
6.0

Constraints, Issues and Opportunities

The previous section establishes the cultural significance of the Yarrangobilly Caves House Precinct including the European and built heritage values, the natural heritage values and the Aboriginal heritage values. This section examines constraints, issues and then opportunities associated with various aspects of the Precinct, which must be considered when formulating implementation recommendations.

6.1 Constraints and Opportunities Arising from Significance

The constraints and opportunities arising from assessed significance below are an input to conservation policy formation. It is important to understand that these findings are modified by the consideration of practical issues and legislative requirements, which is presented in the remainder of this Section of the report.

Constraints

The Yarrangobilly karst environment is an exceptional place of national significance, which should be protected and conserved in accordance with accepted conservation principles.

Every period of the place associated with the touristic use of the Precinct and its continued touristic development contributes to the significance of the place, although some periods are more important than others.

All identified significant historic fabric of the Precinct should be retained and conserved.

The cultural landscape significantly impacted by man made works and plantings is an important component of the complex, which should be retained and conserved.

The individual style and design of individual historic elements within the complex should be retained and no activity, which prejudices the character of individual elements, should occur.

The substantial archaeological resources of both European and pre-contact Aboriginal occupation, both above and below ground should be protected and investigated.

The species diversity and values of the ecosystem associated with the karst landscape within which the Precinct is located should be protected.

Opportunities

The pre-contact Aboriginal occupation of the Precinct and use of the place as a route to other locations is of high cultural significance. The archaeological evidence and Aboriginal cultural values associated with the place should be retained, conserved and interpreted.

Significant vistas and key views to and from elements in the Precinct and key vantage points should be re-established and conserved and considered in future planning. [See Figure 6.1]

The significance of the historic Precinct and of individual elements within it should be interpreted to visitors.

Access to some areas of the Yarrangobilly Caves House Precinct by visitors and people living in the local communities should be encouraged.

6.2 Obligations Arising from the Burra Charter of Australia ([Final Draft] Revised 1999)

The Australian ICOMOS Charter for the conservation of places of cultural significance (the Burra Charter) sets a standard of practice for those who provide advice, make decisions about, or undertake works to places of cultural significance including owners managers and custodians. This study has been prepared in accordance with those standards. The Charter provides specific guidance for physical and procedural actions that should occur in relation to significant places. Guidelines particularly relevant to the Yarrangobilly Caves House Precinct are outlined in Appendix I. The Burra Charter should be referred to for a full set of guidelines:

6.3 Issues and Opportunities Associated with Existing Form and Physical Condition

The Yarrangobilly Caves House Precinct is an extensive area associated with the tourist development and the use of Show Caves within the karst environment and the thermal pool.

The karst environment has been affected by European visitation since 1834 and by permanent occupation from around 1879.

The physical condition of surviving individual buildings and items is addressed in detail in the tables in Section 3.0 under the heading **Condition**.

The major issues associated with the current built form and the physical condition of the Caves House building complex are:

- The 1917, Two Storey Accommodation Wing although an essentially sound has some damaged and missing fabric and outdated plumbing facilities. The building requires major maintenance, refurbishment and fire safety works. As well the layout of the building, which lacks private facilities, is not well suited to modern accommodation expectations.
- The 1901 Caves House building and the 1938 Dining Room, Bar and rear lounge is in good condition although its layout in terms of very small single rooms and no ensuites is also not well suited to meeting modern accommodation expectations.
- The 1938 Dining Room tends to overheat and/ or become very cold.
- There is no commercial kitchen or laundry.

Major problems associated with the current form and condition of other items on site are:

- Narrow roadways around the site, which although in good condition preclude two way vehicular traffic;
- There are few suitable parking locations within the Rules Creek basin (karst catchment area) and there are associated pollution and visual pollution issues with any car parking facilities.
- Steep slopes in the vicinity of the Thermal Pool and the Caves which precludes new roadway development.
- The route of the loop road west along the escarpment above the cave entrances crosses the Glory Hole cave cavity in an area close to the roof of the cave, which is very shallow at that point.
- Some cave stairs and pathways are very old with steep steps and slippery handrails that should be replaced.
- The growth of lampenflora in the caves, which is destructive to the Cave environment is encouraged by the length of time lights are on. Although in general the growth of lampenflora is minimised by lights being turned off and on as tours progress through the caves, Lampenflora growth is a particular problem in the Self Guided Cave where the lights are left on and additional movement activated and lower voltage lights are needed.
- Exotic species such as Elms, Holly and other trees associated with the early complex that were introduced to the Precinct tend to spread into the surrounding bushland.
- Natural vegetation regrowth is a major issue in terms of obscuring views from key vantage points visited by tourists and where over time photographic records of historic vistas have been made.
- Much of the Elm Tree population in the Precinct is thought to have Dutch Elm disease. The Elms are succumbing to disease and old age generally.

6.4 Constraints and Issues Arising from the Condition of Infrastructure

In general the infrastructure systems within the Precinct were installed between twenty-five and eighty years ago. The selection criteria generally revolved around the viability of the systems in an isolated location.

The main sewage system is thought to be the system installed prior to 1921, probably in the period 1912-1917, in association with the construction of the two storey wing of Caves House. The early system consists of a multiple bay tank, which is visible to the north of the roadway in

front of the two storey wing. There are eight septic tanks in total. Issues associated with the existing system are:

- Knowledge of the way the system works and the location of some of the lines has been lost over time.
- The sewage tank is located upstream of the caves and it has potential to impact on the karst environment.
- The system has limited capacity and is unlikely to be able to cope with high levels of visitors.
- Primary and secondary treatment systems in the area require upgrading to meet Environmental Protection Authority and NSW Health Department requirements.

The power scheme is a combination of the 1956 dam and penstocks, the 60kva hydro plant installed in 1975 and the back up 75kva Deutz diesel generators. In general the hydro supply is used, backed up by the Deutz generators. Problems associated with the plant are:

- The variability of the water flow, which comes under threat in very dry years.
- Potential for pollution associated with the diesel supply is diminished as a bund around the tank has been completed.
- Relatively low output capacity.

High priority is currently being given to review of the sewage and electrical power services to the site.

The drinking water is still supplied from the Rules Creek catchment, upstream of the Picnic Grounds. Investigation of water disinfecting facilities is complete and a filtration and ultra-violet disinfection system has been installed with the selection being largely based on its environmental sensitivity.

Fire alarms and a sprinkler system had been installed in the one storey section of Caves House. It is proposed to expand the system into the two-storey wing on completion of electrical and plumbing upgrades to the building.

6.5 Other Management Issues

Management issues within the Precinct revolve around the need to protect the karst landscape from pollution. In addition to the services and physical constraints identified above management of the following activities must also focus on protection of the karst landscape and system:

- Removal of garbage off the Park.
- Potential for camping in terms of location, length of possible stay, and the use of caravans and management of impacts.
- Weed control, including selection of suitable chemical sprays and application rates.
- Management of feral animals.
- Management of recreational impacts including the potential damages associated with adventure tourism and insurance implications.
- Impacts from the presence of vehicles on site including, visual pollution, emission pollution, damage to road surfaces and the potential impacts of the weight of vehicles over cave systems.
- Fire management including protection of microclimates, destruction of minor solution features and erosion hydrology.
- Further research is required into the management of vegetation and conservation management of limestone and the associated species that inhabit limestone based environments.

6.6 Federal Statutory Requirements

6.6.1 The Australian Heritage Commission

The Register of the National Estate is compiled and maintained by the Australian Heritage Commission, a federal institution. It lists items, which in the opinion of the Commission meet the following definition:

Components of the natural environment or cultural environment of Australia that have aesthetic, historic scientific or social significance or other special value for future generations as well as the present community.

Listing on the Register of the National Estate imposes no legal restrictions except on federal authorities that must consult the Commission prior to carrying out any work, which will impact on the heritage value of the place in the Register. They may not take any action, which adversely affects a place on the Register if there are alternatives, which are 'prudent' and 'feasible'.

Kosciuszko National Park is listed on the Register of the National Estate and the Yarrangobilly Caves House Precinct is also individually listed based on a recommendation and the findings in the 1992 Freeman Collett and Partners Conservation Plan See File Number: 1/06/322/0018. That listing should be updated based on the findings of this Conservation Management Plan.

6.7 State Heritage Controls

6.7.1 The Heritage Act 1977 as amended in 1998

Section 170 Register

The Act requires that significant places managed by NPWS be listed in the NPWS Heritage and Conservation Register (Heritage Act s.170 Register). NPWS management of places on the s.170 Register must recognise the identified significance and importance of the place. The Heritage Council of NSW oversees the implementation of the NPWS Heritage and Conservation Register (Section 170 Register).

Individual items and the Yarrangobilly Caves House Precinct are listed on the Draft NPWS S170 Register.

Government owned items of State significance are placed upon the NSW State Heritage Register (SHR). Items listed on the SHR require the consent of the Heritage Council to undertake any work or development which alters moves or damages any part of the item, its relics or vegetation (s.57 Heritage Act 1977 as amended 1998). The Heritage Council can issue exemptions, which waive the requirement for consent, generally in accordance with an endorsed conservation plan. Authority to issue such consent is currently delegated from the Heritage Council to the NPWS Historical Archaeologist.

Listing on the SHR and an endorsed conservation management plan [CMP] has a number of management implications for NPWS managers. An amendment to the Heritage Act of 1977 came into effect on April 2nd 1999 establishing Minimum Standards replacing the previous 'wilful neglect provisions'. Owners of items on the SHR are now required to ensure that heritage significance is maintained. Owners are required to achieve minimum standards of maintenance and repair with standards set for:

- Weatherproofing;
- Fire protection;
- Security; and
- Essential maintenance.

The Service provides a copy of Conservation Management Plans to the Heritage Council for items listed on the State Heritage Register for endorsement and adoption by the Director General of National Parks and Wildlife Service.

The Yarrangobilly Caves House Precinct has previously been identified as being of regional heritage significance but in this CMP is identified as being of National environmental heritage significance and State cultural heritage significance so is eligible for listing on the State Heritage Register (SHR).

The Heritage Act provides protection of relics older than 50 years. An excavation permit is required to 'damage, despoil, move or alter' (s. 129A (b)). Authority to issue such consent is currently delegated to the NPWS Historical Archaeologist from the Heritage Council.

Conservation Instruments

There are currently no conservation instruments specific to Yarrangobilly Caves House Precinct.

6.7.2 National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974

Plan of Management

All service areas are required to have a Plan of Management (POM) prepared under Section 72 of the NPWS Act 1974, which must be placed on exhibition before final adoption by the Minister.

This Conservation Management Plan will be used in close conjunction with the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management. It should be noted that the current Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management is under review.

Protection of Historic Heritage

The NPW (Land Management) Regulations 1995 provides protection for 'any deposit, object or material evidence relating to the settlement or occupation of ...a part of New South Wales...more than 25 years old' on Service estate (cl.13 (3) (d)). This requires that consideration be given to the importance of even relatively recent physical evidence of occupation on the site including earlier NPWS management and conservation works and previous archaeological work.

Protection of Aboriginal Relics

The NPW Act provides for the protection of all Aboriginal relics in NSW. Their disturbance, removal or destruction is regulated through a system of consents to destroy, which are issued by the Director-General of National Parks and Wildlife or by delegated authority.

6.7.3 NPWS Policy Requirements

It is NPWS policy that management and conservation works on historic places are to be carried out based upon a conservation plan. This is to be prepared in accordance with the Revised *Burra Charter* and its *Guidelines* (Australia ICOMOS 1999).

Conservation plans should address conservation and other management requirements, including interpretation and adaptive re-use sufficient for the Services management needs.

The Service provides a copy of Draft Conservation Management Plans to the Heritage Council for their input prior to endorsement by the Director of the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

6.7.4 Draft Nature Tourism and Recreation Strategy

The Draft Nature Tourism and Recreation Strategy provides specific planning direction for managing visitor use of the protected areas of NSW managed by the NPWS. The primary goal of the strategy is:

To achieve ecologically sustainable nature tourism and recreation use of protected areas; to enhance the conservation status of these areas and to positively assist a sustainable nature tourism and recreation industry in NSW.

NPWS recognises that visitor use of protected areas has the potential to impact on the conservation objectives for which the protected areas have been reserved. As part of this strategy the Service is likely to be working more closely with commercial operators particularly in the fields of training and visitor data collection and use. Licenses are required for commercial operations in all National Parks.

6.8 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Protection for items of environmental heritage

The EP&A Act identifies procedures for the authorisation of development on places of environmental significance. Placement of the Yarrangobilly Caves House Precinct on the s. 170 Register recognises it as a place of environmental significance.

State Environmental Planning Policy 4 (SEPP4)- Development Without Consent

The requirement for local council consent is waived due to the provisions of State Environmental Planning Policy 4.

6.9 Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management (POM)

The concept of a National Park is outlined on page 1 of the Plan of Management. For the purposes of this CMP the relevant sections are:

(2) Where...steps [are taken] to ... enforce effectively the respect of ecological, geomorphological or aesthetic features which have led to its establishment; and

(3) Where visitors are allowed to enter under special conditions for inspirational, educative, cultural and recreative purposes.

The POM for Kosciuszko National Park should be referred to directly for a comprehensive description of the Yarrangobilly Management Unit and the management recommendations recommended for it (See pp19-22). The POM describes the objectives for management in the areas of outstanding natural resources (which includes Yarrangobilly) in Section 1.1 'Objectives of Management' (p9) which are mainly to do with, preservation, continuance of environmental processes, protection of sites and features and encouragement of research. However there are also sections relevant to visitor experiences as follows:

- *To provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy and understand the outstanding scenery and natural features.*
- *To provide for all forms of recreation compatible with the above objectives with as few restrictions as possible...to provide for scenic drives, picnics and camping...*

Specific management objectives for the Yarrangobilly Management Unit are:

- *to maintain the outstanding scenic character of the Yarrangobilly gorge*
- *to protect the cave systems from disturbance*
- *to protect cave and stream biota, special plant communities, landforms and geological features from disturbance*

The Yarrangobilly Caves House Precinct lies within the Yarrangobilly Management Unit. The Management Plan identifies the following outstanding natural features within this unit:

- *Yarrangobilly Caves - an extensive complex of limestone caves of outstanding aesthetic, scientific, educational and recreational value*
- *Yarrangobilly Gorge - a spectacular rocky gorge through the limestone*
- *many other interesting landforms developed in the limestone*
- *cave drainage systems and cave biota of special scientific interest*
- *a wide range of plant communities and habitat for important fauna species, for example, the Corroboree frog, Pseudophryne corroboree¹*
- *thermal springs*
- *numerous other natural features of outstanding scenic interest and scientific and educational significance*

¹ Pseudophryne corroboree has been split into two separate species. P. corroboree [southern form] P. pengelly [northern form] which is the form that occurs around Yarrangobilly.

-
- *many special opportunities for recreation including guided cave tours, caving, rock-climbing, walking, fishing and swimming in the thermal pool.*

The POM also identifies the man made features within the Management Unit which include the surviving above ground features within the Yarrangobilly Caves House Precinct (See p20) and notes that the Yarrangobilly limestone area contains an array of outstanding natural features. Presenting them to the public and providing for recreation are important objectives. Within consideration of a number of factors affecting potential use and development within the area the POM includes:

The need to balance the requirements of protection, education and research with continued controlled public access to caves.

Interim specific management practices specific to Yarrangobilly and relevant to the Precinct, specified in the POM are:

Cave Management

...Management emphasis for the existing show caves will be to maintain the highest possible aesthetic standards of (for) any developments in the caves and on protecting the environmental processes of the caves.

Caves House and Environs

The outstanding natural resources of the Yarrangobilly karst area are especially important for education and provision of opportunities for people to appreciate the caves and to increase their understanding of the natural features of the area... [Main management theme].

The Caves House area includes developments that are in serious conflict with the protection of the cave systems...However, the complex of buildings and introduced trees has considerable historical value and will be retained...The use of Caves House will be considered as part of the Yarrangobilly Karst Area Management Plan. Maintenance and/or modifications of the buildings in the Caves House area will be consistent with educational and historic themes...it will be essential to remove all effluent from the catchment. The diesel generator will be relocated to prevent all possibility of accidental pollution.

Camping

Further opportunities for car based camping within a reasonable distance of the caves are needed.

6.10 The Yarrangobilly Management Unit [YMU] Draft Karst Area Management Plan [KAMP]

The Yarrangobilly Management Unit Draft Karst Area Management Plan sets the future direction and management priorities for the Management Unit and the Precinct.

The Draft Karst Area Management Plan identifies the range of management conflicts and issues that are also documented in this plan and offers practical solutions for future management.

6.11 NSW NPWS Corporate Plan 2000/2003

The plan reflects a change of direction for the NPWS, marked by a shift in focus towards greater community involvement and by adoption of three key conservation themes:

- *Movement beyond the reserve system, towards conservation across the whole landscape;*
- *Management of the reserve system within an regional landscape context; and*
- *Enhancement of the reserve system by agreed conservation criteria.*

The plan establishes the corporate direction and priorities for the period 2000 to 2003. The plan incorporates some important changes in both direction and emphases primarily in adopting a holistic approach to conservation, which integrates natural, cultural and community values. This approach to conservation is described as 'landscape conservation'.

The achievement of landscape conservation is dependent on achievement in four key areas: assessment, planning, management and facilitation and a fifth key result area – capacity building - is an essential pre-requisite.

Objectives of particular relevance to this CMP in the Corporate Plan within the key area of Conservation Management are:

Objective 1 [p14]

To work with Aboriginal communities to achieve the protection of natural and cultural heritage through mechanisms which also deliver social and economic benefits.

Objective 3 [p14]

To increase the resources available to NPWS for protecting conservation values on NPWS managed lands and supporting conservation outside those areas.

Objective 5 [p15]

To manage NPWS built assets to achieve conservation and health and safety outcomes.

A strategy for this Objective of particular relevance to the CMP is:

Undertake rigorous business and marketing planning to improve cost effectiveness of NPWS operations.

Objective 6 [p15]

To manage site use within the protected area system in a culturally sensitive and ecologically sustainable way.

Objective 7 [p16]

To contribute to the environmental, social and economic well being of local and regional communities.

A strategy for this objective of particular relevance to the CMP is:

Work with local and regional communities to encourage and promote tourism while ensuring appropriate use of parks.

The key area of facilitation includes *conservation facilitation*, which should also be referred to.

6.12 Issues arising from Aboriginal Significance

6.12.1 Legislative Requirements

There is a range of legislation, which affords protection to Aboriginal sites. These are discussed in Appendix J.

6.12.2 Issues associated with Interpretation of Aboriginal Occupation

The prehistoric remains are highly visible in places but not in others. Visitors or people who have no skill in identifying Aboriginal occupation sites, would not know they were there. The visibility of such occupation evidence in the valley has not been appreciated by the early white settlers and would not be appreciated by the casual visitor.

Sites in national parks are available to be appreciated but because of their fragility and vulnerability to disturbance and accelerated erosion, induced by increased visitation access by park users may need to be controlled. Promotion of visitation and recreational use is a double-edged sword. The visibility of the sites or the promotion of Aboriginal cultural significance brings its own threats. Provision of appropriate protection and interpretation can minimise such threats.

The physical condition of the main areas of known archaeological evidence is variable. The open camp sites appear to be subsurface unless exposed by surface disturbance. Subsurface investigation is required to determine remaining depths or nature of deposits and their lateral extent. What appears on the surface to be of reduced value because the remains are disturbed may not reflect subsurface conditions. In fact subsurface occupation deposit can be expected along the northern side of the Rules Creek between the hydro plant and the Visitors Centre, portions of the Thermal Pool and River Walk, Glory [Hole] Farm, Little Plain and at the Hoad entrance gates.

Other areas yet to be systematically surveyed may also contain intact deposit. These include the cave systems that may also contain evidence of European historic occupation [e.g. if there was early camping in the caves]. Entrances to caves alter through time and sites may be located in areas previously considered inaccessible or unsuitable for Aboriginal occupation.

6.12.3 Issues and Opportunities Related to Conservation of Aboriginal Sites

Issues

Issues related to the conservation of Aboriginal sites at Yarrangobilly fall into two broad categories:

1. Natural Impacts

Natural processes affecting the long-term preservation of the sites include water erosion and slope wash. These may be accelerated due to revegetation and reduction of topsoils. Erosion controls themselves can impact upon the heritage value of an area.

2. Land Use Impacts

Impacts resulting from recreational visitor use are both direct and indirect. Impacts include:

- Damage from vehicle and foot traffic over sensitive areas or collectors targeting artefacts.
 - Park management works such as installation of recreational amenities, service infrastructure, rubbish removal, weed eradication and tree planting also can impact negatively on the sites.
- Most of the Aboriginal sites have in fact been exposed by such action.

Opportunities

The NPWS can also promote the message of care, concern and interest in the area, which visitors respect. High levels of visitor infrastructure may not be necessary or appropriate but neglect feeds public disrespect and reduces amenity.

The opportunities of Aboriginal heritage/site interpretation at Yarrangobilly can also mitigate negative impacts. The Tumut Brungle LALC [Shirley Marlowe pers. comm.] are particularly concerned about wilful or deliberate vandalism and artefact collection. Interpretative signs on site may not be appropriate and could bring about such effects.

6.13 Stakeholder Workshop

A workshop was held at Yarrangobilly Caves House on 9th February 2000 conducted by the study team. A range of invited stakeholders consisting of individuals; representatives of cultural groups, community organisations, the NPWS and representatives of local tourism and business organisations attended the workshop. A full list of the people who attended and the organisations they represented is included as Appendix F.

There were a number of conflicting interests and values represented within the stakeholder group.

TABLE 6.1 SHOWING PRINCIPAL STAKEHOLDER POSITIONS AND CONFLICTS

Stakeholder Groups Represented	Principal Interests/Values	General Stance*	Conflicting Interests/ values
NPWS	<p>To manage places subject to legislative responsibilities and implement NPWS Policies for example implementation of the Draft Tourism Policy:</p> <p>"To achieve ecologically sustainable nature tourism and recreation use of protected areas; to enhance the conservation status of these areas and to positively assist a sustainable nature tourism and recreation industry in NSW."</p>	<p>High level of support for Aboriginal involvement in on site interpretation.</p> <p>Support continued evolution of the site for tourist uses including on-site overnight accommodation.</p> <p>Support appropriate levels of adaptive re-use and conservation.</p> <p>Interested in a sustainable operation that maintains visitor NPWS Park staff contact.</p> <p>Increased emphasis on user pays and viable business operations.</p>	
People with a historical connection to the place	Interpretation and presentation of the past occupation and family associations with the Precinct	<p>Support a strong interpretative programme; generally do not have a problem with continued change.</p> <p>However, maintenance of accessibility to the site for locals is considered very important.</p>	Accessibility has a potential conflict with NPWS viable business operations.
Aboriginal people	The Precinct is significant to the local Aboriginal community as a demonstration of their past presence in the valley.	Welcome additional survey opportunities, new research and the opportunity to be involved in interpretation.	No obvious conflicts
Tourism	Increased visitation to the region and flow on benefits to other tourist operators.	Support improved facilities and increased promotion and visitation to the region.	No obvious conflicts
Recreation Groups	Interested in the accessibility, conservation and enhancement of the karst landscape.	Support improved accessibility and promotion of the unique qualities of the karst system.	No obvious conflicts

TABLE 6.1 SHOWING PRINCIPAL STAKEHOLDER POSITIONS AND CONFLICTS Continued

Stakeholder Groups Represented	Principal Interests/Values	General Stance*	Conflicting Interests/ values
Local Business	<p>Potential partnering in future business development opportunities associated with increased visitation to Yarrangobilly.</p> <p>Interested in individuals and the region benefiting from extended visitor stays, additional tourist numbers and spending associated with increased visitation to Yarrangobilly.</p>	<p>Favour development of business opportunities to fit with individuals own operations.</p> <p>Believe on-site accommodation at Yarrangobilly to be a threat to the viability of local businesses.</p> <p>Some local business operator's perception of competitive interests.</p> <p>Perception of potential conflict with accessibility for the local community.</p>	<p>Perception of potential conflict between regional needs and NPWS viable business needs. Equity issues.</p> <p>Conflicts with the maintenance needs of Caves House. Conflicts with the heritage principle that supported continuity of historic use.</p> <p>Assumes Yarrangobilly is viable without offering accommodation and that the Yarrangobilly visitor market would take up extended stays using other local accommodation options rather than single day use then moving out of the region.</p> <p>Ignores spin off benefits from increased regional promotion.</p>
**Special Interest Group [NPA]	Interested in knowing what the community values are and in preserving the resource.	Reporting back role with a strong interest in preserving the Caves House in its current state.	Assumes the status quo is viable and meets NPWS objectives which it demonstrably does not because of environmental maintenance and conservation costs.
Local people generally	Maintenance of accessibility to the site for locals is considered very important.	General across the board stance	Accessibility has a potential [but not necessarily an actual] conflict with NPWS viable business operations.

* Based on inference from opinions expressed at the meeting and documented policies.

**National Parks Association

Workshop Outcomes

The workshop was held to give the study team the benefit of local knowledge and ideas for the suitable future development of the Precinct. Understanding and considering community views is one of the essential considerations in the future planning of the Precinct in conjunction with consideration of NPWS legislative and management responsibilities and the heritage values of the Precinct.

The workshop process involved the formation of five groups of around six people who considered three questions in a 'Think Tank' session.

Responses to the first question considered identified the most significant places and aspects of the Yarrangobilly Precinct in terms of local and community values. The next question, which considered weaknesses and problems, established the particular issues and threats recognised by local people and managers, and the third identified opportunities for the future development of the place.

After a brief report back session every individual was asked to nominate their highest priorities among the various outcomes from the group sessions. The outcome from the prioritising was:

1. Most significant places/ aspects:

1. The natural environment
2. The caves and karst landscape
3. The Aboriginal cultural landscape

Recognition of the importance of the natural landscape and Aboriginal cultural landscape was consistent and across the board. Other elements of the Precinct that received strong recognition as being important were the Thermal Pool, the isolation and tranquillity of the site and the relationship between all the values of the place, which made up the whole experience.

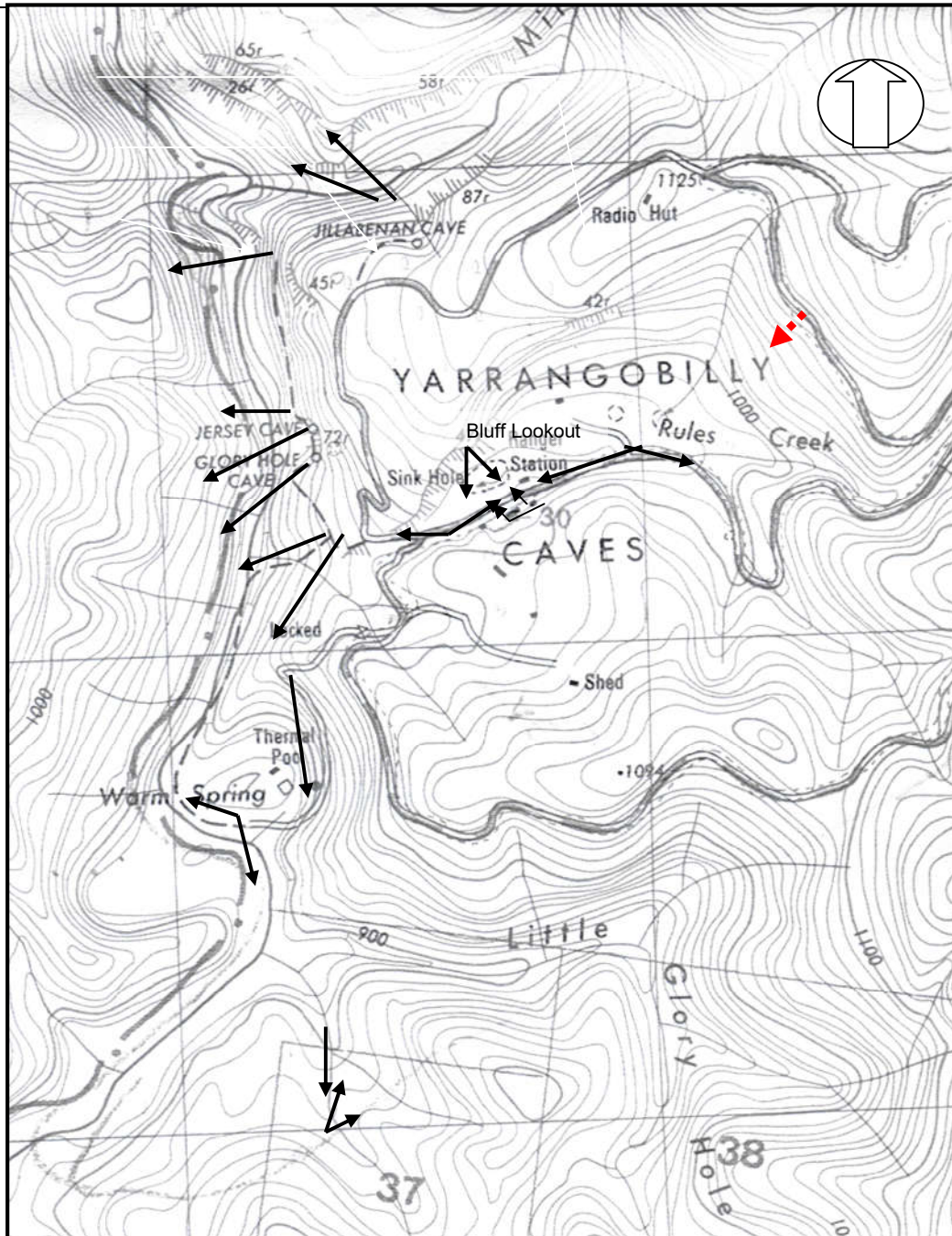
2. Main weaknesses and problems:

1. Funding and lack of care
2. Maintenance of conservation values by limiting impacts
3. Balancing economic viability with ecology
4. Lack of heritage [natural and cultural] information and promotion.

There was considerable consensus that these were the main weaknesses and problems affecting the Precinct. However, there was also some overlap between other concepts including “Attaining sustainable development” which is essentially point 2. and “Infra-structure Issues” which includes “Issues associated with accommodation and catering” which includes aspects of point 3 economic viability.

3. Opportunities:

1. Local Aboriginal involvement in interpretation
2. Links with regional tourism
3. More local involvement with management
4. Education



 Existing view lines
  Old view line that could be re-established

Figure 6.1 Key views and viewing corridors in the Yarrangobilly Caves House Precinct.

There was a very broad spread of ideas within this section and while there was overlap between ideas there were also some direct conflicts between others, reflecting the backgrounds and interests of their proponents [See Table 6.1]. Overlap of ideas occurred with Local Aboriginal involvement in interpretation and interpretation generally; Links with regional tourism including marketing and promotion and targeting niche markets including the aged, disabled, school children and ecotourism.

There was considerable support for the introduction and research into new technology to establish Yarrangobilly as an exemplar ecologically sustainable development, but it was not a priority in terms of the opportunities considered.

Direct conflict occurred between provision of overnight accommodation on site and not providing any on site visitor accommodation, both of which received some support. Unfortunately within the scope of the workshop format and time frame there was no opportunity to explore alternative accommodation scenarios in depth which may have formed an acceptable middle ground.

6.14 Constraints and Opportunities Imposed by Key Views

There are several key views and viewing corridors within the Precinct which have historical significance because they frame historical views and /or significance for the views which they offer which allow visitors the opportunity to appreciate the extent, beauty and physical grandeur of the precinct. Key views and key viewing corridors are illustrated in Figure 6.1

6.15 Future Use Opportunities

The community representatives identified a range of future use options for tourist/ visitor experience of the Precinct in the stakeholder workshop. Those future use options and associated issues and constraints are outlined in the table below.

TABLE 6.2 FUTURE USE OPTIONS

Opportunities	Constraints	Potential Issues
Overnight camping and caravan park	Location: cannot be located where there is potential to impact the karst. Cannot be located within key view corridors	Possible presence of Aboriginal or European archaeological sites. Removal of garbage, provision of services, water supply, vehicular access and egress, increased risk of vandalism.
Provide Accommodation at Caves House within the existing buildings and layout	Constrained by the size and layout of the existing buildings. Constrained by the limitations of the existing services and infrastructure. Constrained by the lack of bathroom and private facilities.	Archaeology associated with former accommodation House buildings. Limitations imposed by the site topography. Limited available space for parking and potential to introduce vehicle related visual clutter and pollution. No present commercial kitchen or laundry.

Options for accommodation at Caves House: See Figures 6.2-6.5 Retain the Status quo Minimal change Major upgrade and introduction of new buildings	Status Quo: Low quality service with limited appeal Minimal Change: As above Major Upgrade: Constrained by site limitations [size, pollution issues] and parking and traffic issues.	Status Quo: May not make a significant financial contribution – low capacity and low rates. Minimal Change: As Above but does introduce a bigger market and potential for some higher returns. Introduces impacts to historic fabric. Major Upgrade & New Buildings: Impacts to archaeology, impacts to historic fabric, major upgrade to services and infrastructure required. Large capital investment. Requires on-site staff accommodation compound.
Provide Accommodation on the plateau south of Caves House for staff	Requires new services and infrastructure	Impacts on present staff accommodation amenity. Area presently workshop artefact dump area. Issues to do with re-location and/or screening. New staff accommodation location may be required. Site selected for treatment and disposal of sewerage in 2002 works.
Visitors Centre Options Enlarge existing New Visitors Centre	Existing Size is constrained by site topography. Envelope and layout of building would lose historic integrity. New Must be located where a control and security role can be undertaken.	Existing Issues associated with increased parking and visual clutter in the vicinity. Issues associated with introduction of new services. New Frees up the current centre for a new use for example cafe. Select a site where karst pollution, archaeology and visual intrusion are not potential issues. Would facilitate interpretation and research.

6.16 Opportunities Associated with the Introduction of New Technology

There are opportunities associated with the use of new technology around the Precinct that could significantly alter the level of constraints and issues that the Precinct is currently managed under. There was considerable support in the Stakeholder Workshop for the introduction and

research into new technology to establish Yarrangobilly as an exemplar ecologically sustainable development.

Services including power, sewage, water supply, garbage removal and treatment, visitor circulation and transport around the site, cave lighting and handrail and pathway design all offer significant benefits to the site from the application of new technology to these old needs. These areas should all be re-considered in the light of available new technology.

6.17 NPWS Leasing Options

The three types of lease options available to the Service for historic sites are:

- Residential (use as a home, subject to the Residential Tenancies Act);
- Semi-residential (for non-residential use for example occasional and weekend use) and
- Commercial (for compatible commercial ventures).

Each of the above lease types can include conservation requirements and are then known as Conservation Leases (CL) for example a Residential (CL). All current leases include in the terms, a requirement for compliance with the Conservation Management Plan prepared for the building and site.

In some cases, in exchange for the restoration works to enable the building to be used either for residential or compatible commercial purposes a long term lease can be negotiated.

Commercial leases have the most relevance for the future development of the Yarrangobilly Caves House Precinct.

6.18 Interpretation

The Kosciuszko Plan of Management [1988] does not mention interpretation specifically in its statement of Objectives of Management and Management Practices. However, the Management Practice specifies:- *Visitor awareness of the natural and cultural values of the area will be encouraged*. That statement is a sound basis for the use and promotion of interpretation throughout the Precinct.

At present interpretation is low key and fragmented although recent initiatives associated with the interpretation of Glory Hole Farm, Castle walk, Bluff Lookout and River Walk have been completed.

In addition a National Cave education Kit has been developed between Cave Managers and the Australian Geological Survey Organisation.

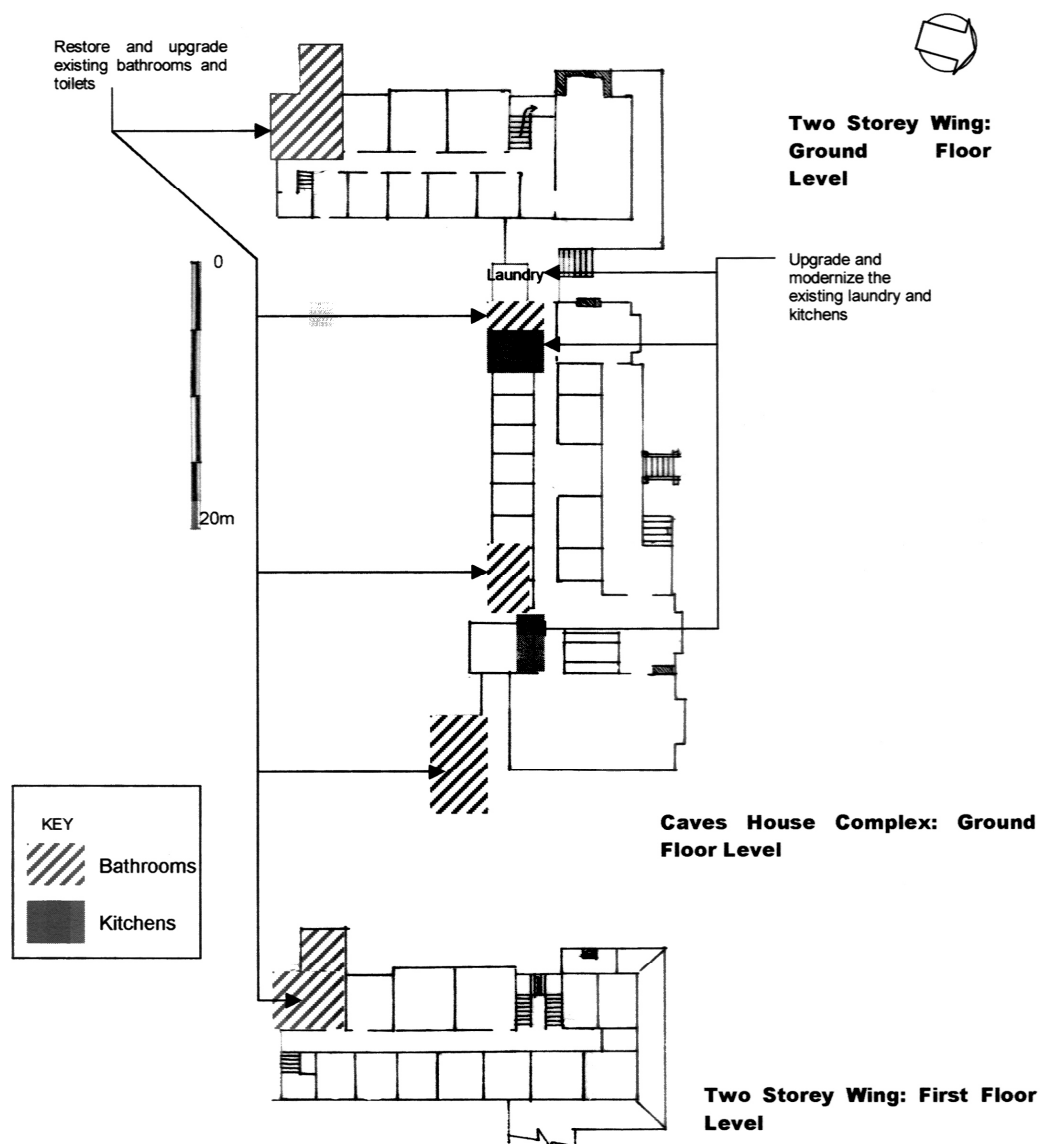


Figure 6.2 Future use Option 1 for the Caves House Complex: Preserve the *Status Quo*

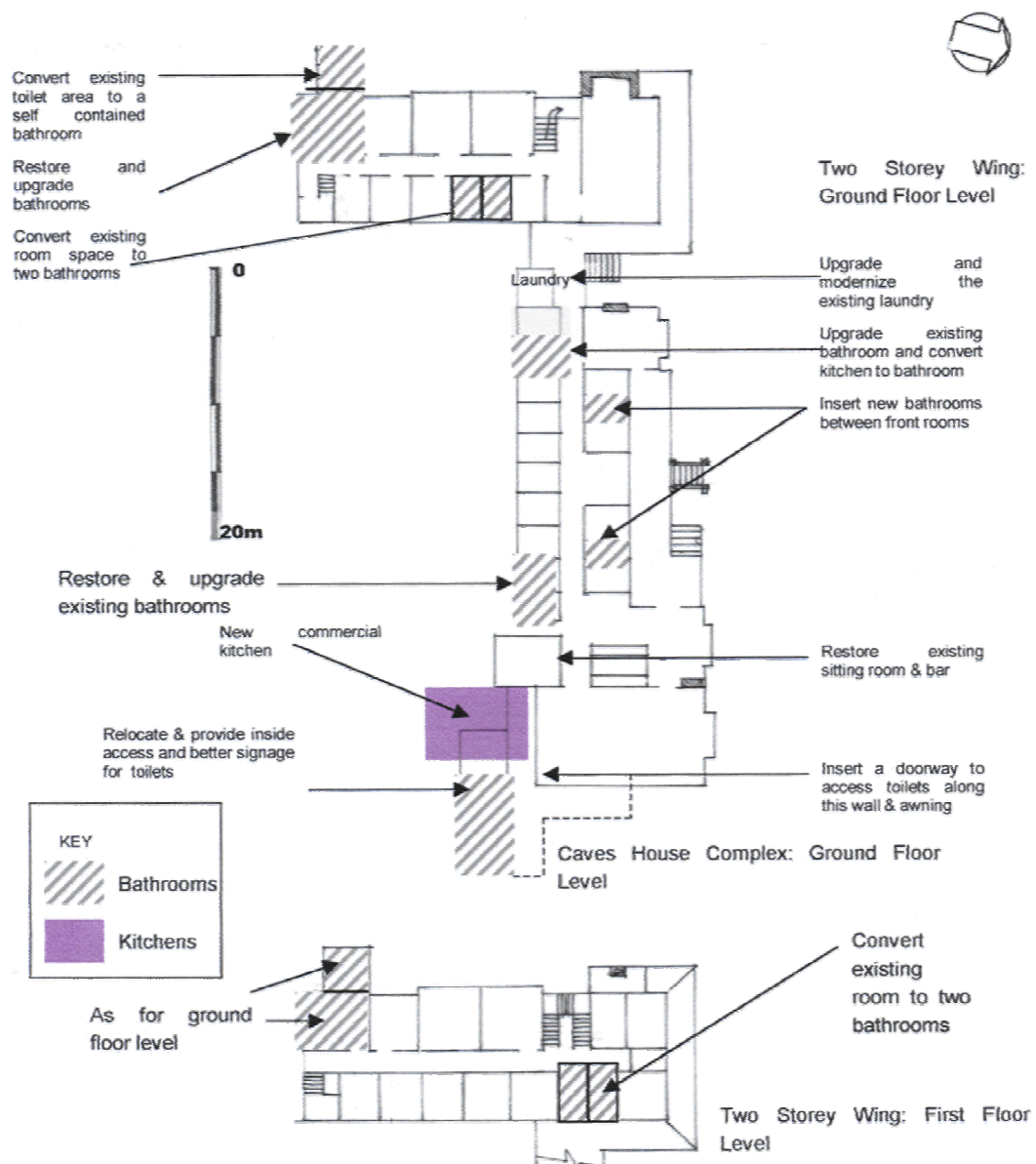


Figure 6.3 Future use Option 2 for the Caves House Complex: Minimal Alterations

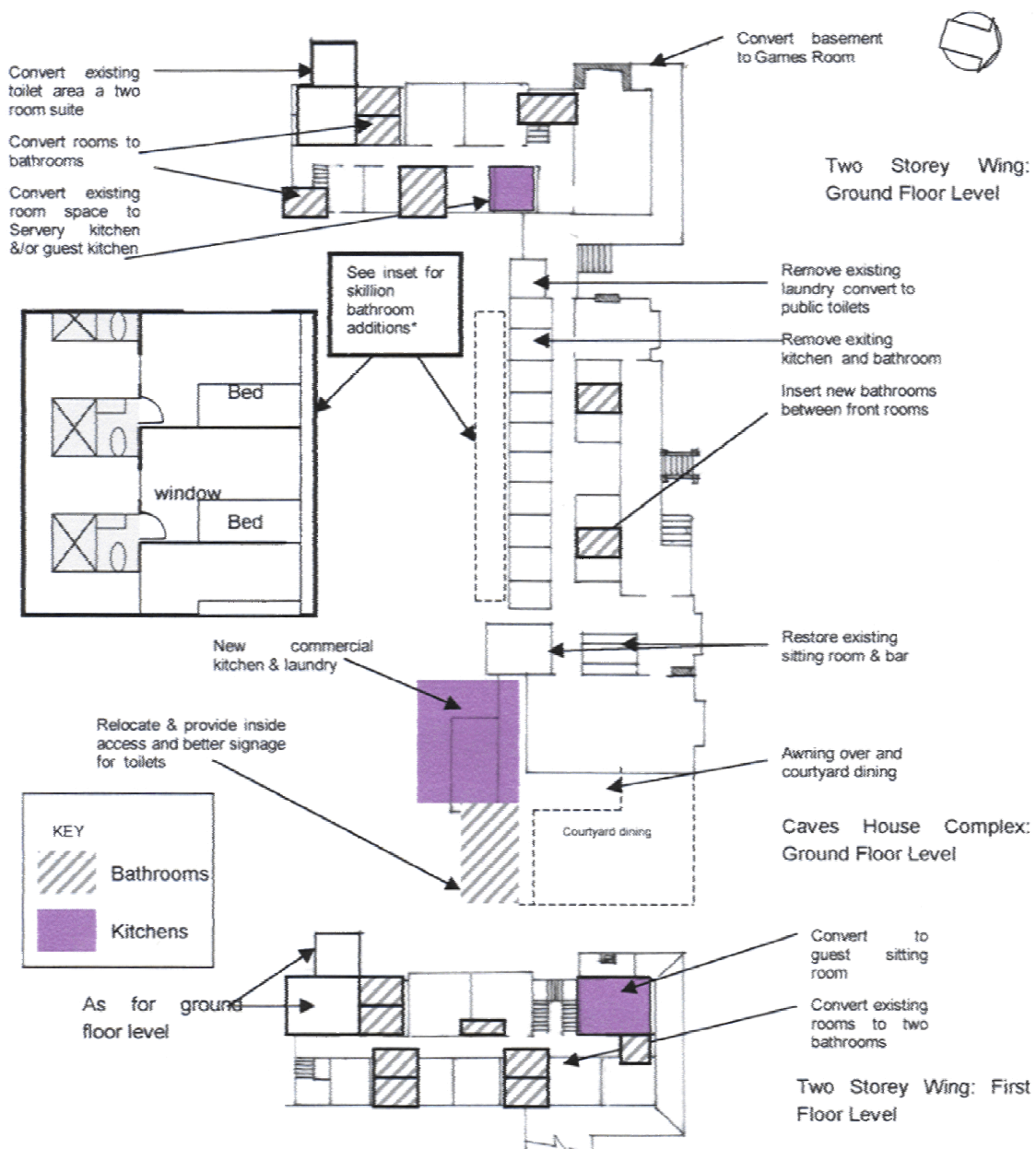


Figure 6.4 Future use Option 3 for the Caves House Complex: Major Upgrade.

* The alternative option for bathrooms is to convert the central room of every three into two bathrooms.

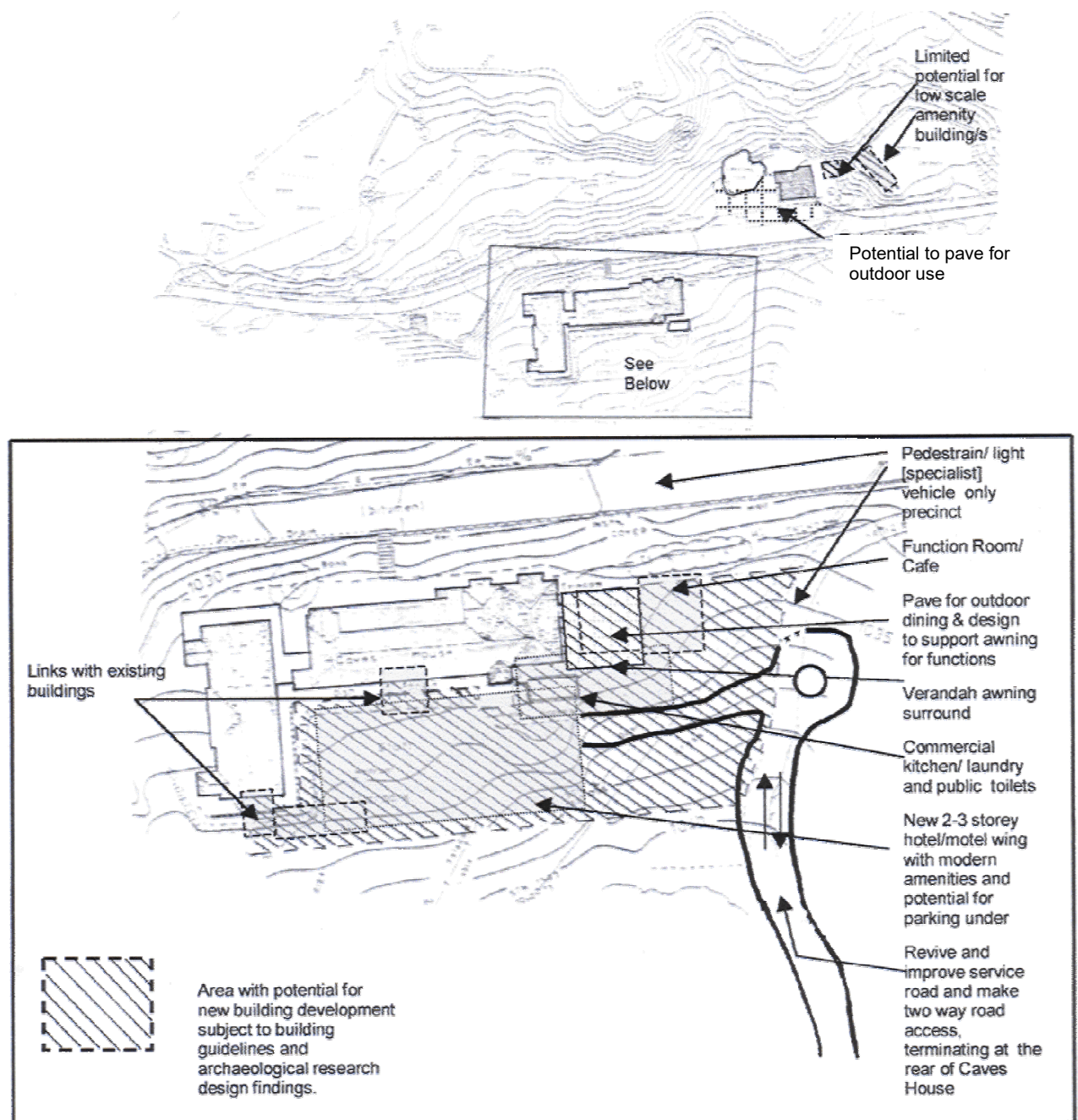


Figure 6.5 New building opportunities associated with the Caves House site and a new building layout concept.

6.18.1 Interpretive Opportunities

Interpretation is not simply the communication of factual information; it is arousing interest and the imagination and engaging visitors with the place. When interpretation is done well, the audience becomes participants not spectators and they acquire an ownership of the resource.

The [US] National Parks Service [US Department of the Interior] has developed the concept of interpretation as *Compelling Stories*.² This concept takes Freeman Tilden's principles of Interpretation and applies them in innovative, thought provoking ways. At the heart of Compelling Stories are three of Tilden's principles:

- Interpretation is *revelation* based upon information.
- Interpretation is *provocation* not instruction.
- Interpretation presents *the whole*, rather than the part.³ They seek to tell stories and manage resources within a broader context of meaning and significance:

It is essential that interpreters realise their primary role is to cultivate this care and love for the resource and what it represents.

It is the job of interpreters to connect visitors to the meaning of the resource and to provoke care.

*Interpreters can do this with compelling stories that are relevant to visitors, and which challenge the audience to re-examine their own values relative to these significant resources.*⁴

In interpreting Yarrangobilly we need to understand why was Yarrangobilly set aside as a special place? To understand this, refer to the Historical Background in Section 2.0 and the Contextual Synthesis in Section 4.0 and the following brief summary.

Yarrangobilly was protected by the on-site location of a caretaker from 1887 and reserved in 1919 to protect the cave systems. Cave systems were a focus of adventure exploration and scenic interest during the reign of Queen Victoria [the Victorian period], throughout Europe and America. In Australia where there was a strong sense of inferiority by comparison with Britain and other older countries, and in the lead up to Federation cave discoveries was an area where a spirit of competition could bolster sentiments of national worth. They were a new frontier for exploration seen as having enormous tourist potential.

Cave visiting was an aspect of Scenic Tourism and by extension nature tourism, at a time when imaginative stimulation was provoked by the mysteries of nature, the grand, the unusual and the

² *Achieving Excellence in Interpretation*, Compelling Stories, National Park Service – US Department of the Interior, No publishing Date provided c.1998. p4

³ p5 *ibid*

⁴ p4 *ibid*

scary. It was a mindset that was probably only possible before the cinema and television changed our entertainment expectations. It was also a time of mechanics institutes and workers clubs with organised educational improvement classes and group outings. It was a period when the railways particularly promoted travel so those places like Yarrangobilly were ideal for group outings where family and worker bonding, recreating, and continuing education could be combined.

6.18.2 Universal Ideas and Values

Universal ideas and values underpin the development of storylines in interpretation. Universal ideas and values associated with Yarrangobilly are:

- Conflict between people and cultures - Europeans move in and the Aborigines move out: European ideas about Aboriginal presence, tribal movements and culture versus the physical evidence.
- Conflict between people and natural systems – balancing people, pollution and a pristine natural environment, sustainability, the prison era when damage was repaired.
- Internal conflicts- My caves are better than your caves! Competition and comparison with Jenolan and other cave systems: the Federation movement, competing on an international level raises nationalist sentiment and facilitates promotion and construction of Australian tourist resorts.
- Creation and Nature- earth processes, geology, geomorphology, flora, fauna etc. isolation, timelessness
- Time and Place – time stand still in the Victorian era; Victorian values; the Victorian imagination, complexity and melodrama; Cave as theatre; Federation and nationalist sentiment; special place, separate world;
- Curiosity and Caves, inside caves inside your imagination; Illumination, ideas and cave lighting; Seeing inside caves; Touring and tourism
- Family – family business, the families who lived at Yarrangobilly;
- Frontiers – Caves a nineteenth century frontier, going into deep space; new frontiers cave hacking and adventure tourism; Courage; Self sufficiency and isolation; communications and technology;

Universal idea or value – Theme/s	Revelation	Story Lines and Provocation [Thoughts or actions]	Interpretation Where & How
Conflict between people and cultures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aboriginal Contact - Migration - Cultural Sites - Pastoralism - Peopling the continent 	Europeans moved in and the Aborigines move out;	<p>See the goldrush at Kiandra and the farmers and pastoralists moving their stock as the spearhead of an invasion.</p> <p>Whole idea: Dispossession and re-discovery</p>	<p>Visitor Centre;</p> <p>Valley occupation</p> <p>The Camp sites, stone tool technology, stone resources, the valley in a regional environmental context and Aboriginal settlement and movement pattern.</p> <p>Mapping of European settlement Patterns.</p> <p>Mapping of the campsites.</p>
	European ideas about Aboriginal presence, tribal movements and culture versus the physical evidence.	<p>Bogong moths were not the only reason to go to the mountains! An understanding that the mountains were populated and used by Aboriginal people, the ridge lines and the river valleys were highways, native flora and fauna are food. Ceremony and tradition.</p> <p>Whole idea: The growth of myths and mysteries. How the local Aborigines lost their knowledge.</p>	<p>Visitor centre; video, local Aboriginal people telling their family stories.</p> <p>Map showing travelling routes through the mountains.</p> <p>A look at the local larder; Possum as a feasting opportunity. Other delicacies.</p> <p>Information provided on the self guided walk could focus on Aboriginal burial, desecration of burial sites, removal of remains; Aboriginal use of caves, the Bogong season, possible art sites. Ceremony and tradition.</p>
Conflict between people and natural systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land tenure - Evolution & Environment - Aboriginal sites - Events 	<p>A happy and healthy cave doesn't include people.</p> <p>People are like an alien invasion in a cave environment.</p> <p>Special place separate world</p>	<p>Actions: Considerate and thoughtful passage through the show caves and care not to pollute or damage the environment.</p> <p>Appreciate why light levels are low.</p> <p>Notice previous damage and effects of people passing through.</p> <p>Whole idea: People and technology are the most destructive force in nature.</p> <p>Consequences</p> <p>Use of Prison Labour to repair and upgrade</p>	<p>Guided tours include, dead and damaged sections of caves, look at lampenflora, smoke layers in stalactites, vandalism etc.</p> <p>In the trip to the cave explain the extent of the karst and the importance of the catchment and waterflow .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comparative interactive display booth aimed at children ▪ Cave Sense [Experience each of the five senses] ▪ Sight : Pitch dark ▪ Hearing: Cave sounds, drip drip drip ▪ Touch: A live cave formation feels like? A dead formation feels like? Message in a cave your touch kills. ▪ Taste; I wouldnt ?? ideas ▪ Smell: Damp cave smell <p>Photographic display of the prison labour period.</p>
	Aborigines used caves for burials	Different cultural practices associated with death	The Burial site and its desecration, repatriation of burial, the present lack of evidence for occupation.

Theme [Universal idea or value]	Revelation	Story Lines and Provocation [Thoughts or actions]	Interpretation Where & How
People Adapt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aboriginal pre-contact - Cultural Sites - Events - Developing economies 	Aborigines adaptive strategies	Bush as larder Survival skills	Thermal Pool A sign could focus on Aboriginal bush food - using native raspberry as an adjunct to Pool Fencing. Indicating common plants used by Aboriginal occupants in various seasons, including late summer. River resources. Main Picnic area A sign could focus on Aboriginal Valley Occupation - identifying valley floor as focus of camping, stone artefact technology, local resource exploitation, site protection legislation and significance of sites. Seasonal availability of plant and animal resources. Stone sources for tool manufacture, water resources, and strategies for coping with extremes in temperature and land of high relief.
Cave formation-evolution & environment	Creation and Nature	How long did it take for these formations to take shape? Why are there so many different formations?	Explain about cave formation chemical processes & show examples of formations of different ages
Ebb & flow between natural vegetation & developed valley-evolution & environment	Clearing was more extensive around previous turn of century, now nature is coming back	Vegetation distribution is a dynamic process, changing with time, climatic change and interference by humans	Visitor Center display and or video or booklet
Habitat - threatened fauna interactions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evolution & environment - peopling the continent 	How nature works	Cave fauna like bats are there for a reason Rare birds need cover for protection from predators, they move around to access resources during different seasons Water is an important resource for fauna	Visitor Center display

Theme [Universal idea or value]	Revelation	Story Lines and Provocation [Thoughts or actions]	Where & How
Internal conflicts - Communications - Labour - Persons - Peopling the continent - Building Settlements	Caves were a nineteenth century arena for competition	Competing with nature	Show the man made elements within the Caves where the caretakers were competing with other caves of the same period. Outline the Caves the Caretakers. Guides believed they were competing directly with- Jenolan and Wombeyan
	Nationalism	Cave tourism emerged in Australia when Federation was in process	Comparison with overseas Caves of a similar period. Look for relevant political statements.
	Tourism	Australians became interested in the resources of their own country and saw them as a source of pride.	Photos showing early tourists, the cave photography of Charles Kerry the Photographer and the articles of Sylvanus Urban. Gallery type display in the passages of the accommodation buildings Caves House and 2 storey wing.
Ancient geological processes - evolution & environment	Deposition of rock strata in deep ocean basins beside an island arc	Imagine what the landscape was like when the limestone was being formed	Track to Glory Arch approaching entrance signage and/ or guide presentation.
	Earth processes	Geological forces and change	Underground stream channels Self Guiding cave with a self operated tape and or a light box display/ Also potential for a sign at the Cave Entrance.
Time and Place - Events - Persons - Communication	The Victorian mindset	Vivid imaginings interest in complexity	Explore the Victorian period vehicles, wallpapers, cutlery and crockery note its complexity and compare with the karst interiors.
	Cave as theatre	Life without television	Torchlight tours Ghost tours Discovery tours including melodramatic moments and showmanship.
Curiosity and Caves - Educating - Utilities and technology	Inside Caves inside your imagination Illumination understanding by seeing Touring and tourism	Ways of Seeing Ways of touring	The native animals that inhabit caves Lampenflora and light levels Torchlight or repro candlelight historic tours. Photographic display comparative views Cave Shaws and shaws, Cave formations and real places, people etc. Vintage car rallies

Theme [Universal idea or value]	Revelation	Provocation [Thoughts or actions]	Where & How
Family - Persons - Building Settlements - Labour	Family business Specific Families	Local people grew up and went to school here! Running Caves House and Feeding visitors was a family business.	Show videos of people talking about their past at Yarrangobilly. Support the local high school or nearby university to make preparation of such videos part of their media studies unit. Include current photographs of people in the photographs on the walls of the accommodation buildings. Make the hallways in the accommodation houses galleries for photographs of the way it was.
Frontiers - Exploration - Utilities and technology	Caves a nineteenth century frontier, going into deep space; Courage	Caves are Deep Space	Compare and contrast the experience of astronauts and cavers. Look at frontier conditions and living. Simple things like the timber industry and the choiced fences, the gardens and the importance of communications and technology.
	new frontiers cave hacking and adventure tourism;		Adventure tours to wild caves.
	Self sufficiency and isolation;		Videos showing adventure caving.
	communications and technology;	Technology is a frontier too1	Display of memorabilia, photographs and technology associated with the early telegraph and telephone. Set up a display around the Pelton Wheel, drawings of the machine are held by NPWS. Ideally the machine would be located where it could operate or a scale model showing working parts might be made. Examine the history of the development of electricity and the significance of its introduction [as lighting] to Show Caves.

Theme [Universal idea or value]	Revelation	Provocation [Thoughts or actions]	Where & How
	Glory Farm	Isolation & Hardship	Trace the floor plan of the farmhouse [and of other known buildings] in a narrow gravel strip or with a low timber fenceline and set a garden seat or rocking chairs where the verandah overlooking the valley used to be with the interpretation board in front of the seated visitors.
Invasion by alien plants	Weeds & their place in the landscape	The green stuff isn't all supposed to be here	Track to Glory Arch, Signage
Australians and the water	This pool might have been a hydro-therapy spa.	Bush spa	Use recreated change rooms as the interpretive display mounts Use the rear walls of the sheds and the back of doors for photographs, graphics and signage. Interpret the evolution of the pool, changing bathing fashions and the qualities and geology that makes the water warm. Nearby bush tucker and former occupations.

6.18.3 Interpretation Infrastructure

Ideally a new visitors centre is required as the existing building being used as a Visitors Centre does not have any scope for extension of the floor space to house special displays or the use of modern interpretive media including video and interactive displays.

The Visitor Centre is the obvious place to promote Aboriginal heritage and provide interpretative material for the visitor. This could in part, take the form of a brochure specific to Yarrangobilly, but which also puts the sites in a regional context. Display material could make use of known collections. The Letheridge collection of artefacts from the region is known to have been deposited at the Narrandera High School and then put into storage. Efforts should be made to establish its present whereabouts for return to the Aboriginal community. The collection, subject to the agreement of the Aboriginal community, could form the basis of a secure display at the Visitors Centre commemorating past Aboriginal occupation.

Interpretation in the Self Guiding Cave is an interesting concept using light boxes but is minimal, old and somewhat tired. New technology such as movement activated lighting and the self guiding used in Art Galleries with a tape player operated by the visitor at number prompts has great potential for self guided interpretation both within the caves and around the site.

6.18.4 Special Events

There are also opportunities associated with the kind of events that are encouraged to start and finish at Yarrangobilly or simply to use Yarrangobilly as a staging post. Vintage car rallies would be suitable, endurance rides, bicycle tours and a range of re-enactments and functions that relate to the historic use of the place, and the bravery and endurance of the people who lived there.