

2025-2035
OLD DUBBO GAOL
PLAN OF
MANAGEMENT



Chief Executive Officer's Message

We aspire to being recognised as the inland capital of regional NSW. This Plan of Management represents a continuing step in the development of the city as a regional leader. The plan highlights a place of cultural significance.

This plan gives prominence to the consistent improvement of Old Dubbo Gaol to date, its interpretive and historic development and thorough master planning.

Highlights of the plan include management actions to 2030. It links to city wide needs for opportunities to encourage a diverse range of uses with our unique heritage places as a backdrop.

The 10 year plan offers opportunity for development of exhibition space, presentation of Old Dubbo Gaol to Macquarie Street, and interpretation. It lays concept plans and opportunities for further consideration over time.

Murray Wood
Chief Executive Officer

“ We aspire to be recognised as the inland capital of regional NSW...” ”



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wiradjuri people who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, work and play. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging of the Wiradjuri Nation and thank them for their care of the land, water and sky and extend that respect to other Indigenous Australians.

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Old Dubbo Gaol vision

To continue to engage the community in this remarkably complete and intact state heritage gaol, explaining and illustrating the powerful, surprising and dark moments in Australian prison history



Executive summary

Purpose of a plan of management

This plan is a synopsis of the master planning, cultural heritage and interpretive work already developed to date for Old Dubbo Gaol. The objective of this plan is to present achievable and specific outcomes for Old Dubbo Gaol over the next 10 years.

A plan of management is an aspirational framework prepared in consultation with the community for the development and operation of community owned lands, parks and reserves. Old Dubbo Gaol is reserved NSW Crown Land.

Respect for our cultural traditions

This Plan of Management recognises the rights of the local Wiradjuri people as the traditional owners. Our Council aims to work respectfully and inclusively in the preparation of actions and future outcomes for Old Dubbo Gaol.

Enhancing the relationship of traditional owners with the land has been linked to maintaining a healthy cultural life, identity and autonomy and is an aspiration of the preparation of this plan of management.

Introduction

Old Dubbo Gaol (ODG) is situated along Macquarie Street, it is set back from the street and is accessed via Eddie Meeks Place. The Old Dubbo Gaol (Lots 1, 4 and 6, and part Lot 2, DP 40398) are identified in the Dubbo Local Environmental Plan as heritage item I144. It is a State Heritage listed site managed by Dubbo Regional Council (DRC) on NSW government owned land. It is the aim of this document to support ongoing operational effectiveness of this cultural tourism asset.

The gaol operated for 119 years from 1847 to 1966. Since 1966 the gaol has been preserved for its historic value by Council and the community.

It is a major attraction due to its unique offering, such as the such as the NSW State Hangman's kit, and its unique location in the heart of a modern city.

This Plan of Management (PoM) has been prepared as a response to the changes in the *Crown Land Management Act 2016* (CLM Act). Under the CLM Act, Council now manages the Crown land in the same way as Council owned land under the *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act). Under the new CLM Act, Plans of Management are required for all Council controlled Crown Land that are classified within the LG Act as being "Community Land." The preparation of a PoM also allows Council to issue leases and licenses over Crown land without ministerial consent.

Scope of this PoM

This PoM covers the required information regarding land classification and categorisation. It includes information regarding land ownership, the reserve numbers, lots and Deposited Plans.

This plan draws on and summarises information provided by external consultants such as:

- Old Dubbo Gaol Scoping Study, 2019, by Sanmor and Associates and Thylacine.
- Design Plan & Cost Benefit Analysis Framework, Old Dubbo Gaol - Stage 2, 2018, by 3-D Projects with SGS Economics & Planning and Lyons Advantage.
- Old Dubbo Gaol Concept Design Plan, 2017, by 3D Projects and Lightwell.
- Old Dubbo Gaol Exhibition Master Plan, 2015 by Thylacine.
- Significance Assessment: Hangman's Collection - Old Dubbo Gaol Museum, 2015, by Dr Emma Kearney & Dr Bruce Pennay.
- Conservation Management Plan, 2012, by Graham Hall and Partners.
- Draft Conservation Management Plan, 2002, by Design 5 Architects.



Cultural values, heritage and significance

The ODG is categorised as an area of cultural significance. Assessment of significance values has resulted in actions for future conservation, interpretation and management of the place. Documents prepared for Council have contributed to registration of ODG as culturally significant by Heritage NSW.

Significance is assessed on values including historic, associative, aesthetic and social significance. The assessment of significance has categorised the gaol on points of research potential, rarity, and representativeness. ODG is generally considered to be artefact rich. ODG is uncommon in its completeness. It is possibly the most complete country gaol listed on the Register of the National Estate. Most of the other country gaols have been removed, demolished, or altered so significantly that it is not easy to interpret their origins and functions. In this respect ODG has HIGH significance for the State and for the region beyond the Blue Mountains.

The visitor value of a visit to ODG is high as the presentation of the gaol is at a high level. There are many opportunities to build on the experience of the gaol through further expansion and interpretation of the gaol artefacts, cultural background of prisoners and diversity. Improvements to the current offering can be found at points for:

- further educational programs,
- improved sequencing of exhibitions for the visitor when exploring the gaol,
- diversify themes of ODG to create a distinct and unique experience,
- improve methods of interactive and interpretive materials to draw wider audiences of wider age/ demographic/culture/ability to the gaol.

Management Principles, Objectives and Actions

Broad principles have been derived for DRC PoM program across objectives to:

- Create Vibrant and Diverse Experiences
- Respect Cultural Heritage
- Strive for Environmental Sustainability
- Enhance Community Engagement
- Improve Financial Sustainability

The actions for management also follow the Dubbo Regional Council 2040 Community Strategic Plan which identifies that Old Dubbo Gaol is a prime tourist attraction in the region.

Consultation

Aspirations voiced by our community are to enable access to a diverse range of open space experiences.

Our community has also expressed the importance of respecting and protecting our unique environment.

Key aspirations of the community strategy

Our 2040 Community Strategic Plan follows the key strategic aspirations for the future. The aims are to spark:

- opportunities to grow
- incorporation of technology
- support to the regional economy
- educational experiences

The 2040 Community Strategic Plan forms the foundation for objective setting, principles, and actions delivered for each precinct plan.

Consultation with stakeholders and community

In support of the overarching planning framework, consultation with stakeholders for the PoM has identified principles for the development of parks, cultural sites and reserves.

Participants of stakeholder meetings were asked to assist with the identification of issues and opportunities as well as confirm the strategic directions of the plan of management program.

The consultation provided feedback that has assisted in setting principles and key directions.

The principles of the plan of management program are to:

- Respect cultural heritage
- Be places of vibrant diverse experiences
- Respond to the needs of the community
- Seek economic development opportunities

The second tier of key messages stakeholders supported as important for plan of management development included:

- seeking partnership with the local community
- supporting land stewardship
- enhancing community health
- building on the Dubbo Region identity.

Community consultation

This PoM was placed on public exhibition from 14/04/2025 to 29/05/2025 in accordance with section 38 of the LG Act. A total of zero (0) submissions were received.

In accordance with section 39 of the LGA Act, the draft PoM was referred to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Crown Lands, as representative of the state of NSW, which is the owner of the Reserve. Council has included in the plan any provisions that have been required by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Crown Lands.

Land information

Description

ODG is situated along Macquarie Street, it is set back from the street and is accessed via Eddie Meek Place. It is a small, compact gaol located within the Central Business District (CBD) of Dubbo within enclosed walls. The gateway entrance has been restored with wooden block paving.

It is a heritage listed place managed by DRC on NSW government owned land. It is the aim of this document to support ongoing operational effectiveness of this cultural tourism asset.

ODG is walled by a brick wall at a height of approximately 4.2m (14 feet) and contains several buildings and structures. The enclosing wall is extensive and high. It is built of Dubbo red-brown bricks in English bond, with piers, laid in lime mortar. Above the north-eastern corner of the wall is a watchtower having a wide eaved roof of corrugated iron².

Located on the low northern sandstone wall on the approach to ODG are two bronze surveyor markers. These markers denote the old 'chain' measurement (22 feet or 20.12m).

The site location, buildings and landscaped areas are shown in plan at Figure 1.

The general site plan includes:

- Eddie Meeks Place: the brick paved entrance toward the Western Gatehouse.
- The Western Gatehouse: main entry with heritage reconstruction of the wood block setts at the entry.
- The Male Division: including the dark cells, condemned cell and padded cell.
- The Female Division: with adjoining yard
- The Watch Tower
- The Debtors Exercise Yard and Remand cells.
- The Gallows Gallery: previously the female exercise yard.
- The Eastern Gatehouse
- Exercise Yards No 1 & No 2.
- The Gallows
- The Well
- The Infirmary and Kitchen building

Detailed surveys of the building structures have been undertaken as part of the Old Dubbo Gaol Conservation Management Plan Volume 1.





Figure 1: Old Dubbo Gaol key site plan

Land classification

ODG is within the Crown land reserve 24311.

The purpose of the reservation under the Crown land gazette of 27 June 1896 was for public buildings. A reproduction of the reserve from sale is shown at Image 1. The reserve under the Crown Land portal is shown at Figure 2.

A map showing land information is at Figure 5.

Council has been nominated trustee from 22 June 1973, with assignment of the former Dubbo City Council as corporate trust in 23 November 1990 under the previous *Crown Lands Act 1989*.

Under the CLM Act, Crown land managed by local government must be classified under section 36 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act). Reserve 24311 is classified as community land, at Figure 2.

Land categorisation for cultural significance

The core objectives for management of community land categorised as an area of cultural significance are:

- (1) The core objectives for management of community land categorised as an area of cultural significance are to retain and enhance the cultural significance of the area (namely its Aboriginal, aesthetic, archaeological, historical, technical or research or social significance) for past, present or future generations by the active use of conservation methods.
- (2) Those conservation methods may include any or all of the following methods –
 - (a) the continuous protective care and maintenance of the physical material of the land or of the context and setting of the area of cultural significance,

- (b) the restoration of the land, that is, the returning of the existing physical material of the land to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material,
 - (c) the reconstruction of the land, that is, the returning of the land as nearly as possible to a known earlier state,
 - (d) the adaptive reuse of the land, that is, the enhancement or reinforcement of the cultural significance of the land by the introduction of sympathetic alterations or additions to allow compatible uses (that is, uses that involve no changes to the cultural significance of the physical material of the area, or uses that involve changes that are substantially reversible or changes that require a minimum impact),
 - (e) the preservation of the land, that is, the maintenance of the physical material of the land in its existing state and the retardation of deterioration of the land.
- (3) A reference in subsection (2) to land includes a reference to any buildings erected on the land.



Figure 2: Crown Lands Portal: Reserve 24311

Reserve details

Reserve 24311 being the land on which ODG is sited is within the Parish of Dubbo. It is within the County of Lincoln. The location of the reserve is shown on the old Department of Lands parish map registry. An early city plan is the town map of Dubbo 1885 shown at Figure 3.

The reserve comprises Lots and Deposited plans:

- Lot 1 DP 40398
- Lot 1 DP 46169
- Lot 2 DP 40398
- Lot 2 DP 46169
- Lot 4 DP 40398
- Lot 6 DP 40398

Zoning information

ODG is in the Central Business District of Dubbo.

Under Dubbo Land Environmental Plan (LEP) 2011 it is zoned for B3 Commercial Core. See Figure 4, the commercial core coloured blue.

The area occupied by the Theatre, Eastern Gate and Charge rooms includes small portions of land currently owned by the Department of Justice and Attorney General. These are part Lot 7 DP 40398 and part Lot 13 DP 1187541. Discussions have commenced to have these small portions added to Reserve 24311.



Figure 3: Map Of The Town Of Dubbo 1885

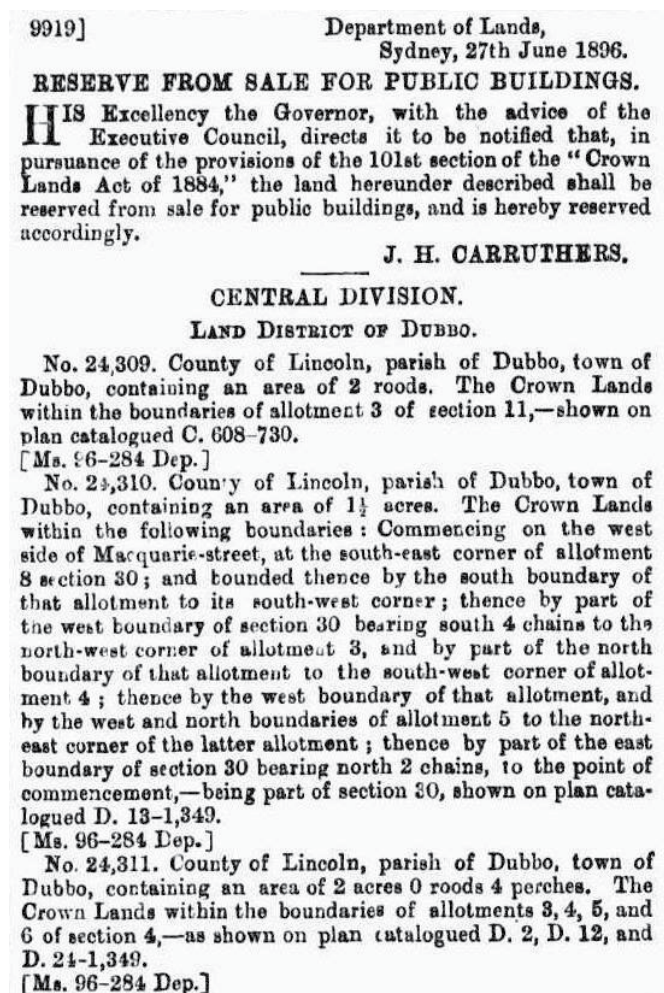


Figure 4: DRC LEP 2011
- Land Zoning Map - B3 Commercial Core



Figure 5: Land information map

ODG land information map

Land ownership
 ODG is gazetted NSW Crown Land as Reserve 24311.
 The reserve comprises lots:

- Lot 1/DP46169
- Lot 2/DP40398
- Lot 1/DP40398
- Lot 2/DP46169
- Lot 4/DP40398
- Lot 6/DP40398

ODG is adjacent to the Justice precinct. This includes lots owned by the NSW Minister for Police and Justice. The Court House and grounds are located on these lots.

Adjoining government owned lands

	DRC
	NSW Crown
	NSW Justice
	CWTH

Council acquired Lot 1 DP 726705 which housed a commercial building known locally as the old State Bank building, for the purpose of establishing the Old Dubbo Gaol Heritage Plaza. This development is being constructed as part of the Destination Dubbo: International Ready project that was announced in October 2019. Project budget for the Heritage Plaza project is \$5,010,000, with such costs including the acquisition of the property to create the community precinct and a major public art installation adjacent to the Telstra exchange building behind the clock tower.

Public exhibition of the concept designs was undertaken in 2021. These concept images were developed locally and informed by Council's Old Dubbo Gaol Redevelopment and Heritage Preservation Strategy which was developed in 2018. These concepts have been developed to demonstrate to the community how the space can be activated in line with meeting the various social, cultural and economic outcomes Council identified in the funding application. Final design plans for the Plaza will form part of a design and construct tender process.

The Plaza will provide the desired exposure for the Old Dubbo Gaol's gatehouse entrance and Gaol wall as well as the ornate Post Office colonnade and its iconic clock tower, creating a unique civic space in Dubbo's justice precinct. There is also a significant, First Nations public art installation that is being delivered as part of the project."



Licences and leasing

Council may from time to time enter into or create a range of leases, licences, other estates, management agreements, and/or booking arrangements, in order to encourage the use of the land and/or buildings appropriately and effectively. These arrangements are intended to support and encourage a range of uses, which enhance the level of activation and enjoyment of the space.

Under section 46(1)(b) of the LG Act, leases, licences and other estates formalise the use of community land. A lease, licence or other estate may be granted to organisations and persons, community groups, sports clubs and associations, non-government organisations, charities, community welfare services, non-profit organisations and government authorities.

The lease or licence must be for uses consistent with the reserve purpose(s), the assigned categorisation and zoning of the land, be in the best interests of the community as a whole, and enable, wherever possible, shared use of community land.

Any lease or licence proposal will be individually assessed and considered, including the community benefit, compatibility with this PoM and the capacity of the community land itself and the local area to support the activity.

A lease is normally issued where exclusive control of all or part of an area by a user is proposed. In all other instances a licence or short-term licence or hire agreement will be issued.

Approval of the PoM allows for Council to continue current and future leasing arrangements on areas of Crown land. Where leasing and licences occur on Crown Land, this PoM allows for Council to undertake the following activities without Ministerial consent:

- Issue short-term licences for a range of purposes such as holding recreational activities and commercial events.
- Renew existing leases for terms of up to 21 years.
- Grant new leases for terms of up to 21 years.

This PoM expressly authorises the issue of leases, licences and other estates over the land covered by the plan of management, in accordance with section 46(1)(b) and section 36(3A) of the LG Act, provided that:

- the purpose is consistent with the purpose for which it was dedicated or reserved
- the purpose is consistent with the core objectives for the category of the land
- the lease, licence or other estate is for a permitted purpose listed in the *Local Government Act 1993* or the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*
- the issue of the lease, licence or other estate and the provisions of the lease, licence or other estate can be validated by the provisions of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth)
- where the land is subject to a claim under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* the issue of any lease, licence or other estate will not prevent the land from being transferred in the event the claim is granted
- the lease, licence or other estate is granted and notified in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993* or the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*
- the issue of the lease, licence or other estate will not materially harm the use of the land for any of the purposes for which it was dedicated or reserved.

Tables in the relevant category sections of this plan of management further identify the purposes for which leases and licences may be issued over the reserves identified in this plan of management, and the maximum duration of leases, licences and other estates.

Areas held under lease, licence or regular occupancy shall be maintained by the user. The user will be responsible for maintenance and outgoings as defined in the lease or licence or agreement for use. Granting of a lease or licence does not grant approval for any development applications or similar Council approvals that may be required.

Any lease or licence proposal will be individually assessed and considered, including the community benefit, compatibility with this PoM and the capacity of the area to support the activity.

Kiosks, restaurants, refreshment facilities, mobile vending, recreational equipment sale or hire (e.g. bicycle hire or sale of souvenirs), may support the general community enjoyment of the precinct. Each proposal will be reviewed to ensure it is compatible.

Considerations for leases and licencing

Council will consider leasing areas in the following situations:

- There is a clear reason for granting a lease, and the lease is consistent with the intended use of the land.
- There is a strong link between the nature of the asset and the tenant.
- The occupant has made (or intends to make) a significant financial contribution to the asset.

Asset	Compatible purposes for granting leases/ licences
Public Building	• Social purposes • Educational purposes including libraries, workshops and classes • Cafés and kiosks including outdoor seating and tables • Hire or sale of recreational equipment Short term licences may also be granted to facilitate community events, festivals, music, picnics and private celebrations, filming for cinema and television, public performances, fairs, markets, auctions and similar activities, as well as public addresses.

Native title

The Council Native Title Manager has reviewed the Crown land within ODG.

A request was sent to the Native Title Manager on 10 December 2019 requesting confirmation of the status of the reserve against the following databases:

- Schedule of Native Title Determination Applications
- Register of Native Title Claims
- National Native Title Register
- Register of Indigenous Land Use Agreements
- Notified Indigenous Land Use Agreements.

The response from the Native Title Manager confirms they have searched the above databases and no results were returned.

Native Title legislation continues to be effective until one of the following events occur:

- There is determination that native title has been extinguished over the subject land,
- There is an order made for 24FA protection, or;
- A Native Title Certificate is issued by the Minister acknowledging native title has likely been extinguished.

This PoM for the reserve is on the basis that native title rights and interests exist or may be determined to exist in the future.

Consultation for this PoM included discussion with Council's Aboriginal Liaison Officer. Future management actions and timeframes for delivery were discussed. It was determined that an aim of this PoM is to support inclusion of indigenous cultural heritage, stories and interpretation within future developments to enhance the value of the gaol for the wider community and tourism.

Heritage values

General history

The gaol traces its lineage to the beginning of the city.

ODG operated for 119 years from 1847 to 1966. Dubbo was surveyed in 1848 and gazetted on 23 November 1849.

1846

The history of settlement of Dubbo is interlinked with the siting of the administration of justice, being the court house, police station and lock-up. In December 1846, three magistrates, Messrs RV Dulhunty, EB Cornish and J Maughan were appointed for the Courts of Petty Sessions to be held at Dubbo.

1847

The first public buildings were sited at squatters runs on the east side of the Macquarie River. The ODG began as the court house & lock up in 1847. The lock up, which was a slab hut of one main room and two cells, frequently leaked when it rained and was not a secure area as it was not enclosed by walls.

1849

Surveyor GB White laid out the plan for Dubbo town. The court house and lock up were the only structures that fitted within the Crown land survey. With the selection of the location for Dubbo town along the Macquarie River it was one of the first government buildings along with the constable's residence and the post office.

1858

District Courts were established, giving status, bringing business and siting Dubbo as the most westerly regional town in NSW.

Crimes brought about by greed, hunger and poverty saw many individuals locked away in the small confines of the lock-up and in 1859 Dubbo lock up was proclaimed a gaol.

1862

The Colonial Architect designed court and watch house commenced construction for the sum of £1,560.

In 1871 a new gaol was built complete with 4 cells and a bedroom for the gaoler. This new police gaol, along with Dubbo being proclaimed a circuit court in 1874, saw more serious criminals locked away, including those who had committed such crimes as assault, murder, infanticide and sexual assault.

1877

The Dubbo Gaol was provided a gallows for those crimes deemed to warrant the death penalty.

The first hanging occurred in 1877, being Thomas Newman for the rape and murder of a little girl, Mary McGregor. Newman was buried in the Dubbo Gaol yard.

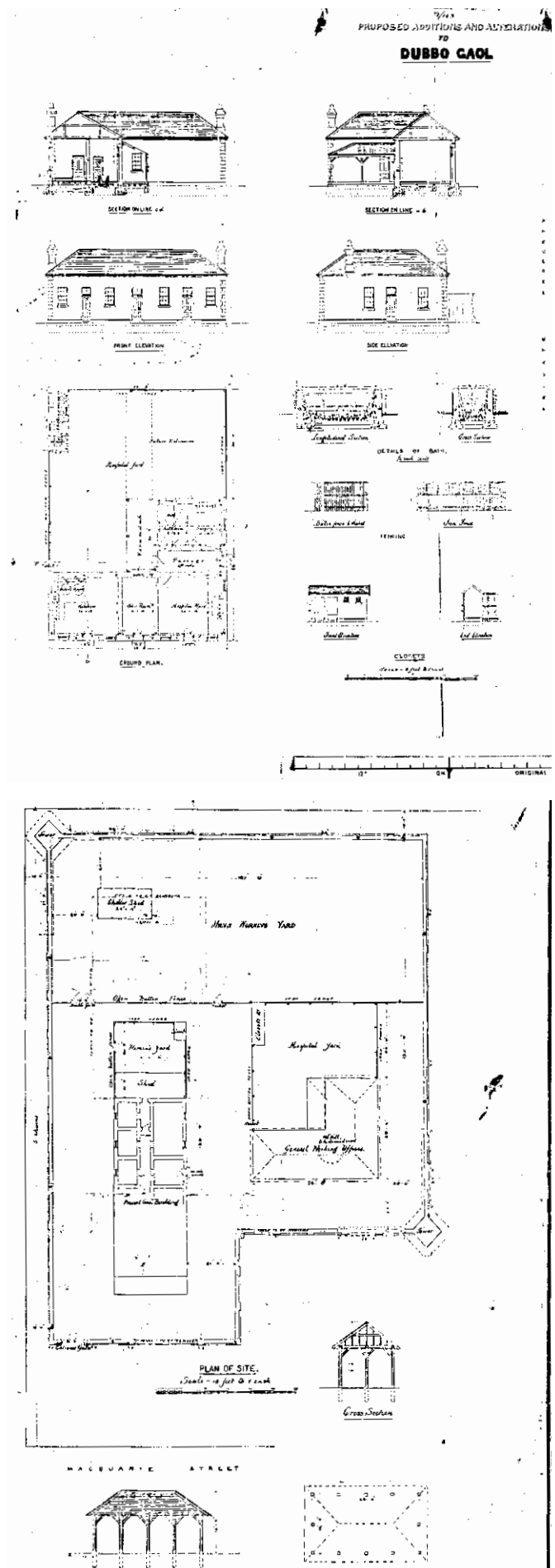


Figure 6: Proposed Kitchen & Hospital Block Additions and Alterations - 1878

Additional extensions and additions were commenced (see Figure 6) including:

- Construction of the block containing the kitchen, store room, hospital ward, surgery, bathroom and closets (See Architects drawings above).
- Fencing and alterations to the cell block.
- A fully independent female division was erected with separate exercise yard and bathroom facilities.
- Remand yards nicknamed “the birdcage” were built.

The Gaol was then enclosed behind 14 foot (4.2m) high brick walls and an imposing gated entrance from the Macquarie street into the Dubbo Gaol.

1887

The Gaol was upgraded to a Minor Gaol in 1887. The male cell division was expanded to encompass 13 regular cells and large padded cell for psychiatric prisoners was installed along with two dark cells for the punishment of prisoners.

When completed the gaol resembled other country gaols such as Hay and Albury.

Three yards provided for the separation of different classes of prisoner while the new trial and remand yard ensured that those not yet convicted did not mix with prisoners serving sentences 4.

1904

The last execution took place at the gaol.

1914

The status of Dubbo was reduced from a Minor Gaol to a Police Gaol after the opening of Long Bay Gaol in Sydney. From 1914 Dubbo served short sentences and usually had less than 10 inmates.

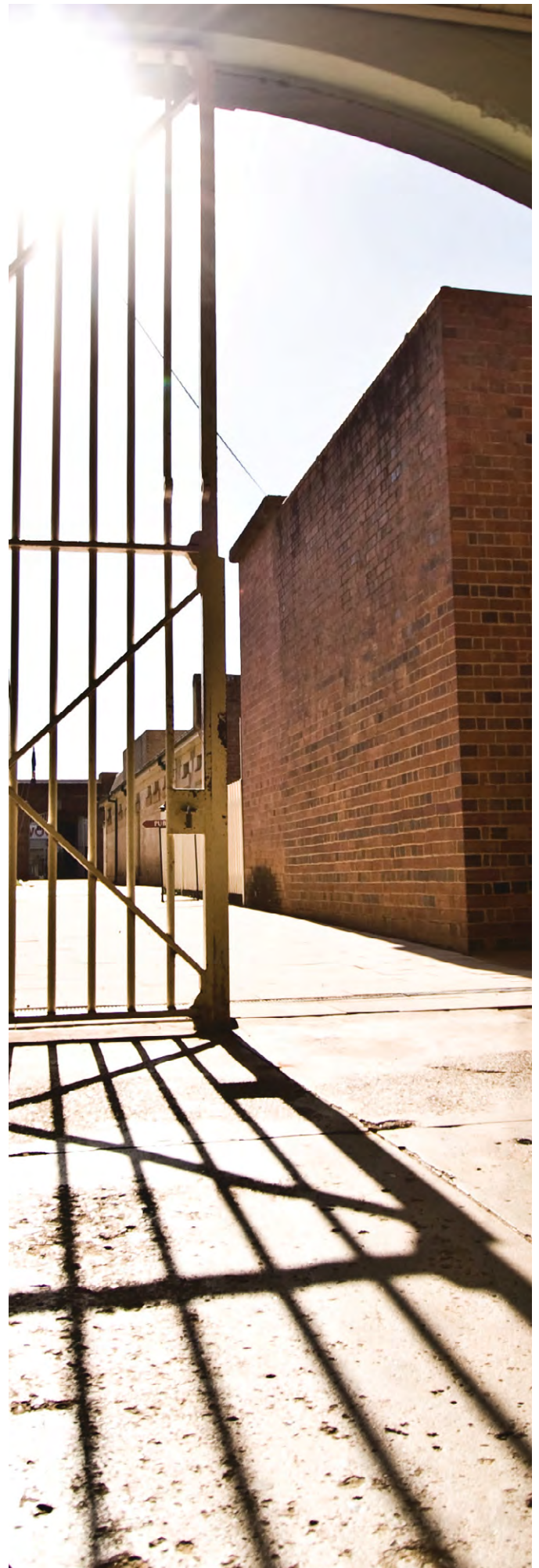
1929

The entrance to the gaol from Macquarie Street was changed due to plans to sell the Macquarie Street frontage. Alterations at this time included removing the western wall and relocating the eastern wall to function as a double entrance in the east wall.

1966

The Gaol was closed on the 31st of August 1966. The 20 remaining prisoners were transported to gaols around the area.

Many of the fittings and objects were either removed from the site or buried. The Gaol was re-opened in 1974 as a tourist attraction through the persistent efforts of the Historical Society and Restoration Committee, re-claiming many original artefacts and performing archaeological digs.





Eastern gates



Macquarie Street entrance

Significance values

A rare and highly intact example of a gaol

The complex has rare aesthetic significance at a local level as an arrangement of simple buildings which reflect their functions faithfully. They are vernacular, with echoes of the Victorian Georgian style. They are well proportioned and well built of harmonising materials. They are austere but on a human scale. The gatehouses are at once refined and imposing. The high walls, solidity buildings and the open-sided roofed yards create a series of large outdoor rooms- ordered spaces which unfold as the observer moves around freely but aware of the experience of its inmates.

During the 1870s gaol building in NSW allowed greater space and facilities.

The Dubbo Gaol was improved during this era and whilst similar in much of its architecture to other country or minor gaols in NSW, it is notably different due to:

- Separation of a women's section.
- Inclusion of 'dark cells' for punishment.
- Ability to classify and segregate hardened prisoners from others.

ODG is listed on the following registers:

- Commonwealth Register of National Estate (closed in 2007), now the Australian Heritage Database.
- NSW State Heritage Register
- Local Environment Plan

Assessment of cultural significance

The significance of ODG has been undertaken following guidelines of the Burra Charter 1999 and Part 3A State Heritage Register as at April 1999, under the *Heritage Act 1977*.

Heritage information from the 2002 Conservation Management Plan by Design has formed the basis for the State Register Inventory since 2003.

NSW assessment of significance fits the criteria for historical significance, associative significance, aesthetic significance, social significance, research potential, rarity and representativeness.

The following information is from the NSW State Heritage Register for ODG.

Historic significance

ODG is one of many country gaols erected in the 19th century to cope with the burgeoning population as it spread west and opened up the interior of New South Wales.

By 1900 there were many prisons and lock-ups across the state. As such then, ODG is not important in the course, or pattern of NSW's cultural or natural history. However, it is of exceptional significance locally. The buildings erected for the purpose of the administration of justice for Dubbo and the surrounding region were the first to appear in the new settlement.

The Gaol therefore traces its lineage to the beginning of the city. Aboriginal association with the gaol, in terms of inter-cultural relations on the frontier of white settlement is exceptionally high.

Associative significance

ODG was never more than a local and regional gaol. The staff, inmates and other visitors were similar to other gaols and judicial institutions of this type across the state.

ODG has associations with some infamous criminals, in particular, Jackie Underwood who was hanged in the Gaol in 1901 for his part in the Breeelong Incident near Gilgandra.

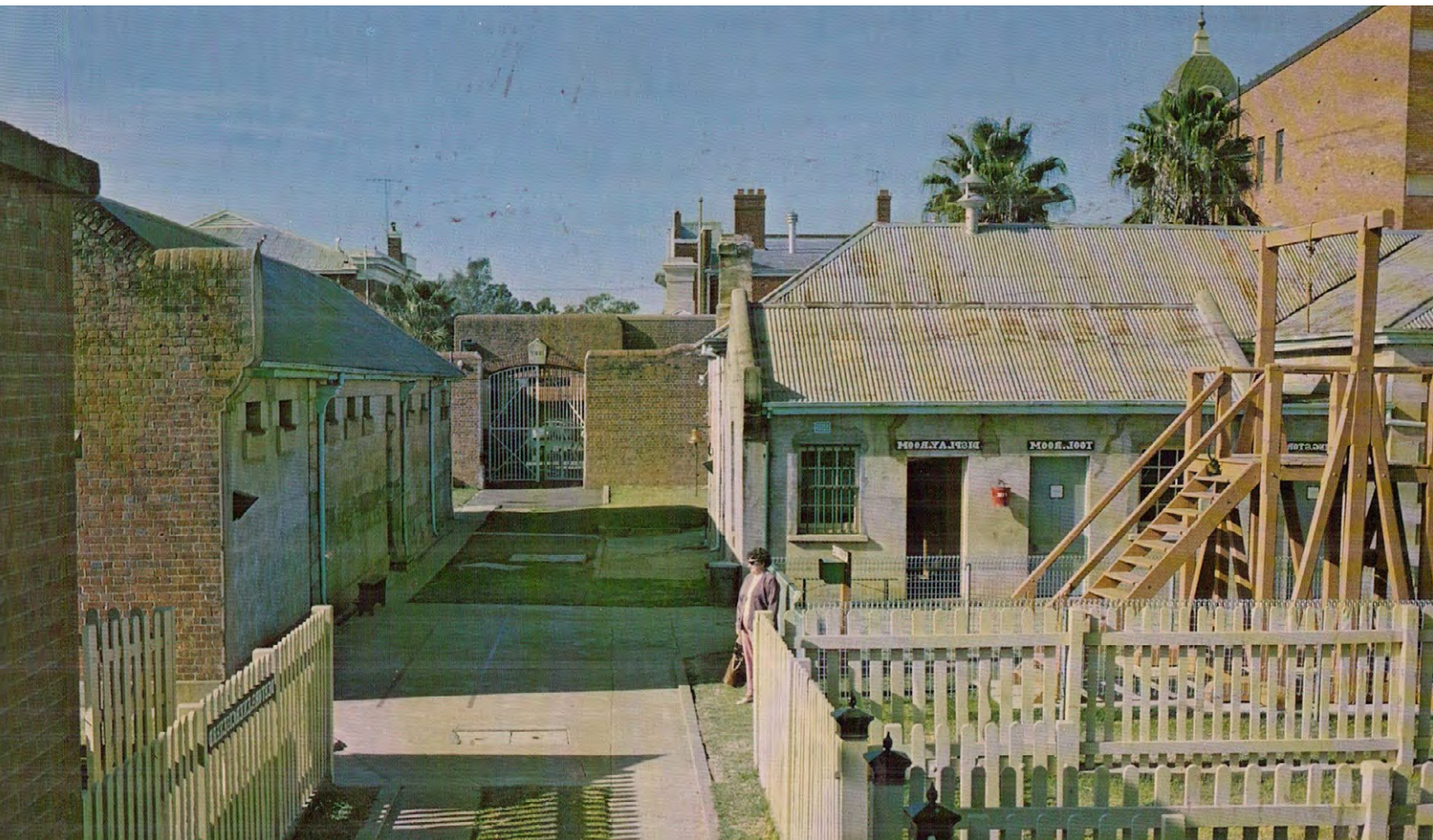
ODG is also associated with the Dubbo Court House, a remarkable James Barnet Court House designed c.1887. While working as the Clerk of the Court in Dubbo, Rolf Boldrewood penned the Australian classic novel, *Robbery under Arms*.

Aesthetic significance

ODG sits within a high gaol wall in the main street of Dubbo. While the gaol itself does not have any extraordinary aesthetic appeal, the location and ambience of the buildings within the busy Dubbo CBD, provides an appealing oasis within the Dubbo CBD. Its close proximity to the aesthetically outstanding Dubbo Court House and gardens adds to this setting.

Social significance

ODG does not have strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local; area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. It does however, have association with the "under-classes", in particular, rural poor, itinerant rural workers, hawkers and "swaggies".



Circa 1976

The Gaol did incarcerate a surprisingly large number of prisoners from culturally diverse backgrounds, particularly the Chinese.

Of the eight men hanged in the Gaol, they consisted of two Aboriginals, two Chinese man, one Irishman, one Englishman, one Australian (Victoria) and one Dane.

Research potential

The history of the Gaol is now well researched and it is unlikely that any significant new material will emerge from the place. Archaeological excavations may reveal some interesting information or remains but nothing that could be gleaned from other sites.

A very large number of Aboriginal people from the region were incarcerated in the Gaol during the process of dispossession, and future research may reveal some interesting episodes in the history of inter-cultural relations in a “frontier” location.

Rarity

ODG is uncommon in its completeness. It is possibly the most complete country gaol listed on the Register of the National Estate for New South Wales.

Most of the other country gaols have been removed, demolished, or altered so significantly that it is not easy to interpret their origins and functions. In this respect ODG has HIGH significance for the State and for the region beyond the Blue Mountains. The free standing, demountable scaffold, is probably unique in Australia and therefore HIGHLY significant to the study of capital punishment in Australia.

Representativeness

ODG is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural; or natural places in that it closely follows the “Hay” style of country gaol as identified by J.S Kerr.

In this it is judged as being of HIGH significance. It would gain a higher rating if the Gaoler's Cottage was still standing. As both the early and the later cottages have been demolished the Gaol is not complete. However, in its current state of preservation it is a remarkably intact survivor of its type.



Community & visitor experience

Visitor expectations

This section of the PoM refers to community values are discussed in detail within the ODG Scoping Study. Chapter 9 Visitor expectation explored general themes for why people visit places:

- People desire opportunities for relaxation, fun, or amusement.
- People generally prefer opportunities to visit in company of partners, families or social groups.
- Some places will be visited on numerous occasions – such as parks, whereas museums are less frequently visited.
- Educational factors are not motivators for visitation. Educational factors are important to enrich the experience.
- Expectations of the visit will be based on previous experience, word of mouth recommendations and advertisement.
- Provision of toilets, good circulation, ease of access, safety, seating and refreshments are 'usually essential'.
- Children are often 'powerful motivators' for visitation, however, venues often cater 'poorly for children'. Intergenerational experiences are important in bringing older parents together with adult children and grandchildren.
- Tourists are 'keen visitors' of places, especially those that are highly valued by the local community.

Value of a visit

Value is based in expenditure vs effort, that is, the entry fee with additional expenditure against the effort required in undertaking the visit (time to get there, ease of access, effort to access with children, toilets, shelter, refreshments and venue highlights). Advertising can create unrealistic expectations of a visit.

In comparison with other gaols Dubbo offers interpretation and experiences around the themes: night tours, capital punishment, prison life, food, illness, hygiene, escapes, architecture, and ghosts.

Successful venues continue to grow, develop and change.' The OLG will need to continue to develop experiences and commercial ventures over the coming years that are relevant, and responsive' to the needs of visitors. People will pay a premium for special experiences if they are of high quality and represent high value for money and effort.

Marketing and advertising should be carefully aligned so that promotional material encourages visitation with realistic expectations. Under-promising and over-delivering can produce highly valued outcomes.





Visitor experience

“ To supplement the historic fabric of the ODG with exhibitions and experiences aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the history of the gaol and empathy with its inhabitants ”

The core proposition

The core proposition is a statement about why the gaol exists as a public attraction and the approach taken to its public presentation. There are many Australian and International gaols that provide opportunities for comparative analysis to draw on major themes. Possible themes utilised by competitors include: animatronic and holographic displays; historic crime, law and order precinct; past prisoners, escapes, gallows etc; heritage listing of built structures; ghosts / paranormal and; food, illness and hygiene.

Positioning ODG as an attraction can be based on the spectrum of experience. The spectrum of experience can span from 'Frozen in Time' to 'Heritage as a Backdrop,' depending on the elements of the gaol that are explored as a visitor experience. This can include re-creating historic time periods with the use of original artefacts and interpretive materials.

Built structures could be used for a range of uses that are dissociated from the original use. Using the Gaol as a backdrop may optimise the commercial return of the facility while forgoing the opportunity to explore the history of the asset. Various interpretation strategies provide a mixture of options for the gaol. Examples include:

Frozen in time

Elements presented with no interpretation or other explanatory media.

Recreated history

This approach recreates moments in time, based on a fixed date e.g. 1880 to explore specific periods of history.

Full explanation

Provision of explanatory material and experiences using interpretive methods. E.g. the building structures, prison life, stories of prisoners.

Contextual history

This puts the gaol into broader context including explanations of life outside of prison and circumstances surrounding imprisonment. Discussions around, education, social attitudes, racial and religious prejudices can be drawn.

Comparative History

An approach that compares history with current social, political and economic attitudes.

Heritage as a Backdrop

The building architecture is a setting for other activities.

Value of the current offering at ODG

The table below is a summary of the value offering at ODG. These show the pros and cons as potential for development through staged development of the ODG experience and links to cultural tourism in DRC.

There are opportunities to expand the offerings with other cultural and recreational experiences across wider tourism themes for the development. The building architecture is a setting for other activities.

Offering	Pro	Con
Entry experience	Opportunity to immediately immerse visitors in the experience. ODG has artefact's that provide a point of differentiation.	Ticket room is easily missed by visitors.
Visitor flow	Opportunity to create a family/children focused self-guided tour experience in the site.	
Signage	Improve way-finding from Macquarie Street (2015).	Modern signs (such as non smoking and warning signs) detract from the experience.
Audio/visual experiences	Through projections and audio elements creates an immersive experience for the visitor to experience the history of Dubbo Gaol.	Passive experience which doesn't allow direct interaction with the a/v elements.
Guided tours	Numbers are small for current tours and additional evening experiences could be explored.	Tours cannot operate more frequently due to staffing/budgetary pressures and rely on the self-guided aspect of the gaol.
Functions and events	Generally events are profitable. Possibility to include a more permanent structure that works with the heritage-listed complex.	Structures for events are temporary and take time to set up and remove.
The Gallows Gallery	Opportunity to use underutilised space for exhibiting on and around the plinth. Opportunity to utilise the large projector for audio/visual displays.	Visitor access to original gallows timber pieces could lead to damage.
Guard tower	Access adds to the overall experience	Access differs to original internal climb to the tower
Scaffold	Better located in its original position as it sets the context of punishments in the gaol.	Original fabric in the way of putting scaffold in the original location
Closed rooms	Provide additional interpretive experiences by opening rooms	A small number of rooms closed are for staff operations and amenities, blocking access to visitors.
Light Fittings and other infrastructure	Rationalise lighting systems with some interpretation of older styles	
Educational programs	Opportunities to explore wider themes. Opportunities to provide educational materials as part of the visit.	
Sequencing	Opportunity to offer a logical manner of viewing and understanding the gaol. A successful visit should not be dependent on following the sequence.	An open ended experience can leave a 'fomo'-type fear that a person has been everywhere in the gaol.
Themes	Opportunity to define the gaols themes to provide distinction with other gaols.	In comparison with other Australian gaols there is an overall sameness thematically.
Interpretive Methods	Opportunity to expand interactive materials and displays using audio tours/sound displays, interactives, prisoner database, student resources/educational kits. Opportunity to develop interpretation of broader concepts.	Experiences need to be incrementally updated over time and out-of-date material removed. Interpretation is limited to ODG focus only.
Cost of Entry	Gaol tickets are on par with its competitors. Cross promotion tickets are now available.	Cross promotion targets non local tourism. Offerings for repeat local visitation could be improved.

Points of significance

Key opportunities derived from the significance assessments for the future development of the gaol have been broken down into the current opportunities and threats. These include:

Element	Opportunity	Threat
Aesthetics	The building and walls show evidence of fine craftsmanship especially in the working of the hospital and administration block. The gaol is an 'oasis' of calm from Macquarie Street.	
Historic	Location of ODG is linked to the origin of Dubbo. Rarity of the site as perhaps the only example in Australia of a complete and generally unaltered 'Hay-style' of gaol. Association with Colonial Architect James Barnet.	- Introduction of new materials without proper consideration of heritage significance - Overdevelopment in the area - Lack of funding to repair/restore/ stabilise original fabric of site
Scientific	Site has had significant archaeological investigation. Opportunity to do further investigations. Potential to find grave sites, gardens and locations of original built structures.	Erection of temporary/permanent structures and the fixings/ foundations impact the sub-strata and distort/damage archaeological matter.
Social or spiritual	Has considerable social significance from the local community.	Social significance of links with indigenous community has not been fully investigated. Similarly for other cultures and peoples held in the gaol e.g. Chinese, Danes.





Management principles and objectives

Council management principles

This section introduces a coordinated management plan based findings and recommendations made within the supporting documents:

- Old Dubbo Gaol Scoping Study, 2019, by Sanmor and Associates and Thylacine.
- Design Plan & Cost Benefit Analysis Framework, Old Dubbo Gaol - Stage 2, 2018, by 3-D Projects with SGS Economics & Planning and Lyons Advantage.
- Old Dubbo Gaol Concept Design Plan, 2017, by 3D Projects and Lightwell.
- Old Dubbo Gaol Exhibition Master Plan, 2015 by Thylacine.
- Significance Assessment: Hangman's Collection - Old Dubbo Gaol Museum, 2015, by Dr Emma Kearney & Dr Bruce Pennay.
- Conservation Management Plan, 2012, by Graham Hall and Partners.
- Draft Conservation Management Plan, 2002, by Design 5 Architects.

Overarching objectives of Council management of public lands includes for the following key future directions:

- To provide access to a range of community, cultural and open space facilities and areas.
- To value our unique environment and ensure it is protected for future generations.
- To achieve economic prosperity.
- To fully realise our tourism assets.
- To enhance our quality of life through key infrastructure and services.

As a part of the consultation process in developing PoMs, the principles and objectives were determined to be:

1. Create Vibrant and Diverse Experiences
2. Respect Cultural Heritage
3. Strive for Environmental Sustainability
4. Enhance Community Engagement
5. Improve Financial Sustainability

These objectives have been expanded to include actions for the ODG 10 year management program.

The actions below may indicate timeframes for achievement over the 10 year period of the plan and are dependant on Council's Operational Plan/ Delivery Plan and associated budget priorities may change over time. These timeframes are considered to be:

- Short term: year 1 to year 3 / 2025-2028
- Mid term: year 4 to year 6 / 2029-2031
- Long term: year 7 to year 10 / 2032-2035

Create vibrant and diverse experiences

Build on our unique regional identity with offerings of contemporary recreation, exercise and cultural experiences.

Respond to the needs of community to cater to new opportunities and innovative ways to better use the gaol. This may be to encourage a maximum diversity of programmed and event based uses that are compatible with the gaol.

Plan areas of the gaol to cater to temporary installations, events, music, festivals, contemplative zones and gathering spaces.

Timeframe: (short term)

- Program of events, festivals and/or cultural experiences approved and implemented annually.
- Prepare a 5 year forecast for activities and programs.
- Identify funding opportunities and relevant grants to improve visitor experiences.
- Implementation of Interpretive Plan.
- Progress has been made on improvements to the built environment and forecourt.
- Consistent signage has been achieved at the gaol.

Respect cultural heritage

Cater specifically for the needs of youth, families and cultural groups through flexible, multi-use facilities and programs. This may include incorporation of diverse language, access and ability opportunities and experiences for a wide range of user groups.

Protect and enhance cultural heritage infrastructure and cultural values across the gaol to heighten the awareness of their historical significance with best practice museum standards.

Timeframe:

- Review of Conservation Management Plan mid to late term to review development and inform the next 10 year PoM.
- Review the significance values of the site and opportunities identified to further enhance the ODG experience.



Strive for environmental sustainability

- Ensure that any development within the precinct enhances water quality run-off, recycling or water sensitive design.
- Seek energy efficient upgrades to lighting, including LED and solar where appropriate. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources as it becomes appropriate to install in the historic building context.
- Extend the Useful Life Expectancy of the Gaol's historical fabric through environmentally sensitive and sustainable building practices and management.

Timeframe:

- Short term audit for environmental sustainability options. Develop an upgrade plan for consistency and visual cohesion.
- Mid term implementation of appropriate sustainability options and recommendations.

Enhance community engagement

- Contribute to community engagement through development of a unique experience.
- Provide social equity across access, way finding and modes of interpretation.
- Create opportunities for community uses to be interactive and responsive to social equity.

Timeframe:

- Programs and product development strategies are in place in the short term. Review and update on a 3 year cycle.
- Review visitor facilities for all access and universal options to engage with ODG including appropriate improvements for better social equity.

Improve financial sustainability

Encourage community involvement and partnerships. Annual marketing and promotions programs are prepared and implemented.

Create employment in the precinct associated with development and management of tourism and community facilities.

Timeframe:

- Prepare Business Plan for approval annually.
- Marketing program approved for short term, with mid term and long term review and update.
- Seek future funding for improvements and repairs to buildings and installations.

PoM approved activities

A range of works or activities may be undertaken either as exempt development or development where a PoM has been adopted. The following table lists a range of activities or works which may be undertaken as allowed by this PoM. Any approvals and additional environmental assessments would be determined and undertaken prior to any works being commenced.

For all assets under the control of Council, a rolling asset maintenance and replacement program is developed and implemented. All components are identified alongside their expected lifecycle and cost of maintenance and ultimate replacement. Any defects are recorded and scheduled for repair and/or removal to help ensure the public's safety.

Activity	Approved with PoM
Roads and parking facilities	✓
Utility services	✓
Storm water services	✓
Maintenance facilities & storage	
Pathways, slabs and fencing	✓
Landscaping and tree planting	✓
Street furniture	✓
Play and fitness equipment	
Shade sails/structures	
Temporary event structures	✓
Kiosks & cafés	✓
Signage and way finding	✓
Lighting	✓
Community buildings renovation	✓
Office space	✓
Commercial lease and licence	✓

References

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