

Gissing's Distributors

STATEMENT of HERITAGE IMPACT

73 Bulwer Street
Lot 1 DP1038953
Maitland NSW 2320

Statement of heritage impact for change of use, alterations and additions to the former Gissing's Distributors warehouse.

Prepared by Heritas for Hoover Group.

FINAL | 27 September 2024



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Figure 1

source: *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney, New South Wales, Australia), Saturday 21 December 1991, p.2.

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Statement of heritage impact for:

Partial demolition and alterations to the existing dwelling at 73 Bulwer Street, Maitland, accommodating a commercial disability facility.

Author Identification

This Statement of Heritage Impact was prepared by the following Heritas Architecture team members:

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All photographs, diagrams and drawings have been prepared by Heritas, unless otherwise stated.

Prepared for:

Hoover Group as agent for Catered Supports.

1 THE HERITAGE ITEM

1.1 Site description

This report represents an assessment of heritage impact for alterations and additions to the existing dwelling at 73 Bulwer Street, Maitland NSW 2320, with property description Lot 1/DP1038953. The proposed commercial change of use supports retention of the former textiles factory warehouse, adapted for use as a community disability centre. The subject site is situated within the Central Maitland Heritage Conservation Area (HCA), pursuant to Schedule 5 of the Maitland Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2011. The site is not known to be included under any other statutory or non-statutory registers.

1.1.1 Heritage item

The mid-twentieth century structure fronting Bulwer Street comprises a simple blonde-brick gabled warehouse with asbestos roof sheeting, ornamental roof vents and timber framed double-hung windows. Although the place has been subject to ongoing alterations and additions, the building contributes to a collective of c1950s warehouses established in Central Maitland.

1.1.2 Heritage listings

Listing Type	Item name and document details	Listing number
Local Heritage Conservation Area	Central Maitland Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) <i>Maitland Local Environmental Plan 2011</i>	C2
Significant Structures within the context of 73 Bulwer Street		
Local Significance	Maitland Public School (Elgin Street)	1139
Local Significance	Brick Cottage (41 Bulwer Street)	1129
Local Significance	Brick Cottage (50 Bulwer Street)	1130
Local Significance	Shops (45 + 45A Elgin Street)	1142
Local Significance	Former Hotel (43 Elgin Street)	1141
Local Significance	House (60 Bourke Street)	1127
Local Significance	House (40 Bourke Street)	1124
Local Significance	House (81 Bourke Street)	1128
Local Significance	"Somerset" (71 Elgin Street)	1143
State Significance	Grossmann House (71 Church Street)	1137
State Significance	Brough House (Church Street)	1133

1.1.3 Site and its context

The subject site is positioned within the Central Maitland district, boasting an array of retail, commercial, educational, entertainment and transport uses. Situated on Bulwer Street, the dwelling fronts Maitland Public School to the west, with the substantial shopping complex, Pender Place, immediately north-west. The main commercial spine is located north-east along Hunter Street with a number of remarkable early buildings which reflect the civic growth of the town in the Hunter Valley.¹ Development within the vicinity is characterised by a mixture of residential and commercial activities, both historic and contemporary. Dwellings lining Elgin and Bulwer streets are predominantly single-storey weatherboard cottages with a number of multi-residential complexes and other infill developments scattered throughout the context. Early and mid-twentieth century commercial outlets also remain, further contributing to the eclectic character of the streetscape.



Figure 2
Local context of 73 Bulwer Street within Central Maitland. Subject site denoted in red. source: SIX Maps adapted by Heritas, 2024.



Figure 3
Immediate context of 73 Bulwer Street with the subject site highlighted in colour. source: SIX Maps adapted by Heritas, 2024.

¹ Maitland City Council, Maitland City Wide Development Control Plan. Part E- Special Precincts - Heritage Conservation Areas, Central Maitland Landscape and Streetscape, p.42.

1.1.4 The proposed works

The development proposal comprises partial demolition of the existing dwelling, with alterations accommodating a new commercial use as a community facility. The collective built form of the historic warehouse is conserved with removal of a single window to suit provision of an accessible ramp-way. Partial demolition of internal fabric is limited to sections of late-twentieth century wall partitions and amenities allowing for equitable access upgrades. Vehicular access is provided via Napoleon Lane, with two additional car-parks constructed to the existing courtyard.

1.2 Site summary history

The brief historic overview of 73 Bulwer Street is detailed as follows.

1818	English-born convict Molly Morgan (Mary Hunt) is granted a ticket-of-leave by Governor Macquarie, awarded a parcel of land at Wallis Plains (Maitland).
1835	John Bourke acquires Morgan's Maitland land holdings.
1850	Subdivision of Bourke's paddock into a 121 lot estate.
n.d.	Construction of single storey cottages at 73 Bulwer Street with weatherboard outbuilding and WC fronting Napoleon Lane.
c1950s- c1960s	Demolition of outbuildings with development of C.R. Gissing's textiles warehouse. An additional factory established on Elgin Street, Maitland.
1991	Closure of the Bulwer Street warehouse following importation of garments from Asia.
c2000s	Adaptation for occupation as a single residential dwelling.

1.2.1 Early Development of Maitland

Maitland and the surrounding area has a long history and significance in Australia. The area's original inhabitants were the people of the Wonnarua Nation, 'people of the mountains and the plains'. Dreamtime stories of the Wonnarua people illustrate how the great spirit Baiame created the great hills, valleys, forests and living beings in and around Maitland region, and acknowledge the creation of the Hunter, Williams and Paterson Rivers.² As the colony of NSW expanded outside of Sydney in the early 19th century, the fertile lands of the Hunter Valley region were soon discovered and a colonial outpost established.³ European settlement in Maitland began in 1818 mainly consisting of farmers whom described the area as:

*"being originally densely wooded, required great labour in clearing, a disadvantage, however, amply compensated by the amazing fertility of the soil which is alluvial, and still subject to being covered with water during high flood. The country back from the river consists of rising hills, inferior soil, with fertile flood vine brushes, watered by lagoons communicating with the river."*⁴

With its rich alluvial lands, the township of Maitland (then called Wallis Plains) was settled soon after and its strategic position on the Hunter River, which could provide steamship transport from the region to Sydney in less than twelve hours, was the key to its success and development. Maitland quickly became an important agricultural provider for the colony and, by the 1840s, its booming commercial sector saw its population expand exponentially, exceeded only by that of Sydney itself.⁵ Maitland was home to a wide range of businesses, including flour-mills, breweries, soap and candle making and salt stores. Iron workers, blacksmiths and saddlers also thrived at this time. During the 1850s a series of riverside merchants traded, most notably David Cohen & Co and Owen & Beckett, experiencing great success. Interspersed within the retail area of Central Maitland were a selection of services and outlets such as tailors, hairdressers, wig makers, confectioners, photographers and dressmakers who added to the sense of vitality and diversity within the area.⁶

Even though the fertile plains of the Hunter River and the town at Wallis Plains proved popular amongst the settlers, it was not the first site of Maitland. The government surveyor, George Boyle White, was instructed in 1828 to survey the land that is currently East Maitland in order to lay out the official town. The area was chosen for its higher ground and was bestowed with wide streets and orderly, official buildings. Conversely Wallis Plains was a flood prone "raw and vigorous settlement", with a narrow winding High Street peopled with "mud-caked riders and teamsters... the road-weary, the restless, the resentful..."⁷ However, the advent of the steamship brought about a boom to the Hunter Valley as the ships could travel between Sydney and Morpeth in under twelve hours. Wallis Plains was fast becoming one of the most important towns outside of Sydney as a centre for commerce. The regular and swift steamships that moored at Morpeth meant that goods could be shipped more efficiently to the north via this hub as opposed to the route over the Blue Mountains. Furthermore, the rich alluvial river flats made Maitland the granary of New South Wales. The area produced most of its wheat locally until wheat rust broke out in the 1860s and the farming moved to drier parts.



Figure 4

Artist's impression of West Maitland, 1837.

source: Robert Russell, National Library of Australia.

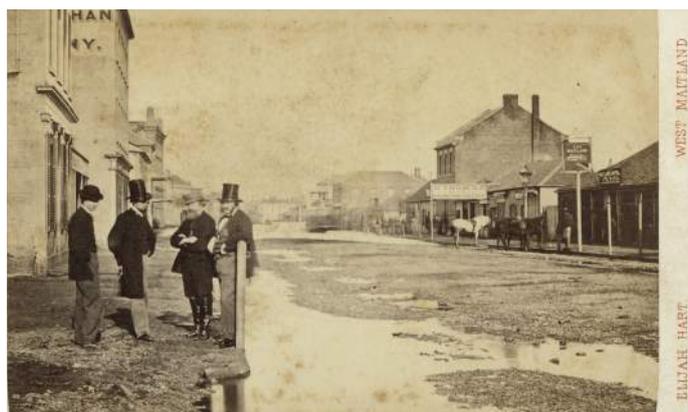


Figure 5

Maitland Flood Scenes 1857 by Elijah Hart, Photographer, West Maitland.

source: University of Newcastle Special Collections, Courtesy of State Library of

² Maitland City Council, Local History, 2018.

³ Office of Environment & Heritage, *Maitland Lodge of Unity Masonic Hall and Lodge-Historical Notes*, 2015.

⁴ Helen Brayshaw, *Aborigines of the Hunter Valley, 1986, Descriptions of the Environment-Maitland*, pg 23.

⁵ Office of Environment & Heritage, *Maitland Lodge of Unity Masonic Hall and Lodge-Historical Notes*, 2015.

⁶ Maitland City Council, *Maitland's History*, 2018.

⁷ Archer, C. and Walsh, B. (2007) *Maitland on the Hunter* Second Edition, CB Alexander Foundation, Tocal, 31 Kennedy, M. J. (1992) *Hauling the Loads: A History of Australia's Working Horses and Bullocks*. Melbourne University Press pg. 27.

The dichotomy that grew between the two Maitlands from their earliest days was still notable into the 1880s. The ornate buildings and grounds of East Maitland were at odds with the busy commercial side of West Maitland. Trade directories demonstrate the large scale of business in the area and in 1867 West Maitland was the site of over three hundred businesses, eighty-two tradesmen, twenty auctioneers and fifteen professionals.

The pre-eminence of the town began to decline during the 1860s as Maitland suffered through the wheat rust outbreak and Newcastle finally took on its role of regional centre. The situation was expedited by the siltation of the Hunter River that made river travel difficult, and in conjunction with the rise of northern rail transport with its terminus at Newcastle. Even though West Maitland was a part of the rail network by 1858, the 1864 extension to Singleton was cited as a contributing factor in their decline of progress. By the late 1870s it was thought that much of Maitland's trade was being lost to Singleton with the rail.

There have been numerous devastating floods witnessed in the Hunter Valley since European settlers took up residence there. It is notable that the community has persisted in their occupation of the flood prone area despite recurring damage to life and land. Whilst the waters brought alluvial sediment to the flood plains that enriched the agricultural soils, on many occasions the damages outweighed this benefit. The inundations were so strong as to twice flout the instalment of floodgates in the 1870s, and often changed the course of the river itself. Throughout the last two centuries, land owners would join forces, committees were formed and deals with the government made. Yet the river consistently overpowered the embankments, stone walls and gates. The most severe flood ever recorded for the region was in 1955 reaching 12.1 metres and in modern terms inflicted over two billion dollars in damages. The aftermath saw a fundamental shift in land use in the area. Heavy depositions of sand rendered up to twelve farm holdings infertile and encouraged the re-establishment of a natural flood plain at Bolwarra to redirect the water. Since then a series of levees, spillways, control banks and more floodgates were constructed which have so far successfully protected central Maitland and the expanding urban areas from minor to moderate flooding. In order to persist living in the area the community required modern infrastructure. Gas services were the first available to the town, established by J. W. Tuck in 1860, and by 1878 Maitland's streets were lit with the first gas lamps. The town first requested funding to obtain a permanent fresh water supply in 1855, although land resumptions were not made until 1879 and the first section not completed until 1883. Finally, the entire scheme was complete in 1884. Electricity lagged far behind and was not present in Maitland until 1922.

Figure 6
Floods in New South Wales-West
Maitland, From Elgin Street,
27-07-1867, Cubitt, F., engraver.
Campbell, Oswald Rose,
1820-1887, artist.
source: State Library of Victoria,
ID 1689110.

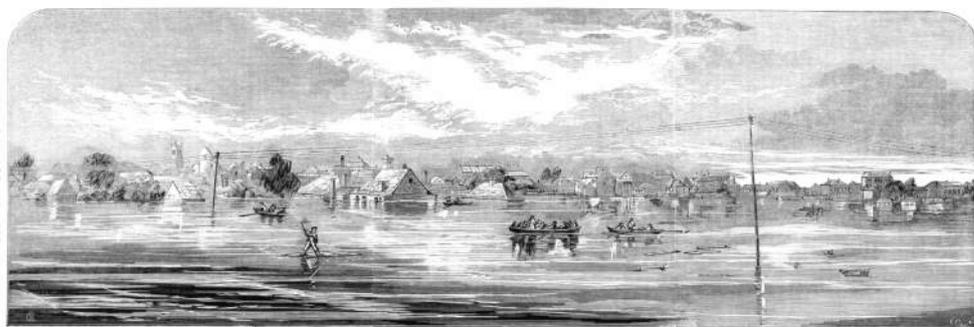
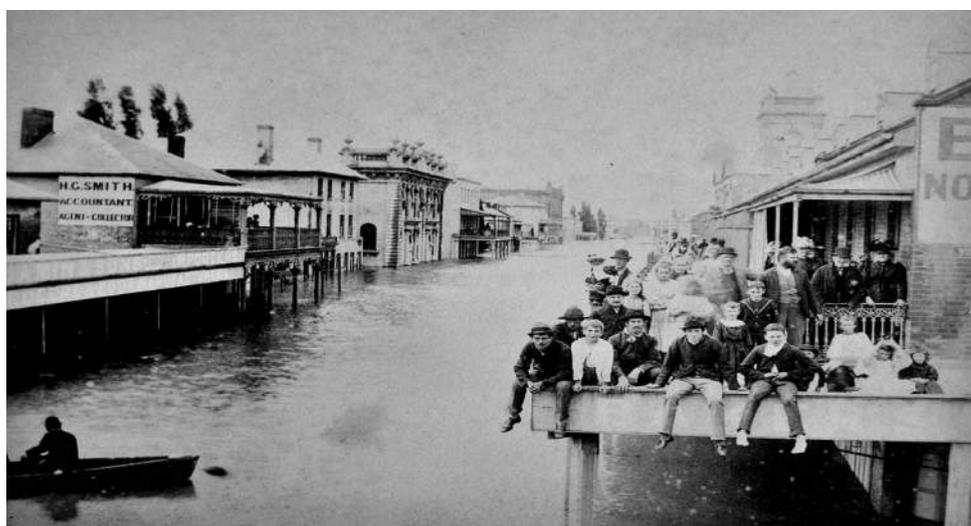


Figure 7
Maitland Flood, March 1893.
source: Maitland Mercury.



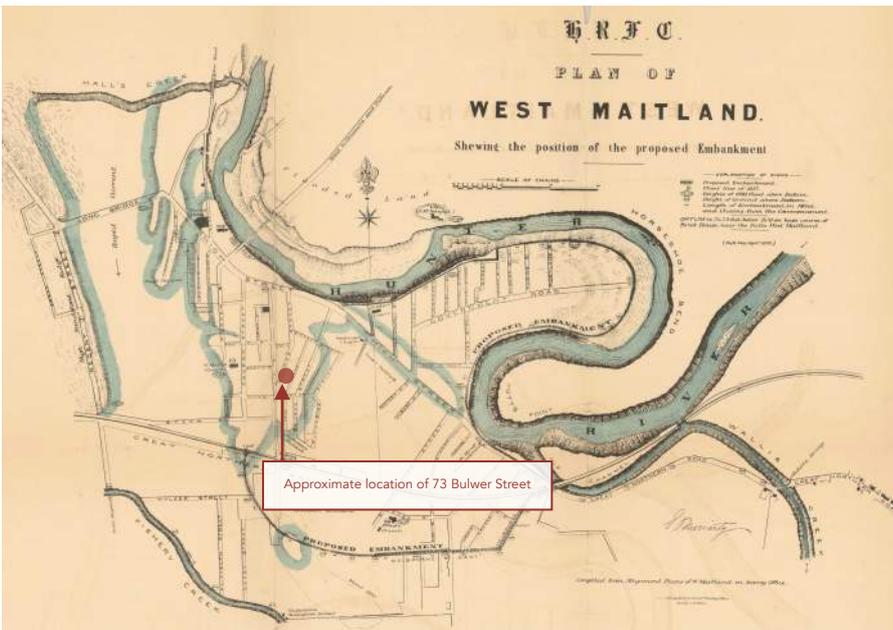


Figure 8
Floods in the Hunter, HRFC Plan of West Maitland showing the position of the proposed embankment, 1870. Location of subject site indicated.
source: University of Newcastle Cultural Collections, F627.4099442 NEWS, Hunter River Flood Commission, Sydney: Thomas Richards, Govt. Printer, 1870.



Figure 9
St Pauls Church Parish Hall, West Maitland, 1921.
source: University of Newcastle, Special Collections.



Figure 10
Maitland, NSW, February 1955 Flood. Corner of James Street and High Street.
source: Picture Maitland, Album of E. R. Brown, A.M.I.E. (Aust.) City Engineer, Maitland City Council, 000276.

1.2.2 Lot 1 DP1298956

The allotment at 73 Bulwer Street originally formed part of the landholdings of Mary Hunt (commonly referenced as Molly Morgan), an early European settler granted 157 acres within the town of West Maitland. The landscape during this period was dominated by scrub and low-lying swamps with sections of quality timber. Colonial settlement was first concentrated along the bullock tracks, later developed as High Street.⁸ Hunt's parcel was later transferred to John Bourke in 1835. Following Bourke's passing the parcel was inherited by his son Michael Bourke, later responsible for subdivision of the estate in 1850. Titled 'Bourke's Paddock', the 121 lot estate was bound by High, Catherine and Elgin streets. Early recounts of West Maitland reflect the low cost of land during this period with "...sixteen lots in Bulwer-street brought from 4s to 10s per foot; Elgin-street allotments from 3s to 4s per foot; Michael-street, 1s 6d to 4s per foot."⁹



Figure 11
Map of East and West Maitland, Wm. H. Wells, Surveyor, published 28th July 1846. Location of subject site indicated.
source: State Library of New South Wales, 74VK20b8aA2Z, Maps/0195, <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/>

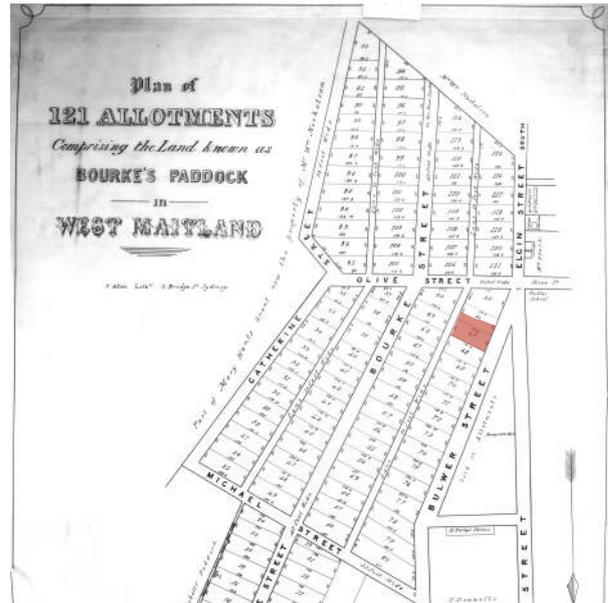


Figure 12
Plan of 121 allotments comprising the land known as Bourke's Paddock in West Maitland, NSW. R.W. Goodall, Surveyor, 11th February 1850. Map 85. Footprint of 73 Bulwer Street extending over lot 67 and a portion of 66. Subject site indicated in red.
source: Maitland City Library, Picture Maitland.



Figure 13
Extract of a map of the Town and Environs, West Maitland showing Crown Land Grants and private subdivisions, 1891, Fry Bros., Gibbs, Shallard & Co. Subject site outlined in red.
source: State Library of New South Wales, M3 811.259.

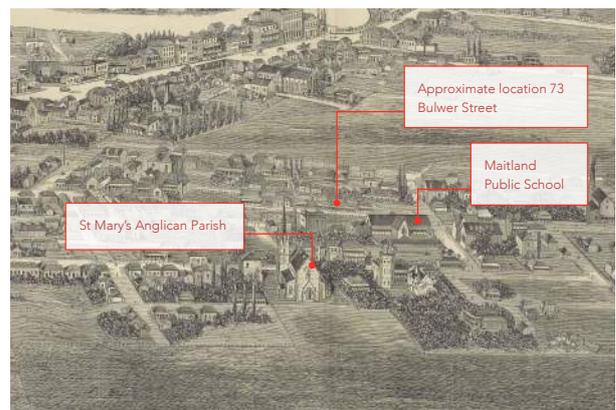


Figure 14
West Maitland, NSW and its leading Commercial Buildings, 1878. Note the early development along Bulwer Street. Subject site indicated.
source: State Library of Victoria, nc002726, <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/67298>

⁸ Back to Maitland Week: Souvenir Book, 7th to 12th, November 1927, University of Newcastle Cultural Collections, p.44.

⁹ The Armidale Express and New England General Advertiser (NSW: 1856-1861; 1863-1889; 1891-1954), Maitland in 1850, Tuesday 6 February 1894, p.7.

Historic mapping and artistic depictions reflect the present site occupying several single-storey cottages at 66 and 67 Bulwer Street accompanied by a weatherboard outbuilding and WC fronting Napoleon Lane. Little information could be obtained in relation to these early dwellings, however, aerial imagery confirms they had been demolished by 1949. A number of lots within the immediate context had also been amalgamated by this period, diminishing Bourke's original subdivision pattern.



Figure 15
Extract of West Maitland Sheets, Sheet No. 19. 2.12.36. Vacant allotment identified at 73 Bulwer Street.
source: Picture Maitland, Second Series, Map 0036. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/98887654@N05/39071920872/in/album-72157663591916588>

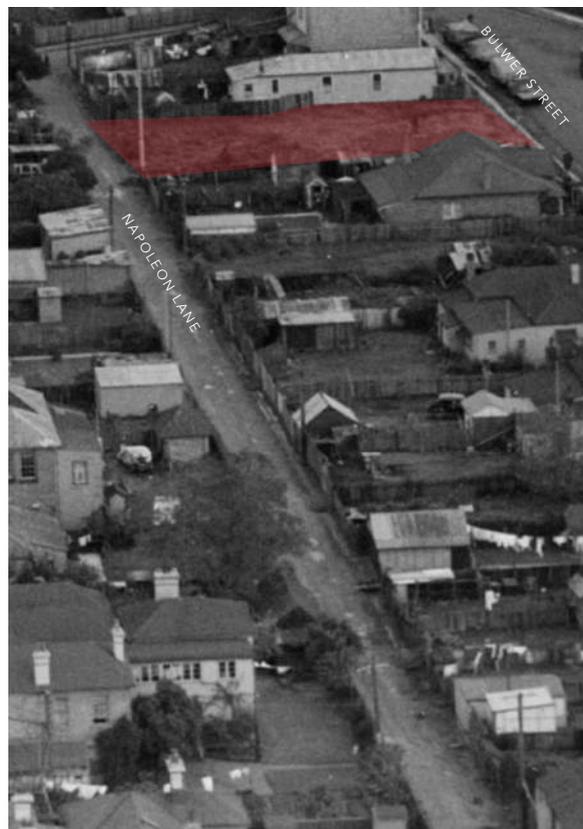


Figure 16
Aerial view of June 1949 Flood in Central Maitland with the subject allotment highlighted in red.
source: SLNSW.

By the mid-twentieth century, the once residential streetscape had gradually transformed with the establishment of storage facilities connected to High Street's commercial precinct. The subject building was erected between 1955 and 1966 as a warehouse for local clothing apparel manufacturer C.R. Gissing and Co., with an additional factory on Elgin Street and offices in Dimmock's Building (361 High Street).¹⁰



Figure 17
Aerial view Bulwer Street, February 1955 flood.
source: Picture Maitland, Hunter Valley Conservation Trust Collection.



Figure 18
Aerial view of 73 Bulwer Street, 17/08/1966. The existing warehouse is highlighted in red.
source: NSW Government, Historical Imagery, Spatial Services.

¹⁰ Maitland Mercury (NSW: 1939-1955), Advertising, Wednesday 2nd May 1951, p.6.



Figure 19
 King's Store constructed c1950 at 27 Bulwer Street, undated. The store complex was later demolished in the early 2000s.
source: Picture Maitland, Kings Engineering, Maitland City Library Collection.



Figure 20
 Aerial view of Maitland with the subject site highlighted in red, 1985. Note the comparative built form of the Elgin Street factory.
source: Picture Maitland, Design Concept High Street Heritage Mall, January 1985, Cox & Corkhill Pty Ltd. in association with Maitland City Council.

Gissing's trading continued at the Elgin Street and Bulwer Street premises until the early 1990s, later closed due to the importation of textiles from Asia. A report in the Sydney Morning Herald reflects the impacts of the sudden closure on Maitland employees:

*"The women from the Gissing clothing factory in Maitland would normally start their Christmas holidays today. Instead, they will join the dole queue. For the past 46 years the company has had a factory in Maitland but has now decided to close its Hunter Valley manufacturing operations and import the clothing that had been made there from Asia, throwing 29 women out of work... Their stories were repeated around the country yesterday as manufacturing companies, hard hit by the recession and cuts in tariffs and quotas, closed their doors..."*¹¹

Remaining utilities were advertised for sale in March 1992 with items comprising of a Union bander, elasticator, overlocker, button sewer and steam irons.¹² The property was later adapted as a single dwelling with the introduction of a modern kitchen, dining area, bedrooms and carport.



Figure 21
 Gissing's clothing factory staff. The article refers to the pictured shopfront as Sefton, NSW although the description and image appears to match that of the Bulwer Street premises.
source: Sydney Morning Herald (Sydney, New South Wales, Australia), Saturday 21 December 1991, p.2.

¹¹ Sydney Morning Herald (Sydney, New South Wales, Australia), Saturday 21 December 1991, p.2.

¹² Sydney Morning Herald (Sydney, New South Wales, Australia), Monday 2nd March 1992, John Gissing Dist Sale of Maitland Plant, p.14.

1.3 Physical analysis

1.3.1 Landscape

The subject site is oriented north-west fronting Bulwer Street with secondary frontage to Napoleon Lane. The main entrance is defined by concrete steps flanked by low-lying garden beds, adjoined by a concrete crossover formerly servicing the original textiles warehouse. Side and rear boundaries are bordered by a combination of timber paling and corrugated metal fencing with pedestrian access provisioned via wire mesh and timber gates to the northern and western corners of the site. Due to the extent of contemporary alterations, there is little surviving evidence of early landscaped features, with the rear yard incorporating a paved patio intersected by a ramp-way and areas of turf. Vehicular access is provided from Napoleon Lane via a concrete driveway with a light-weight steel framed carport partially enclosed by timber lattice.



Figure 22
View of the Bulwer Street frontage with a portion of the boundary lined by a low-lying gravel planting bed with bush rock edging. Note the combination of fencing to neighbouring properties with sections of timber pickets and Colorbond.



Figure 23
Former concrete driveway with exposed aggregate crossover servicing unloading of goods to the Gissing's warehouse. Sandstone kerb and gutter evident beyond.



Figure 24
Corrugated metal fencing defining the south-eastern boundary with timber lattice concealing the rear courtyard from Napoleon Lane. Lightweight steel framed carport at left with concrete driveway.



Figure 25
View looking south-west along Napoleon Lane with the subject site at right. Corrugated fencing with agapanthus borders the laneway with timber palings defining the north-eastern boundary.



Figure 26
Rear paved courtyard with timber framed awning over decking to the laundry entrance. Deck, awning and entry door nominated for demolition.



Figure 27
Established tree plantings lining the rear and side boundaries with pine sleepers, areas of turf and paving.

1.3.2 Built Fabric

Exterior

The historic warehouse structure employs a simple gabled form of masonry construction with asbestos clad roof and gutter. The prominent Bulwer Street facade is characterised by face blonde brickwork with a central roller door opening, masonry lintel and timber bumper. An elevated tiled entrance alcove is located to the north-eastern corner of the site, incorporating a combination of vinyl weatherboard and painted brick walls with solid core timber double doors and aluminium security screen. Timber framed sash windows retrofitted with metal security mesh line the eastern and western elevations whilst a series of sliding doors to the southern facade provide access to the paved courtyard. The southern portion of the building has been subject to extensive alterations with the introduction of a glass brick opening, faux PVC weatherboards and fibre cement sheeting to the gable end. A secondary entry flanked by a light-weight timber awning adjoins the lean-to car port accessible from Napoleon Lane.

The collective structure presents in fair condition with surface staining to areas associated with compromised metal barge capping. Timber fascia boards are similarly in a state of disrepair.



Figure 28

Front façade of the existing dwelling highlighting the simple gabled form, blonde face brick, central roller door opening.



Figure 29

Detailed view of the face brick exterior fronting Bulwer Street with the central entrance at right. Note the areas of organic growth to locations of compromised drainage.



Figure 30

Detailed view of the north-eastern corner of the dwelling highlighting the timber sash window nominated for demolition. Note the unsympathetic fence panel at right.



Figure 31

View looking north-east along the side boundary highlighting the blonde face brick facade, and timber windows. A paved pathway extends the length of the boundary connecting to Bulwer Street.

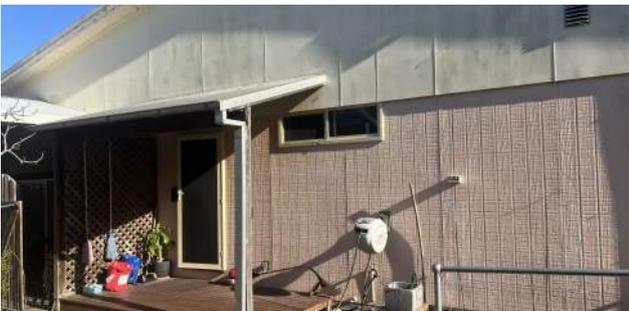


Figure 32

Southern facade clad in vinyl weatherboards with cement sheeting to the gable end.



Figure 33

View of the partially enclosed patio addressing the rear yard with contemporary aluminium fenestration, cement ceiling lining and glass block infilled opening.



Figure 34

Aluminium windows and doors to the kitchen and living space forming part of the c2000s alterations.



Figure 35

Detailed view of the masonry lintel over the central roller door opening with remnant fixings above likely used in connection with the Gissing's factory operations.



Figure 36

Detailed view of the extant timber bumper mounted to the central Bulwer Street opening.



Figure 37

Solid core timber entrance doors to the Bulwer Street vestibule with aluminium security screen. Vinyl cladding fixed to the entrance reveal.

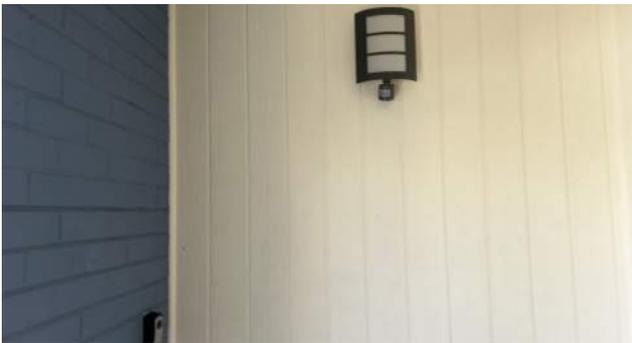


Figure 38

Bulwer Street vestibule comprising of painted brickwork and vinyl weatherboard cladding.



Figure 39

Detailed view of the northern gable end illustrating the deteriorated condition of the metal barge capping, areas of organic growth and sections of re-pointed brickwork.

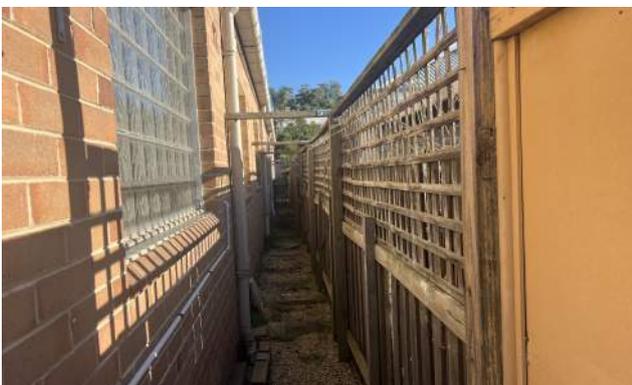


Figure 40

View looking north-east along the eastern boundary with the infilled glass opening to the patio at left. A gravel pathway, timber paling fence and lattice borders the building.

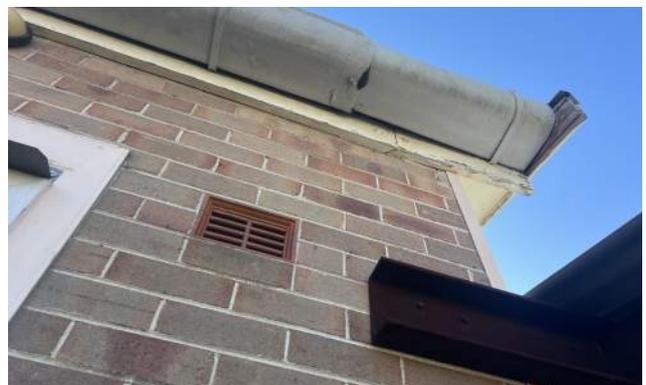


Figure 41

Detailed view of face brickwork, timber fascia board, asbestos gutter and single clay wall vent.

Interior

The internal spatial arrangement of the warehouse comprises a central entrance foyer adjoined by an open-planned living/dining and kitchen space fronting an outdoor patio. A series of bedrooms, offices, toilet and laundry are contained to the western portion of the dwelling connected via a central corridor and separate living area. Adapted for residential usage in the early 2000s, much of the fabric identified does not date to the original construction period of the warehouse and is of deemed of little significance.



Figure 42

Internal view of the main foyer space with original sections of brickwork, exposed truss, corrugated sheet lining and timber sash windows.



Figure 43

Typical office interiors with a combination of painted brick and plasterboard walls with contemporary suspended ceiling tiles and venetian shutters.



Figure 44

General view of the store room with exposed brickwork, suspended ceiling tiles with modern cornice at left.



Figure 45

Secondary living area with suspended ceiling, linear vinyl cladding, modern architraves and hinged solid core doors.

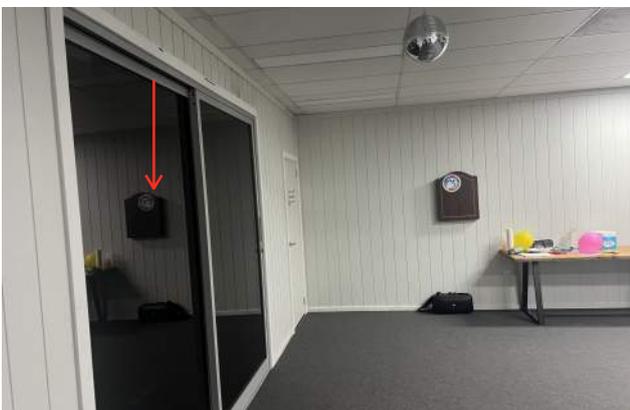


Figure 46

Internal view of the secondary living space with sliding glass doors concealing the original central roller door opening indicated at left.



Figure 47

Sections of original floor timbers lining the Bulwer Street roller door opening. This fabric is nominated for reuse as part of the central planter bed.



Figure 48
General internal view of the main living area with painted brickwork, ceiling tiles and aluminium sliding doors.



Figure 49
Contemporary kitchen adjoining the open planned living/dining space with aluminium glazed doors connecting to the rear patio and courtyard.

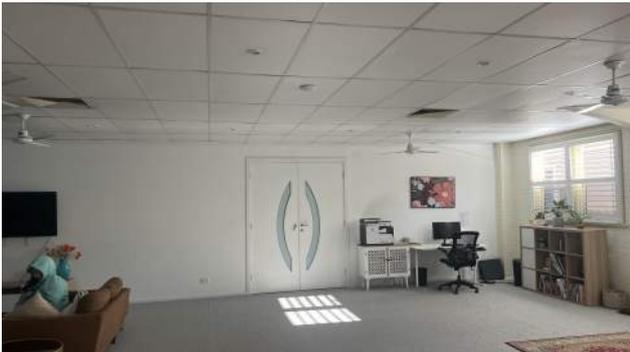


Figure 50
Central living/dining space with later carpet flooring, ceiling tiles and plasterboard wall partition.

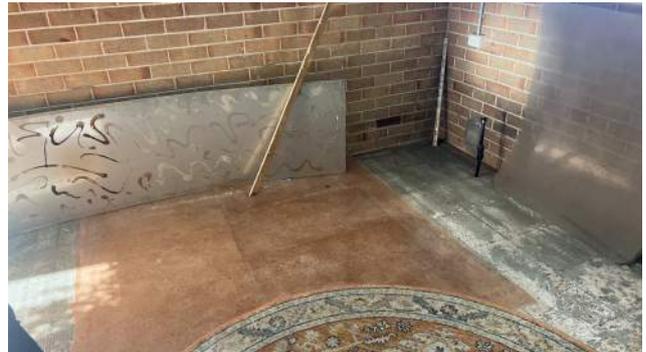


Figure 51
Former footprint of a water tank housed within the entry foyer.



Figure 52
Typical office with plasterboard wall partitions, suspended ceiling and painted brickwork.

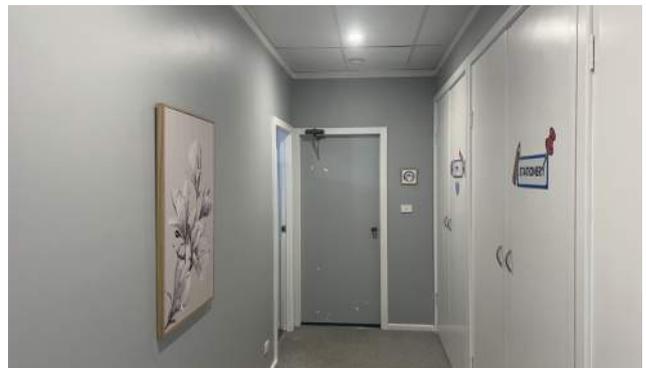


Figure 53
Central hallway looking north with the entrance to Room 3 beyond at left. Note the carpet flooring, plasterboard walls, joinery, doors, architraves, ceiling, skirting and cornice form part of the later residential works.



Figure 54
Internal view of the common bathroom with no significant fabric of note.



Figure 55
Areas of original timber floor boards to the store room.

2 SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

2.1 Significance of the site

The site at 73 Bulwer Street is situated within the Central Maitland Heritage Conservation Area (HCA). The existing structure is significant externally as an intact example of a mid-twentieth century light industrial building demonstrative of the ongoing commercial growth of both Bulwer Street and Central Maitland.

2.2 Significance of the Central Maitland Heritage Conservation Area

The site falls within the boundary of the Central Maitland Heritage Conservation Area. The HCA retains heritage values as stated by Maitland City Council in the Maitland City Wide Development Control Plan: Part E Special Precincts (2017, updated), reproduced below.

Setting

Central Maitland's appearance as a distinct urban centre is a result of its location in an open flood plain highlighting the contrast between rural and urban character. From without, it appears as a settlement of small scale buildings punctuated by towers and spires of the major buildings and complemented by groups of trees.

The transition from rural landscape to urban form, which includes many mature street trees, is particularly distinctive at the Centre's northern and western edges, where the rise of the high ground and the built edge has remained essentially the same for a century. This provides an appreciation of the quality and density of development within the centre.

Particularly interesting views of the area are obtained from surrounding settlements, particularly Bolwarra and East Maitland, and from the southern approach road from Kurri Kurri. While its northern and western edges remain clearly defined, the once distinctive urban form is now somewhat compromised on its southern and south-eastern edges.

The current location of the New England Highway helps to accentuate the rural setting of the City Centre. However, it also creates difficulties in terms of capacity to interpret the southern edges of early development of the town; important components of that phase now sit isolated on the southern side of the highway.

Central Maitland itself is relatively flat and views within the town are confined to the immediate street scene; but near the edge, the rural surrounds and the settlements beyond are prominent, together with hills in the background. This rural setting is an important characteristic of Central Maitland.

Layout

Central Maitland has a random layout creating a compact, intimate character. Its main arteries are relatively narrow and have traditionally been bordered by impressive, commercial, religious and cultural buildings. The irregular pattern of streets branching off High Street following original tracks and land grants vary in width and character.

The road pattern of residential areas, small scale buildings together with a smattering of rural uses, combine to form areas of unique character and special seclusion. The Hunter River forms the northern boundary of the City Centre, reflected in the meandering nature of High Street, however the City's built environment does not directly address the River.

Changing attitudes and changing fortunes of Maitland City Centre between the 1950s and the 1990s brought structural change to the City Centre streetscape in a number of instances, altering its homogeneous 19th century scale and form within certain street blocks.

Landscape and Streetscape

High Street is characterised by a remarkable collection of early buildings which reflect the growth of the town as a centre of commerce in the Hunter Valley. Banks, shops and offices, together with churches and houses, date from every period of development and exhibit a variety of architectural styles.

High Street is the spine from which the majority of streets branch off at an acute angle. The original bullock track became fixed as the line of the main street enclosed by buildings of two - three storeys, and punctuated along its length by landmark or "reference" buildings. Throughout its development, the two storey building has dominated the streetscape with only a few instances of one or three storey buildings occurring.

Maitland's prominence as a trading centre meant that development and redevelopment was always taking place and, in many areas, the present buildings might be the third or fourth buildings on the site. This process of growth and redevelopment has caused some unusual groups of buildings - each building being different from one another in style and period - occurring in various parts of the town: for example, Bourke Street, in the heart of the residential area, contains buildings dating from the 1850s, 1880s, 1890s and twentieth century.

The earliest buildings for which dates are known are residential buildings and they have survived largely because they are on the edge of town, away from the business centre and, also, because they are of masonry construction and have withstood the floods.

Within the town are several buildings such as slab huts, which might date from this early period. Cottages and houses from the 1850s to 1910 occur in sufficient numbers for a recognisable sequence of styles to be identified, including fashions peculiar to Maitland.

Because of its length, and the advent of the mall over a portion of that length, the character of High Street now changes somewhat from east to west.

Regent Street and Church Street in the west consist of major residences and private landscapes, and major cultural buildings and public landscapes. Each of the residential areas in Central Maitland has its own special character, however they do share some common features. These include an irregular street pattern, predominance of old buildings, many vacant allotments, a scattering of rural uses and few trees.

Buildings

The character of Maitland's architecture is very strong and is comprised of two distinct building types. High Street is typified by those buildings having parapets which conceal the roof. Areas away from High Street are typified by buildings having a visible hipped or gable roof.

Central Maitland has retained most of its landmark public and private buildings which continue to dominate the skyline. The majority of buildings in High Street were built before World War 1, and display recognisable styles characteristic of the locality including examples from each period of Maitland's growth.

Individually, many of these buildings have special architectural and historical significance because of Maitland's 19th century commercial significance.

Together, they represent both the history of the development of High Street and a catalogue of late 19th century façades. Importantly, from a streetscape viewpoint, the smaller buildings complement the larger buildings in both scale and design.

The earliest commercial buildings remaining appear to date from the 1850s - 1860s. It is possible that the rear timber portions on the buildings on the northern side of High Street backing on to the Hunter River might date from this time, although the façades are much later.

The central residential area contains a mix of styles, shapes and sizes of structures. The buildings dispersed along Ken Tubman Drive remain as the earliest evidence of development in the town centre.

Most residential buildings are detached with pairs and terraces being unusual. The two storey single fronted house with full height verandah built in brick or timber is a particularly special feature of Maitland.

The majority of the cottages and houses were commissioned by their first occupants, many of whom were businessmen or traders in the High Street.

The existence of several architects in the town suggests that a considerable number of these buildings were designed by architects, particularly those built after 1870.

The evolution of the built environment in Central Maitland can be summarised as follows:

Pre 1843: *The majority of buildings were slab huts with shingle roofs. The overall road pattern was established.*

1843-1860: *Church Street, Bulwer, Bourke and Catherine Streets began to be settled. The railway was commenced (1856) and iron introduced as a building material.*

1860-1879: *Maitland remains as the centre of the agricultural community. Horseshoe Bend is subdivided from agricultural to residential land. Street lighting introduced.*

1880-1893: *Much redevelopment and building in High Street. New shop fronts and wide verandah/colonnades added to shops. Cast iron decoration and corrugated iron becomes popular. Town Hall built (1889). The old courthouse is demolished and a new one built (1893). Kerbs are formed and sealed with stone gutters. Fine banks built. Many major buildings of this boom period were designed by architects of state and national stature.*

1894-1913: *The 1890's depression followed by further building boom with most vacant land being taken up in the area. Electricity is introduced.*

1914-1945: *Many shops in High Street rebuilt. Verandahs began to be removed from shops. Some redevelopment and new brick bungalows particularly in Horseshoe Bend.*

Post 1945: *Major floods in 1949 and 1955 drastically reduce the resident population and the number of houses. New 'wave' of commercial redevelopment begins.*

2.3 Statement of Significance

Central Maitland has historic significance of exceptional value recording an early settlement of the Hunter Valley which grew to be the major centre in the region – larger than Newcastle. It also became one of the largest settlements in NSW during the middle of the nineteenth century. Its historic role is reflected in the excellent examples of Commercial, Civic and Ecclesiastical buildings and in the rarer and more modest surviving examples of early housing.

The Heritage Conservation Area's aesthetic significance is derived from the intactness of its streetscapes, its landmark buildings and strong edge definition of river and flood plain. Regent Street contains an exceptional collection of mansions and large residences of the late Victorian and Federation periods.

The area is of social significance for its continuing roles as a regional centre for administration, cultural activities and several religious denominations.

3 PROPOSED WORKS

3.1 The Proposal

The development proposal comprises alterations and additions to the existing residence accommodating a commercial disability day centre. Partial demolition of the south-western facade allows for introduction of a new primary entrance connecting to an accessible ramp-way with retention of the significant warehouse presentation and central roller door to Bulwer Street. Internal modifications are limited to areas of previously disturbed fabric with the introduction of new male and female ambulant amenities and bathroom. A number of extant solid hinged doors are nominated for replacement with widening of openings to meet accessibility requirements. The general internal configuration of the existing residence is conserved with an open planned living/dining space adjoined by a series of individual office spaces and central common room. New areas of soft landscaping are provisioned throughout with mass planting beds bordering the rear entertaining area and carport. Additional paved parking areas are nominated to Napoleon Lane.

The material upon which this assessment has been based is the following documentation.

Hoover Group Design & Development. Proposed Change of Use (Disability Day Care Facility). 73 Bulwer Street MAITLAND NSW 2320. CATERED-202401.

Revision/Date	Drawing No.	Drawing Title
Rev B 18.09.2024	DA00	Cover Sheet
Rev B 18.09.2024	DA01	Notes
Rev B 18.09.2024	DA02	Site Plan
Rev B 18.09.2024	DA03	Existing Plans
Rev B 18.09.2024	DA04	Existing Elevations
Rev B 18.09.2024	DA05	Existing Perspectives
Rev B 18.09.2024	DA06	Proposed Plans
Rev B 18.09.2024	DA07	Proposed Elevations
Rev B 18.09.2024	DA08	Proposed Perspectives
Rev B 18.09.2024	DA09	Proposed Signage Details

3.2 Background

3.2.1 Methodology

This report has been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter (2000)*, and more specifically the *Guidelines for preparing a statement of heritage impact* published by Environment and Heritage, Department of Planning and Environment (June 2023).

3.2.2 Limitations and Constraints

Independent research on the historical significance of 73 Bulwer Street is limited to desktop research and local document repositories. A historic land titles search has not been conducted, beyond the agreed scope of works.

On-site investigations were conducted by Heritas, however, were limited to an on-ground inspection. All photographs by Heritas unless noted otherwise.

This report addresses European cultural heritage significance only.

The assessment of impact is based on DA documentation, and as such does not detail the full extent of works.

3.2.3 Pre-lodgement Consultation

Pre-lodgement consultation has not been undertaken as part of the proposed development.

3.2.4 Consideration of Alternatives

Alternative design solutions for treatment of the Bulwer Street facade and ramp locations were discussed in consultation with Hoover Group. Partial demolition of the northern elevation to facilitate an exposed ramp were considered, however discounted due to the visual impact on the significant form of the historic warehouse and its contribution to the streetscape. Lowering of the existing entry steps to accommodate a ramp-way without the provision of additional openings was also investigated. Due to the extent of impact to the original entrance and internal configuration, this approach was discounted.

Heritage Considerations

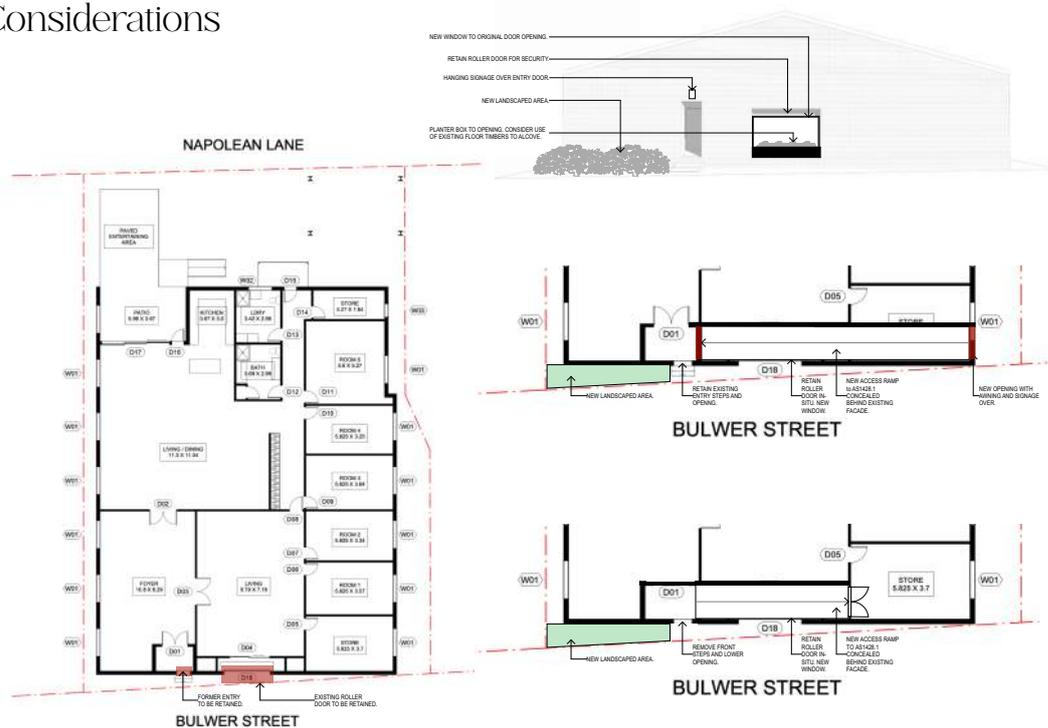


Figure 56 Preliminary heritage considerations: ramp concepts, A001, 23 July 2024. source: Heritas in consultation with Hoover Group.

Paint finishes to existing face brickwork with inclusion of a substantial wall signage panel to the northern elevation was investigated, however was deemed unsympathetic and visually obtrusive within the context of the conservation area. The alternative design solution ensures these visual impacts are mitigated through adoption of a simple hanging shopfront sign with decorative painted mural restricted to the central roller door.



Figure 57 Bulwer Street elevation initial design concept, proposed perspectives, DA08, 11 July 2024. source: Hoover Group, CATERED-202401.

4 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 Matters for consideration

4.1.1 Fabric and spatial arrangements

- a) The development proposal retains the significant gabled form of the former textiles factory ensuring its contribution to the immediate streetscape and broader HCA is maintained.
- b) Considered siting of the ramp-way concealed behind the northern brick wall allows for retention of the original facade design whilst mitigating the visual impact to the public domain.
- c) The historical pattern of development, dual frontage and prevailing setbacks are retained.
- d) The original scale and form of the mid-twentieth century warehouse is preserved as part of the development, with interventions housed within the existing building envelope.
- e) Alterations are primarily contained to the interiors of the dwelling, negating substantial changes to the built form, fenestration pattern and setting of the place.
- f) Existing vehicle access to the southern laneway is retained.
- g) As the building has been subject to ongoing periods of modification, the collective structure is considered to maintain a low to moderate degree of integrity. Alterations are predominantly limited to areas of previously disturbed fabric, with minor modifications to extant northern openings affording equitable access.
- h) The design response avoids the adoption of mock/faux heritage elements which may conflict with interpretation of the original warehouse and buildings characterising the locality.
- i) Vehicle accommodation is contained to the rear of the dwelling adjoining the existing carport structure and as such will not impede upon the streetscape.
- j) Extant sections of historic timber flooring are to be salvaged and reused as part of the decorative planter box.
- k) Integration of soft landscaping lining the northern boundary is a particularly positive aspect of the proposal, enhancing the existing character of Bulwer Street and surrounding context.
- l) The discrete signage proposal successfully demarcates the historic pedestrian entrance, is compatible with the design and character of the building and does not detract from the streetscape's significant qualities. The scale and orientation of the panel further ensures the display is visually recessive.
- m) Sections of contemporary James Hardie Axon cladding are reduced to the proposed internal walkway and as such will be entirely screened from the public domain.
- n) Original exposed face brickwork is maintained, avoiding the application of unsympathetic paint or rendered coatings.
- o) Colourful finishes atypical of the heritage palette of the conservation area are restricted to the existing metal roller door mural.
- p) The timber bumper at the historical loading point to Bulwer Street is retained.
- q) The proposed colour scheme is sympathetic to the architectural style/period of the former warehouse and is complementary to the broader streetscape and conservation area.
- r) Finishing of the sliding security gate in a neutral tone complementary to the blonde brickwork, existing fascias and trim ensures the component is visually recessive.

4.1.2 Setting, views and vistas

- a) With the development predominantly contained to the interiors of the dwelling, significant vistas and views to and from heritage items within the vicinity remain unaffected. Alterations to the rear yard furthermore comprise of minor landscaping works only, partially obscured from the public domain. Prominent view corridors to and from the subject site are furthermore not impacted by the development.
- b) The original character of Bulwer Street and Napoleon Lane typified by a historic conglomeration of educational edifices, light industrial building typologies and shopfronts dispersed amongst residential terrace rows and cottages is conserved.

4.1.3 Landscape

- a) The existing concrete driveway, crossover and sandstone kerb/guttering to Bulwer Street is conserved.
- b) Documentary evidence confirms the site was historically devoid of significant plantings and landscaped features. As such the proposal to replace extant mass planting areas will not adversely impact the streetscape presentation or setting of the place.
- c) The development proposal allows for integration of new soft landscaping, successfully enhancing the visual qualities of the streetscape. Construction of a planter bed framing the central opening is a particularly positive aspect of the scheme, articulating the historic aperture.

4.1.4 Use

- a) The proposal allows for reinstatement of a commercial use, aligning with the original intended function of 73 Bulwer Street. A number of mixed-use commercial buildings are evident within the immediate context, with the purpose as a disability centre deemed compatible.
- b) The change of use proposal will not affect the significance of the former warehouse or its contribution to the eclectic character of the conservation area. Alterations will not reduce the ability to interpret the historic light-industrial form of the building, rather enhancing an appreciation and understanding of the site as the original Gissing's and Co. Distributors.
- c) Works to facilitate the return to a commercial function including installation of an accessible ramp, widening of early 2000s door openings and upgrades to amenities will have a negligible impact on the significance of the subject site, streetscape and broader heritage context.

4.1.5 Demolition

- a) Partial demolition of the western brick wall for provision of a new accessible entrance is considered mandatory for continued use of the site. Concealed from the public domain, the opening will not adversely impact the warehouse's contribution to the HCA or significant Bulwer Street frontage.
- b) Although the north-eastern opening is altered, the original fenestration pattern, timber sash windows and vestibule arrangement remains unaffected.
- c) Removal of extant timber flooring allows for introduction of a concealed ramp-way whilst conserving the collective brick facade and historic central opening.
- d) As D-15 and the connecting timber deck do not form part of the original fabric, demolition of the opening is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the warehouse or its interpretation from Napoleon lane.

4.1.6 Curtilage

- a) The curtilage of the site is not impacted by the development proposal.

4.1.7 Moveable heritage

- a) There is no known moveable heritage at the subject site.

4.1.8 Aboriginal cultural heritage

- a) This report does not address Indigenous cultural heritage, however a basic search of Heritage NSW AHIMS Web Services was conducted 10 September 2024. The search confirmed no Aboriginal sites or places have been formally recorded or declared at or within a 200 metre buffer of the site at 73 Bulwer Street, Maitland 2320.

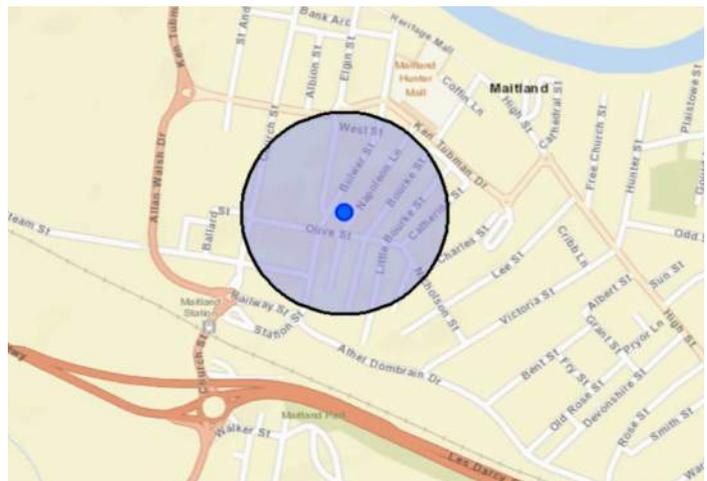


Figure 58
AHIMS Map showing 0 Aboriginal sites or places recorded or declared in or near the subject site.
source: Heritage NSW AHIMS Web Services.

4.1.9 Historical Archaeology

- a) A historical archaeological report pertaining to the early development of the site has not been undertaken as part of the current proposal. The existing archaeological resource of the site is unknown although.

In the event of relics being uncovered, they should be conserved in accordance with the guidelines stipulated by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974 (Aboriginal archaeology) and/or the NSW Heritage Act, 1977 (European archaeology). The NSW Heritage Act defines a relic as 'any deposit, artefact, object or material evidence that:

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

4.1.10 Natural Heritage

- a) The subject site is not known to identify as a place with natural heritage values.

4.1.11 Conservation areas

- a) The proposal generally retains the subdivision and streetscape patterns of the Central Maitland HCA, maintaining consistent siting, orientation and setbacks to both Bulwer Streets and Napoleon Lane.
- b) Development of an additional parking area is consistent with neighbouring commercial properties, with vehicle accommodation limited to the laneway.

- c) The sympathetic detailing and hipped and gable roof forms ensure the established character of the streetscape, HCA and neighbouring heritage item (60 Bourke Street) is not diminished.

4.1.12 Cumulative impacts

- a) The proposal is not considered to present any cumulative impacts.

4.1.13 The Conservation Management Plan

- a) A Conservation Management Plan does not exist for the place.

4.1.14 Heritage Items in the Vicinity

The subject site is nearby to the following listed heritage items, defined by the Maitland Local Environmental Plan 2011 to be of local significance. With the extent of the proposal primarily screened from the public domain with minor landscaping works the scheme does not present any heritage impact.

Item	Published Significance
I139 Maitland Public School Local Significance 70 Elgin Street, Maitland NSW 2320	Historic: Physical evidence of phases of development of Public School in Maitland from 1873 to present. Social: Association as focus and venue for educational and community functions. Aesthetic: Excellent examples of public architecture of Victorian and Federation periods seen in context of later school design and township. Important townscape elements on corner sites.
SHR #01499 Grossmann House State Significance 71 Church Street, Maitland NSW 2320	A large Victorian town house, which forms an interesting group with its twin (Brough House) next door now largely, restored in its original form. Built by merchants in partnership, they form an impressive residential partnership of the 1860's. The historical associations of these two buildings make them of great interest in their relationship to the original owners and later use as part of the Maitland Girls' High School. (National Trust, 1976)
SHR #01495 Brough House State Significance 67 Church Street, Maitland NSW 2320	A large Victorian town house, which forms an interesting group with its twin (Grossman House) next door now largely, restored in its original form. Built by merchants in partnership, they form an impressive residential partnership of the 1860's. The historical associations of these two buildings make them of great interest in their relationship to the original owners and later use as part of the Maitland Girls' High School. (National Trust, 1976)
I127 House Local Significance 60 Bourke Street, Maitland NSW 2320	Historic: Record of urban growth of second half of C19th - probably early in period. Aesthetic: Georgian style and long plan form relatively rare, well-proportioned and relatively intact except alternation of verandah posts. Important townscape element on corner site.
I143 Somerset Local Significance 71 Elgin Street, Maitland NSW 2320	Historic: Record of urban growth and housing reflective of regional role of city. Aesthetic: Intact and well proportioned example of single storey filigree style house with elegant slender verandah posts and attractive roof form. Contributes to townscape value on corner site.
I144 St Elmo Local Significance 87 Elgin Street, Maitland NSW 2320	Historic: Record of urban growth and housing reflective of regional role of city. Aesthetic: Relatively restrained example of Victorian Italianate two storey house with filigree verandah. Contributor to townscape character.
I124 House Local Significance 40 Bourke Street, Maitland NSW 2320	Historic: Record of urban growth of C19th and regional importance attracting citizens of substantial means. Aesthetic: Representative example of Victorian Georgian domestic architecture - one of few large houses (two storey) retaining a substantial curtilage - no traces of original garden.
I130 Brick Cottage Local Significance 50 Bulwer Street, Maitland NSW 2320	Historic: Record of urban growth of early Victorian period. Aesthetic: Good example, intact architectural style of Victorian Georgian small 3 bay cottage. Contributor to townscape character.



Figure 59

Items of heritage significance identified within the immediate vicinity of 73 Bulwer Street with the Central Maitland HCA hatched in red.
 source: Mecone MOSAIC adapted by Heritas, 2024.

4.1.15 Commonwealth/National Heritage Significance

- a) The place does not meet the threshold for Commonwealth or national heritage significance.

4.1.16 World Heritage Significance

- a) The place does not meet the threshold for world heritage significance.

5 SUMMARY + RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The proposed development responds to the characteristic materiality, forms and fabric of the heritage context, incorporating restrained and unobtrusive detailing that is sympathetic to the streetscape. Recent change of use to comparative dwellings and mid-twentieth century warehouses are evident at both 67 Bulwer Street and 73 Elgin Street, Maitland. The collective scheme allows for reinstatement of the original commercial function of the place, whilst supporting its ongoing use, care and maintenance. Demolition is predominantly contained to areas of disturbed fabric with penetrations to the original brick exterior necessitated by equitable access requirements. Considered siting of the aperture to the western facade ensures the prominent street presentation is conserved with enhancement of the central opening through introduction of a decorative mural and planter bed.



Figure 60

Warehouse at 73 Elgin Street servicing Headspace Maitland with recent paint finish, mural and ramp.



Figure 61

Single storey cottage adapted as a rehabilitation centre to 67 Bulwer Street with vehicle parking accessible from Napoleon Lane.

5.2 Recommendations

- Preparation of a heritage interpretation panel should be considered to reflect the former use of the place as Gissing's Distributors & Co. Display of a simple interpretive sign within the entrance alcove or fixture to the timber planter bed may be suitable.
- Treatment of existing and new boundary fencing should be detailed with the design of a comparable scale to the street. The fencing design/finish must complement the character of the streetscape and broader heritage context.
- The cladding format and profile nominated to the infilled south-eastern opening (D-15) should match existing.

5.3 Conclusion

With consideration to the following recommendations given in section 5.2, the development proposal is considered to be a sympathetic response to adaptation of the site whilst positively contributing to the Central Maitland Heritage HCA.