

City of Cockburn

Museum Precinct Interpretation Plan

2026-2030



Cockburn, the best place to be

www.cockburn.wa.gov.au



Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Cockburn acknowledges the Nyungar people of Beeliar Boodjar. Long ago, now and in the future they care for Country.

We acknowledge a continuing connection to Land, Waters and Culture and pay our respects to Elders, past and present.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Why Interpretation

In 1957 Freeman Tilden published 'Interpreting Our Heritage'. In this book, he defined some key principles of interpretation:

- I. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile*
- II. Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information*
- III. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable*
- IV. The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation*
- V. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part*
- VI. Interpretation addressed to children should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program¹*

These should be the guiding principles of the City of Cockburn Museum Precinct Interpretation Plan.

1.2 Mission

The mission of the Cockburn Museum Precinct Interpretation Plan was influenced by the City of Cockburn's ambition of Cockburn, *the best place to be*, the five central City strategic outcomes.

To create a sense of belonging and understanding through place and storytelling;
to promote a connection to Cockburn's past in an accessible and inclusive way.

¹ Tilden, Freeman Interpreting our Heritage University of North Carolina Press 1957
(and still relevant with many subsequent publications)



2.0 Compilation of the City of Cockburn Museum Precinct Interpretation Plan

This City of Cockburn Museum Precinct Interpretation Plan arises from a recommendation from the City of Cockburn Collection Significance Report prepared by Heritage Today October 2022. Interpretation is vital to reveal the stories of museum and local history artefacts and to enable meaningful connections with new generations of museum visitors. The scope of the report is wide and aspirational.

The Cockburn Museum Precinct includes the archaeologically rich Davilak ruins; Azelia Ley Homestead and associated outbuildings and the Wagon Sheds built to house machinery and vehicles and the surrounding natural habitat of lake and coastal dunes. This report is not focused on design of interpretation boards, fonts, or historical content instead whilst the themes of the Interpretation Plan are delineated, the main attention has been on the development of an action plan to change and maximise the visitor experience to the precinct. By working through the action plan the Museum Precinct could provide the community, including staff, volunteers and councillors of the City of Cockburn, with an increased connection to their heritage, culture and identity.

During introductory fact finding and discussions with staff and volunteers, it was revealed that the names and extent of the jurisdiction of the Museum have caused confusion with both employees and visitors alike. What is the Azelia Ley Museum? How is the Davilak ruins site connected? Who is Azelia Ley? Where is Manningtree House? This history of this name? Why do they have modern sheds connected to the State Heritage Listed house? What is that 1970s squat building on the hill used for? Is it connected to the Museum?

During consultation after the ten week draft report review period questions arose from the Historical Society of Cockburn members and City of Cockburn staff. Some were based on the realistic possibilities of the 5 year plan goals, and some were differences of approach to the interpretation and change necessary for a more relevant museum. Acknowledging these, some changes in the final report were made but where it was felt necessary to not compromise the recommendations made, based on contemporary museum guiding standards and principles of interpretation, the recommendations remain unchanged.

To clarify the boundaries and scope of this report it was decided to confirm the term of the City of Cockburn Museum Precinct which is comprised of:

- Azelia Ley Homestead and outbuildings
- The Museum sheds and windmill
- Davilak ruins and archaeological site
- The Council Tractors
- The Cottage on the Hill to be converted into Museum administration and storage
- The surrounding natural habitat of Manning Lake and coastal dunes.

Throughout the report Cockburn Museum or Museum are used interchangeably with the City of Cockburn Museum Precinct.

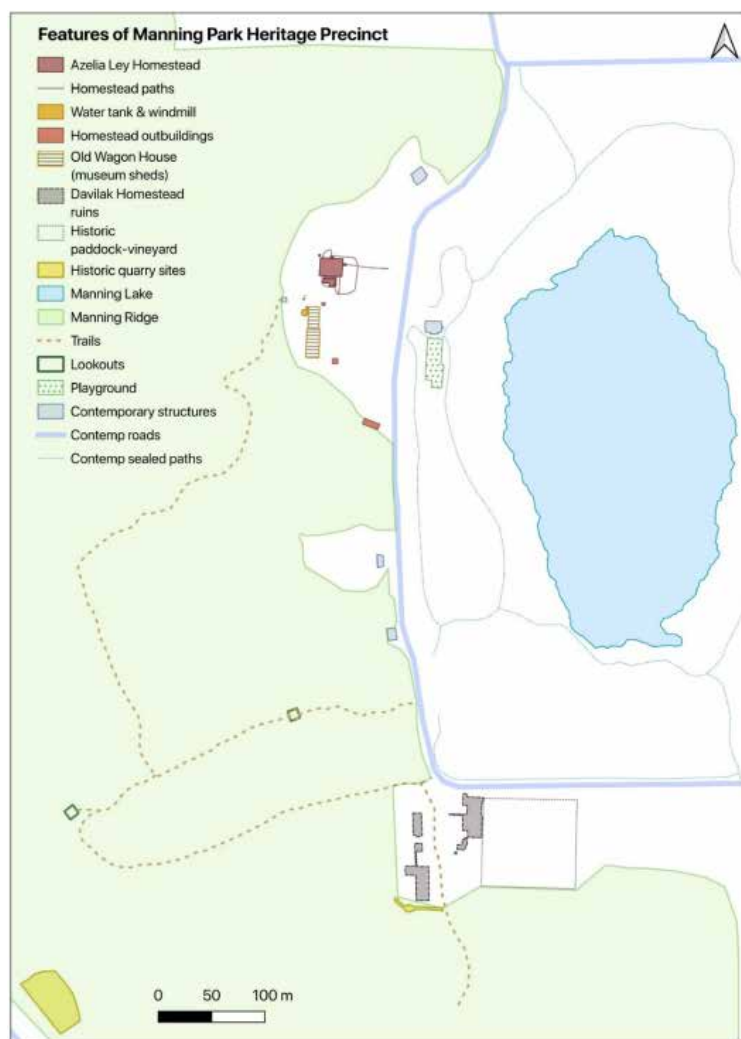
A challenge that has arisen during the course of this project, and will need to be clarified going forward, is the approach to Azelia Ley Homestead – House Museum or Community Museum? Should the house be representative of the Azelia Ley and Manning Family and the way it was once lived in? Or should it be a Community Museum telling the stories of the wider community?

It currently sits as an amalgamation of both, and it could be argued neither is going to address the needs of the contemporary visitor. In the action plan it has been recommended to work with the Historical Society, the Aboriginal Reference Group and community members to address the house and community history allowing each room to have an interpretation board explaining its former use and then a thematic approach to Cockburn's pre and post settlement story told through artefacts.

2.1 City of Cockburn Museum Precinct Site Map

Manning Estate is a State Heritage Listed site, place number 00533 and its the parent precinct to the Davilak Ruins registered as Davilak House the child place of the precinct, place number 00511. State Heritage Listing <https://bit.ly/4sX23H1>

This map was created by volunteer and Historical Society member Alana Francas McNee. It has been an important addition to this project as it is to scale and so can show the extent of the museum precinct with the inclusion of the State Heritage Listed Davilak Ruins.



2.3 City of Cockburn Aboriginal Reference Group

Heritage Today made a short presentation to the Aboriginal Reference Group on 12 May 2025. A description of the intent of 'Focus on First Nations People First' part of the Interpretation themes of the museum was well received and considered well over-due. It was highlighted how important that young children of all cultures should see their culture reflected in the museum stories.

3.0 For Successful Outcomes

For this Interpretation Plan to be successful there are a number of conditions that would optimise the goals of the plan including knowledge, skills, recognition of volunteer input and resources based on National Standards of Australian Museum and Galleries.

1. The Interpretation Plan requires a level of knowledge and skill of a 0.8/ Full time museum curator. Without this, the application for external funding, the development of business cases, the continued management of a large, active volunteer group from the Historical Society of Cockburn and creation of new exhibitions and programs could be compromised.
2. This report is based on the former caretaker's cottage (the Museum Administration Cottage, quite like the acronym MAC) to come under the jurisdiction of the Museum to allow for a base for the Historical Society of Cockburn and a significant expansion for storage and working space for the Museum. Without this, the establishment of a highly recommended space for temporary exhibitions to draw new visitors, will be compromised.
3. The jurisdiction and authority over the Precinct need to be clarified. The archaeological significance of the Davilak ruins site is threatened by years of lack of attention and correct procedure on how to care for this unique place. It is highly recommended that jurisdiction, authority and a budget for protection and conservation be given to the Museum team who have at its heart the knowledge and ability to interpret the important stories of the former Manning Estate. Further to this the exact jurisdiction over the buildings, planning restrictions, and the State's involvement as an A Class reserve should be clarified so that building use and events are put in place to maximise a good visitor experience. Restrictions by heritage, planning use and biodiversity should be the knowledge of the Curator/ Museum Officer to influence strategic direction.
4. Recognition of the First Nations People story within a community museum is important. With the higher aspiration of a City of Cockburn Aboriginal Cultural and Visitors Centre at Bibra Lake, it is recognised that this will be a significant place of welcome for people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage. It is there that the central stories will be told amongst a safe and natural setting of bush and water without the conflicting elements of the colonial history built into Azelia Ley Homestead. However, until the Cultural Centre is built the museum will be an important place to tell both the historical and contemporary Indigenous stories for all visitors. It must be recognised the current design of the Aboriginal Cultural Centre does not include facilities as a safe keeping place for museum level cultural items. If any objects or archives are found the Aboriginal Reference Group at this stage considers the museum would be the best place to store these. Another outcome of the Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Museum Precinct relationship would be a complementary affiliation to share and encourage visitors to both spaces.



4.0 Aim of City of Cockburn Museum Precinct Interpretation Plan

4.1 The Why and Who?

Why we have a museum, who visits it and doesn't visit are vital components of an Interpretation Plan. The current visitation should be explored through collection of numbers, post codes or home countries. An exit survey would be a good addition to reveal how long people are staying and what they get out of their visit from discovery, learning or connection to Cockburn. The survey should also allow visitors an opportunity to provide areas for improvement.

Primary focus is given to providing a vehicle to achieve the following:

- Pride in telling the First Nations story with evocative truth telling.
- Development of local connection and meaningful sense of belonging
- Encouraging caring and ownership of history and heritage
- Visitor enjoyment, capacity to learn
- Signage for easy pathways to get to the museum
- Tools to measure who comes to the Museum, who doesn't? Do we know why not?
- Accessibility
- Good visitor circulation
- Continued strong community representation through membership of the Historical Society of Cockburn.

4.2 The What and How?

The City of Cockburn Museum collection is comprised of a wide variety of objects, archives, photographs and artworks. Nearly all are directly related to the history of Cockburn though a number of artefacts are not fully accessioned and some need to be deaccessioned as not relevant to the Cockburn story. The collection has been built over a period of five decades by enthusiastic donors from the community and has been mostly well managed by volunteers.

As the collection represents the important elements of the historical themes significant to the Cockburn district, the collection is a significant heritage asset that tells the unique story of the colonial settlement. It must be reiterated here that a Cultural Place for the Whadjuk history of the district is being built at Bibra Lake and will be the centre point for all significant Aboriginal stories. However, until then it is the intention of the Museum staff to work with the City of Cockburn Aboriginal Reference Group to make sure a significant presence in the museum is felt through a meaningful Acknowledgement to Country in the entrance to the museum.

At a meeting of the Aboriginal Reference Group (May 2025) support was shown for a strong presence of Whadjuk culture to be exhibited in the museum. It was pointed out that as the museum is visited by many school children, all children should have an opportunity to see their cultural stories reflected.

The Museum collection includes items related to Western Australia's early settlers and the struggle they faced as well as a story with strong relevance to the specific history of the site. Further to the Azelia Ley story are archival records related to Davilak. The modern built sheds house a well-maintained collection of items relevant to the unique local commercial and market garden history. With donor's names attached to the items the Cockburn community and visitors alike can see the importance of migration and local connection to the significant story of agriculture in the district. A substantial proportion of the objects are comprised of domestic or agricultural equipment and household items with direct provenance to Cockburn. Improved directional signage, new interpretation and storytelling as well as a good communication plan will focus on drawing new and existing visitors to view the unique parts of the collection.

And how to do this? A template of interpretation design and display has been included in this report along with a action plan as tools to get the Museum Precinct, staff, Historical Society of Cockburn and volunteers ready for the large changes that new interpretation in the Museum precinct will incur. As outlined above, certain factors will need to be met if this plan is going to be successful, including staffing and budgetary support from the City of Cockburn to reflect a modern museum and the significance of the collection to the people of Cockburn.

For a heritage precinct of this size, which includes a state heritage listed archaeological site and homestead as well as a significant historical collection, a 0.8 or full - time experienced museum curator has precedence in at least 15 Local Government Areas in Western Australia. It is recommended that benchmarking be done for staffing and budgets for exhibition/display development that could lead to a professionally run, attractive and relevant Museum precinct that will continue to have strong volunteer and local connections.

4.3 When and how well?

The action plan is a tool to try and put good planning steps in place to achieve a new look Museum precinct with relevant stories and programs. It would be best if some conditions were met such as staffing and budgetary measures to make significant changes. However, it should be noted the strategic plan includes many items that can be done inhouse with current staff and volunteers. However, most of these actions are getting ready for interpretation rather than actual large display changes.

Implementation and measures of success should be developed from the start of any significant transformations. Change management of staff, Councillors, Historical Society of Cockburn, community and volunteer expectations ensures smooth transitions. This means good communication plans and the incorporation of feedback channels.



5.0 Themes

The themes of the Cockburn Museum are the overarching topics in which the stories of the Cockburn District can be gathered and told. They have been divided into Adult and Children approaches to emphasise the importance of Children's different interpretation needs to understand museum artefacts and associated stories. Interactive elements are not just digital, or part of a facilitated program but can be experienced independently and have a distinct local character. Recognising that we are in a digital age, we are not discounting the value of digital museum learning, however in 2025 the impact of over exposure to digital devices for our new generations is influencing schools and National Government to try and return to an analogue approach to learning. This approach plus the cost of implementation and maintaining digital learning devices has influenced the low key, inexpensive and hopefully highly effective interactive element recommendations in this report.

For each Gallery, a detailed Interpretation Design should be compiled to describe each component of the display and associated programming in terms of:

- Gallery – size, conservation needs, climate control etc
- Exhibition description
- Themes and key messages
- Target audiences
- Interpretation tools
- Learning outcomes
- Special requirements and opportunities.

The design template acts as a control document to inform research and identify ways to work across various museum disciplines such as education, marketing and communication. It should also act as a control document during the museum display and exhibition planning phase. Built into the overall changes to the Museum displays should be post-change evaluation and an ability to review and respond to evaluation.

Recommendations include the development of a temporary exhibition space, and rotating displays in the textile room and photographic hall. This will allow a focus and deep exploration of specific themes and will be achieved with good business planning owing to budgetary implications for staff, opening nights, and exhibition development costs.



5.1 Sample Interpretation Design Template

Gallery

- Room size
- UV impact
- Windows
- Conservation considerations
- Climate control
- Room people capacity
- Accessibility (light, acoustics, sensory challenges).

Overarching Theme/s

Key Messages

- Make sure the key messages meet your overall guiding principles eg, First Nations First, women's perspective, is this the start of a journey for discovery?

Artefacts

- Size
- Connection to key messages
- Cabinets/display needs.

Target audience

- Ensure all people of all abilities and children are included
- Consider existing and new audiences.



Functions of the area

- Free flow or a chronological order to build a complete story?
- Expand on bigger aims such as greeting area or space for quiet reading
- Minimal objects or busy, busy, busy for people to choose what they wish to view closely?
- Look and feel of the area eg. Lighting care for the artefacts vs visitor reading of interpretation panels expectations
- Visitation time 2-3 minutes? If a long dwell time expected seating required?

Story/interpretation Content

- Consider aesthetics, tools, display cabinets and materials required
 - Glass, Metal, Corflute
 - Wall graphics
 - Art
 - Digital
 - Interactive elements (analogue and digital)
 - Maps, photographs.
- Text panels based on internal Museum Style Guide, recommend separate text panels to cover both Historical house room use and then overall arching theme/s of the room. Be aware! Use minimum words NOT books on walls. Text panels for historical house interpretation could be made from distinct material to differentiate from exhibition theme text panels.

Learning Outcomes

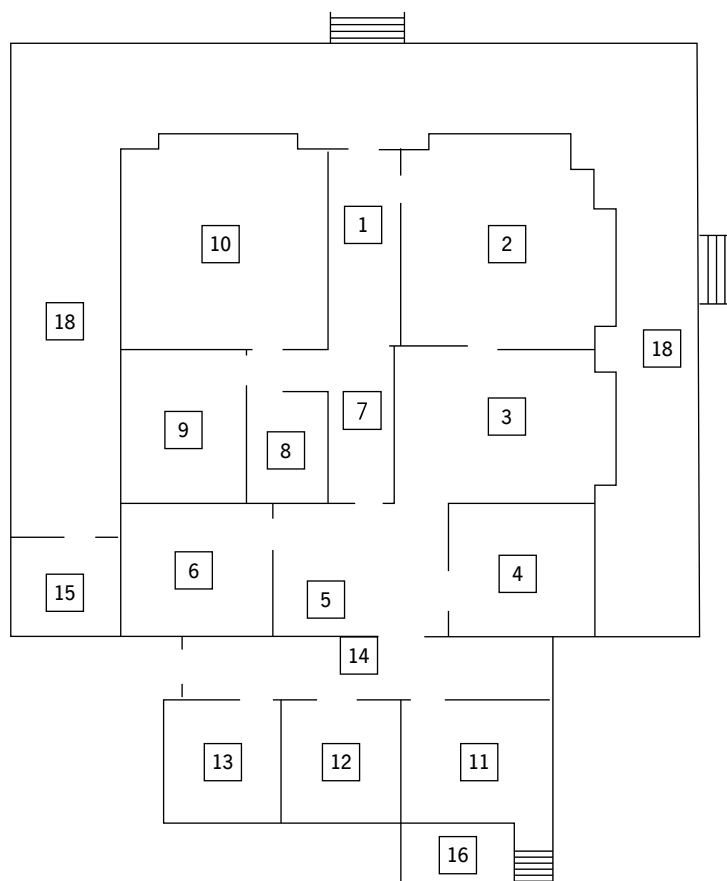
- Adult
- Pre-school children
- School groups.



5.2 Future Site Plan for Azelia Homestead

Index

1. First Nations People First
2. Early Settlers: Like Fish out of Water
3. Leisure Time/Can Anyone Hear Me?
4. Weaving Through Time
5. The World at War
6. Human Conflict and Conservation
7. Temporary Exhibition Space
8. Bathroom
9. Reading Room/Kitchen Display
10. Waves of the World's Unrest
11. Administration Kitchen
12. Administration Office
13. HSC Recommendations for Exhibition/Interactive Space
14. Temporary Exhibition Space (Alternate or Overflow)
15. Storeroom
16. Washroom/Laundry/Women's Work
17. Cellar/Archaeology Equipment
18. Verandah/Event Space



5.3 Future Site Plan for Old Wagon House (Museum sheds)

Index

1. Historic Horsepower

The displays in this shed are an extension of what is already present – artefacts that tell the story of how animals were used to help people in transport and settlement of the land.

2. Maintaining Civic Order

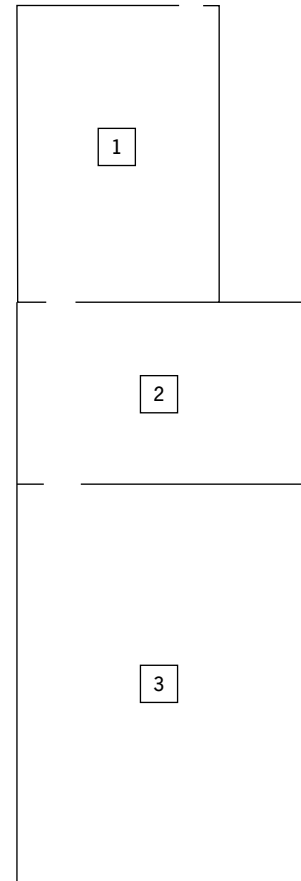
The artefacts that represent this theme can allow visitors to explore stories of school; early road boards and council works; and the development of community groups.

Industry

Industry focuses on artefacts of early retail, commercial and industrial development.

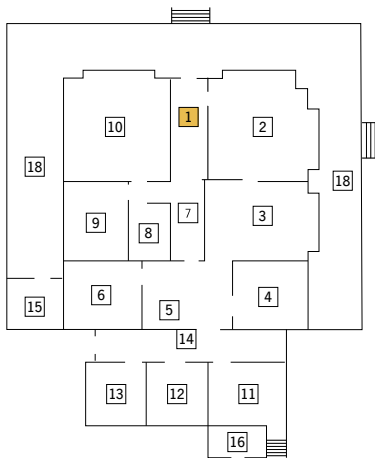
3. Food Bowl

This shed holds a significant collection of machines that represent hard work and ingenuity of the people responsible for making Cockburn known as a market garden and food bowl in WA.



6.0 Museum Precinct themes and associated display spaces and significant collection

6.1 Azelia Ley Homestead



Site map 1

Adult visitors Welcome to Museum

Children visitors Welcome to Museum

Display space (Current name) Entrance Hallway

Interpretative/collection items -

Interactive elements

Interactive elements should always be considered for size and educational impact. But should be placed associated with the interpretive theme within the museum precinct.

- Customer Service Welcome
- Welcome to Museum by Hologram (costed but need budget).



Photo of welcoming Acknowledgement to Country in Victoria Women's Centre

Site map 1

Adult visitors First Nation's Peoples First

Reference: Acknowledgement to Country in Victoria Women's Centre

Children visitors Who are the first peoples of Cockburn?

Display space Left hand side of Entrance Hallway

Reference: Acknowledgement to Country in Victoria Women's Centre

Interpretative/collection items

- Welcome or Acknowledgement to Country placed to right hand side of first door Informed by City of Cockburn Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG)
- Recommended name Kaarditj – to be confirmed by ARG
- Story boards woven throughout the museum informed by Aboriginal Reference Groups, Traditional Owners, Elders
- Wandj Dixon Photo
- Oral History interviews with local First Nations people in Local History Collection
- Spears? If considered local.

Interactive elements

Invite Aboriginal Reference Group to recommend interactive elements

- Customer Service Welcome
- Eg. Whadjuk Language learning through audio post and flip word cards/ or simple audio books
- Immersion into culture through music soundscape.



Left hand side of Entrance Hallway

Site map 2

Adult visitors Early settlers: Fish out of water Talking Point Topics

- Clarence and the Peel Estate
- The Manning Estate: Davilak ruins
- Drummond and Armstrong Connections
- Azelia Ley and her family
- The subsequent tenants in Azelia Ley Homestead possibly best interpreted in other rooms
- Important to represent both History and Archaeology in parallel.

Children visitors Who were the early settlers who came and stayed? What did they leave behind?

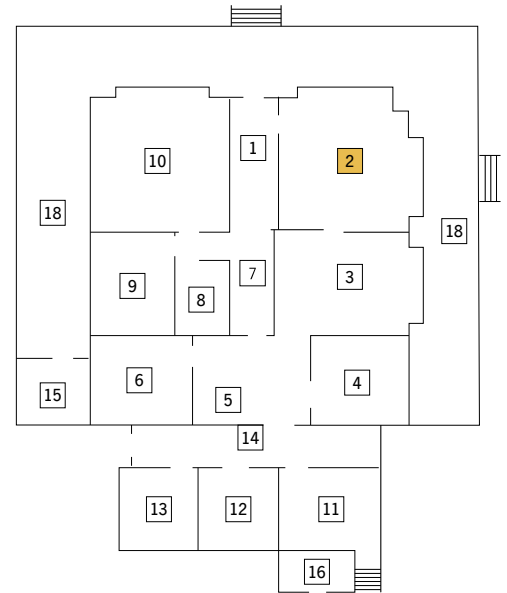
Display space (Current name) Manning Room

Interpretative/collection items

- Florence Manning dresses and Azelia Ley dresses
- Adam Armstrong Harmonium, money box, medicine box
- James Drummond Bed from the Parmelia
- Artwork of Thomas Peel ships which delivered settlers to Clarence
- Davilak ruin archaeological findings eg. Coins,
- Lucius A Manning Photos
- Florence Manning, portrait, letters, photos, diaries
- Azelia Ley historic photos, Dressing table c1900 Congdon Cottage
- Shipwreck Chairs and lifesaving ring from the Orizaba 1905
- Manning family - Wooden travel trunk.

Interactive elements

- Old clothing for dressing up with associated with historical backdrop for take home photograph
- Re-creation of Davilak ruins with kinetic sand for an archaeological dig
- A real time archaeological dig inviting visitors as volunteer archaeologists
- Blind identification of what's this object? Using excess or duplicated artefacts
- Microscope for high magnification of archaeological specimens from Davilak site.



Site map 3

Adult visitors Leisure Time

Topics

- Music
- Sport
- Social and family time.

Children visitors What people do in their spare time?

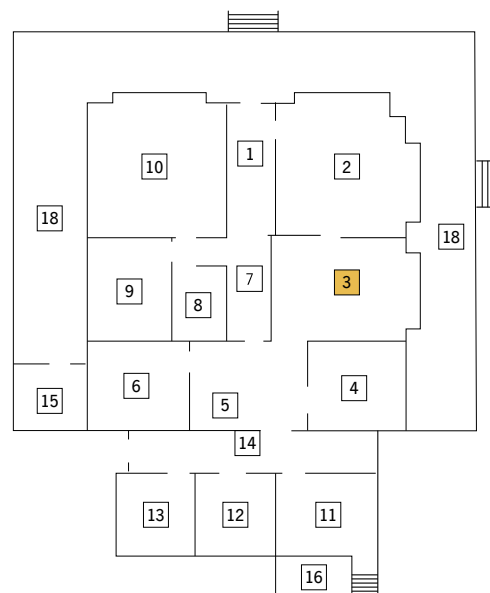
Display space (Current name) Pioneer Room

Interpretative/collection items

- Gymnastics photo and trophies
- Items of faith - bibles
- Series of video film produced by Spearwood resident Alan Beale on soccer and football in the region
- Passage of Olympic Flame through Cockburn.

Interactive elements

- Accurate Speedway or cable water ski park recreation with Scalextric cars/ water-skiers to race
- Building Adventure World working rides in LEGO.



Site map 3

Adult visitors Can Anyone Hear Me?

Topic

- Telegrams
- Telephone
- Radio.

Children visitors Can anyone hear me?

Display space (Current name) Pioneer Room.

Interpretative/collection items

- Bakelite Telephones
- Mobile telephone c1988.

Interactive elements

Old typewriter collection to be used by children.

Site map 4

Adult visitors Weaving Through Time – Temporary display (chance to include community items on short term loan).

Topics

- Textiles through time
- Specific periods of clothing
- Embroidery
- Women's craft.

Children visitors What material is left from history

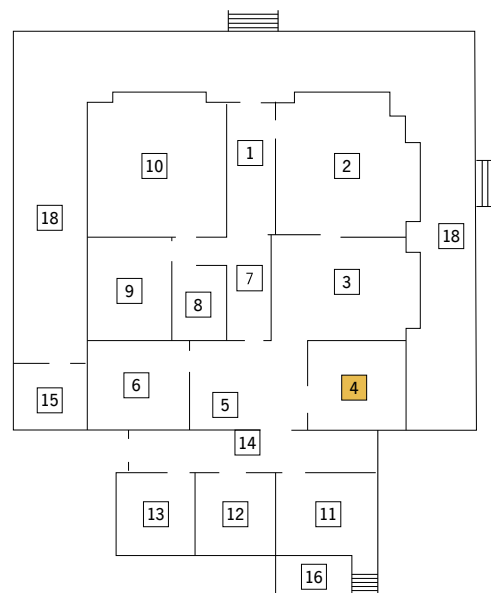
Display space (Current name) Heritage Room

Interpretative/collection items

- Early settler clothing and accessories eg. Button hooks
- Placemats
- Samplers
- Linen
- Tapestry
- Dress making tools.

Interactive elements

- Dress up box or replica or duplicated items for educational purposes
- Restore old treadle sewing machine for not just display purposes but working demonstration.



Site map 5

Adult visitors The World at War

Topics

- World War I and II
- The Boer War
- Korean and Vietnam Wars
- Role of Women in wartime.

Children visitors The World at War

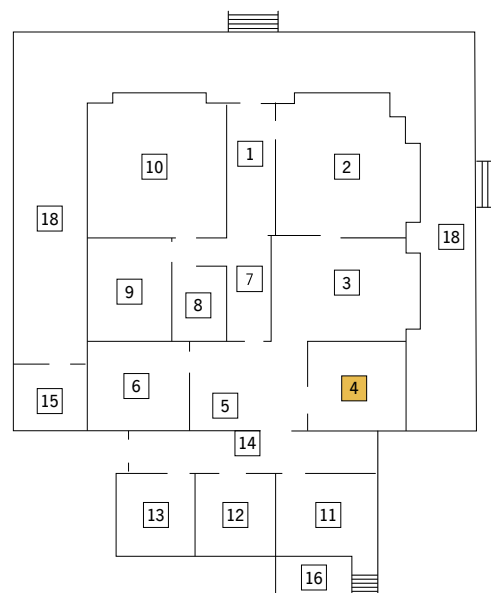
Display space (Current name) Gilmore Room

Interpretative/collection items

- Certificate regarding Fallen Soldiers War Memorial 1922
- Maud Winfield Photo and Red Cross Tablecloth
- World War One Bugle
- Trench Art
- Grenade
- Crest from a destroyer
- Gurkha Knives
- World War Two stretchers
- Otama Oberon Class Submarine (Cold War).

Interactive elements

- Develop an interactive wall or table. Find things that can be touched, picked up, played with, constructed that will make sense of the historical items and impart a story or history
- Model ship building based on models actually built by Australian Marine Complex.



Site map 6

Adult visitors Human Conflict and Conservation

Topics

- Protests
- Activism
- Man's impact on the environment.

Children visitors What was the impact of the natural environment on the people?

What was the impact of the people on the natural environment?

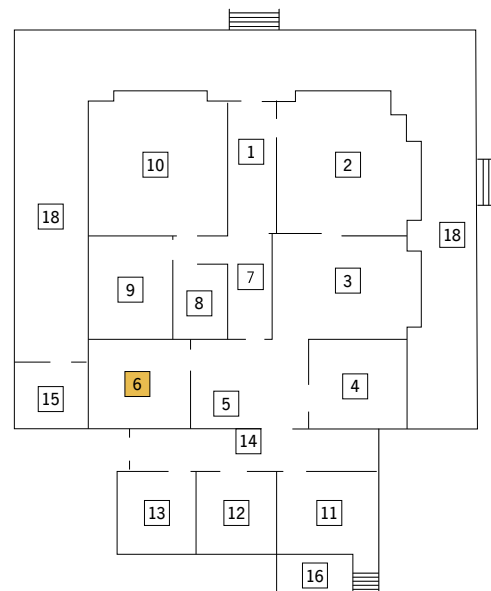
Display space (Current name) Colonial Room

Interpretative/collection items

- Oral History Recollections of the Beeliar Wetlands
- Aim for public education eg endemic species
- Hunting eg. Early shotgun
- Collection to be developed eg WA Wildlife
- Artefacts of environmental activism eg. Roe 8
- Artwork by Larry Mitchell recording Spearwood
- Limestone quarrying – limestone kiln photographs, Davilak quarry (was the stone from Azelia Ley locally sourced?).

Interactive elements

- WA Wildlife Hot Box set up for specific species
- Microscope for high magnification of natural local specimens.



Site map 7

Adult visitors All themes

Children visitors All themes

Display space (Current name)

Temporary Photographic Exhibition Space.

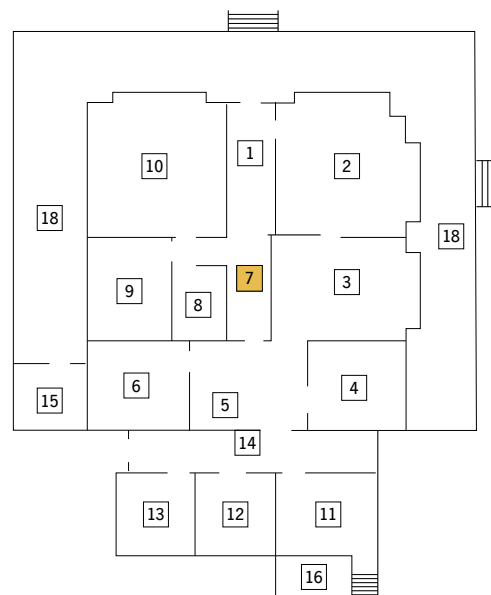
Interpretative/collection items

Early Focus on

- Individual Suburbs of City of Cockburn (23)
- Street and Park Names
- Specific industries eg. Cable Water Ski
- Photographic Competitions based on heritage, natural history, changes in natural environment, culture in community.

Interactive elements

Listening post with oral history? If standing a problem supply QR code links to Local History for further info or audio links.



Site map 8 and 10

Adult visitors Waves of the World's Unrest – the Migrant Story.

Topics

- Group Settlement
- Post World War II migration
- Child migration

Children visitors Who were the new migrants arriving in Cockburn?

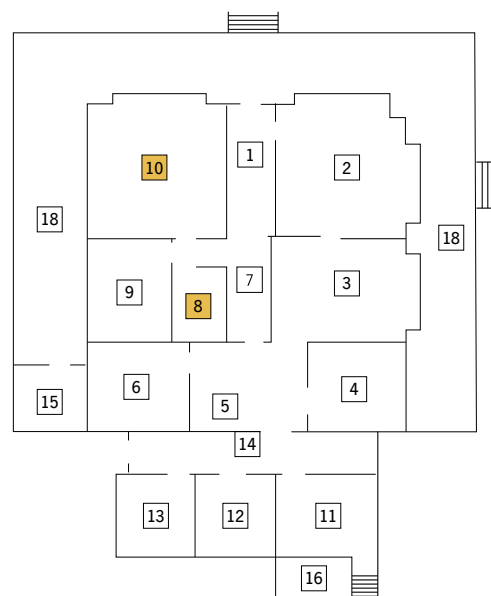
Display space (Current name) Davilak Room and Bathroom

Interpretative/collection items

- Peel Estate Group Settlement (possible Charles Carpenter bed and bookcase)
- Wine Press
- Oral History recordings of long-term residents many with strong links to original immigrants to Cockburn district
- Alfred Meakin Art Deco Tea set
- Anglican Children's Home, Seaside House.

Interactive elements

-



Site map 9

Adult visitors All themes

Children visitors House interpretation of 1950s kitchen and house library
New Reading Room

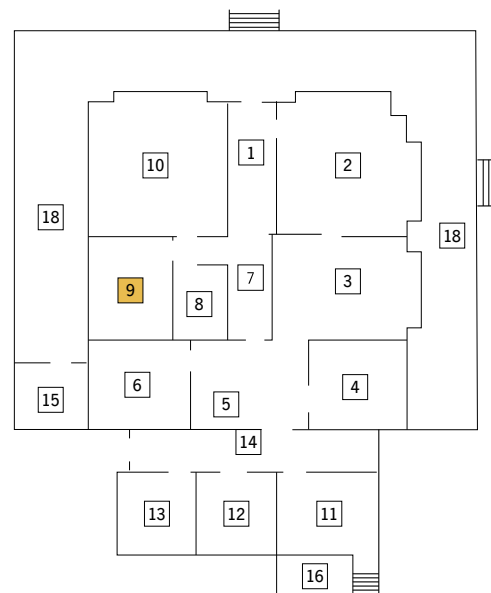
Display space (Current name) Kitchen Display

Interpretative/collection items

- Reading material
- Photographs
- Historical and reference books/magazines
- Small scale space for story time for children
- Pioneers of Cockburn Files/Board.

Interactive elements

- Jigsaw of map of Cockburn to include all 23 suburbs (including Rottnešt)
- Listening post using Local History extensive oral history collection
- 5 minute quick read histories.



Site map 10

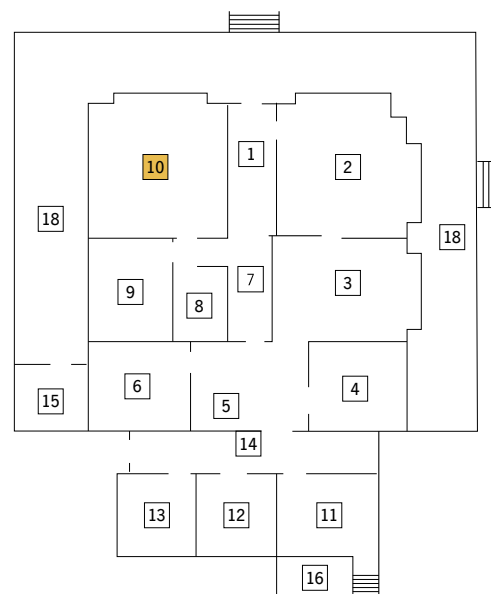
Adult visitors Waves of the World's Unrest – The migrant story

Children visitors See above at 8.

Display space (Current name) Interpretative/collection items
Move Spanish Doll from Old Wagon House (Museum sheds) to here.

Interactive elements

-



Site map 11

Adult visitors Administration Kitchen

Children visitors Limited historical kitchen display

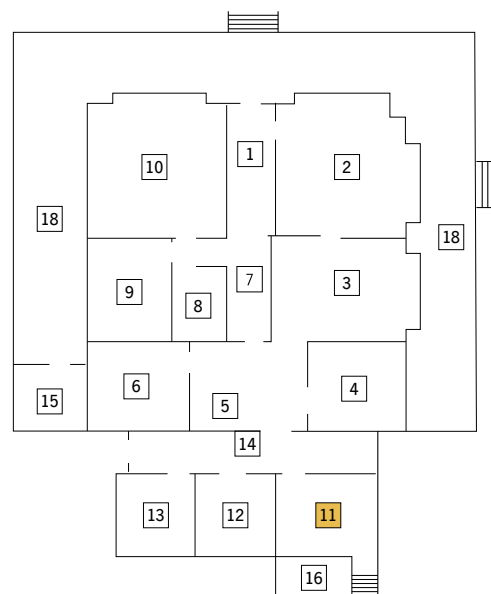
Display space (Current name) Kitchen

Interpretative/collection items

- Try and keep artefacts displayed to either a time frame or class of use
- Display should only be within boundaries of the stove.

Interactive elements

No interactive elements should be in this space



Site map 12

Adult visitors Administration Office

Children visitors -

Display space (Current name) Office Administration

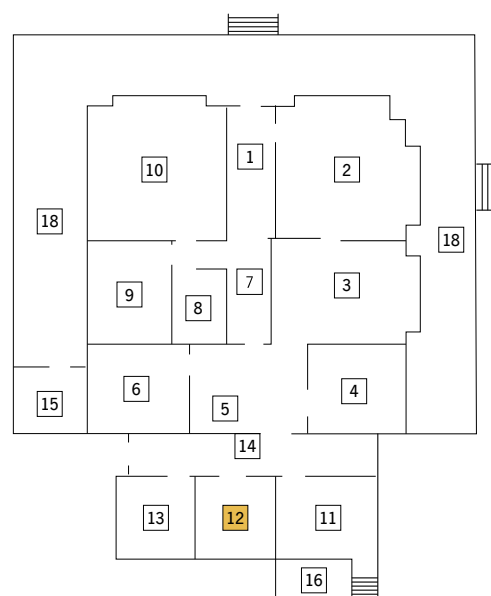
Interpretative/collection items

- First Aid
- Emergency Evacuation Equipment
- Museum Disaster Equipment (to be established).

Interactive elements

No interactive elements

Not for Public Access.



Site map 13

Adult visitors Historical Society driven ideas for temporary Exhibition/ Education/Interactive Space.

Children visitors -

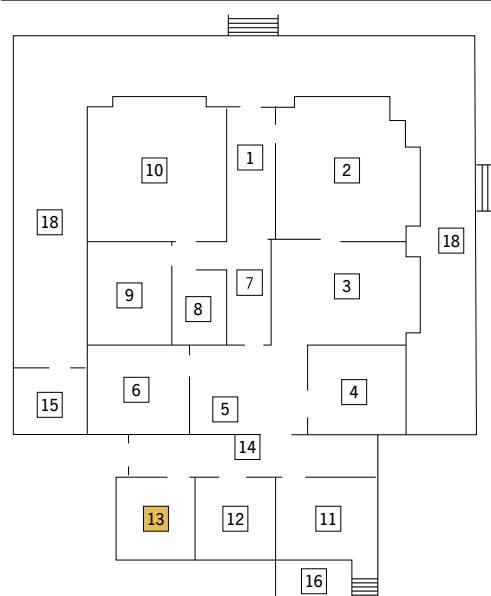
Display space (Current name) Storeroom

Interpretative/collection items

To be linked to temporary exhibition space either for temporary display or storage.

Interactive elements

-



Site map 14

Adult visitors All themes

Temporary Exhibition Space for local and travelling exhibition

Children visitors -

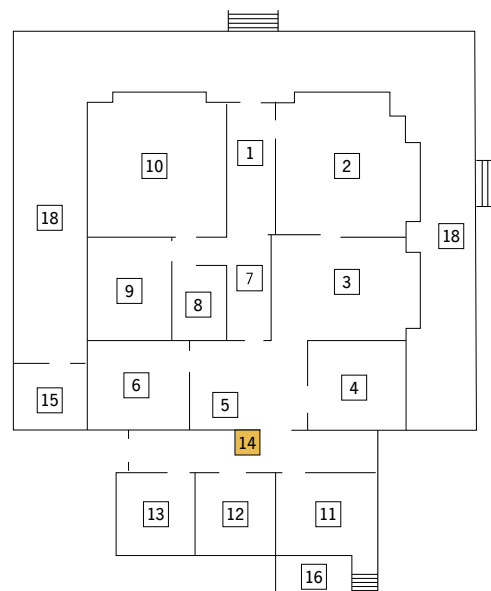
Display space (Current name) Breezeway

Interpretative/collection items

- For travelling or locally developed exhibitions
- Possible use of Coaches' quarters for display boxes
- NB Location of Defib Equipment.

Interactive elements

No interactive elements.



Site map 15

Adult visitors Storeroom

Children visitors -

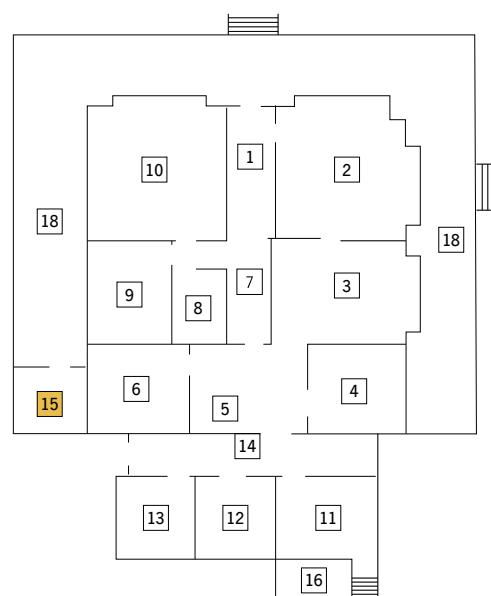
Display space (Current name) Storeroom

Interpretative/collection items

- Tables/Chairs
- Wi-Fi/IT
- Cleaning equipment and chemicals.

Interactive elements

-



Site map 16

Adult visitors Story of domestic washroom/ Laundry/ Women's work

Children visitors -

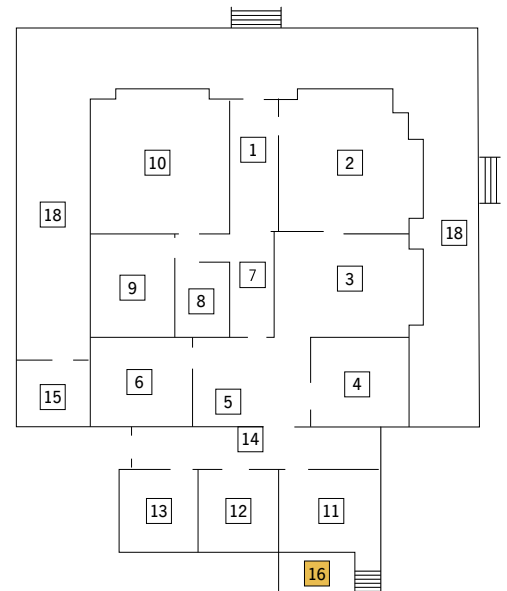
Display space (Current name) Washroom/Laundry

Interpretative/collection items

- Copper
- Washboard
- Ringer
- Laundry items
- Laundry Trolley
- Washing Machine.

Interactive elements

Education potential tied to mill and water pump being in an operative state



Site map 17

Adult visitors Archaeology Practice/ Work on Davilak

Children visitors Not for Public Access

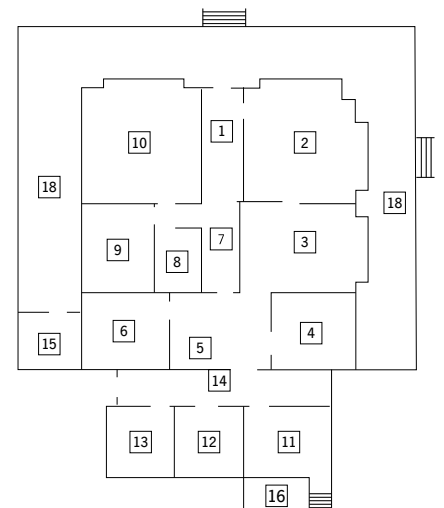
Display space (Current name) Cellar

Interpretative/collection items

Storage for archaeology equipment

Interactive elements

-



Site map 18

Adult visitors Verandah

Children visitors Used for Events

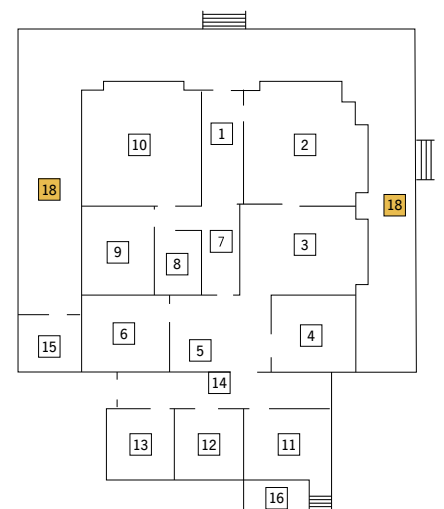
Display space (Current name) -

Interpretative/collection items

-

Interactive elements

-



6.2 Old Wagon House - (Museum sheds)

Site map All

Adult visitors Women's work is never done but is it as important as men's?

Topics

- Aboriginal women in society
- Addressing and acknowledging important women's stories in society.

Children visitors

What did Women do?

What was their life like?

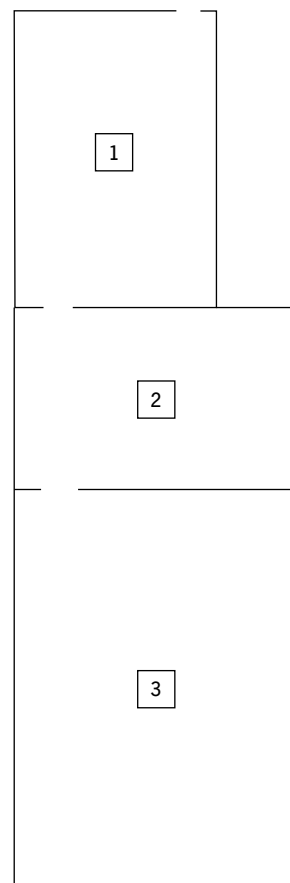
Display space (Current name) All rooms

Interpretative/collection items

- Ensure women's perspective is always considered and represented in each theme
- Oral History interviews with Croation Women
- Hat pins – links to women's history in suffrage movement.

Interactive elements

-



Site map Shed One

Adult visitors Historic Horsepower

Children visitors How were animals important to people throughout history as beasts of burden?

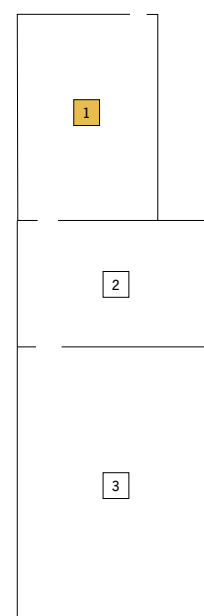
Display space (Current name) Old Wagon House

Interpretative/collection items

- Tabletop Trolley (Wagon) c1900 (move general store items of integrity to new place in Industry section. Some non-accessioned items may need to come off display)
- Photos and stories of donkeys 1960s
- trotters 1970s
- Afghan drivers and Camels.

Interactive elements

-



Site map Shed Two

Adult visitors Industry

- Commerce
- Retail eg. General store
- Australian Marine Complex.

Children visitors What work did people do?

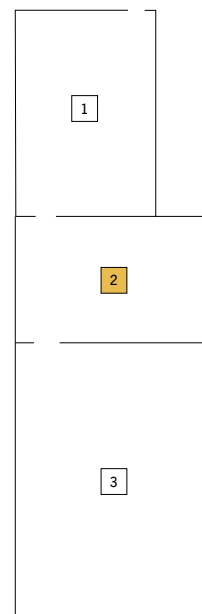
Display space (Current name) Old Wagon House

Interpretative/collection items

- Lime kiln photos
- Watsonia Industry collection
- Carob Tree Kiosk Sign
- Caterpillar Crawler
- Powell Family items relating to dairy, Post Office and Hotel
- Objects associated scrapping of the HMAS Otama Oberon Class Submarine.

Interactive elements

-



Site map: Shed Two and Three

Adult visitors Maintaining Civic Order

Topics

- Politics
- Local Council services
- School and University.

Children visitors Who sets the rules?

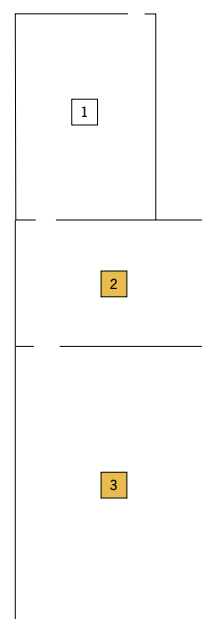
Display space (Current name) Old Wagon House

Interpretative/collection items

- Hamilton Hill School Bell 1903
- Austin Tip Truck Council Rubbish
- Toy tank and weighing scales Anglican Children's Home Coogee
- Grader 1950s (external display)
- Hamilton High School Trophies and Archive Boxes
- Save Cockburn Council T Shirts, protest movements banners
- Oral history memories of Jandakot Primary School
- Oral History in Local history Collection by Arlene Crane about working for Cockburn Roads Board
- 1950s crane (external display)
- Bulldozer (external display).

Interactive elements

-



Site map: Shed Three

Adult visitors

Food Bowl
Market gardens
Dairies

Children visitors

What work did people do?

Display space

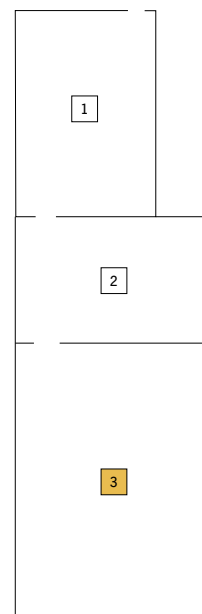
(Current name) Old Wagon House

Interpretative/collection items

- Chinese market gardeners giant watering cans
- Trophies for leading agricultural production
- Crop sprayers c1930
- Onion cutter 1950
- Cauliflower Cart c1964
- Potato Planter
- Video Film of early Market Gardeners produced by local Spearwood resident Alan Beale
- Oral History interviews available in Local History Collection
- Powell Dairy items
- Ray and Rose Lees tractor, money bag and carrot washer.

Interactive elements

Operating old machinery eg. Carrot washer.



Site map: All

Adult visitors

- Museum education
- Restoration vs conservation
- Protecting archaeological sites
- What museums do.

Children visitors

How do we remember history?

Always consider elements that could be used to engender thought about what museums do eg. Conservation vs preservation.

Interpretative/collection items

- Newly painted or restored machinery in Shed 3
- Archaeological items found by intrusive visits to Davilak site.

Interactive elements

-

7.0 Action Plan

This action plan has been developed considering; change management, staffing/ resource limitations and possibilities, volunteer contributions, local government requirements and lead times for business case development and approvals. It is acknowledged the time frames may need to be pushed out owing to staff resourcing and this point was raised in consultation with staff and Historical Society members following the draft report. However, this should be used as a dynamic, guiding document to help with strategic planning. Time frames can be reset as needed. Any substantial works will need relevant approvals and consultation with the Western Australian Heritage Council.

A well-developed marketing and promotions exercise using all facets of signage, events, social media would be beneficial to the Museum Precinct to raise its profile. Further to this good communication will keep the community informed during changes to the museum operations and to allow new exhibition development and interpretation.

7.1 Recommendations for Interpretation Plan

First Nations Stories



Short Term

- Cockburn Whadjuk History – imperative to address through Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG)
- PRIORITY AS not secret sacred items take 5 spears to ARG – where would they start with identifying them?
- Clarify the process for gathering/telling stories to assure correct authority
- Include Cockburn Cultural and Visitor Centre Project team on any new First Nations Interpretation or Projects
- Approach Cockburn Cultural and Visitor Centre project team to explore whether research and stories from the consultation for the Cultural Centre can be shared to prevent duplication of effort. To include both pre and post settlement stories
- Follow up on offer of an Aboriginal artefact for display at the Museum -offered at the Aboriginal Reference Group Meeting
- If appropriate, develop natural history interpretation informed through Cockburn Aboriginal perspective
- Clear entrance hallway for readiness of City acknowledgement or a well-funded, designed and consulted Welcome to Country.



Medium Term



Long Term

The Outdoor Tractors

Short Term

Revealing the tractors at the front of the museum

1. Write a paper clarifying plan for tractors
2. Include outlook for stabilising the tractors to prevent further deterioration
3. Provide recommendation and costing for interpretation sign/s security fencing eg. Pool fencing in black
4. Establish a timeline for approval for budget and planning/safety conditions.

Act upon recommendations for tractors

1. Allow safe viewing and understanding of tractors history
2. Erect interpretation panels
3. Erect fencing
4. Consider organising a BIG reveal to include City staff, Historical Society of Cockburn and council to help increase profile of the Museum.

Medium Term

Continue care for tractors by following preservation recommendations eg. Raising the tractors up to relieve pressure on the tyres.

Long Term



Improve Museum arrival experience for the Visitor

Short Term

- Review signage from main road to Manning Park and Museum Precinct
- Include arriving to Museum Precinct from different directions and by car, bus, bike or as a pedestrian.

Relocate rubbish bins that currently block the accessible path from the car park to Azelia Ley Homestead

Medium Term

Develop relationships with City of Cockburn Community Arts team and public art master plan – under their direction discuss relevant mural themes, planning, community involvement with professional guidance, budget and timing for painting mural/s on external walls of Old Wagon House for external interpretation. Consider contemporary design to help with promotion

- Community Promotion campaign to include potential mural design
- Business case development for funding murals.

Long Term

Execution of Mural planning



Collection Policy and Management

Short Term

- Review the current Museum and Local History collection policy - consider amalgamated document and look through a contemporary lens. Include all stakeholders in review and make jurisdiction of the policy clear. Include recent topics that may expand stories and relevant collection
- Use the Collection Policy and Significance Assessment to guide all collection management
- Have the Collection Policy of the City of Cockburn adopted by Council. This is important for the profile of the significant Historical Collection which is owned, administered and funded by the City.

Medium Term

With other goals achieved gap filling the collection would allow a focus on contemporary subjects keeping in mind perspectives of First Nations People, women, migrants

- Protest Movements of Cockburn
- Adventure World
- Australian Marine Complex
- Speedway
- WA Wildlife
- Cockburn Ice Arena
- Cable Water Ski Park
- Cockburn Cement
- Coogee Marina.

Review museum collection online presence. In 2025 the Museum and Local History Collection and Catalogue can only be found under Cockburn Libraries. The museum and local history catalogue is so far down the list it is almost invisible. It is vital that the profile of the museum and local history is raised in Council, in community and in all promotion and online portals.

Long Term

Respecting the history of the house



Short Term

- Start research to develop text for storyboards about the use of each room in the Azelia Ley Homestead during the time of Azelia Ley and subsequent tenants/occupiers
- Display storyboards even if only using temporary signage until Internal style guide is developed.



Medium Term

Print permanent storyboards for Azelia Ley homestead rooms.



Long Term

Making space



Short Term

- Deaccessioning of artefacts not relevant to Cockburn's story (ongoing) AND
- Return items on loan to owners or approach them to consider permanent donation
- Consider artworks vs museum objects eg. Mosaic of Azelia Ley Homestead in the Gilmore Room.



Medium Term

Deaccessioning of artefacts not relevant to Cockburn's story (ongoing).



Long Term

Deaccessioning of artefacts not relevant to Cockburn's story (ongoing).

Temporary Exhibition Space

☒ Short Term

To enhance community engagement and broaden interest, consider hosting thematic exhibitions that showcase Cockburn's diverse cultural and historical narratives. Collaborate with local artists and historians to weave unique perspectives into the museum's storytelling, ensuring every display resonates with visitors. Introduce interactive digital platforms, allowing users to explore historical artefacts and stories beyond the physical museum space. This initiative could simultaneously raise the profile of the museum and serve as an educational tool for schools and community groups.

☐ Medium Term

☐ Long Term

Museum Admin Cottage

☒ Short Term

Make a plan for moving all items in storage at Azelia Ley Homestead to Museum Administration Cottage. Get costings for IT, Wi-Fi connection, office equipment, shelving, compactus and moving costs to develop a business case. Consider long term climate control for collection (make it evidence based by measuring humidity and temperature when air-conditioning not on).

☒ Medium Term

- Move all items leaving one office space (current curator office) and kitchen for catering and officer/volunteer use
- Set up Historical Society of Cockburn Head Quarters in Cottage – include all plaques, honour boards and history of Society.

☐ Long Term

Measured Drawings



Short Term

Develop relationship and jurisdiction to prepare a budget item for

- measured drawing of all buildings in the precinct
- engineered assessed load bearing weights for wagon shed beams for aerial display
- to scale museum precinct site plans (include parking areas)
- to scale site plans of Davilak ruin site.



Medium Term

Acquire measured drawings for all museum buildings and to scale site plan for precinct make sure this includes internal drawings of Museum Administration Cottage and Davilak ruins site.



Long Term

Interpretation Style Guide



Short Term

- Research and do costings to develop business case for interior museum interpretation panel design style guide if this can't be done by internal team
- Work with graphic design team to develop and establish museum interpretation design style guide.



Medium Term



Long Term

House OR Community Museum

Short Term

- Establish new strategic direction for museum with stakeholders to move away from house museum to community history museum
- Research and quantify costs for a budget for interpretation panels (using newly established design style guide) to explain the historical use of each area of Azelia Ley Homestead including all outbuildings, garage, stables, coachman's house, the old out house and the wash house.

Medium Term

Research, write, print and display interpretation panels for Azelia Ley Homestead rooms.

Long Term

Work on a display design throughout Museum Precinct

Short Term

Start in Azelia Ley Homestead using a design template that has been provided as a sample above.

Medium Term

Long Term



Outbuilding Interpretation

Short Term

- Focus on interpretation boards of out buildings especially Coachman's quarters and outhouse
- Move 'A Vast Estate Panel' which is poorly situated near Coachman's Quarters
- Change name which currently says Coachmans H*use (the O is missing) to Coachman's Quarters and add new interpretation panel.

Medium Term

Consider and research promenade performance art heritage elements to focus on the Manning History at Davilak, the modern Sound Shell, Azelia Ley Homestead and include outbuildings.
(The Camel Quarantine story in this property is of particular note.)

Examples to draw on Rottnest Island, Lake Grace, Gosnells.
Contact Helen Munt for suggestions.

Long Term

Link visitor experience to trails and places outside of the Museum collection for when the Museum is closed. Focus on three walking trails

1. An aboriginal cultural/ bush tucker walk
2. A walk focusing on natural environment/coastal dunes/wildflowers
3. An historic cultural walk to include Davilak ruins and Homestead site.



Photo Display Hall – in Azelia Ley Homestead

Short Term

- Remove fragile, original photos - to be held in Local History Archive
- Develop a procedure for high resolution scanned copies to be made for future display purposes
- Working with Local History team, establish jurisdiction, staff and protocols around management of the photographic display area of the Museum for ongoing temporary displays.

Medium Term

- Focus on unique suburban character history told through photographic display based on development of suburbs. Research associated oral history stories
- Develop costings and business case for audio station to support history of Cockburn suburban growth.

Long Term

Installation of audio station to support pictures with oral history stories.

Work with Men's Shed

Short Term

- Build relationship with local Men's Shed/ or Woodworking group
- Work with the group to make a jigsaw of the map of the City of Cockburn showing all the suburbs (include Rottnest) and important historical sites. To be used in area in conjunction with photographic display focusing on specific character of areas supported by oral history.

Medium Term

Build in some feedback to see if this type of hands on mapping helps visitors build on their knowledge of the area or connection to place.

Long Term

Tie Cockburn Museum precinct and Local History collections to different sites, heritage, City buildings, parks, archaeological sites to produce a new self-drive tour eg Self Drive tour of Cockburn c2009 include as an online presence.

Temporary Exhibition Space

Medium Term

Establish place for temporary exhibition space within the Museum precinct. This is based on the Caretakers Cottage being given to the Museum for administration and storage support.

Areas considered

1. Front hall - current reception area
2. Historical Society Meeting Space/Breezeway
3. Current working kitchen
4. The Stables
5. Space within Wagon Sheds.

Recommendation

- Historical Society Space/Breezeway and current Object storage area
- Find out legal limit of people in Homestead with this new area for public use included.

Experiment with small in-house exhibition with a soft opening to gauge use of space.

Work on a business case for a temporary exhibition program include.

- Budget for design and delivery
- Internal topics suggested
 - Wedding dresses
 - Nautical themes shipwrecks
 - Adventure World
 - War.

It is recommended that items be on loan for the course of the exhibition but if have high significance/ relevance to Cockburn and a willingness by the owner to donate this could be away to expand significant collection.

Long Term

- If Budget approval for temporary exhibition space do a grand opening event for inaugural new look museum
- During annual planning period plan forward for exhibition development or relevant travelling exhibitions.

Prepare for Museum Closure

☒ Short Term

To allow for

- changes to Azelia Ley Homestead collection display
- changes to location and content of the Wagon Shed galleries
- the preparation of a temporary exhibition space
- Moving object storage to the Museum Administration Cottage
- The setting up of Historical Society Headquarters.

Prepare for this by developing a Museum Precinct Communication Plan that recognises relevant reference groups, all stakeholders and the public for a timely approach to these changes.

☐ Medium Term

☐ Long Term

Changes in Wagon Shed

☒ Short Term

- Without changing anything large or significant, small changes could make a difference.
- Remove intrusive photos and ephemera not relevant to Cockburn.
Eg. Fremantle and Melbourne Photo boards.

Objects used as props that are non-registered artefacts should also be removed.

☐ Medium Term

☐ Long Term

Education Program

Short Term

Adult program

- Review the current tour for adults. How often is the tour operated, how many people take up the opportunity, is there any marketing/promotion?

School Program

- Review current uptake and content. Does it address the current curriculum for local history?
- Do research with other museum education programs to do some comparative analysis for programs eg Wanneroo.
- Find a database with contact details - include all pre-primary, primary and high schools in the City of Cockburn
- Work on relationship building with local schools both primary and high schools of the region
- Working with local people develop a further arm to school education program to include Aboriginal culture
- Work on relationship with City of Cockburn Library for relevant Baby Rhyme Time and/or Story Time sessions being held in the Museum.

Medium Term

- Work with local teachers to develop a curriculum specific Museum learning program which will address their needs and help children form a sense of belonging to their region
- Consider a charge to schools to cover some costs for the school visits.

Expand offering for both school holiday programs and adult programs to include topics such as

- Night visits for Astronomy
- Aboriginal culture through bush tucker
- First Nations Culture through art
- Spotlighting (if appropriate) for local fauna to be done in conjunction.

Long Term

Climate Control



Short Term

- Purchase sensors for humidity and temperature measurement for multiple sites in the Museum Precinct
- Set up schedules for data collection and recording particularly in extreme weather months when conditions could most impact the condition of the collection.



Medium Term

Research best climate control; solution for the Wagon shed and Azelia Ley Homestead, quantify cost, write a business case – it may require a phased approach towards a final solution.

Note that climate control maybe a factor in determining the suitability of travelling museum exhibitions.



Long Term

Review the wall hanging system though out Azelia Ley Homestead



Short Term

- Investigate and cost the best solution for a wall hanging system appropriate for heritage buildings throughout all spaces of Azelia Ley Homestead
- Give particular focus to the temporary exhibition space in the current Breezeway.



Medium Term

- With costings develop a business case to apply for funding
- If successful have new hanging system installed.



Long Term

Create an Action Plan for Davilak Ruins Site

Short Term

- Continue to develop relationship with university Archaeological schools
- Clarify jurisdiction for the Davilak ruin site.

Medium Term

Research and define an action plan for Davilak Ruins site to include

- Restoration
- Conservation
- Protection from threat from wild mountain bike paths or illegal car incursions
- Safety
- Environmental Controls
- Boardwalk to protect foundations but allow site access for visitors (precede with archaeological study of boardwalk places)
- Public Education.

Long Term

- Archaeological exploration and tourism.



Toilet Facilities



Short Term

- No Local Government report would be complete without discussing toilet facilities. The current situation of a staff only use of the single toilet as a visitor feels very unwelcoming. Review the use of the toilet by visitors when the museum is open.



Medium Term



Long Term

Communication and Promotion Plan



Short Term

- With the opening of a new look Museum Precinct, it would be essential to produce an overall welcome to City of Cockburn Museum Precinct and Manning Park communication and promotion plan. Consider something like attached example
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nBjGARjPv2Y>



Medium Term

- Prepare a costed business case for a communication and promotion strategy to announce the opening of the new galleries.



Long Term

- Put in place well budgeted promotion plan for new look museum precinct.

8.0 Sketch Drawings of Possibility

During the course of the project Tony Bird (Museum Officer) sketched some possibilities for the new arrangements of the permanent exhibitions. Three of these sketches have been included to show some of the thought that has gone into future changes. (Third drawing on page 46).





This interpretation plan was made possible with co funding from the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage through the Community Heritage Grants Program.



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