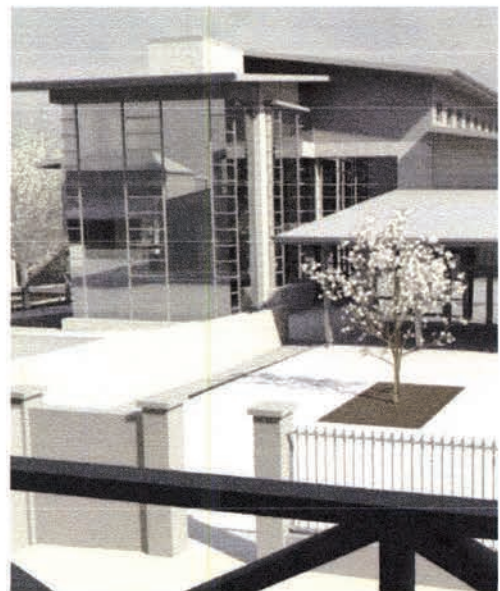


STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

**Muswellbrook Shire
Council**

PROPOSED TERTIARY EDUCATION CENTRE



Prepared by:

John Carr Heritage Design
Final Report Rev C
21 March, 2014

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Cover: *The proposed development viewed from the balcony of Loxton House.*

(Photographs in this report are by Stephen Rose unless otherwise noted.)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview:

The following report comprises a Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI) for the proposed new Tertiary Education Centre in Hill Street, Muswellbrook. Guidelines published by the NSW Office of Environment & Heritage have been used to produce the Statement of Heritage Impact.

John Carr Heritage Design has been engaged by Stephen Rose Architects on behalf of Muswellbrook Shire Council to prepare the SoHI to accompany their submission for a proposed new Tertiary Education Centre. The Statement summarises the development proposal as described on the following drawings, dated Feb 2014:

553 DA A01 (Rev A)	553 DA A02 (Rev A)	553 DA A03 (Rev A)	553 DA A04 (Rev A)
553 DA A05 (Rev A)	553 DA A06 (Rev A)	553 DA A07 (Rev A)	553 DA A08 (Rev A)
553 DA A09 (Rev A)	553 DA A10 (Rev A)	553 DA A11 (Rev A)	553 DA A12 (Rev A)
553 DA A13 (Rev A)	553 DA A14 (Rev A)	553 DA A15 (Rev A)	



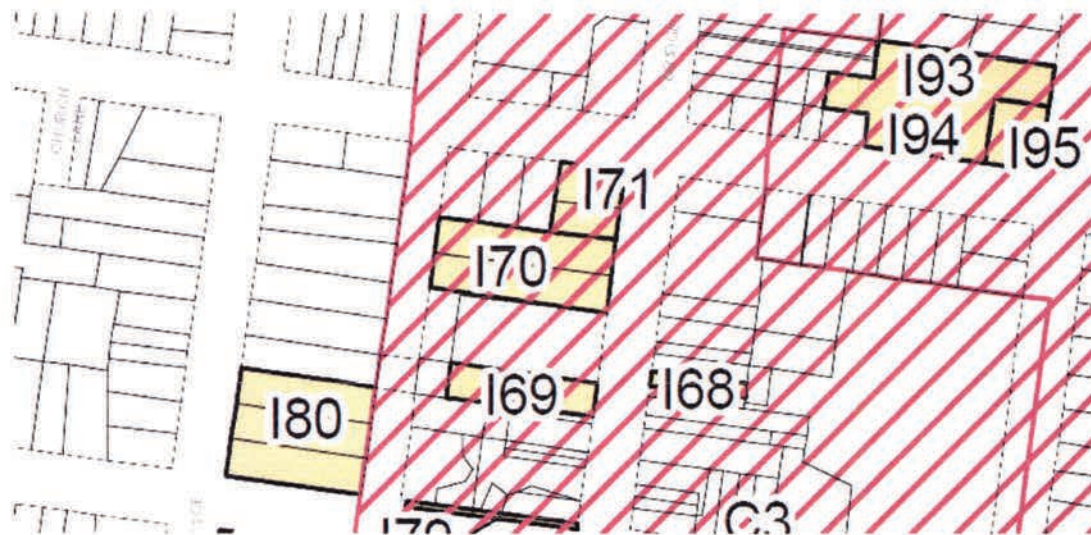
Plate 1: Aerial view of the site off Bridge and Hill Streets.
(Source Stephen Rose Architects and Muswellbrook Shire Council)

1.2 Limitations:

This report has not undertaken detailed historical research of the Visitors Information Centre due to the extensive alterations to the building as evidenced by materials and details surviving on site. The report does not assess the structural adequacy of the building or the costs to repair or reinstate damaged or missing building elements.

1.3 The Setting:

The subject site lies within the Muswellbrook Heritage Conservation Area and is nearby to individually listed heritage items. Three items, Weidmann Cottage, Loxton House and St Alban's Anglican Church are listed as being of STATE heritage significance. Other nearby items are of Local heritage significance.



Suburb	Item name	Address	Property description	Significance	Item no
Muswellbrook	Campbell's Corner	60 Bridge Street	Lot 101, DP 606303	Local	167
Muswellbrook	Masonic Lodge	78 Bridge Street	Lot 1, DP 558793	Local	168
Muswellbrook	Uniting Church	110 Bridge Street	Lot 401, DP 516923	Local	169
Muswellbrook	Weidmann Cottage	126 Bridge Street	Lot 7, DP 71755; Lot 8, Section 6, DP 758740	State	170
Muswellbrook	Loxton House	140-142 Bridge Street	Lots 1 and 2, DP 11221	State	171
Muswellbrook	St Alban's Anglican Church	20 Brook Street	Lots 15-20, Section 6, DP 758740	State	180
Muswellbrook	St John's Presbyterian Church	Hill Street	Lot 21, DP 526480	Local	193
Muswellbrook	Former St John's Presbyterian Church	Hill Street	Lot 21, DP 526480	Local	194
Muswellbrook	Former Presbyterian manse	106 Hill Street	Lot 20, DP 526480	Local	195

Plate 2: Extract from the LEP showing a portion of the Heritage Map and Heritage Items.
(Source - Muswellbrook LEP 2009)

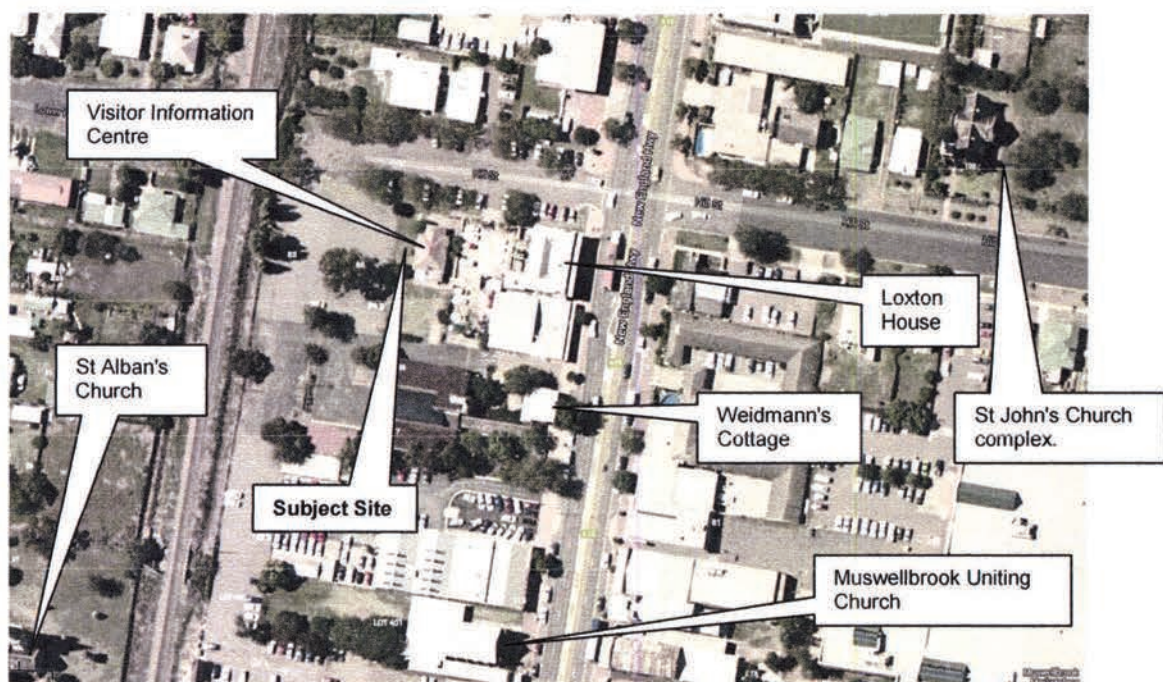


Plate 3: Aerial view of the site and surrounds. (Source Google)

St Alban's Church can presently be seen from the end of Hill Street across the existing car park looking south west. The proposed development maintains that aspect as the car parking arrangements will remain largely unaffected by the new building. Views from St Alban's toward the northern CBD area and the township will see the development in conjunction with other surrounding buildings. The new building will not block any views from the St Alban's site to the overall township, including those views towards the Presbyterian building complex.



Plate 4: The view toward the site from St Albans.



Plate 5: The spire view is lost by moving back.

The view toward the northern portion of the township from the St Alban's site is limited depending where you stand. The spire of the Presbyterian Church can be seen from near the belfry, but immediately lost when you move back on the site due to surrounding trees. The new development may screen part of this view, but it is not considered a strong enough view to be a "view corridor" that should be preserved.



Plate 6: View from the Hill St car park to St Albans.



Plate 7: View from Hill St to the Presbyterian Church.

The lower end of Hill Street at the car park entry provides good views of both St Alban's and the Presbyterian Churches as well as the rear of Loxton House, which are preserved.



Plate 8: Two surviving cottages in Hill Street.



Plate 9: View of St Alban's spire behind Loxton House.

Only a few cottages survive in Hill Street, behind and adjacent to the rear of Loxton House. The view from Hill Street toward Loxton House will retain the St Alban's spire in the background.



Plate 10: the view to St Alban's spire from the hill area will be maintained.

(Source - Google)

The western portion of Hill Street, once residential, has lost all but three cottages built in the first half of the twentieth century. It is likely that this area has been largely abandoned for residential use due to the noise generated by the Great Northern Railway, the commercial area of the town and the gradual introduction of car parking along the town's boundary with the railway corridor. The house on the southern side of Hill Street, known as the Muswellbrook Visitors & Wine Centre was originally a brick & tile cottage, now owned by Muswellbrook Council.

A 15 metre wide forecourt separates the proposed building from the wall of the Loxton House rear courtyard to the verandah of the Student Common Room. Visually, there is a 23.6 metre distance between the wall of the Loxton House rear courtyard to the wall of the Student Common Room under the verandah.



Plate 11: Loxton House on the corner of Bridge & Hill Streets will remain visually dominant.



Plate 12: The rear of Loxton House and the neighbouring private property.

The proposed curtilage to Loxton House virtually retains the existing space, but changes the use from vehicle parking to a pedestrian forecourt, improving the visual aspect to the Loxton House courtyard enclosure.



Plate 13: View of Weidmann Cottage from the Library.



Plate 14: The Courtyard of Weidmann Cottage.



Plate 15: Southern aspect of Weidmann Cottage.



Plate 16: View toward the subject site from the Library.

Weidmann Cottage is visually separated from the subject site by distance and screening from landscaping and adjacent buildings.

1.4 The Muswellbrook Central Business District Heritage Conservation Area

The Muswellbrook Central Business District Heritage Conservation Area is separate from the residential area as shown in the LEP Maps.

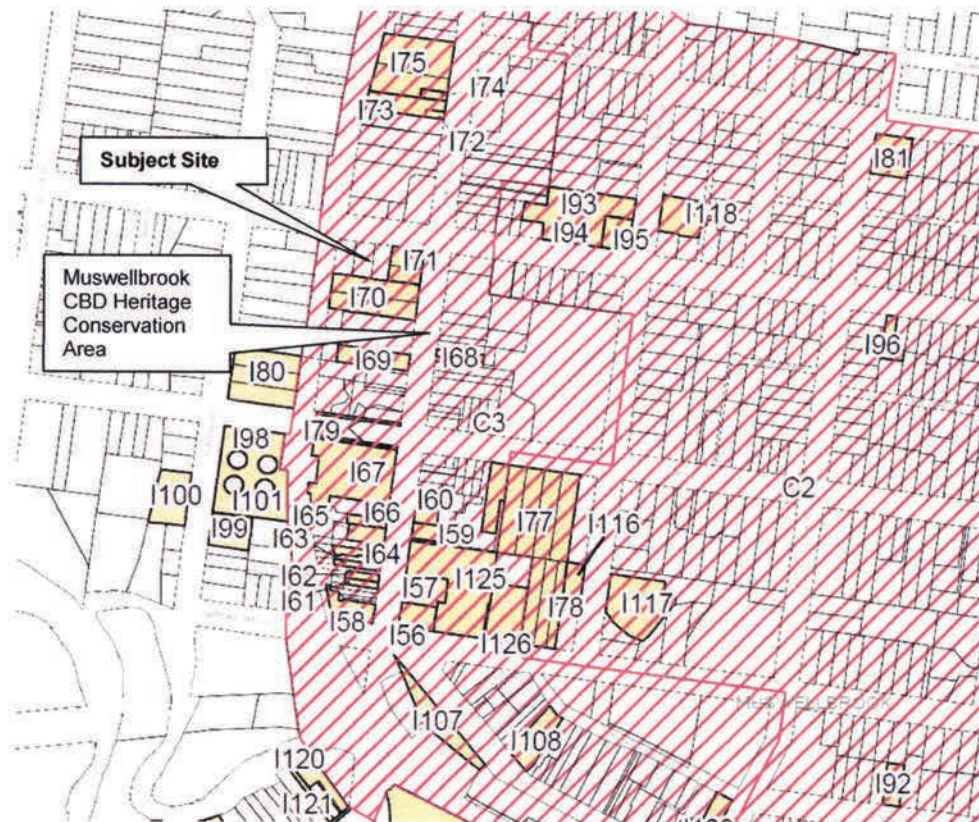


Plate 17: The majority of the Muswellbrook CBD Heritage Conservation Area to the immediate west of the Muswellbrook Residential Heritage Conservation Area. (Source - Muswellbrook Shire Council LEP 2009)

The cultural significance of the CBD area is defined in the Muswellbrook Development Control Plan as follows:

15.4.2 MUSWELLBROOK CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT HERITAGE CONSERVATION AREA

This heritage conservation area embraces all the allotments fronting on to Bridge and Victoria Streets from Carl Street and the Railway overbridge to Wilkins Street, together with allotments further east and west to the railway which are in the vicinity of these allotments. Most of the older buildings lie in an older commercial precinct between William and Hill Streets. Precincts north of Hill Street and east of William Street contain mixtures of older and more recent buildings including some originally built for residential purposes.

Statement of Significance

This area is significant for the Upper Hunter region as a physical expression of 150 years of commercial activity in the region. It is highly visible from both a major regional highway and the northern railway as well as from outside the area. While the earliest built features of the streetscape have disappeared, existing buildings provide a tangible link to the commercial history of Muswellbrook, particularly to the interwar period of sustained growth. A variety of building styles is represented but, because most buildings date from the first half of this century, their form and materials tend to be in harmony. Many of the more modern buildings are modest rather than brash, and respect the earlier era character of the precinct. Street and private plantings tend to modulate the intrusive effect of other 'modern' buildings.

The proposed development adds to this extensive history of the growth of Muswellbrook by respecting the earlier character of the conservation area while providing a building of contemporary design.

2.0 STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

Statement of Heritage Impact for:

The proposed Tertiary Education Centre in Hill Street, Muswellbrook.

Date:

This Report was completed on 21st March 2014.

Reference:

The site is not listed on the Muswellbrook LEP 2009 but is within the Muswellbrook Central Business District Heritage Conservation Area and adjacent to three items of STATE heritage significance.

Address & Property Description

The site is located at Hill Street, Muswellbrook NSW 2333.

The property description is:

- Lot 3 & 4, in DP 11221.

Prepared by:

John Carr, a Heritage Architect trading as John Carr Heritage Design, compiled this report.

For:

The report has been prepared for Stephen Rose Architects on behalf of Muswellbrook Shire Council.

2.1 Background to this Report:

This project is a result of a decision by Muswellbrook Shire Council to join with the Hunter Institute of TAFE and the University of Southern Queensland to provide a shared Tertiary Education Centre specialising in mining engineering in the Muswellbrook CBD adjacent to the existing community library resource. The proposal involves the demolition of an existing domestic building currently housing the Muswellbrook Visitors Centre.

2.2 The Existing Building:

The existing Muswellbrook Visitors Centre was once a house, probably constructed in the 1920's or 1930's by the look of its detail. The style of design indicated it was a simple version of the Inter War Bungalow style with a distinctive "cut-off" gable to the front.



Plate 17: The north elevation to Hill Street.



Plate 18: The western side with Entry doorway.

Externally the building fabric is terracotta tile roof, face brick walls now painted and timber windows, doors and trims. Internally the building has fibrous plaster decorative ceilings, set plaster walls, splayed timber skirtings & Picture rails, square timber architraves, 4 panelled doors, glazed multi light doors and a plate rail to the Lounge Room. The building is very typical for its period and not unique.



Plate 19: The rear or southern elevation.



Plate 20: The eastern side elevation.

Externally, the bungalow's most impressive feature would have been its open front verandah to Hill Street, now enclosed. The building is generally in the same configuration as built, except for changes such as additional doors in the facade and the infilled verandah. The "cut-off" gable is a small fashion adjustment, probably started by the Spanish Mission design style and adjusted by building contractors of the day. House plans were available from banks and lending authorities and builders picked up on this, offering their own variations. A considerable number of houses were built between the wars using standard plans.

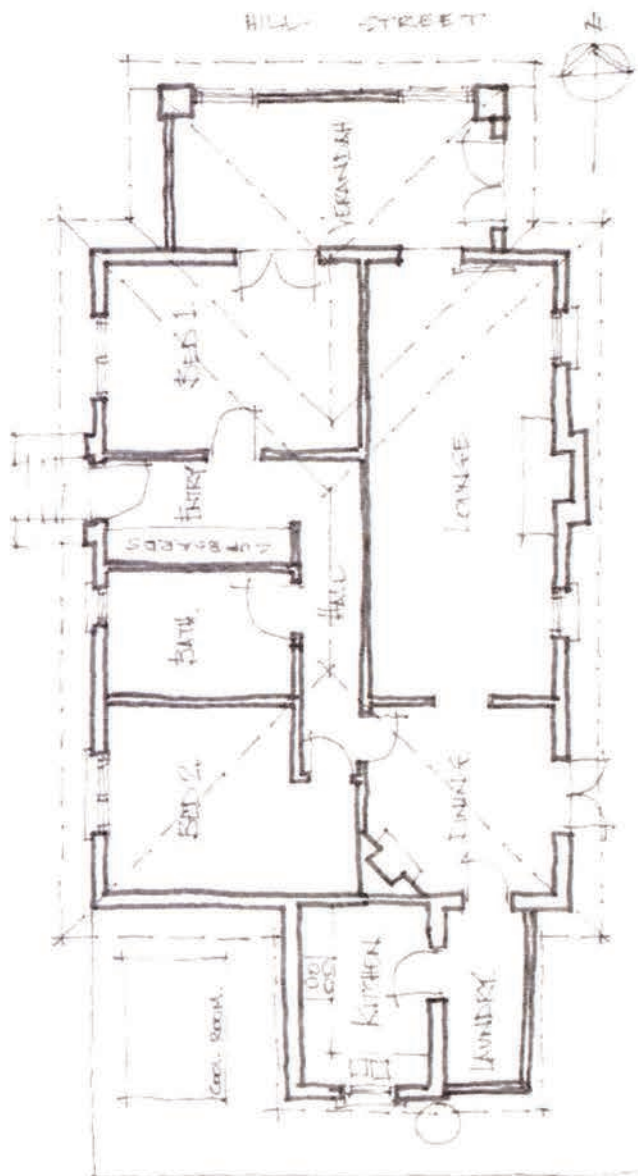


Plate 21: Plan diagram of possible house layout (J. Carr - not to scale.)



Plate 22: The side Entry door to the building.



Plate 23: Decorative fibrous plaster ceiling & cornice.

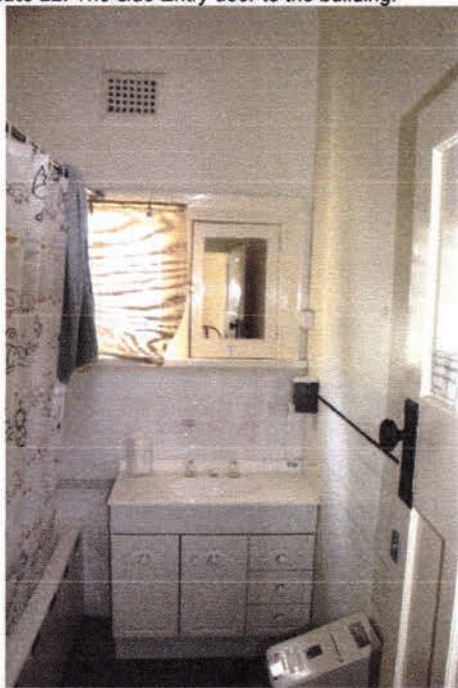


Plate 24: Modern Bathroom.



Plate 25: View from Bedroom 1 to enclosed Verandah.



Plate 26: The enclosed front Verandah.



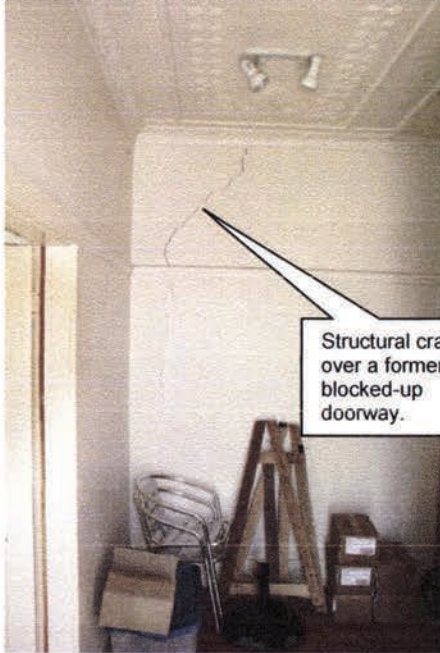
Plate 27: Decorative fibrous plaster ceiling to Bed 1.



Plate 28: Lounge Room view towards the Verandah.



Plate 29: Lounge view showing plate rails and ceiling.



Structural crack
over a former
blocked-up
doorway.

Plate 30: View in Bed 1 toward infilled doorway.

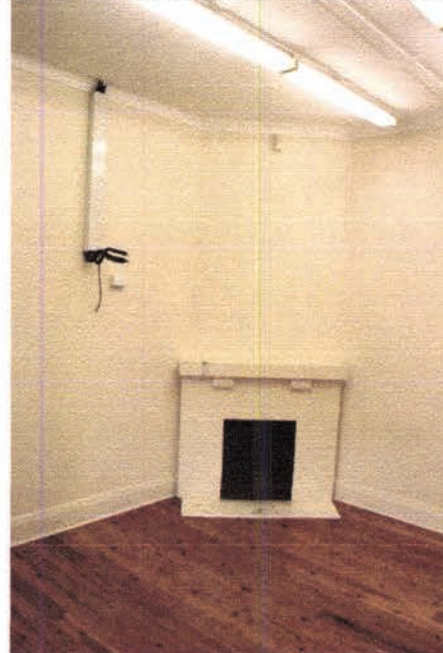


Plate 31: Dining Room corner brick fireplace.



Plate 32: Laundry from the Dining Room.



Plate 33: Kitchen accessed off the Laundry.

The internal spaces are generally as original with changes to adapt its use for a visitor's centre. The design is not rare or distinctive enough to attribute it to an architect, but may have been constructed, along with others, by a local contractor from a standard plan.

2.3 Assessment of Cultural Significance

The cultural significance of the Muswellbrook Visitors Centre is assessed below.

2.3.1 Assessment of Heritage Value

This assessment is based on criteria developed by the NSW Office of Environment & Heritage using the following values:

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

The following analysis of significance uses the criteria identified in the Heritage Act:

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

- A detailed history of the building has not been made. Based on its style of design and the surviving detail, it can be reasonably established that the bungalow was constructed at some time between the wars (late 1920's to 1930's). The building is of a typical standard bungalow design and not considered to be rare or important enough to the local area's cultural history.

Criterion (b): Association of Life or Works An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person or group of persons, of importance in the cultural or natural history of the local area (Local Significance).

- This building does not satisfy these criteria due to the type of building and the numbers constructed in the Hunter Valley.

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

- The building façade demonstrates the typical aesthetic character of a bungalow.
- It is not considered to be aesthetically important.

Criterion (d): Cultural, Social or Spiritual An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in the area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (Local Significance).

- The building does not satisfy these criteria.

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

- It is not considered that the building will yield any information on bungalow construction that is not already known.

Criterion (f): Endangered Item An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the area's cultural or natural history (Local Significance).

- The place is not considered to be rare.

Criterion (g): Demonstrating Principal Characteristics An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of the area's cultural or natural places, or, cultural or natural environments (Local Significance).

- The place is not considered to be important in demonstrating the principle characteristics of the bungalow design.

2.3.2 Integrity & Grading of Significance:

The integrity of the physical and documentary evidence must be such to enable a sound analysis of the significance of the place. Loss of integrity or condition may diminish significance. Different components of a place may make a different relative contribution to its heritage value.

Grading (significance)	Justification	Status
EXCEPTIONAL	Rare or outstanding element directly contributing to an item's local and State significance.	Fulfils criteria for local and State listing
HIGH	High degree of original fabric. Demonstrates a key element of the item's significance. Alterations do not detract from significance.	Fulfils criteria for local and State listing
MODERATE	Altered or modified elements. Elements with little heritage value, but which contribute to the overall significance of the item.	Fulfils criteria for local and State listing
LITTLE	Alterations detract from the significance. Difficult to interpret.	Does not fulfil criteria for local or State listing.
INTRUSIVE	Damaging to the item's heritage significance.	Does not fulfil criteria for local or State listing.

The assessment of significance also requires that the level of significance be determined:

1. *National significance (significant to the people of Australia)*
2. *State significance (significant to the people of NSW)*
3. *Local significance (significant within the local government area)*

2.3.3 Statement of Cultural Significance

The bungalow known as the Muswellbrook Visitor & Wine Centre in Hill Street, Muswellbrook, is of **little** Local heritage significance due to fabric alterations to the interiors, as well as alterations to the rear of the building.

The building is not a good example of the individual bungalow house it once was, with the removal of the surrounding houses that once occupied Hill Street. To this degree, it has lost its value as a contributing item to the CBD Heritage Conservation Area, whose cultural significance lies largely with the commercial development of Bridge Street and its surrounds.

2.4 The Proposed Development:

2.4.1 The Building:

The proposed building has been designed to provide a shared Tertiary Education Centre specialising in mining engineering in the Muswellbrook CBD adjacent to the existing community library resource and Loxton House was purchased in 2012 to include in the campus. The building layout has been carefully designed so as not to visually impose on Loxton House. It provides for a single storey wide verandah to the eastern portion of the new building. This verandah is constructed over the footprint of the existing single storey bungalow, which is proposed to be demolished. The design converts the existing car park at the rear of Loxton House, into a pedestrian courtyard, thereby maintaining the existing curtilage to the west of the listed item.

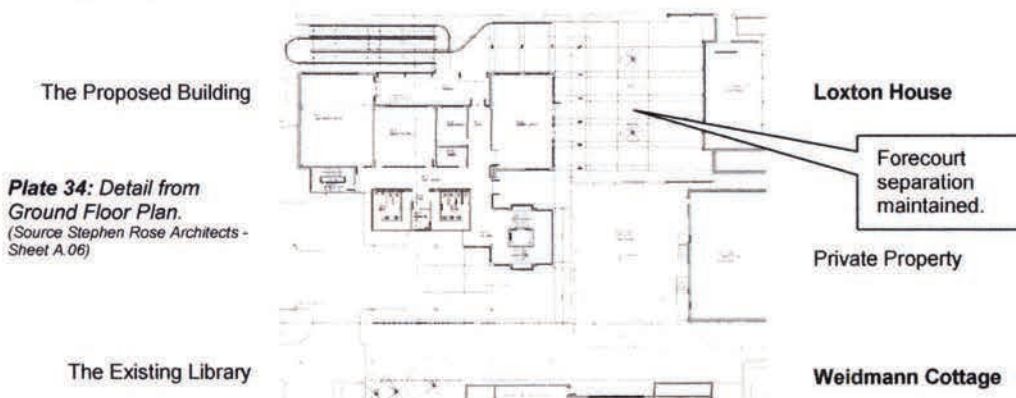




Plate 35: View of development from Bridge Street looking northwest. (Source Stephen Rose Architects - Sheet A.15)

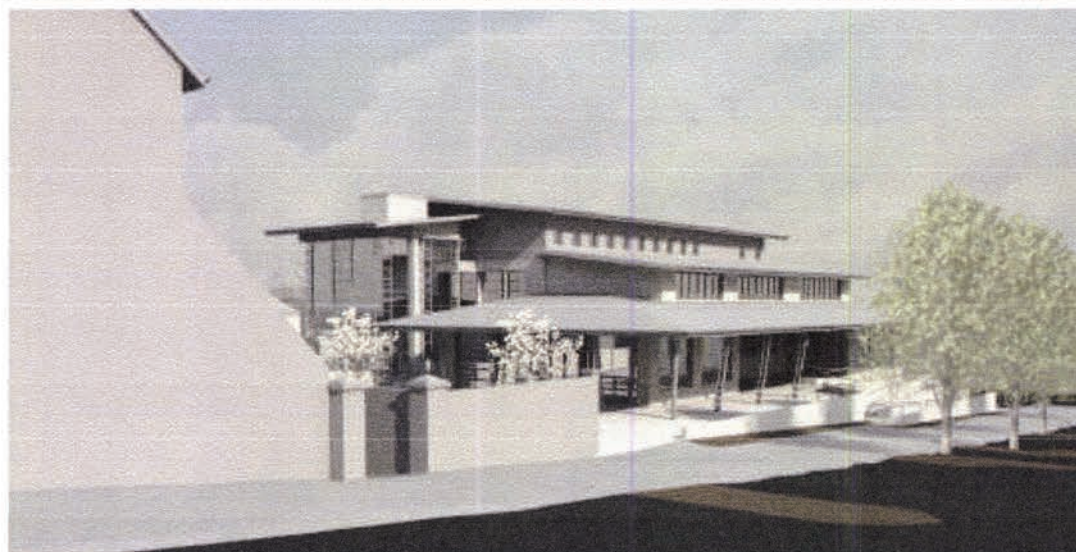


Plate 36: View of development from Hill Street looking southwest. (Source Stephen Rose Architects - Sheet A.14)

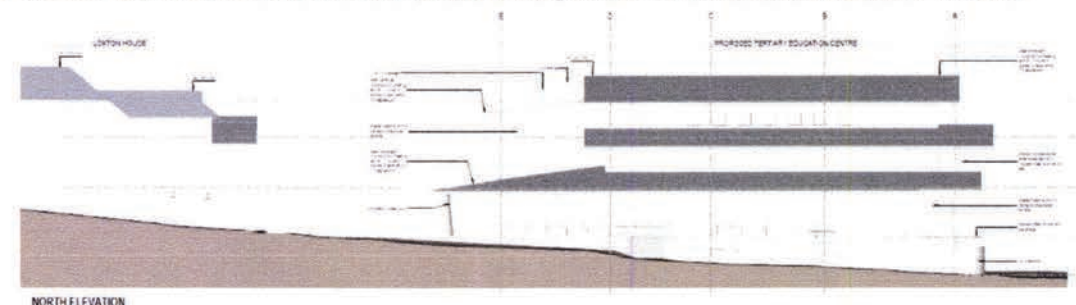


Plate 37: North Elevation. (Source Stephen Rose Architects - Sheet A.09)

The above architects impressions and elevation show that both Loxton House and Weidmann Cottage remain dominant heritage items within their respective settings, both maintaining their existing curtilage. The impact of the bulk and scale of the proposed building is reduced by the natural fall of the land toward the railway corridor.

While Loxton House does not have a CMP, the CMP for Weidmann House was updated in 2010 and the policies for the setting recommend retention of the existing curtilage to Weidmann House as a minimum. This has been achieved in the proposed development by maintaining the curtilage and setting to Loxton House.

2.4.2 Archaeology:

The Conservation management plan for Weidmann Cottage included a plan of the subject site prepared in 1872, which shows the location of Loxton House and Weidmann Cottage, which at that stage had buildings located on its northern and southern sides. Hill Street can be

clearly seen with cottages on the northern side and a separate building or shed to the west of Loxton House on its Hill Street boundary. All other buildings on Hill Street are located west of the Railway easement.

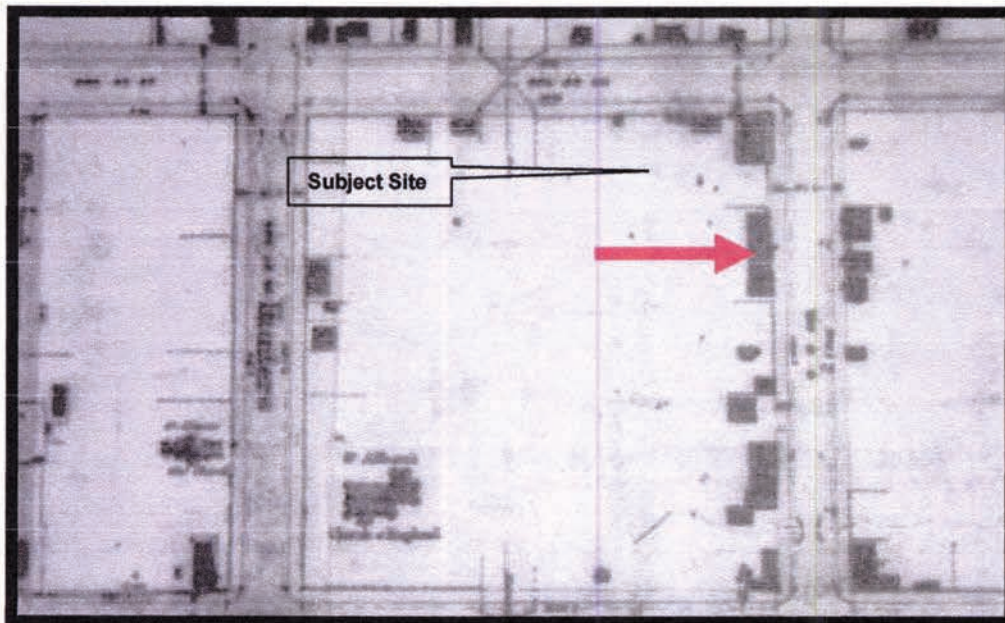


Plate 38: The 1872 Map of Muswellbrook. (Source - 2010 CMP of Weidmann Cottage).

Part of an 1872 map of Muswellbrook showing location of Weidmann Cottage, indicated by the red arrow. (Source: Rob Tickle Veritas Archaeology & History Service, S60 Application & Associated Documentation for Muswellbrook Library Extension DA215/2008, p.18, original held by Muswellbrook Shire Council).

The indication from the above map is that there is a low risk of encountering archaeology on the site of the proposed development.

2.5 Assessment of Heritage Impact:

- **How is the impact of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the items and conservation area to be minimised:**

The impact is to be minimised by preserving the existing curtilage between Loxton House and the Muswellbrook Visitor Centre (MVC). The proposed new building has a single storey verandah structure over the footprint of the former MVC building. The roof of the three storey portion of the new development remains underneath the level of the apex of the Loxton House roof to maintain the dominance of Loxton House on Bridge Street. The development takes advantage of the fall in the land toward the railway corridor, to site the building to minimise its dominance of the CBD heritage conservation area.

- **How do the proposed works affect views to and from the heritage items and conservation area? What has been done to minimise negative affects:**

The proposed works affect some marginal views to and from St Alban's Church however existing view corridors to St Alban's Church will remain. The siting of the building on lower ground west of Bridge Street results in the affects on views being largely from the western side of the railway corridor to the rear of Loxton House and Weidmann Cottage, depending on the point of observation. Movement to an adjacent view point would restore the views to the rear of these two buildings. The development will have minimal affect on views to and from the CBD heritage conservation area.

- **Is the development sited on any known or potentially significant archaeological deposits? If so, have alternative solutions been considered? Why were they rejected?**

The site is not known to have any potential archaeological deposits based on an 1872 plan showing almost no buildings on the southern side of Hill Street on the subject site. (See Plate 38)

- **Is the new development sympathetic to the heritage items and conservation area? In what way (eg form, siting, proportions, design)?**

This design is sympathetic for a three storey educational structure as it is orientated east west in a similar fashion to other commercial buildings in the Muswellbrook CBD. The design has minimised the spread of the footprint and visually reduces bulk by the use of glass, helping to make the building transparent. The contemporary design does not challenge the aesthetics of the two adjacent heritage items but ensures the stone buildings remain unique and dominant by the use of modern materials on the proposed building in contrast to use of stone or brick.

- **Will the public still be able to view and appreciate the heritage items and the conservation area's significance?**

The Muswellbrook CBD Heritage Conservation Area preserves a range of buildings that reflect the changing era of commercial development and the growth of Muswellbrook over the last 150 years. This development adds to that history by providing a building of the 21st century on a presently almost vacant allotment, for educational purposes in the heart of the township. The public will have reasonable access to this site to fully appreciate the two State listed heritage items that also form part of the larger site area. Ease of access to and from Bridge Street will allow the observer a full view of the immediate conservation area to see the many styles of design and detail associated with the varied architectural styles found in the CBD area.

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT:

The proposed development of the Tertiary Education Centre in Muswellbrook will have minimal heritage impact on the two State listed heritage buildings on Bridge Street by retaining their existing curtilages and their dominance on the CBD area.

The proposed building will have minimal affect on the heritage significance of the CBD by adding to its existing wealth of building stock from various periods of growth over the last 150 years.

The proposed building will have minimal affect on the heritage significance of locally listed heritage items in the near vicinity as a result of screening from other buildings and the existing landscape as well as distance from items such as the Presbyterian Church on the hill.

The proposed building will have minimal affect on the State listed heritage significance of St Alban's Church due to distance and screening by other buildings and the existing landscaping in the area. Existing view corridors to the church are being maintained.

3.0 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed development of a shared Tertiary Education Centre in Muswellbrook to compliment existing TAFE facilities has been assessed as having a minimal affect on the heritage significance of the State listed heritage items, the Local listed heritage items nearby and the Muswellbrook CBD Heritage Conservation Area.

The project requires the demolition of an existing Inter War bungalow, which has been assessed to be of little heritage significance. The building is largely isolated and no longer contributes to the conservation area due to the loss of other housing that was once in the street.

The listed items and the conservation area will benefit by the development as it will introduce an education centre within the town to compliment the TAFE campus at Muswellbrook South as well as other tertiary facilities to be relocated to the listed Campbell's Corner building to the south of the subject site.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations should be considered:

1. The demolition of the building housing the Muswellbrook Visitors Centre should require the contractor to salvage the following elements for re-use in buildings of that era being restored. *Reason – to preserve original building fabric for restoration projects.*
 - 4 Panel doors;
 - Glazed doors;
 - Plate rails;
 - Skirting boards.

Yours faithfully,



John Carr
Heritage Architect
(Reg. No. 4128)

(End of Report)