

The Old Bega Hospital Draft Management Plan

Introduction

This document sets out draft proposals for management of the Old Bega Hospital Reserve as at May 2015.

The objectives are the context for more detailed management principles across subjects ranging from heritage conservation to provision of electricity - see the table of contents.

An objective of the plan, and of the planning process that led to it, is to limit conflicts in space and time, integrate multiple requirements where practicable, and to take advantage of current events to cover future needs.

The document is not a *Plan of Management* as described in the New South Wales *Crown Lands Act*. It is not legally binding. Parts of what are described in it, however, are legally required, either under the *Crown Lands Act* or otherwise. Nor is it exhaustive: not all subjects have been covered, and situations will arise that are not adequately covered by the principles outlined here.

Nor is the plan fixed: it will be updated from time to time and may be substantially revised.

The document was prepared by and has been adopted as a draft for consultation purposes by the Old Bega Hospital Reserve Trust, the body appointed under the *Crown Lands Act* to manage the Old Bega Hospital Reserve. The trustees who comprise the Trust are volunteers and receive no payment. More details about the Trust are included in the section on [land tenure](#) below. More details on the Old Bega Hospital generally are available on the internet at www.obh.org.au.

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Part 1: Objectives

The Trust intends that the built, social, Aboriginal and natural heritage and other values of the Old Bega Hospital be used for community purposes and to generate social and financial returns, rather than to be simply a heritage relic or left idle. It intends the buildings and site be used actively to conserve and build regional heritage, social and cultural value. It intends to promote active public use and enjoyment of the facilities.

The management goals for the Old Bega Hospital Crown Reserve are to simultaneously:

- conserve, use and build the heritage and other values of the buildings and grounds
- provide facilities to build the value of community organisations and activities grounded in the Sapphire Coast of New South Wales
- provide facilities to build arts, crafts and other cultural activities and value on the Sapphire Coast
- ensure use of the site is financially secured by sound commercial uses and tenants.

To achieve those goals, the Trust has resolved to use the Old Bega Hospital Reserve to create, manage and maintain the physical infrastructure for a regional community and cultural centre for the Sapphire Coast, including a restored main building and renovated outbuildings.

While the Trust will create, manage and maintain the infrastructure, it will allow, contract or employ others to market, manage and maintain the operations of the centre and ensure its viability.

To be financially self-sufficient, i.e. to have sufficient recurrent income to cover recurrent expenditure, the centre will incorporate commercial as well as not for profit community and cultural activities.

In the short term, management will aim to:

- restore the main building to standards that will conserve heritage values, attract and retain visitor and users, be efficient to run and generate net income, and meet all legal requirements
- renovate the outbuildings to standards that will conserve heritage values, attract and retain visitor and users, be efficient to run and generate net income, and meet all legal requirements
- maintain the grounds and other infrastructure to standards that conserve heritage values, attract and retain visitor and users, are efficient to run and meet all legal requirements
- provide for, encourage and manage community use of the buildings and grounds.

In the longer term, once the buildings are restored and operational, management will:

- provide for, encourage and oversee commercial, community and cultural use of the buildings and the grounds as a regional community and cultural centre for the Sapphire Coast of New South Wales, to generate social and financial returns
- maintain the buildings, infrastructure and grounds to standards that conserve heritage values and attract and retain visitors and users.

Management will integrate multiple objectives and avoid trading off one objective or principle against another. Where there is conflict, heritage conservation will take precedence over other actions.

Part 2: Description

The site

The Old Bega Hospital Reserve covers 1.6 hectares about 2km south of Bega on the New South Wales Sapphire Coast, in the Bega Valley shire.

The site slopes gently to the north, with views towards Mumbulla Mountain (Biamanga) in the distance. It is mainly grassed, with regularly mown grasses around the buildings, and unmanaged grasslands in the lower northern part and around the perimeter. Most grasses are introduced species. The soil is a granite loam.

There are some trees, mostly patches of weedy species that are probably self-sown, but some isolated pines were probably planted. Trees are mainly in poor condition and/or poorly placed and few if any are worthy of long term retention.



Aerial view looking west, early 2015. The buildings from the foreground clockwise are: the main building without its roof, the operating theatre, the morgue and a recent storage shed, the laundry (with tall chimney), nurses' quarters (at the rear), the Cottage (a recent demountable), and a garden gazebo. The Men's Shed is not in the photo.

The surrounding properties are also mainly grassy and used for, if anything, rural purposes. Some blocks a little further away are used for light industrial purposes, e.g. bus garaging, water supply. An adjacent block between the Old Hospital and the junction of the new and former Princes Highways is zoned industrial (IN1), but has not been developed.

Access is from the former Princes Highway, close to the southern turnoff into Bega from the new Princes Highway (Bega bypass). Access from the road is along approximately 200 metres of a narrow bitumen driveway which is owned and maintained by Council. The driveway has been used in the past for buses, but is not suitable in its current configuration for frequent use by large vehicles.

The former Princes Highway is a two lane bitumen road with variable narrow verges, providing excellent access for motor vehicles but barely suitable for cyclists and pedestrians. Infrequent public bus services use the road, but there is no stop in the vicinity.

Within the site, vehicle access is by way of a narrow paved driveway around the perimeter of the site with a one way circulation. Parking is informal and uncontrolled, on grass or dirt depending on the level of use. There is no formal disabled parking.

The site has town water, electricity and communications services. It has an on-site septic sewerage system. An 11kV overhead electricity service crossed the site roughly north-south; and the Tathra water supply crosses the lower northern part of the site roughly east-west.

The climate is variable, often with good rainfall and marked seasons, but is subject to extended periods of drought. Grassfires would be a danger in suitable conditions.

Tenure is discussed below.

The site is quiet, sunny and not overly exposed to wind. It is much loved by the people of Bega and surrounding areas.

Buildings

There are five historic buildings on the site, and a few newer ones.

The historic buildings are:

- the main hospital building of 615 m² plus 212 m² of verandahs (constructed in 1888-89 and later extended). It was gutted by fire in May 2004 and is being restored at a cost of around \$3 million
- nurses quarters of 164 m² plus 66 m² of verandahs (1928), now used for a community radio station and arts and crafts workshops
- morgue, 14 m², used as a store
- laundry, 120 m² (1934-35), used by the Bega Valley Potters
- operating theatre, 50 m² (1934-35), used by the Bega Valley Weavers.

Construction of the Old Bega Hospital commenced in 1888 on land reserved for the Bega Common, using funds raised by the community and matching contributions from the NSW government. Operation commenced in 1889.



Main building when completed in 1889. Source: Bayley 1987: 51

When completed in 1889, the hospital building was a north-facing brick structure consisting of four rooms, flanked by two weatherboard wings that were protected by verandahs (Bayley 1987: 49). The weatherboard wings were later replaced with brick constructions in 1904 (western male wing) and 1909 (eastern female wing), substantially giving the building its present form. In 1909, the total site included the main building, an operating theatre connected by walkway to the main building, nurses' quarters, morgue, isolation building, laundry and other minor outbuildings and extensions (Bega Community Contact and Resource Group 1985: 4).

After 1909 various modifications and extensions were carried out in order to cope with changing technology, the rising population of the district and the positive change in social attitudes towards hospitals and medical treatment (Old Bega Hospital Trust 2012). These modifications and extensions included:

- construction of a new isolation building (1912)
- connection to the municipal gas service for lighting (1918)
- construction of the new nurses' quarters (1928)
- connection to mains electricity (1934)
- construction of new wards, operating theatre, bathroom, laundry, boiler room, wardsman's quarters, nurses' quarters and isolation building extension (1934/35)
- glazing of north-facing verandahs (1937)
- connection to town water supply (1940).

All the historic buildings on the site are exposed brick structures. The majority of the main building can be identified as Flemish bond while the outbuildings are stretcher bond. The floor and roof of the main building were timber structures and all buildings originally had corrugated steel roof cladding. The main building has a number of notable external features including:

- a largely symmetrical façade
- high pitch gable roofs with decorative gables
- the hospital construction date displayed on the central gable
- three north facing verandahs with separate entrance doors (two verandahs were enclosed with fibro sheeting and glazing)
- three north facing bay windows
- multiple chimneys.

The buildings exhibit a combination of features reflecting the influence of different architectural styles over time. When the main building was first constructed in 1888-1889, its symmetrical façade included a central block with two weatherboard wings and verandahs, demonstrating elements of Victorian Regency. However, the high pitch gable roof and pyramid roof on the wings suggest Gothic style influences. Features that were added later, such as the bay windows and decorative gables, demonstrate influence from the Federation Queen Anne architectural style. The influence of this style may also be responsible for the movement away from the rigid symmetry that the main building had displayed originally (Apperly, Irving & Reynolds 1989).

The site is listed in the Bega Valley Local Environment Plan 2013 as a heritage item of local significance.

The site ceased operation as a hospital when a new hospital opened in 1957. Subsequently

- it was used as a boys hostel until 1976
- from 1976 Department of Agriculture used and neglected it, leading to deterioration
- community action from 1984 led to renovation for the Australian bicentenary and the Hospital's centenary. Work was completed in 1989

- fire in 2004 caused extensive damage to the main building
- damage, clean-up, deterioration and stabilisation followed.

The buildings apart from the main building, are in sound condition, but as at early 2015 were in only an adequate state of repair or fairly run down: still suitable for budget community use, but not up to standards for commercial occupancy. Toilet facilities were minimal with no disabled toilets, ceilings were not insulated, some roofs were in need of resheeting. Major refurbishing will be needed to bring them up to the standard expected in the repaired main building.

The main building was gutted by fire in May 2004. It was not insured. It has not had a roof, and has been missing floors, windows and doors, since. It is a demolition site and is fenced off from public access. The walls are structurally sound, but the top courses of brickwork will need to be replaced before a new roof can be installed. The full cost of repairing and restoring the main building is estimated to be of the order of \$3m.

The newer buildings on the site are the Bega Men's Shed which opened in 2015, an equipment shed, a temporary building known as the Cottage, and a garden gazebo.

Land tenure

Description

The traditional owners of the Old Bega Hospital land are the Yuin people. Following European settlement in the area, land around and including the Old Bega Hospital site was reserved for the Bega Common. Part of the Common was subsequently reserved for construction of the Hospital.

The Old Bega Hospital site is currently Crown land administered by the Crown Lands Division, Department of Primary Industries, New South Wales, as a Crown Reserve under the NSW *Crown Lands Act 1989*. It is Lot 296 in Deposited Plan 728021 (Figs # and #). The land area is 1.603 hectares (about 4 acres). Management is assisted by the Old Bega Hospital Reserve Trust which is governed by a Trust Board comprising voluntary trustees appointed under the Act by the relevant Minister. The Minister may dissolve the Reserve Trust at any time by notification in the government Gazette. Crown land may be developed and/or sold by the government.

Following community pressure, the site was withdrawn from sale and reserved *for preservation of historical sites and buildings and community purposes* by notice in the government Gazette on 30 March 1990. The Minister may, by notification in the Gazette, revoke the whole or part of a reservation of land under the Act.

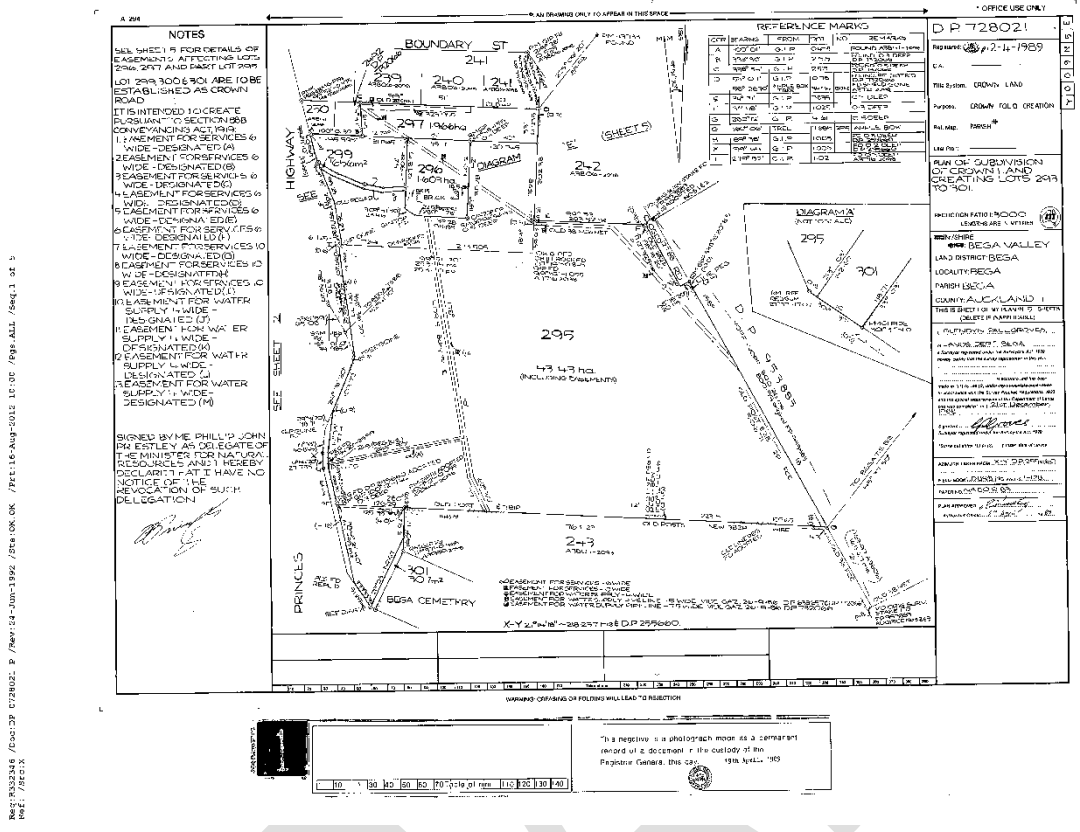
Crown land can, with the Minister's consent, be leased. As at April 2015, a small portion of the site was leased to the Bega Men's Shed and a Men's Shed had been constructed on that portion. No other part of the site is leased.

There are easements for water mains and electricity services across the site, which limit where buildings and other infrastructure can be placed.

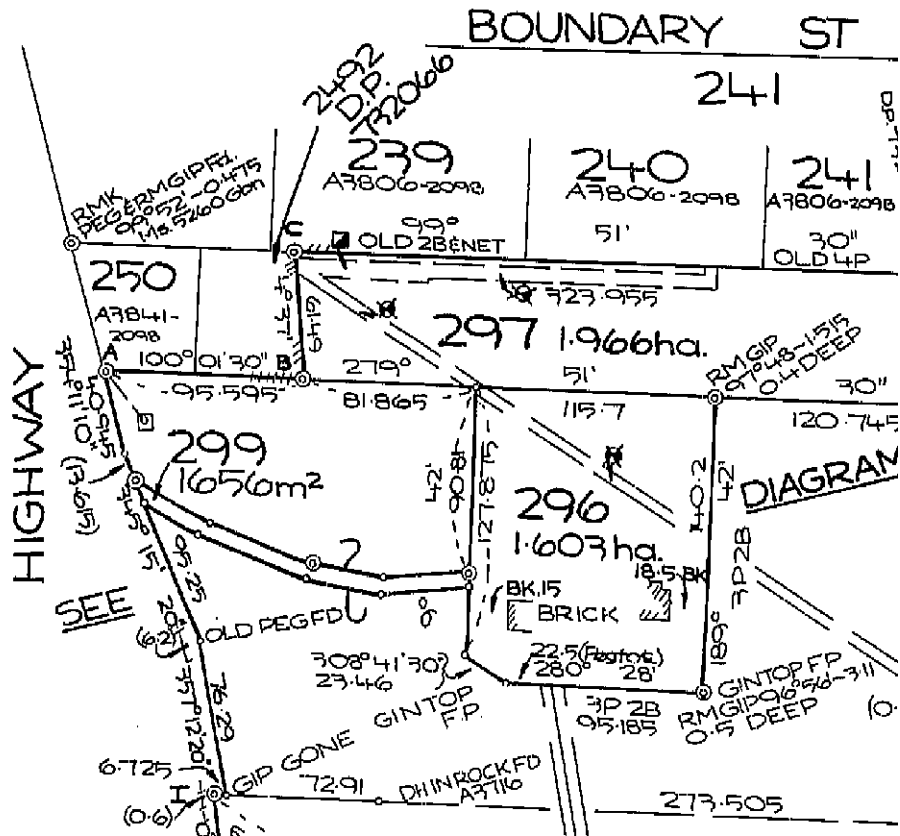
Community groups use the buildings or site under leases, licences, temporary licences, informal rental agreements or short term hire arrangements.

Surrounding land is currently used for rural, light industrial and water supply purposes. Under the 2013 Bega Valley Comprehensive Local Environment Plan (LEP), part of the surrounding land is zoned general industrial (IN1) while the remainder is shown as deferred matters (DM). In 2014, the Old Bega Hospital site was re-zoned from SP1 'special purpose' (in part because no 'special purpose' had

been specified in the LEP, which severely limited development options for the site) to RE2 'private recreation' (which allows a range of uses, including public uses).



Deposited Plan 728021, registered on 12 April 1989. The Old Bega Hospital is on Lot 296 in the top left of the Plan.



Detail from Deposited Plan 728021. Lot 299 is the access road to the Old Bega Hospital (Lot 296) from the Old Princes Highway (Newtown Road). The long dashed lines are easements for water supply, electricity and other services. There are other easements. Dimensions are in metres.

Value

The buildings were valued in their 'as is' state for insurance (i.e. replacement) purposes in 2006 at \$1.67m, including demolition and council and professional fees. That estimate was on the basis that the main building in its current state represented about 25% of the value of a reconstructed building. At that time, it was estimated that if all the buildings were fully replaced with new modern buildings of similar size, quality and functionality, the value of the replacement buildings would be \$3.565m (inclusive of fees etc) for insurance purposes. As at July 2012, the value of the land for rates purposes, as determined by the Valuer General, was \$129,000. The market value of the entire site in its current condition, or if restored rather than replaced, is not known. Valuers have said (pers com to Tim Whitaker, 2015) it would be extremely difficult at this stage to determine a reliable estimate for the market value of the site in a restored state.

Actions

Develop and implement plans to lease, licence, rent and hire all existing and new spaces in accordance with the Trust Handbook and to meet user needs and generate sufficient recurrent income to the Reserve Trust to pay for recurrent outgoings.

If ongoing development and use of the site to meet the objectives of this plan requires that the site be placed in some other form of ownership, consider alternative tenure models.

Consult with Council and use consultative arrangements to ensure that surrounding land tenures are consistent with the heritage values and community uses of the Old Bega Hospital.

Legal basis for management

Crown Lands Act

The site is Crown land. Management is subject to the provisions of the NSW [Crown Lands Act 1989](#). The Minister is primarily responsible for management (s.12). Some of the Minister's function is delegated to the Crown Lands division in the Department of Primary Industries, which also advises the Minister. Day to day management is delegated to the Reserve Trust appointed under the Act (s.92 et seq). The duties of the Reserve Trust are set out in the Act (s.92). Much more detail on what is expected and required of the Trust is set out in the [Reserve Trust Handbook](#).

Section 11 of the *Crown Lands Act* sets out principles for management:

For the purposes of this Act, the principles of Crown land management are:

- (a) that environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land,
- (b) that the natural resources of Crown land (including water, soil, flora, fauna and scenic quality) be conserved wherever possible,
- (c) that public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged,
- (d) that, where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged,
- (e) that, where appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity, and
- (f) that Crown land be occupied, used, sold, leased, licensed or otherwise dealt with in the best interests of the State consistent with the above principles.

The *Crown Lands Act* provides at Division 6 (ss.112A et seq) for preparation of *plans of management*. Section 114 provides:

- (2) If a *plan of management* is adopted:
 - (a) the reserve trust shall carry out and give effect to it, and
 - (b) no operations may be undertaken on or in relation to the reserve unless they are in accordance with the plan.

This management plan is **not** a *plan of management* under the Act.

This management plan is designed to inform managers, users and any other interested parties of the principles that the Trust will seek to apply to its role in management of the site. It is not intended to be prescriptive (saying things that must be done) or proscriptive (saying things that must not be done).

Other legislation

Management restrictions or requirements may also arise under other legislation, including:

- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cwlth)
- *Native Title Act 1993* (Cwlth)
- *Crown Lands Regulation 2006*
- *Local Government Act 1993*

- *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*
- *Roads Act 1993*
- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
- *Heritage Act 1977*
- *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*
- *Companion Animals Act 1998*
- *Noxious Weeds Act 1993*
- *Catchment Management Act 1989*

Management may also be bound by provisions in a lease or other agreement it enters into with third parties.

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Part 3: Principles

Heritage

Management principles

Management of the Old Bega Hospital will be guided by the principles of the Burra Charter.

Expert conservation and heritage advice will be used to assist in conservation and maintenance of the site.

Any building alterations will not detract from the cultural significance of the Old Bega Hospital.

Do as much as necessary and as little as possible in relation to maintenance and reconstruction works.

Reconstruction is appropriate where fabric is incomplete through damage or alteration. It must reproduce a known earlier state. The buildings will be a model of sensitive restoration.

Existing fabric should be re-used in conservation and maintenance work where possible. If this is not possible new material is acceptable as long as it matches or closely resembles the original fabric.

All new work carried out will only be identifiable on close inspection.

It is not appropriate to significantly alter the main structure, layout and dimensions of the main building or outbuildings.

Conservation of the interior spaces will retain or reinstate original features and fixtures where possible.

New developments within the precinct and on adjacent properties are not appropriate where they adversely impact cultural heritage significance.

Gardens and landscaping will:

- be returned to a known earlier state, or
- resemble an earlier known state, or
- be appropriate and complement the historical and current purposes of the site.

A photographic record will be made before, during and on completion of any significant conservation works. Photographic recording is not an alternative to conservation and maintenance of significant fabric.

Conserve the heritage significance of existing significant fabric relics, settings, and views that are associated with the significance of heritage items.

Day to day maintenance and any alteration, restoration or renovation will conserve and protect heritage values at all levels.

Development will not adversely affect the heritage significance of heritage items and their settings.

Any development will be carried out with development consent where it involves demolishing, damaging or altering a heritage item.

Any proposed development will be assessed before development consent is applied for as to the extent to which a proposed development would affect the heritage significance of heritage items.

Present and interpret heritage values as part of the attractiveness of the site for visitors and users.

Engage local people for restoration work. Use work on the buildings as an education opportunity on principles and practice of heritage restoration and encourage connections between the buildings and the community.

Value

There are few remaining relatively unpolluted architectural items in the Bega Valley from the early settlement and immediate post- Federation periods. Of those remaining, none match the scale of the main building in size and style.

The Old Bega Hospital has been assessed against the NSW Heritage Council's criteria for State significance (Kaylie Beasley 2012, *Old Bega Hospital Conservation Management Plan*), as set out in the following paragraphs.

Criterion A: Historic Significance

An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history.

The Old Bega Hospital is important because it was the first public hospital in Bega and provided healthcare to residents of Bega and surrounding districts for 68 years (1889-1957). It is one of the Oldest extant public buildings in Bega. It also provides an important example of regional healthcare in NSW during the early 20th century.

Criterion B: Associative Significance

An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history.

The Old Bega Hospital is associated with Sir Robert Lucas Tooth. He made substantial donations towards the development of the hospital and he formally opened the hospital in 1889. Sir Robert Lucas Tooth is a notably figure in NSW's history due to his involvement in R and F Tooth & Co, the Bank of NSW, the NSW Legislative Assembly and for his properties at Kameruka (near Bega) and Darling Point (Sydney).

Criterion C: Aesthetic Significance

An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW.

The main building demonstrates a high level of design with an attractive combination of architectural styles. The main building contains many decorative features including, high pitch roofs with decorative gables and three large north facing bay windows. The 2004 fire caused significant damage to the main building and subsequent deterioration of the structure has diminished the aesthetic values of the main building.

The surrounding landscape of the Old Bega Hospital has remained relatively undeveloped since the time when the place was operating as a public hospital, therefore, maintaining elements of the original setting and ambience.

The Old Bega Hospital demonstrates aesthetic significance. However, because of damage and deterioration of the main building it does not currently meet this criterion at State level.

Criterion D: Social Significance

An item has strong social or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

The Old Bega Hospital has been an important site within Bega and surrounding districts since its construction in 1888. Its role as hospital for 68 years (1889-1957) means that many community members share a personal connection with the hospital. They may have been born there, visited people there, worked there or been involved in hospital fundraising efforts. The subsequent use of the Old Bega Hospital and conversion into a community centre has maintained this strong connection with the community.

Criterion E: Scientific/Technical Significance

An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history.

The Old Bega Hospital does not meet this criterion.

Criterion F: Rarity

An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history.

The Old Bega Hospital is the only extant hospital from the late 19th century located in the Sapphire Coast. Also its structural form and architectural style is unique in comparison to other hospital buildings in NSW. The 2004 fire and subsequent weathering of the main building has diminished the value of the Old Bega Hospital's unique form and style, however, the Old Bega Hospital does meet this criterion at a State level because it is the only extant hospital from the late 19th century located in the Sapphire Coast region.

Criterion G: Representativeness

An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's

- *cultural or natural places; or*
- *cultural or natural environments.*

The Old Bega Hospital is an important example of regional healthcare facilities that were operating in NSW during the early 20th century. It also demonstrates the development of healthcare within NSW and the development of Bega as a regional centre. The positive shift in societal attitudes towards public healthcare and the rising population of the region is evident through the physical fabric of the building, particularly the layout of the main building and changes which were made to the structure, such as the glazing of the verandahs in order to provide more accommodation. The representativeness values of the Old Bega Hospital have been reduced by the 2004 fire and subsequent deterioration of the main building and, as a result, the Old Bega Hospital does not fulfil this criterion at a State level.

There is little remaining of the original garden from when the Old Bega Hospital was operating as a public hospital.

Actions

Based on the identified heritage values of the Old Bega Hospital, Beasley identified the following management needs:

- immediate action to prevent further deterioration of the main building (criteria a, b, c, d, f, g)

- conserve the structure and layout of the main building (criteria a, f, g)
- conserve notable features of the main building, such as the decorative gables and bay windows (criteria a, c, f)
- conserve identified elements that are of significance, specifically the hospital construction date on central gable and commemorative plaque on the nurses' quarters (criteria a, d);
- restore the main building to allow community use (criterion d)
- continue the use of outbuildings by community groups (criterion d)
- carefully consider new development within the precinct and on adjacent properties where it may detract from the identified significance (criteria c, f).

Seek professional heritage advice wherever there is doubt about heritage values that may be affected by any proposed management action.

Consult heritage specialists for any major works proposed for the site to ensure that works will not detract from the significance and that works are appropriate for heritage buildings and places. Retain notable features of the buildings, including the decorative gables, bay windows, glazed verandahs, the hospital construction date on central gable; and commemorative plaque on the nurses' quarters.

Do not significantly alter the main structure, layout and dimensions of the main building or outbuildings.

Restore exterior of buildings to heritage specifications to conserve the quality and character of the original buildings: roof to follow original roofline and be clad in corrugated steel, but with modern substructure and materials; repair brickwork; replace missing and damaged windows and doors with modern materials in similar style.

Conserve interior layout, walls, fireplaces and chimneys, with new interior wall rendering, new floors, new ceiling, new services. Conservation of the interior spaces should retain or reinstate original features and fixtures where possible.

Construct further buildings in the same external style, arranged around a central courtyard in front of the main building, with access, parking etc around the periphery of the site.

Landscape the grounds to complement buildings, using local species to make the site distinctively Sapphire Coast. Seek advice on and incorporate local Aboriginal motifs and links to Country. Landscape the courtyard so that it can be used year round for events and functions on a variety of scales (from individual users to substantial public events).

Document and implement a maintenance schedule for heritage values to ensure any deterioration is noticed and appropriate action taken.

Research, better document and present the social history and heritage values of the site, including oral histories.

Community

Management principles

Fostering community groups is a major strategy for use of the Old Bega Hospital.

Facilities at the Old Bega Hospital will be made available to commercial, not for profit and charitable groups without favour to any particular user.

Users will be encouraged to help each other and create synergies, e.g. by volunteering to staff a shared front desk.

Community groups and individual members of the community will be encouraged to participate in management and maintenance of the buildings and grounds and in provision of services.

The Old Bega Hospital will provide core facilities, such as office services, for shared use by community groups at minimum cost.

Value

Over 40 community groups used the buildings and grounds before the fire for a wide range of commercial and non-commercial activities. In 2015 the out-buildings were being used by four main resident groups (potters, weavers, radio station and stained glass workers), the Bega Men's Shed had a new shed on a leased part of the site, and a handful of community groups used the premises on a casual basis.

The Trust has identified a need for a regional community centre to serve the Sapphire Coast of New South Wales.

The Trust's objective is to provide the physical infrastructure for a regional community centre using the buildings and grounds of the Old Bega Hospital. As the Trust is a volunteer body and does not have, or intend to have, the capability to manage the day to day operations of the groups that will use the centre, the Trust will have only an oversight role. Management of the operations of the centre, including commercial operations, will be outsourced to an appropriate group or operator.

Restored use of the precinct as a community centre will provide additional funds for maintenance of the site, improve site security, provide opportunities for interpretation of the site and build on the social significance of the site.

Actions

Engage with the community to develop a proposal for a regional community and cultural centre on the site.

Repair and reconstruct the main building and fit it out for community uses as a regional community and cultural centre, to standards that will attract commercial as well as not for profit tenants and generate a significant flow of local and international visitors to the site. In tandem, renovate the existing outbuildings and grounds to a comparable standard.

Meet legislative requirements in relation to occupational health and safety, access, fire safety, provision of facilities and any others that are relevant.

Identify a suitable person or body to manage operations of the completed centre.

Arts

Management principles

Fostering the arts is a major strategy for use of the Old Bega Hospital.

Facilities at the Old Bega Hospital will be made available to commercial, not for profit and charitable groups without favour to any particular user.

The operator of the regional community and cultural centre is to manage arts as well as community activities and users, and to the extent practicable integrate arts and community uses, especially commercial uses.

Arts and craft activities will be visible to visitors and become an attraction for the site, as well as a source of income for artists.

Charges for arts and craft users will be equitable across users, including other commercial users, non-commercial not for profit users and charitable users.

Value

The Bega area has an established reputation as an environment which fosters the arts. Bega TAFE had, since its inception at the Barrack street campus, a strong, well-attended arts program. This was cancelled for budgetary reasons and ceased in December 2012. Prior to the 2004 fire, the Old Bega Hospital suitably serviced both art activities and exhibition space.

Bega has no identifiable precinct for arts and crafts activities. It has two display galleries in the central business district: the community run Spiral Gallery; and the Council run Regional Art Gallery. Craft outlets come and go and have no permanent home.

Even after the 2004 fire, the Old Bega Hospital has been able to provide some facilities: the Bega Weavers are long term exclusive users of the former operating theatre building; Bega Potters are long term exclusive users of the former laundry building and have installed substantial equipment including kilns; and the Nurses Quarters building is used for the studios of EDGE FM community radio and for painting and other arts classes on a regular basis.

There is a need for studio spaces and shared facilities for both local and visiting artists. There is a need for a centre of mass for arts and craft activities in the region. A regional community and cultural centre at the Old Bega Hospital will be able to meet that need.

Arts and craft uses of the Old Bega Hospital will support the arts and craft community of the region, both by provision of spaces for arts activities, and by promotion of sales of art and craft products. That will increase the overall level of arts activities in the region and provide income and employment for practitioners.

Arts activities will be an important use of the site, generating interest for local and international visitors, with flow-on effects for the cafe and other commercial activities on the site, and complement heritage values and interest. Integration and cross fertilization with community activities will increase the value of both.

In the short term, the site will continue to provide a home for the Weavers, Potters, EDGE FM and casual arts and craft activities. Upgrades to existing facilities such as toilets will improve conditions, and provision of equipment such as chairs, tables and a projector will enable additional uses such as film nights and art classes.

Completion of restoration of the main building will provide additional large and small spaces, suitable for permanent and temporary exhibitions, artists in residence and for arts activities not currently catered for such as dance studios and music performances. Complimentary services will include the cafe, childcare, and sales of art and crafts to visitors, both local and international.

In the long term, a new east wing at the Old Bega Hospital will complement the heritage buildings and partially enclose a courtyard to provide indoor and outdoor workshop, classroom, studio, storage, display and sales spaces and a supportive, creative focus for Bega Valley arts and crafts people, including established, beginner and visiting artists. Spaces will range from quiet galleries and

libraries, to semi industrial studios and workshops, and include covered verandahs and an outdoor sculpture garden.

Actions

Engage with the Bega arts and crafts community to develop a proposal for a regional community and cultural centre at the Old Bega Hospital.

Repair and reconstruct the main building and fit it out for community uses as a regional community and cultural centre, to standards that will attract commercial as well as not for profit tenants and generate a significant flow of local and international visitors to the site. In tandem, renovate the existing outbuildings and grounds to a comparable standard.

Meet legislative requirements in relation to occupational health and safety, access, fire safety, provision of facilities and any others that are relevant.

Identify a suitable person or body to manage operations of the completed centre.

Obtain capital funding from government, community, business and private (donor) sources.

Ensure the operator of the regional community and cultural centre has the skills to integrate arts and community uses, including commercial uses.

Ensure other uses of the grounds do not cut off options for arts and crafts uses and vice versa.

Incorporate arts and crafts uses into the landscape plan.

Ensure site infrastructure (including electricity, gas, roads and other access) upgrades include capacity to service a future east wing.

Services infrastructure

Management principles

Services infrastructure provision (electricity, water, gas, sewerage, communications, solid waste management) will be sufficient to meet the needs of current users and reasonably foreseeable future users.

Services infrastructure will be arranged spatially so as minimise both current and future costs and not cut off future development options.

Services infrastructure visibility will reflect heritage values, i.e. if it was not visible around the original buildings, it should not be visible now.

Charging for services will be on the basis of full cost recovery for commercial users (i.e. including the cost of providing infrastructure on site as well as recurrent costs), full recovery of recurrent costs (including service availability charges) for not for profit non-commercial users, and recovery of any significant variable costs for charity users.

Management will minimise services costs by including energy and water conservation and efficiency measures into development, renovation and maintenance work.

The Trust will provide basic site-wide services such as external lighting (both low intensity for safety and security, and higher intensity for outside events at night), public toilets and septic tanks (until such time as the site is connected to the town sewer).

The trust will provide access to the site to enable specific users to meet their services needs e.g. for connection of services to leased areas of the site and for commercial tenants.

Value

Service provision will be essential to most users of the site. Service provision is expensive to establish, to operate and to maintain, but invaluable in ensuring the vitality of the site.

Actions

Develop a spatial plan for service provision generally, which minimises both current and future costs.

Seek to have existing overhead electricity wiring redirected around the site or put underground in such a way that it does not detract from heritage values of the site or interfere with future development of the buildings and grounds.

Ensure external infrastructure such as antennas, poles, wires and solar panels are unobtrusive, so far as practicable not visible from the principal public use areas, and in the longer term can be removed without damaging the heritage fabric.

Develop sewerage infrastructure in such a way as it can be readily connected to town sewerage at a future date.

Incorporate energy and water efficiency and conservation measures into landscape and building design.

Vehicle Access

Management principles

Motor vehicle access is unwelcome but essential.

Safety will be paramount.

Vehicles access on the site will interfere as little as practicable with other uses of the site.

Speeds will be restricted by signage and traffic calming measures.

Parking will be restricted. Parking areas may be developed on the northern portion of the site, where building is largely precluded by the Tathra water supply easement, provided they are suitable hidden from view from the main building.

Disabled parking and access will be provided.

Heavy vehicle access will be restricted to essential services, including deliveries, buses, garbage collection and building work.

Cycling, walking, disability scooter, shared and public transport will be encouraged as alternatives to private vehicles.

The entry to the site from Newtown Road (old Princes Highway) should be safe and attractive.

Value

Vehicle access is expensive to provide and maintain and generally detracts from other values of the site. Vehicles bring noise and pollution and are a danger to people. Roads and parking take up

valuable space and create stormwater management issues. Vehicle access is essential to bring people, goods and services to the site.

The current entry to the site from Newtown Road is in a cutting. It is not particularly safe or attractive. A much improved entry could be made from further south on Newtown road.

Actions

Restrict vehicle access and parking to the periphery of the site except in exceptional cases where direct or close access is required e.g. for delivery of heavy equipment or disabled access.

Maintain the existing one way traffic flow.

Separate roads and parking from areas frequented by children by provision of child resistant fencing or other barriers with appropriate gateways.

Integrate vehicle access and parking with landscaping so that vehicles do not detract from heritage and other values including views.

Liaise with Council to get cycle paths along Newtown Road and public bus access included in any upgrade or other changes to services.

Consult with adjacent landowner and Council with a view to moving and improving the turn off from Newtown Road into the site.

Landscape

Management principles

Landscaping is an essential part of presentation and conservation of the heritage values of the site.

Landscaping will reflect that the site is in the Bega Valley and has a living connection with the Aboriginal people of the valley.

Landscaping will incorporate elements of Aboriginal identity consistent with the wishes of the Aboriginal people of the Valley.

Gardens and landscaping should:

- be returned to a known earlier state, or
- resemble an earlier known state, or
- be appropriate and complement the historical and current purposes of the site.

Landscaping will define public access around the site, including formal entry points.

Major elements of plantings (shrubs and trees) will be local species.

Weedy species, whether local or introduced, will be avoided and suppressed.

Detailed plantings around buildings and access points will reflect past practices, from when the site was a working hospital, and will include appropriate non-native species (e.g. rose gardens, flower gardens between paths and buildings).

Large trees will be included a part of succession planning, where they will not interfere with heritage buildings, proposed buildings or modern services, including solar access, and only where ultimately it will be safe to remove them.

Very large trees may not be appropriate to the site.

Habitat for native animals and insects will be included to add interest to the site.

Areas of non-native plantings may be included for specific purposes, e.g. for a permaculture demonstration garden, for heritage flower gardens.

Heritage gardens will use heritage species and varieties, and avoid modern varieties and hybrids.

Grassy areas in high use areas and may include native and non-native species. Other grassy areas will be primarily native species, including forbs.

Landscaping will separate areas according to functions e.g. car parks will be separated from play areas, semi private function areas will be separated from high use public areas.

Landscaping will be multifunctional, e.g. several small areas for small uses (e.g. family picnics) may be part of a larger area for a large function (e.g. wedding or market day).

Landscaping will protect and present views, particularly of Mumbulla Mountain (Biamanga).

Landscaping will be reasonably easy to maintain.

Landscaping will promote safety and security, including after dark and including bushfire safety.

Landscaping will be used to manage stormwater, including active (tanks and dams) and passive (ground water) conservation for later use.

Irrigation using water imported to the site (town water) will be avoided except in exceptional circumstances. Stormwater and greywater may be used for irrigation in limited areas e.g. formal gardens.

Landscaping will take account not only of sight, but also of smell, touch, sound, privacy, wind protection, access to sunshine and seasons. It will provide formal and informal places to sit, to stand, to play, to mingle and for private reflection.

Paths and other access will reflect historic patterns (mostly rectilinear and adjacent to buildings, with the area between path and building used for flower gardens).

External signage will be kept to a minimum, and except as required otherwise by law, will be in one or two standard formats (size, shape, colours, font, materials) e.g. metal signs on posts along the lines of road signs, timber signs along the lines of national parks signage, and no others.

Community groups and individual volunteers will be encouraged to participate in landscape work.

Value

Landscaping is an essential part of presentation and conservation of the heritage values of the site.

Landscaping is essential to defining public access around the site, including formal entry points. Signs are essential to some aspects of this but generally detract from the amenity of a site; much of what might be done with signs can be achieved by other aspects of landscaping e.g. traffic calming, sightlines along major access routes. That approach has the added advantage that it works for non-English speaking visitors.

Landscape elements can be expensive to establish and to maintain, but add substantially to the value and interest of the site for users and visitors if done well. Landscaping can either reflect the place or be foreign to it, or can integrate elements of both. Landscaping can be educational: it can

demonstrate techniques and values. Landscaping was part of look and feel of the working hospital and contributed to the wellbeing of patients and staff, many of whom would have been migrants.

Before European settlement the site was vegetated with [lowland grassy woodland](#) dominated by Forest Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis*) and with a very limited shrub layer. Most of that former woodland has been cleared from the Bega Valley, though remnant trees and to varying degrees some understory species remain. The original grassy layer has been extensively invaded by exotic species, particularly pasture grasses and weeds. It would be difficult to restore to its original state and then to maintain.

Surviving photographs of the Old Hospital (<http://obh.org.au/Hospital/history.htm> and <http://www.serh.org.au/gallery/past-bega-hospital-history.html>) suggest that at some times, but not others, it had garden beds around the buildings, sometimes with climbers (perhaps *wisteria*) around the verandah posts. Further from the buildings there were scattered shrubs and trees, probably mostly exotic, a rose garden at one time, and at some stages a post and rail fence, and at others a picket fence. In early photos scattered remnant eucalypts can be seen behind the main building.

Actions

Develop, document and implement over time a long term spatial landscape plan that reflects the management principles and values.

Future buildings

Management principles

Uses of the site may outgrow the existing buildings.

Future buildings will be of size and form that complement and do not detract from the heritage buildings on the site.

Future buildings will be for the use of, or directly support the operations of, the regional community and cultural centre.

Future buildings will include east and west wings which will enclose a courtyard to the north of the main building but be open on the northern side with views to Mumbulla Mountain and winter sunshine. The east wing will incorporate heavy or service intensive activities such as studios and workshops and other less public activities, with service access from the rear; the west wing will cater to lighter and more public activities such as galleries, theatre and dance, function rooms, offices and storage.

The main building will remain the principal point of public access and interaction (e.g. for a community shopfront, for the cafe, for public functions), with formal access from the courtyard (north), service access from the road (south) and pedestrian access from the east (main vehicle entry to the site and primary point of public entry). Public access to other buildings will be principally via the courtyard.

Minor buildings will be avoided as much as practicable, and located to the rear (east and southeast) of the site. They will include a machinery shed. An easement for the Tathra water supply largely precludes building on the northern portion of the site.

Future development will be integrated with developments on adjacent blocks, particularly where they are providing for public uses; and vice versa.

Value

The heritage buildings constitute the main present value of the Old Bega Hospital site for community and cultural purposes. In time they are likely to prove insufficient to meet the needs of a thriving regional community and cultural centre, so additional buildings will be required. Such buildings could build on or detract from heritage values. The management principles are intended to ensure that future buildings add to existing heritage values and indeed create new heritage for future generations. Identifying the form and function of future buildings will ensure that management in the meantime does not cut off future options or make them unaffordable or wasteful.

A largely enclosed courtyard to the north of the main building, and reflecting its form and scale, will add considerably to the value and versatility of the site as whole. It will provide a variety of spaces for activities and reflection, including open verandahs, seating areas, outdoor cafe and eating areas, performance spaces, steps and walls for informal seating, display areas (e.g. for sculpture) and incorporate links to Mumbulla Mountain and Aboriginal traditional ownership. It will be suitable for community market days and for night functions.

Retaining the main building as the principal point of public access and interaction will ensure visitors are exposed to and appreciate the heritage value of the principal building and its site.

A semi industrial building will be needed to accommodate machinery and other site maintenance requirements. Arts and crafts uses will also include semi industrial operations which pose safety and environmental risks. These uses will be concentrated to the east and southeast of the site to minimise effects on other users and make joint use of services, while presenting a user friendly face to the courtyard.

Most of the adjacent blocks are currently unzoned ('Deferred Matters') in the Bega Valley Local Environment Plan 2013, though land to the southwest adjacent to the old Princes Highway south of the entrance to the Old Bega Hospital is zoned General Industrial. There is currently little or no development on the adjoining blocks. There is a risk that the owners of the adjoining land will seek to develop their land in ways that will not complement and might seriously adversely affect the values of the Old Bega Hospital. There is also the opportunity to seek to have the land used in ways that will complement and enhance the values of the Old Hospital site, for example by providing complementary public facilities, protecting views and the general ambience of the place, and increasing the numbers and length of stay of visitors.

Actions

Develop a spatial plan for future buildings, to inform other aspects of management such as landscaping and service provision.

Engage with adjoining landowners and Council re uses of adjacent blocks, with a view to mutually supportive development.

Safety and security

Management principles

Design and management of the buildings and grounds will meet all legal requirements for safety and security, including emergency management and bushfire safety.

Management of the site will be family friendly, i.e. it will accommodate the needs of children and people with disabilities and infirmities, as well as able bodied adults.

Sufficient low intensity external lighting will be provided around the site to ensure safe access and egress at night for visitors, users and employees, without detracting from the heritage values and setting of the site.

Paths will provide safe access and egress from principal points of entry to the site to principal points of entry for the public buildings, including for people with disabilities.

Landscaping will promote safety and security.

Rules relating to, for example, dogs on the site, will reflect family friendly management intentions, as well as legal requirements. But they will not be more onerous than they need to be.

Encourage use of the site seven days a week and many hours a day so that people are around to keep an eye on it.

Long term tenants (those with leases or licences) will be expected to make their own arrangements for security within their tenures, including security services if required.

Manage physical access to buildings and the site, manage movable property, and where appropriate install security systems, so as to reduce opportunities for malicious damage and theft.

Smoking will not be permitted on the site.

Value

Safety and security for visitors is essential if they are going to continue to use the site.

Safety and security are also essential to protect both the heritage fabric of the site and investments in more recent improvements.

Actions

Develop and implement a safety and security plan, including emergency management, that will give effect to the management principles.

Integrate safety and security in all other elements of management.

Risk management

Management principles

The Trust will undertake risk management as required by the Trust Handbook and applicable law.

Where a party other than the Trust is conducting an activity, the trust will seek to have that party take responsibility for the risks involved in the activity.

The Trust will closely monitor financial performance of the site and address any emerging issues to ensure that the site continues to be financially sustainable.

Value

Risk management is designed to reduce foreseeable damage, and thus the cost of damage, arising from foreseeable events on the site, including both human events (e.g. activities) and natural events (e.g. storms), including both damage to people and damage to property, and covering both major and minor damage. In many cases risk reduction (either the likelihood of an event occurring or the resulting damage when it does occur) is a matter of doing things differently rather than requiring additional expenditure, so risk management should be integrated into other aspects of

management. Insurance can spread the financial cost of damage over time and among the insured, but does not prevent or reduce it. For some forms of damage, insurance can provide protection against major financial liabilities.

Actions

As prescribed or recommended in the Trust Handbook, especially Chapter 7.

Develop and implement a business plan.

Leasing, renting and hiring

Management principles

The Old Bega Hospital buildings and grounds are there to be used by the community. They do little good if sitting idle. The site was reserved from sale for heritage and community purposes and should be actively used for community purposes.

The site will generally be open to casual visitors at no charge.

The Trust will give effect to the Trust Handbook and related policy in determining appropriate forms of tenure, and related rents and charges, for users of the site and its facilities. Generally that means for commercial users and commercial activities that market rents will be charged. For non-commercial uses by not for profit users, rebates on market rents are applicable. Unless required otherwise:

- Charges for commercial operations, whether run by for profit or not for profit organisations, will reflect market prices for the facilities and services provided.
- Charges for not for profit non-commercial users will at least cover variable costs; that is, the additional costs incurred by use of the facilities. Where practicable, they will provide a contribution to fixed costs. Charges across different groups will be equitable.
- Charges for unfunded charitable community groups will reflect their ability to pay, up to the level of charges for not for profit groups.

Charges for services such as electricity (covering both supply and consumption charges) are additional to rents unless provided under separate accounts directly to the user. Short term hire charges will generally include services such as electricity.

Value

The site is Crown land and the government wants a proper return to the public for the use of the public land. Following completion of the work to restore the main building and renovate the outbuildings, there will also have been a big financial investment in infrastructure. The financial return on that investment should at least cover the recurrent financial outgoings on the site, including insurance.

Actions

Lease, licence and hire as much as practicable of the buildings and site to commercial, community and arts users in accordance with the Trust Handbook to generate financial returns.

Develop a business plan for the Regional centre to demonstrate how recurrent income will cover recurrent expenditure.

Appoint a manager (volunteer, employee or contractor; person or body corporate) to market and manage day to day operations of the Regional centre, including rentals.

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