



Statement of Heritage Impact– Gillieston Public School redevelopment and new public preschool

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GILLIESTON PUBLIC SCHOOL  
REDEVELOPMENT AND NEW PUBLIC  
PRESCHOOL

Statement of Heritage Impact

REF SUBMISSION

December 2024



## **GILLIESTON PUBLIC SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT AND NEW PUBLIC PRESCHOOL**

Statement of Heritage Impact

### **REF SUBMISSION**

Prepared by  
**Umwelt (Australia) Pty Limited**  
on behalf of  
**NSW Department of Education**

Project Director: **Tim Adams**  
Project Manager: **Brad Vale**  
Report No. **V.01**  
Date: **December 2024**



North Sydney Office



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## Document Status

Rev No.	Reviewer		Approved for Issue	
	Name	Date	Name	Date
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# Executive Summary

Gillieston Public School is listed as a locally significant heritage item on the Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register of the Department of Education. It is Heritage Item ID: 5068006 on the State Heritage Inventory. The school site contains a brick building that was built in 1897 as a teacher's cottage, known as Gillieston Public School Building B00D.

The Gillieston Public School redevelopment and new public preschool would place a three-storey contemporary school building within approximately 30 m of Building B00D. This new Building BC would be approximately 12.8m tall closest to Building B00D, causing an adverse impact on the setting of Building B00D that is acceptable.

An inter-war period timber classroom building (Building B00A) that is not intact, and was moved to this site after its initial construction, would be demolished as part of the works, having an acceptable adverse heritage impact.

The activity would continue the long tradition of public education on this site and would retain Building B00D for a continuing school use. Based on the identification of potential heritage impacts and an assessment of the nature and extent of the impacts of the activity, Umwelt finds that the heritage impacts can be appropriately mitigated to ensure that there is minimal impact on the heritage significance of elements in the locality, and will not diminish the community's appreciation of local heritage and the environment.

Project Stage: Design (D) Construction (C) Operation (O)	Mitigation Measures	Relevant Section of Report
<b>D</b>	Select a place for the school bell in the activity	7.3.3
<b>C</b>	Undertake a Photographic Archival Recording of the timber classroom building (Building B00A) before it is demolished	3.3, 7.3.2, 8.0
<b>C</b>	Report to the heritage consultant if any item of potential archaeological value is uncovered during excavation	4.1

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared for the NSW Department of Education (DoE) to accompany a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) addressing the Gillieston Public School redevelopment and new public preschool. The statement follows the format of the NSW Heritage document, 'Guidelines for preparing a statement of heritage impact'. The site comprises a public primary school with a former Federation house near the north-western corner, an altered inter-war timber classroom building, and demountable classroom buildings.

The school site requires an upgrade in response to current and projected local enrolment demand by demolishing the existing facilities and providing new. Master planning will include provision of a 'core 35 primary school' including:

- removing the demountable classrooms and the remains of the timber classroom
- continued use of the Federation brick cottage (Building B00D) for school purposes.
- New indoor and outdoor primary school spaces
- Infrastructure improvements
- Removal of an inter-war timber building (Building B00A)

Details of the activity have been prepared by SHAC Architects.

Gillieston Public School is listed on the section 170 Register of the Department of Education, under the *Heritage Act of NSW 1977*. The school site is not to another heritage item or a conservation area.

This Heritage Impact Statement reviews the activity in terms of the relevant heritage provisions of the LEP and the requirements of the Maitland Development Control Plan (DCP) 2011.

## 1.2 Methodology

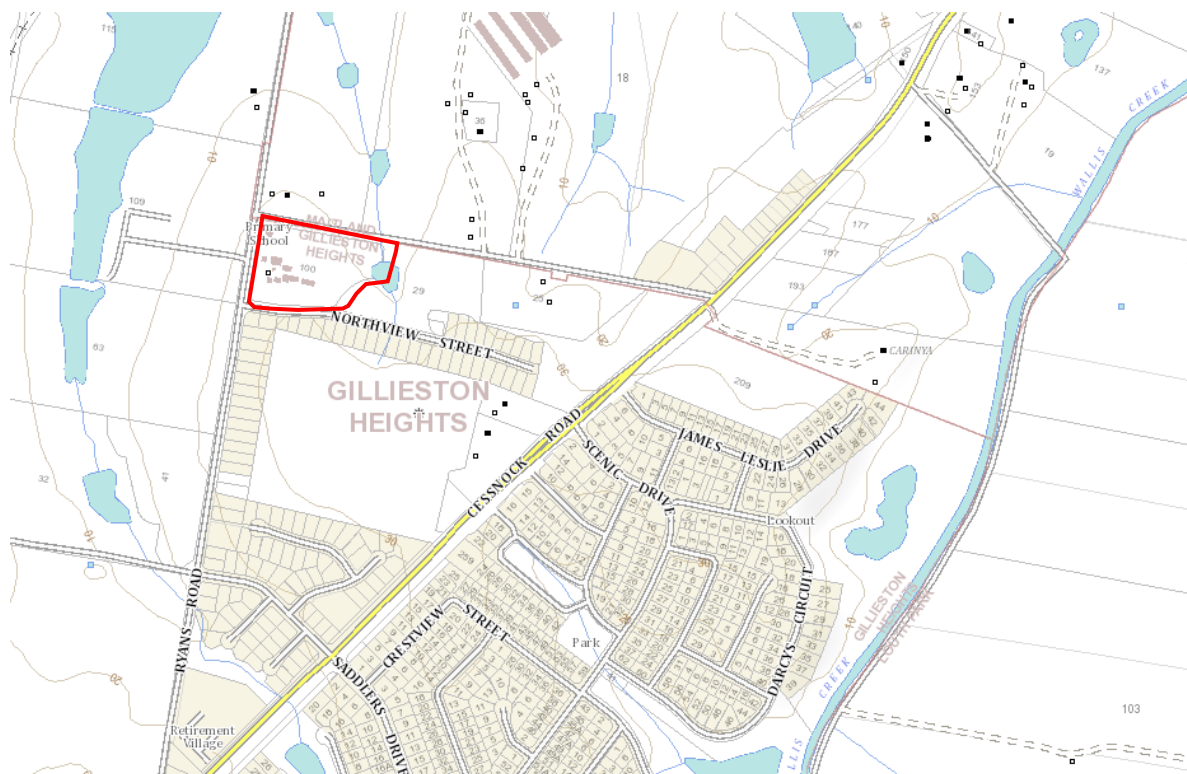
This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines set out in the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, 2013, known as The Burra Charter, and the New South Wales Heritage Office (now Heritage NSW) publication, NSW Heritage Manual, and the Impact Assessment Criteria guidelines endorsed by the NSW Heritage Council.

The Burra Charter provides definitions for terms used in heritage conservation and proposes conservation processes and principles for the conservation of an item. The terminology used, particularly the words *place*, *cultural significance*, *fabric*, and *conservation*, is as defined in Article 1 of The Burra Charter. The NSW Heritage Manual explains and promotes the standardisation of heritage investigation, assessment and management practices in NSW.



## 1.3 Site Location

The site is located at 100 Ryans Road and 19 Northview Street, Gillieston Heights 2321; identified as Lot 51 DP 1162489 and Lot 2 DP1308605 respectively by the NSW Land Registry Services (LRS). It is bound by Gillieston Road to the north, Ryans Road to the west and Northview Street to the south.



**Figure 1.1 Site Location (Gillieston Public School is outlined in red by Umwelt)**

Source: NSW Spatial Information Exchange (SIX Maps).



**Figure 1.2 Aerial Photograph Showing the subject site (outlined in red by Umwelt)**

Source: NSW Spatial Information Exchange (SIX Maps).

The Site is located within the Maitland Local Government Area (LGA) and is zoned RU2 Rural Landscape and R1 General Residential zone under the provisions of the LEP.

Existing attributes of the subject site are noted as follows:

- The subject site exhibits an area of approximately 23,385m<sup>2</sup> and is located in the suburb of Gillieston Heights;
- The subject site has a frontage to Ryans Road to the east, Gillieston Road to the north, and Northview Street to the south;
- In its existing state, the subject site comprises the existing Gillieston Public School. Existing school buildings are primarily located in the west portion of the subject site with a large area of open space situated in the eastern portion. There are limited permanent structures located on the subject site with thirteen (13) existing demountable classrooms currently occupying the subject site. Permanent buildings consist of the Main Administration Building, Original Brick Cottage, Library and GLS building located in the centre of the subject site; and
- Carparking is provided from Gillieston Road for staff. Pedestrian access is available via this main entrance from Gillieston Road and via a separate pedestrian-only access gates on Northview Street and Ryans Road.

## **1.4 Heritage Management Framework**

Gillieston Public School is not listed on the NSW State Heritage Register or as an item of local heritage significance on Schedule 5 of the LEP.

## **1.5 Authorship**

This report was prepared by Brad Vale, Principal Heritage Consultant, using research and a history written by Alison Fenwick, Historian / Archaeologist.

## **1.6 Limitations**

This report is limited to the assessment of potential impacts on the European cultural heritage values of the site and does not include Aboriginal and European archaeological assessment. This report only addresses the relevant planning provisions that relate to heritage.

## **1.7 Copyright**

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Greta colliery, which was completed in 1893. Power companies in Sydney, Melbourne and Bundaberg were keen to buy the high-quality coal, enabling the company to declare a dividend in 1896. With increasing capital, it was able to expand its operations and dug a second mine shaft the same year.

The village was named East Greta until 1968 when it was renamed to honour the former Maitland mayor and member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, John Gillies (1843-1911) following a poll of residents.<sup>3</sup>

Gillieston Heights has been transformed from dairying land use to a suburb in the twenty-first century in several sub-divisions such as 'Darcy's Peak', 'Saddlers Ridge' and 'Wallis Creek Estate'.

## 2.3 History of the Subject Site

Public education began in Gillieston in April 1859 when the Fishery Creek Public School, as it was then known, opened. The school operated from temporary premises on Cessnock Road at the southern end of the Maitland Parish. Fifty-five children were enrolled, and the average attendance was 31 under teacher William Thompson.<sup>4</sup>

A new weatherboard school building was constructed in 1859 on a large block of land close to the property 'Clarelands'. The Department of Education report for 1859 declared, "The building is nearly finished and is well suited to its purposes. The furniture is unfinished and the apparatus is incomplete". The school fee was three pennies per child per week. In these early years, the school served the nearby communities of Fishery Creek, Dagworth, Farley and Louth Park, until the local mine opened in 1889. The recorded parental occupations were miners, blacksmith, carpenter, farmers, grazier and a shopkeeper. Boats were used to ferry children to school during floods.

The expansion of the East Greta coal mine encouraged the expansion of the East Greta township, so the NSW government decided to move the school closer to town. The Department of Education resumed a two-acre (0.8ha) site from Mr TV Bloomfield, with compensation of £60. The new single-room school was opened by Mr J Giles MLA in April 1894. The township of East Greta was renamed Gillieston in his honour.

Initially, the students sat on long benches at tables, using pencils, chalk and slates. There were many reading cards and maps on the walls. The headmaster Mr Wilson and his assistant Miss Houston travelled to the school by horse and buggy each day until the residence was constructed in 1897.

The brick cottage was built for the senior teacher to the design of John Pender. Tenders were called for April 1897<sup>5</sup>, and awarded in that month to builder Robert James for £429<sup>6</sup>. The cottage was extended in 1902 at much the same time as a new school building was constructed.

As the coal mines expanded, and the good reputation of Mr Bates, headmaster 1901-11, the school enrolment peaked at 204 pupils in 1910. Pupils came by train from as far away as Kurri Kurri, Weston and Abermain. A second and third classroom were added, and the children sat two to a desk. The schools' inspector noted that 70 pupils in first class was too many for one teacher. The top class then was fifth class, but Mr Bates had a good record preparing students for the high school entrance examination. The older students would walk to Maitland Technical College for training in applied arts. The school was used

<sup>33</sup> Meehan, Michelle, 'Urban evolution of Gillieston Heights' in *The Maitland Mercury* February 1 2013

<sup>4</sup> Most of this section is derived from 'Gillieston Public School: 120 years of education in our area, 1858-1978', Gillieston Public School, 1978.

<sup>5</sup> NSW Government Gazette Friday 2 April 1897, p2413.

<sup>6</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, Saturday 24 April 1897, p4.



three nights a week in 1905 to provide evening education to people older than 14 who had missed their primary education.

The cricket pitch that the school used was located across the road in Bloomfield's paddock. The school participated in sporting competitions in cricket, tennis and rugby. A maypole would be set up for Empire Day on May 24<sup>th</sup>. Dignitaries would visit, including Mr Gillies and other members of parliament. However the athletics activities of the day and the picnic were held off the school grounds at Lee's paddock (formerly McDonald's).



**Figure 2.2** Gillieston Public School, January 1920. This building might not remain on site.



**Figure 2.3** Gillieston Public School - Infants Class 1925 Teacher Miss D. Brady  
This building has different (12-paned) windows to the remaining timber classrooms.

Source: Digital ID: SLNSW Images: 15051\_a047\_005558



**Figure 2.4** Gillieston Public School - Maypole Dancing in 1921

The school's student population varied between 122 and 200 during the headmaster period 1912-17 of Mr Hodge BA. He set up the sixth grade class and led the school with improving Qualifying Certificate results. A Junior Cadet Corp was established in 1915 and 26 of Mr Stuart's students passes the course. Mr Hodge encouraged musical achievement ahead of sports. The school's vegetable gardens developed during this period. When the rainwater tank water ran out, the older boys were asked to cart drums of water from the nearby swamp, when trade carts could not be easily obtained to refill the tanks. The school was connected to town water in 1958.

Mr McCoy was the school's headmaster 1917-30. The school buildings were renovated in 1920. The vegetable gardens thrived as a lesson in agriculture, and a means of charity. Vegetables and flowers were sent to Maitland Hospital periodically. A tennis court was built behind the cottage in 1926. The cottage was broken into during Mr Dunlop's time as headmaster 1930-32. The intruders cooked bacon and eggs for themselves. By this time, the local coal mine had closed, but enrolments were strong at 140. Over the next five years, enrolments fell to 85. Many students did not last long at the school, as their parents moved around in search of work during the Great Depression. Milk and soup were distributed to poor children. Student numbers fell to 62 during the headmaster period of Mr Nelson 1932-42. Only one assistant teacher was required.<sup>7</sup>

Air raid trenches were dug in the school grounds by 1941, and were part of regular air raid drills for all school members. The 1940s drought limited available water. A grassfire threatened the school, and all the school's water was used protecting the buildings during Mr Ryan's term 1942-47. The 1944 aerial photograph shows the brick cottage and rear service buildings, with a boundary fence and some planting behind the house and alongside Ryans Road. There appear to be many small sheds in an irregular arrangement, possibly domestic-scale chicken sheds or similar. A school building appears running east-west to make the most of the northern light and northerly views. There may be a toilet block south of the south-west corner of the school building, and a windbreak of trees planted east of the school building.

In 1944 there were four trees growing near the southern boundary of the school boundary. These were reduced to two by 1954, and only the western specimen remained in 1966, it too was removed by 1974. However, the 1974 photograph shows many small trees had been planted around the boundaries of the school and home paddock. The 1984 photograph shows these tree plantings to have grown into full trees., and by 1993, many of the trees have touching canopies.

The school population dropped to 25-35 pupils during most of the single-teacher school period of Mr Herden 1948-64. During the 1950s, the weatherboard school building became badly damaged by termites. The Department considered the quote of £2650 to repair the building to be a poor investment, so a surplus timber two-classroom building was moved to this site from Kurri Kurri in the late 1950s.<sup>8</sup> This inter-war building remains. The Parents and Citizens campaigned to move the school at this relatively convenient stage into the built-up part of town. However, the Department did not accept this and determined in April 1959 that the children should occupy the new school. The damaged timber classroom building and all vestiges, including the school bell, were removed.

The school population declined further to 29 pupils in 1965 when Mr Turnbull took charge for more than a decade. The enrolment slowly increased to 63 in 1965.<sup>9</sup> By the time of the 1966 photograph, the relocated school building from Kuri Kurri and the teacher's residence are the only buildings on site. A septic sewer

<sup>7</sup> 'Gillieston Public School: 120 years of education in our area, 1858-1978', Gillieston Public School, 1979, p12.

<sup>8</sup> ibid p13.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid p14.

system was installed uphill from the cottage on the site of the former tennis court in 1966. An office, storeroom and staff room were constructed in 1973, likely located at the rear of the cottage.



**Figure 2.5** 1944 aerial photograph of the subject site showing the brick cottage top-left within the boundary, superimposed by Umwelt in yellow.

*Source: NSW Historical Imagery Spatial Information Exchange (SIX Maps)*



**Figure 2.6** 1954 aerial photograph of the subject site showing the brick cottage top-left within the boundary, superimposed by Umwelt in yellow.

*Source: NSW Historical Imagery Spatial Information Exchange (SIX Maps)*





**Figure 2.7** 1966 aerial photograph of the subject site

*Source: NSW Historical Imagery Spatial Information Exchange (SIX Maps)*



**Figure 2.8** 1974 aerial photograph of the subject site

*Source: NSW Historical Imagery Spatial Information Exchange (SIX Maps)*



**Figure 2.9** Gillieston Public School, c 1978, looking south-east. The 1894 school building was to the left (east) of the brick cottage.

*Gillieston Public School: 120 years of education in our area, 1858-1978. Published by Gillieston Public School.*



**Figure 2.10** The relocated school building seen c1978. The front verandah and attached façade have been removed.

*Gillieston Public School: 120 years of education in our area, 1858-1978. Published by Gillieston Public School.*



**Figure 2.11** Westward view along Gillieston Road in 2010, before most of the present demountable classrooms were fitted on the school site.

*Source: Street View Feb 2010*



**Figure 2.12** Southwards view from Gillieston Road showing Gillieston Public School in 2010 before most of the present demountable classrooms were in place.

*Source: Street View February 2010*





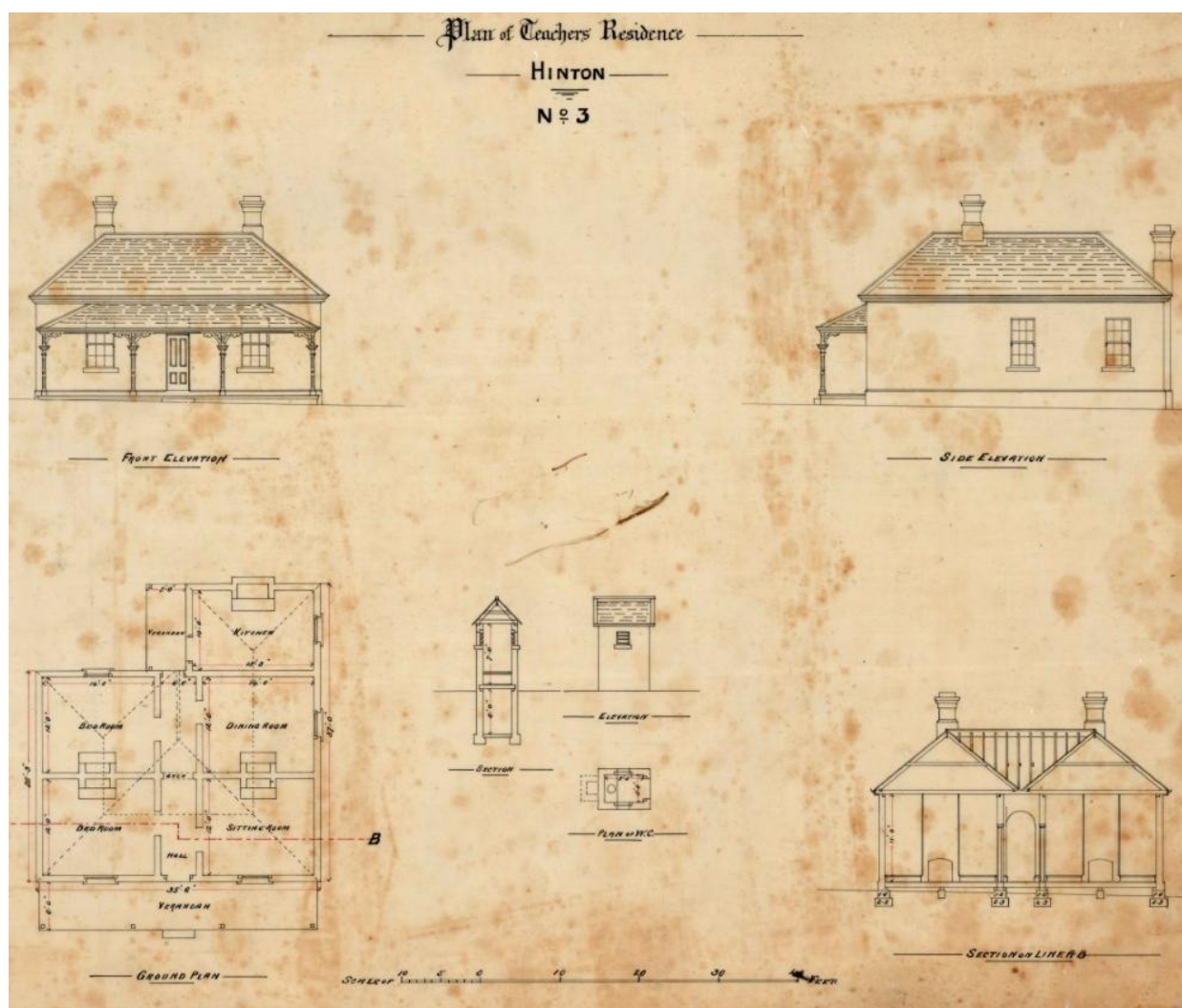
**Figure 2.13** This timber garage to the west of the cottage was built between the 1944 and 1954 aerial photographs. It was removed around 2020.

The school layout changed very little from the late 1970s to 2010. Since then, many demountable classrooms were installed with connecting pathways made of concrete and steel-framed covered ways. Approximately 300 students attended the school in October 2022<sup>10</sup>

## 2.4 John Pender, Architect

The original drawings for the teacher's cottage have not been found, but the cottage is very similar to other teacher's cottages designed in this district by local Maitland architect John Pender in the late Victorian period.

<sup>10</sup> Ferguson, Katie, Gillieston Public School P&C President in *Newcastle Herald* 29 October 2022



**Figure 2.14** the teacher's cottage at nearby Hinton has similar planning and detail to Gillieston.

*The Pender Archive, University of Newcastle*

The Pender architectural practice was set up around the year 1863 by John Wiltshire Pender (1833-1917), who migrated to NSW in 1855 with his family from Scotland. His father, William Pender (1789-1876) was a carpenter/builder, as was his uncle John Pender (1800-1885). He had served his apprenticeship as carpenter and joiner. After a brief sojourn on the Victorian goldfields, he settled in Maitland in 1857. His uncle, John Pender, had emigrated in 1838 and had established a successful building firm in Maitland, for which John Wiltshire Pender worked as a superintendent and possible manager for a number of years before establishing his own practice.

The earliest building that he designed was the Morpeth School of Arts which was opened in 1863. Throughout his career he designed and built many significant public buildings, cottages and homesteads including Presbyterian manse, Tamworth (1883), St Luke's Anglican Church, Scone (1884), Sefton Cottage, West Maitland (1886), McMaster Cottage, Bundella (1885), Cintra for B.W. Levy, West Maitland (1878), and two White family homesteads, Saumarez (1888) and Belltrees (1905-1906). John Wiltshire Pender married Jane Baker and had twelve children.

The business later passed onto his youngest son, Walter Harold Pender (1885-1943) who had become an architect and continued the practice. He designed and built cottages and houses, a series of motion picture theatres, war memorials, a wireless station and large hotels. The third generation of the Pender practice was continued by his son, Ian Walter Pender (1923-1988).



## 3.0 Physical Evidence

### 3.1 Site Context

The Gillieston Public School site is on an upland among swampy ground that is prone to flooding. It slopes gently down towards the north to Gillieston Road, and the eastern part of the site falls a little towards the east. The site looks over mostly cleared land to the west, north and east, where grazing land remains.

The school site contains two early buildings, the teacher's residence (Building B00D) near the north-west corner of the site, and the timber classroom (Building B00A) that is close to the centre of the school site. All the remaining buildings are from recent decades, including many demountable classrooms. The site has had a considered landscape throughout its school use. All the remaining plantings are from the post-war era.



**Photo 3.1** The north elevation of Building B00D, the teacher's cottage, seen from Gillieston Road





**Photo 3.2** The south-west corner of the school, looking north-east. The south-west corner of the school, looking north-east.



**Photo 3.3** Northly view towards the school from Northview Road showing the inter-war timber classroom (Building B00A) circled, behind the demountable buildings.





**Photo 3.4** Easterly view along Northview Road showing the school on the left, and houses built after 2010.

## 3.2 Building B00D

Building B00D is a single-storey former residential building that is now used for teaching, remedial and school administration purposes. A concrete path connects its entry steps to Gillieston Road. There is a bitumen parking area on the west side of the cottage. A grassed play space and shrubs lies to the east. The southern section of the cottage has several extensions built over the post-war period.



**Photo 3.5** The north elevation of the cottage, Building B00D





**Photo 3.6**      **The west elevation of Building B00D**



**Photo 3.7**      **The rear wing of Building B00D, seen looking north-west.**





**Photo 3.8 The east elevation of Building B00D**

Building B00D is constructed with brick walls, and timber framing to the floor, whole of the verandah and the roof. The roof is clad with corrugated steel sheet. The main front section of the cottage has a hip roof, with a skillion roof over the verandah and a large skillion over the original service wing at the rear. The carpenter's craft is demonstrated in the simple timber framing of the verandah and the exposed rafters under the eaves, with some decorative chamfering work. The rear service wing has no eaves. The western end of the verandah appears to have been enclosed in the c1930s, with windows have a characteristic horizontal emphasis in their transoms. The original sliding sash windows are in Federation Queen Anne style with two panes in the lower sashes and nine in the upper sashes. The front door is in the same style richly profiled timber mouldings. The top light has had its glazing replaced with an opaque panel.

Building B00D is very solid, having at least three thicknesses of brick in its walls, and further thickening in its plinth edged with chamfered bricks. The craft of the bricklayer is shown in the English bond brickwork, and the segmented arches that are less pronounced now that the external walls are painted. The corbelling in the chimneys was a common pattern among architects in the Arts and Crafts style since the preceding decade. The service wing with hipped and skillion roofs steps in one brick's thickness on both sides so that it appears as a separate entity from the main hipped roofed section.

There are two skillion extensions with timber framed walls at the rear of the cottage. They are clad variously in weatherboard and fibre cement sheet. Stylistically, they appear to have been built before WWII.

Stylistically, Building B00D is in the Federation style, with some decoration typical of the Federation Queen Anne style, including the moulded windowsills and corbelling in the chimney tops. The interior has a high standard of fixtures, in a style common to the late Victorian and Federation Queen Anne styles. The

stylistic aspect of the cottage that is of greatest interest is the very simple carpentry brackets under the verandah beams. These are a very early instance of the Federation Arts and Crafts style articulated in a manner that is two decades before this detail became common. This demonstrates forward thinking at Pender Architects.

The interior is largely intact and fitted with many original fixtures of a high quality, including four marble mantelpieces, all in off-white marble with red marble in the decorative astragals. The floors are finished with modern carpet and linoleum that hide the floorboards. All the original internal walls are plastered. There are staff moulds on the projecting wall corners on each side of the fireplaces. The joinery is of a good quality with wide architraves and regular profiles of the period for middle-class housing. The four-panelled interior doors are original and typical of the period. The original ceilings are lined with V-jointed timber boards and profiled timber cornices. The former kitchen retains its original hearth and mantle shelf. All the fire places have had their void covered over with a panel or converted to cupboard space, so it is not clear if cast iron grates remain with the marble mantelpieces, as would be typical.



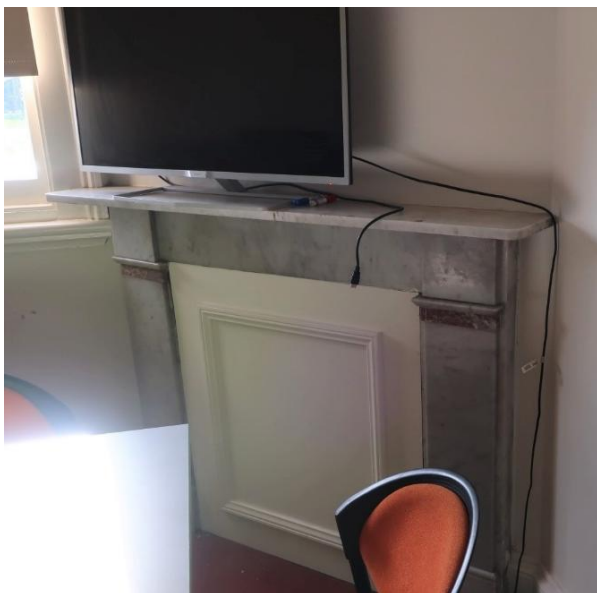
**Photo 3.9** The living room in Building B00D, the south-east room under the main hip.



**Photo 3.10** The hallway looking towards the front door, showing original joinery.



**Photo 3.11** Typical windows in the north-west room.



**Photo 3.12** A typical original marble mantelpiece in Building B00D, though the fireplace has been panelled over.



**Photo 3.13** south-west view into the former kitchen, showing the hearth adapted with a cupboard.



### 3.3 Building B00A

Building B00A has a long gable form, formerly enclosing three classrooms, but is now used as the school library. The long facades have vertical joins that demonstrate where the building was cut to move it here from Kurri Kurri.

Building B00A is constructed on brick piers at the ends and precast concrete piers at the centre, supporting timber bearers and conventional timber balloon framing with joists and wall studs. The walls are clad with timber weatherboards, lacking any decorative profile. The original windows are timber-framed sliding sashes with four panes to each sash. The architraves have some decoration in the mouldings and quadrant-shaped sash horns typical of the inter-war period. The doors appear to be modern replacements. The roof has been re-clad with grey corrugated steel sheet.



**Photo 3.14** The eastern end of the southern elevation of Building B00A

Building B00A in its original form is shown in **Figure 2.9** and **Figure 2.10**. The north-facing verandah was infilled after 2010. The fenestration in the northern façade is now aluminium-framed. The brick and concrete steps were built in 1959, though the steel handrail is more recent. The verandah on the south side is more recent than 2010.



**Photo 3.15** The western end of the southern elevation of Building B00A



**Photo 3.16** The south verandah of the inter-war Building B00A





**Photo 3.17** The western end of the northern elevation of Building B00A showing the infilled verandah.



**Photo 3.18** The eastern end of the northern elevation of Building B00A



### 3.4 The School Grounds

The school site has relatively fertile soils that have long been used for agriculture and are able to support substantial trees. There is a row of silky oak trees *Grevillea robusta* growing inside the northern boundary by Gillieston Road. These were likely planted in the 1950s or a little later. They give an avenue effect to the road and screen northerly views from the school. There is a scattering of other silky oak trees of similar size through the school site, and several near the north-west corner of the site by Ryans Road. Aerial photographs show a line of large trees here since the 1950s. The largest silky oak here might be from the mid-twentieth-century planting, but others are smaller more recent planting. The natural distribution of this tree is northwards from Coffs Harbour.

The front garden of the cottage (Building B00AD) contains a relatively large jacaranda *Jacaranda mimosifolia*, crepe myrtle *Lagerstroemia indica*, and wattle. These were planted from the late 1960s onwards and give a domestic character to the cottage.

The rectangular area of concrete hardstand north-east of the timber classroom building (Building B00A) was laid after 1978. There has been at least a sort of row of trees running north-south to the east of this hardstand since the 1944 photograph. However, these earlier trees are seen to have been removed in later photographs. The trees in this row are now substantial, but they are post-war plantings. They include brush box *Lophostemon confertus*, lemon-scented gum *Corymbia citriodora*, silky oak and jacaranda.

### 3.5 Views

The school is located on high ground with commanding views over the floodplains on several sides. The brick cottage is readily seen from the public domain of Ryans Road and Gillieston Road.



**Photo 3.19** Northwards view along Ryans Road showing the flood plain on the western side.

## 4.0 Archaeological Considerations

### 4.1 Historic Archaeological Potential

The original school room was built in 1894 to the east of the former teacher's cottage (Building B00D) that remains. The original school was constructed of timber framing and cladding, built upon brick piers. This school building was demolished in the 1950s because the termite damage was too extensive to be viable to repair. The former school building is the larger brown rectangle in **Figure 3.1**.

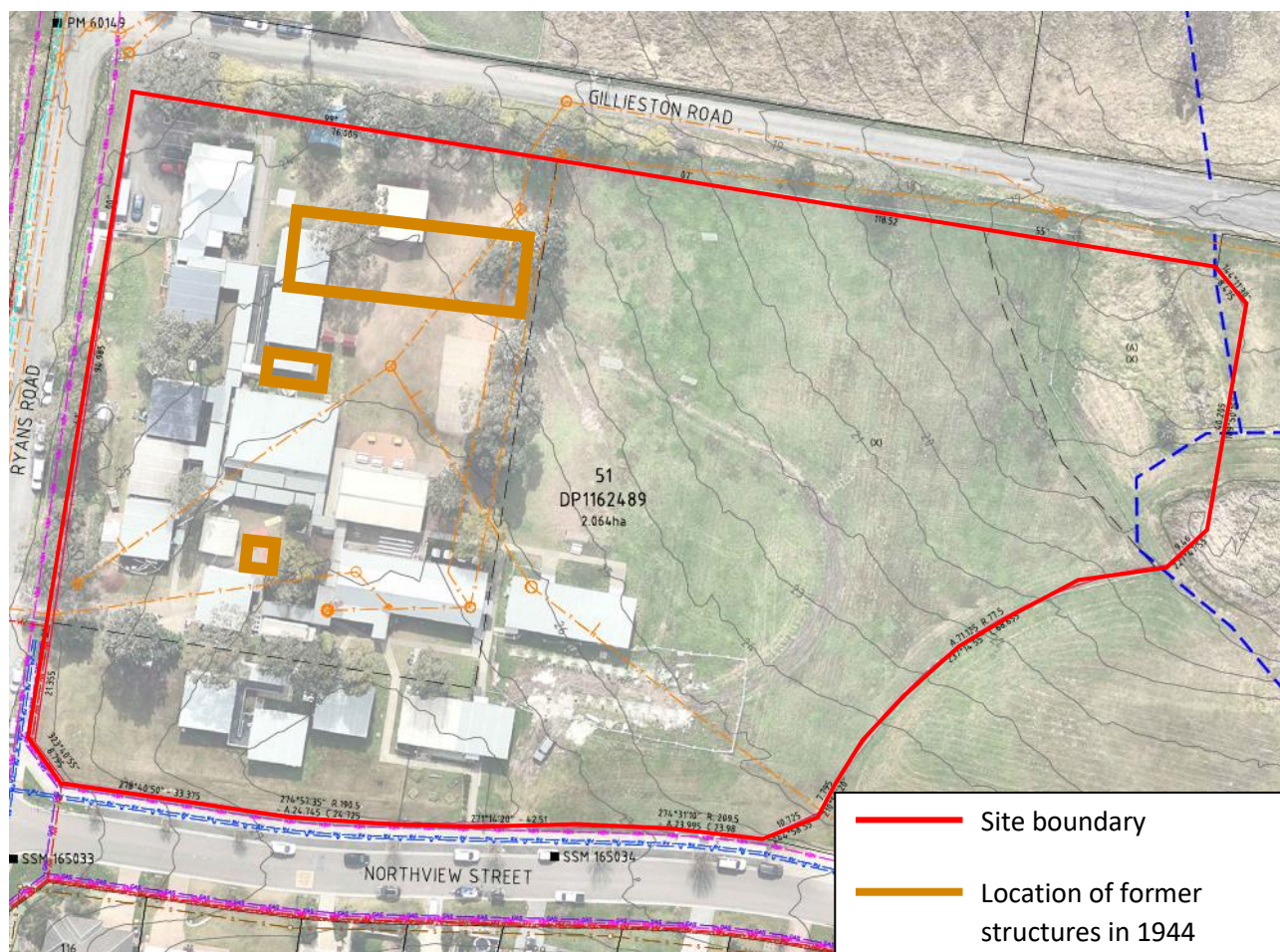
A smaller toilet block building was constructed south of the western end of the former classroom building, apparent in the 1944 aerial photograph. A smaller shed was constructed further south. All the above buildings appear in the 1954 aerial photograph and were likely demolished in 1959 when the existing timber classroom building was moved to Gillieston.

Any footings that may remain from the former classroom building would have low archaeological significance as Federation period footings are quite common, and the documentary evidence provides a lot of information about Federation period construction techniques. If any footings are uncovered, they are unlikely to answer questions about local development already provided for in the documentary evidence.

Water reticulation occurred in the Maitland and Newcastle areas following the completion of the Walka Water Works, located near Maitland, in 1887. Prior to water reticulation, brick-lined pits (cess pits) were standard construction for toilets. However, as the school was constructed in the 1890s, it is assumed that any toilets or sanitation structures would have been connected to the water and sewerage services. As such, it is unlikely that any significant archaeological remains would be present associated with the former toilet building.

The project area contains low historical archaeological potential.

In the event that any potential archaeological 'relics' are discovered during works all work in the area shall cease immediately and a qualified archaeologist will be consulted, in accordance with Section 146 of the *NSW Heritage Act 1977*, to determine an appropriate course of action prior to the recommencement of work in the area.



**Figure 3.1** Location of former structures at Gillieston Public School.

Base map prepared by ADW Johnson Surveying



## 5.0 Assessment of Cultural Significance

### 5.1 Assessment Against Significance Criteria

An assessment of how the subject site relates to the criteria established by Heritage NSW is provided below. It considers the historical context and physical evidence of the subject place as detailed in sections **Error! Reference source not found.** and **Error! Reference source not found.** and of this report.

This assessment of heritage is based on the methodology and guidelines set down by Heritage NSW and considers the standard values or criteria that arise from the history, construction and use of the building and its site as well as any levels of esteem by recognised groups for the site.

#### Evaluation Criteria

Heritage significance, cultural significance and cultural value are all terms used to describe an item's value or importance to our own society. This value may be contained in the fabric of an item, its setting and its relationship to other items, the response that the item stimulates to those who value it now and in the historical record that allow us to understand it in its own context. An assessment of what is significant is not static. Significance may increase as more is learnt about the past and as items become rare, endangered or are found to document or illustrate aspects that achieve a new recognition of importance.

Determining cultural value is the basis of all planning for places of historic value. Determination of significance permits informed decisions and planning that ensures that the significance is retained, enhanced or at least minimally impacted upon. A clear understanding of the nature and degree of significance will determine the parameters for flexibility of future planning and activities.

The historical analysis provides the context for assessing significance, which is made by applying standard evaluation criteria to the associations of an item. The NSW Heritage Manual has produced standard evaluation criteria that are compatible with the criteria used by the Australian Heritage Council in assessing items for the Register of the National Estate, and with those included in *The Burra Charter*.

#### The School Bell

The documentary evidence suggests that the original school bell was removed from this site, which implies that the existing school bell was reinstated or has come from another site. The metal parts of the bell are characteristic of the turn of the twentieth century. However, this bell cannot be said to have heritage significance until evidence comes to light stating its provenance. If evidence is forthcoming that it is the original school bell, then it should be included in the heritage listing.

## 5.2 Assessment of Cultural Significance

Criterion (A) Historical Importance	
An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (State significance); OR An item is important in the course, or pattern, of the local area's cultural or natural history (local significance).	
Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows evidence of a significant human activity.</li> <li>Is associated with a significant activity or historical phase.</li> <li>Maintains or shows continuity of a historical process or activity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has incidental or unsubstantiated connections with historically important activities or processes.</li> <li>Provides evidence of activities or processes that are of dubious historical importance.</li> <li>Has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association.</li> </ul>
Heritage Assessment	
<p>Building B00D (the former teacher's cottage) at Gillieston Public School demonstrates the population growth south of Maitland in the late Victorian period as the East Greta coal mines boomed. Many workers lived locally with their families. The NSW Department of Education determined to upgrade the school to meet demand for public schooling. The solidity and quality of the building demonstrates the intention to attract a valued teacher. Gillieston Public School - Building B00D <b>satisfies</b> this criterion at a local level.</p> <p>The timber classroom building (Building B00A) that is used as a library demonstrates an inter-war classroom moved between schools in the Maitland region to meet accommodation requirements in public schooling. This building has Moderate heritage significance by contributing to an understanding of the school, and contributing to the wider setting of Building B00D. However, it does not meet the criteria individually for listing because it is not original to this site and is not intact.</p>	

Criterion (B) Historical Associations	
An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (State significance); OR An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the cultural or natural history of the local area (local significance).	
Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows evidence of a significant human occupation.</li> <li>Is associated with a significant event, person, or group of persons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has incidental or unsubstantiated connections with historically important people or events.</li> <li>Provides evidence of people or events that are of dubious historical importance.</li> <li>Has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association.</li> </ul>
Heritage Assessment	
<p>Gillieston Public School - Building B00D has not been linked with documentary evidence to a significant local person. A former pupil, Lieutenant Joe Maxwell was awarded the Victoria Cross in October 1918 near St Quentin, France, but this link is too incidental to satisfy this criterion.</p>	

Criterion (C) Aesthetic Values	
An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (State significance); OR An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in the local area (local significance).	
Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows or is associated with, creative or technical innovation or achievement.</li> <li>Is the inspiration for a creative or technical innovation or achievement.</li> <li>Is aesthetically distinctive.</li> <li>Has landmark qualities.</li> <li>Exemplifies a particular taste, style or technology.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is not a major work by an important designer or artist.</li> <li>Has lost its design or technical integrity.</li> <li>Its positive visual or sensory appeal or landmark or scenic qualities have been more than temporarily degraded.</li> <li>Has only a loose association with a creative or technical achievement.</li> </ul>
Heritage Assessment	
<p>Gillieston Public School - Building B00D is a fine and intact example of a Federation house built well and with a high standard of fixtures. The house has some features that are a particularly early instance of Federation Arts and Crafts styling. The cottage <b>satisfies</b> this criterion at a local level.</p> <p>The timber classroom Building B00A that is used as a library demonstrates the aesthetic of an inter-war timber classroom. However, it is only moderately intact and is not distinctive and so does not meet the criteria individually for heritage listing.</p>	

Criterion (D) Cultural Associations	
An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (State significance); OR An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in the area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (local significance).	
Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is important for its associations with an identifiable group.</li> <li>Is important to a community's sense of place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is only important to the community for amenity reasons.</li> <li>Is retained only in preference to a proposed alternative.</li> </ul>
Heritage Assessment	
<p>The site is not identifiable as being associated with any community group, beyond the inevitable links with compulsory education. There is not sufficient known evidence that the site has local social significance. The cottage and its site do <b>not</b> satisfy this criterion at a local level of significance.</p>	

Criterion (E) Cultural or Natural Research Value	
An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (State significance); OR An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the area's cultural or natural history (local significance).	
Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the potential to yield new or further substantial scientific and/or archaeological information.</li> <li>Is an important benchmark or reference site or type.</li> <li>Provides evidence of past human cultures that is unavailable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has little archaeological potential.</li> <li>Only contains information that is readily available from other resources or archaeological sites.</li> <li>The knowledge gained would be irrelevant to research on science, human history or culture.</li> </ul>
Heritage Assessment	
<p>There is a historical record of previous light-weight structures on the school site. This has not left remains that are known, and any remains are likely to be typical of many other similar sites. There is also a record of an excavated waste pit. Its location is not known, and while any remnant contents may reveal information about children's education in the Federation period, this is a well understood topic with similar resources in other places.</p> <p>Gillieston Public School - Building B00D is a relatively intact building formerly used as a house. Such buildings are not rare, and so this site does not have a distinctive research value.</p> <p>The site does <b>not</b> satisfy this criterion for cultural research potential.</p>	

Criterion (F) Rarity	
An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (State significance); OR An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the area's cultural or natural history (local significance).	
Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides evidence of a defunct custom, way of life or process.</li> <li>Demonstrates a process, custom or other human activity that is in danger of being lost.</li> <li>Shows unusually accurate evidence of a significant human activity.</li> <li>Is the only example of its type.</li> <li>Demonstrates designs or techniques of exceptional interest.</li> <li>Shows rare evidence of a significant human activity important to a community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is not rare.</li> <li>Is numerous but under threat.</li> </ul>
Heritage Assessment	
<p>Gillieston Public School - Building B00D is not rare as a Federation dwelling or school- related building from the Federation period. The cottage does <b>not</b> satisfy this criterion at a local level.</p>	

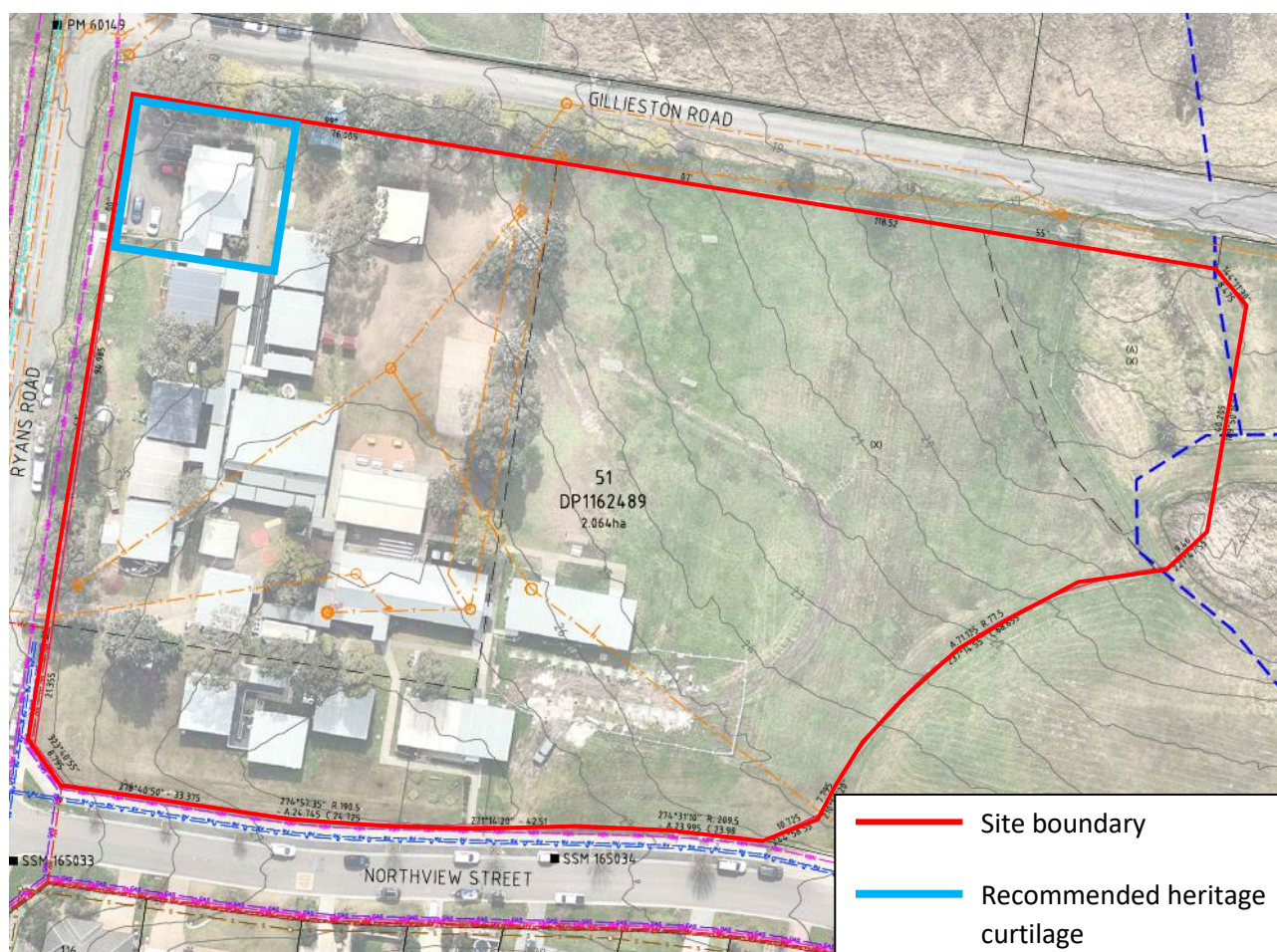
Criterion (G) Representativeness	
An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (State significance); OR An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of the area's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (local significance).	
Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is a fine example of its type.</li> <li>Has the principal characteristics of an important class or group.</li> <li>Has attributes typical of a particular way of life, philosophy, custom, significant process, design, technique or activity.</li> <li>Is a significant variation to a class of items.</li> <li>Is part of a group which collectively illustrates a representative type.</li> <li>Is representative because of its setting, condition or type.</li> <li>Is outstanding because of its integrity or esteem in which it is held.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is a poor example of its type.</li> <li>Does not include or has lost the range of characteristics of a type.</li> <li>Does not represent well the characteristics that make up a significant variation of a type.</li> </ul>
Heritage Assessment	
<p>Gillieston Public School - Building B00D <b>satisfies</b> this criterion for demonstrating the principal characteristics of an early Federation period teacher's cottage in NSW. It was one of many. It demonstrates the styling, scale and technology of a late nineteenth-century dwelling built for middle-class expectations.</p> <p>The timber classroom building is representative of timber school buildings built across NSW in the inter-war period, but its moderate integrity prevents this building satisfying this criterion at a local level.</p>	

## 5.3 Curtilage Recommendation

The heritage curtilage of a place is the extent of the surrounding area which contributes to its heritage significance. The curtilage should be preserved as space that assists with the retention and interpretation of the item's significance. A Reduced Heritage Curtilage is less than the lot boundary of the property. It arises where the significance of the item may not relate to the total lot, but to a lesser area.

The heritage significance at the Gillieston Public School site is concentrated in Building B00D, in the north-west corner of the site. This area is recommended to be listed as the significant part of the heritage item.





**Figure 5.1 Aerial photograph and topographic map of Gillieston Public School site with the site boundary and recommended heritage curtilage.**

*Base map prepared by ADW Johnson Surveying*

## 5.4 Statement of Cultural Heritage Significance

Building B00D (the former teacher's cottage) at Gillieston Public School demonstrates the population growth south of Maitland in the late Victorian coal mining boom. The NSW Department of Education determined to upgrade the district schooling in the early 1890s to meet demand. The solidity and quality of the building demonstrates the intention to attract a valued teacher. Building B00D is a fine and intact example of a Federation house built with a high standard of fixtures. The building has some features that are a particularly early instance of Federation Arts and Crafts styling. It demonstrates the principal characteristics of an early Federation period teacher's cottage in NSW. Building B00D meets the criteria for a local heritage item.

Building B00A (the timber building) has some significance as a movable inter-war classroom building. However, it is not intact, following removal of its northern façade. It is not original to this site. The building contributes to interpreting the school site and is an element of Moderate heritage significance in the Gillieston Public School site.

## 5.1 Grading of Significance

Each component of a site makes a different relative contribution to the site's overall heritage significance. Where a component has lost its integrity, or its condition has deteriorated, the element might not make a positive contribution to the heritage value of the place. This section grades the heritage significance of the various elements that make up the place. These heritage assessment gradings are based on the gradings included in the NSW Heritage Division's guideline *Assessing Heritage Significance (2023)*. These gradings are explained below.

### **EXCEPTIONAL - Rare or outstanding element directly contributing to a place or object's significance.**

These spaces and or elements are of exceptional cultural significance for historic, aesthetic, scientific or social values. They include rare or outstanding building fabric and retain an exceptional degree of integrity or intactness from their original construction or later significant period. They play a crucial role in the overall significance of the place.

### **HIGH - High degree of original fabric.**

These spaces and or elements are of High cultural significance. This may include fabric from the original construction of the building which has now been altered, or significant fabric from later alterations. Demonstrates a key element of the place or object's significance. Alterations do not detract from its significance.

### **MODERATE - Altered or modified elements.**

Elements with little heritage value, but which contribute to the overall significance of the place or object.

### **LITTLE - Alterations that detract from the item's heritage significance.**

These spaces and or elements are of low cultural significance. This may include fabric associated with recent or less significant alterations and additions. They play a minor role in the overall significance of the place and may be difficult to interpret.

### **INTRUSIVE – Alterations that are damaging to the place or object's significance.**

These spaces and or elements are intrusive to the cultural significance of the site. They include unsympathetic alterations and additions where new elements have adversely affected significant fabric or the overall legibility of the site's cultural significance. These spaces and or elements are damaging to the site's cultural significance.

### 5.1.1 Significance Grading Table

Provided below is an assessment of the site's various elements and their individual significance.

**Table 5.1 Schedule of Heritage Significance of Built Elements**

Elements of Gillieston Public School	Grading
There are no elements of Exceptional significance	Exceptional
Building B00D, the teacher's cottage of 1894 excluding alterations	High
Building B00A, the remains of the relocated inter-war timber classroom building	Moderate
School Bell, owing to current difficulty knowing its origin. It would be High if original	Moderate
Temporary modern classrooms	Little
Infilled section of the front verandah of Building B00D	Intrusive

## 6.0 Statutory Heritage Status

### 6.1 Heritage Status

Gillieston Public School is not listed on the NSW State Heritage Register. Gillieston Public School is listed as a heritage item on the Section 170 Register of the Department of Education and appears in the State Heritage Inventory with Heritage Item ID: 5068006. This listing functions similarly to a listing on Schedule 5 of the Maitland LEP. The school is not in the vicinity of another heritage item or a conservation area.



**Figure 6.1** Extract from Heritage Map HER\_004B showing Gillieston Public School outlined. The site outlined in blue by Umwelt is on the S170 Register.

Source: Maitland Local Environmental Plan, 2011, Heritage Map HER\_004B



## 7.0 Heritage Management Recommendations

The following policies are transferred from the Summary Report of Initial Site Investigations for Gillieston Public School prepared in November 2023 by Umwelt. Several policies in this section 7.0, such as the recommendation to retain Building B00A, are not achievable in the current design.

### 7.1 Issues, Constraints and Opportunities arising from the Statement of Significance

Building B00D (the former teacher's cottage) is of cultural significance for its historical and aesthetic values, and for representing late-nineteenth-century housing in regional NSW. The heritage significance of the Gillieston Public School site can be conserved in a reduced curtilage as recommended in section 5.3.

The statement of cultural significance for the place should inform the preparation of any activity that would change the site, such that decisions regarding the nature and extent of change should ensure that the established significance is maintained. Schemes for activity on the site should respond to aspects of the cultural significance of the site, identified in the statement of cultural significance.

Decisions for activities at the place, including maintenance, repairs or more extensive adaptation works, must consider the impact on the cultural significance of the place, both as a whole and on individual components. Any activity at the place should not diminish any aspect of its cultural significance. The approach and recommendations set out in Section 6 of this report should be used as a guide to future work.

### 7.2 Issues, Constraints and Opportunities arising from the Owners' Requirements

The facilities at Gillieston Public School have met the recently greatly increased demand with temporary buildings. Gillieston Heights is a rapidly growing area with several subdivisions leading to a great many established homes that have attracted young families. The surrounding flood-prone lands make many surrounding sites inappropriate for a school. While the school was somewhat isolated from population centres last century, the suburban expansion of Gillieston Heights is now across Northview Street from the school. There are reasons for developing the school to meet demand on its traditional site.

### 7.3 Heritage Conservation Policies

#### 7.3.1 Building B00D (The Cottage)

Building B00D appears to be in good condition and has been maintained. This building will have an ongoing active use. This building should continue to be maintained and conserved in accordance with Minimum Standards of Maintenance and Repair (water-tight and weatherproof, secure from illicit entry, protected against natural degradation).

### **7.3.2 Building B00A (The Timber School Building)**

The timber school building recently used as a library has Moderate heritage significance as a relocated and altered inter-war building. This building may be removed with an acceptable heritage impact.

### **7.3.3 The School Bell**

The documentary evidence suggests that the original school bell was removed, which implies that the existing school bell was reinstated or has come from another site. The metal parts of the bell are characteristic of the turn of the twentieth century. However, this bell cannot be said to have heritage significance until evidence comes to light stating its provenance. If evidence is forthcoming that it is the original school bell, then it should be included in the heritage listing.

The school bell should continue to be maintained. This includes painting steel and iron with a rust-resistant paint every five years. The paint colour should be a school colour or black. When the timber post rots, it should be replaced with a hardwood or treated timber post.

### **7.3.4 Landscape**

The many trees on the school site have an amenity value, but as post-war plantings, they do not have cultural heritage significance. A landscape with large areas of grass, trees and shrubs is an appropriate setting for the significant buildings, but the planted fabric would be best selected by the landscape architect on the school development team.

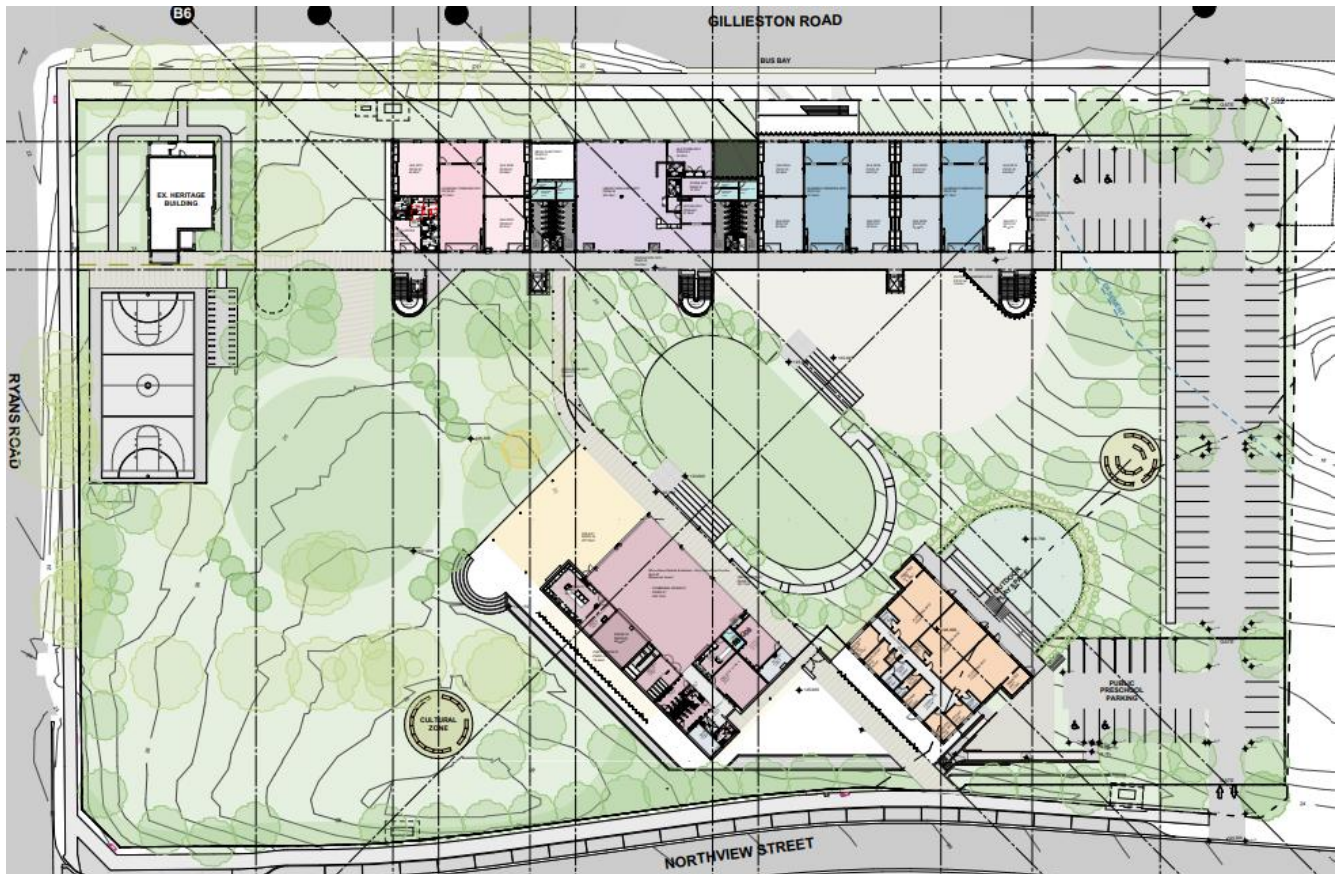
## 8.0 The Activity

The Gillieston Public School have been identified by the DoE as requiring improvement. The Gillieston Public School redevelopment and new public preschool are driven by service needs including an increase in expected student enrolments, and removing demountable structures and their replacement with permanent teaching spaces. This activity would retain Building B00D (the brick cottage), and would remove all other buildings from the site to enable new permanent primary school buildings to be constructed.

The activity at Gillieston Public School is designed by SHAC Architects, in the REF Report dated 23 October 2024, Revision D, and includes the following.

- Demolition and removal of existing temporary structures. This includes demolishing Building B00A.
- Site preparation, including demolition, earthworks, tree removal.
- Construction of new:
  - 32 permanent general learning spaces and 3 support teaching spaces
  - Administration and staff hubs
  - Hall, canteen and library
  - Out of school hours care
  - Public preschool (standalone building for 60 places)
  - Covered Outdoor Learning Areas (COLAs)
  - Outdoor play areas, including games courts and yarning circle
  - New at-grade car parking
  - Extension of the existing drop-off / pick-up area and new bus bay
  - Realignment of the existing fencing
  - Associated stormwater infrastructure upgrades
  - Associated landscaping
  - Associated pedestrian and road upgrade.
- Landscape activities include a parking area near the eastern boundary of the school with driveways heading north to Gillieston Road, and south to Northwest Street. A basketball court would be built south of the retained cottage, Building B00D. The central part of the site between the buildings would be an oval with other areas being landscaped open play space.





**Figure 8.1**      **Proposed Gillieston Public School Site Activity Plan**

Source: SHAC Architects. September 2024

The landscape concept is by Terra Landscape Architects, seen in the Landscape Schematic, Revision N, dated 17 October 2024.

## 9.0 Assessment of Heritage Impact

### 9.1 Introduction

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared to refer to the impact assessment criteria in the following documents: the *Maitland Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2011*, the Maitland Development Control Plan (DCP) 2011 and the NSW Heritage Division guidelines, *Altering Heritage Assets and Statements of Heritage Impact*, contained within the NSW Heritage Manual, updated by the recent '*Guidelines for preparing a statement of heritage impact*' by the Department of Planning and Environment. These are appropriate reference documents for an item of environmental significance on the Section 170 Register of the Department of Education.

### 9.2 Evaluation of the Guidelines of the NSW Heritage Division

The following assessment is based on the assessment criteria set out in the Heritage Division publication, 'Statements of Heritage Impact', contained within the NSW Heritage Manual. The standard format has been adapted to suit the circumstances of this REF.

*The following aspects of the activity respect or enhance the heritage significance of the item or conservation area for the following reasons:*

- Building B00D would be retained and will continue to be used for a school purpose. It will remain just as visible to the public and its views will remain.
- The site will continue as a school, with an investment in the replacement of portable classrooms with permanent buildings. However, at up to three storeys, the new buildings will be larger than Building B00D in scale and footprint, but will be located at least 30m away from the cottage. Building BC will largely cover the footprint of an earlier school building that was a single storey.
- Most trees on the site will be retained. Retained trees along the verge of Gillieston will blur the contrast in scale between the retained Building B00D and the new three-storey Building BC in views from the street. A row of tuckeroo and lilly pilly trees to be planted to the east of Building B00D will serve as minor screening.

*The following aspects of the activity could detrimentally impact on heritage significance. The reasons are explained as well as the measures to be taken to minimise impacts:*

- The altered timber building (Building B00A) on the site would be removed. While the timber building on the site has no statutory heritage protection, it is identified by Umwelt as having Moderate heritage significance. This timber building could not be integrated into the design and would be demolished.

### 9.2.1 Demolition of a Building or Structure

- *Have all options for retention and adaptive reuse been explored?*
- *Can all the significant elements of the heritage item be kept and any built activity be located elsewhere on the site?*
- *Is demolition essential at this time or can it be postponed in case future circumstances make it retention and conservation more feasible?*
- *Has the advice of a heritage consultant/specialist been sought? Have the consultant's recommendations been implemented? If not, why not?*

#### Comment

Building B00A (the timber building) would be demolished. Even in its altered state, this building has Moderate heritage significance by contributing to the setting of B00D and an understanding of use of the school site over time. Building B00A was not constructed for Gillieston but was relocated to this site from another school that had less need for it. The northern façade has been removed, diminishing its integrity. The loss of this building from the site would have an acceptable heritage impact on the identified heritage significance of the school.

The modern demountable buildings and other post-war buildings on the site have negligible heritage significance. The removal of these buildings will have no adverse impact on the heritage values of the site.

### 9.2.2 Activity Adjacent to a Heritage Item (Including Additional Buildings and Dual Occupancies)

- *How is the impact of the activity of the heritage significance of the item or area to be minimised?*
- *Why is the activity required to be adjacent to heritage item?*
- *How does the curtilage allowed around the heritage item contribute to the retention of its heritage significance?*
- *How does the activity affect views to, and from, the heritage item? What has been done to minimise negative effects?*
- *Is the activity sited on any known, or potentially significant archaeological deposits? If so, have alternative sites been considered? Why were they rejected?*
- *Is the activity sympathetic to the heritage item? In what way (e.g. form, siting, proportions, design)?*
- *Will the activity visually dominate the heritage item? How has this been minimised?*
- *Will the public, and users of the item, still be able to view and appreciate its significance?*

#### Comment

Building B00D (the brick cottage) is listed on the DoE Section 170 List of Heritage and Conservation Items. This building will be retained.

The new school Building BC will come within approximately 30m of Building B00D. This is a sufficient setback space for the cottage building to be understood as a former residential building at a school. This



width of open space is larger than the width between the cottage and the former classroom building that existed in the 1940s. See **Figure 3.1**. The nearest new school building (Building BC) will be three storeys with a contemporary character that includes vertical shades two storeys tall. Building BC will have the same setback from Gillieston Road as the retained Building B00D, within view of the retained building. The new Building BC would be built over the approximate footprint of a classroom building that existing in the 1940s, though the footprint of the new building would be considerably larger. As above, the setback from Building B00D would be larger. The precedent of a classroom building offset from Gillieston Road is recognised.

The new school buildings will not diminish views from the public domain towards the brick cottage. The retention of the silky oak trees along Gillieston Road will help to blur the contrast between the cottage and the three-storey school building in views from outside the school. The contrast in scale between the three-storey Building BC and the retained single-storey Building B00D will still be apparent in the public domain and more so from within the north-west quadrant of the school grounds.

The northern façade of the new Building BC will have a plinth of face brick, and a dominant character of vertical metal steel blades on the upper two levels. The exposed steel will be coloured a dull light green. This muted colour provides some opportunity for the retained Building B00D to retain, or be repainted in its traditional brighter colours that will allow it to stand out in terms of colour. While the new buildings at Gillieston Public School will have a clearly contemporary character, they will be recessive colours and will be sited with a distance away from Building B00D that is more than twice the height of the new buildings.

### 9.2.3 New Landscape Activity and Features (Including Carparks and Fences)

- *How has the impact of the new work on the heritage significance of the existing landscape been minimised?*
- *Has evidence (archival and physical) of previous landscape work been investigated? Are previous designs being reinstated?*
- *Has the advice of a consultant skilled in the conservation of heritage landscapes been sought? If so, have their recommendations been implemented?*
- *Are any known or potential archaeological deposits affected by the landscape activities? If so, what alternatives have been considered?*
- *How does the work impact on views to, and from, adjacent heritage items?*

#### Comment

The school does not retain significant early plantings or gardens. There are no physical remains from the strong tradition in the Federation era of gardening at this school by the students. The early trees have been removed. The current school landscape consists mostly of trees and grass, with a small number of linear plantings of common shrubs planted in recent decades. Areas of hardstand within the school are typical of the twentieth century, and do not have heritage significance.

The landscape concept places buildings a short distance from the northern and southern boundaries so that the space in between is open space for play, gathering and ecology. The new buildings would be set back sufficient distances so that the trees planting close to the school boundaries can be retained. New trees

would be planted in the school site. The eastern car parking area would only affect grass; the western basketball court would affect approximately four trees and areas of grass.

Approximately sixteen trees would be removed from the school site and the verge outside in the activity, as shown in the Canopy Cover drawing by Terras, dated 17 October 2024. A vastly larger number of trees, shrubs and ground covers will be planted in the activity. There is a native plant theme across the school. While the planting around the retained Building B00D would also be largely a palette of natives, some exotic flowering ground covers would be used to imply Federation taste in a domestic scale garden around this former cottage. A row of tuckeroo and lilly pilly trees would be planted to the east of the retained Building B00D. This row of small trees will partly screen the older building from the larger newer buildings more than 30m away. This will not be complete screening and will more effectively define a spatial curtilage with selected garden planting around the retained building, which will have a more Federation style domestic character than the rest of the school site. A domestic garden is planned for the northern and western sides of Building B00D with an orthogonal surrounding path and rectangles of grass edged with flowering shrubs. The planting schedule around Building B00D includes daisies, lavender and rosemary for a domestic landscape.

The planting concept would have more trees on this site than at any time since before the school was established here. Nonetheless, the documentary record shows that the school has usually had many trees growing on this site. The larger number of trees will define outdoor spaces and will partly screen the new buildings from each other.

The landscape activity would have a positive impact on the identified heritage significance of the Building B00D by replacing hardstand on the western side with garden, and making a clearly domestic garden around the building that will interpret its original purpose. The landscape for the rest of the school site will have some positive impact by planting the southern three-quarters of the school site more thickly with trees. However, there will be a clear contrast in scale between the retained Building B00D and the new Building BC seen between the 30m grassed space that will separate them.

## 9.2.4 Tree Removal or Replacement

- *Does the tree contribute to the heritage significance of the item or landscape?*
- *Why is the tree being removed?*
- *Has the advice of a tree surgeon or horticultural specialist been obtained?*
- *Is the tree being replaced? Why? With the same or a new species?*

### Comment

Approximately sixteen trees would be removed from the school site and the adjacent verge. Of these, approximately six would be removed to make room for the replacement permanent buildings. A silky oak and a small jacaranda would be removed from the verge to Gillieston Road to make way for the bus parking bay. One tree would be removed to make way for COLA 1 attached to Building BB. Six small trees would be removed from the verge to Northview Street, and would be replaced by a much larger number of trees planted alongside within the school grounds.

The trees in the school site are late twentieth-century plantings in a regular style for a school of the period, using mostly endemic Australian trees. These trees do not have cultural heritage significance. The removal of these trees will not have an adverse heritage impact on the heritage significance of the place. Most trees on the school site will be retained, and vastly more trees will be planted than will be removed.

### 9.3 Summary of Potential Heritage Impacts

Activity Elements	HERITAGE IMPACT
Removal of hardstand on the western side of Building B00D and construction of a domestic style garden	<p><b>Small Positive heritage impact on the setting of Building B00D</b></p> <p>The immediate setting of the former dwelling will be improved. A row of small trees to be planted on the eastern side of the house will be a marker of the implied heritage curtilage around the building.</p>
Retention of Building B00D	<p><b>Neutral heritage impact</b></p> <p>Building B00D will be retained.</p>
Construction of new school buildings of up to three stories on the school site. This will change the wider setting of Building B00D.	<p><b>Acceptable heritage impact</b></p> <p>The construction of much larger school buildings will lead to a contrast in scale with the single storey Building B00D. This will cause some adverse heritage impact, but this impact is acceptable because the minimum 30m gap is more than twice the height of the nearest new building. Only early morning shadows will be cast by the new Building BC on the retained Building B00D.</p>
Demolition of Building B00A, former timber classrooms now used as the library.	<p><b>Acceptable heritage impact</b></p> <p>The removal of this inter-war period building will have some adverse heritage impact, which is an acceptable impact on the site, because Building B00A is not intact, and it is not original to this site.</p>
The Landscape plan consists of some removal of trees, new trees, shrubs ground covers and grassed spaces	<p><b>Neutral heritage impact</b></p> <p>The planting of vastly more new trees than the approximately 16 trees to be removed will have a positive environmental impact, but the heritage impact is close to neutral. This recognises that no tree with cultural heritage significance will be removed, and the new trees will partly screen the visual impact of new larger buildings that will be seen in the wider setting of Building B00D.</p>



## 9.4 Heritage Objections of the Maitland LEP 2011

The site is not listed under the Maitland LEP 2011, but it is listed on the Section 170 Register of the Department of Education so Council may assess this Statement of Heritage Impact.

Umwelt sees the activity as acceptable, from a heritage perspective, for the following reasons.

- The scheme retains Building B00D (the cottage) and continues its educational use.
- The cottage will be visible from the public domain to the same extent as at present. A more appropriate domestic-style garden will be made around Building B00D.
- There will be no adverse change to the appreciation or interpretation of the fabric of Building B00D from the public domain, however its wider setting would change with acceptable adverse heritage impacts.

The activity is consistent with the relevant heritage objectives of the *Maitland LEP 2011*, which are:

### **5.10 Heritage conservation**

#### *(1) Objectives*

*The objectives of this clause are as follows:*

*(a) to conserve the environmental heritage of Maitland,*

*(b) to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views,*

## 9.5 Heritage Guidelines of the Maitland DCP 2011

The Maitland DCP 2011 supports the *Maitland LEP 2011* by providing additional objectives and development standards for heritage items. The heritage provision of the Maitland DCP in section C.4 – Heritage Conservation apply. The provisions are written for a domestic context, which is not entirely applicable to a site that has been a school for over a century in which school buildings have come and gone. The setback between the cottage and new buildings is sufficient to conserve an appropriate domestic setting around Building B00D, and interpret it as a former dwelling for the school 's teacher.

Nonetheless, the activity would have a small positive heritage impact through building a more appropriate landscape around the retained Building B00D, while acknowledging the acceptable degree of adverse impact on the wider setting of Building B00D through the construction of several much larger buildings more than 30m away.

The removal of the timber building B00A would have an acceptable heritage impact on the Gillieston Public School heritage item because this inter-war building is not original to this site, and it is not intact.

## 10.0 Recommendations and Conclusion

### 10.1 Conclusion

Gillieston Public School is listed as an item of local heritage significance on the Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register of the Department of Education. It is not listed in the Maitland LEP, and nor is it within a conservation area. The brick cottage (Building B00D) is the element of the school site that clearly meets the heritage assessment criteria.

The portable buildings will be removed and replaced with permanent buildings of up to three storeys. Building BC would place three storeys approximately 30m away from Building B00D, with an acceptable adverse impact on the setting of Building B00D. The activity at Gillieston Public School will have an acceptable impact on the place through the retention and reuse of Building B00D in an ongoing school, and landscape to define the curtilage of Building B00D. The removal of the altered and incomplete timber Building B00A from the school site will have an acceptable adverse heritage impact on the heritage item.

The existing views towards Building B00D will be retained, recognising that the small trees to be planted by the eastern side of this building will help to define an appropriate domestic setting.

Umwelt commends the heritage aspects of this review of environmental factors.

### 10.2 Recommendations

Umwelt recommends that Building B00D will continue to be used for a school purpose, without the removal of any original fabric. If additional internal openings come to be required between rooms, give preference to removing areas of plain wall, so that fireplaces and internal doors remain in place. The original joinery of the house is widespread through the house. This is significant fabric and it is appropriate to conserve this fabric, along with fireplaces and plaster detailing that includes staff moulds at the projecting corners.

The school bell and its column have not been dated, but they appear to be an early item in the life of the school on this site. It would be appropriate to find a place for the school bell and its iron column in the activity.

Building B00A (the timber building) should be recorded before it is demolished. A photographic archival recording of the original parts of this small building should be completed as part of the activity. Use the standards of Heritage NSW, including, *How to prepare archival records of heritage items*. The completed recording should be deposited electronically with the Department of Education and Maitland City Council.

Project Stage: Design (D) Construction (C) Operation (O)	Mitigation Measures	Relevant Section of Report
D	Select a place for the school bell in the activity	7.3.3
C	Undertake a Photographic Archival Recording of the timber classroom building (Building B00A) before it is demolished	3.3, 7.3.2, 8.0
C	Report to the heritage consultant if any item of potential archaeological value is uncovered during excavation	4.1

**Umwelt Australia**



**Brad Vale**

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