

## Statement of Environmental Effects

<b>Project</b>	Morpeth Courthouse (Museum) Improvements	<b>Date</b>	2 September 2019
<b>Prepared for</b>	Maitland City Council (MCC)	<b>Issue</b>	1

This Statement of Environmental Effects (SoEE) has been prepared by donn architects on behalf of Maitland City Council (MCC) Infrastructure & Works in support of a Combined Development Application/Construction Certificate Application (DA/CC) to document the proposed changes to former Morpeth Courthouse and improvements for its ongoing Museum use at 123 Swan Street Morpeth.

The SoEE has been prepared having regard to Section 79C: Evaluation of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and in accordance with Clause 2(1)(c) & 4 of Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2000* (EP&A Reg) to review the following:

- the environmental impacts of the proposed development
- how the environmental impact of the proposed development has been identified, and
- the steps taken to protect the environment or the reduce any anticipated harm to the environment

The proposed improvements have been designed to respond to the current development controls and the environmental qualities of the site and its surroundings. And the SoEE demonstrates that the proposal substantially complies with the development controls applicable to the site.

The content of Maitland City Council's (MCC's) Development Application Guide has been referenced and the SoEE has been formatted to meet the objectives of the Guide, as follows:

- A. Introduction/Brief Description of the Development
- B. Planning/Statutory Controls
- C. Site Analysis & Existing Uses
- D. Operational Details
- E. Access & Traffic
- F. Utility Services & Waste
- G. Privacy, Views & Overshadowing
- H. Flooding & Drainage
- I. Erosion & Sediment Control
- J. Heritage Conservation
- K. Other Environmental Impacts

The proposed improvements are of a modest scale, substantially comply with MCC's Local Environmental Plan 2011 (LEP) and MCC's Development Control Plan 2011 (DCP), brings economic and social benefits to Morpeth and surrounding areas, and will reinforce the viability of the museum and its contents into the future.

The improvements are a permissible form of development for the site and will have minimal impact on the adjoining lands as demonstrated throughout this SoEE. The design proposal responds to current development controls and as a result provides a solution which is best-fit for the site and its context.

The proposed development is reasonable and appropriate when considered under the relevant heads of consideration in Section 79C(1) of the EP&A Act, and is worthy of favourable consideration by the approval authorities.

## A. Introduction/Brief Description of the Development

The proposed changes to former Morpeth Courthouse and improvements to the museum use primarily focus on the southern rear yard area behind the southern extents of the existing building. The works include improving general connectivity between exhibition spaces and making provision for compliant disability access to the site and building interior. In addition to these visible improvements, there is a historical part to the design proposal which recognises the past legacy of the site. This work recognises now reburied and preserved archaeological artefacts which will be promoted and interpreted through careful positioning and selection of external finishes and services. These concealed artefacts include an old underground water cistern which is a domed-shaped structure constructed of masonry elements; the remains of an old masonry dish drain; sandstone footings previously used to support a horse stable structure for law enforcement officers; and an old cesspit adjacent to the known horse stable footings. For more detailed information on the archaeology of the rear yard space, reference can be made to the Excavation Report, as prepared by Archaeologist Sue Singleton, October 2014 and the Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI), as prepared by Placemark Consultants 29 August 2019.

Practically, the existing rear yard space is currently ill-defined in terms of its public use and is plagued by surface stormwater drainage and inground moisture issues affecting the usefulness of the space, provision for safe access and accelerating the deterioration of the building. These issues affect potential outdoor uses for the site that, if addressed, could enhance museum attendance and more safely protect its contents.

The design proposal can be defined into three key areas:

1. A building addition, which provides 2 new accessible unisex toilets complete with baby change tables, a cleaner's store and a passageway that clearly defines a new internal circulation link between the current exhibition spaces in both the east and west building wings. The building addition provides for step-free access and improved circulation for the whole building (compliant equitable access is not currently available)– as well as improving building security and staff safety.
2. A new paved area and roofed outdoor learning / external exhibition spaces design with consideration of being constructed over the existing sandstone footings of the old horse stables.
3. A new external landscape design consisting of both soft and hard elements, as well as heritage interpretation exhibits. The following inclusions are proposed:
  - sealed pedestrian pathways
  - gates and picket fences to secure the rear yard space
  - a continuous masonry wall at the rear of the yard which will also form as a substrate for external exhibits
  - bench seating
  - lawns
  - gardens
  - screened bin enclosure
  - new stormwater infrastructure
  - new underground hydraulic and electrical services
  - special paving treatments over buried archaeological artefacts, and
  - miscellaneous visual and audible interpretive installations to convey information to visitors about Morpeth and the site's original use as a courthouse.

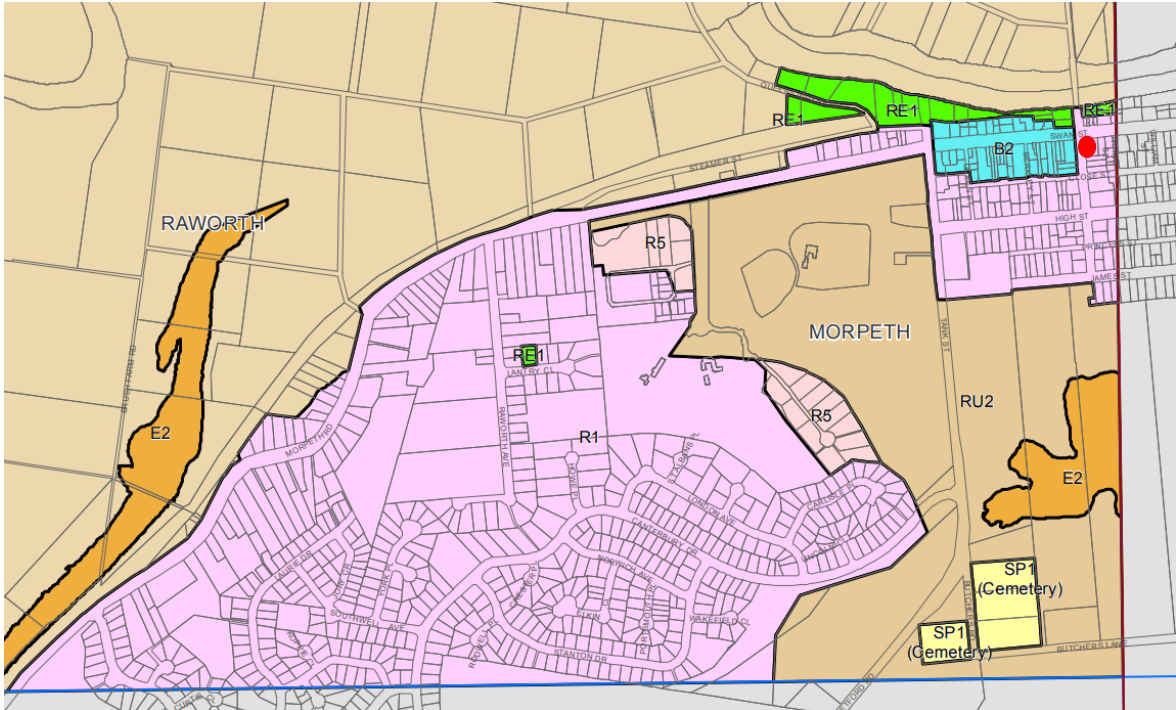
## B. Planning/Statutory Controls

The museum site is legally defined as Lot 1, DP 526098 and has a site area of 965m<sup>2</sup>. The property is zoned R1: General Residential under the LEP. In addition to the LEP, the relevant development controls and State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) affecting the site as they relate to the design proposal are as follows:

- **Maitland DCP 2011 (as amended July 2016)**
- **SEPP (Coastal Management) 2018**

- **SEPP (Miscellaneous Consent Provisions) 2017**

The LEP defines the objectives of Zone R1: General Residential primarily to meet the needs of housing for the community. However, the existing use of the site as a public museum is consistent with the provision of facilities and services that meet the day to day needs of residents. In this regard, a community facility used for social, cultural or intellectual development – which is owned or controlled by a public authority - may be permitted with consent.



(Extract from) LEP Land Zoning Map\_Sheet LZN\_004C (museum site marked red)

Other clauses of the LEP which are relevant to the design proposal are as follows:

**Clause 4.3: Height of Buildings**

The design proposal has been designed in consultation with a specialist heritage consultant and seeks to protect the heritage character and significance of the former courthouse and avoids any adverse effects on the integrity of heritage listed item, which is of local significance. Refer to the SoHI, as prepared by Placemark Consultants.

**Clause 5.10: Heritage Conservation**

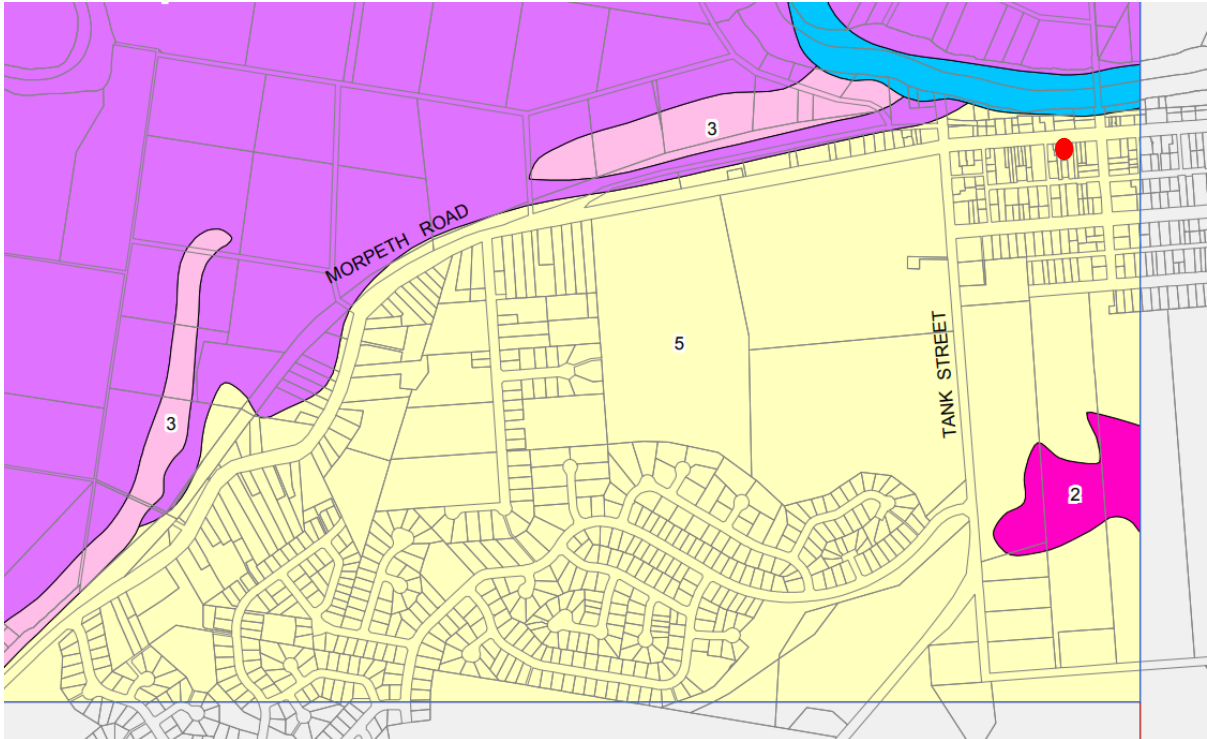
The objectives of this clause are:

- to conserve the environmental heritage of Maitland,
- to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views,
- to conserve archaeological sites,
- to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.

Development consent is required for the proposed improvements, as the building that is being altered is of local heritage significance (Item No. 211 – listed as the ‘former courthouse’) and the site is within the Morpeth Heritage Conservation Area. **Schedule 5: Environmental Heritage** confirms the local heritage listing (Item 211). Refer to the SoHI, as prepared by Placemark Consultants.

**Clause 7.1: Acid Sulphate Soils**

The site is identified as containing Class 5 acid sulphate soils. Given the nature of the proposed improvement works, acid sulphate soils are not expected to be impacted by the improvement works.



(Extract from) LEP Acid Sulphate Soils Map\_Sheet ASS\_004C (museum site marked red)

### Clause 7.2: Earthworks

The objective of this clause is to ensure that earthworks for which development consent is required will not have a detrimental impact on environmental functions and processes, neighbouring uses, cultural or heritage items or features of the surrounding land. Minor earthworks are proposed to accommodate new yard levels and structural footings as part of the improvement works. The proposed design will accommodate and improve on existing drainage patterns, facilitate the intended use of the site and will be undertaken with appropriate and applicable work methods inclusive of erosion and sediment controls in compliance with MCC's requirements. The original provisions for drainage and building integrity have been negatively impacted by poorly managed processes over the building's life. To address this, the design proposal adopts appropriate yard and paving levels and overland flow path provisions that will assist with the building's long term preservation.

The design of new yard levels has taken into consideration the presence of recorded archaeological artefacts presently buried within the museum's rear yard space. The location of these elements have been surveyed (depth recorded) and will not be disturbed as part of the proposed improvements. As an additional measure of protection, appropriate rules for notification will be in place should excavation works uncover additional historical artefacts not yet known.

The relevant sections of **Maitland DCP 2011** have been reviewed and the following points of consideration can be made:

#### Clause A.4 – Notification

A notification plan has been prepared (Drawing PNP: Public Notification Plan) and is submitted as part of the application deliverables.

#### B.2 – Domestic Stormwater

Stormwater management for the site has been documented on Drawing A003: Proposed Drainage Plan and illustrates compliance with the DCP.

#### B.5 – Tree Management

The existing vegetation to be cleared at the rear of the museum's site was approved by Council under a separate application (30 August 2019). As a record of what has been approved for removal, reference can be made to Drawing A002: Items to be Removed Plan, which illustrates the extent of tree removal – some of which are

considered overgrown weeds. MCC's Parks & Gardens provided input during design development to identify tree species and provide recommendations for their safe removal.

#### **B.6 – Waste Not – Site Waste Minimisation & Management**

The proposed development is consistent with this clause and a Waste Management & Minimisation Plan (completed Council pro-forma) has been prepared and is submitted as part of the application deliverables.

#### **C.4 – Heritage Conservation**

This clause applies to all items including heritage conservation areas, to which clause 5.10 of the LEP applies. As outlined in this SoEE, the museum is a locally listed heritage significant building (Item 211) and is positioned within Morpeth's Heritage Conservation Area. A Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI) for proposed improvements has been prepared by the consulting heritage architect - Placemark Consultants - and is submitted as part of the application deliverables.

#### **C.11 – Vehicular Access & Car Parking**

On-site parking is not currently available within the confines of the Morpeth Courthouse Museum site due to the presence of the existing heritage listed building and the lack of available space in the rear yard area for safe and efficient movement of motor vehicles. The overall intent behind the proposal is to carry out much needed improvements to the museum and these upgrades should not translate to a change in the existing traffic movements associated with the museum. It should be emphasised that a bus stop is provided at the front of the museum on Swan Street (in front of the adjacent public park). This will continue to prove to be useful in catering for visitors arriving by bus. And in relation to protection of street infrastructure within the Heritage Conservation Area, the existing sandstone kerb and gutter as well as the existing driveway crossover adjacent to the rear yard space will be protected and retained.

#### **C.12 – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**

A well-considered design reduces opportunities for crime by using design and place management principles that can reduce the likelihood of essential crime ingredients (law, offender, victim or target, opportunity) from being brought about. CPTED is based on the following four key strategies:

- territorial re-enforcement
- surveillance
- access control, and
- space/activity management.

The proposed improvement works to the museum's rear yard space effectively address each of the four CPTED principles as follows:

- **Surveillance**  
The design proposal incorporates clear sightlines between the surrounding street network, public park and improved rear yard space through the use of picket fences, which allows visible gaps. This passive surveillance will be augmented by a network of security cameras strategically placed around the rear yard space to capture all areas, including both of the new rear of building entry points as well as the gate access points off Northumberland Street and the public park sides. The proposed landscaping is appropriate in scale and will not allow opportunity for potential offenders to hide or entrap victims. Artificial external lighting will also be used to illuminate the rear yard space throughout the night and will be set to automatically dim and turn off at sunrise. It is anticipated that the proposed development, through increased surveillance and visitation rates – particularly in relation to intended night-time uses (refer to comments below), will enhance the overall safety of the museum site and the surrounding area, thereby adequately discouraging crime-related activity.
- **Access Control**  
Appropriate access control has been incorporated as part of the design proposal. Refer to Section K. Other Environmental Impacts of this SoEE for an overview of access control through the pedestrian gates and new external entry doors.
- **Territorial Reinforcement**  
The design ensures a clear distinction as to what areas of the rear yard space are public versus private. Whilst the glazed-in existing rear verandah spaces allow safe and controlled surveillance into the rear

yard space, the newly introduced rear entry conditions on the southern side of the building could potentially partly conceal unwanted intruders who may have attempted to scale the rear yard fences and walls at night. The two new rear entry conditions are partly recessed for weather protection from the south. To address security concerns, the following design aspects have been integrated into the improvement works:

- The new access doors are fully glazed to maximise visibility both inside and out
  - The access doors (and yard gates) will be able to be locked off – allowing provision of controlled operation to suit museum use
  - Access from the interior of the museum (building addition) to the rear yard space via the two new entry doors will be free-passage 24/7 coupled with an overhead door closer. This will allow the doors to close automatically and lockable from the outside (if this is the desired function of the museum staff at the time)
  - Both new entry doors will be key lockable and museum staff will be able to disengage the key-lock setting if desired (to suit multiple door movements) – that is, doors can be set to operate in free-passage mode
  - Artificial lighting installed within the new passageway and just outside both entry points will illuminate the areas during the evening and will be timed to remain on until sunrise
  - Security camera footage trained on to both entry points will be able to be viewed and recorded at a central monitor station at the front of the museum (where museum staff are present most of the time) as well as at a newly installed monitor with the staff room as a secondary viewing station. All captured security footage will have a recording function.
  - Additional security cameras will be positioned in the remaining yard space. These will be trained on external gate entry points and all areas of the rear yard space to ensure complete surveillance is maintained.
- **Space Management**

The new improvement works to the rear yard space have been designed for ease of long-term maintenance in mind. This will allow the museum staff to maintain a well-kept appearance, which will assist in presenting the museum and its grounds as a crime-free zone. The design of the rear yard space also proposes to claim yard space for the museum which was not previously used or allocated as part of the museum's grounds. An additional 900mm (maximum) will be captured along the southern edge of the site following the removal of an old paling fence, which was constructed well inside the museum's property. And an additional 2.5 metres in width will be added to the museum's yard space on the eastern side of the site – again following the removal of the old picket fence and construction of a new fence line closer to the actual property boundary. This latter fence line adjustment will allow a new pedestrian gate to be positioned perpendicular to the side boundary. This gate will face the more public thoroughfare of busy Swan Street and the broader scope of the public parkland. The front-on appearance and functionality of this new gate – together with the new gate provided on the Northumberland Street side - will assist with managing the security of the rear yard space through controlled use and enhanced visibility from street network and the public park adjacent.

### **E.3 – Heritage Conservation Area**

#### **5. Morpeth Heritage Conservation Area**

Refer to Section J. Heritage Conservation of this SoEE.

**SEPP (Coastal Management) 2018** identifies land in a defined coastal zone and promotes specific land use planning on development proposals to ensure consistency with the Coastal Management Act 2016. The museum site is located within a Coastal Environment Area and Coastal Use Area. Section 13 of the SEPP prescribes development conditions on land within a Coastal Environment Area. The design proposal complies with the relevant conditions stated as the proposal will:

- not cause an adverse impact on the integrity and resilience of the biophysical, hydrological (surface and groundwater) and ecological environment related to the Hunter River
- not impact on the coastal environmental values and natural coastal processes,
- not impact on any marine vegetation, native vegetation and fauna and their habitats
- not have any adverse impact on existing public open space and safe access
- not impact on any known aboriginal cultural heritage, practices and places

Section 14 of the SEPP prescribes development conditions on land within a Coastal Use Area. The design proposal complies with the relevant conditions stated as the proposal will:

- not cause an adverse impact on the existing safe access to and along the nearby foreshore of the Hunter River
- not produce overshadowing, wind funnelling and the loss of views from public places to the foreshore of the Hunter River
- not detract from the visual amenity and scenic qualities of the Hunter River
- not impact on any known aboriginal cultural heritage, practices and places
- not diminish the cultural and built environment heritage of the site as it relates to the Hunter River

Compliance with SEPP (Miscellaneous Consent Provisions) 2017 is provided in so far as any demolition work proposed as part of the improvements, will only be actioned following development consent.

### C. Site Analysis & Existing Uses

Reference should be made to Drawing A002: Site Analysis Plan, which illustrates the museum's rear yard space in the context of the surrounding areas. Reference should also be made to the completed survey drawings, as prepared by MCC (Assets & Infrastructure Planning) - Drawing Ref: F003 09 1203 (Sheets 1, 2 and 3). The survey drawings are included as part of the application deliverables.

The topography of the former courthouse museum site slopes gently towards the north (Hunter River) and is surrounded by established urban development. To the north, the museum addresses Swan Street (its primary street frontage). To the east, the site borders a public park which has a children's playground, park benches & tables, public amenities and gardens. To the west the museum site fronts Northumberland Street, with the Commercial Hotel directly opposite the site. And to the south, the rear yard of the museum borders a private residential property (No. 4 Northumberland Street).



*The museum's primary street frontage facing Swan Street (public access available under clock-face)*

The current use of the former courthouse and the site as a public museum will continue following completion of the improvement works. A portion of the existing building (a previous bathroom and storeroom addition constructed c. 1932) will be demolished to allow for the new building addition. This demolished built portion is noted on the Site Analysis Plan and has been assessed as being of little heritage significance (Ref. Conservation Management Plan for the Former Morpeth Court House, prepared by John Carr Heritage Design, 28 February 2012) and SoHI prepared by Placemark Consultants.

It should be emphasised that the rear yard of the museum is currently a vacant lawn area, lacking any significant purpose other than a temporary storage yard for salvaged items that the museum volunteers have acquired and intend to refurbish for possible inclusion in the exhibits.



*Panoramic view of rear yard space looking north at the former courthouse museum (salvaged items under tarp on right)*

## D. Operational Details

Morpeth Courthouse Museum is a built asset own and managed by MCC and is currently open to the public 4 days a week (Thursday to Sunday 11:00am to 2:00pm). These opening hours are subject to the availability of volunteers and otherwise by special appointment. Weekends are considered the busiest times, when visitors flock to Morpeth for recreation. MCC's Operations Manager Major Venues and Facilities (Culture, Community and Recreation) – Kelly Baldwin - has clarified that Council are currently considering options to have the Museum open 7 days a week with the operating hours being from 8.30am up to 10:00pm (Sunday to Thursday) and 8.30am to midnight on Fridays and Saturdays. These hours are indicative of the future planned uses for the building following completion of improvement works.

The longer opening house planned for the Museum will likely be justified due to the following factors as a result of the improvement works:

- enhanced connection to public park and the Northumberland Street frontage
- compliant disability access conditions
- the enhanced amenities area
- provision of new audio-visual services intended to be deployed as part of the improvements to the rear yard space, and
- overall enhancement of the museum and its rear yard space for public appreciation.

One notable inclusion that will modify the way in which the museum operates is the intention to provide an outdoor movie projector. This is to be mounted to the underside of the new roof structure over the old horse stable footings and will project motion pictures on to the new blank screen south-facing wall of the new building addition. Such an inclusion will offer opportunities for night-time use of the museum's grounds, which may be considered favourable to museum staff and interested visitors wishing to present historical information in a less-formal setting (outdoor seated area). MCC's Operations Manager Major Venues and Facilities has confirmed that they would look at place activation in the improved outdoor rear yard area, with possible uses including showing feature length movies during summer evenings, broadcasting historical footage as part of a specific museum exhibit during special evening events at the museum and possible uses by local/visiting artists specialising in moving image media. MCC would be looking at this space to activate for public use.



In relation to bin storage and collection - all waste, recycling and green waste bins will continue to be collected from the site serviced as part of weekly Morpeth collection days. The Council supplied bins will be accommodated within a new screened off area separated from the rear yard space and will be accessible to museum staff and the general public via a pedestrian gate.

## E. Access & Traffic

No onsite parking provisions have been allowed for as part of the improvement works. Whilst museum staff and visitation rates are expected to increase following the improvement works, the existing kerb-side parallel and reverse-in parking spaces on Swan Street and Northumberland Street will continue to adequately serve the Museum, surrounding businesses and residential properties. The improvement works are not considered to be major traffic generating proposal and therefore, an assessment by a traffic engineer is not considered necessary.

A bus stop exists adjacent to the museum frontage on Swan Street (in front of the public park). This will offer an alternative mode of transport to potential visitors and will be particularly useful for visiting school groups and large tour groups arriving via bus.

A vehicular crossing currently exists at the rear of the museum (west wing) with access available off Northumberland Street. This crossing will cease to be of used by motor vehicles once the rear yard space is completely devoted to pedestrian use only, as part of the improvement works. The existing vehicular crossing with its stone elements will remain in place to preserve historical legacy of the site.



*Existing vehicular crossing leading to the rear yard space off Northumberland Street*

## F. Utility Services & Waste

The museum site is currently serviced by town water, sewerage, electricity and telecommunications. These existing services will be utilised as part of the improvement works.

Amplification of sanitary compartments is part of the proposed building addition works. Currently one toilet and a handbasin is provided. These will be removed and replaced with two new toilets (accessible types in both left and right handed transfer orientations), two handbasins and one cleaner's sink (accessible to museum staff only). Hunter Water's existing infrastructure will be utilised as part of the hydraulic services design and the design plans have been stamped by the water authority and have been issued for Hydraulic Design Assessment as part of the application process.

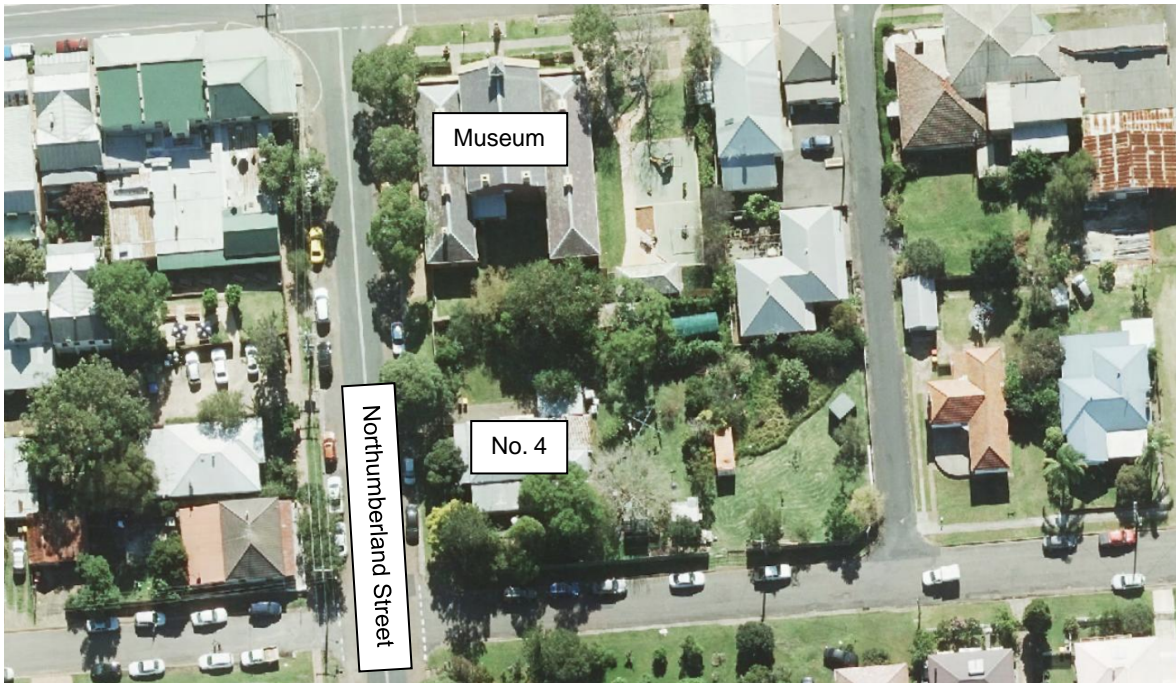
Other than the disposal of sewerage waste and collected waste, recyclables and green waste are to be stored for collection inside MCC supplied bins. No additional waste collection, special treatment or disposal arrangements are necessary as part of the museum's current operations and following completion of the improvement works.

In support of the DA/CC Application, a Waste Management & Minimisation Plan has been prepared and is submitted as part of the application deliverables.

## G. Privacy, Views & Overshadowing

As the museum site directly addresses Swan Street (to the north), Northumberland Street (to the west) and the Public Park (to the east) – the privacy of the neighbouring residential property (No. 4 Northumberland Street) to the south of the museum's rear yard space is of prime consideration.

A new rear masonry wall will be constructed as a continuous solid element along the southern property boundary of the site - and returning in-part along both east and west boundaries. The new wall will significantly address both privacy and acoustic impacts imposed by the museum's public-related functions on the neighbouring residential property. The new wall ranges in height from 1.8 metres to 3.0 metres, with the highest portion coinciding with the new roof to be constructed over the old horse stable footings.



*Aerial photo showing relationship between the museum and No. 4 Northumberland Street*

In relation to any overshadowing effects of the new rear masonry wall onto the neighbouring residential property to the south - at midday winter solstice - shadows have been calculated to cast at least 4.5 metres into the property (when calculated from the highest wall height of 3.0 metres). In fact, the roof over the horse stable footings terminates at a slightly higher point above the wall and will cast a longer shadow into the neighbour's yard space of at least 5.5 metres. These overshadowing effects will be lessened in impact, as the neighbouring property to the south steps up in level and the surround topography climbs towards High Street.

Depth of cast shadows noted, these mid-winter overshadowing effects should not be considered in isolation – noting that the higher section of the new masonry wall and horse stable roof are representative of a localised 10.9 metre length of structure over an overall property boundary length of 41.28 metres (26.24 metres for museum rear boundary + 15.04 metres for the public park boundary that when combined forms the common

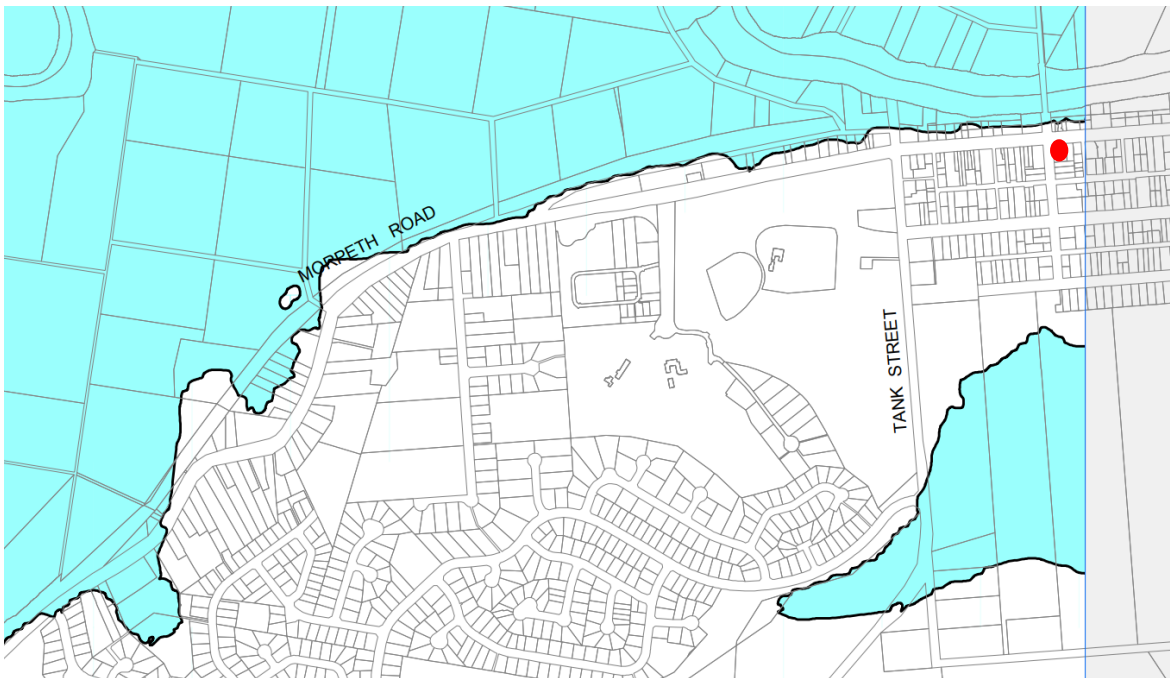
boundary to the neighbouring residential property). This wall/roof length equates to 26% of the boundary length before the wall height steps back down to 1.8 metres. It should also be noted that the existing dwelling, which occupies the neighbouring southern property, is also some distance away from the boundary where the wall will be constructed. This distance – measuring approximately 14 metres – affectively addresses any concern of the possibility of overshadowing living rooms and appurtenant outdoor areas. Considering these contextual factors will apply to the localised area, the extent of overshadowing can be considered manageable with no significant impacts on the amenity of the neighbouring residential property.

Existing view lines will not be impacted by the improvement works. A solid fence and dense vegetation already exist between the museum’s rear yard space and the neighbouring residential property to the south. This condition will be removed and reconstructed in a similar condition as part of the new works. The replacement of the exiting paling fence with a new solid masonry wall will improve the acoustic separation between the museum and residential properties to the south and also assist with maintaining visual privacy (from the perspective of private residences to the south of the museum site).

It should be noted that the owner occupier of No. 4 Northumberland Street has been made aware of the improvement works and is supportive of the design proposal. A copy of the design drawings have been left with the owner for their reference prior to making submission of the DA/CC application.

## H. Flooding & Drainage

With reference to the relevant Flood Planning Map from the LEP, the museum site does not lie within a flood prone area. That noted, the site does experience the impact of flooding during extreme weather events. From local knowledge, surface stormwater water and the effects of groundwater have been known to sweep through the site – through the existing rear yard space – on its way to the Hunter River.



(Extract from) LEP Flood Planning Map\_Sheet FLD\_004C (museum site marked red)

Currently, the rear yard portion of the museum site is ill-equipped to deal with this stormwater run-off and in extreme events the quantity of stormwater would be too great for the small yard sump that is within the existing rear yard space. As a result, localised and temporary flooding could occur within the rear portion of some of the building’s spaces.



*Existing stormwater pit in rear yard*

The proposed works intend to improve the stormwater drainage system in the rear yard space, with the inclusion of the three new stormwater pits and a network of appropriately sized underground drainage pipes. The new pits will control the flow of stormwater drainage from the rear portion of the site, inclusive of an enhanced management system for roof water discharge from the southern building portion (existing downpipes will be re-diverted to the new pits). Appropriate falls in finished surfaces will also be formed as part of the proposed external landscaping works. These gentle gradients (in compliance with disability access requirements) will fall away from the building – a condition that is currently not provided in the rear yard area. In fact, the archaeological artefact that is the now buried masonry dish drain would have once provided a similar provision prior to the construction of the prison cells (c. 1900).



*Old masonry dish drain (now buried) at right (kitchen wing in background), photo taken by archaeologist during excavation works 2014*

New impervious paved surfaces will be introduced into the rear yard space. However, these hard surfaces will be offset with the inclusion of adjacent soft pervious landscaping elements such as turf and gardens. The hard surfaces will assist in managing the moisture levels adjacent to the building's walls to minimise building movement over time and allow for ongoing management of the heritage asset.

The proposed stormwater drainage design is documented on Drawing A003: Proposed Drainage Plan. This drawing has been prepared in consultation with MCC's Infrastructure Project Engineer (Civil) – Chris Pinchen - and the consulting hydraulic services engineer (McCallum PFCA). MCC's Infrastructure Project Engineer has already confirmed that no additional stormwater control measures such as detention tanks are required.

## I. Erosion & Sediment Control

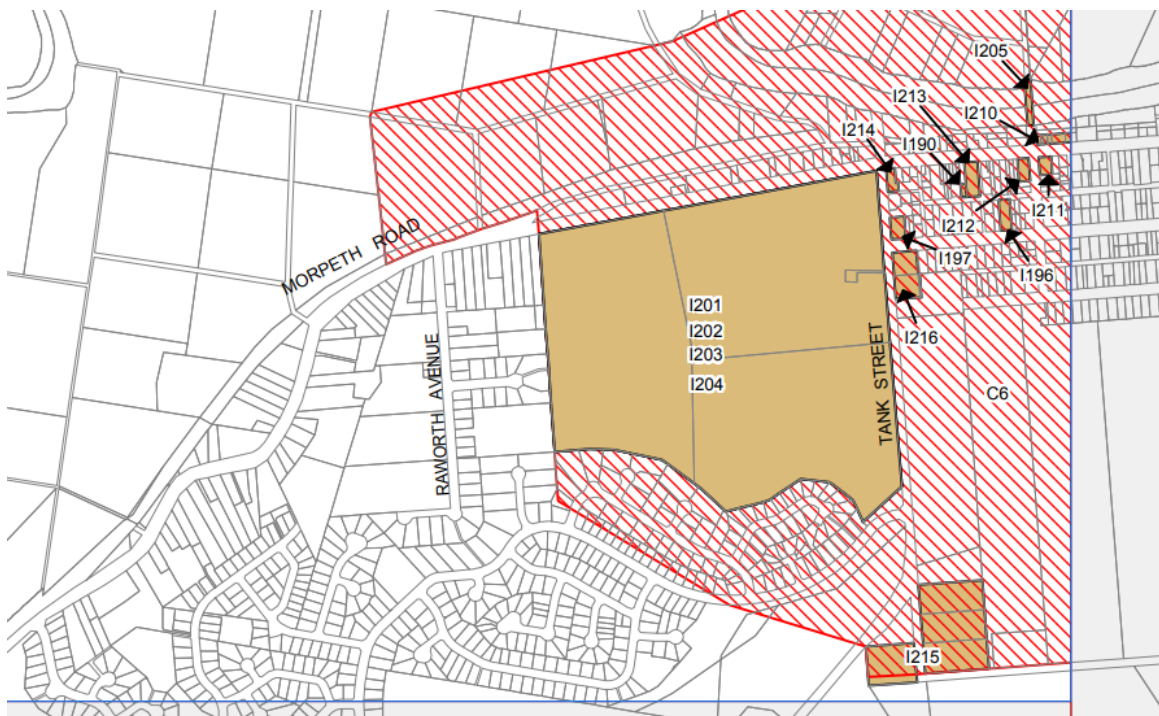
As the project is quite small - consisting of three stormwater pits and a stormwater outlet to the kerb in Northumberland Street – MCC’s Infrastructure Project Engineer has advised that explanatory notations be provided on Drawing A003: Proposed Drainage Plan. The following notation has been provided on the drawing to ensure erosion and sediment control measures are addressed as part of the improvement works:

*Sediment & erosion control measures shall be installed in accordance with the Landcom publication Managing Urban Stormwater - Soils & Construction Volume 1. All silt control measures shall be in place prior to commencement of earthworks with measures subject to further additions or alterations, where considered necessary, as directed by the Superintendent, MCC Project Officer or Council during the progression of the works.*

*Construct a sediment fence around all SWPs [stormwater pits] or wrap the grated lid in sediment fence during construction. Utilise sandbags downstream on the stormwater outlets to Northumberland Street as well as to the natural depression in the public park to the east of the museum site.*

## J. Heritage Conservation

The museum site is located within the Morpeth Heritage Conservation Area and the museum building itself (former courthouse) is listed as an item of local heritage significance in the LEP (Item 211).



(Extract from) LEP Heritage Map\_Sheet HER\_004C (museum site marked I211)

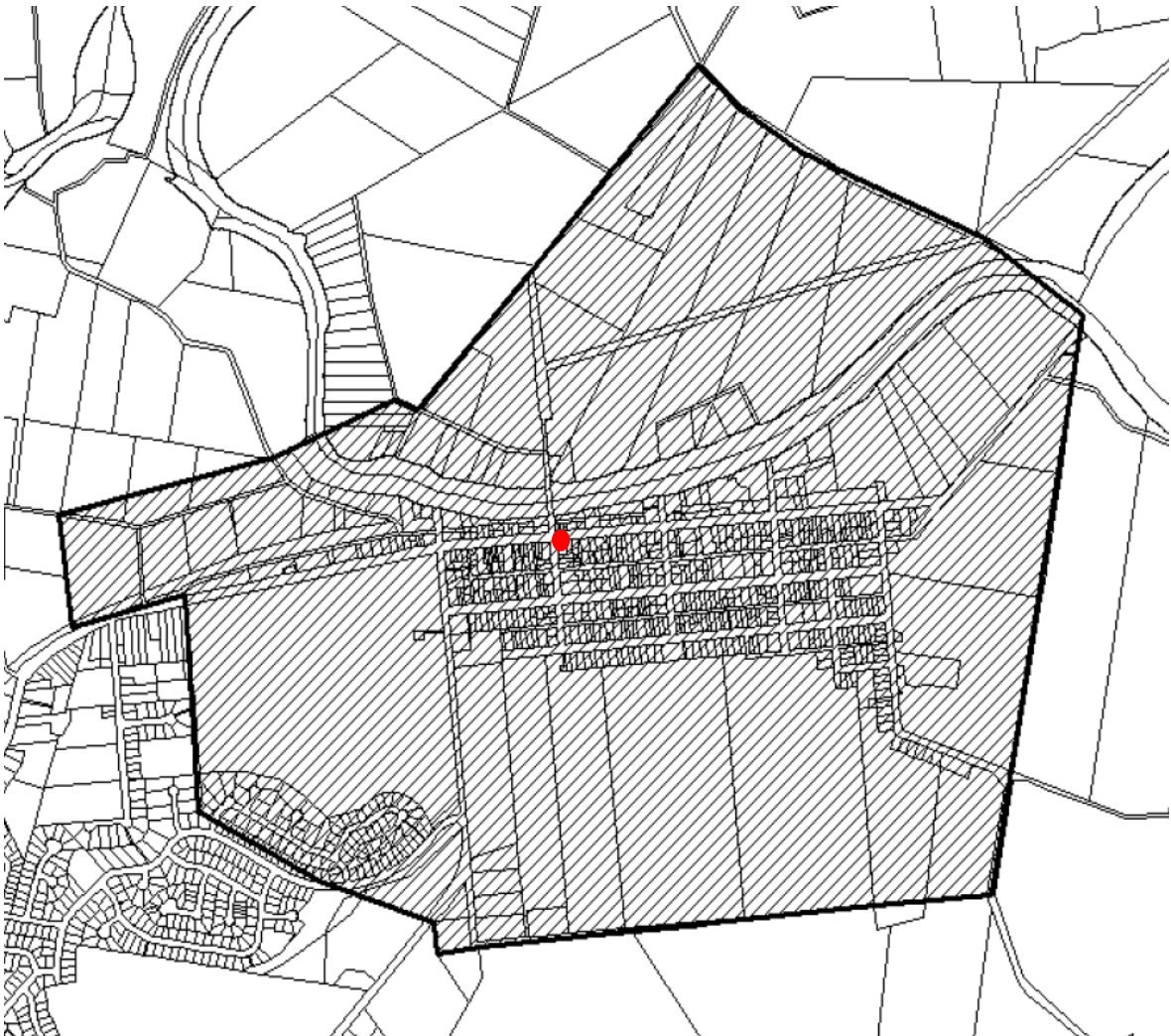
The ‘former courthouse’ is of local significance only and not classified as a state listed item with the NSW Office of Environment & Heritage.

The design of the improvement works has been developed in detailed consultation with heritage architect – Mark Fenwick of Placemark Consultants. Placemark Consultants have played an active role in design development so that the improvement works have minimal impact on the heritage significance of the site and building. Input from the heritage architect – who is familiar with the site - has been instrumental to many elements of the improvement works, from the selection of appropriate materials to the organisation of the museum’s

collection and expansion into the rear yard space to celebrate and preserve the historical legacy of the site acknowledging the presence of known archaeological artefacts which were previously recorded and now buried (Ref. 2013/s140/09 Excavation Report, prepared by Eurkea Heritage – October 2014).

The former courthouse building is part of a fine collection of public buildings, originally constructed to accommodate the needs of the township that still exist in Morpeth today. The building was designed by Mortimer Lewis Jnr, Clerk of Works for the Colonial Architect, Alexander Dawson. The East Maitland Courthouse was designed by Dawson and would have influenced Lewis' design. The design of the Morpeth Courthouse was modified several times to address the limited budget then completed in stages over a number of years. According to the Conservation Management Plan for the Former Morpeth Court House (referenced earlier) the original building was constructed in two stages. The first stage (1862) saw the creation of the central court room and western building wing, which accommodated legal staff, local law enforcement personnel and a telegraph and post office. The eastern wing of the building was constructed later (1879) as staff numbers grew. The present configuration of the building includes a rear kitchen (western wing) and two prison cells (eastern wing). These additional spaces were added to the southern ends of the building in the early twentieth century. The original building elements have been graded with different levels of cultural significance, have been protected and preserved as part of the design and documentation of the improvement works.

As the improvement works necessitate the alterations to the existing building, which is a listed item in the Morpeth Heritage Conservation Area – a Statement of Heritage Impact has been prepared by the consulting heritage architect. Reference should be made to this report for an exploration of issues and any potential impact on significance in relation to the proposed improvement works.



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## **K. Other Environmental Impacts**

No additional impacts relevant to air quality, water quality, native flora, fauna or habitats, public health, soil or groundwater contamination or existing noise levels are anticipated as a result of the proposed improvement works.

In relation to building security and the on-going management of the improved rear yard area, a security camera system will be deployed as part of the new works. Security camera footage will focus on all areas of the rear yard space and in particular the new rear of building entry points. This proposal will be a vast improvement over the current security system, which consists of a number of low-tech movement sensors and front door (only) alarm, controlled by security keypad. The security of the rear yard space will be further enhanced through passive and active design inclusions – minimum 1.8 metres high fences and gates, key-lockable gate hardware with free passage available on egress, door reed switches to trigger security alarm at both new entry points; and clear sight-lines across the entire rear yard space (no obstructing built elements or landscaping).

In terms of a lasting legacy and overall design intent behind the proposed improvement works, it is hoped that the building and landscaping upgrades will encourage more visitors to the museum and a renewed appreciation of its historical artefacts. In particular, it is envisaged that more excursions for school-aged children could be conducted at the museum. In this regard, the provision of the new covered outdoor learning space (over the old horse stables) will offer a break-out space for students and teachers to conduct informal research and other outdoor activities during their visit.