

(Rev 1) 15 December 2023

MREC: Demolition of 88-108 Bridge St, Muswellbrook NSW 2333

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

This statement forms part of the Heritage Impact Statement for:

Demolition of 88-108 Bridge St Muswellbrook, in preparation for future park

Address and property description:

The site is located at 88-108 Bridge St Muswellbrook

Prepared by:

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For: Muswellbrook Shire Council

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Introduction

This Heritage Impact Statement was commissioned by Muswellbrook Shire Council, to comment on the impact of the proposed demolition of 88-108 Bridge St Muswellbrook. The current owners, Muswellbrook Shire Council, are proposing to demolish existing buildings to create a city park.

Documentation

The report outlines a brief historical summary for the site and adjacent buildings, and from this, a Statement of Significance has been developed. With this information, the Heritage Impact Statement for the proposed demolition of the redundant buildings has been prepared.

Author Identification

This report has been prepared by Genevieve Lilley, a heritage specialist architect, who has sat on the NSW Heritage Committee, and has sat on the Tasmanian Heritage Council since 2017 (Deputy Chair role since 2019). She chairs the Works Committee for Heritage Tasmania.

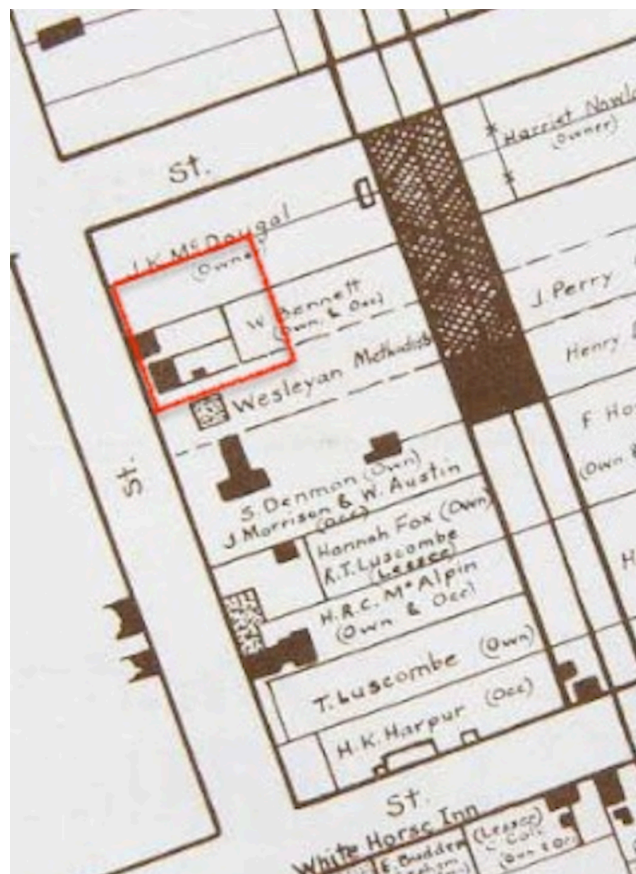
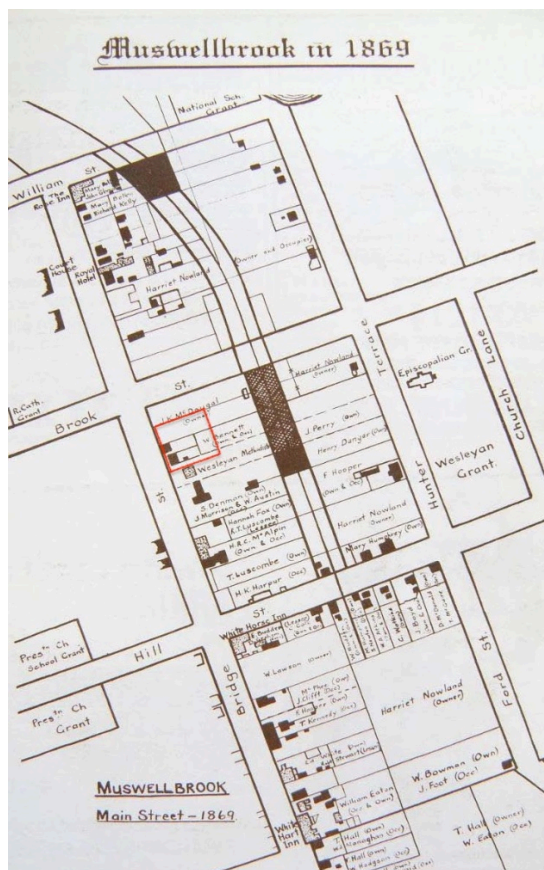
Report Structure

The report follows the general structure set out in the document '*Statement of Heritage Impact*' available on the NSW Heritage website. The report also follows the methodology found in the '*Conservation Plan*' by the National Trust of Australia, and in the current Australia ICOMOS Guidelines to the Burra Charter.

Historical Background

As set out in Muswellbrook Shire Council's own website, the area in which the town of Muswellbrook sits was once occupied by the Wanaruah Aboriginal people, at a junction with the southern edges of Kamilaroi people area. The two tribes had trade and ceremonial links.

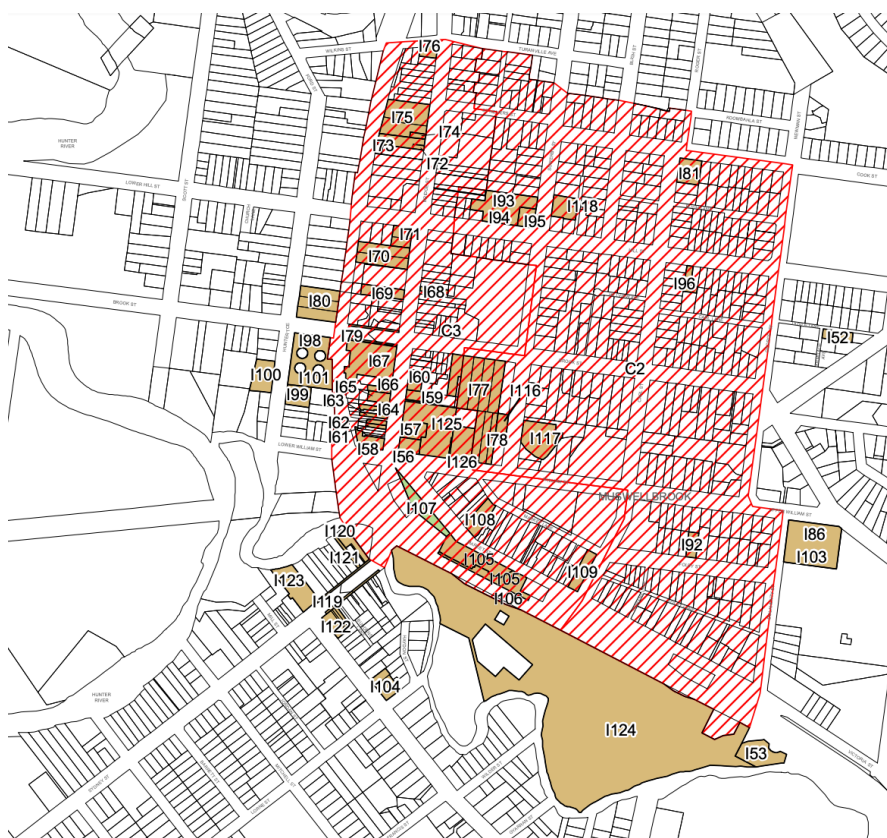
Muswellbrook was declared a township in 1833. It was discovered by Chief Constable John Howe in 1819 and in 1824 major parcels of land were surveyed by Henry Dangar along the banks of the Hunter River for allocation to early settlers. By 1840 the population was 215. There were 41 houses as well as some inns and shops and a flour mill was built around 1841. In 1842 the sons of Francis Forbes established the private village of Forbestown south of Muscle Creek (but due to confusion with the town of Forbes it was changed to South Muswellbrook in 1848). The first railway was completed in 1869 and the town expanded to 1500 soon after this period. The first coal mine in the area opened in the 1890's. The boundaries of the shire were officially defined in 1907 when Muswellbrook Shire was created from Wybong Shire area.



Plan of Muswellbrook in 1869, with the site (marked in red). Detailed extract shows the Uniting Church predecessor (the Wesleyan Methodist church, just below the site)

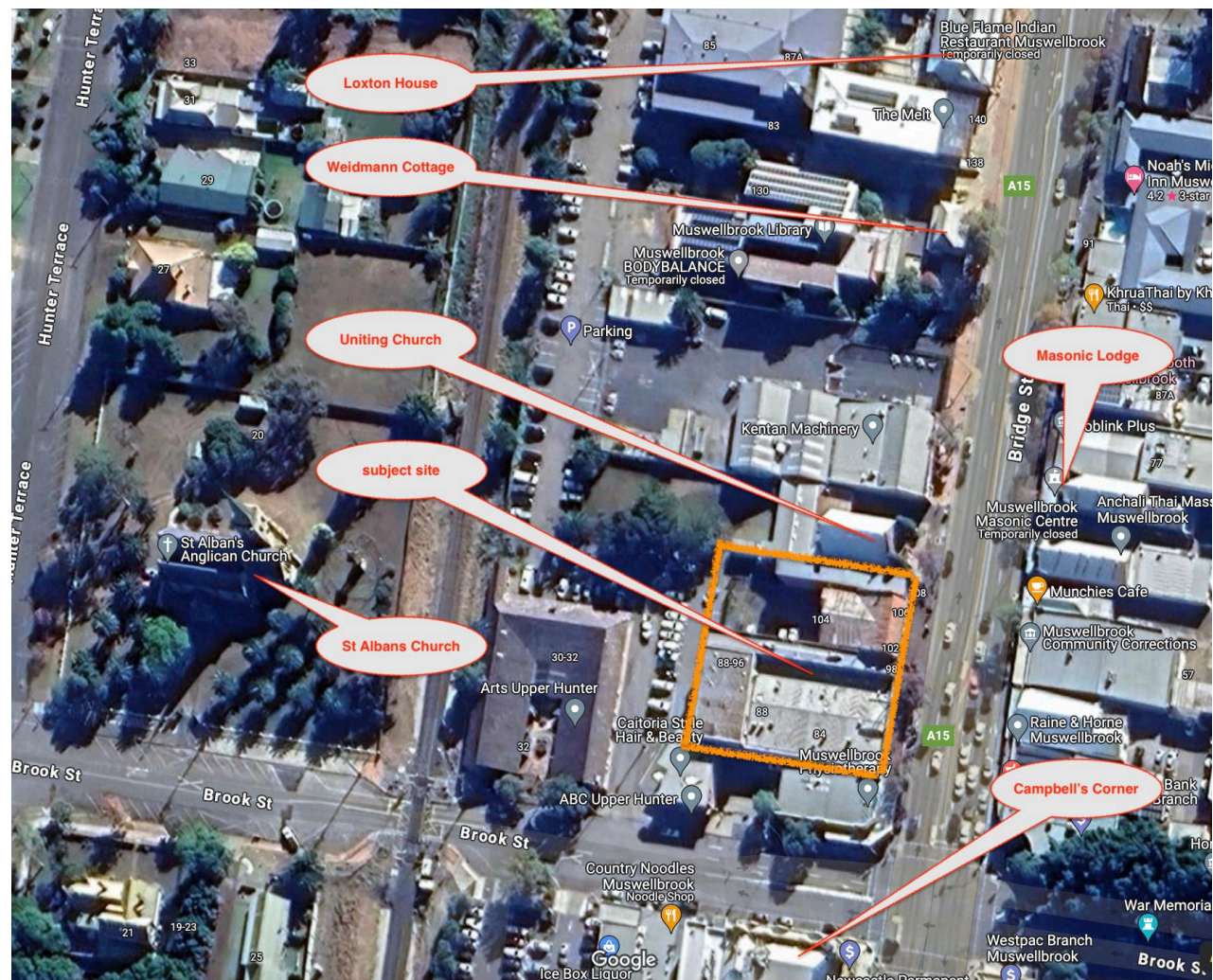
Heritage Listings

The site fronts Bridge St, and comprises several buildings, and some buildings nearby have State heritage significance as examples of early colonial architecture in Muswellbrook. The map below shows heritage properties in brown. The Uniting Church to the immediate north of the site is #169, with the two oldest buildings in town being Weidmann Cottage (#170) and Loxton House (#171). To the south of the site, across Brook St, is Campbell's Corner (#167). Many of these adjacent heritage properties are described in more detail below

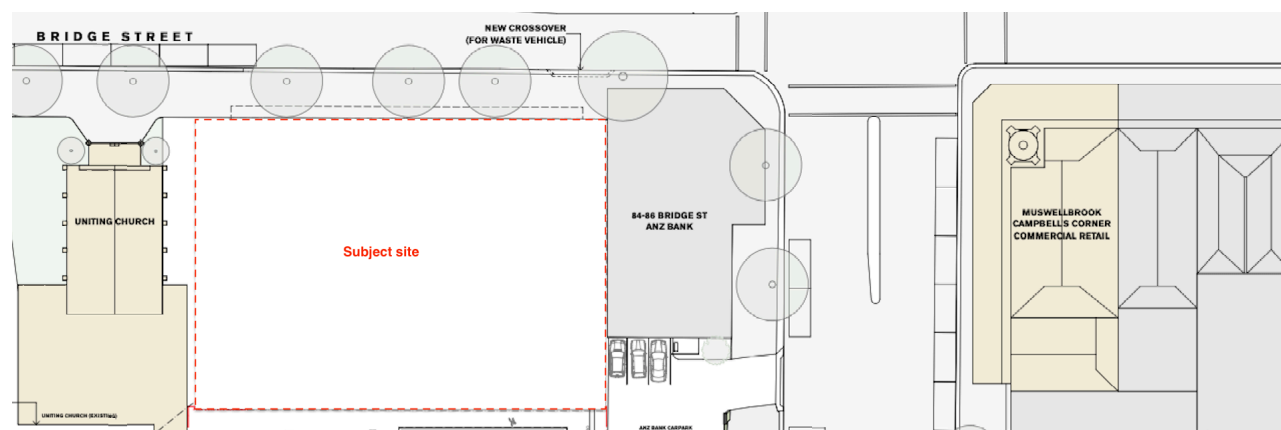


An overlay showing the Heritage Listed properties of Muswellbrook, with the Uniting Church at 169, Loxton House at 171 and Weidmann Cottage being the right side of 170 (from current Muswellbrook Shore Council LEP 2009)

Masonic Lodge	75 Bridge Street	Lot 1, DP 558793	Local	168
Uniting Church	110 Bridge Street	Lot 401, DP 816923	Local	169
Weidmann Cottage	126 Bridge Street	Lot 7, DP 71755; Lot 8, Section 6, DP 758740	State	170
Loxton House	140–142 Bridge Street	Lots 1 and 2, DP 11221	State	171
St John's Presbyterian Church	Hill Street	Lot 21, DP 828480	Local	193
Former St John's Presbyterian Church	Hill Street	Lot 21, DP 828480	Local	194
Former Presbyterian manse	106 Hill Street	Lot 20, DP 828480	Local	195



Aerial photo with the adjacent Uniting Church, Campbell's Corner, Loxton House, Weidmann Cottage, and the subject site, shown (from current Google maps)



Location Plan with the curtilage of the Uniting Church (top left) and Campbell's Corner (top right)

Details of the adjacent heritage buildings (as described partly in council's website) are itemised below:

St Albans Anglican Church

As described in Australian Christian Church Histories, this church is 'the only building designed for Australia by the noted English architect Sir George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878) under the supervision of E.T. Blackett and J.H. Hunt'. Sir George Gilbert Scott was famous for many iconic Gothic Revival buildings including the Midland Grand Hotel at St Pancras Station, the Albert Memorial, and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, all in London. He also designed St Mary's Cathedral in both Glasgow and Edinburgh, and King's College Chapel in London.

Built between 1864 and 1869, St Albans is constructed in stone with a copper-clad broach spire to the north. The foundation stone was laid on 11 November 1864, but took five years to complete, and was dedicated by Bishop Tyrrell on 17th June 1869. In the 1880s, the wooden bell tower and the fence, both designed by John Horbury Hunt, were added.

The precinct "is closely identified the artistic and religious patronage of the White family, which was responsible more than any other, for much of the 19th century development in the Hunter Valley. The Rectory was built c. 1881 and for many years was the residence of Mrs Jane Wilson, sister of the Archdeacon W. E. White, Rector of the Parish from 1860-1900. It was acquired by the church in 1937 and now forms an essential element of the precinct. It is a good example of late 19th-century romanticism, featuring a complexity of gables, hipped roofs, tall chimneys and a semi-circular, single storey wing. The Sunday School and Hall, erected in 1874 as the St. Alban's School, was the first non-ecclesiastical building undertaken by Horbury Hunt. It was in pious memory of Sarah White, and Francis, her son, to the glory of God. Special features of this building are bellcote on the roof ridge, a triple arch porch, multiple gables and high chimney stacks. It is constructed of warm red sandstock bricks recovered from the original St. Alban's (c. 1840). The attached residence was initially for the schoolmaster, later for the schoolmaster, later for the organist and currently for the curate. In 1934, a kindergarten room, stage and porch were added in a style compatible with Hunt's concept. The rear room was dedicated in memory of Lillian Luke, cousin of Mrs Jane Wilson.

In 1981 the National Trust classified the St Alban's Church precinct. Within the precinct are St Alban's Church, the Gothic fence, the bellcote, the Rectory and the Sunday School Hall with attached residence. St Albans was listed on the NSW Heritage Register (listing 00458, listed 2 April 1999)

The physical description, as noted by Heritage NSW in the listing, reads:

St Alban's Church is constructed of stone quarried at Atienne and has a slate roof, with a square north-east tower. The interior construction features, chancel with scissor-truss roof and original polychrome application. Carved limestone reredos by Harry Hemes of England designed by Pirie and Clyne, Aberdeen, Scotland. Floor tiles throughout the church were made by Minton and Hollins. Needle point kneelers and cushions were possibly made by early Rector's wife, Mrs Beedle. Chancel arch supported by short shafts and volute corbels. Four bays with south aisle and arcade. Scissor and collar truss with braced principals and polychrome decoration. A complete set of stained glass windows by Howard Bros. of Frome, Somersetshire, England. Original oak pews. Nine shafted carved stone font, built by James Black & Son.

The noted modifications/dates are:

1880s a fence, believed to be designed by John Horbury Hunt was built on the Brook Street and Hunter Terrace boundaries.

1886 - further maintenance works undertaken: whole exterior of church's stonework was re-pointed and the fence repainted.

1893 - roof repair works and guttering on the tower. Organ rebuilt by Sydney organ builder, Charles Richardson, keeping some of the original facade and Walker pipes.

1894 - gas lighting installed by Muswellbrook Gas Co.

late 19th c.: termite damage led to replacing some floor boards and foundations below pulpit re-laid.

1913 - re-roofing carried out in slate for the roof and copper for the church spire. Stone work repointed.

1914 - Archdeacon White memorial clock with chiming bells installed in church tower, detached stand-alone belfry/bellcote/bell tower of timber erected in the church yard to house original church bell (from 1843 church, transferred to new one in 1869). Vestry enlarged on north-west side of tower, moving the wall approx. 4' - sandstone of the same quality as the original and workmanship similar. The only style departure was using copper gutter and downpiping and diamond lead-lighting with clear glass with red border around the edges of the window (CMP, 2012, K12).

mid-1980s - Belfry/belcote/bell tower - major maintenance works done in the mid-1980s based on a 1979 Donald Ellsmore Report.

The front of the church faces Hunter St, so it is the rear north-side spire that is most visible from the subject site, across the level crossing



Photo showing St Albans Anglican Church – the subject site is across the train track to the left, and more than a block away, beyond other buildings (photo: Deb Doran)



St Albans Anglican Church from Hunter Terrace – the subject site is across the train track behind the church, and more than a block away, beyond other buildings (Google)



St Albans Anglican Church from Hunter Terrace – the subject site is behind the spire, across the train track, and more than a block away, beyond other buildings (Google)

Campbell's Corner (south-west corner of Bridge and Brook St)

This building was originally M Campbell and Co's department store. Soon after the arrival of the railway in 1869, Malcolm Campbell decided to move from Sydney Street to Bridge Street which he correctly judged would be the commercial centre of the town. In 1870, he built a two-storey store (a façade with 1870 scroll and four windows). This opened in 1871 and the Campbell's lived in the top floor. As the business prospered, the building was extended. Another two-storey block on the northern side in 1879 and a similar block on the southern side in 1891 (both of these display three windows above the awning). The actual corner site was occupied by the office of R G D Fitzgerald – solicitor, a member of both houses of the New South Wales Parliament and a Mayor of the Municipal Council in 1878 and 1879. He built "Hennor" on the corner of Maitland and Lorne Streets. Fitzgerald Park was named in his honour. His office was situated behind a picket fence.

The corner block, facing Bridge and Brook Streets, with its distinctive tower and clock (added at a later date on the Bridge Street façade) was built by W Barrett in 1910-1911. It contained an office section. The whole block had a uniform awning supported by posts near the kerb and guttering. About 1954 these posts were removed and the façade modernised. When Campbell's was at its peak, they had stores in Scone, Denman, Aberdeen, Rouchel and Merriwa. They also operated Campbell's Garages in some of these towns. Campbell's stores were purchased by Winns and later Mr Noel Mitchell, who leased floor space to individual businesses.



Campbell's Corner after completion of the corner building and verandah (with posts), after 1911

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS / DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS		
a	ARCH. STYLE Victorian (1870 – 1894) & Federation Free Classical (1908)	MATERIALS Exterior – masonry, stucco
b	OTHER DETAILS OF PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	
<p>All rooves behind the parapets of both newer and original buildings are gambrel forms of timber construction with corrugated metal sheet cladding. The Bridge Street (1870) original facade is characterised by two identical bays of building (added not long after the establishment of the first), one added each side of the central bay. The additional bays replicate features of the original building such as bracket / cornice parapet line, banded pilaster corners (or building junctions) and vertically proportioned double hung windows with moulded architraves and sill. The original central bay is emphasised by having four wider spaced windows as opposed to the added on bay's three and a central parapet pediment with distinctive scrolled outline framing date and floral motif.</p> <p>The 1908 addition was designed with a deliberately asymmetrical facade. The facades are parapeted with decorative circular accents on the skyline. The parapet at the west elevation is demarked by a raised pediment which provides emphasis to a point of entrance off Brook Street. The curved pediment design is repeated in a smaller scaled version at the junction of the building with the original building in Bridge Street. Two pilasters support the Brook Street pediment with a decorative cornice on each at a height not far below parapet height. The building is also characterised by a stringcourse and parapet cornice above the second level. Windows in the newer building are a symmetrically balanced mix of vertical double hung windows and larger semi-circular windows framed in Palladian motif. All windows are surrounded by decorative architraves. The predominant tower has classical features, circular openings, pilasters, balustrade parapet, cornices, moulded architraves and feature metal shingle clad dome top.</p>		
c	MODIFICATIONS	
<p>The cantilevered timber balcony with concave corrugated iron awning and cast iron decorative column/railings (of the 1870's original Bridge Street building) has since been removed, as has the post supported awning over the footpath (of the original 1870's building when bays were added in 1903). A large hipped roof and vaulted ridge structure of the original building with added bays (on Bridge street), have since been replaced with three separate roof structures. The current rooves are in the gambrel form matching that of the Brook Street 1910 addition. The ground level facades have been completely modified into modern glazed and brick shop fronts with paint finish matching the older upper level facade sections.</p>		
d	CURRENT CONDITIONS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INTACT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED - UNSYMPATHETIC <input type="checkbox"/> ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:	REPAIRS REQUIRED <input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED - SYMPATHETIC
INFORMATION SOURCES		
WRITTEN	National Trust Classification Sheet Muswellbrook Historical Society Rob Tickle – Local Muswellbrook Historian	

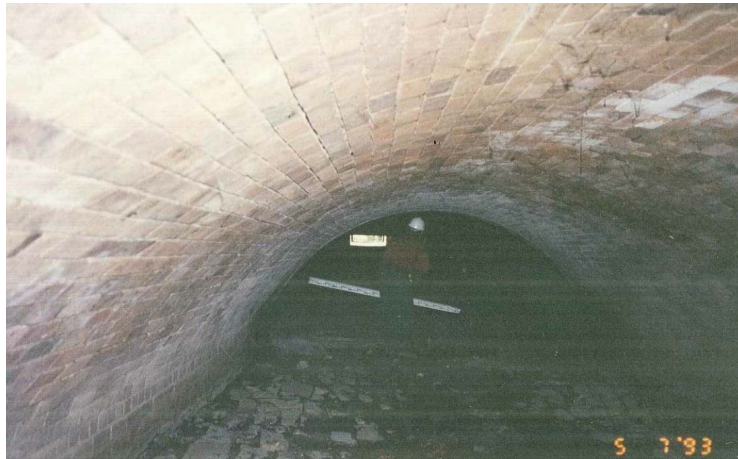
Extract from Muswellbrook Heritage Study/Inventory 2000, describing Campbell's Corner

The traffic lights on the Bridge/ Brook intersection

These lights were the first in Muswellbrook was switched on by the F. L. O'Keefe M. L.A. on the 2nd August, 1968. On the northwest corner of the Bridge/Brook intersection once stood a home and gun shop of a Mr Gunter. This was replaced by a two-storey building for the Bank of Australasia (the current ANZ Bank building). The manager's residence was on the top floor. Part of this building is now occupied by a physiotherapist

Possum Gully and the subject site

North of the (now ANZ) bank on Bridge St was a house, right on the footpath edge. This was occupied by Mrs. Trixie Budden. It was built directly over Possum Gully, which flowed under Bridge Street Page 8 Walk through the town through a brick tunnel, which was revealed when the street was reconstructed to reduce the cross fall. In c.late 1940s a "cloudburst" on the common created a flash flood in Possum Gully. A wave actually flowed over Bridge Street and was blocked by the house, and threatened to wash it away. The danger was lessened, when after closing the internal doors off the hallway and opening both the front and back doors, water rushed down the hallway. It ruined the lino or carpet runner, but saved the house. On the north side of Mrs. Budden's house was Miss Dorothy Morton's lending library. Both these buildings were later demolished and replaced by a large shop occupied for a short time by a Woolworths Supermarket, then a Woolworths Furniture Store and later converted into the Hub Arcade.



Possum Gully under Bridge St (near the southern end of the Hunter Hub complex)

Arnott building

Before 1928 Mr. Muller (Keith's grandfather) had two houses and a market garden at the southern side of the Methodist church. He sold the site in 1928 to Mrs. A M Arnott, the widow of George Arnott. She demolished the houses and built the Arnott building consisting of 3 shop fronts and her living quarters on the top floor. The northernmost shop was the retail outlet for bread and pastries, which were baked at their Market Street premises (now Gould Brothers site). In c. 1955 2NM (radio station) converted the top floor to studios, having been temporarily in Campbell's Bargain Hall. In the narrow strip between Arnott's shop and the Church, Sam Adams established a plant nursery. His son Brian, build a two-storey shop on the lot. Don Carter's Sports Store occupied the ground floor and M M Hyndes, Bailey (Col Murray) - Surveyors had their office on the top floor.

Uniting Church

A Wesleyan Church occupied the current Trinity Uniting Church site from 1862/63. It was used as a public schoolroom as a temporary measure until the Superior School was opened in William Street in 1879. The first church was demolished in 1912 and was replaced by the current building, which was opened on the 2 August, 1913. A hall at the rear was added much later. It became a Uniting Church, when some Methodist/Presbyterian/Congregational churches combined.



Exterior and interior of the Uniting Church

HISTORICAL NOTES			
<i>The first church on this site was opened in 1862, a stone building described as both neat and substantial. The present church was constructed on the site of the original building in 1913 and it is likely that some of the materials were recycled. The Muswellbrook Historical Society refers to the church as "constructed in 1913 of red brick on a sandstone base, the neo-Gothic design with 'sub' Art Nouveau details creates a pleasing building". The handsome 20th century interior is intact and features diagonally boarded ceiling. Much of the stone work was carried out by a local stone mason (Armitage).</i>			
PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS / DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS			
a	ARCH. STYLE	Federation Gothic	MATERIALS: Exterior Stone and Brick with corrugated galvanised iron roof
b	OTHER DETAILS OF PHYSICAL APPEARANCE		
c	MODIFICATIONS Final cross to porch		
d	CURRENT CONDITIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INTACT <input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED - UNSYMPATHETIC <input type="checkbox"/> ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:	<input type="checkbox"/> REPAIRS REQUIRED <input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED - SYMPATHETIC
INFORMATION SOURCES			
WRITTEN	Muswellbrook Heritage Streetscape Study Sheet No. M/25 National Trust Classification Sheet		

Extract from Muswellbrook Heritage Study/Inventory 2000, describing the Uniting Church

The Masonic Hall, Bridge St

The Masonic Hall sits across the road from the subject site, and was built in 1888, to the design of architect T Dixon Chater. While a shopfront conceals its purpose, the description above the awning reveals its use. This building has significance in its links to numerous men in Muswellbrook's 19th and 20th C history.



Two views of the Masonic Lodge

HISTORICAL NOTES

The Prince of Wales Masonic Lodge built this lodge in 1888 on land bought from Clark. The building was planned by one of the Lodge members, T. Dixon Chater, who was described as the 'honorary architect'. G. Parrs was the bricklayer and finance was provided by George Blunt. The importance of Masonry in the social life of the period gives this building particular local significance because of its links with many of the town's leading male citizens.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS / DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS

a	ARCH. STYLE Victorian Itallinate	MATERIALS: Exterior Brick, rendered brick and stucco, galvanised iron roofing
b	OTHER DETAILS OF PHYSICAL APPEARANCE Recent painting of building's pilaster capitals and parapet decorations. Unusual rearward extension of tall building pediment, with exaggerated detail.	
c	MODIFICATIONS Awning addition	
d	CURRENT CONDITIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INTACT <input type="checkbox"/> REPAIRS REQUIRED
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED - UNSYMPATHETIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED - SYMPATHETIC
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: See above comment	

INFORMATION SOURCES

WRITTEN	Masonic Lodge Centenary Booklet Muswellbrook Heritage Streetscape Study, Sheet No. M/34 National Trust Classification Sheet
ORAL	Noel Fayers - spokesman for the lodge

Extract from Muswellbrook Heritage Study/Inventory 2000, describing the Masonic Lodge

Weidmann Cottage

SHR 00260 notes Weidmann Cottage as positioned on a Crown grant given to David Brown on 27 November 1838, with the small two-storey building constructed in 1840-45. The cottage was constructed sometime between 1840 and 1850, and quite probably before 1845, by the original owner. The building was erected as one of a pair of semi-detached town cottages (the other cottage has since been demolished to make way for the council public library). Brown appears to have erected the buildings as a speculative venture or as a town residence. Brown sold the property to Henry Richard Clovell McAlpin, a store and innkeeper. The property was purchased by another storekeeper, William Corby Thompson in 1867 who sold it to David Stafford in 1882. Stafford sold both properties to Albert Weidman, whom the cottage is named after, in 1891. Weidmann, used the adjoining residence as his butcher shop. In 1935 the property was transferred into the name of A.Weidman & Company Ltd, passing out of individual private ownership. Prior to being demolished in 1977, the second cottage was used as a cakeshop. (Woodhouse & Danks 1985: 6-9)

The entry describes the building as 'a sturdy, monolithic structure of symmetrical proportions and reflects the type of architecture and design of a typical colonial middle/working class house of the period - a merchant's townhouse'.

The entry goes on to state that the 'two storey stone section of the building and its verandah contribute greatly to the streetscape of Bridge Street and in particular, their relationship to nearby Loxton House. (Woodhouse & Danks 1984: 1)... The building consists of a predominately symmetrically-designed monolithic structure constructed of sandstone, probably quarried from "Ravensworth". The building comprises a 2 storey main structure of four rooms with the remains of an original one room stone wing extending on the west side at the south end. The building has a colonnaded verandah along the east facade, a light timber framed outbuilding on the western side at the northern end and a cellar. All these appear to be original except for the ground floor terrace brick coping walls which were built in the 1920s.'

The building is constructed of quarried sandstone and fieldstone and the south wall of quarried rubble. Internal walls are of similar rubble masonry finished with hair plaster and painted. The roof is corrugated galvanised iron. The double storey verandah and posts had a simple balustrade at first floor level. It is of a small and modest scale.

As described in Rappoport's CMP of June 2010, Albert Weidmann was born in Muswellbrook and contributed significantly to the local community over a 50 year period in commercial, pastoral and sporting interests. In addition to his contribution to the Upper Hunter community, his brother Alexander was one of the founders of the Muswellbrook Colliery and his eldest son, Leslie Albert Weidmann left sufficient funds on his death to facilitate construction of the Weidmann Memorial Wing at Muswellbrook District Hospital

Weidmann Cottage was listed on the Register of the National Estate on 11 August 1987, and the Hunter REP in 1989. A permanent conservation order was gazetted 12 April 1985, and the property was entered into the NSW State Heritage Register on 2 April 1999



Views of Weidmann Cottage from Bridge St

Loxton House

The SHR entry (Item number SHR 00185) lists Loxton House as being built in c1838 as a residence, and is noted as 'a key building in the main street of Muswellbrook. It is a two- storey Colonial-Georgian building which has been claimed to be Muswellbrook's oldest remaining building'. It is further described in the same document, as below:

'The front facade is stone with projecting quoins and an upper verandah supported on fluted timber columns. The side walls are stuccoed brick and the rear wall is painted brick. The rear elevation also has a two-story verandah. The roof is iron over shingles. Joinery is cedar and floors are pit-sawn timber boards. Internally the building retains much of its original cedar joinery including a staircase with carved handrail. (Branch Managers Report to the Heritage Council 19/03/1980)'

The listing came about when, in January 1980 Muswellbrook Council requested comments from the Heritage Council regarding proposed renovations of Loxton House, for conversion of parts of the building to a restaurant. The Heritage Council recommended that an Interim Conservation Order be placed over the building as it was concerned that full compliance with Ordinance 70 of the Local Government Act would require an unacceptable sacrifice of the architectural integrity of the building (non-compliance with the relevant provisions would not unduly affect its fire safety). In recognition of its heritage significance a Permanent Conservation Order was placed over Loxton House on 8 January 1982. It was transferred to the State Heritage Register on 2 April 1999.



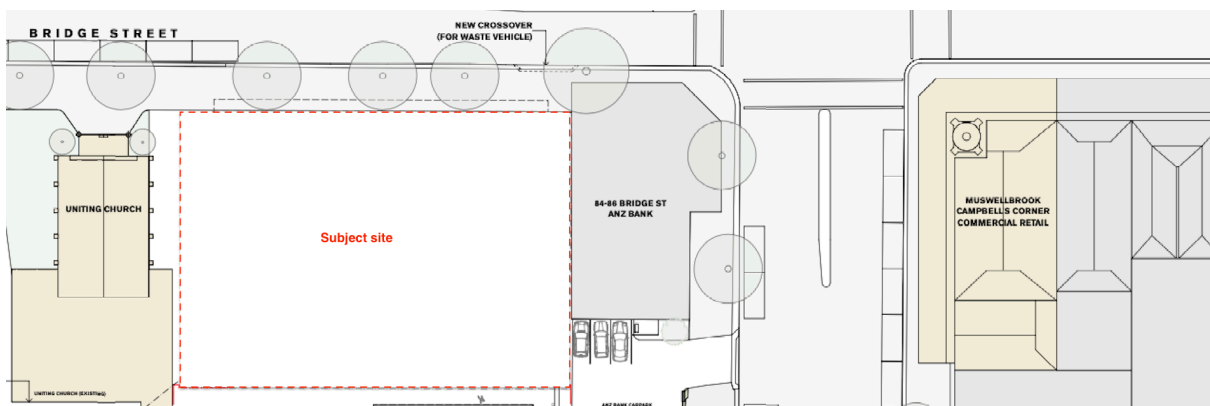
Late 19th C view south down Bridge St with Loxton House on the right



Loxton House from Bridge St, taken from the front of the subject site

The subject site of the buildings proposed to be demolished

The subject site is a group of buildings between the ANZ Bank building and the Uniting Church (which has heritage-listed). The subject commercial buildings have been vacant for many years, and the proposal is to demolish these.



The precinct plan for the site, with the Uniting Church to the left, and Campbell's Corner right, with the proposed site shown



The subject site, as viewed from Bridge Street



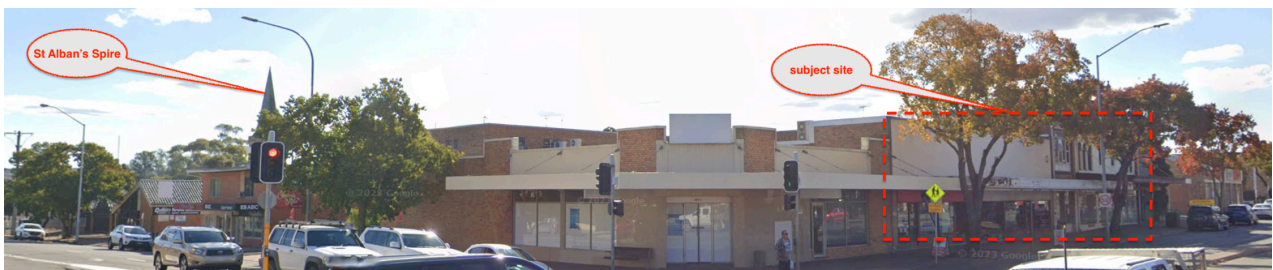
The subject site, as viewed from the corner of Brook and Bridge St

Analysis of Significance: Assessments/Statements of Significance

Of the historic buildings near/around the subject site, only St Albans, Weidmann Cottage and Loxton House are on the State Heritage Register. All others listed are on the local Muswellbrook Shire Council register.

St Albans Church

This is the building on the SHR which is most proximate and also recognisable at a distance, by virtue of its spire. The SHR listing has a detailed description and history and notes of modifications, but does not include a formal Assessment of Significance. Nevertheless, it is clearly an exceptionally important building, in terms of design, construction, streetscape and civic history. The views of the spire from the central areas of Muswellbrook (Bridge St, and Brook St near Bridge St) mean that the presence of the church informs all decisions to adjacent buildings




View of the site from Brook/Bridge St, with St Albans to the left, over the railway crossing, further along Brook St

Weidmann Cottage

The significance of Weidmann Cottage has been assessed/listed on the SHR website, as below. No works to this building are proposed as part of this development, and its only able to be seen at a distance from the subject site

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a) [Historical significance]	The building is a good example of a typical merchant class townhouse and as such is an important element in both the streetscape of Bridge Street and the ongoing social history of the community. (Woodhouse & Danks 1984: 16)
SHR Criteria c) [Aesthetic significance]	The building is a well proportioned, symmetrically designed middle-era colonial town residence typical of the reasonably affluent middle/working class merchant housing. It exhibits an interesting and very broad use of solid masonry walls devoid of moulding and utilising stone lintels in otherwise rough hewn stone walls(Woodhouse & Danks 1984: 15)
SHR Criteria g) [Representativeness]	The building is a typical merchant class townhouse. (Woodhouse & Danks 1984: 16)
Integrity/Intactness:	Externally the building has not been substantially altered except for the rear western elevation and removal of the semi-detached building at the south end. Internally, apart from general deterioration, the cottage generally remains as it would have been,
Assessment criteria:	Items are assessed against the  State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.



The site as glimpsed from Bridge St, near the library entrance and Weidmann Cottage.

Loxton House

The NSW State Heritage Listing for Loxton House has a very brief Statement of Significance but does not have an Assessment of Significance. No works to this building are proposed as part of this development, and as its beyond Weidmann Cottage on Bridge St, it is only able to be seen at a distance as well.

The new building will complement the streetscape of heritage buildings, as it includes self-weathering materials (not dissimilar to the rich facades of Campbell's Corner) and generous shade awnings, echoing the verandahs of Weidmann Cottage and Loxton House.

Grading of the Building's Cultural Significance

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

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

Grading of Elements

Building	Grading
State Heritage-Listed Buildings (in the vicinity of the Proposed site)	
<u>St Albans Anglican Church</u>	
Building proportions	High
Roof Shape	High
Roof slates	High
Church spire	High
Stained glass	High
Timber truss roof	High
Stonework and carvings	High
Floor tiles	High
Front/side fence/portico	High
<u>Loxton House</u>	
Building proportions	High
Roof Shape	High
Roof sheeting	Little
Roof Shingles (concealed below roof sheeting)	High
Chimneys (missing caps)	High
Front verandah (reconstructed)	Moderate
Cast iron balustrade and columns	High
Fluted timber columns (reconstructed)	Moderate
Flagstones to street	High
<u>Weidmann Cottage</u>	
Building proportions	High
Roof Shape	High
Roof sheeting	Little
Roof Shingles (concealed below roof sheeting)	High
Chimneys (missing caps)	High
Front verandah (reconstructed)	Moderate
Cast iron balustrade and columns	High
Fluted timber columns (reconstructed)	Moderate
Flagstones to street	High

Building	Grading
Local Heritage Listed Buildings (in the vicinity of the Proposed site)	
<u>Campbell's Corner (on Brook/Bridge St corner)</u>	
Building proportions	High
Roof Shape	High
Roof sheeting	Little
Façade/tower detail	High
<u>Masonic Temple (on Bridge St, opposite/north of the Uniting Church)</u>	
Building proportions	High
Façade detail above ground level	High
Street level façade/glazing	Little
Awning	Little
	High
<u>Uniting Church (adjacent to site on northeast boundary)</u>	
Building proportions	High
Roof Shape	Moderate
Roof sheeting	Little
Façade detail	High

The DCP

The Muswellbrook DCP Section 15 Heritage Conservation states:

15.1.11 Council's Responsibilities

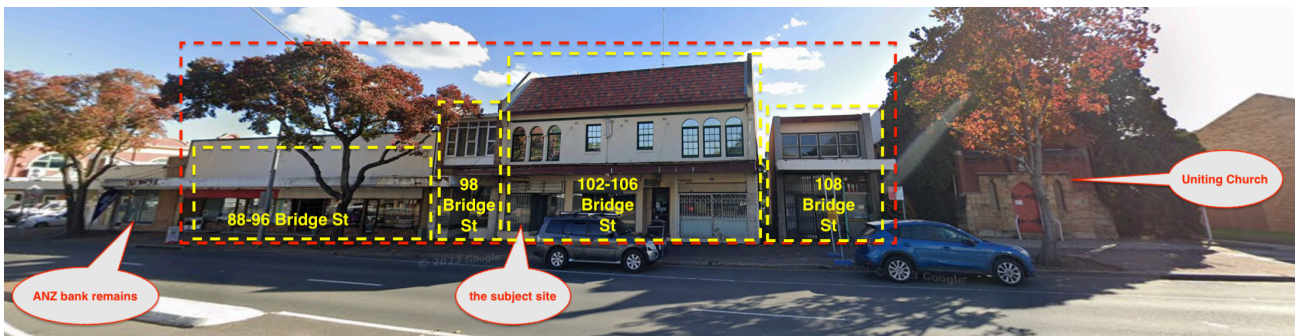
The State Government requires Council to deal with DAs affecting all heritage items listed as being of local significance, including proposals for additions and alterations to buildings. When changes are proposed to items of State Significance Council must refer the application to the NSW Heritage Office and obtain its concurrence.

No state-heritage-listed properties are affected by the proposals, so this document addresses impacts of the demolition of the buildings on adjacent local heritage-listed items

Conservation Policy

As the proposal is simply demolition, the proposals include no restoration/alteration works to existing buildings, so conservation is not an issue in this document

Details of Proposals



The proposal includes the demolition of:

- 88-98 Bridge St (single-storey building)
- 98 Bridge St (two-storey building)
- 102-106 Bridge St (two-storey building)
- 108 Bridge St (two-storey building)

Each of these buildings has some asphalted areas to the rear of the site

Statement of Heritage Impact of demolition proposal

The assessment is divided into three categories of question, and in each category, there is a summary in two parts:

- how the demolition proposal affects the adjacent Uniting Church as well as the important St Albans Church building nearby
- how the demolition proposal affects the other heritage buildings in the vicinity, both those on the State Heritage Register (Loxton House and Weidmann Cottage), and those on the Local Heritage Register (Campbell's Corner and the Masonic Temple)

How is the impact of the proposed demolition on the heritage significance of the item and the surrounding conservation area to be minimised?

The Uniting Church and St Albans Church

The Uniting Church is a strong solid contributory building to the streetscape, with a 'closed' character. It is currently 'hemmed in' by adjacent structures. The proposed building demolition creates a public space between the corner ANZ building and the Uniting Church, and allows a better view down the southern side wall of the Uniting Church. The proposed open space allows the church to remain a strong civic structure, now better understood by increased visibility and access to its side/rear

The proposed demolition does not affect the St Alban's spire/church. The future open space proposed will contribute to a future sequence of 'green spaces' that runs from Bridge St to St Albans

Other heritage properties in the vicinity

While the proposed demolition means a sequence of building fronts/awnings on Bridge St are lost, the purpose of the demolition is to allow future public open space. The adjacent heritage-listed buildings in the Bridge St streetscape will benefit from the improved streetscape once these dilapidated structures are removed.

All four nearby buildings on Bridge Street – Weidmann Cottage, Loxton House, the Masonic Temple and Campbell's Corner – have filigree/ornate details to the upper level, and therefore form a rich 2-3 storey façade of detail. The removal of the simplistic dilapidated buildings between 88-108 Bridge St is therefore a contributory improvement to the Brook St streetscape and to the likely new public Square.

**How does the proposed development affect views to and from the item and the surrounding conservation area?
What has been done to minimise negative effects?**

Uniting Church and St Albans Church

The proposed demolition of 88-108 Bridge St allows a greatly increased view of both the Uniting Church heritage item. The St Albans Church is not affected. The proposed demolition is an improvement on the existing buildings, which leave part of Bridge St unoccupied and derelict. The existing buildings block views and access to adjacent heritage buildings.

Other heritage properties in the vicinity.

The proposed demolition of 88-108 Bridge St will leave a space for public use, and will support a future landscaped street presentation. With the demolition proposals, nearly all the heritage buildings in the vicinity will be visible from the future public space area

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

Uniting Church and St Albans Church

The existing brick storm-water asset below ground level will be retained. Aside from this, there are no known archaeological deposits on the subject site, and the foundations of the Uniting Church will not be affected by the proposed building demolition.

Other heritage properties in the vicinity.

Not applicable, the other heritage properties are some distance from the site

All of the above questions have been considered thoroughly in the proposed demolition project. Alternatives have been examined and debated by the architects during their design process.

Summary/Conclusion

Only one of the subject buildings (108 Bridge St) is adjacent to a locally listed heritage item, the Uniting Church. But on the whole, the subject group is quite distant from adjacent State-Heritage-Listed properties of St Albans Anglican Church, Weidmann Cottage, and Loxton House. Any future park/building proposal on the subject site must be assessed to determine its potential impact on the significance of the adjoining/nearby heritage items and the broader heritage conservation area.

The proposed demolition works as detailed in the previous section of this report have been assessed in detail in the Impact Assessment included above. The proposed demolition works have been assessed herein to have a negligible degree of impact on the adjacent Uniting Church and St Albans Church properties, whilst providing for a significant increase in visibility and amenity for both churches and the town. The proposed demolition works will have a positive impact on the adjoining and proximate heritage items, and will make a positive contribution to the broader Muswellbrook CBD heritage conservation area.

The proposed demolition of 88-108 Bridge St allows the adjacent heritage buildings to be seen better, maintaining their aesthetic and physical contribution to the Muswellbrook CBD heritage conservation area.

The proposed demolition works are therefore recommended for approval from a heritage perspective.

Recommendation/Advice

We recommend a proposed condition, to be added to any Development Approval, and to be fulfilled prior to the issuing of a Construction Certificate:

- details of the demolition of the building structure at 108 Bridge St should describe how the side wall and foundations of the adjacent Uniting Church are not adversely affected by the removal of 108 Bridge St. These details should include a method statement and drawings showing how the foundations of 108 Bridge St are to be removed so as not to damage/undermine the adjacent Uniting Church

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December 2023

