated to align with the corresponding emotion, creating a unique space; formal labels won't be used. Products for each area of the Gaol can be offered as separate ticketed experiences.

### Other locations for consideration

- Walkways—Hope (cont. from exercise yards)
- Tower Gantrys—Power
- Governor's & Lt Governor's Residence—Powerful
- Workshop building—Pride
- External visitors centre—Sadness (cont. from interior visitors centre)



## 2. Principles for emotional storytelling

Because interpretive content will change at the Gaol, it's vital to be guided by the following principles to achieve the best outcome for emotional storytelling in each area.

Not all visitors will experience the full arc of the emotional experience. The interpretation in each space should allow the emotion to be communicated in isolation from the others, and access via paid experiences allows for shorter emotional arcs to be explored.

Some areas are not included in the overarching narrative journey, but should be interpreted keeping with the overall heritage interpretation of the site. Extra spaces such as the Governor's Residence and Lt Governor's residences can work as individual experiences and should use interpretive devices and themes that cater to guests once this space is converted to accommodation.

Similarly, the Former Warders Amenities area, currently serving as a cafe, should use interpretive devices and themes suitable for this space once redeveloped.

### A. Structure stories

In curating stories for interpretation experiences, content should be aligned to the emotion but should also consider key elements in communication:

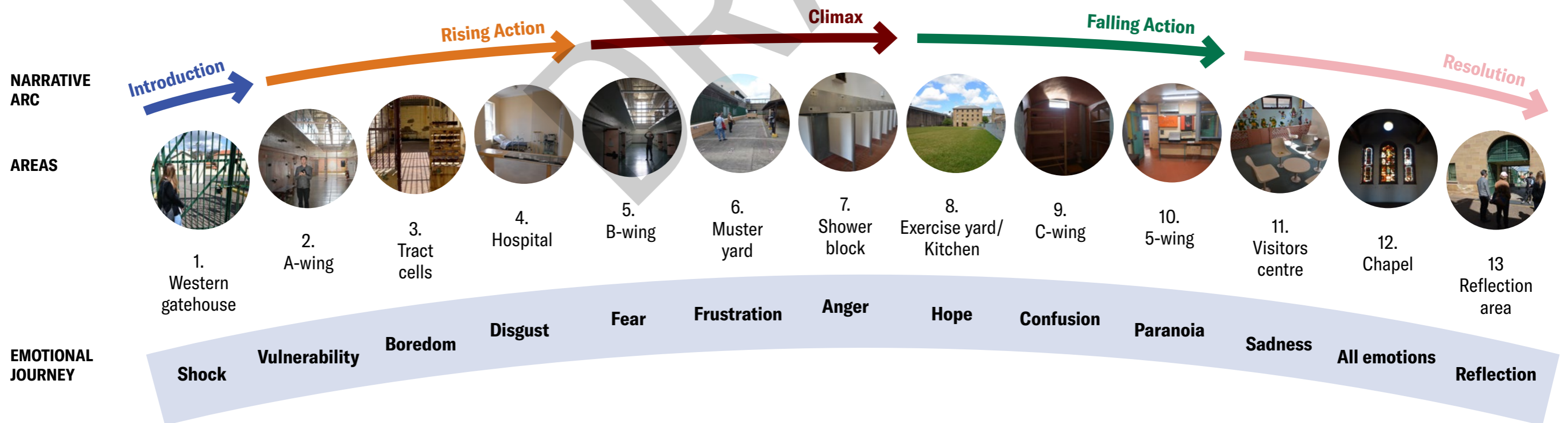
**Narrative arc:** The narrative arc that starts with shock, peaks with anger, and concludes with reflection.

**Setting:** The setting encompasses the whole Gaol, which is then broken down into key focal interpretive spaces.

**Characters:** All key characters can be utilised throughout the site, though some spaces need to focus on selected archetypes.

**Point of view:** First-person narrative guides the storytelling.

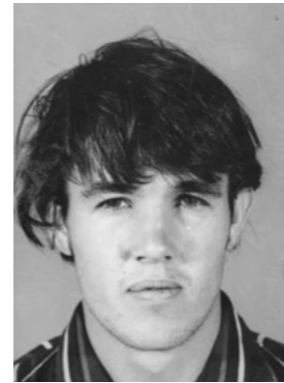
**Devices:** All interpretive devices are utilised as a tool throughout the spaces to assist in telling the stories.





This becomes the guiding framework for all permanent or temporary interpretive stories programmed for that space.

**Prisoners**



**Escapee**



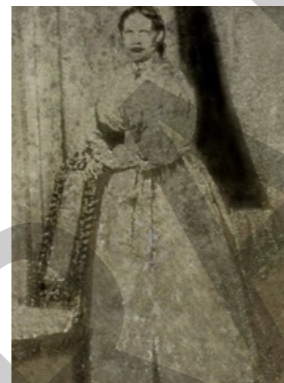
**First Nations**



**Child**



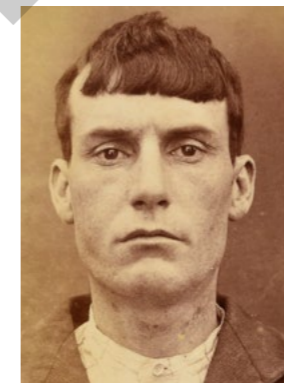
**Cell heavy**



**Rebel**



**Women prisoners**



**Young prisoner**



**Death row prisoner**

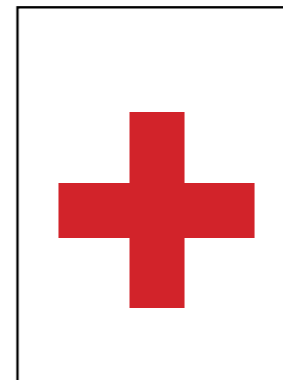
**Staff**



**Executioner**



**Officer**



**Nurse**

**Outside the Walls**



**Family**



**Victim**



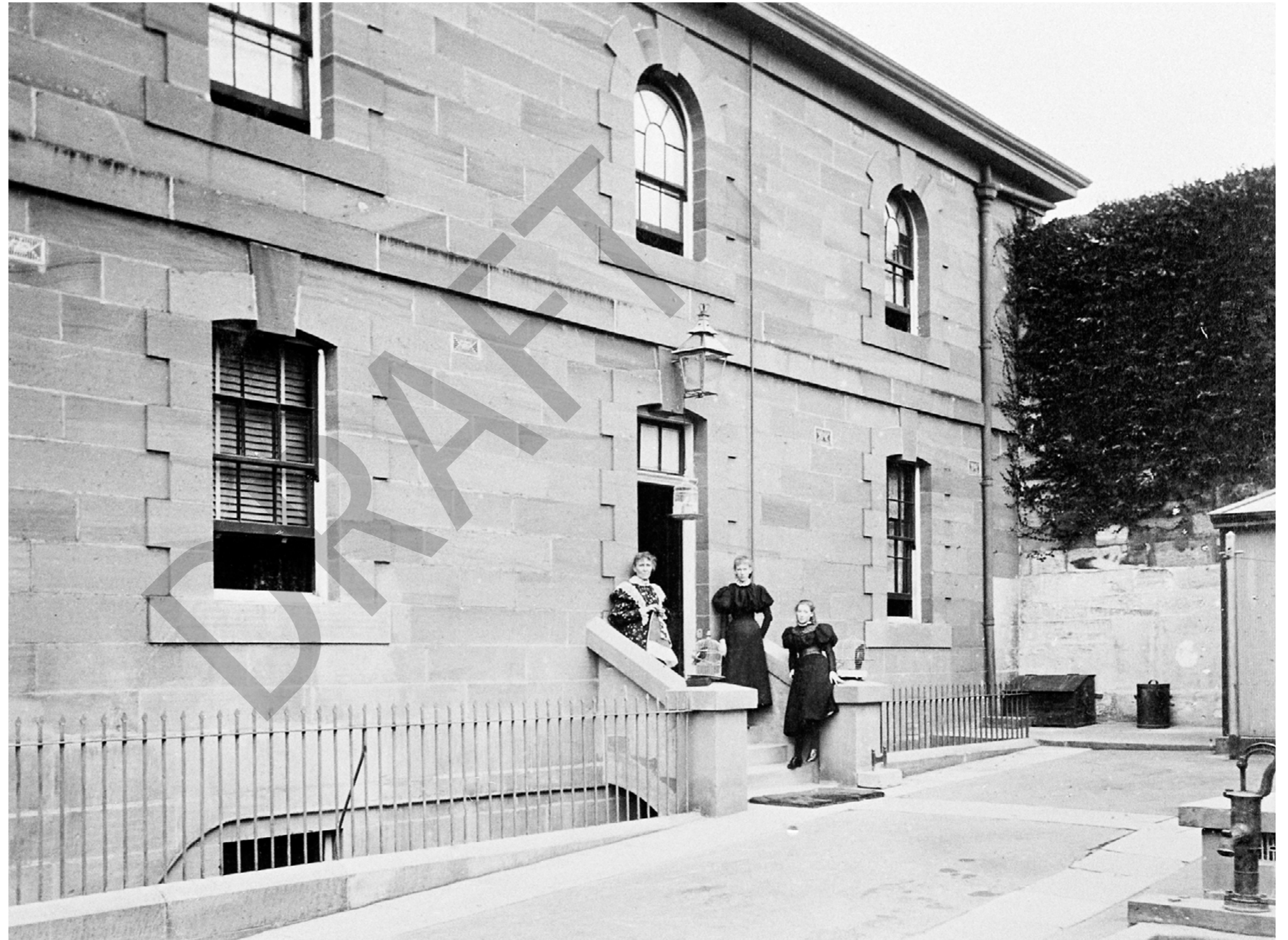
**Community**

**B. Prioritise first-hand emotional experiences to tell the story**

The voices of prisoners, officers, former auxiliary staff and the people outside the Gaol walls should be positioned at the forefront of the new interpretation on site. Their lived experience is vivid in detail and in their articulation of memories of this site in operation. Many individuals are archetypes or characters that can be adapted to capture similar experiences. Visitors may recognise their own humanity in the lives of those at the Gaol (i.e. 'There but for the grace of God go I').

Visitors may understand the history from different perspectives and imagine what they would have done in this situation, providing insight into the complex experiences people lived through.

The expansion of this cast of characters should be considered based on any additional research undertaken.



Entry to the Governors Residence. c.1985 (Source: Maitland Gaol)

### 3. Interpretive devices

The following interpretive devices are suggested tools to bring life back to the spaces. These devices fill the empty rooms with soundscapes, moving images, guided stories, and displays to deliver an evocative experience for the visitor.

Use of experiential media also allows for storytelling to be introduced in the first person, through intimate engagement with people from the past, whether through voice or performative re-enactments (based on court records, diaries and other detailed historical records) or existing oral history interviews.

Intimate experiences are designed to be experienced by a group of no more than 3 people and ideally as an individual within a more confined space such as a cell. Group experiences are designed to be experienced by the whole tour and should be in larger open spaces like the hallway of a wing or in the tract cells.

The devices comprise existing products like the tours and heritage fabric itself, plus new devices proposed in this plan such as:

- **Tours**
  - Guided
    - With guide
    - Self-guided
  - Free roaming
- **Digital Media**
  - Projections and lighting
    - Large-scale outdoor projection
    - Small-scale indoor projection
  - LED displays
    - Portable LED display
    - Embedded interpretive screens
  - Audio
    - Directional speakers
    - Immersive Soundscape
  - Multimedia interactive
- **Building Illumination**
  - Architectural Lighting
- **Furnished environments**
- **Interpretive displays**
  - Large displays
  - Small site-specific displays
- **Interpretive signage and brand identity**
- **Built & movable heritage**
- **Interaction/participation**
  - Tactile props
  - Roleplay
- **New horizons**
  - AR tours
  - VR and 3D environments
  - Holograms
  - Generative AI
  - Photogrammetry & 3D scans

Right: Artistic render by Esem Projects



## Area 1

# Western gatehouse

## Shock

*My first memory of the place was being driven there in the back of a paddy wagon from Newcastle. So I found myself in this yard, and, a very sort of stark place. The thing that struck me most about it, I think, straight away was just like desolation. It's such a shock to the system.<sup>10</sup>*

## Western gatehouse

### Shock

#### Narrative arc: Introduction

The **shock** of arriving at prison is a palpable memory for many prisoners. The induction into the correctional system was punctuated by a clear set of processes.

The prisoner escort would ring the bell to announce their arrival. While the vehicle remained in the cage, prisoners would be searched. The intake officer had details of arriving prisoners. He opened the small door in the big steel gate, and as the new prisoners were brought into this area, one at a time, he would check their names off his list. Once each of the prisoners had been walked through the cage, SLAM, the gate would be closed. Until their sentence was over the prisoners may never see that gate reopen.



#### Experience 1 (Group)

##### The caged entry

**Characters:** Young prisoner, officer

**Story:** A group of new prisoners are entering the Gaol for the first time.

**Key audience:** School groups, family groups

**Suggested devices:**

- **Audio—Immersive soundscape:**
  - Current tour guides utilise techniques like slamming the gate on arrival for visitors to prompt shock as you first enter the Gaol.
  - Guide rings the doorbell to signal arrival.
- **Built & movable heritage** The cage provides a confined space as prisoners were inducted into the institution.

#### Experience 2 (Group)

##### Guided tour point

This is the point where the guide should do their introductions, housekeeping and safety briefings.

#### Experience 3 (Group)

##### Northern gatehouse

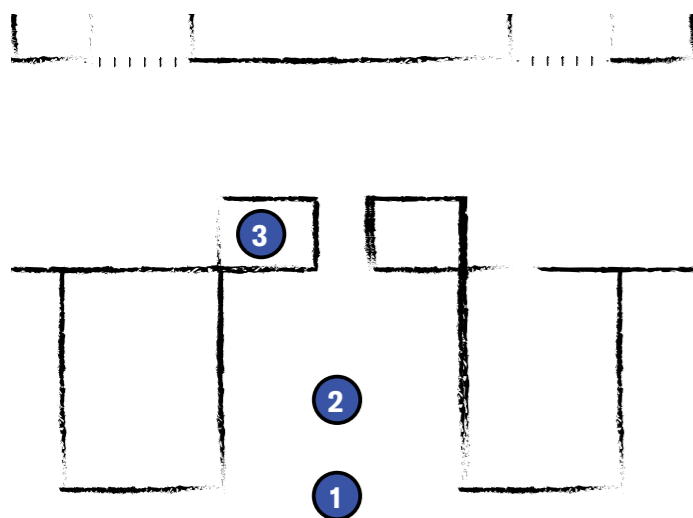
**Characters:** Young prisoner, officer

**Story:** A group of new prisoners are processed within the northern gatehouse.

**Key audience:** School groups, family groups

**Suggested devices:**

- **Furnished environments:** The northern gatehouse is dressed to look like a processing office. There is a clock on the wall.
- **Interaction/participation:** Guide (acting as the officer) starts the processing procedures with the visitors (new prisoners). Use **tactile props** such as tape measures to measure visitors as they arrive or handing them bedding, which the visitors then carry across to A-wing. Guides should be stern with the visitors throughout this interaction to establish the sense of shock a young prisoner would be feeling.



Plan of experiences within the gatehouse.

## Area 2

# A-wing

## *Vulnerability, Despair*

*... everybody's talking, singing, yelling out, screaming at each other ... People are just snarling at you, giving you filthy looks.<sup>11</sup>*

## A-wing

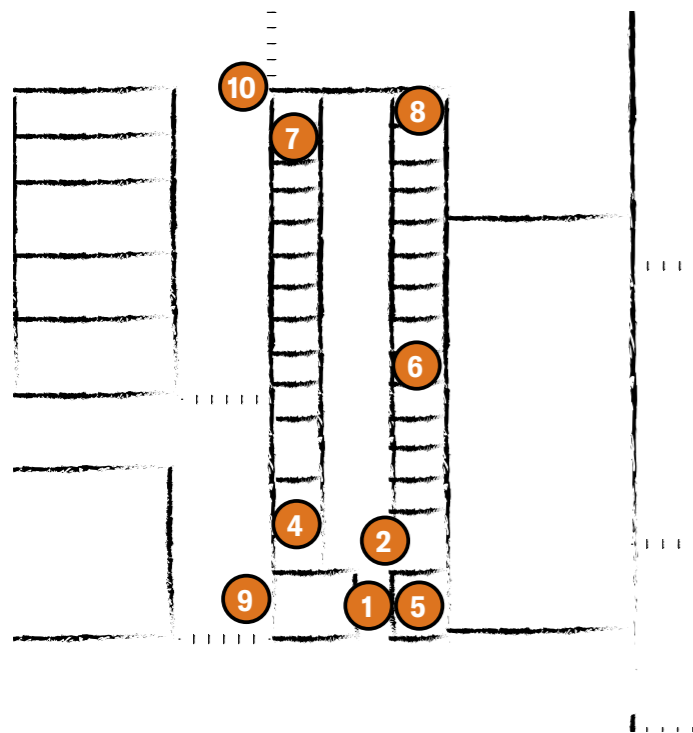
### Vulnerability, Despair

#### Narrative arc: Start of rising action

Whether you arrived in A-wing as a woman, an 11-year-old boy during the nineteenth century, a young offender during the 1990s or a homosexual man, this wing was a place to feel **vulnerable**. A-wing was used for those prisoners who required segregation and protection. Both the dangerous and the vulnerable were placed here. Key cells such as the Young Offender Cell and Reception Cell can become the 'hero' locations within the wing to convey this sense of vulnerability.

Alongside vulnerability is the feeling of **despair** felt in the condemned cell as you spent your last night before execution.

*Note: A-wing could be used as a standalone museum space and work as a paid experience. GML recommends that the museum-like experience be placed within cells to preserve the experience of walking into the wing for the first time as a visitor.*



Plan of experiences within A-wing.

## Interpretive concepts



### Experience 1 (Group)

#### Entrance to main hall

**Characters:** Young prisoner

**Story:** The raucousness and cacophony of sound heard as new prisoners are being led into the wing for the first time and the general volume experienced by a officer throughout the day.

**Key audience:** All

**Suggested devices:**

- **Audio—immersive soundscape:** As the visitors walks through the doors they are hit with a cacophony of yelling, whistling, singing and any other sound possible. Among the din you can hear a child crying.



### Experience 2 (Group)

#### Guided tour point

Before inviting the visitors to explore A-wing, this is the point where the guide should deliver their own stories.

Perhaps show the visitors the young offenders cell, as the first point where a visitor can view an 'intimate' experience. This could lead into the bedding roleplay.

**Key audience:** family groups, school groups, over 55s



### Experience 3 (Group/intimate)

#### Young offenders cell (Cell #23)

**Characters:** Young prisoner

**Story:** The vulnerability of being 18 and in gaol surrounded by dangerous men.

**Key Audience:** Single travellers, adult couples

**Suggested devices:**

- **Furnished environments:** Cell contents from the late 1990s:
  - a TV
  - bedding
  - objects bought from the buy-up.
- **Interaction/participation:** Have the visitors with the bedding make their bed in the young prisoners cell. Dress the top and bottom bunks, but leave the middle bunk for this.



**Experience 4** (Group/intimate)

**Museum space - Cell life**

**Characters:** Officers

**Story:** Day-to-day life of a prisoner

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, school groups

**Suggested devices:**

- **Interpretive displays—small site-specific displays:** Create artefact and object displays using objects from the collection.
- **Furnished environment:** Cell contents from the early 1970s:
  - a radio
  - bedding
  - toilet bucket.



**Experience 5** (Group/intimate)

**Museum space - Officer booth**

**Characters:** Officers

**Story:** Day-to-day life of an officer within a wing

**Key audience:** All

**Suggested devices:**

- **Interpretive displays—small site-specific displays:** Create artefact and object displays using the objects an officer may have on them, including a hat and a baton.
- **Furnished environment:** Include in situ objects such as a clock on the wall.



**Experience 6** (Group/intimate)

**Cell #6**

**Characters:** Child

**Story:** A young child, all of 11 years old, is sitting within a cell with a man.

**Key audience:** School groups, family groups

**Suggested devices:**

- **Projections—small-scale indoor projections:** Visitors have to look through the cell bars to view a projection of a child prisoner sitting in a cell crying.
- **Interpretive signage**
- **Audio—directional speakers:** Environmental sounds, a child sobbing.



**Experience 7** (Group/intimate)

**Cell #15**

**Characters:** Young prisoner

**Story:** How did it feel to be placed in the same category as a paedophile, just for loving another man?

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, visiting friends and relatives

**Suggested devices:**

- **Projections—small-scale indoor projections:** Visitors have to look through cell bars to view a projection of a prisoner going through their daily routine as they're locked in their cell.
- **Audio—directional speakers:** Environmental sounds relating to what the visitor is seeing in the projection. Possible use of voice from oral histories.
- **Interpretive signage**

Artistic render by Esem Projects



Note: this experience should be moved to the front of the building to better reflect the path of execution a death row prisoner would take.



**Experience 8** (intimate)

**Condemned cell (Cell #12)**

**Characters:** Charles Hines, George Waters Ward, Executioner

**Story:** The despair of your last moments before execution.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples

**Suggested devices:**

- **Furnished environments:** Cell contents from the late nineteenth century:
  - nineteenth-century bedding
  - a bucket
  - a bible
  - an officer's stool outside the door.
- **Interpretive signage:** Potential Charles Hines story
- **Audio—directional speakers:** George Waters Ward (*Maitland Mercury*, 24 March 1849): *'For a solemn warning to others, I am going to tell them the first step of vice that has at last brought me to this place of confinement, where, in a few days, the Sheriff will come and demand my body, and lead me to execution ...'*

**Experience 9** (intimate)

**Dead man walking**

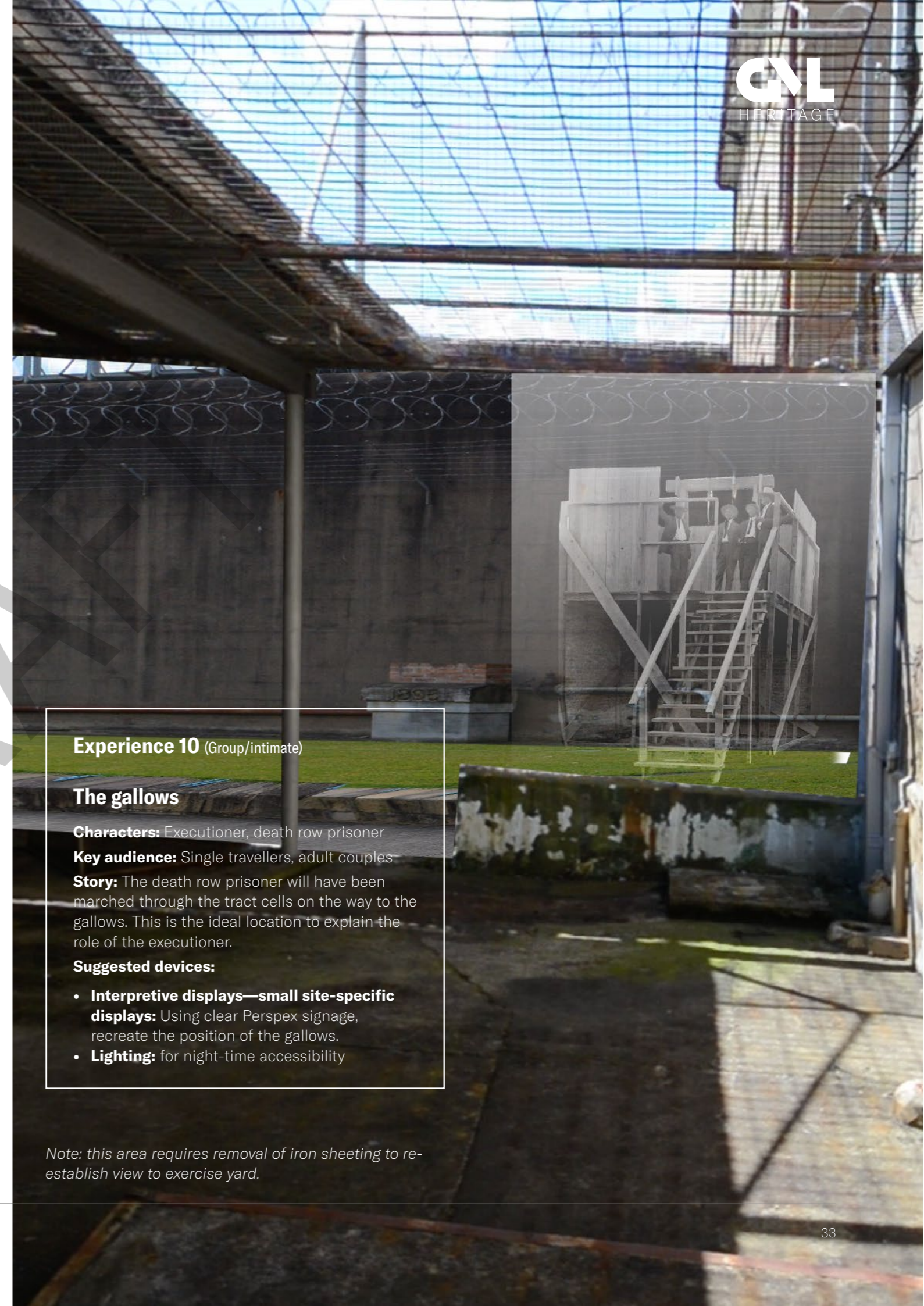
**Characters:** Death row prisoner, Executioner

**Story:** The final walk of a man's life.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples

**Suggested devices:**

- **Projections—small-scale indoor projections:** A series of quotes along the ground summarising the final moments of an prisoner on death row. and display the 16 prison numbers of the prisoners executed.
- **Tours—with guide:** The guide should walk the visitors through the same route that an prisoner on death row would have. Show them to experience 8 before beginning the tract cells portion of the tour.
- **Audio—directional speakers:** The sound of footsteps and other environmental sounds as the visitors walk through this area.



**Experience 10** (Group/intimate)

**The gallows**

**Characters:** Executioner, death row prisoner

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples

**Story:** The death row prisoner will have been marched through the tract cells on the way to the gallows. This is the ideal location to explain the role of the executioner.

**Suggested devices:**

- **Interpretive displays—small site-specific displays:** Using clear Perspex signage, recreate the position of the gallows.
- **Lighting:** for night-time accessibility

Note: this area requires removal of iron sheeting to re-establish view to exercise yard.

Area 3

# Tract cells

## ***Boredom***

***No matter the game, no matter the job,  
no matter the prisoner's status, the  
predominant experience of daily life in  
prison was one of boredom.<sup>12</sup>***

## Tract cells

### Boredom

#### Narrative arc: Rising action

The tract cells included prisoners who had escaped from custody, attempted to escape, been violent, involved in inciting riots or generally caused trouble. This space became the intractable prisoners' outside space, as they would move between their cell and these cages. Prisoners were at times permitted to bring books, a deck of cards or a tennis ball into this space. But the predominant experience of 'the cage' would have been boredom like other parts of the Gaol—except that in addition it 'got colder than hell in the winter, and hotter than hell in the summer.'

## Interpretive concepts



### Experience 1 (Group)

#### Guided tour point

The tract cells are a part of the tour that can be explained perfectly by the guide, highlighting the built environment and boredom of the prisoners in these cells.

**Key audience:** Family groups, school groups, over 55s

### Experience 2 (Group)

#### Tract cells

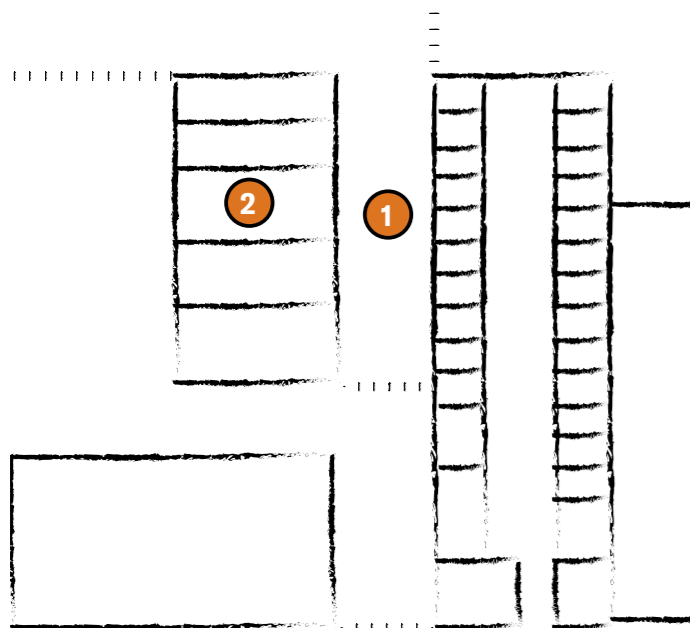
**Characters:** Cell heavy

**Story:** The experience of endless hours inside a tract cell.

**Key audience:** Family groups, school groups, over 55s

#### Suggested devices:

- **Interaction/participation—tactile props:** Use props such as a tennis ball or a half-finished game of patience.
- **Audio—immersive soundscape:** Tennis ball being thrown against a wall. Include wind/rain, sounds of other prisoners in the main exercise yard.
- **Built & movable heritage:** The tract cells are an imposing environment that allows the visitor to explore and imagine what it would've felt like to be trapped inside while you heard other prisoners in the main exercise yard.



Plan of experiences within the tract cells.

**Area 4**

# Hospital

## *Disgust*

*You know I could handle an inmate punching me, but being spat at and having bodily fluids entering my body was disgusting.<sup>13</sup>*

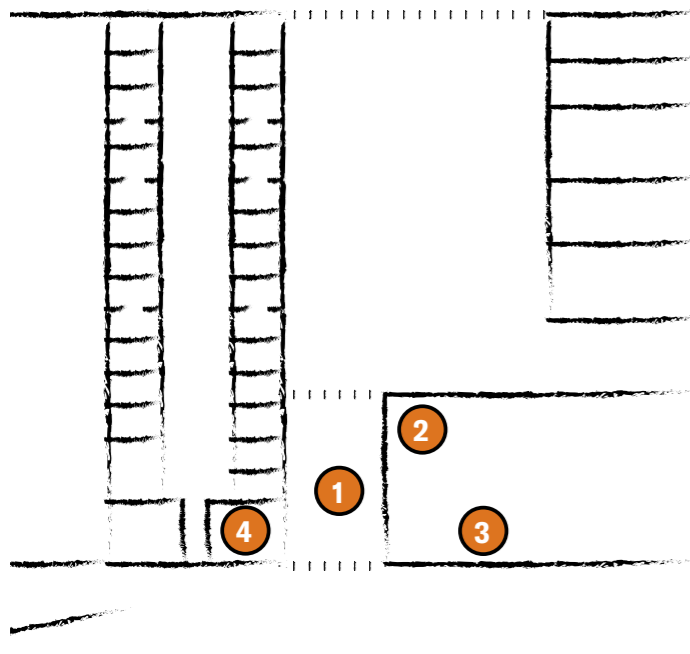
## Hospital

### Disgust

#### Narrative arc: Rising action

The fluids, disease, smells and hygiene associated with the body in prison prompted feelings of **disgust** in both prisoners and staff. Both felt their health was continually at risk. Prisoners were acutely aware of how the lack of sanitation could lead to infection, and some faced a daily battle with addiction and mental health issues. Staff reported post-traumatic stress after years of working in the prison and associated physical health conditions such as heart disease.

While the stigma associated with the rise of intravenous diseases such as HIV, AIDS and hepatitis played out in society, inside the prison it was magnified. The threat of violence for staff was no longer just physical but also biological. In November 1988, prison officers in Maitland and Cessnock gaols went on strike over the admission of an HIV antibody positive prisoner.<sup>14</sup> By 'the early 1990s nearly 40 per cent of prisoners came in with Hepatitis C, and the rates of HIV infection were ten times higher than in the general community'.<sup>15</sup>



Plan of experiences within the hospital and dentist.

The hospital's provision of the NSW Methadone Program was the first of its kind in the world. However, some prisoners found a way to subvert the program, hoarding the methadone in cotton wool inside their throat and then regurgitating it to resell it.

*Note: for accessibility issues, content within the hospital site should be made readily available online and within the ticketing area on the interactive screens.*

## Interpretive concepts



### Experience 1 (Group)

#### Guided tour point

The guide should pause at this point to explain the role of the hospital and dentist in the Gaol. Time and tour depending, this may be a space that the guide recommends the visitors explore after the end of the tour. In cases such as these, information and stories reflected within these experiences must be touched on where possible.

**Key audience:** Family groups, school groups, over 55s



### Experience 2 (Group)

#### Hepatitis, HIV and AIDS

**Characters:** Nurse, officer, young prisoner

**Story 1:** Heroin use, the NSW Prison Methadone Program and the government's duty of care.

**Story 2:** The rising prevalence of, and tension surrounding, hepatitis and HIV in prisons.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, over 55s

#### Suggested devices:

- **Interpretive displays—large display:** Create artefact and object displays using pamphlets, photos, objects and quotes.
- **Furnished environments:** Include in situ objects such as the hospital bed and scales.
- **Projections—Prison hospital projection:** Integrate projections where objects may not be available onto showcase. For further see information see pg 73.



**Experience 3** (Group/intimate)

**Addiction**

**Characters:** Nurse, young prisoner

**Story:** Heroin use, the NSW Prison Methadone Program and the government’s duty of care.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, over 55s

**Suggested devices:**

- **Interpretive displays—large display:** Create artefact and object displays using pamphlets, photos, objects and quotes. Include in situ objects such as the hospital bed and scales.
- **Projections—Prison hospital projection:** Integrate projections where objects may not be available onto showcase. For further see information see pg 73.

**Experience 4** (Group/intimate)

**The dentist**

**Characters:** Nurse, prisoner

**Story:** The daily routine of managing prison health from the perspective of staff.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, over 55s

**Suggested devices:**

- **Interpretive displays—small site-specific displays:** Create artefact and object displays using a metal glove (used to prevent prisoners biting), images and other objects.
- **Furnished environment:** Include in situ objects such as the dentist’s chair.
- **Projections—small-scale indoor projection:** Integrate projections where objects may not be available.

## Area 5

# B-wing

## ***Fear***

***It was fear that stopped Dave McGarry from re-offending when he was finally released from Maitland Gaol. Locked up from age nineteen, McGarry remembers how 'everyone here was someone to be scared of ... at least sixty per cent of the guys ... all carried weapons.'<sup>16</sup>***

## B-wing

### Fear

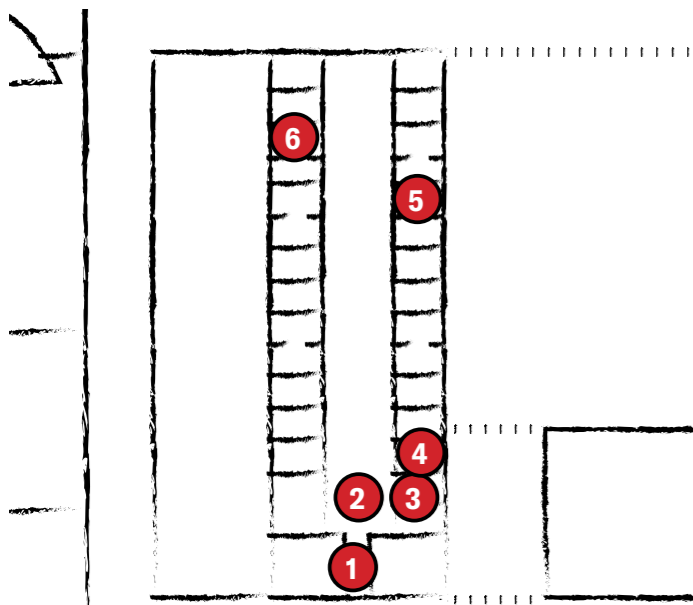
#### Narrative arc: Climax

B-wing was a place designed to instil **fear** from its very beginnings. It was built from 1867 with single cells to hold prisoners as part of the Separate System. Under this system, prisoners who refused to stop shouting, whistling or singing in their cells could be deprived of all senses—hooded, gagged and only let out of their cells for one hour a day. Floggings were meted out as additional punishment.

Later, B-wing became home to some of the most feared cell heavies in the system. Upper floor cells housed Neddy Smith, Chow Hayes and Darcy Dugan.

In 2015, a sharpened toothbrush was found on the top level of B-wing. But the creation of such weapons was as old as the Gaol itself, as prisoners ingeniously adapted anything they had:

*Most weapons were wanted for self-defence against the risk of beatings, violence and rape by other prisoners, but prisoners also used them during protests, escapes, and bloody attacks on other prisoners and guards. Prison staff were under constant threat, leaving many emotionally scarred and requiring counselling.*



Plan of experiences within B-wing.

*Former warder Keith Bush recalled, 'It's hours and hours of boredom punctuated by seconds of sheer terror.'*

Designed to prevent escape, B-wing was built entirely from sandstone, with 2-foot-thick walls, and behind each wooden door was an iron one, bolted into the rock. In reality overcrowding meant most cells had as many as 4 prisoners. Many prisoners remember long, hot, claustrophobic nights in cells where even if you pushed the call button for help it might never come.

*Note: B-wing is a space designed for mature audiences due to its subject matter, guides should be aware of the group that they are presenting to and give appropriate warnings.*

## Interpretive concepts



### Experience 1 (Group)

#### Entrance to main hall

**Characters:** Prisoner, officer

**Story:** Based on the story of Gaoler George Stace, October 1867 records implementing the gag:

*I beg leave to report that Susan O'Neill who was placed in confinement ... for disobedience of orders, was handcuffed to the ring bolts yesterday evening by my orders for persisting in singing and talking to male prisoners after being repeatedly spoken to.*

*While in irons she continued to create a disturbance. The prisoner was then gagged with a handkerchief, whereupon she immediately promised to be quiet. I then ordered her release from the gag and irons.<sup>17</sup>*

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, VFRs

#### Suggested devices:

- **Audio—immersive soundscape:** Prisoner singing then officer shouting, "Keep that up, you'll be going to the segregation cell".
- **Furnished environment:** Include in situ objects such as a clock on the wall of the officers room.



### Experience 2 (Group)

#### Guided tour point

At this point and following experience 1, the guide should deliver their part of the tour before inviting the visitors to explore the space. This experience directly links with experience 3.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples





**Experience 3** (Group/intimate)

**Cell with wooden door (Cell #14)**

**Characters:** Escapee

**Story 1:** The fear involved in trying to escape.

**Story 2:** The fearful, overcrowded state of the original cells.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, VFRs, School groups

**Suggested devices:**

- **Audio—immersive soundscape:** Storm sounds are activated by the guide while they tell the wooden door escape story.
- **Audio—directional speakers:** Directional speakers (audio tour R13 talking about overcrowded conditions).

**Experience 4** (intimate)

**Segregation cell (Cell #13)**

**Characters:** Prisoners

**Story:** Part 2 continuation of the experience 1 story. This is where the officer places the prisoner.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, VFRs, over 55s

**Suggested devices:**

- **Interpretive displays—small site-specific displays:** Visitors have to look through a peephole to view items on display that were used to restrain prisoners i.e. a gag and hood.
- **Audio—directional speakers:** prisoner being restrained and gag forced into mouth.

*Note: this is explicit content and appropriate warnings should be given.*

**Experience 5** (intimate)

**Cell #10**

**Characters:** Prisoner (from the 1970s), cell heavy

**Story:** The advancement of furnishings, plumbing and devices in the 1970s. Also the terrifying shivs that were being used at the time.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, VFRs, over 55s

**Suggested devices:**

- **Furnished environment/Interpretive displays—small site-specific displays:** walk in display of cell contents from the 1970s era:
  - bunk beds
  - a flushable toilet
  - a fresh water bucket
  - electricity
  - a bible
  - radio/TV
  - a shiv
- **Audio—directional speakers:** Sports game playing on the radio or TV

**Experience 6** (intimate)

**Cell #6**

**Characters:** Cell heavy

**Story:** The most feared men in the system were housed on the upper floor here: cell heavies including Neddy Smith, Chow Hayes and Darcy Dugan.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, VFRs, over 55s

**Suggested devices:**

- **Interpretive displays—small site-specific displays:** Walk in display of photos and artefacts related to these 'top tier' villains.

*Note: this is explicit content and appropriate warnings should be given.*

## Area 6

# Muster yard

## ***Frustration***

***A lot of physical fights used to break out between inmate and officer, mainly because of the frustration on both sides.<sup>18</sup>***

## Muster yard

### **Frustration**

**Narrative arc: Climax**

The muster yard can be used to explore the growing **frustration** felt by a prisoner as the monotony of the daily routine, control of their every movement and lack of reform took its toll: 'Every day, at least three times a day, prisoners were counted. They stood facing the wall and the wires, watched over by security cameras and an officer in the tower up on the left.' Frustration was felt by staff, too. Descriptions of the watch in the tower are akin to those of life in a cell, as a confined space with no entertainment and only a bucket to relieve yourself. The build-up of frustration led to anger and violence playing out in places like the exercise yard or the shower block.

## Interpretive concepts



### Experience 1 (Group)

#### The routine

- Characters:** All prisoners  
**Story:** The daily, repetitive routine of mustering in the yard.  
**Key audience:** Family groups, school groups  
**Devices:**
- Interaction/participation—roleplay:** The visitors walk into the muster yard in single file, just as the prisoners would have, then the guides, acting as officers, should line up the visitors along the mustering lines and call the roll just as they would have in the gatehouse.

### Experience 2 (Group)

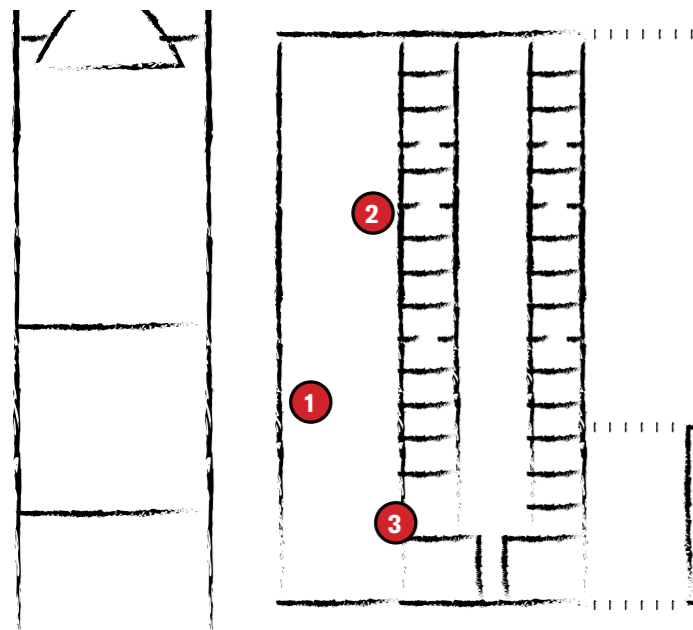
#### 'Oi, who said you could sit there?'

- Characters:** Young prisoner, cell heavy  
**Story:** The power dynamics of the muster yard.  
**Key audience:** Family groups, school groups  
**Suggested devices:**
- Interaction/participation—roleplay:** Have the visitors explore the muster yard, encourage them to sit down and take it in.
  - Audio—directional speakers:** As a visitor sits down, a cell heavy tries to claim his territory as though they've sat in his seat.

### Experience 3 (Group)

#### The gunshot

- Characters:** Prisoners, officers  
**Story:** As two prisoners were arguing, an antsy officer fires a warning shot which takes out a chunk of the sandstone wall of B-wing.  
**Key audience:** Family groups, school groups  
**Suggested devices:**
- Audio—immersive soundscape:** A loud gunshot can accompany the officer's story.



Plan of experiences within the muster yard.

## Area 7

# Shower block

## **Anger**

***Cell-block heavies ran the showers ...  
There was definitely blokes raped. There  
was definitely blokes bashed and flogged.  
That's no doubt.<sup>19</sup>***

## Shower block

### Anger

#### Narrative arc: Climax

Free of the surveillance of security cameras, the shower block was one of the most lawless places in the prison, a place where **anger** exploded. Cell heavies could administer violent retribution and a code of silence meant no one would report what had happened.

Anger at the prison system boiled over in 1975 into a gaol-wide riot by prisoners and violence was meted out by officers in return. Prisoner 520 remembers the nearby B-wing being damaged as prisoners ‘were bashed running the gauntlet from one end of the gaol to the other with baseball bat sized wooden batons.’<sup>20</sup>

The shower block also tells the story of the daring escape led by Ray Denning in 1977.

*Note: while this area of the gaol is still in development, devices such as sound, projections and signage are opportunities and are subject to change.*

## Interpretive concepts



### Experience 1 (Group)

#### Guided tour point

The guide should deliver their portion of the tour as the group enters the shower block. After this, allow them to explore.

**Key audience:** Family groups, school groups, over 55s

### Experience 2 (Group)

#### The escape

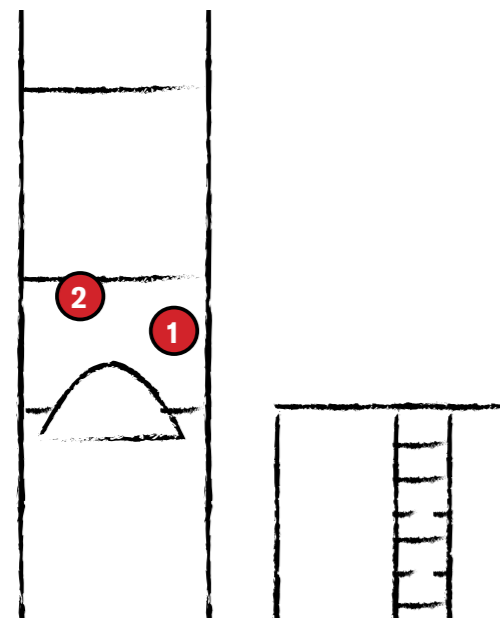
**Characters:** Escapee, community

**Story:** Taking advantage of an airvent and some poor design choices, four prisoners successfully devised and performed an escape, for a few hours at least.

**Audience:** All

#### Suggested devices:

- Audio—directional speakers
- Interpretation signage



Plan of experiences within the shower block.

**Area 8**

# Exercise yard

## *Hope*

*I haven't had the best and happiest life as of yet but once I'm out of custody I will be able to create a happy life.<sup>21</sup>*

Interpretation framework

**Exercise yard**

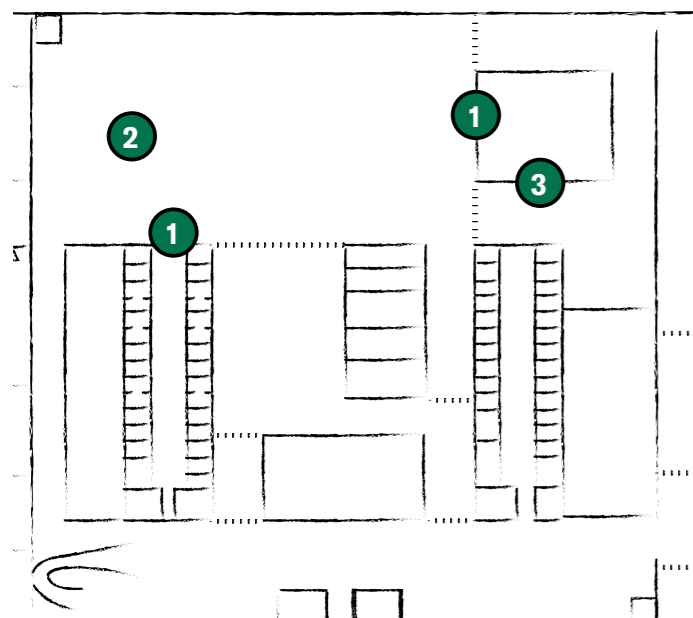
**Hope**

**Narrative arc: Falling action**

The exercise yard, once the site of the former women's wing, is the only green space in the Gaol. Looking upwards to the sky, it provides the most open and light atmosphere in the Gaol. Here the **hope** felt by prisoners could be explored as they dreamed of the outside world, plotted prison breaks and invented resourceful ways to survive or temporarily escape from the stultifying routine.

Psychologically and physiologically, a prisoner was meant to be just another number in the system. Yet self-expression was carved out in other ways. Tattoos, graffiti and murals were all ways to hold on to individual identity in the prison system. These murals follow common themes of prison art:

*connection to the outside world, identity, escapism/engagement with imagination, freedom, family, country, and reflection of life; past, present, future. (Maitland Regional Art Gallery)*



Plan of experiences within the exercise yard.

**Interpretive concepts**



**Experience 1** (Group; night-time)

**Gaol walls and public art**

**Characters:** All prisoners

**Story:** Showcase the many ways prisoners expressed themselves in the Gaol, i.e. break up the darker atmospheres of other spaces, and introduce humour by showing props of items smuggled into the Gaol.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, VFRs

**Suggested devices:**

- **Projections—large-scale outdoor projections:** Using projections on the large sandstone walls that enclose the space, this yard can be activated at night.

Artistic render by Esem Projects



### Experience 2 (Group)

#### Looking upwards

**Characters:** Escapee, community

**Story:** The exercise yard has an array of stories to tell. Including the smuggling of contraband over the walls in tennis balls and dead birds, the use and care of the Gaol gardens for their food and the position of the women's block which once stood here.

**Key audience:** Over 55s, adult couples

**Suggested devices:**

- **Interpretation signage:** Because this area is a public access space, signage can be used throughout the area in the form of both plinth signage and ground inlays.



### Experience 3 (Group)

#### Kitchen block

**Characters:** Prisoners

**Story:** The luckiest prisoners got to work and live within the kitchen block. Their cells were on the top floor of the building and would have been one of the only places you could see over the walls.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, family groups, school groups, over 55s

**Suggested devices:**

- **Projections—small-scale indoor projection:** Projections within this building could be of the prisoners working in the kitchen. Future techniques could include hologram technology.
- **Interpretation signage**



## Area 9

# C-wing

## Confusion

*I can't concentrate, can't read ... your mind's narcotised. Memory's going. You feel like you are losing something you might not get back.<sup>22</sup>*

## C-wing

### Confusion

#### Narrative arc: Falling action

Prison life could take its toll, destabilising a prisoner’s mental health and prompting feelings of **confusion**, memory loss and isolation. This was exacerbated by a prison system that confused mental illness with criminal behaviour. The 1867 NSW Parliament created the ‘Lunacy Reception House’ to triage people’s fate for either asylum or prison. Women in particular were subject to this approach. Maitland Gaol had lunacy cells specifically for women in C-wing. Cells 11 and 12 were originally padded cells known as ‘lunacy cells’. Padding was made from timber panels attached to the walls followed by horse hair, which created the padding, covered in leather.

Built in 1880s, C-wing was deliberately isolated from the rest of the Gaol to incarcerate women. Their stories are part of a history of the gendered approach to crime and punishment. Many of the crimes would no longer be recognisable to modern women. The biological fact

that a woman could become pregnant emmeshed her ‘in an array of social and cultural prohibitions which made women more at risk for being imprisoned for “social” crimes such as public drunkenness and prostitution, where men’s imprisonment more frequently involved crimes of violence.’<sup>23</sup> Women like Annie Turnbull were gaoled at Maitland for trying to procure an abortion in 1899.

Later the Safe Cell was constructed here to provide 24-hour surveillance of those at risk of self-harm or suicide.

## Interpretive concepts



### Experience 1 (Group)

#### Guided tour point

The guide should deliver their portion of the tour as the group enters C-wing. After this, they can allow them to explore.

**Key audience:** Family groups, school groups, over 55s

### Experience 2 (Group/intimate)

#### Women in Gaol (Cells #11 and #5)

**Characters:** Women prisoners

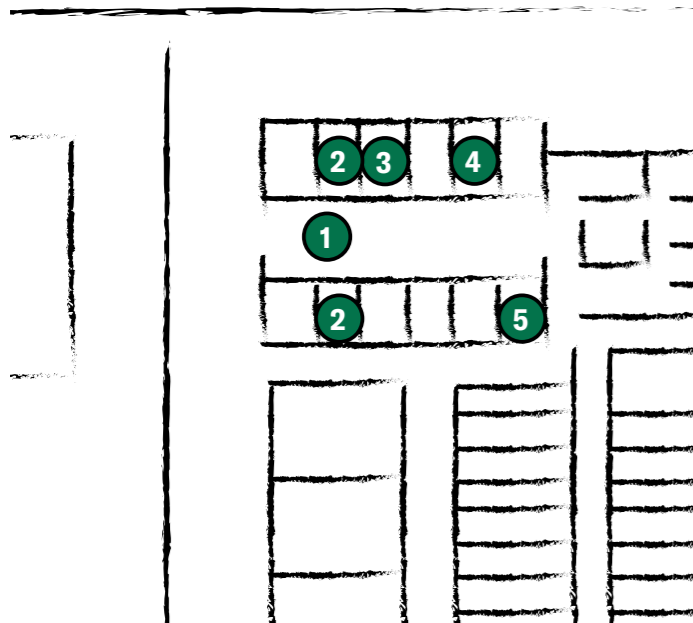
**Story:** Highlight the notable women that spent time in Maitland Gaol. Take this information from the temporary Chapel exhibition and incorporate more serious female criminals to balance out the ‘petty’ crimes currently featured.

**Key audience:** Family groups, adult couples, over 55s

#### Suggested devices:

- **Projections—small-scale indoor projections**
- **LED display—portable LED displays**
- **Audio—directional speakers**
- **Interpretive displays—small site-specific displays**

*Note: This may contain explicit content and appropriate warnings should be given.*



Plan of experiences within C-wing.



**Experience 3** (Intimate)

**Escape attempt (Cell #10)**

**Characters:** Escapee, prisoners

**Story:** In the 1980s a hole dug by a prisoner is found in C-wing.

**Audience:** All

**Suggested devices:**

- **Interpretation signage**
- **Projections—small-scale indoor projection**



**Experience 4** (Intimate)

**Cell #8**

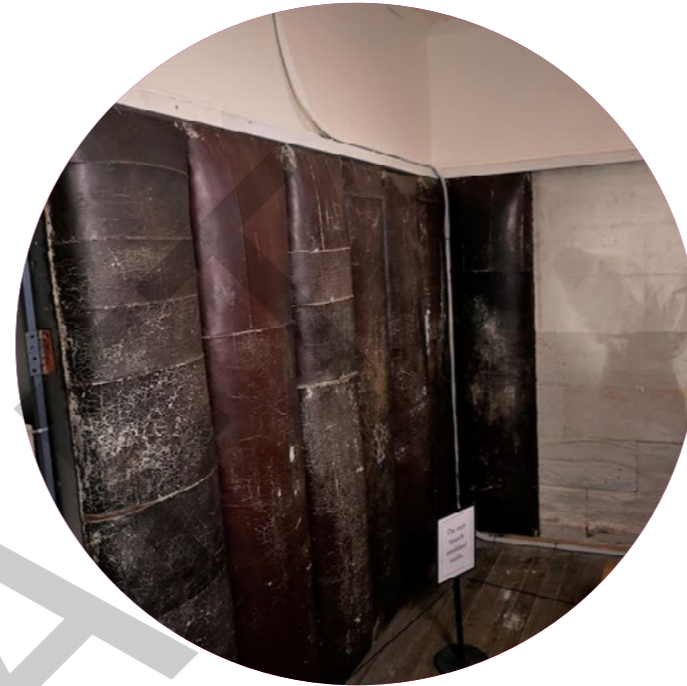
**Characters:** Women prisoners

**Story:** Explore the life of women prisoners in the 1950s.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, school groups

**Suggested devices:**

- **Furnished environment:**
  - bedding
  - 1950s women’s prison uniform
  - straight jacket dress
  - two buckets.



**Experience 5** (Intimate)

**Lunacy cells (Cell #1)**

**Characters:** Prisoners

**Story:** Exploration of the treatment of mentally unwell prisoners in the Gaol and the evolution of modern treatment of people with these conditions.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, school groups (where warning is given)

**Suggested devices:**

- **Furnished environment:** Reintroduce the padded cell
- **Interpretive signage**
- **Audio—directional speakers:** Environmental sounds

## Area 10

# 5-wing

## *Paranoia*

*You see you're dealing with the bad, all the time. Eight hour's your shift. All the time. You've got to be wary of what you do, you're looking over your shoulder.<sup>24</sup>*

Interpretation framework

**5-wing**

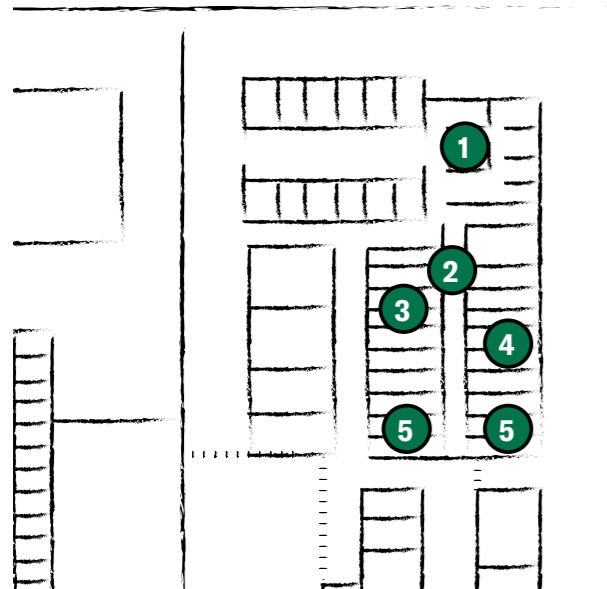
**Paranoia**

**Narrative arc: Falling action**

Looking over your shoulder and feeling paranoid was a sensation shared by prisoners and officers. **Paranoia** is embodied in the surveillance embedded in the architecture and, later, technology at the Gaol.

Closed-circuit TV (CCTV) monitor systems, infra-red beams and remote monitors attached to staff (indicating their location on the central TV monitor) transformed security at the Gaol beyond the physical wire mesh fences, razor wire and high walls of yesteryear. However, at 5-wing, despite the \$3.8 million dollar investment introducing a Polyplex booth with constant CCTV monitoring, many officers felt less safe because increased technology meant less staff.

For prisoners, the surveillance was part of the daily existence in gaol as well as their contact with the outside world, because their phone calls were taped by corrective services. These recordings were crucial to foiling the Ivan Milat and George Savvas' escape attempt.



Plan of experiences within 5-wing.

**Interpretive concepts**



**Experience 1** (Group/intimate)

**CCTV**

**Characters:** Officers, cell heavy, escapee

**Story:** Rising reliance on technology within correctional facilities placed a lot of stress on both officers and prisoners.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, school groups, family groups

**Suggested devices:**

- **LED displays—CCTV installation:** Using a set loop of cameras within the site, capture the visitors walking through and play the footage back through a series of monitors within the Polyplex security centre to impart a sense of paranoia, of being watched.
- A digital clock on the displays

Artistic render by Esem Projects



**Experience 2** (Group)

**Guided tour point**

The guide should deliver their portion of the tour for 5-wing after the group experiences the CCTV installation.

**Key audience:** Over 55s, family groups, school groups



**Experience 3** (Intimate)

**Cell #20**

**Characters:** Prisoners

**Story:** What does a twentieth-century, maximum-security cell look like and how does being isolated heighten paranoia?

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, school groups

**Suggested devices:**

- **Furnished environments:**
  - TV
  - bedding
  - an item bought from the buy-up
  - covering the windows into the cell with sheets, blankets, pages etc so they can't be 'watched'.
- **Audio—directional speakers:** Prisoner whispering conspiracy theories to themselves.



**Experience 4** (Intimate)

**George Savvas**

**Characters:** George Savvas, victims

**Story:** George Savvas' attempted escape, famous friends and untimely death placed a lot of attention on Maitland Gaol and the role of security within correctional systems.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, over 55s

**Suggested devices:**

- **Projections—small-scale indoor projections**
- **Audio—directional speakers**
- **Interpretive displays—large and small-site specific displays:** Upgrading the current interpretive display with projections, object displays and immersive sound design is vital for telling this story effectively.

**Area 11**

# Visitors centre

## *Sadness*

*You see it in the movies where people put their hand up to the glass ... but you actually find yourself doing it ... trying to make some kind of contact ... it was just heartbreaking.<sup>25</sup>*

## Visitors centre

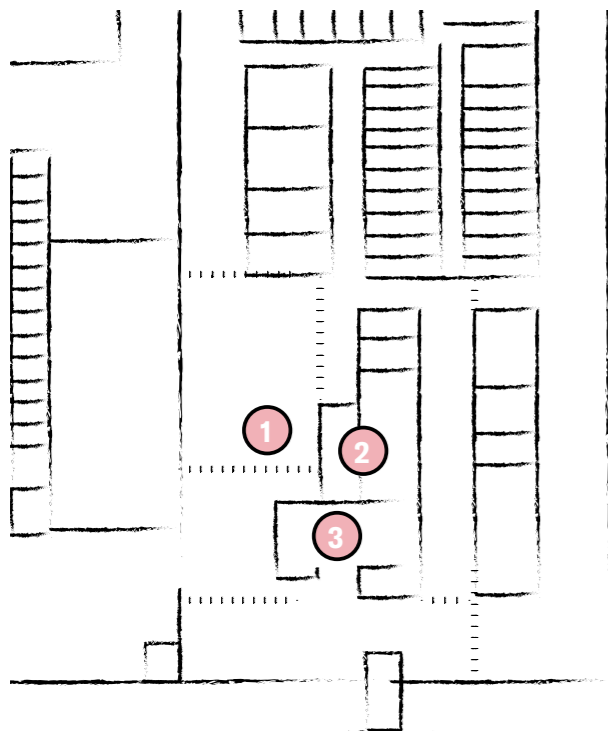
### Sadness

#### Narrative arc: Resolution

The visitors centre partitioned and controlled emotional and physical access between prisoners and their families. Electronic gates were controlled by the towers, and officers would radio to announce when visitors arrived. Meanwhile, prisoners underwent the strip ritual and were clothed in cable-tied sleeve outfits; and glass separating visitors from prisoners created a highly controlled environment. Testimony from prisoners and officers describes the sadness but also the tension in this space. Visiting rights could easily be revoked as punishment for misbehaviour by prisoners. Family members too could be banned if the rules of visiting were contravened such as drugs being smuggled in. Oral history interviews with families, partners or children who visited prisoners in the Gaol would help provide their perspective in this space.

Voices of the victims' families should also be included here. Victims could be the victims of crime (surviving parents, partners and siblings of those murdered), and families grieving including those who had lost a relative to the prison system or been impacted as a spouse or child of a prisoner.

For Garry Lynch, Anita Cobby's father, the grief never went away. But he attempted to transform it into a network of support through the Homicide Victims' Support Group. Garry Lynch 'cried often for Anita, he cried with the newly bereaved. He gave them hope that they would survive. He was an inspiration.'<sup>26</sup>



Plan of experiences within the visitors centre.

## Interpretive concepts



### Experience 1 (Group)

#### Guided tour point

The guide should deliver their portion of the tour for the visitors centre before entering the space as well as after guiding them through experience 2.

**Key audience:** Over 55s, family groups, school groups



### Experience 2 (Group/intimate)

#### Separated by 5mm of glass

**Characters:** Family, all prisoners

**Story:** Often prisoners weren't allowed to speak with their family members face to face and had to be separated by a screen made of Perspex. What was it like to be so close yet so far away from someone you loved?

**Key audience:** Over 55s, single travellers, adult couples

#### Suggested devices:

- **Audio—directional speakers:** Oral history interviews with families, partners or children who visited prisoners in gaol would help provide their perspective in this space.
- **Projections—small-scale indoor projections:** Rear projections onto the glass could be used in this area.
- **Interpretation signage:** Use discreet signage on tabletops describing the process of visiting a loved one behind bars.



### Experience 3 (Intimate)

#### Reflection space

**Characters:** Family, all prisoners

**Story:** Meeting a loved one in gaol could be filled with joy but so much sadness, and a constant tension that the visit could be cut short or visiting rights taken away altogether.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, over 55s

**Suggested devices:**

- **Built & movable heritage:** Allow visitors to use the face-to-face meeting room and reflect on what it would have been like to visit a loved one in this room.
- **Interpretation signage:** Use discreet signage on tabletops describing the process of visiting a loved one behind bars.

### Experience 4 (Intimate)

#### Visitors centre

**Characters:** Family, all prisoners

**Story:** Re-establish a kids play area and develop interactives for children.

**Key audience:** Family groups, school groups

**Suggested devices:**

- **Interaction/participation**
- **Interpretive displays—large and small site-specific displays/furnished environment:**
  - display of visits uniform for prisoners
  - a vending machine with era accurate cans of drink and snacks
  - a clock on the wall.

## Area 12

# Chapel

## *All emotions*

***Success in the gaol system can be comparable to diamonds. They're very small, they're very rare, and very few in between.***

***I don't think there's much rehabilitation at all in gaols. Hardly any. For the 30 years that I was there, I couldn't see where they'd helped the prisoner to get back out again.<sup>27</sup>***

Interpretation framework

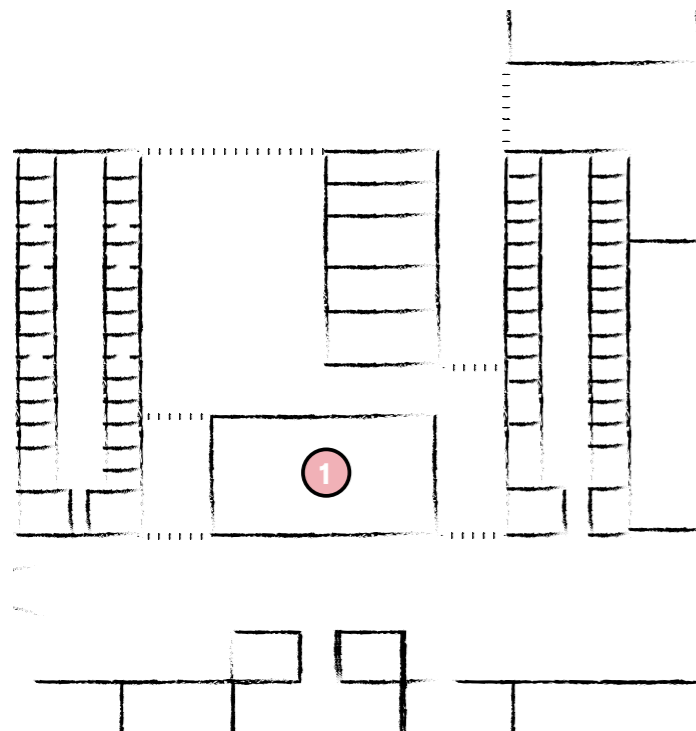
**Chapel**

*All emotions*

**Narrative arc: Resolution**

While chapel services never had great attendance from prisoners, the elevated space of the Chapel itself, with a view of the Gaol, offers a space for contemplation, reflection and stillness. Religious ideas of forgiveness, redemption and acceptance of 'sin' could be explored here.

*Note: For accessibility reasons, content within the Chapel site should be made readily available online and within the ticketing area.*



Plan of experiences within the Chapel.

**Interpretive concepts**

**Experience 1** (Group/intimate)

**LED installation**

**Characters:** All

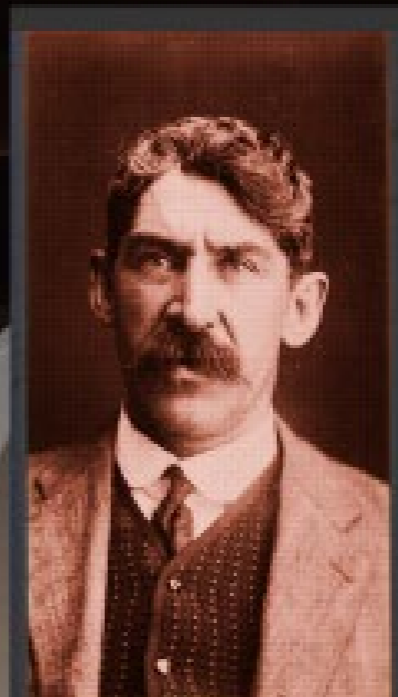
**Story:** After a long tour, visitors have the chance to reflect on all of the stories they have learnt about throughout their visit, and the chance to dig deeper.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples

**Suggested devices:**

- **LED displays—portable LED displays**
- **Audio—directional speakers**

*Note: LED screens are movable. For more information see page 75.*



Native place *New Zealand*  
 Year of birth *21.2.67*  
 Married in *1897*  
 Colour *B.S.*  
 Trade or occupation *Bookmaker*  
 previous to conviction *R.C.*  
 Religion *R and W*  
 Education, degree of *5. 1/4. 1/4. 1/4.*  
 Height, without shoes *166*  
 Weight *166*  
 in lbs. *100*  
 Colour of hair *Black to grey*  
 Colour of eyes *Grey*  
 Marks or special features *scar on inside left thumb. Brown scar on bridge of nose.*

Where and When		
Melbourne P.D.	11	10
Adelaide P.D.	11	11
Melbourne P.D.	3	3

Artistic render by Esem Projects.

## Area 13

# Reflection Area

## *Reflection*

*The best thing I saw happen in that prison was when I was released (laughs) ... I felt the day I was released made up for the day that I was first put in there. The day you're released is reverse from that feeling.<sup>28</sup>*

## Reflection

### Narrative arc: Resolution

The feeling of leaving the prison may have been relief commingled with the overwhelming emotions of having to readapt to life in the outside world. A timeline of different penal philosophies could be further elaborated in this space along with contemporary statistics of recidivism in Australia today (over 50% of prisoners in NSW return to prison within two years)<sup>29</sup> to invite visitors to reflect on the gaol system.

*Note: Location of this space to be confirmed in next phase of documentation.*

## Interpretive concepts

**Experience 1** (Group/intimate)

**Visitor's reflection moment**

**Characters:** All

**Story 1:**  
*'Success in the gaol system can be comparable to diamonds. They're very small, they're very rare, and very few in between.'*<sup>30</sup>

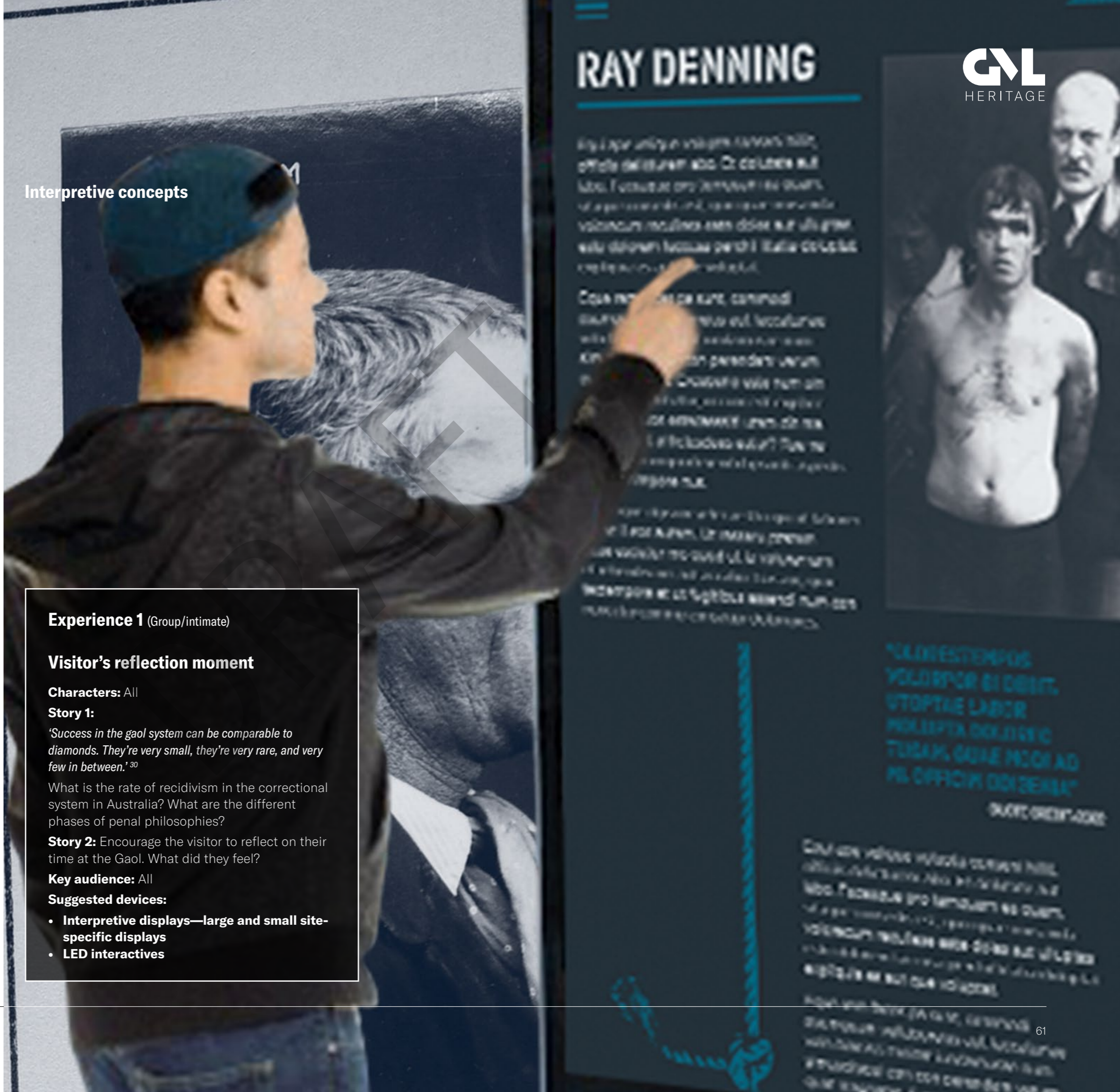
What is the rate of recidivism in the correctional system in Australia? What are the different phases of penal philosophies?

**Story 2:** Encourage the visitor to reflect on their time at the Gaol. What did they feel?

**Key audience:** All

**Suggested devices:**

- Interpretive displays—large and small site-specific displays
- LED interactives



# RAY DENNING



It's a great way to see the history of the place, and the people who lived here. It's a great way to see the history of the place, and the people who lived here. It's a great way to see the history of the place, and the people who lived here.

It's a great way to see the history of the place, and the people who lived here. It's a great way to see the history of the place, and the people who lived here. It's a great way to see the history of the place, and the people who lived here.

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**Unpaid area**

# Outer walls

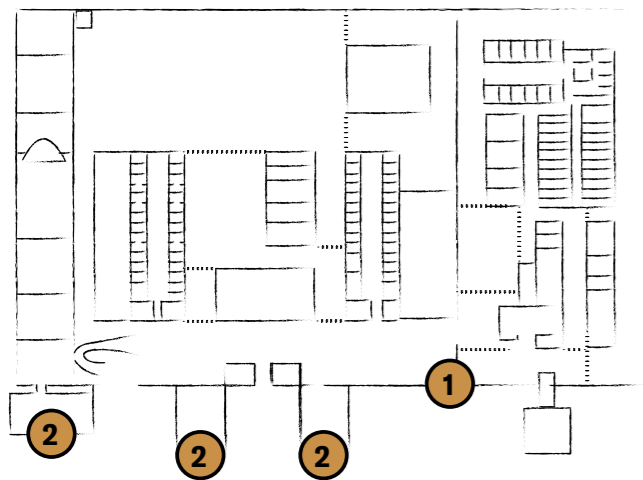
Interpretation framework

**Outer walls**

**Free roaming**

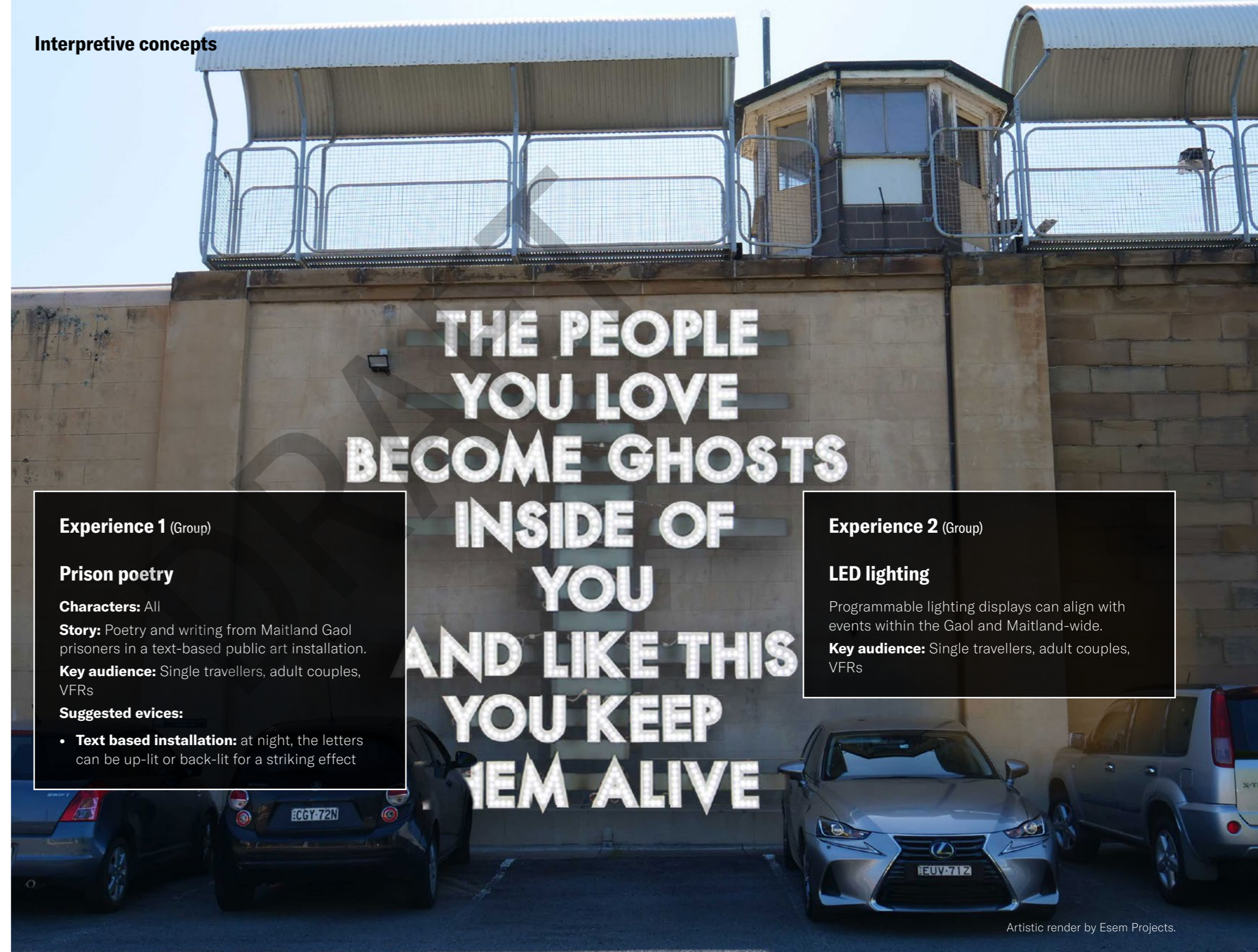
A main thoroughfare through East Maitland occurs on Lindesay Street and the main entrance to the Gaol is on John Street. The Gaol's large, imposing walls offer an impressive canvas to advertise and promote the place's heritage and to showcase a visit to the Gaol as a contemporary experience.

*Note: Projections and public art in public spaces should follow all state and local guidelines for safe roads.*



Plan of experiences on the Gaol wall.

**Interpretive concepts**



**Experience 1** (Group)

**Prison poetry**

**Characters:** All

**Story:** Poetry and writing from Maitland Gaol prisoners in a text-based public art installation.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, VFRs

**Suggested evices:**

- **Text based installation:** at night, the letters can be up-lit or back-lit for a striking effect

**Experience 2** (Group)

**LED lighting**

Programmable lighting displays can align with events within the Gaol and Maitland-wide.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, VFRs

Artistic render by Esem Projects.

Unpaid area

# Ticketing office



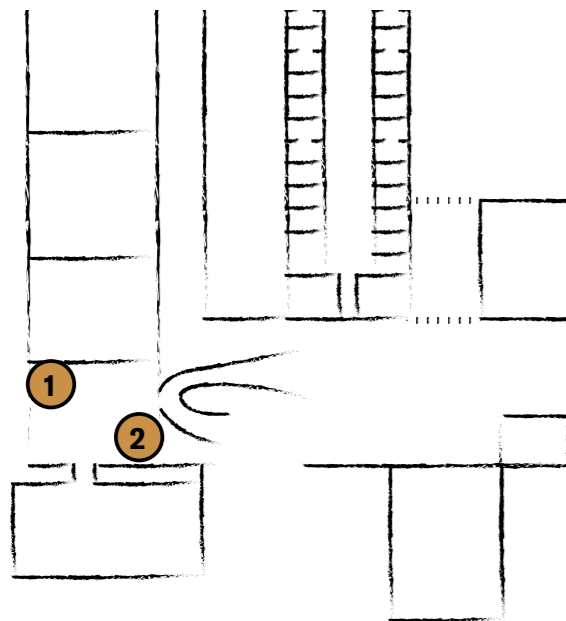


## Interpretation framework

### Ticketing office

#### Free roaming

The ticketing office is one of the first areas that a visitor will experience. Whether a visitor is there for an event in the theatre, or to explore the Gaol itself, this is the first opportunity to upsell them on a guided tour.



Plan of experiences within the ticketing office.

### Interpretive concepts



#### Experience 1 (Intimate)

##### LED interactive

**Characters:** All

**Story:** An interactive LED map can be a great gateway point showcasing the many stories of the Gaol. Having the visitor interact with and learn little pieces of information should create a hunger to then learn more.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples

**Suggested devices:**

- Multimedia interactive

#### Experience 2 (Group/intimate)

##### Interpretive display

**Characters:** All

**Story:** Encourage investment in the Gaol through objects. These can include makeshift tattoo guns, things made in the workshop and other found objects not able to be included within the tours.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, Over 55s, family groups

**Suggested devices:**

- Interpretive displays—small-site specific displays
- Interpretive signage

## Unpaid area

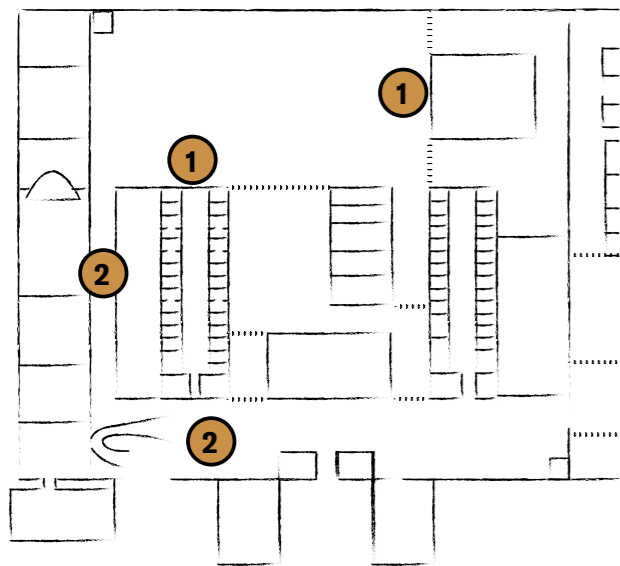
# Exercise yard and walkways



## Exercise yard and walkways

### Free roaming

When the public is visiting the Gaol for events such as theatre productions or festivals in the exercise yards, layers of interpretation such as non-invasive interpretive signage and public art/projections can develop a connection to the site which will then encourage repeat visits and push people towards the guided tours.



Plan of experiences within the public walkways and exercise yard.

## Interpretive concepts



### Experience 1 (Intimate)

#### Projections

**Characters:** All

**Story:** As discussed in stop 8, projections and public art can be leveraged for events and night-time explorers. Showcase the many ways prisoners expressed themselves in the Gaol, i.e. break up the darker atmospheres of other spaces, introduce humour by showing props of items smuggled inside the Gaol. These displays should be flexible and programmable to encourage repeat visits and keep content fresh.

**Key audience:** Single travellers, adult couples, VFRs

**Suggested devices:**

- **Projections:** Using projections, this space can be activated at night using the large sandstone walls that enclose the space.

### Experience 2 (Group/intimate)

#### Interpretive signage

**Characters:** All

**Story:** Explore the built heritage and interesting characters of the site that aren't explored in the tours. Use non-invasive signage to encourage more people toward the guided tours.

**Key audience:** Over 55s, adult couples

**Suggested devices:**

- **Interpretive signage**



# Interpretation devices



## Device 1 Tours

Tours at Maitland Gaol are the driving force of the interpretive framework. All devices should work in tandem and be complementary to the stories told.

*Note: Some experiences and stories in the interpretation framework may not be suitable for all ages. Guides and visitor experience officers should be aware of the audience and give warnings where necessary.*

### Guided (restricted area, paid)

#### With guide

During guided tours, the guides control the tempo of the experience. Because of the time limit placed on tours, the guides can and should omit certain experiences from their tour where it is deemed appropriate i.e. hospital space, shower block.

Self-discovery is encouraged and is incorporated into the design of the interpretation framework. Each key building will have designated techniques that the guides can choose to use if it suits their own individual process.

#### Self-guided tours

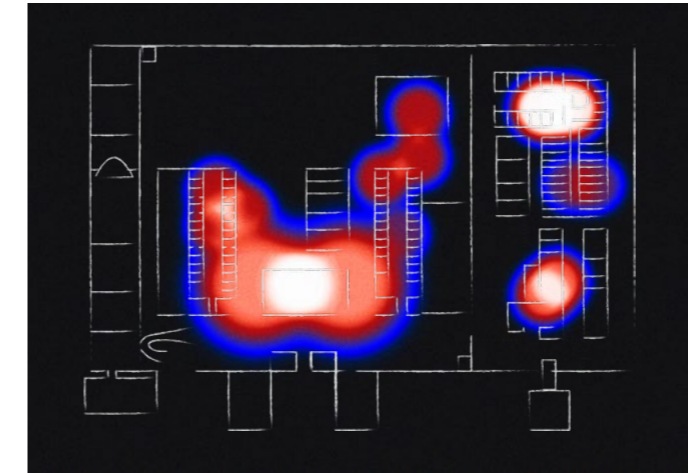
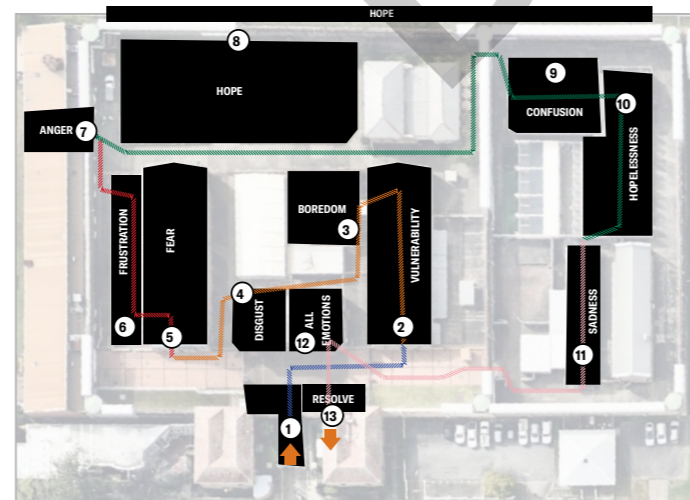
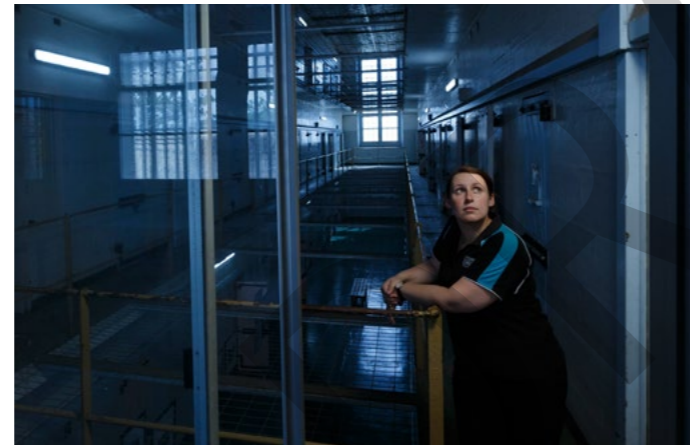
Visitors should be able to experience self-guided tours as a group. For this reason, headphones should be removed from the experience. This will then be supplemented by the use of sound within each space.

#### Virtual guided tours

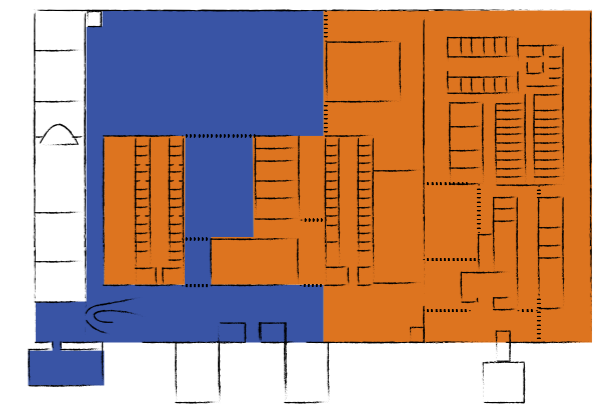
Virtual tours could also be made available online and on the multimedia kiosks on site. Visitors would control the navigation with a Google Street View style approach and have interpretive hotspots to click on along the way. This will assist in enabling virtual access to currently closed buildings such as the kitchen and the workshop.

### Free roaming (unrestricted area, free)

Even casual (non-paying) visitors who arrive at the Gaol for another reason and choose not to take a formal tour should be taken on a journey through the site. The use of signage, LED interactives and projections in these public spaces (as detailed later in this report) should be designed to lead the casual visitor towards the paid experiences.



Low Self-discovery hot spots High



Unrestricted area Paid area

## Device 2a—Digital media

### Digital projections

Digital projections can form a powerful medium through which to surface historical layers of experience and perspective within a built environment.

Projections should be used as focal points for visitor tours. Media can incorporate a mix of historical photographs and documents and imaginative re-enactments through filming and live-action sequences.

Projections should be accompanied by use of sound to attract attention and elevate emotional connection.

Requiring minimal to no intervention to the built fabric, projection can utilise rear-projection screens or be used directly on wall surfaces.

*Note: Projections require low levels of lighting to achieve impact. They would be best used within cells and during night-time tours or events.*

*Projections also require an ongoing maintenance/servicing budget.*

#### Types of projection experiences:

- Large-scale outdoor projection
- Small-scale indoor projection
  - View from inside
  - View from outside
- Prison hospital projection
- Chapel projection



B-wing projection (artistic render by Esem Projects).



View of small-scale rear projection onto Perspex sheet, located inside cell (artistic render by Esem Projects).



View from outside small-scale projection (artistic render by Esem Projects).



Chapel projection (artistic render by Esem Projects).

## Interpretation devices

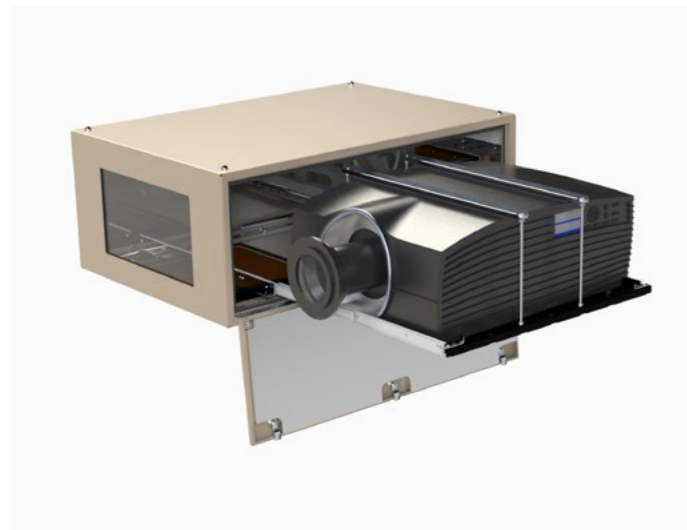
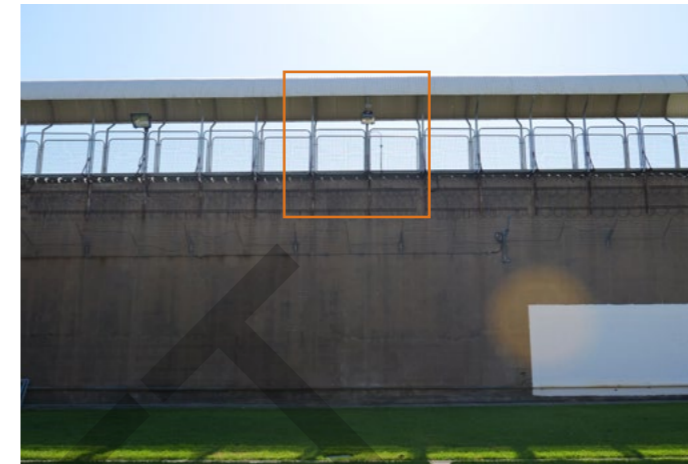
### Large-scale outdoor projection

Technical notes:

- Permanent outdoor projection installation.
- Two or more large venue projectors installed in outdoor all-weather housing to activate the exterior of buildings, for example B Wing or the Kitchen building.
- The projection cases are installed on the existing walkways, offering a secure location, access to power and a good line of sight.
- These projectors can be used for regular night-time activations. They can also be offered for events, festivals or other uses of the space as A/V infrastructure for programming.



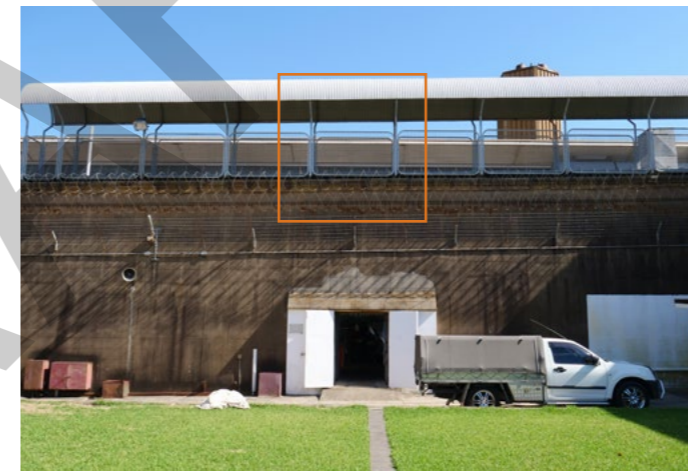
B-wing projection surface (left) and projector housing location (right).



Blizzard projection case.



Kitchen projection surface (left) and projector housing location (right).



Large venue 16K Lumens projector.

## Interpretation devices

### Small-scale indoor projection: View from inside

Technical notes:

- Small projectors are located inside selected cells.
- The projection installation is viewed from inside the cell.
- Projectors are located on existing fixing points, or inside existing alcoves.
- Power is accessed via existing ventilation openings in the walls.
- If sound is incorporated as part of the installation, directional speakers are attached to existing fixings, or compact speakers are placed within existing openings.



Directional speakers.



Compact speakers.



Lightscene compact projector.



Compact 4K Lumens projector.

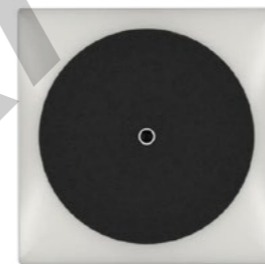


Existing fixing points and alcoves to place AV equipment.

### Small-scale indoor projection: View from outside

Technical notes:

- Small projectors are located inside selected cells.
- The projection installation is viewed from outside the cell, through the cell door peephole, or in the open doorway.
- Projectors are either located on the floor inside the cell in clearly defined positions, away from the eye-line through the door peephole; or fixed to the rear of the cell door; or sit behind the Perspex screen.
- Projections appear on either the rear wall of the cell, visible through the peephole, or are projected back towards the viewer, onto Perspex sheets that fill the doorway on the inside of the bars.
- In larger cells in the B-wing, the arch between cells can become a projection surface. Perspex fills the archway, and professional projection equipment sits on the metal bunks.
- Small speakers provide sound for these installations.
- Power is accessed through the existing electrical services.



Directional speakers.



Compact speakers.



Lightscene compact projector.



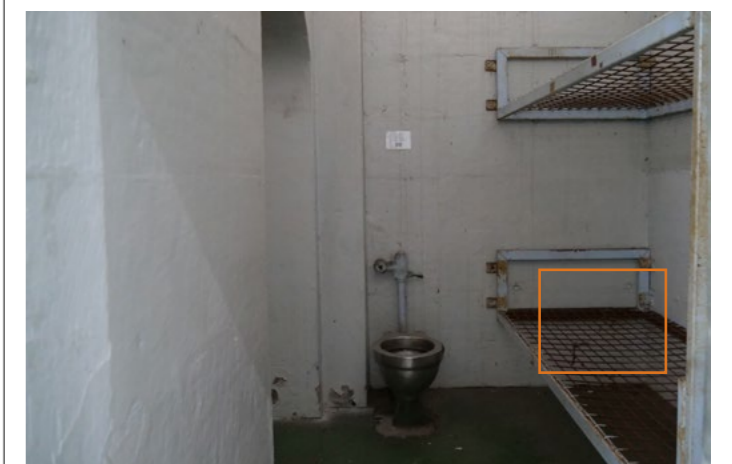
Short-throw projector.



Example of peephole.



Location of Perspex.



Location of AV hardware.



## Interpretation devices

### Projection style 1

Technical notes:

- Ceiling-mounted high-resolution projector mapped to provide a digital overlay to the physical display directly beneath the projector.
- Inclusion of direction speakers if required.
- An example of a suitable location would be in the hospital. This non heritage listed ceiling means the projector and speakers can be mounted using simple professional projector brackets and fixes.



Directional speakers.



Compact speakers.



Ceiling-mounted vertical projection bracket.



Position of projector within prison hospital.



Example of ceiling-mounted vertical projection.

### Projection style 2

Technical notes:

- Projection onto retractable screen.
- Projectors attached via non-permanent clamps to existing beam structures.
- Retractable screen attached via non-permanent clamps to existing beam structures.
- Power and data runs across the top of existing walls and beams, following existing cable runs.



Compact speakers.



Large venue 16K Lumens projector.



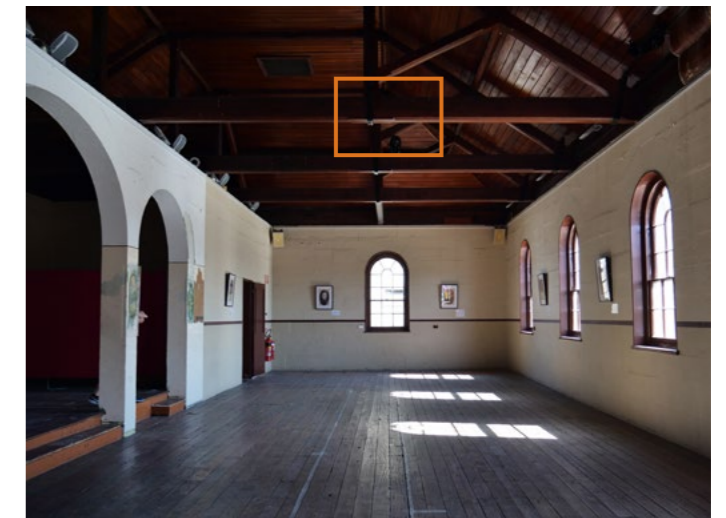
Retractable projection screen.



Ceiling projection bracket.



Location of projection screen.



Location of projector bracket.

Interpretation devices

**Device 2b—Digital media**  
**Visual experiences**

**LED displays**

LED displays provide a programmable interface for interpretation and storytelling, from day into night.

LED displays are highly modular and customisable and can be designed to support a variety of settings.

An ongoing maintenance/servicing budget should be factored in.

**Types of LED display experiences**

- Portable LED display
- Embedded interpretive screens

*Design precedents*



Royal Theatre LED plinths. (Source: Esem Projects)



Custom LED plinth. (Source: Esem Projects)

*Application of LED display concept (Artistic render by Esem Projects)*



**Portable LED display**

Technical notes:

- Custom mobile LED plinths located under existing beams on the Chapel floor.
- Plinths receive power and data from the beams above—dropped down from above.
- Power and data can be disconnected to allow plinths to move on castors / lockable rollers.
- Plinths must be relocated in the same positions to enable reconnection of power and data.
- Small speakers if required, or alternatively locate small speakers within the custom plinth design.



Plinths located in room under beams.



Compact speakers.

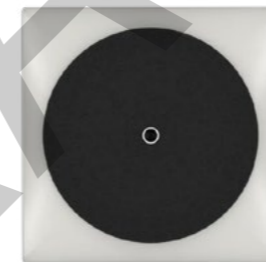
**Embedded interpretive screens**

Technical notes:

- Custom CCTV control console, incorporating LED screens to replicate CRT monitors, and control buttons and keys in a custom case.
- Reference for the construction can be found in the Savvas escape video, supplied by Maitland Gaol.
- Imagery shown on the screens includes the Savvas video, archival material, and video of current prison visitors, recorded throughout the Gaol via CCTV, and played back on a delay loop to coincide with the visitor entering this room.
- There is the option for the content of these displays to be switched via buttons incorporating circuit relays, using a BrightSign player via BrightAuthor (or similar).
- Power and data accessed through existing locations, incorporated into CCTV control prop.



Reference video.



Directional speakers.



CCTV camera.



Control buttons and screens.

## Device 2c—Digital media

### Audio

Sound is used as an integrated component within projections and LED media and as a stand-alone element.

Strategic use of sound can enhance the atmosphere (through sound design) and support interpretive storytelling.

An important consideration is the design of sound envelopes to prevent audio bleed across different spaces.

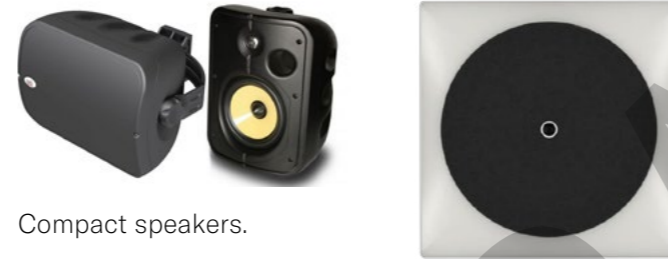
The two types of sound that should be used are:

- Directional speakers:** Use of directional speakers with minimal audio footprint can support independent discovery by visitors (alone or in groups). Directional speakers can be used in a variety of settings including cells and outdoor spaces. Assets for inclusion include oral histories and recordings of diaries and letters.
- Immersive sound:** An immersive sound installation should feature highly considered compositional elements, incorporating sound design and other atmospherics. This format can be used to restage key historical moments featured within tour experiences. Consideration should be given to the way sound installations play over time. For example, a subtle sonic experience for general use, interspersed with a performative experience for tours. Technology such as infrared and sensors can be used to ensure sound is activated by the presence of visitors.

#### Directional speakers

Technical notes:

- A sound installation, incorporating directional speakers are attached to existing fixings, or compact speakers are placed within existing openings.



Compact speakers.

Directional speakers.



Location of speakers



#### Immersive sound

Technical notes:

- External speakers are placed on the internal roof of the first floor, and bounce off the ceiling above to create short bursts of immersive soundscapes. Smaller speakers located out of sight on the first floor walkway provide additional sound details, such as running feet and moving voices.
- For night-time visits, roving lights replicating officers' torchlight shines out of the doors above the entrance on the upper level, and from a cell door at the opposite end of the area.
- These lights are on motorised heads, and create dynamic shadow movements throughout the cell wing.



Compact speakers.

Large speakers.



Moving head lights.



Location of moving head light.

## Device 2d—Digital media

# Multimedia interactive

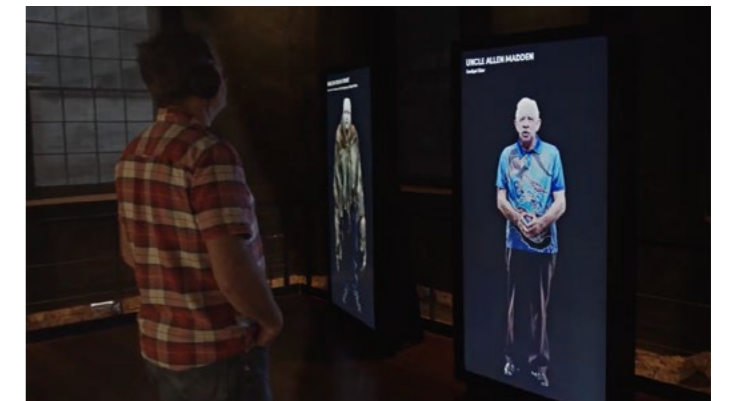
Multimedia interactives can be strategically placed in areas where they will enhance the visitor experience. These interactives could perform multiple interpretive roles without taking up too much heritage floor space.

This device presents in a modern form that is attractive and engaging.

*Design precedents*



Peace Wall (Source: Lightwell)



Hyde Park Barracks (Source: Museums of History NSW Youtube)



Australian Sports Museum (Source: Lightwell)

### Device 3—Building illumination

## Architectural lighting

Illumination offers a number of evocative potentials across the Gaol precinct.

LED uplighting can be used on exterior walls as a way to attract interest and attraction. LED lights can also be programmed to reflect different seasonal initiatives and programs run by the Gaol over time. These can also align with Maitland-wide initiatives, festivals and events.

*Design precedents*



Mudgee Glow: Intense Lighting / Esem Projects.



**LED building lighting**

Technical notes:

- LED Fusion BAR Q XV.
- Custom colour display controlled via DMX programming.
- Lighting display can be redesigned for specific events.

*Example application of LED lighting concept (artistic render by Esem Projects).*



LED Fusion BAR Q XV.

## Device 4

### Furnished environments

In addition to multimedia, lighting and sound, dressing cells and other key rooms to era-appropriate standards is a key component of adding life to the experience. Props will help the visitor to understand just how uncomfortable these spaces would have been and to appreciate the improved standards towards the 21st century.

For example for a c1850 cell could contain:

- a toilet bucket
- a fresh water bucket
- coir mats to sleep on
- possibly a bible and a candle.

Whereas a c1970s cell may contain:

- bunk beds
- flushable toilet
- a fresh water bucket
- a radio.

Special cells may require added touches, for example reintroduction of the padded cells in C-wing or a stool outside the condemned cell, where an officer may have been sitting.

For more information on which cells should be furnished see the *'interpretive framework'* section.

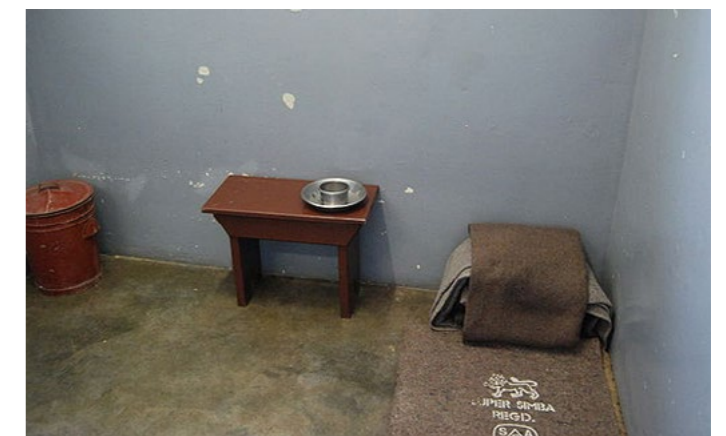
#### Design precedents



Shepton Mallet Prison cell. (Source: Shepton Mallet Prison)



Dressed cells. (Source: Fremantle Prison)



Nelson Mandela's cell. (Source: Wikimedia Commons)



Interpretation devices

**Device 5**

**Interpretive displays**

Interpretive displays add depth to the interpretive experience of the Gaol. Split into two types, large displays can provide visual respite from the harsh aesthetic of the Gaol's interior fabric. They present an informal dwell space that is educational and engaging.

**Large displays**

Interpretive displays in limited key areas add to the rich interpretive narrative of the Gaol by facilitating access to broad, multilayered content that couldn't be covered in other areas of the Gaol. These environments use multiple interpretive devices to deliver immersive experiences for the self-guided visitor.

The displays are placed strategically to enhance the tour experience:

**Hospital**

**5-wing**

**A-wing (as an experience)**

**Small site-specific displays**

Small displays can present artefacts that help contextualise a specific, focused area. They can infuse a sense of life without interfering with the built environment. For example, these can be:

**A-wing**

- Shivs in cells
- Batons in the control room
- Profile of Charles Hines in execution cell
- Augmented display of the gallows.

**B-wing**

- Gag and whip in first class separation cell
- Batons in the control room.

**C-wing**

- Graphic display: themed around the stories of the female prisoners.

*Design precedents for larger displays*



Gallows Gallery. (Source: Old Dubbo Gaol)

*Design precedents for smaller displays*



Artefacts on display. (Source: Fremantle Prison)



Jailed exhibition. (Source: Museums of History NSW)



London Mithraeum display. (Source: archdaily.com)

Interpretation devices

**Device 6**

**Interpretive signage and brand identity**

Development of a contemporary brand identity for interpretation at Maitland Gaol is crucial to link interpretation signage, LED displays and interactives, wayfinding, printed marketing material and online marketing material.

Interpretive signage is a vital resource for guided, non-guided and non-paying visitors to the site. It acts as an extra layer of information and should be seen as a discovery opportunity. Although modern audiences are drawn to multimedia, many will still look to signage to clarify or resolve what they have seen, heard, touched or even smelled.

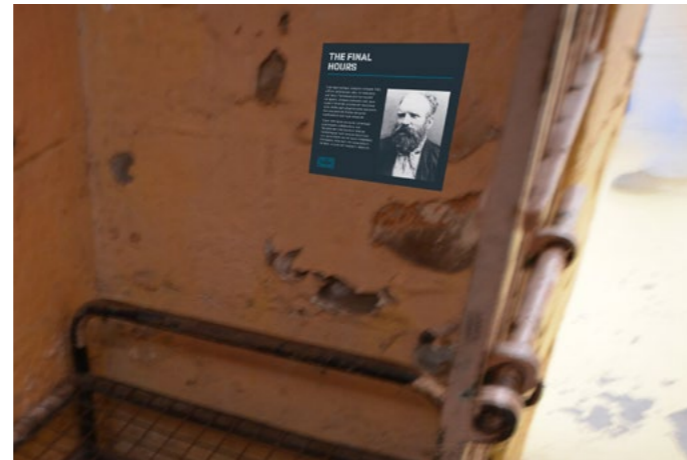
Because non-paying visitors will have access to almost half of the site, it is important to provide limited interpretation for these visitors. Signs in the unpaid areas should point to built heritage or stories not told in the current tours on offer.

Signage can present an interpretive narrative and orientation, or act as a promotional device to sell the paid experience of guided tours.

Signage can also be used as art installations, such as text-based sculptures.

*Note: Signage shown here is purely conceptual and not prescriptive.*

*Application of visual identity concept*



Application of visual identity concept.

*On-site application*

**Signage and visual identity**

A clear and engaging identity helps consolidate and present a clear interpretive layer that can be easily identified and followed as one navigates around the site.



**Type 1**

Building signage—this interpretation signage can be placed on a plinth or mounted to a wall and should double as wayfinding for self-guided tours and in unpaid areas.

**Type 2**

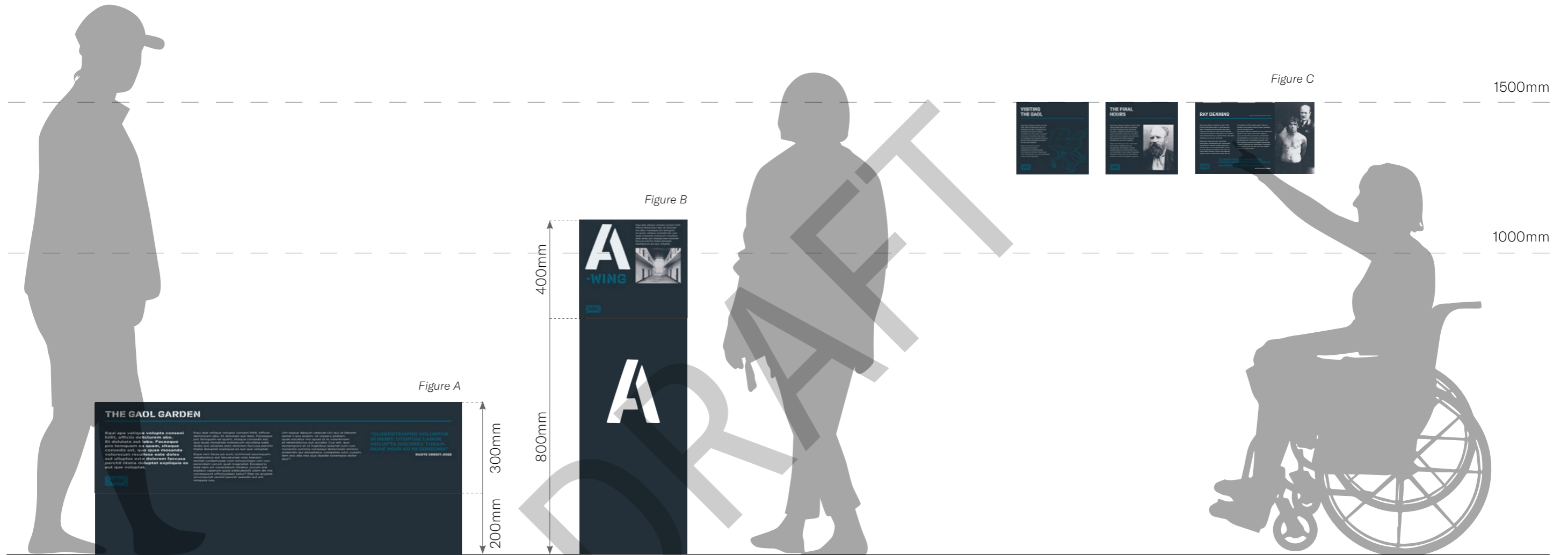
Environmental signage—this interpretive signage is best placed within the environment for unpaid areas such as gardens and event spaces. Use this signage for built heritage.

**Type 3a**

Discrete signage—place this signage within the tour environment for the audience to discover. Attach it to surfaces using non-invasive methods as per the CMP.

**Type Cb**

Discrete signage—a more discreet version of the type 3a signage. Use this signage to further expand on self-discovery experiences such as the condemned cell or the visiting centre.



**Signage system**

The signage system should be designed to be a discrete, flexible and discoverable experience. As recommended in the *Maitland Gaol Conservation Plan* (1998), ‘signage, interpretation and temporary exhibitions can occur but need not be invasive and can be managed to be effective.’

Signage should avoid main thoroughfares and vehicle access points. If unavoidable in areas where wayfinding

is essential, interpretation signage should be easily movable without damage.

Larger signage (type 1 and 2) should be easily read by a group of people.

**Accessibility guide for signage**

- Signage below 1000mm should sit at an angle so as to be accessible. As the signage gets lower this angle should approach 90°.
- Signage on the horizontal plane (other than the ground) should sit flat only where wheelchair users can fit beneath it.
- If signage is to be attached to a vertical surface it should sit no higher than 1500mm. This is average eye height. See Figure C.
- Signage intended for children or school students may need to be fixed lower; however, any signage intended

for young children may be more likely to be read out to a child by their parent or guardian.

- Typography should be easily legible. Make sure there is a high contrast between the background of the sign and the text itself. The use of braille is also recommended for those with vision impairment.
- Size of body copy should be easily read from at least 1000mm away.

## Interpretation devices

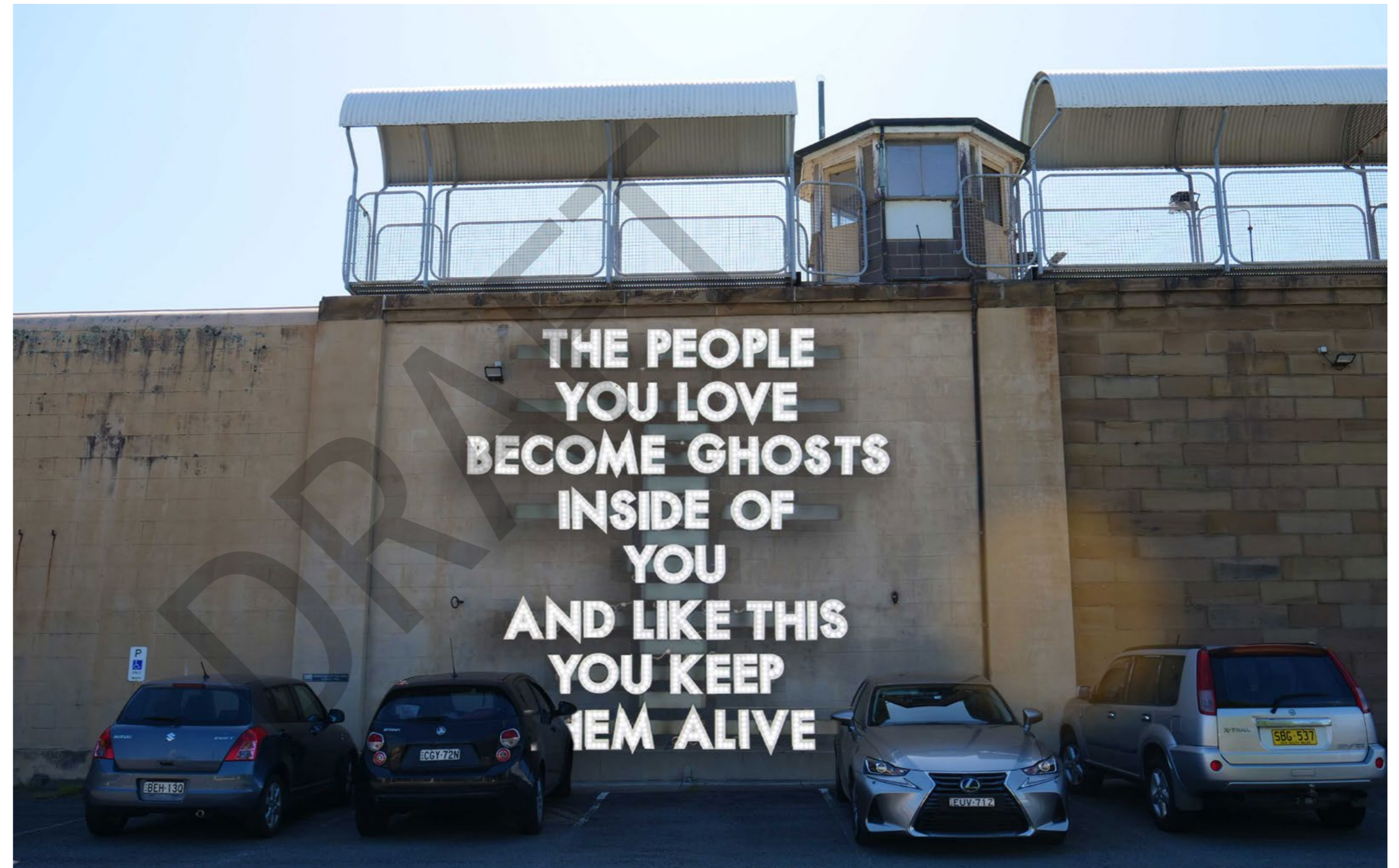
### Text-based installation

Technical notes:

- Permanent text-based sculpture.
- Letters are attached to metal armature which is fixed to the ground—floating off the heritage wall.
- The letter forms are laser cut from metal. A second layer of letters, exactly matching the first, is laser cut from coloured Perspex, and mounted offset directly behind the metal letters. This will create an interplay of dark and coloured shadows on the wall behind as sunlight moves across the wall.
- At night the letters can be up-lit or back-lit for a striking effect.



Application of text-based installation. (Artistic render by Esem Projects)



## Device 7

# New horizons

### Emerging opportunities in extended reality (XR) programs and platforms

Museums and galleries are experimenting with the potentials of extended reality platforms, sometimes called 'XR'. Technologies such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and 'mixed reality' (MR) fall under this category.

Growing use of XR media can be expected over the coming decade. At the same time, museums working with XR also report challenges around maintaining a high-quality visitor experience over time.

Care should be taken when commissioning XR experiences, ensuring reliable connectivity is in place, and that there is ongoing resourcing available to support technology updates over time.

Potential opportunities include:

**AR tours:** These allow for the integration of AR images and sound, overlaid onto the contemporary environment as viewed through a smartphone.

**VR and 3D environments:** VR can be provided on location as a visitor experience, or downloaded as an online purchase/rental for those with VR headsets.

Virtual tours could also be made available online as an introduction to potential audiences. This requires 360-degree filming of the environment, which could be undertaken prior to new works to capture the existing fabric of the site and then again following any new development works.

**Holograms:** Although holograms have been available for some time, new AI tools and programs are increasing the accessibility of holographic visualisation techniques, particularly when large volumes of collections images are available.

**Generative AI:** New AI tools such as ChatGPT present new opportunities for conversational tools such as chatbots to be designed as a custom interface to converse with visitors and customers. While chatbots have been used in retail and sales environments for some time, the accessibility of AI-based prompts introduces the potential for more customised chatbot interfaces with unique collections, places, and story collections.

Because AR and VR are not easily shared experiences, they do present some challenges for museums and visitor spaces. As Seb Chan and Jini Maxwell write:

**AR technology is often met with distrust, revealing the tension between the private and shared versions of reality that are in contention in public spaces, including museums and galleries.**

See 'Augmented Reality in Museums', NGV 2022.



Images: Example applications of AR and VR.

Top image: AR at the NGV featured as part of AR.Trail (2022).

Middle: Chatbot UI offers conversational tools for on-site interactivity.

Below: Museum Next VR experience.

## Photogrammetry and 3D scans

Use of 3D technologies provides new opportunities for museum interpretation and storytelling, bringing to life 3D historical artefacts, buildings and environments.

3D scans of buildings and environments can be used in VR and AR applications to create virtual visitor experiences, but they also ensure fragile artefacts or environments undergoing redevelopment can be preserved for future interpretation and preservation purposes.

For preservation purposes, a 3D scan can be used to help monitor the condition of a fragile item or built fabric over time. For interpretation purposes, the possibilities are endless, from creating 3D virtual environments for visitors to explore, or new creative works by artists that mix virtual and real in surprising ways.

### Photogrammetry vs 3D scans

Photogrammetry and 3D scanning are the two primary methods for creating 3D models.

**3D scans** (such as LiDAR scans) use light sources to capture an object or environment in 3D space, translating these into dense data points known as 'point clouds'. These scans capture a large volume of data in high resolution and are highly accurate. Because they are achieved through light, they require control of the lighting environment.

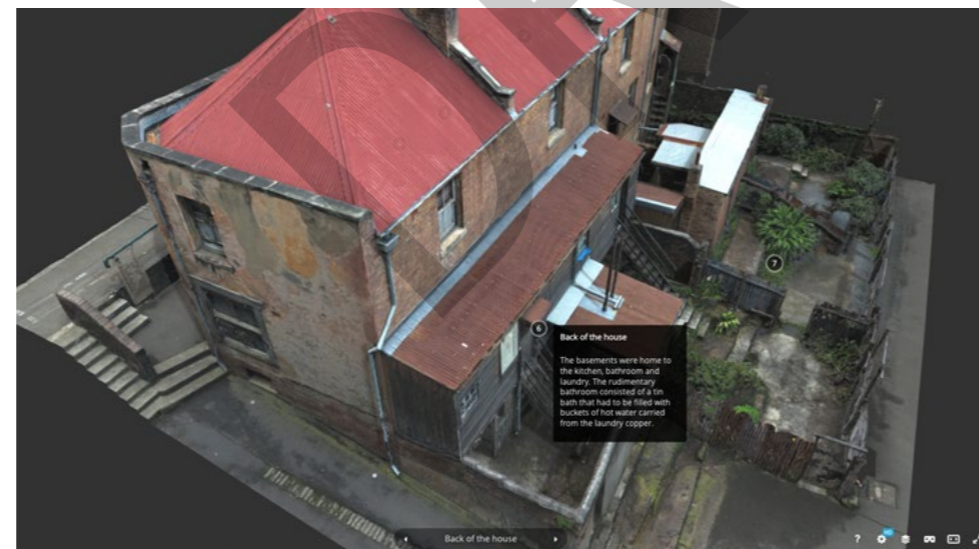
**Photogrammetry** is achieved through more traditional photographic techniques, e.g. by taking a photo of an object from multiple angles and translating these photos into 3D using photogrammetry software. It can be less expensive but is also considered less accurate.

**A specific scoping project to understand potential resources required for 3D scanning of Maitland Gaol environments and artefacts is recommended.**



Elizabeth Farm

Point Cloud scan of Museums of History NSW (MHNSW) property Elizabeth Farm animated and rendered by Esem Projects for the launch of MHNSW 2022.



3D scan of MHNSW's Susannah Place property allows for annotations of the built fabric with stories and other information.



'Ming Bowl' (c1400-1460) photogrammetry scan created by Macquarie University for the City of Parramatta in 2020.

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# Endnotes





# Endnotes

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