

Moree Police Station

Statement of Environmental Effects

60-62 Frome Street, Moree

Prepared for United Group

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SPECIALIST REPORTS AND ADDITIONAL DETAIL ACCOMPANYING THE APPLICATION

Plans and survey

Heritage Report

1. OVERVIEW

This report accompanies a development application to Moree Plains Shire Council for demolition of the existing main Police Station building, construction of a new building and associated works at the Moree Police station.

The site is located at 60-62 Frome Street, Moree. The Police Station adjoins the Moree Courthouse and is within a precinct of public administration buildings.

The proposed new building adjoining will serve the Moree Local Area Command and Moree Police Station. The development seeks to provide a contemporary facility to meet current and future functional, operational and service requirements of the NSW Police Force and the Moree community.

The new Police Station building is proposed on the northern side of the site between the existing main police building and the courthouse and will include a secure link to the courthouse. The existing two storey building will be demolished when the new building has been completed and commissioned. The central portion of the site will then become an open works area.

Development consent was granted on 18 November 2010 for temporary works at the site (DA10-0128). The approved temporary works include demolition of some of the existing buildings on the site, erection of nine modular buildings and ancillary works. The modular buildings, which are being constructed on the southern side of the site, will also be demolished when the new building is commissioned.

The site is zoned No 3 Business under the Moree Plains Shire LEP 1995. The proposal is permissible with consent under the planning controls and by way of clause 76 of SEPP (Infrastructure) 2007.

The application is lodged by Caldis Cook for UGL on behalf of the NSW Police Force. Consent is sought under Part 4 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. NSW Police is prescribed as a public authority pursuant to clause 226 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 and the application is subject to the provisions relating to Crown development applications within Part 4 Division 4 of the EPA Act.

Section 89(1) of the EP&A Act states:

A consent authority (other than the Minister) must not:

- (a) refuse its consent to a Crown development application, except with the approval of the Minister, or
- (b) impose a condition on its consent to a Crown development application, except with the approval of the applicant or the Minister

Applications by the Crown are generally not subject to developer contributions. It is anticipated that the current application would be similar in this regard.

This Statement includes details of the site context, an outline of the scope of works, and an assessment of the proposal in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements including the relevant heads of consideration under Section 79C of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.

2. THE SITE

2.1 Location and context

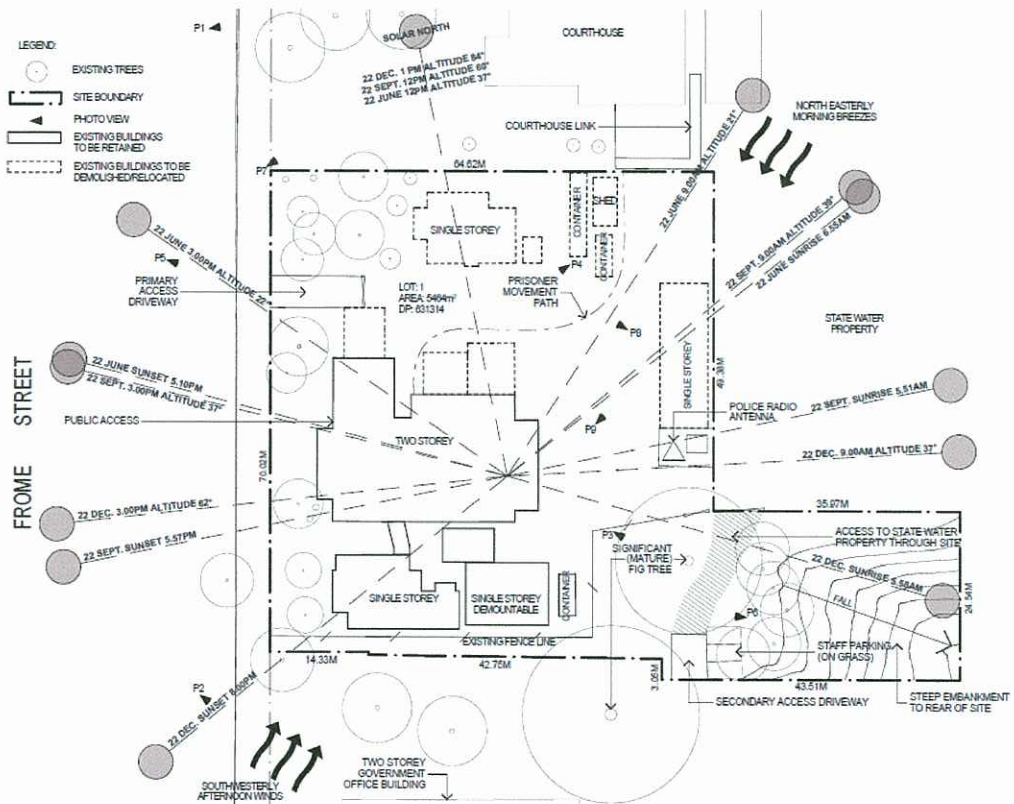
The site is at 60-62 Frome Street, Moree. It is located on the eastern side of the town near the Mehi River. The Police Station is one of a number of public administration uses along Frome Street which also includes the adjoining Moree Courthouse, Government offices and Post Office.



2.2 Site details and existing development

The property has a frontage of 70.02m to Frome Street and a depth of 64.62m. The total site area is 5,464m². The land rises from Frome Street towards the centre of the site and then falls away on the eastern side beside the State Water land towards Bank Street. A survey plan is provided with the application.

An extract of the site analysis plan is provided below. The site analysis shows the aspect of the site, prevailing winds, the location of the primary buildings which are to be retained and the location of the significant mature fig tree. The main building on the site is the two storey Police Station building.



Extract, site analysis

The site includes the 1959 main police building, former Sergeant's residence and a Lock-Up keeper's residence. Both of the former residential buildings have been adapted and are now used as part of the police station offices.

There are a number of demountable and other structures on the site. This includes containers and other structures to the rear of the site used by the Highway Patrol and Court Process officers. The Department of Corrective Services also has some demountable buildings on the land.

DA10-0128 approved the relocation of a second weatherboard building from the northern side of the site and demolition of other secondary buildings on the land.

The main Police Station building is a two storey brick building which is understood to have been purpose built as a Police Station in 1959.



Main Police building – Frome Street



Two storey main Police Station building

The weatherboard office building on the southern side of the site is single storey and set on piers.



Main Police building and weatherboard offices



Weatherboard offices

2.3 Adjoining developments

The site is part of a precinct containing public administration and civic uses. This includes the Moree Courthouse, Post Office and government offices.



Site location

The Moree Courthouse adjoins the site's northern boundary at 48 Frome Street. The Courthouse, which dates from 1900-1903, comprises a single storey symmetrical building constructed in brick and stone. The Courthouse is identified as a heritage item by the Moree Plains LEP 1995. The courthouse is also included on the NSW State Heritage Register.

The Moree Post Office is on the northern side of the Courthouse. Other uses in the vicinity of the site are the Government offices to the south of the site towards Albert Street and former council offices opposite the site. Buildings in the vicinity of the site include a mix of older style and heritage buildings, and contemporary developments. Buildings opposite the site include single storey commercial buildings of mixed age set close to the street alignment.

The site adjoins, but is not within, the Moree conservation area. Many of the buildings in the conservation date from the late 1920s and early 1930s, having been re-constructed at generally the same time after a fire destroyed much of the town. As a result the conservation area has a strong and coherent Art Deco character featuring buildings with boldly geometric patterning.



Moree Courthouse



Post office

2.4 Zoning

The site is zoned 3 Business under the Moree Plains LEP 1995. The proposed use is permissible with consent in the zone.

3. THE PROPOSAL

3.1 Application Summary

The details of the application are set out below:

Applicant name:	United Group on behalf of the NSW Police Force
Address:	60-62 Frome Street, Moree
Real property description:	Lot 1 DP 631314
Proposed development:	Demolition of the existing two storey Police Station building, construction of a new building and associated works
Hours of operation:	As existing – no change
Existing development:	Moree Police Station and associated buildings
Zoning:	Zone No 3 Business, Moree Plains LEP 1995
Site area:	5,464m ²

3.2 Design details

Design objectives

The design objectives for the project are:

- a) To provide an updated law enforcement facility that is commensurate with the local environment, adjoining Courthouse and surrounding buildings
- b) To ensure that the site planning and layout satisfies the service requirements of the Justice agencies and the NSW Police Building Code
- c) To provide safe and secure facilities that provide easy and accessible access to the public and non-operational areas in accordance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act
- d) To ensure that the new building is visually welcoming and suited to its location while giving a sense of authority and presence in the streetscape
- e) To ensure that the new building achieves appropriate environmental standards, is consistent with Council and statutory planning requirements, and is designed to minimise running and maintenance costs.

Design statement

The need to retain the existing police station on the site until completion of the new building is a design constraint and has resulted in the new building being rectangular in plan with both levels above ground almost the same size.

There was only a small opportunity for articulation in order to achieve the required floor area. The proposed building breaks the building form horizontally, with the ground level being face brickwork and the upper level light-weight cladding. This visually breaks the building into smaller forms and creates an elegant horizontality.

The red face brick of the ground level responds to the brickwork of neighbouring buildings such as the Shire Chambers and the Westpac building across the road. Every sixth course in the face brickwork will be slightly recessed – emphasizing the horizontality and also being another reference to the detailing of the Shire Chambers and Westpac building.

At the street entry a blade wall and steel canopy signifies “entry”, while the face brick wall subtly angles towards the entry doors as a welcoming gesture.

The western and eastern elevations are protected with vertical louvers, in natural anodized aluminium. The roof is a simple skillion, sloping up towards the north – opening up to the sun and creating a dialogue with the space in front of the Courthouse. The horizontality of the roof of north elevation is continued for the full elevation, but the wall elevations are broken into different elements which will add a level of complexity and visual interest to the façade.

The boundary walls to the west and south will be Bowral Blue as a contrast to the red brick of the building.

Description

The proposed new building is located to the north of the existing main building on land that has been cleared as a result of the approved temporary works. The building's footprint is rectangular, fitting into the space available between the existing main building and the adjoining courthouse. The new building will replace the existing two storey building which will be demolished as part of the final stages of works.

The new building has three levels. The basement parking level provides a total of 24 parking spaces, trailer parking spaces, and general and bike storage facilities as required by the NSW Police Code. The basement level has an access ramp from Frome Street close to the existing main building and a lift which provides access to all levels of the building.

The ground floor level contains the main areas of public interface including an enquiries counter and interview rooms, custodial areas, storage facilities and office space. The public entry to the building from Frome Street is clearly defined and has an awning providing weather protection. The ground level includes a secure link to the adjoining courthouse. Police cells and associated facilities, including an exercise area, are located to the rear of the ground level.

The ground floor level is elevated above the flood planning level. The basement access design also takes potential flooding into account.

The first floor level contains additional office areas, records storage space, staff facilities and conference room/briefing facilities.

The building has a setback of 6.6m to Frome Street. The front setback is similar to that of the government offices to the south of the site.

3.3 Development details

Development statistics

Gross floor area (new building):

Basement:	1448.7m ²
Ground floor:	1405m ²
First floor:	1433m ²

Setbacks:

Front:	6600mm
North boundary:	1500mm at ground level

Staff and facilities

A large proportion of the staff work in shifts across the 24 hours each day. As a result the numbers of staff present at different times of the day varies, with between 50 and 60 staff rostered to work in a typical shift. However, not all are present on the site during that time as many are involved in duties off-site. No significant changes are expected in terms of the number of staff expected to be at the site as a result of the changes.

No changes are proposed to the hours of operation for the police facility. The new building will be in operation 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Parking and access

Access to the basement parking level of the new building is from a vehicle crossing and ramp from Frome Street in a generally similar location to the existing driveway access. The access ramp is designed to come up at the same level of the ground floor thereby reducing the likelihood of water entering the basement during flood.

The final site layout includes two additional vehicle entry points on Frome Street, one being an entry and the second a dedicated exit. A secure fence will contain the external area of the site.

A total of 24 parking spaces are proposed within the basement level. A further 29 spaces are provided in the at-grade area giving a total of 53 spaces. In addition, the external works area includes a holding yard for stolen or damaged vehicles and a wash bay. A simple roof structure is proposed over the external parking spaces.

The existing secondary access on the southern boundary remains unchanged.

Building services

The building services are incorporated within the envelope as much as possible. The lift overrun is designed within the roof. The associated mechanical plant is screened and located on the roof. Due to high temperatures it is proposed to cover the roof top plant.

Materials and finishes

The proposed materials and finishes for the new building are shown on the accompanying plans. The materials include:

Ground floor – face brick to provide a solid base for the building

First floor – light weight cladding to provide an aesthetically pleasing elevation which is low maintenance but also relates appropriately to the adjoining courthouse.

Fencing and landscaping

A 2.4m high face brick fence is required to secure the open works area. Landscaping is proposed in front of the fence to soften its impact on the street and contribute to the landscaped character of the streetscape. Selected plant species are to include low (security suitable) native and water resistant shrubs to the street. The existing mature fig tree to the rear of the site is to be retained.

3.4 Staging

The works approved by DA10-0128 facilitate the site's preparation for construction of the new building. The staging is:

Approved temporary works – demolition of building on northern side of site and construction of modular accommodation

Construction of new building – the new two storey building will be constructed between the existing main building and courthouse

Demolition of the existing building and external works – the final stage will include removing the temporary accommodation once the new building is complete and commissioned and demolition of the existing two storey main building. The reinstatement of the external works area will also occur at this stage.

4. COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT

An assessment of the proposed works under Section 79C of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act is set out below. This includes all matters relevant to the application.

Section 79C(a)(1)

The Provisions of any Environmental Planning Instrument

State Environmental Planning Policy No 55 (Remediation of Land)

SEPP 55 requires Council to consider whether land is contaminated prior to granting consent to any development. Council must be satisfied that any necessary remediation has occurred before use of the land is permitted.

The site has historically been used for primarily commercial purposes. Two underground fuel tanks have recently been removed from the site and the land rehabilitated. Accordingly the proposal is satisfactory in relation to the requirements of clause 7 of SEPP 55.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007

SEPP (Infrastructure) 2007 aims to facilitate the effective and efficient delivery of infrastructure across the state. The policy prevails over local plans where there is an inconsistency.

Division 14 of the SEPP applies to Public Administration buildings and buildings of the Crown. The SEPP adopts the Standard Instrument definition for public administration buildings:

Public administration building means a building used for offices or for administrative or other like purposes by the Crown, a statutory body, a council or an organisation established for public purposes, and includes a court house or a police station.

Clause 76 of SEPP (Infrastructure) 2007 permits public infrastructure buildings with consent in zones that are prescribed by clause 74. The No 3 Business zone comprises a comparable zone and the proposed development is therefore permissible with consent under the SEPP.

Clause 104 triggers requirements for referral of certain applications to the RTA. The proposal is not of sufficient size and does not have the relevant characteristics to require referral under this clause.

Moree Plains LEP 1995

LEP Objectives

The general objectives of the LEP as set out in clause 2 are:

- (a) to encourage the proper management, development and conservation of natural and man-made resources within the Moree Plains area to promote the social and economic well-being of the community and the protection of the environment, and
- (b) to replace the former planning controls with a single local environmental plan to help facilitate growth and development in the Moree Plains area in a manner which is consistent with the objective specified in paragraph (a) and which:
 - (i) protects and improves the economic base of the area,
 - (ii) facilitates the efficient and effective delivery of amenities and services,
 - (iii) protects, enhances and conserves prime crop and pasture resources,
 - (iv) facilitates a range of residential and employment opportunities in accordance with demand,
 - (v) facilitates farm adjustments,
 - (vi) ensures that the safety and efficiency of arterial roads are not adversely affected by development on adjacent land,
 - (vii) minimises the impact of flooding and bushfires,
 - (viii) encourages the separation of conflicting land uses, and
 - (ix) protects the heritage significance of the area.

The proposal is consistent with the LEP objectives as a development which supports the ongoing protection of law enforcement in the district.

Business zone

The site is within the No. 3 Business zone. The zone objectives are:

- (a) to encourage the development and expansion of business activities which will contribute to economic growth and employment opportunities within the area,
- (b) to facilitate the establishment of retail, commercial and professional services to meet the needs of the community and which are compatible with the surrounding environment,
- (c) to maintain and enhance the role of the Moree town centre as the major centre for retail, commercial and professional services for the area and for associated uses,
- (d) to provide office employment in locations close to other town centre facilities including Government offices and community services,
- (e) to provide low intensity retail, commercial and tourist activities on the fringe of the town centre of Moree which will not prejudice the commercial viability of the core retail localities in the town of Moree,
- (f) to provide neighbourhood business centres meeting the day to day needs of surrounding residential precincts,
- (g) to provide non-commercial development where such development is compatible with the commercial character of the locality, and
- (h) to provide carparking to meet the needs of commercial areas, and

- (i) to provide for development that maintains the town character of Moree and Mungindi and is in sympathy with existing development in terms of the following:
 - (i) setbacks
 - (ii) building bulk and scale
 - (iii) visual amenity
 - (iv) heritage significance
 - (v) townscape and streetscape character
 - (vi) existing service infrastructure
 - (vii) land capabilities.

The proposed use as a public administration building is permissible with consent in the zone. The proposal is consistent with the zone objectives as a development which maintains and enhances the role of Moree as the area's major centre. The new building and associated site works are sympathetic to the town character and adjoining developments in terms of setbacks, building bulk and scale, visual amenity and character as required by the zone objectives. Additional comments are provided below.

Heritage provisions – Courthouse

The adjoining courthouse is identified as a heritage item by the LEP. Clause 27 of the LEP requires the consent authority to consider potential impacts of developments that are in the vicinity of heritage items on the heritage significance and setting of the item.

The statement of significance for the Courthouse states:

The site dates from one of the key periods for the development of Moree as a direct result of the original town plan of 1862. The Courthouse, built in 1900-1903 is a prominent and good example of the Federation Free Style in a landscaped garden setting. It makes an important and positive contribution to the streetscape.

Designed by Government architect Walter Liberty Vernon and constructed by C. Grant, the building and its setting forms part of a Law and Order precinct with the Police Station complex next door, and the former council offices opposite.

A Heritage Impact report has been prepared and identifies the important features of the Courthouse building as:

- deep setback from the road
- landscaped setting
- contrast of the red brick and sandstone combined with the interesting and small scale detail
- front fence.

The report identifies the important design elements for the new police station building as:

1. Setback

The setback for the new building should be well considered. Setting the new building further back than the existing will enable better views of the

courthouse and provide for additional landscaping in the foreground. Consider a setback equal to the Government Offices at 64-66 Frome Street.

Response: The setback of the proposed building is similar to the Government Offices as recommended by the Heritage Report.

2. Fence line

Fencing is an important element for the public and streetscape value. The visually dominant and well detailed fence allows views through to the building behind.

Response: The front setback area in front of the new building is to be open and landscaped. This will allow views to the heritage building to be retained across the site. Fencing is required to secure the open works area. The fence is set well back from the street alignment and the setback area will be landscaped.

3. Landscaping

Consider retaining the existing trees or those suitable for a more considered landscape forecourt, possibly symmetrical.

Response: the proposal retains the significant mature fig tree on the site. Landscaping is proposed in the front setback area and will include drought tolerant and native shrubs.

4. Materials and/or colours

The red brick walls, sandstone trims and fence line are predominant characteristics.

Response: The materials and finishes of the proposed building have been selected to ensure a lightweight and sympathetic elevation which does not seek to compete with the adjoining heritage item.

5. Bulk, massing and scale

The building presents as a monolith of some 20m wide and 8m to the ridge line.

Response: The building footprint has been constrained by the need to retain the existing police building until the new building is constructed. Materials and detailing are used to achieve visual interest and ensure the building relates well to neighbouring developments and the context of the site.

Overall the proposed building is considered to satisfy the requirements of clause 27 in relation to the adjoining heritage item as a development which will not adversely affect the setting or heritage significance of the heritage item. Additional comments are provided in response to the DCP requirements below.

Section 79C(a)(ii)

The provisions of any draft environmental planning instrument

The draft Moree Plains LEP 2010 was exhibited for public comment from August to September 2010. The site is zoned B3 Commercial Core under the draft LEP. The zoning of the draft LEP is comparable to the existing zone and does not raise any additional issues for the current application.

Section 79C(a)(iii)**Any Development Control Plan***Moree DCP 2008*

The site is subject to the Moree DCP 2008. Relevant provisions are set out below.

Section 3 - Parking

The DCP requires parking to be provided at a rate of 1 space per 50m² of gross leasable floor space. The calculation is not relevant to the proposed development as it comprises a public administration building with no leasable floor space.

The application provides a total of 53 parking spaces, including 24 spaces within the basement level of the new building at 29 spaces at grade in the remodeled open works area. This is consistent with Government policy which specifies that parking is only to be provided for police vehicles.

The DCP also specifies dimensions for parking spaces, isle widths and the like. The proposed basement level complies with the relevant specifications.

Section 5 – Moree Floodplain

The site is flood affected and therefore subject to the provisions of Section 5. Specialist reports on this aspect of the proposal accompany the application. In summary the proposed development has been designed to ensure that the new building is flood proof. The ground floor level has been raised to provide the required freeboard above the flood planning level and the basement entry has been designed to minimise the risks of flood waters entering the building.

Section 8 – Heritage Conservation Area

The site is beside the Moree Heritage Conservation Area. Although not directly affected by the conservation area, the development's potential interaction with the streetscape and conservation has been considered.

The Heritage Report generally finds that the existing police building is neutral to the conservation area as it is not assertive, supported by trees and landscaping, and includes smaller scale elements within its façade. The primary recommendations for the new building are:

- The new building to be well setback from the road and
- The building to be designed to be compatible with adjoining and nearby significant buildings in terms of form, massing, scale and front and side setbacks.

Section 79C(iia)**Any Planning Agreement**

There are no planning agreements that are relevant to the proposal.

Section 79C(a)(iv)**Matters prescribed by the Regulations**

All matters prescribed by the Regulations are expected to be included in the consent.

Section 79C(b)

The likely impacts of the development

Context, setting and public domain

The proposed new building has been designed to respect the setting and heritage significance of the adjoining Courthouse and the Moree Conservation Area. This is achieved through setbacks, which are based on the setback of the Government Offices to the south, materials and the relatively simple form of the new building.

Access, transport and traffic

The proposal does not significantly alter the existing traffic conditions at the site. Parking spaces are split between the basement level of the new building and at-grade spaces in the open works area.

The number of spaces provided is consistent with Government policy that specifies parking should only be provided for police vehicles.

Utilities, Land Resources, Water

The site is served by existing utility services. The proposal should not raise any issues or concerns in this regard.

Soils

Construction would be subject to normal preventative measures. The underground fuel tanks that were previously on the site have been removed and the affected areas remediated.

Safety, Security and Crime Prevention

Matters of public safety have been considered as part of the design process. The building has a legible plan and clear entry from Frome Street. The public entry is also marked by the raised awning section and will be clearly sign posted with directional and building identification signs.

A solid brick fence is required to secure the open works area. Landscaping is proposed in front of the fence to soften its impact on the streetscape.

All prisoner handling occurs within the secured areas of the site away from the public access areas.

Social Impacts

The proposal supports the ongoing use of the site by NSW Police and reinforces the police presence in the locality. The facility will become the major centre for the Moree Local Area Command and Moree Police Station.

The proposal also supports the ongoing operations of the adjoining Moree Courthouse, and fulfils an important social function for the local and regional community.

The proposed new building is fully compliant and accessible for disabled access.

Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative impacts of the proposal are positive. The development reinforces the role of law enforcement activities in the area, and will improve the overall level of service available to the local community.

Section 79C(c)

The suitability of the site for the development

Does the proposal fit in the locality?

The proposal is considered suitable for the locality. The new building respects the established character of the adjoining heritage conservation area and the adjacent courthouse. The building's simple form, setbacks, landscaping and materials and finishes support this aspect of the proposal.

Are the site attributes conducive to development?

The site attributes are conducive to the development. Development consent has been granted for temporary works which allow existing operations to be relocated on the site to create the space for the new building.

The portion of the site on which the new building is to be constructed is relatively level and conveniently sited beside the courthouse. The new layout for the site is appropriate in the context of adjoining land uses and the functional requirements of the law enforcement agencies.

Public or other submissions

Not available at this stage.

Section 79C(e)

The public interest

The public interest is served by the consistent application of planning controls and council policy. In this instance it is also served by supporting the development of improved policing and law enforcement facilities.

The proposal will comprise a quality contemporary development within the Moree commercial and public administration precinct, and supports an important government function for the community.

5. Conclusion

The application seeks consent for demolition of the existing main police station building, construction of a new building and associated works at the Moree Police Station. The new facility will serve the Moree Local Area Command and the Moree Police Station.

The application is permissible with consent pursuant to SEPP (Infrastructure) 2007 and is consistent the relevant controls and policies of the Moree Plains LEP 1995 and Moree DCP 2008. The application comprises a crown application.

The development is not expected to result in any unreasonable adverse impacts, and will be an appropriate contemporary development beside the historic Moree Courthouse and nearby heritage conservation area. The proposal supports the important role of policing and law enforcement in the community.

As a crown development the application should not be subject to any contribution requirements or the like.