

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

PROPOSED REZONING AND SUBDIVISION

30 SWAN STREET
MORPETH NSW 2321

Lot 3 DP 237264



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1. INTRODUCTION

EJE Heritage has been requested to provide a Heritage Assessment and subsequent Heritage Impact Statement for the proposed rezoning and subdivision for residential purposes of the subject land at 30 Swan Street, Morpeth, Lot 3 DP 237264.

The initial section of the report places the site within an historical context, and examines its physical condition and context. With the history and physical condition and context of the building understood, a heritage assessment of the site can be completed using the NSW Heritage Division guidelines encompassing the Australia ICOMOS *Burra Charter 2013* heritage values: historical significance; aesthetic significance; scientific significance; and social significance.

The Statement of Heritage Impact that follows examines the proposed works, identifying any impacts which the proposal might have on the significance of the heritage items, and any measures which should be taken to mitigate any negative impacts, if these are in fact identified.

The Historical Context section of this report was prepared by David Campbell. This Statement of Heritage Impact was prepared by EJE Heritage. The project team consisted of:

- Barney Collins – (Director), Conservation Architect.
- David Campbell – Heritage Consultant.

1.1 METHODOLOGY

This report has been undertaken in accordance with the NSW Heritage Office publications, *Assessing Heritage Significance and Statements of Heritage Impact*, together with the Australia ICOMOS *Burra Charter 2013*.

1.2 HERITAGE LISTINGS

The site and building do not compose a Heritage Item in Maitland Local Environmental Plan 2011 ('LEP 2011'), but is within the Morpeth Heritage Conservation Area, which has local significance. It is, in addition, within proximity to LEP 2011 Heritage Items as listed below:

Morpeth	Police station	32 High Street	Lot 1, DP 904664	Local	I193
Morpeth	Morpeth Public School	36–46 High Street and 35 Close Street	Lot 1, DP 724176; Lot 1, DP 782470; Lot 1, DP 782303; Lots 1 and 2, DP 782304	Local	I194
Morpeth	White's Factory	7 Robert Street	Lots 3 and 4, DP 592403	Local	I206
Morpeth	Marlborough House	75 Swan Street	Lot 631, DP 1091885	Local	I207
Morpeth	Former Queens Wharf and Railway Station	90 Swan Street	Lot 1, DP 714289	Local	I208
Morpeth	Post office and residence	105 Swan Street	Lot A, DP 411508	Local	I209
Morpeth	Former Bond Store group	122 Swan Street	Lots 1, 2, 5 and 6, DP 260922; Lots 7 and 8, DP 628665	Local	I210

Other heritage items within the Morpeth Heritage Conservation Area include:

Morpeth	Former bakery	98 Close Street	Lot B, DP 161543	Local	I190
Morpeth	Grandstand	20 Edward Street	Lot 7001, DP 1052969	Local	I191
Morpeth	“Kiora”	7 High Street	Lot 1, DP 535966	Local	I192
Morpeth	Police station	32 High Street	Lot 1, DP 904664	Local	I193
Morpeth	Morpeth Public School	36–46 High Street and 35 Close Street	Lot 1, DP 724176; Lot 1, DP 782470; Lot 1, DP 782303; Lots 1 and 2, DP 782304	Local	I194
Morpeth	Former cinema	85 High Street	Lot 1, DP 64366	Local	I195
Morpeth	School of Arts	110 High Street	Lot 1, DP 782444	Local	I196
Morpeth	St James Parish Hall	138 High Street	Lot 200, DP 872144	Local	I197
Morpeth	Roman Catholic Church	James Street	Lot 3, DP 844638	Local	I198
Morpeth	Former Catholic school and convent group	20 James Street	Lots 1 and 2, DP 844638	Local	I199
Morpeth	Georgian house	5 John Street	Lot 1, DP 924593	Local	I200
Morpeth	Morpeth House, Closebourne House, adjoining chapels and Diocesan Registry group	Morpeth Road	Lot 2 and Part Lot 3, DP 841759	State	I201
Morpeth	Avenue of Brush Box trees	363 Morpeth Road	Part Lot 3, DP 841759	State	I204
Morpeth	“Closebourne House” and adjoining Chapel and Diocesan Registry (former)	363 Morpeth Road	Part Lot 3, DP 841759	State	I202
Morpeth	Former Diocesan Registry	363 Morpeth Road	Part Lot 3, DP 841759	State	I203
Morpeth	Morpeth Bridge over the Hunter River	Northumberland Street	Road reserve	State	I205
Morpeth	White’s Factory	7 Robert Street	Lots 3 and 4, DP 592403	Local	I206
Morpeth	Marlborough House	75 Swan Street	Lot 631, DP 1091885	Local	I207
Morpeth	Former Queens Wharf and Railway Station	90 Swan Street	Lot 1, DP 714289	Local	I208
Morpeth	Post office and residence	105 Swan Street	Lot A, DP 411508	Local	I209
Morpeth	Former Bond Store group	122 Swan Street	Lots 1, 2, 5 and 6, DP 260922; Lots 7 and 8, DP 628665	Local	I210
Morpeth	Former courthouse	123 Swan Street	Part Lot 1, DP 526098	Local	I211

Morpeth	Commercial Hotel	127 Swan Street	Lot 1, DP 744896	Local	I212
Morpeth	Former CBC Bank	149 Swan Street	Lot 10, DP 57156	Local	I213
Morpeth	Former Campbell's Store	175 Swan Street	Lot 1, DP 735924	Local	I214
Morpeth	General Cemetery	Tank Street	Lots 1-4, DP 775155	Local	I215
Morpeth	St James group	19 Tank Street	Part Lot 63, DP 755205; Lot 631, DP 1137280	Local	I216

1.3 SITE IDENTIFICATION

The site is identified as 30 Swan Street, Morpeth NSW 2321. The subject site is located within the Maitland Local Government Area. The real property description is: Lot 3 DP 237264. The site is zoned RU1: Primary Production, is adjacent to land to the south and west zoned R1: General Residential.

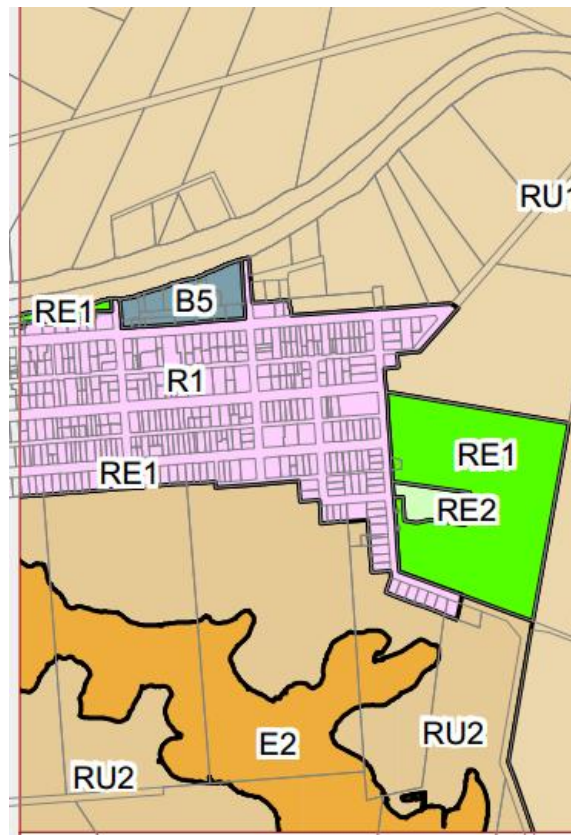


Figure 1. Detail of Land Zoning Map LZN_006, LEP 2011.



Figure 2. The subject land, showing its relationship with the surrounding area.
Nearmap (by licence)



Figure 3. A closer view of the subject land. *Nearmap (by licence)*

1.4 CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS

EJE is not qualified to offer structural opinions. This report is not intended to convey any opinion as to the structural adequacy or integrity of the structure, nor should it in any way be construed as so doing. Similarly, the author's observations are limited to the fabric only: he does not comment on the capacity, adequacy, or statutory compliance of any building services.

2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The subject land was formerly the site of one of Morpeth's railway stations, of which there were three. The following description seeks to provide the historical context by which the history of the site may be understood.

2.1 The Founding of Morpeth

The European settlement ultimately called Morpeth was founded in the early 1820s by Lieutenant Edward Charles Close, a veteran of the 48th Regiment of Foot ('The Heroes of Talavera') in the Peninsular War of 1807 – 1814. Born in Rangamatti, Bengal, on 12 March 1790, he and his mother some seven years later removed to England, where at the age of 18 he joined the 48th Regiment of Foot to defend his country against Bonaparte.¹ Surviving several significant actions, including the great battles of Albuera and Talavera, Close arrived in Sydney with a detachment of his Regiment on 3 August 1817.² In 1821, he decided to sell his Commission, as one could in those days, and was promised 1,200 acres of land reserved for his use³ at a place known to the traditional owners, the Wonnarua people, as Illulong,⁴ Illalaung⁵ or Illullaung,⁶ and to the Europeans as the Green Hills,⁷ about 29 miles by water from Newcastle.⁸ The area had first been seen by Europeans in June 1801, during the expedition of the *Lady Nelson* up river from Newcastle; it appears to have been Lieutenant-Colonel Paterson, leading member of this enterprise, who first conferred on the area the title of 'Greenhill'.⁹ This was at the head of navigation for ocean-going vessels proceeding up-river from Newcastle; and although vessels of lighter draught could navigate as far as Wallis Plains, also called Molly Morgan's, where merchants Captain William Powditch and Frederick Boucher established a wharf and warehouse,¹⁰ the distance by land was so much shorter than that by water as to give Green Hills the advantage as a landing place. West Maitland may have been known to the Wonnarua as *Boyen*.¹¹

The reservation of land at the Green Hills, however, had no basis in law. The land could not be granted to him, as it was, at this time, illegal for serving Officers to be granted Crown land. This obstacle was overcome by Close's new appointment, allowing the grant to be made on 2

¹ Edward Charles Close, *The Diary of E.C. Close*. Sydney: W.E. Smith, 1892, p. 5

² *Diary of E.C. Close*, p. 64.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁴ From Memorandum of E.C. Close, in *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 12 January 1878, p. 8.

⁵ Joseph Cross, 'Map of the River Hunter, and its Branches, shewing the Lands reserved thereon for Church purposes, the Locations made to Settlers, and the Settlement and part of the Lands of the Australian Agricultural Company at Port Stephens together with the Station of the Mission to the Aborigines belonging to the London Missionary Society on Lake Macquarie, New South Wales 1828'. National Library of Australia, Map NK 646. *NSW Government Gazette*, 19 February 1834.

⁶ 'Town of Morpeth formerly called Illulaung' (1834), Maps/0186, State Library of NSW.

⁷ William Henry Wells, *A Geographical Dictionary or Gazetteer of the Australian Colonies: their Physical and Political Geography: together with a Brief Notice of all the Capitals, Principal Towns, and Villages*. Sydney: W. & F. Ford, Sydney, 1848, p. 269.

⁸ *Diary of E.C. Close*, 1892, p. 65; W. Allen Wood, *Dawn in the Valley: The Early History of the Hunter Valley Settlement to 1833*. Sydney: Wentworth Books, 1972, pp. 18-21; William Henry Wells, *Geographical Dictionary*, p. 269.

⁹ 'Lieutenant-Colonel Paterson's Journal and Discoveries at Hunter River', in F.M. Bladen (ed.), *Historical Records of New South Wales*, vol. 4. Sydney: Charles Potter, 1896, pp. 448-453.

¹⁰ *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 31 October 1825, p. 3. Boucher is said to have been a confidence man, guilty of much sharp practice and even forgery.

¹¹ See Memorandum of E.C. Close, in *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 12 January 1878, p. 8.

November 1822.¹² Sir Thomas Brisbane, Macquarie's successor, added to the grant; and Close himself subsequently added to his holdings by purchase, enabling him to control much of the flood-free land on southern side of the Hunter River, a stream said to have been known to the Wonnarua as *Coonanbarra*.¹³

Close, then, enjoyed a unique advantage at a time when the Hunter Valley was being opened to free settlement. Resigning his position as Engineer at Newcastle, he and his wife devoted themselves to improving the *Illalaung* estate.

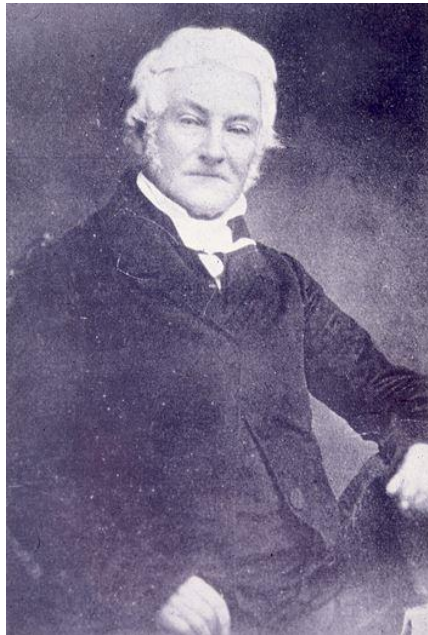


Figure 4. Lieutenant Edward Charles Close, in later life. The photograph betrays something of the man's hard-won confidence, fortitude and determination.
University of Newcastle Cultural Collections

William Tyrrell, first Bishop of Newcastle, later described their struggle:

Those who know the place only as it is, have little idea of the labour involved in bringing a piece of forest land into cultivation, and fitting it for the purpose of trade. Mr. Close found that country a dense bush, covered with scrub and ancient trees, whose arched branches almost concealed the river, and whose leafy boughs were so impervious to light that to walk beneath them even in broad daylight was like walking in the dimness of twilight. This dense forest and bush land Mr. Close set to work to clear, with all the obstacles and impediments incident to the then lawless condition of an ignorant and criminal population; and the result of his labours now is before us in fertile meads and peaceful habitations.¹⁴

¹² Henry Dangar, 'Index and Directory to Map of the Country Bordering upon the River Hunter: the lands of the Australian Agricultural Company, with the Ground Plan and Allotments of King's Town, New South Wales'. London: Joseph Cross, 1828, p. 2; Michael Breen, *Morpeth Survival: A Look into the Past through Morpeth's Surviving Heritage*. Morpeth: M.&T. Breen, 2000, pp. 9-10.

¹³ See Memorandum of E.C. Close, in *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 12 January 1878, p. 8.

¹⁴ William Tyrrell, 'The Demise of E.C. Close, Sen., Esq.', *Church Chronicle*, 21 May 1866, cited in *Diary of E.C. Close*, pp. 71-72.

In the absence of a proper road between Newcastle and Wallis Plains, that commenced in November 1824,¹⁵ on Governor Brisbane's order, having not yet been completed, the river remained the main artery of communication, along which coastal vessels travelled to and from Sydney and other ports. Immigrants and travellers making their way from Sydney to the interior made use of the landing place at which Queen's Wharf was later built, then walked or were conveyed along the track to Wallis Plains. All were technically guilty of trespass, for the land was of course controlled by Close. Goods, together with carts and carriages¹⁶ bound for Wallis Plains, later to be called West Maitland, and for settlements and stations further inland, were also landed here. These activities stimulated commercial enterprise, for in 1832 licences were issued for the establishment nearby of two inns, John Hillier's 'Illalaung Hotel'¹⁷ and James Cracknell's 'The Wheatsheaf Inn'. Hillier's removal from the Ship Inn, Newcastle, illustrated the rising importance of the Green Hills. This was further demonstrated when the government, from 1833,¹⁸ used convict labour to build a made road from the latter place to (East) Maitland,¹⁹ the site of which is said to have been called *Cooloogooloogheit* by the Wannarua.²⁰ The closer settlement of districts to the west and north-west,²¹ together with the development of the wheat wool, tallow and tanning industries, further stimulated the port, to the extent that it gradually became a principal outport of the Colony, supported by infrastructure at East and West Maitland.²² While the remarks of an auctioneer in 1842 that Morpeth "already possesses the germ of a large and influential city", and that "every article consumed in Maitland and the Upper Hunter passes through Morpeth" were exaggerated, his willingness to make them is instructive.

2.2 The Influence of E.C. Close on the Development of Morpeth

E.C. Close, who gradually leased portions of his estate for residential and commercial purposes,²³ lived long enough to see the growth of Morpeth into a comparatively compact but growing town, free of the fear of flooding that haunted other townships along the rivers Hunter and Williams. Unlike those settlements, however, Morpeth was a private town and long remained so, for Close subdivided and sold comparatively few allotments, and that at irregular intervals and at high prices,²⁴ providing little motivation for the erection of substantial improvements. The Surveyor-General's department was, moreover, naturally unable to follow its usual practice of setting apart sites for public buildings.²⁵ General Sir Ralph Darling, a Governor very careful of public moneys, understood these difficulties, but was unable to persuade Close to sell his land for the laying out of a properly planned town in what was, after all, the most suitable local site.²⁶ These circumstances appear to have slowed the growth of Morpeth as a residential locality, and to have instead favoured that of East Maitland, the

¹⁵ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 25 November 1824, p. 2.

¹⁶ See Peter Cunningham, *Two years in New South Wales: a Series of Letters, comprising Sketches of the Actual State of Society in that Colony, of its Peculiar Advantages to Emigrants, of its Topography, Natural History, &c. &c.* London: H. Colburn, 1827, p. 144.

¹⁷ See advertisement, *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 7 July 1832, p. 1.

¹⁸ *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 7 November 1833, p. 2.

¹⁹ *Sydney Monitor*, 25 March 1834, p. 3.

²⁰ See Memorandum of E.C. Close, *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 12 January 1878, p. 8.

²¹ *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 7 November 1833, p. 2.

²² William Henry Wells, *Geographical Dictionary*, p. 249.

²³ *Ibid.*, *Geographical Dictionary*, p. 269.

²⁴ See, for example, 'Plan of Fourteen Building Allotments in the Town of Morpeth Hunter's River, for sale by the Hunter's River Auction Company on the 19th January 1841'. State Library of NSW, ZM2 811.259/MORPETH/1841/1.

²⁵ *Australian*, 13 July 1832, p. 3.

²⁶ See *Colonist*, 5 February 1835, pp. 43-44; W. Allan Wood, *Dawn in the Valley*, p.20; see also Maitland City Council, *Maitland, 1863 – 1963*. Sydney: Oswald Ziegler Publications, 1963, p. 12.

government town,²⁷ and West Maitland, where rich agricultural land was available. They also left the best wharf frontage, some of which Close did indeed sell, in private hands, allowing the steamship companies trading to Morpeth to discourage competition from other parties. While Close agreed to sell to the Crown a waterfront reserve for public wharfage and the standing of cargos, the site was comparatively undesirable, being on low-lying land liable to flooding and comparatively difficult of access. Its Wonnarua name is said to have been *Waywerryghein*.²⁸ The wharf itself, later called Queen's Wharf after Queen Victoria, was exposed to the vagaries of the river, and was expensive to maintain. The best-capitalised buildings and facilities, such as the warehouses of James 'Squire' Taylor, continued to occupy the higher ground above the private wharfs.

The origins of the port of Morpeth are interesting. The river was deep enough for vessels to come alongside and unload their cargos on its banks; a wharf was, naturally, desirable, but evidently beyond Close's immediate resources. The deficiency was supplied in the form of a hulk, the *St. Michael*, which was made fast to the southern bank of the river was made fast to the northern bank adjacent to what is now Green Street. With her decks roofed and boarded over, she became a store-ship at which cargos could be handled, warehoused and sold. In December 1841 she sank at her moorings,²⁹ by which time the southern bank had become the main focus of maritime activity. Another store-ship, the *Alexander*, met a similar fate in late February 1844, only her shingled roof remaining for a time above water.³⁰ By this time, private wharfs and warehouses, some of them of stone, had been built, with others in contemplation.

2.3 The Development of the Town

In early 1834, Close sold the first town allotments at *Illalaung*, a name which he had but recently changed to the less authentic but more commercially attractive name of 'Morpeth',³¹ originally the name of the entire parish, and one formerly but abortively applied to Wallis Plains, afterwards called West Maitland.³² These included the area between High Street in the south and Tank Street, named for a nearby dam, later called the Bishop's Tank, in the west, with Northumberland Street joining the two thoroughfares.³³ Lots along the riverfront, suitable for wharfs and warehouses, were particularly attractive to steamship companies and merchants.³⁴ In 1840 20 town lots were advertised, with more put up for sale in 1841 and January 1842,³⁵ although Close was disappointed in his plan to sell lots in a new village, which he called 'Closebourne', probably after his house of that name, some distance to the east along the road to East Maitland. Although the new township, as it was optimistically titled, was laid out by surveyor's plan into 100 lots, nothing is heard of it after about 1842.³⁶ This lack of success was probably due to the severe economic depression of the 'Hungry Forties'. Some of the area was later incorporated into the village of Raworth. In 1848, when Europe was plagued by revolution,

²⁷ See, for example, the opinion expressed in the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 21 December 1841, p. 2.

²⁸ See Memorandum of E.C. Close, *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 12 January 1878, p. 8.

²⁹ *Australian*, 11 December 1841.

³⁰ *Maitland Mercury*, 2 March 1844, p. 2.

³¹ See advertisement, *Australian*, 24 June 1834.

³² The name was applied to Wallis Plains in 1827, but it was not popularly used: see *The Australian*, 9 May 1827; W. Allan Wood, *Dawn in the Valley*, p.243.

³³ '[Plan of] Town of Morpeth formerly called Illulaung' (1834), Maps/0186, State Library of NSW.

³⁴ *Sydney Herald*, 26 June 1834, p. 3.

³⁵ See advertisements for sale of land, *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 21 December 1841, p. 3.

³⁶ *Ibid*; see also 5 May 1841, p. 4.

Morpeth was distinguished only by a quiet prosperity. According William Henry Wells, a pioneering geographical gazetteer, it contained

...about 635 inhabitants, viz. : — 334 males and 301 females, an Episcopalian church and parsonage, a Wesleyan chapel, a ladies' school, and two day schools ; fine inns, one steam flour mill, a soap and candle manufactory, five large stores, some excellent shops, 37 stone and brick buildings, and about 117 wooden dwellings; steamers constantly ply between this place and Sydney ; coal promises to be abundant at a very short distance from this river...The extensive wharf of the Hunter River Steam Navigation Company is here, and throughout the greater part of the year there is a daily communication to and from the metropolis by the steam vessels of the Company; a considerable number of sailing vessels also trade between this place and Sydney...A coal mine is in actual operation under the direction of Mr. Close, jun., also the extensive steam flour mill of Mr. John Portus. About two acres on the bank of the river are used as a Government wharf; an officer of the Custom house from Newcastle is stationed here.³⁷

Portus' flour mill, an imposing building with a high chimney testified to the suitability of the surrounding country for the growing of wheat before the onset in the 1860s of the fungal disease, usually called 'the Rust', that ruined the industry in the lower Hunter. The building was later used by John Eales, of the Duckenfield estate, as a storehouse, before being purchased by Thomas Adam, who used portion of it as a saw mill.³⁸ The candle manufactory was that of Frederick Nainby,³⁹ whose raw materials came partly from his boiling-down establishment at Richmond Vale. Having trained in England as an apothecary, he also ran a chemist shop at Morpeth.⁴⁰ Among the stores were the bonded stores of James 'Squire' Taylor, Captain Patterson, and James Campbell; the latter also kept a large general store. The ladies' school, opened in 1834, was conducted by Mrs Luke.⁴¹ In this year, also, Bishop William Tyrrell arrived from England via Sydney, and took advantage of Close's ready hospitality in using Morpeth, with its "Three long lines of straggling streets",⁴² as they were later described by his assistant, Rev. R.G. Boodle, as a base for his first efforts within the new Diocese of Newcastle. So convenient did he find the locality, and so superior did he think its church to his tumbledown 'Cathedral' high on the hill at Newcastle, that he chose Morpeth for his place of residence, effectively making it the centre of the diocese.⁴³ He lived first in the St. James' parsonage; but Close, always willing to assist, in the late 1840s sold Tyrrell his house, *Closebourne*, in which his Lordship and his successors for many years dwelt.⁴⁴ The Wonnarua name for its site is said to have been *Terrymilla*.⁴⁵ In 1853, Close sold eight more town allotments.⁴⁶

The three lines of streets of which Boodle wrote were, in fact, Swan Street, James Street and High Street. The first appears to have been named after John Swan, a convict who is thought

³⁷ William Henry Wells, *Geographical Dictionary or Gazetteer of the Australian Colonies: their Physical and Political Geography: together with a Brief Notice of all the Capitals, Principal Towns, and Villages*. Sydney: W. & F. Ford, Sydney, 1848, p. 269.

³⁸ *The Maitland Daily Mercury*, 27 January 1931, p. 2.

³⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 January 1846, p. 3

⁴⁰ *Maitland Mercury*, 18 March 1886, p. 6.

⁴¹ *Sydney Herald*, 3 April 1834; see also *Brisbane Courier*, 2 October 1928, p. 22.

⁴² Richard Boodle, 'Recollections of Ministerial Work in New South Wales', in John Halcombe, *The Emigrant and the Heathen; or, Sketches of Missionary Life*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1874, p. 8.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

⁴⁴ A. P. Elkin, *The Diocese of Newcastle: A History of the Diocese of Newcastle, NSW, Australia*. Glebe: Australian Medical Publishing Company, 1955, p. 160.

⁴⁵ See Memorandum of E.C. Close, in *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 12 January 1878, p. 8.

⁴⁶ *Maitland Mercury*, 23 February 1853.

to have been the earliest settler at Paterson's Plains;⁴⁷ the second, for St. James and the church named for him; the third, being central to the town, may have been intended to be the 'high street', the principal thoroughfare, although Swan Street took on this role with the construction of the road to East Maitland and the development of the waterfront. Another explanation may be that its earliest, western length ran along the top of the ridge. By 1860, during which year Close sold more lots, Robert Street had been laid out to the east. The sale involved the creation of two more, but shorter, roads, which were named Green Street and Market Street, while two others, Ann Street and Elizabeth Street, were also laid out.⁴⁸ The thoroughfares later called Close Street and Princess Street were at that time lanes by which the original lots were separated, and by which rear access was afforded to the lots addressing the roads themselves.⁴⁹ Their status as lanes encouraged the development of outbuildings, back-of-house facilities for commercial premises, and the various small scale industries, such as ostling and blacksmithing, usually to be found in a nineteenth century township. There were also some residences, although these were usually of a quality and size inferior to those found in the streets themselves. The high-quality stone kerbing and guttering associated with the principal streets was not replicated along the lanes.

The convict-built route from East Maitland, along which stage coaches ran, was known, practically enough, as Morpeth Road, from which a lane extended to the river at Queen's Wharf.⁵⁰ Steamer Street provided access to the Queen's Wharf railway station. The non-geographically specific street names owe their titles mostly to Close's natural children and their dependents, or to loyal feelings for the Royal family.

As Meredith Walker and Gardner Browne have shown, the street layout and allotment pattern of Morpeth significantly differed from those of other contemporaneous settlements, such as Clarencetown (1832), Paterson (1833) and Dungog (1837), all of which had been laid out by the Colonial government. In these townships the streets are of a width of 1 or 1 ½ chains, with intersections every 10 chains; allotments are of 1 chain in width and 5 chains depth. By way of contrast, the streets of the historic portion of Morpeth, as developed by E.C. Close, are comparatively narrower. Swan Street is 88'5" wide; High Street is 86'6" wide; James Street is 77'10" wide. Close Street and Princess Street, originally lanes, are 33' wide. The five cross streets are each 66' wide. Many of the town allotments, of 2 chains width, have been sold and re-subdivided with variable widths.⁵¹ The depths of the allotments are variable, but are considerably less than the standard 5 chains, or of the later government standard of 2 ½ chains. Walker and Brown further point out that this gives the streets a more intimate character than that of the typical Australian town of the era.⁵²

⁴⁷ Cynthia Hunter, *Bound for Wallis Plains: Maitland's Convict Settlers*. Maitland: Maitland City Council, 2012, p. 25.

⁴⁸ 'Plan of Allotments of Land at Morpeth'. National Library of Australia Map F827A.

⁴⁹ See 'Plan of Allotments for Sale in Morpeth, NSW', Reuss and Brown, Surveyors, 134 Pitt Street, Sydney, 28/5/[18]60. National Library of Australia, Map F827B; see also

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ See 'Morpeth Management Plan' (May 2000), Appendix B, A6.

⁵² See Meredith Walker and Gardner Brown, 'Morpeth Conservation Planning Study' (1982), p. 15.



Figure 5. ‘Town of Morpeth, 1868’, from Meredith Walker and Gardner Browne, ‘Morpeth Conservation Planning Study’ (1982). The laneways that became Close Street and Princess Street are shown, serving the three principal streets. Note the numbers of structures already erected along them. (The prominent cross-lines are merely repair marks)



Figure 6. Detail of Reuss and Browne, ‘Allotments for Sale in Morpeth, N.S.W., 1860’. The three main streets within the town are shown, as are the roads to Hinton, East Maitland and Queen’s Wharf. *National Library of Australia*

If Close prospered through his sale of allotments in his private town, he continued to return a good deal to ‘his’ community by way of involvement in public affairs. In September 1862, for example, just after the completion of the Court House in Swan Street, he laid the foundation stone of a relatively imposing Doric building for the Morpeth School of Arts, reimbursing the full

price of the land as well as contributing in other ways.⁵³ Designed and built by John Wiltshire Pender, apparently as his first significant commission, and opened twelve months later,⁵⁴ from 1865 it served as the chambers of the Municipal Council until the disbandment of that body in 1944. It also accommodated the initial meetings of the Synod of the Diocese of Newcastle, and the many smaller events, displays, concerts and meetings characterising the life of the town. The Wonnarua name for its site is said to have been *Baybeg*.⁵⁵

In satisfaction of an oath made during a battle of the Peninsular War, in which he was spared while his comrades fell on every side,⁵⁶ he donated the land and payed much of the expense incurred in the building of the first Church and parsonage of St. James. In further gifts to the Diocese of Newcastle and to the wider community,⁵⁷ Close for many years played the part of the respectable country squire, serving the growing town in a variety of ways, including his agreement to take on the office of magistrate. Close's time on the bench was generally uncontroversial, although in his conduct in the case of Lieutenant Nathaniel Lowe, who had, in his murderous treatment of Aboriginal prisoners,⁵⁸ outraged civilised feeling, he appears to have placed accustomed military loyalties above his duty to the law. This did not prevent his later appointment as Warden of the Maitland District Council;⁵⁹ nor did it prevent his becoming a member of the Legislative Council. By the time of his death in May 1866, the year after Morpeth was proclaimed a municipality, Close was generally regarded not only as the founder of Morpeth, but as its genial mainspring, a "fine old English gentleman", as he was described by the press.⁶⁰ His Morpeth estate was variously allocated to four surviving children, although the portion given to his married daughter had, at that time, to be held in trust for her.⁶¹ The residue of the estate, eventually administered by trustees, was not finally broken up until the great auction sale of 30 October 1920.⁶²

⁵³ *Maitland Mercury*, 25 September 1862, p. 2.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 26 September 1863, p. 4.

⁵⁵ See Memorandum of E.C. Close, in *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 12 January 1878, p. 8.

⁵⁶ Richard Boodle, *The Life and Labours of the Right Rev. William Tyrrell, D.D. : First Bishop of Newcastle, New South Wales*. London: W. Gardner, Darton & Co., 1881, p. 9; Close's son, E.C. Close Jnr, at the laying of the foundation stone of the rebuilt Church of St. James in April 1875, related details of the oath: see *Maitland Mercury*, 17 April 1875, p. 2.

⁵⁷ Such as the first schoolhouse at Morpeth, where missionary James Backhouse preached in 1836: see James Backhouse, *A Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies*. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1843, pp. 397-398.

⁵⁸ See *Australian*, 23 May 1927, pp. 3-4.

⁵⁹ See, for example, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 January 1844, p. 2.

⁶⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 May 1866.

⁶¹ The *Married Women's Property Act 1879* (NSW) had not yet commenced.

⁶² See 'Close's Estate, Morpeth: for Auction Sale on the Ground, Saturday, Oct. 30th 1920', National Library of Australia, Map F95.

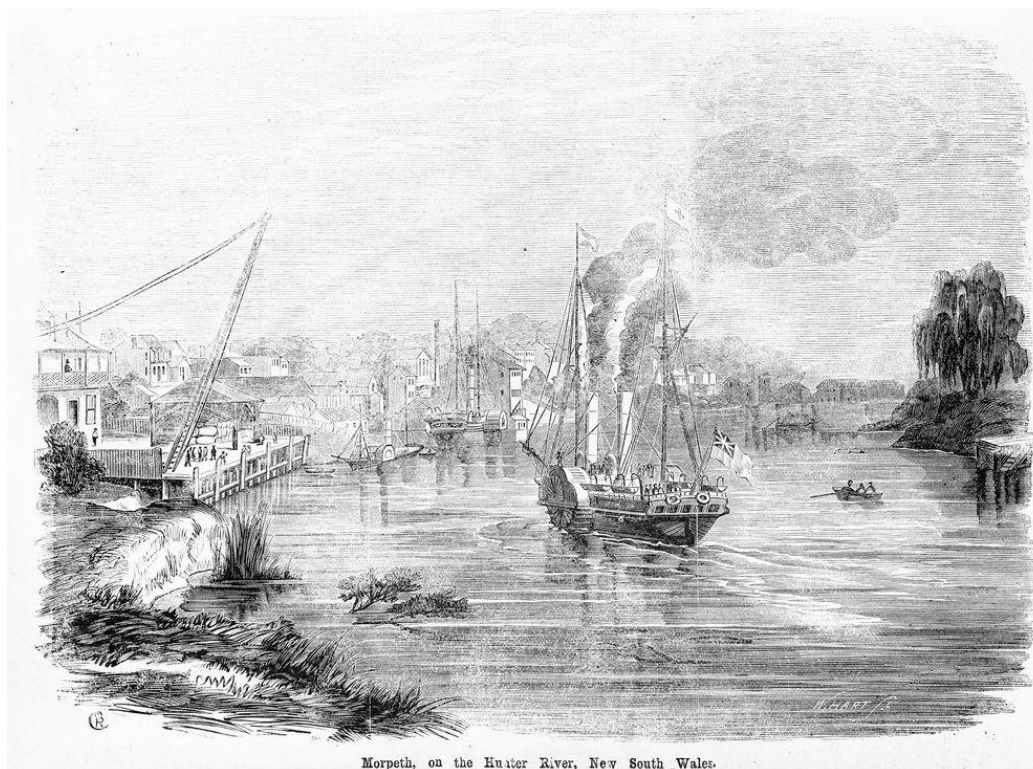


Figure 7. Oswald Rose Campbell's 'Morpeth, on the Hunter River, New South Wales', engraved by Walter Hart, and published in the *Illustrated Melbourne News* in 1865. The nearest large wharf is that of the Australasian Steam Navigation Company; the next is that of the Hunter River New Steam Navigation Company. Other, smaller wharfs are visible. Queen's Wharf, open to the public, is further up river. Note the contrast in size between the two ocean-going steamers and the smaller river steamer between them. Some of the stone warehouses along the river bank were later demolished to make way for the extension of the railway, opened in 1870, although Portus' mill, behind the tied-up coastal steamer, long remained extant. *State Library of Victoria*

2.4 The Influence of the Railway

The opening of the Great Northern Railway between Honeysuckle Point and East Maitland, and its subsequent extension into Newcastle and West Maitland, gave rise to fears on the part of shareholders in the steamship companies that dominated the coastal trade that Morpeth would become progressively isolated as further railway extensions attracted wool and coal traffic to the port of Newcastle. Attempts in 1860 and 1861 to interest the Colonial government in the building of a railway from East Maitland to Morpeth having proved abortive, during the following year the Maitland and Morpeth Railway Company, an enterprise identified with the steamship interests, endeavoured to obtain an Act of Parliament enabling it to build such a line. This met with opposition; but the Colonial government was now successfully pressed to construct the branch railway. Its opening on Monday 2 May 1864⁶³ was ill-starred, for the line terminated too far from the river front to be of practical benefit either to the town or to the shipping companies: a reluctance on the part of some to sell the necessary land for reasonable prices,⁶⁴ appears to have encouraged a belief that trade would, instead, be attracted to the public wharf, called Queen's Wharf, that was located near the terminus. Expensive coal staithes, to which a siding

⁶³ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 May 1864. p. 8.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 4 May 1864, p. 5.

was constructed from the initial terminus in Steamer Street, west of Tank Street, were erected near Queen's Wharf in 1866 in the hope that colliery proprietors would take advantage of them;⁶⁵ but they were scarcely used, and won renown only as a white elephant.⁶⁶ Queen's Wharf, in the event, attracted little cargo; and it was not long before the whole situation became a political embarrassment.

A proposed extension of the line was delayed by the insistence of the Australasian Steam Navigation Company that it should be compensated for the land required for the laying of the line to the wharf of the Hunter River New Steam Navigation Company, its competitor.⁶⁷ This dispute, the fruit of bitter rivalry, was overcome only by considerable effort on behalf of the authorities. By 1870, when the line was opened to its new terminus,⁶⁸ all but very limited coal traffic had been lost to Newcastle,⁶⁹ and it was too late to divert it, for it was by now more convenient for shippers to send coal along the Great Northern Railway to the advanced loading facilities at Newcastle than to be delayed by the marshalling and remarshalling of wagons involved in the running of the light trains along the Morpeth branch line.

The local application by the railways of differential freight rates, too, stimulated by the government's willingness to undercut the Morpeth trade to increase traffic to Newcastle, also appears to have played a significant role.⁷⁰ The trade in general goods also suffered, a circumstance worsened by the demolition of several large warehouses and hotels near the waterfront to make way for the railway extension and its associated cutting along the rocky river front,⁷¹ although the railway seems to have assisted in the bringing of wheat to Rundle's flour mill, opened by John Portus in 1839,⁷² two decades before the onset of fungal wheat rust put an end to the growing of wheat in the lower Hunter River district. Wool traffic was, however, a different story, with the steamship companies being well equipped to handle wool bales in their sidings and warehouses. So substantial was this trade that a new stone-faced Queen's Wharf, extending either side of what the *Maitland Mercury* called "that useless monument of expenditure, the Morpeth coal staithes",⁷³ was erected in 1870.⁷⁴

This growing trade certainly stimulated commercial and residential activity, as did the continuing success of Duncan Sim's foundry, the Swan Street enterprise founded by Sim upon his return from the gold diggings after 1853.⁷⁵

The town of Morpeth, for a long time almost stationary, appears to have reached a more promising point in its history...whereas there was a number of tenements empty and going to decay, dwelling houses are now in demand, and as a result, the untenanted buildings are now being renovated for occupation.⁷⁶

⁶⁵ *Maitland Mercury*, 12 June 1866, p. 2.

⁶⁶ See, for example, *Evening News*, 16 June 1877, p. 4.

⁶⁷ *Maitland Mercury*, 29 July 1869, p. 2.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 7 July 1870, p. 1.

⁶⁹ *Maitland Mercury*, 1 May 1875, p. 2.

⁷⁰ See *Maitland Mercury*, 26 July 1870, p. 2.

⁷¹ See Cynthia Hunter and W. Ranald Boydell, *Time Gentlemen, Please! Maitland's Hotels Past and Present*. Maitland: Maitland City Heritage Group, 2004, p. 16.

⁷² *Maitland Mercury*, 'Death of Mr John Portus', 19 June 1860, p. 2.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 24 September 1870, p. 2.

⁷⁴ *Empire*, 4 November 1870, p. 3.

⁷⁵ See Judith MacLeod, *Duncan Sim, 1818 – 1892: A Morpeth Ironfounder and his Family*, p. 19.

⁷⁶ *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 3 August 1878.

The staithes, to serve which an all-too prominent embankment and timber trestle had been constructed to support a long siding leading off the Morpeth railway just east of the original railway terminus, long proved an embarrassment, attracting the notice of a Sydney press that questioned government expenditure on regional projects. The *Evening News*, for instance, under a headline advertising “Some Big Railway Blunders”, thundered that

The country, of course, knows of that fearful shame, the coal staiths at Morpeth, which stand unused after being fifteen years finished – nearly a quarter of a mile of solid elevated railway work put up for trucks that were never to run, and for the convenience of colliers that were never to sail above Hexham Flats. That was a job, it is nearly forgotten now, though the work still stands there as a placard of political and engineering bungling...⁷⁷

The Morpeth-Sydney wool trade, however, continued to prosper, although much wool was also exported through the port of Newcastle, either to Sydney or to the United Kingdom. Large new wool stores, complete with railway sidings, were erected at the Morpeth wharfs of both the Hunter River New Steam Navigation Company and the Australasian Steam Navigation Company.⁷⁸ The latter company in 1880 retired from the Hunter River run, selling its local vessels and interests to a new enterprise, the Newcastle Steamship Company Ltd, which for a time provided determined competition as to pricing. Such prosperity was, however, overtaken soon after the opening of the great Hawkesbury River bridge that at last connected the northern and southern portions of the Homebush to Waratah railway, ending the physical separation of the Northern railway system. So expensive had the unifying line proved, and so influential were the Sydney mercantile interests that coveted the Morpeth wool for Darling Harbour and Circular Quay, that the Colonial government widened the application of the differential rail freight rates that had hitherto favoured Newcastle subsidising the carriage of wool to Sydney and discouraging its transport to either Morpeth or Newcastle. As Robert Lee has written,

Thus, in New South Wales railway rate policy deliberately and consciously centralised rail traffic on Sydney and prevented the development of rival ports.⁷⁹

The ability to have wool shipped direct from the Northern districts to the Sydney wool stores saved the cost of loading at Morpeth and unloading at Sydney,⁸⁰ although this also badly affected the port of Newcastle, which experienced a decline of over 33% in bales dispatched between 1888 and 1890.⁸¹ Despite these disadvantages, in 1889 the port of Morpeth handled about 34,000 bales.⁸² Such was the impact of the differential rates that, in 1891, the two steamship companies decided to amalgamate; on 1 January 1892, the new company, the Newcastle and Hunter River Steamship Company Ltd, commenced operations.⁸³ These were, at first, attended by some success: in 1893, as much wool was shipped at Morpeth as at Newcastle, while in 1899 a record 82,361 bales were loaded at the river port; but any repetition

⁷⁷ *Evening News*, 26 August 1887, p. 3.

⁷⁸ *Maitland Mercury*, 29 August 1878, p. 4.

⁷⁹ Linking a Nation: Australia’s Transport and Communications 1788 – 1970, Chapter 2: Ports and Shipping, 1788 – 1970,

⁸⁰ See Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, ‘Minutes of Evidence, Railway to Connect the North Shore Railway with Port Jackson, at Milson’s Point’, Evidence of Hugh McLachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, 8 July 1890. *Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales*, 1890, vol. VI, p. 47.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, Evidence of Cecil Darley, Engineer in Chief for Harbours and Rivers, 26 June 1890, p. 22.

⁸² *Ibid.*, Evidence of Hugh McLachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, 8 July 1890, p. 47.

⁸³ Newcastle and Hunter River Steamship Company, *The Newcastle and Hunter River District Tourists’ Guide*. Newcastle: The Company 1907, p. 20.

of these efforts was prevented by the redoubled determination of the government railways to obtain the traffic.⁸⁴ It was this intervention by a government instrumentality, rather than the silting of the river, that undermined the viability of the port of Morpeth. In consequence, the premises of the former Newcastle Steamship Company, originally those of the Australasian Steam Navigation Company, were no longer required: the site was made available to the Bowthorne Co-operative Dairy society, which in 1910 opened a butter factory there.⁸⁵

Although the government's railway policies had a negative influence on the port, they also for a time brought increased prosperity to the local manufacturing sector. Duncan Sim was awarded contracts for the supply of rolling stock, now easily dispatched along the Morpeth branch railway. Sim was pleased to have added this additional work to his usual manufacture of "Hay presses, Mowing Machines, Horse rakes, cornshellers, ploughs, Drays, wagons & ce."⁸⁶

Sim's continued success, and the activities of the Hunter District Water Supply and Sewerage Board, attracted the attention of Pope, Maher & Co., of Darlington, Sydney. In 1896 they opened a steel pipe fabrication workshop in Swan Street, adjoining the Newcastle and Hunter River company's wharf.⁸⁷ This was served by both rail and water transport.⁸⁸ The opening in June 1898, of the Northumberland Street bridge over the Hunter River,⁸⁹ followed by that of the Hinton Bridge, the caissons for which were supplied by Pope, Maher & Co., in February 1901,⁹⁰ allowed large loads to be conveniently conveyed by road, also. The metals industry for a time remained attractive enough for the Sim family to find a buyer for their foundry after their withdrawal from the industry in 1926. The purchaser was J.D. Couston, a prominent businessman.⁹¹

2.5 The Decline of Morpeth

Hopes that Morpeth might become an industrial centre were, however, disappointed. River-borne trade continued to decrease. In July 1931, the Newcastle and Hunter River Steamship Company was forced to retire from the Sydney to Morpeth trade, closing its Morpeth wharf,⁹² although a small wooden-hulled steamer, the *SS Allyn River*, until 1939 continued to carry flour and small quantities of provisions for shops. The Depression of the 1930s emptied Couston's order book, and in the middle of that decade he was forced to close the Swan Street foundry. Pope, Maher & Co. had by this time also vacated their site. The conclusion of the Second World War brought no revival in the metals trade, but some new business opportunities were forthcoming. In 1946, for example, British American Tobacco opened a tobacco plant in the milk dehydration works built by the Commonwealth government during the recently concluded world war.⁹³ This year, however, also saw the end of the shipping trade, when the last

⁸⁴ See John Turner, 'The Development of the Urban Pattern of Newcastle: A Critique', in *Australian Economic History Review*, vol. XI, September 1971, p. 181.

⁸⁵ *Maitland Mercury*, 22 August 1910, p. 2.

⁸⁶ Letter from Duncan Sim to Peter Sim, reproduced in Judith MacLeod, *Duncan Sim*, p. 19.

⁸⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 March 1896, p. 9.

⁸⁸ See *Maitland Daily Mercury*, 21 March 1896, p. 6.

⁸⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 June 1898, p. 5.

⁹⁰ See *Maitland Daily Mercury*, 14 February 1901, p. 2.

⁹¹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 September 1926, p. 16.

⁹² See *Maitland Daily Mercury*, 9 July 1931, p. 6.

⁹³ *Singleton Argus*, 2 August 1946.

commercial vessel to visit Morpeth, the *SS Doepel*, of only 389 tons, conveyed a cargo of newsprint from Sydney.⁹⁴ The remaining wharfs were dismantled in mid-1951.⁹⁵

The tobacco factory did not prosper, for it was closed not long after April 1951, when the Bowthorne butter factory also ceased to trade, its activities being centralised at the Hunter Valley Dairy Co-operative ('Oak') facility at Hexham.⁹⁶ The demise of these enterprises further undermined the viability of the Morpeth branch railway, already badly affected by the cessation of river traffic.⁹⁷ The line was closed on 31 August 1953,⁹⁸ the President of the Morpeth Progress Association describing the loss as being "like losing a right arm".⁹⁹

The loss of so many jobs put an end to hopes that the local economy could survive the eclipse of the port of Morpeth. The increasing availability of motor cars and buses brought the town within the orbit of East and West Maitland, with which the municipality had been amalgamated in 1944 to form the City of Maitland. Morpeth residents increasingly looked to Maitland for both shopping and business transactions, further undermining the viability of local businesses. This led to the abandonment of several comparatively large buildings, such as the former Anlaby's Inn and Campbell's store in Swan Street. Some of these were demolished, while others were simply allowed to fall down. A lack of demand for commercial space contributed to a general air of dilapidation and declining land values, although the connection of the town with the district sewerage scheme in late 1939¹⁰⁰ does appear to have encouraged the construction of some new dwellings.

2.6 Revival

Conditions began to change in the 1970s, when businessmen such as Trevor Richards identified the potential of Morpeth as a tourist and heritage destination, as well as being a convenient place in which to reside. The town is now very popular, particularly on weekends, with cultural pursuits vying with commercial and residential activities, the latter being supported by extensive new subdivisions outside the historic precinct.

2.7 Morpeth's Railway Station Controversy¹⁰¹

The extension of the railway from the initial terminus to the new one, opened in July 1870,¹⁰² was of course a boon to the steamship companies, and for those wishing to receive or dispatch general goods up country. The question as to the most suitable location for the passenger terminus was, however, quite a different matter, and became the subject of much dispute.¹⁰³ A

⁹⁴ See generally David Campbell, 'Railways of the Newcastle District of New South Wales, 1840 – 1865: Some Influences on their Development', in *Stories of the GNR*. Newcastle: Newcastle Regional Museum and Engineers Australia, 2007.

⁹⁵ *Singleton Argus*, 16 May 1951, p. 2.

⁹⁶ *Muswellbrook Chronicle*, 6 April 1951, p. 2.

⁹⁷ See *Singleton Argus*, 29 May 1953, p. 6.

⁹⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 October 1953, p. 8.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ See *Maitland Daily Mercury*, 5 August 1939, p. 10.

¹⁰¹ The author has been guided in the following discussion by the pioneering work of Ian Dunn and the late Cyril Singleton: see Ian Dunn, 'The Morpeth Branch', in *Byways of Steam 14: On the Railways of New South Wales*. Matraville: Eveleigh Press, 1998; see also C.C. Singleton, *Australian Railway Historical Society Bulletin*, September 1953, pp. 104-106, October, 1953, pp. 113-117.

¹⁰² *Maitland Mercury*, 26 July 1870, p. 2.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 29 July 1869, p. 2.

site to the north of Swan Street, near its intersection with Northumberland Street, and adjoining the government wharf at which private persons could come and go via river transport without trespassing on private property, was locally favoured. This, however, was situated in the riverfront cutting earlier mentioned, from which it was difficult to obtain access to Swan Street, with its shops and post office. These restrictions, together with the periodic flooding of the river, rendered it impracticable to establish at this location the terminal facilities necessary for the working of the line. Such was the depth of local feeling in what was, after all, a politically influential community that the authorities decided to provide not one, but two new passenger stations, both of which were opened in July 1870.¹⁰⁴

The first of these, later known as Northumberland Street, was indeed constructed on the site above described. Its difficult situation involved the construction of a steep flight of sandstone steps, which caused a good deal of inconvenience, although they were undoubtedly better than the “deep, precipitous incline, paved with loose, rough stones” by which access was originally available.¹⁰⁵

The other railway station, known simply as ‘Morpeth’, was at the new terminus. Tenders for its erection are said to have been called in September 1869; the successful contractor was William Cains. The four-roomed station house, of brick relieved by stone coping, with a roof of galvanised iron, was described as “a very neat little building”,¹⁰⁶ said to have been approximately 54’ in length and 16’ 6” inches in width, was roofed in corrugated iron, with a stone flagged and columned front verandah addressing Swan Street, the main thoroughfare of the town. Railings were supported by a stone course. The four rooms consisted of a porters’ room; a ticket office; a general waiting room; and a ladies’ waiting room.¹⁰⁷ The platform, complete with a canopy supported by columns, faced in brick with stone coping, and stone flagged, was 220’ long, with an 80’ carriage dock at the western end. As befitted a town without sanitary services, the lavatory facilities were detached from the building.¹⁰⁸

Up until this time, the site of the terminus appears to have been vacant land, although some cottages appear to have existed just east of the intersection of Swan Street and George Street.

¹⁰⁴ *Maitland Mercury*, 29 July 1869, p. 2.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 26 July 1870, p. 2.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 16 June 1870, p. 3.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 21 April 1870, p. 3.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*



Figure 8. Plan of Morpeth, 22 June 1849. University of Newcastle Cultural Collections

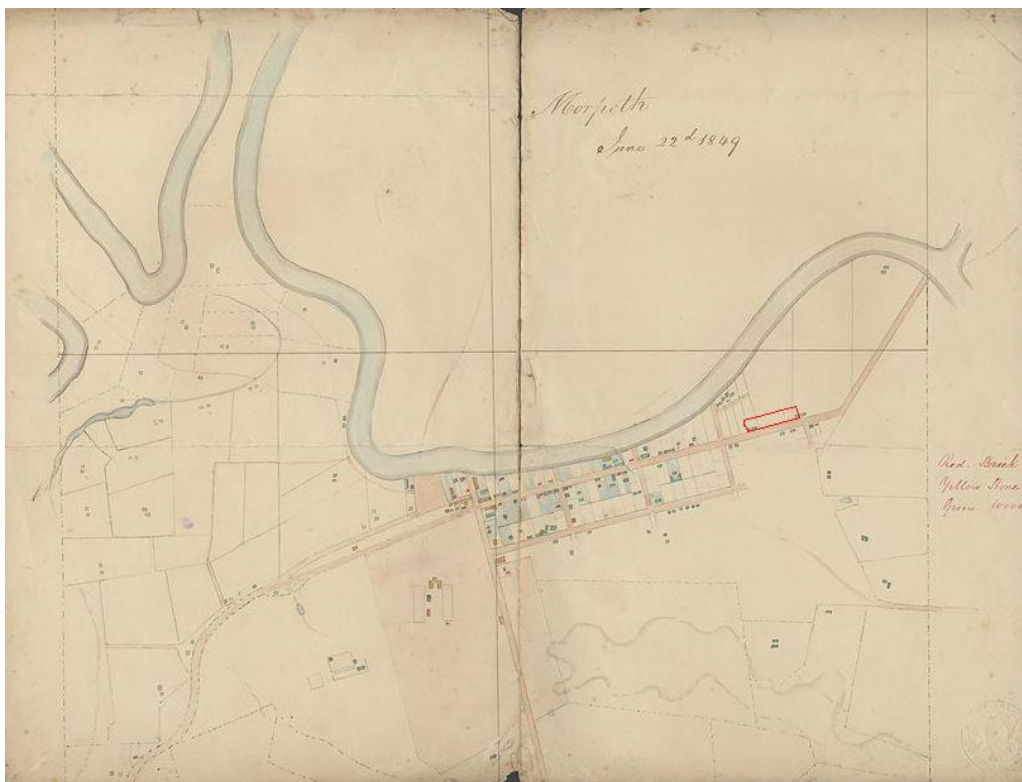


Figure 9. The subsequent location of the railway terminus is outlined in red.

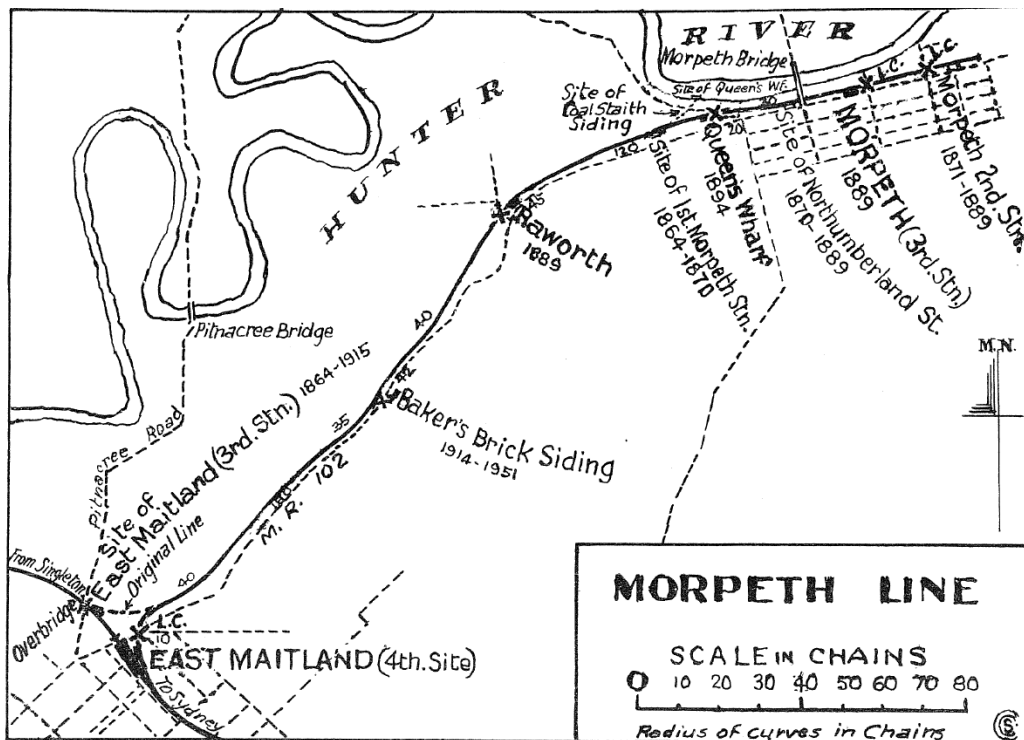


Figure 10. Plan of the Morpeth branch railway, showing the facilities with which it was associated, as drawn by the late C.C. Singleton. Note the second Morpeth station, locally known as the Edward Street station, near the terminus at extreme right. From C.C. Singleton, 'The Morpeth Branch Line', in *Australian Railway Historical Society Bulletin*, September-October 1953.

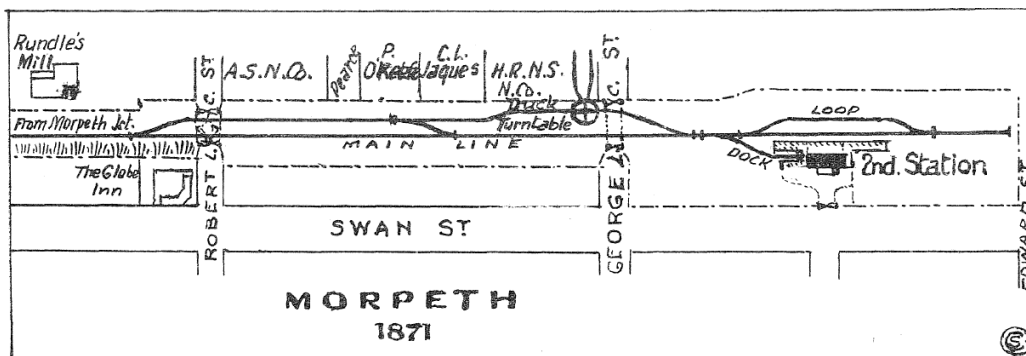


Figure 11. The terminal station of 1870. Note George Street level crossing. From C.C. Singleton, 'The Morpeth Branch Line', in *Australian Railway Historical Society Bulletin*, September-October 1953.

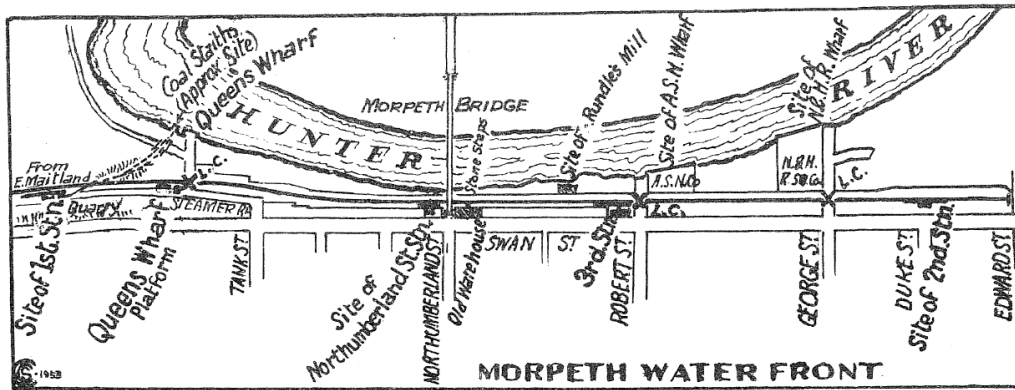


Figure 12. The Morpeth river front, showing the extraordinary number of railway stations with which Morpeth was associated. From C.C. Singleton, 'The Morpeth Branch Line', in *Australian Railway Historical Society Bulletin*, September-October 1953.



Figure 13. The approximate location of the subject land is marked by the marshalled train, at extreme left, standing on the Morpeth goods siding. The former passenger station, since 1889 the Station Master's residence, is out of shot to the left. Prescott's, produce agents occupy the large Newcastle and Hunter River Steam Navigation Company store, centre, on the southern side of the railway, just west of the George Street level crossing. This building survives to this day. The wharf and warehouses of the Newcastle and Hunter River Steam Navigation Company are at right. The larger vessel is the Clyde-built S.S. *Archer*, which was in the possession of the N&HRSN Co. between 1901 and 1933. Note the steam crane, used for the loading of bunker coal into the company's steamers. The Church of the Immaculate Conception, the tower of which is visible at extreme left, was built in 1897. The photograph, taken from the northern bank of the Hunter River, would appear to date from the 1920s.

Edward Street, which provided the main approach from the south, and with which the station was locally identified, provided access to the river port of Raymond Terrace and the confluence of the Williams River and Hunter River, while the nearby river punts promoted traffic with Largs and Hinton.

The dock siding is said to have been extended in an easterly direction in 1902 to serve a goods siding laid along a timber-faced bank of a height suitable for the loading and unloading of railway wagons, complete with a hand-operated jib crane of five tons capacity and a ten-ton cart weighbridge.¹⁰⁹ This facility handled wool bales consigned to the nearby wharfs; it must have relieved pressure on the brick-built goods shed, 60 feet long and 27 feet wide with internal and external loading platforms, not opened until 1878, following a press campaign, the deficiency having in the meantime been freely supplied by the steamship companies.¹¹⁰ The goods shed was similar in design to that later built at St. Mary's railway station. Through its arched portals,¹¹¹ trains passed for the loading and unloading of the wide variety of articles associated with the government railways as the State's common carrier. The nearby Hunter River New Steam Navigation Company (N. & H.R.N.S.N.) featured a wagon turntable, allowing these to be run directly into its capacious warehouse, which was free from flooding, for loading or unloading, the goods being conveyed by two narrow-gauge funiculars to and from the wharf below.¹¹² The company also constructed other large sheds fronting Swan Street. A stock yard and stock races in association with the goods shed siding are said to have been provided in 1882. From 1911, the wool bank siding also served the Coastal Farmers' Co-operative Company lucerne shed, said to have had a capacity of about 4,000 bales.¹¹³ In 1877, a timber-built, galvanised iron-clad engine shed with coal stage, and water tanks elevated by means of a timber-built 'pig sty', were provided for the servicing of locomotives,¹¹⁴ which were usually tank engines.

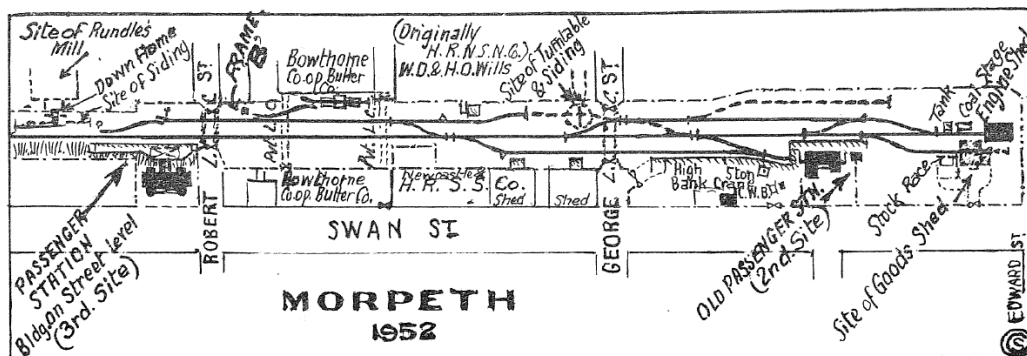


Figure 14. Railway facilities around the Morpeth terminus in 1952, just prior to the closure of the line, as drawn by the late Cyril Singleton. The long-closed passenger station of 1870 (locally known as the Edward Street station) is at right. The plan appears to show the still-extant dwelling, perhaps former commercial premises, known as 36 Swan Street. From C.C. Singleton, 'The Morpeth Branch Line', in *Australian Railway Historical Society Bulletin*, September-October 1953, pp. 113-117.

¹⁰⁹ Ian Dunn, 'The Morpeth Branch', p. 27.

¹¹⁰ See *Maitland Mercury*, 8 August 1878. p. 4, 27 July 1877, p. 4.

¹¹¹ Photographic evidence shows that these were later replaced by square openings.

¹¹² *Maitland Mercury*, 14 April 1870, p. 4.

¹¹³ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 October 1911, p. 6.

¹¹⁴ Ian Dunn, 'The Morpeth Branch', p. 29.

The station yard ultimately consisted of the goods shed and stock siding, served by a stock yard; the goods siding along the wool loading bank, served by a trucking yard, weighbridge and 5-ton jib crane; a back siding general purposes; a run-around loop; and the points and crossovers necessary for running and shunting.

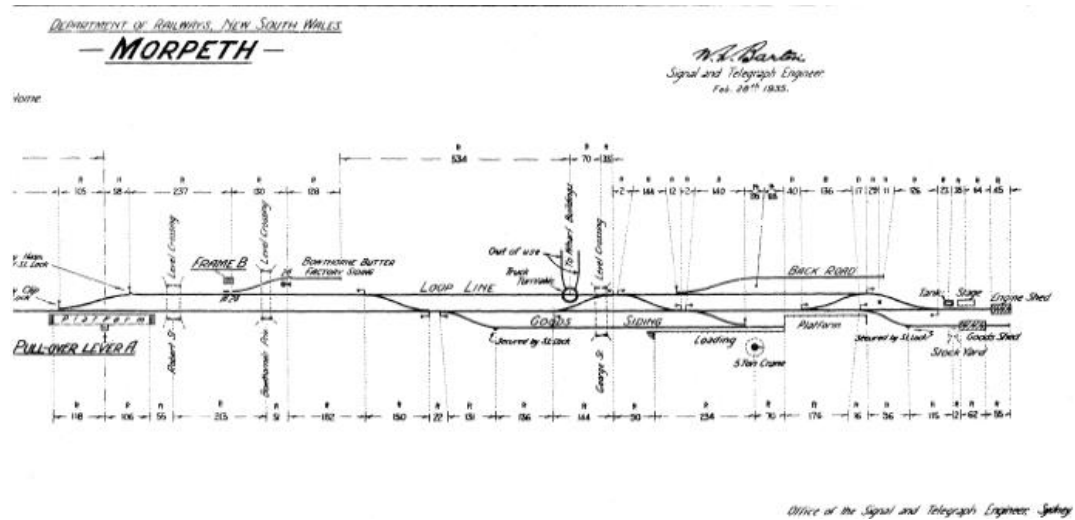
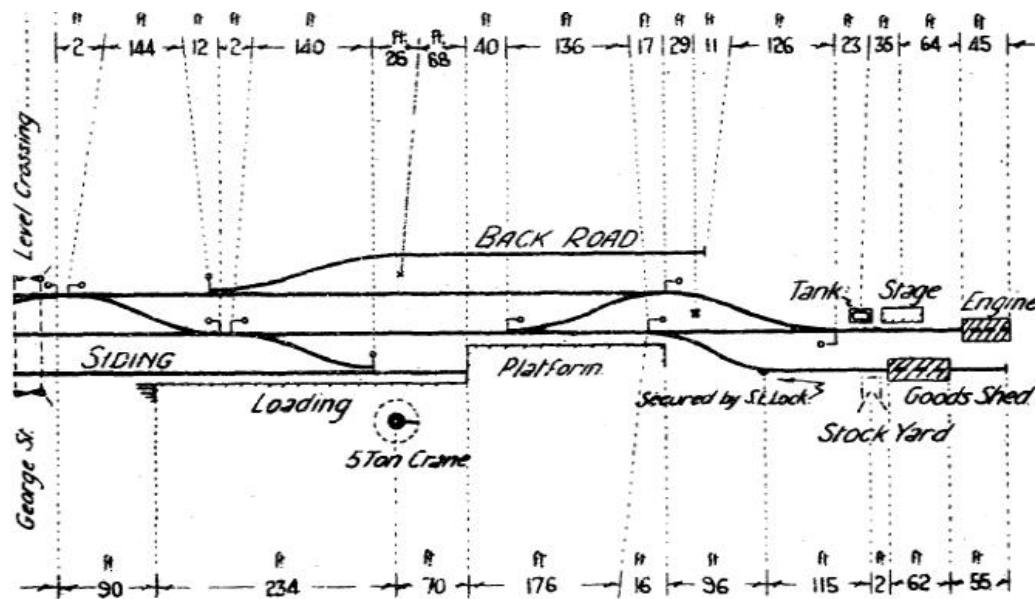


Figure 15. Portion of arrangements at Morpeth, February 1935. NSWGR



Office of the Signal and Telegraph Engineer

Figure 16. Detail of above. Note the loading bank and 5-ton capacity manually-operated jib crane, which allowed loading and unloading to and from the trucking yard. The George Street level crossing is shown; the surviving cottage, not being located on railway property, is not.

While the Edward Street station and yard was the main centre for the handling of general goods and parcels traffic, and also the passenger terminus, other sidings and platforms, as earlier described, were located along the line.

In early 1889, work began on the construction of a new railway station, the town's third. This project aimed to provide one central station approximately midway between the other two, which might then be closed to economise on staffing and other costs.¹¹⁵ The Edward Street station, soon to become redundant, was converted into a residence for the Station Master,¹¹⁶ work which possibly included the incorporation of the outhouse lavatory within the habitable areas. The passenger platform was at some time fenced off from the running lines, probably for reasons of safety. The station, then, replaced the original Station Master's residence, on the site of which the new station was built.¹¹⁷ The Edward Street and Northumberland Street platforms ceased to be available to passengers from the time of the opening of the new station on the morning of 19 December 1889, although the railway authorities appear to have been remiss in providing notice of this. The effects of this failure are made evident in the rather amusing news clipping set out below:

Morpeth.

The new railway station at Morpeth, after standing idle for four months since it was taken over from the contractor, was opened hurriedly on Thursday morning, no notice whatever being given at the Northumberland-street station yesterday, let alone in any more formal manner. The consequence was that more than one season ticket-holder had to run to get in time, when they found the old station locked up. Someone must have bungled the business; as it is, the furniture has not been sent up. Perhaps it is not yet imported, but the floorcloth for the ladies' waiting room is to hand, and the porters laid it very well for amateurs. Labourers have been engaged filling in earth in front of the building, which filling, some eight or ten feet wide, is, as well as the whole of the platform, covered with ashes some inches deep, which, in this dry weather, is the reverse of pleasant, especially for ladies. Fortunately the gentle creatures do not complain very loud, or some of them might be brought up for bad language.

Figure 17. From *Maitland Mercury*, 20 December 1889, p. 8.

¹¹⁵ *Maitland Mercury*, 14 November 1889, p. 5.

¹¹⁶ *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, 28 March 1889, p. 5.

¹¹⁷ *Maitland Mercury*, 28 November 1889, p. 4.

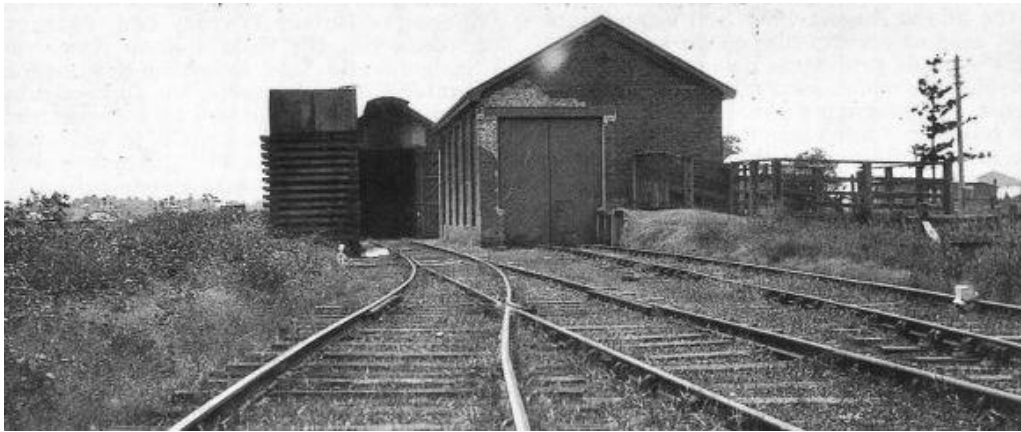


Figure 18. Terminal facilities, 1935, looking east from the former passenger station. From left: water tanks supported by timber pig-sty, with coaling stage beyond; timber and galvanised iron-built engine shed; brick-built goods shed, modified through replacement of arched doors by lintels; and stock yard and races.



Figure 19. The terminus on 12 March 1953. The timber-faced loading bank, next to which runs the barely-visible goods siding, is at right; behind it is the weighbridge associated with the trucking yard; the 5-ton capacity manually-operated jib crane; the former passenger station; and the engine shed. The goods shed has already been demolished. The cottage at extreme right, perhaps former commercial premises, known as 36 Swan Street, still stands. *Late C.C. Singleton*

The railway itself had an unexciting history, governed largely by the waxing and waning of demand from the shipping companies, lucerne undertakings and small industries, later including the dairy and butter factory. Except on special occasions, passenger traffic was light, although from about 1915 to 1951 comparatively large quantities of milk were dispatched to both

Newcastle and Sydney.¹¹⁸ From 1893, trains traffic were usually hauled by a four-wheeled steam tram motor, rather than by a locomotive; after the reintroduction of locomotives in 1913, no fireman was rostered, with operational responsibility falling to the driver and guard only.¹¹⁹ One particular incident, reflecting the potential dangers of one-man operation of locomotives, occurred on 18 April 1950, when a Z-20 class tank engine, with driver Bob Green on the footplate, crashed through the end of the engine shed and down the low embankment on which it was built; it took two days to drag the locomotive back onto the line. Bob Green, by coincidence, also drove the last timetabled train between Morpeth and East Maitland.¹²⁰ Photographic evidence suggests that, by the time of the closure of the railway in August 1953, the terminal station, which for over half a century after its closure had accommodated the Station Master, had received very little maintenance, particularly with regard to the now-redundant passenger platform and its associated canopy. The goods shed, which would appear at some time to have suffered structural damage, perhaps from ground movement or the inadequacy of footings, was demolished some time before the closure of the railway.

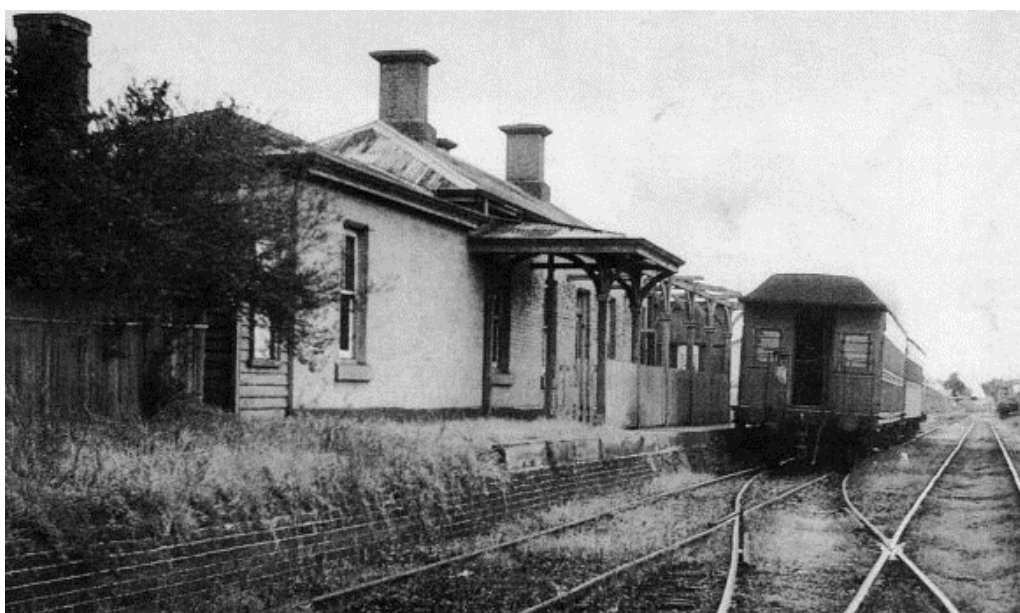


Figure 20. The Morpeth terminal railway station, used for half a century as a Station Master's residence, shown shortly before the closure of the Morpeth branch line. The carriages are temporarily standing on the original platform road, probably while the locomotive runs around its train in preparation for the return to East Maitland. Note the poor condition of the platform canopy. *Late C.C. Singleton*

The building, together with the engine shed, goods shed, elevated water tanks and timber-faced bank, was demolished at some stage after the closure of the line. While the date of demolition has not been established, the *Maitland to Morpeth Railway (Cessation of Operation) Act 1953* (NSW), which commenced on 31 August 1953, authorised the dismantling of infrastructure associated with the line, as well as the sale of the associated land, including the land at the

¹¹⁸ Ian Dunn, 'The Morpeth Branch', p. 28.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-35, 43.

terminus. As lifting of the track is said to have begun shortly after closure,¹²¹ it seems likely that the buildings at the terminus did not long survive.

The demolition and removal of this infrastructure gradually erased the railway from sight, although it is remembered by some older residents.

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**MAITLAND TO MORPETH RAILWAY (CESSATION
OF OPERATION) ACT.**

Act No. 38, 1953.

An Act to discontinue the operation of the railway between Maitland and Morpeth; to make certain provisions consequential upon such discontinuance; to amend the Government Railways Act, 1912-1952; to validate certain matters; and for purposes connected therewith. [Assented to, 16th December, 1953.] Elizabeth II,
No. 38, 1953.

BE it enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of New South Wales in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be cited as the "Maitland to Morpeth Railway (Cessation of Operation) Act, 1953." Short title
and
commence-
ment.

(2) This Act shall be deemed to have commenced on the thirty-first day of August, one thousand nine hundred and fifty-three.

2. The Commissioner for Railways shall cease to operate the railway between Maitland and Morpeth, and any duties or obligations imposed upon The Commissioner for Railways by the Government Railways Act, 1912, as amended by subsequent Acts, the Public Works Act, 1912, as amended by subsequent Acts, or any other Act of Parliament, or by agreement, contract, deed, or by operation of law in relation to the said railway or any of the lands or works connected therewith or adjoining thereto, or the carriage of persons, animals and goods upon the said railway, are hereby extinguished. Cessation of
operation
and extin-
guishment
of
obligations.

3. Any land resumed or taken for the purposes of the said railway may be dealt with as superfluous lands under the Public Works Act, 1912, as amended by subsequent Acts. Lands may
be dealt
with as
superfluous
lands.

LORD

Figure 21. The single-page Act by which the line was closed; this authorised the sale of its facilities and easement.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

3. PHYSICAL CONDITION AND CONTEXT

3.1 SITE AREA

The site covers an area of approximately 7,908².

3.2 CURRENT USE

The subject land is occupied by an existing dwelling and tennis court.

3.3 PAST USE

Between 1870 and the mid-1950s, the subject land was occupied by the Morpeth railway terminus, including a comparatively impressive brick-built passenger station, closed in 1889, but thereafter occupied by the Station Master of the facility that replaced it; a goods shed, demolished before 1953; an engine shed with coaling stage and elevated water tanks; stock yard and races; a loading bank with associated manually-operated jib crane; a trucking yard with weighbridge; and their associated running roads and sidings.

3.4 CONDITION

The lot is regularly mown.

3.5 SURROUNDING CONTEXT

To the east, the subject land adjoins a redundant cattle yard and associated barn; to the west, the dwelling known as 36 Swan Street; to the north, vacant land; and to the south, Swan Street.

To the north and east, the site overlooks agricultural land gradually sloping down to the Hunter River flood plain, although views of the Hunter River, which is to the north, are obscured by levee banks.

A dwelling, formerly commercial premises, known as 36 Swan Street, situated about 30m to the west, addressing Swan Street, is potentially of some antiquity, but is not listed as a Heritage Item in Maitland LEP 2011. Beyond it are several modern dwellings and a light industrial area, formerly the site of shipping warehouses, pipe fabrication plant and butter factory.

A road milestone stands on Crown land vested in Council just south of the property boundary, proximally to 36 Swan Street. This item is not affected by the proposed rezoning.



4. HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The NSW heritage assessment criteria encompass four generic values in the Australian ICOMOS *Burra Charter 2013*: historical significance; aesthetic significance; scientific significance; and social significance.

These criteria will be used in assessing heritage significance of the place.

The basis of assessment used in this report is the methodology and terminology of the *Burra Charter 2013*; James Semple Kerr, *The Conservation Plan: A Guide to the Preparation of Conservation Plans for Places of European Cultural Significance*,¹²² and the criteria promulgated by the Heritage Division of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage. The *Burra Charter 2013*, Article 26, 26.1, states that:

Work on a place should be preceded by studies to understand the place which should include analysis of physical, documentary, oral and other evidence, drawing on appropriate knowledge, skills and disciplines.

Places and items of significance are those which permit an understanding of the past and enrich the present, allowing heritage values to be interpreted and re-interpreted by current and future generations.

The significance of the place is determined by the analysis and assessment of the documentary, oral and physical evidence presented in the previous sections of this document. An understanding of significance allows decisions to be made about the future management of the place. It is important that such decisions do not endanger its cultural significance.

The *NSW Heritage Manual*, prepared by the former NSW Heritage Branch and Department of Urban Affairs and Planning and endorsed by the Heritage Division of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, outlines the four broad criteria and processes for assessing the nature of heritage significance, along with two added criteria for assessing comparative significance of an item.

Heritage Significance Criteria

The NSW assessment criteria listed below encompass the following four values of significance:

- ☐ Historical significance
- ☐ Aesthetic significance
- ☐ Research/technical significance
- ☐ Social significance

¹²² (7th ed). Burwood: Australia ICOMOS, 2013.

Listed below are the relevant Heritage Assessment Criteria identified in the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW):

- Criterion (a) An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).
- Criterion (b) 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 (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).
- Criterion (c) An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).
- Criterion (d) An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
- Criterion (e) An item has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).
- Criterion (f) An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).
- Criterion (g) An item is important in demonstrating the principle characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area's cultural places; or cultural or natural environments).

An Assessment of Significance requires that a level of significance be determined for the place. The detailed analysis uses the levels of significance below:

LOCAL	Of significance to the local government area.
STATE	Of significance to the people of NSW.
NATIONAL	Exhibiting a high degree of significance, interpretability to the people of Australia.

4.1 ANALYSIS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historical Significance

Criterion (a) An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The subject land is associated with the former terminus of the Morpeth branch railway, which included not only a passenger station and general goods and stock facilities, but also infrastructure necessary for the operation of steam locomotives. The terminus was important in the wool trade at a period when a large percentage of Northern and New England wool was exported through the port of Morpeth, to the prosperity of which the railway was very important. The closure of the railway in 1953, and the resultant demolition of the infrastructure at the terminus, has so altered the site as to no longer provide obvious evidence of its former associations, although the goods shed footings and 5-ton capacity jib crane base remain.

Criterion (b) 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 (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The subject land is not known to be associated with any significant event, person or group of persons, with the exception of a general relationship with the former New South Wales Government Railways and a comparatively small number of local staff. Relatives of Bob Green may recall his involvement in the locomotive accident of 1950, and also the fact of his having driven the last timetabled train from Morpeth to East Maitland.

Aesthetic And Technical Significance

Criterion (c) An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).

The demolition of all above-ground structures, particularly the once-elegant passenger station, formerly associated with the railway terminus has negated any such significance.

Social Significance

Criterion (d) An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Although the railway terminus was closed 61 years ago, and the associated structures appear to have been demolished shortly afterwards, a comparatively small minority of long-standing residents of Morpeth and district may continue to share a special association with the site.

Research Significance

Criterion (e) An item has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The demolition of all above-ground structures formerly associated with the railway terminus has removed most such potential. It is, however, possible that the footings of the former goods shed may provide some insight into the nature of late nineteenth century government railway goods handling facilities, although this will not provide information not available elsewhere in a local or State context, for example, at Wallsend NSW (private railway) and St. Mary's NSW (NSWGR). The concrete pad for the 5-ton capacity jib crane also remains, although similar items are extant at Awaba, Condobolin, Fairfield, Moss Vale, Scone and Windsor, to name but a few.

Rarity Significance

Criterion (f) An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The demolition of the above-ground structures negates the potential of the subject land to provide evidence of now-defunct processes or activities, or of designs and techniques of exceptional interest. The goods shed footings and 5-ton jib crane pad are not uncommon, rare or endangered in either a State or local context, being present in locations where these have been provided and subsequently demolished.

Representative Significance

Criterion (g) An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area's cultural places; or cultural or natural environments).

The subject land is not a fine example of its type; nor is it outstanding because of its setting, size or condition. It does not possess the principal characteristics of a railway terminus, and is not known to be held in high esteem either by the Morpeth community, nor that of the wider Local Government Area.

4.2 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The subject land, formerly the site of the ultimate terminus of the branch railway between East Maitland and the river port of Morpeth, played an important part in the economic and social development of the Maitland district in general, and of the town of Morpeth in particular. For perhaps three decades, the terminal infrastructure, which at first included both passenger and goods facilities, allowed Morpeth to survive against competition from the expanding port of Newcastle, although government transport policy favourable to Sydney interests later brought about its decline and eventual demise as a transport hub. The closure of the railway, followed by the demolition of all the structures with which it had been associated, has, however, so altered the site as to have considerably degraded its heritage significance, to the extent that its past importance is no longer legible.

The survival of the pad of the 5-ton capacity jib crane, and also that of the footings of the brick goods shed, does little to retrieve this situation, although these items do provide some limited and specialised evidence of the historical associations of the place.

The subject land must, therefore, be assessed as having moderate significance in a local context.

5. PROPOSED WORKS

These involve an application to rezone and subdivide the subject land for residential purposes. The existing zoning is RU1: Primary Production; the proposed zoning is R1: General Residential, like the land to the south and west, on which dwellings already exist. The number of proposed lots has yet to be determined.

5.1 COMPLIANCE WITH MAITLAND URBAN SETTLEMENT STRATEGY 2012

The subject land is identified in the *Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy 2012* ('MUSS 2012') as non-residential zoned land, located within or adjoining land zoned residential, which satisfies the principles and definition of urban extension or urban infill development. Its inclusion within the table of Urban Infill and Urban Extension Potential Development Sites indicates that it will be considered by Council for potential future development, pending the lodgement of a rezoning proposal that justifies the lands as urban infill or urban extension, with due consideration of opportunities and constraints.

*Extract of Table 12: Urban Infill & Extension Sites
MUSS 2012, p. 132.*

<i>Property No.</i>	<i>Lot No.</i>	<i>DP No.</i>	<i>Locality</i>	<i>Suburb</i>	<i>Category</i>
25423	3	237264	Swan Street	Morpeth	2

6. STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

This is the Statement of Heritage Impact for: Proposed rezoning and subdivision, 30 Swan Street, Morpeth NSW 2321

Date: This statement was completed in April 2014

Address and Property Description: 30 Swan Street, Morpeth NSW 2321; Lot 3 DP 237264

Prepared by: EJE Heritage

Prepared for: Mr H. Lantry

The following aspects of the proposal respect or enhance the heritage significance of the item or area for the following reasons:

The proposed rezoning and subdivision recognises that, from 1849 or earlier, much of the subject land has not been used for primary production. Cartographic evidence dating from 1849 suggests the presence of dwellings, perhaps including the former commercial premises and dwelling known as 36 Swan Street, while between 1870 or 1953 the land was occupied by the terminus of the Morpeth branch railway. Despite the demolition and removal of the railway facilities and infrastructure, the subsequent subdivision of the railway easement prevented the re-incorporation of the subject land into the farm land to the north and east.

The proposed rezoning and subdivision, moreover, forms part of a process of alienation and subdivision of land associated with the former railway, one that began in the mid-1950s and continued until the yielded lots had been sold, and some of them had been built upon.

The redundant cattle yard and associated barn, of unknown provenance, to the east of the subject land, will not be affected by the proposed rezoning and subdivision.

The following aspects of the proposal could detrimentally impact on the heritage significance of the item or area for the following reasons:

It is not considered that the proposed rezoning and subdivision has such potential, for some of the subject land has in any case long been used for residential purposes, while the remainder is historically associated with railway activities, specifically the operation over some 83 years of passenger trains, goods trains and mixed trains. All railway infrastructure has long been removed, while no physical evidence of such infrastructure is known to exist above ground level.

The following sympathetic design solutions were considered and discounted for the following reasons:

Retention of the RU1: Primary Production zoning and lot boundaries were considered, but were rejected, given the long-standing use for residential purposes of much of the land, and the previous use of the remainder for railway purposes, such as the operation of trains; the handling and conveyance of goods and livestock; and the servicing of steam locomotives. The subject land, moreover, is identified in the *Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy 2012* ('MUSS 2012') as being suitable for consideration by Council for potential residential development in terms of urban infill or urban extension.

The following actions are recommended to minimise disturbance and/or enhance the interpretation of the heritage significance of the item or area:

Mandatory Actions

The process of rezoning and subdivision will, of themselves, not involve the excavation of the subject land. That said, future registered proprietors considering building works within the new lots may need to have regard to the requirements of the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW).

The subject land may contain historical relics within the meaning of the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW), s. 4(1), as set out below,

relic means any deposit, artefact, object or material evidence that:

- (a) relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement, and
- (b) is of State or local heritage significance.

Should this in fact be the case, before the commencement of excavations, it will be necessary for the proponent to obtain from the Heritage Council of NSW an Excavation Permit under s. 139:

139 Excavation permit required in certain circumstances

- (1) A person must not disturb or excavate any land knowing or having reasonable cause to suspect that the disturbance or excavation will or is likely to result in a relic being discovered, exposed, moved, damaged or destroyed unless the disturbance or excavation is carried out in accordance with an excavation permit.
- (2) A person must not disturb or excavate any land on which the person has discovered or exposed a relic except in accordance with an excavation permit.

Should any items properly described as relics, for example footings of demolished structures, in fact be unearthed in the course of site or construction works, notification must be made in accordance with s. 146, as follows:

146 Notification of discovery of relic

A person who is aware or believes that he or she has discovered or located a relic (in any circumstances, and whether or not the person has been issued with a permit) must:

- (a) within a reasonable time after he or she first becomes aware or believes that he or she has discovered or located that relic, notify the Heritage Council of the location of the relic, unless he or she believes on reasonable grounds that the Heritage Council is aware of the location of the relic, and
- (b) within the period required by the Heritage Council, furnish the Heritage Council with such information concerning the relic as the Heritage Council may reasonably require.

The Heritage Council should be contacted via the Heritage Division of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, 3 Marist Place, Parramatta NSW 2150, telephone: 02 9873 8500, and by email at heritage@heritage.nsw.gov.au

In the event of such a discovery, Council's Heritage Officer, Ms Clare James, should immediately be contacted at 4974 2000 or 4934 9700, and by email at clarej@maitland.nsw.gov.au

Recommended Actions

It is recommended that printed and PDF copies of this Statement of Heritage Impact should be made available to Maitland City Library, Morpeth Museum and University of Newcastle Cultural Collections.

The surviving pad of the 5-ton capacity jib crane, together with the footings of the brick goods shed, while not affected by the proposed subdivision, might well be sympathetically re-used or otherwise dealt with, in the preparation of later Development Applications involving the lots on which they are located. Similarly, the nearby mile stone, while not situated within the boundaries of the subject land, should be protected from damage during and after any site works associated with either the proposed subdivision or with any subsequent works.

6.1 Compliance with City of Maitland Conservation and Design Guidelines

The *City of Maitland Conservation and Design Guidelines*, Part 2 – Conservation Areas: 2.10 (Morpeth-Conservation Policies), specifies policies with reference to proposed development within the Morpeth Conservation Area. These are both set out and addressed below:

6.1.1 'What to Keep'

All buildings and structures constructed prior to 1949.

The dwelling, with tennis court, on the subject land was constructed in the 1970s.

Retain business activity within the existing 3(a) Business Zones.

The proposed rezoning is for residential purposes.

The rural character of the land on the edges.

The abutting land to the north, north-east and south is not subject to a rezoning proposal. The abutting lots to the west, and those to the south on the other side of Swan Street, are already occupied by dwellings.

The distinctive sandstone kerb and guttering .

Princess Street features concrete guttering.

The narrow sealed carriageways with (gravel) differentiated verges.

Swan Street is asphalt sealed to its full width.

Important view corridors to river and rural surrounds.

As the subject land is not elevated views of rural surroundings from the subject land are not significant. Views of the river itself are disrupted by levee banks.

Front fences and outbuildings consistent with residential area.

Star picket and wire fencing will be retained until the sale of lots takes place, after which fencing will become the responsibility of the new registered proprietors. There are no outbuildings on the subject land.

The single-storey and detached nature of residential development.

Future residential development will be the responsibility of the new registered proprietors.

The existing overall form, character and diversity of Swan Street.

It is submitted that the existence of a large dwelling on part of the subject land, together with its historic use for railway purposes, and the presence to the south dwellings addressing Swan Street, means that the proposed rezoning will not negatively affect the form, character and diversity of Swan Street.

The original subdivision pattern: wide lots in main streets, rear lane access.

The proposed lots will be similar in width to those opposite. The subject land, having been used for railway purposes, has never been subject to the original Morpeth subdivision pattern.

6.1.2 'New Development'

Character Assessment

General Building Forms and Overall Heights

These will be the responsibility of future registered proprietors.

Front and Side Setback

These will be the responsibility of future registered proprietors.

Materials

These will be the responsibility of future registered proprietors.

Building Use (Past and Present if Different)

The existing 1970s dwelling will continue to be used for residential purposes.

New buildings should not obstruct streetscape views of pre-1949 buildings.

The proposed rezoning does not have this potential.

Buildings should be set back no less than 7 metres, except in lanes. In Close and Princess Street, the setback is to be no less than 6 metres, and in Green, Berkeley, Elizabeth, Ann, Market and William Streets the setback is to be a minimum of 2 metres.

These will be the responsibility of future registered proprietors. The existing dwelling complies with these standards.

If a building is demolished, any new building must comply with new setback standards.

The proposed rezoning does not involve the demolition of an existing building.

In the residential area, side setbacks are to be the standard 900mm minimum on one side, but increased to 2.5m – 3.5m minimum on the other, to maintain views between buildings and low density characteristics.

These will be the responsibility of future registered proprietors.

Scale

*The single storey and detached nature of the residential area should be maintained.
Single-storey is the preferred form for new dwellings in the residential zone.*

This will be the responsibility of future registered proprietors.

Additional floor area may be accommodated in the roof space, providing that the overall roof height and pitch is in keeping with surrounding structures.

These are not applicable.

Two storeys may be permitted on steep sites, providing the building is only single storey at the road frontage.

This is not applicable to the subject land.

Dual Occupancies

The detached house should be maintained as the principal residential form.

Dual occupancies are not considered appropriate at Morpeth.

This will be the responsibility of future registered proprietors.

New Development in the Business Zone

The existing overall form, character and diversity of buildings in Swan Street should be maintained.

The subject land is not in the Business Zone.

Subdivision

The general subdivision pattern of wide lots fronting the main streets, with vehicular access from rear lanes, should be maintained, in addition to sandstone kerbing and guttering.

The subject land has never been influenced by the general historic subdivision pattern. The existing kerbing and guttering is of concrete.

Any subdivision of allotments facing Swan Street, High Street and James Street are appropriate only where rear lane access to all lots can be provided, and/or use existing kerb crossing.

Access to the subject land will be via Swan Street. The subject land is exceptional, as it has never been influenced by the general historic subdivision pattern.

Frontages to the east-west streets (Swan, Close, High, Princess and James) shall not be reduced to less than 15 metres, and frontages to the side streets to not less than 40 metres.

The frontages of the proposed lots are not less than 15 m.

Rear access to properties fronting Swan Street, High Street and James Streets should be maintained.

Rear access has never been available to the subject land.

The amalgamation of sites is not considered appropriate.

This is not applicable to the proposed subdivision.

Rural Surrounds

The subject land is adjacent to existing residential development, and will not adversely affect the rural land to the north, north east and east. The subject land is identified in the *Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy 2012* ('MUSS 2012') as non-residential zoned land, located within or adjoining land zoned residential land, satisfying the principles and definition of urban extension or urban infill development.

Driveways, Kerbing and Guttering

Paths from front gates to kerb and driveway crossings are acceptable, with hard paving minimised to reduce run-off.

These will be the responsibility of future registered proprietors.

Driveway crossings should be paired strips, rather than the full width. Unadorned concrete is preferred.

These will be the responsibility of future registered proprietors.

No new kerb crossings in areas of sandstone kerb and guttering will be permitted. Where required, access is to be provided from rear lanes.

The kerbing and guttering addressing the relevant length of Swan Street is of concrete.

Where new crossings of sandstone kerb and guttering is unavoidable, bridge crossings are preferred to alteration of old stonework.

The kerbing and guttering addressing the relevant length of Swan Street is of concrete.

6.1.3 'What to Avoid'

Most two-storey project homes.

The nature of future development will be the responsibility of future registered proprietors.

Demolition of any pre-1949 structure.

The existing dwelling, with tennis court, dates from the 1970s. No earlier structure is extant, although footings and pads of some demolished buildings may be present; those of the former goods shed and 5-ton capacity jib crane are known to be present. Responsibility for these will devolve to future registered proprietors.

Multi-dwelling/medium density and attached dual occupancy development.

The proposed subdivision will create new residential lots. The nature of future development will be the responsibility of future registered proprietors.

Additions which involve altering the existing roof height or shape.

The proposed subdivision will not involve alterations and additions to the existing 1970s dwelling.

Full width sealed driveway entrances over grassed footways.

Driveway design will be the responsibility of future registered proprietors.

Visually prominent garages which front the street.

Residential design will be the responsibility of future residential proprietors.

New crossings within the existing sandstone kerb and guttering.

The kerbing and guttering along the relevant length of Swan Street is of concrete.

Amalgamation of sites.

A new subdivision of the existing lot is proposed. Adjoining lots are not involved.

New buildings obstructing streetscape view of pre-1949 buildings.

The existing dwelling, with tennis court, dates from the 1970s. Views of the much older dwelling known as 36 Swan Street will not be affected.

6.2 RELATIONSHIP OF HISTORIC TRACK LAYOUT TO SUBJECT LAND

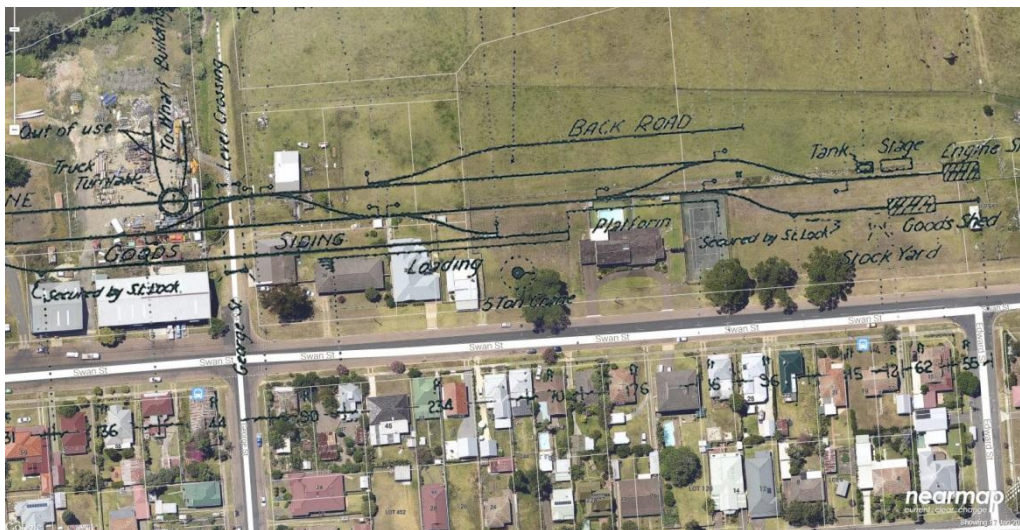


Figure 24. Overlay of 1935 track layout and subject land. The 10-ton capacity weighbridge, which is not shown, was located to the right of the jib crane.
EJE/NSWGR/Nearmap by licence

An overlay of the 1935 track layout and the subject land shows the sites of now-demolished railway buildings and infrastructure. While rails and pointwork have been removed, portions of trackbed appear to remain. The site of the former passenger station is occupied by the 1970s dwelling and tennis court at 32 Swan Street. The concrete pad for the 5-ton capacity manually-operated jib crane remains just above ground level in the former trucking yard. The footings of the brick goods shed are evident at ground level. Footings of the timber-framed engine shed and coaling stage may remain at or below ground level. It is unlikely that anything remains of the 'pig sty' base of the locomotive water supply tank. The track bed of the branch line and its associated sidings is no longer discernable, but the former railway easement may be traced through the light industrial area to the west.



The rezoning application does not have the potential to disturb these items, or historic relics that may or may not be concealed beneath the surface. Subdivision does, however, have the potential to place the goods shed footings within more than a single lot, while any excavation or site works associated with future development applications may have the potential to disturb both items. This is a matter for future registered proprietors, rather than for the present proponent.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed rezoning and subdivision of the land known as 30 Swan Street, Morpeth NSW, Lot 3 DP 237264, will not negatively affect its heritage significance, or that of the Morpeth Heritage Conservation Area. The site is adjacent to land zoned for residential purposes, as well as residential development of long standing. The subject land is identified in the *Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy 2012* as non-residential zoned land, located within or adjoining land zoned residential, satisfying the principles and definition of urban extension or urban infill development. Its inclusion within the table of Urban Infill and Urban Extension Potential Development Sites indicates that it will be considered by Council for potential future development, pending the lodgement of a rezoning proposal that justifies the lands as urban infill or urban extension, with due consideration of opportunities and constraints.

The subject land was for over seven decades the site of important railway infrastructure associated not only with the East Maitland to Morpeth branch railway, but with the coastal shipping trade. The demolition of the structures above ground level, compounded by the

construction in the 1970s of a residence and tennis court on the site of the former passenger station, has, however, so altered the place as to render it practically illegible in terms of its historic purpose. The concrete pad of the former 5-ton capacity, manually-operated jib crane, together with the footings of the long-since demolished brick goods shed, will not be affected by the rezoning application, although their presence, as well as the possible discovery, during any future excavation, of historic relics, should be addressed in development applications concerning the proposed lots within which they are situated. The mile post and marker plaque addressing Swan Street, although not within the boundaries of the subject land, should be protected from disturbance during any activities associated not only with the present application but with any future development nearby.

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