

# Central Coast Council Heritage Committee

Meeting: 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Item 2.2 & 2.7



# Heritage Advisory Committee

The Heritage Advisory Committee assists Council to conserve, promote and celebrate the Central Coast's local heritage and history.

**The Committee focuses on the identification, registration, conservation and development of the Central Coast's heritage resources.**

<https://www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/about-council/council/heritage#:~:text=The%20Heritage%20Advisory%20Committee%20assists,the%20Central%20Coast's%20heritage%20resources.>



Nomination of

Gosford City Library,  
118 Donnison Street, Gosford,


for the Central Coast Council  
Local Heritage Inventory.



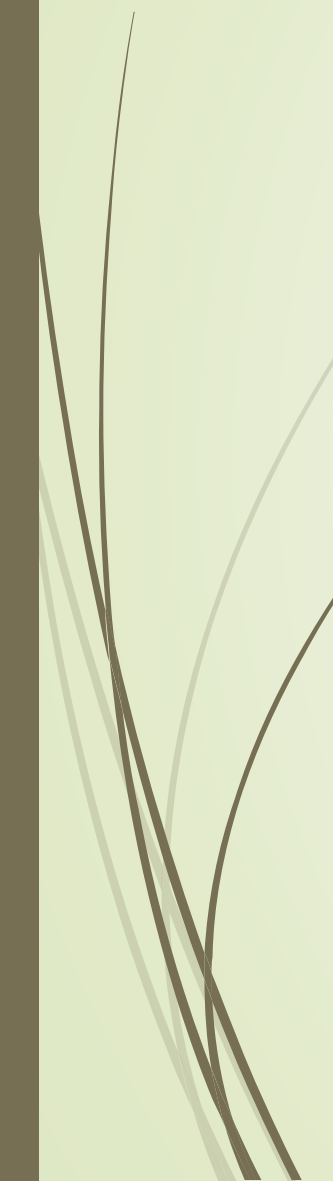


Extensive research has now been conducted and a Central Coast Council Heritage nomination form has been prepared.

Members of the Heritage Advisory Committee have attended the library to evaluate the potential for repurposing the library building.



Here are some of the reasons why it should be listed / retained as a Local Heritage item.





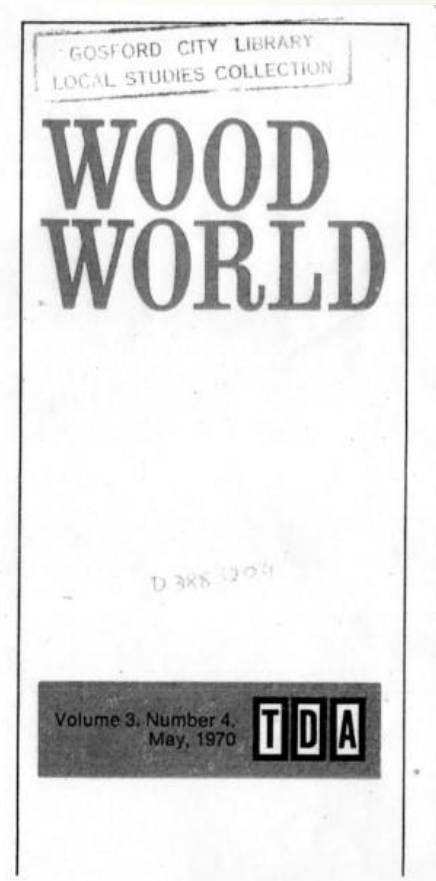
- Listed with Australian Institute of Architects, significant buildings in NSW. Reference No. 4703094.
- Previously nominated for Local Heritage listing in the Scobie Report 2016. ***This nomination was not completed due to amalgamation of Councils.***

<i>Gosford Heritage Inventory</i>				
Item Name	Street Address	Suburb	LGA	Item Number
William Street Well	124-134 Donnison Street	Gosford	Gosford	1620493
Gosford City Library	118 Donnison Street	Gosford	Gosford	1620372
Original Gosford Sandstone Quarry	89 John Whiteway Drive	Gosford	Gosford	1620348
Streetscape, Scale and Detail	92,94,96 Mann Street	Gosford	Gosford	1620626
Shop - Orion Café	98 Mann Street	Gosford	Gosford	1620430

- Pending National Trust listing as a building of Built Heritage significance. (Tabled for April Meeting)



- Featured in Wood World Magazine, May 1970
- Featured in Constructional Review, 1970





# Architectural Features

At the time of construction, there were a number of “state of the art” design and construction techniques used in this building.

- A rare example of the “Sydney School Nuts and Berries” design style
- Unique Japanese inspired design and embedded architectural ideology.
- Designed low, hidden or no gutter lines, mezzanine levels, raked roof lines.
- ‘Gluman’ laminated timber beams – made by Hardy’s Joinery.
- Prefabricated concrete panels – artistically made by Fabbrostone.
- Tasmanian oak casements for aluminium windows and doors. Hardys
- Clinker Bricks and Quarry tiles (8”x8”).



# Notable people/ businesses involved in construction of Gosford Library

## ➤ Architect Alan Williams and Associates.

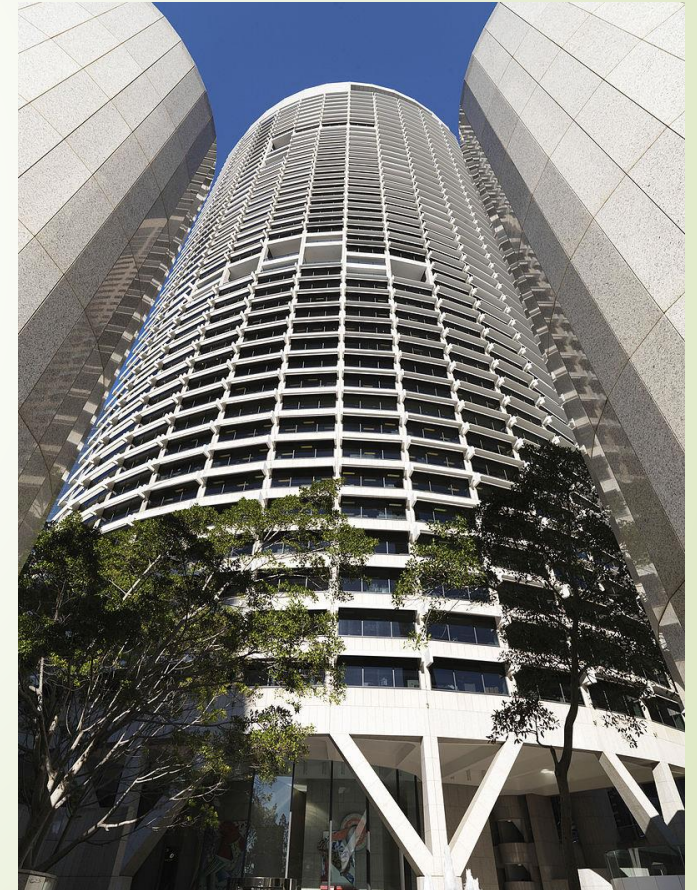
➤ Designer of Prudential Assurance Building, Martin Place, Sydney (1972)

➤ Designer of NRMA Building, Northbourne Ave, Braddon.



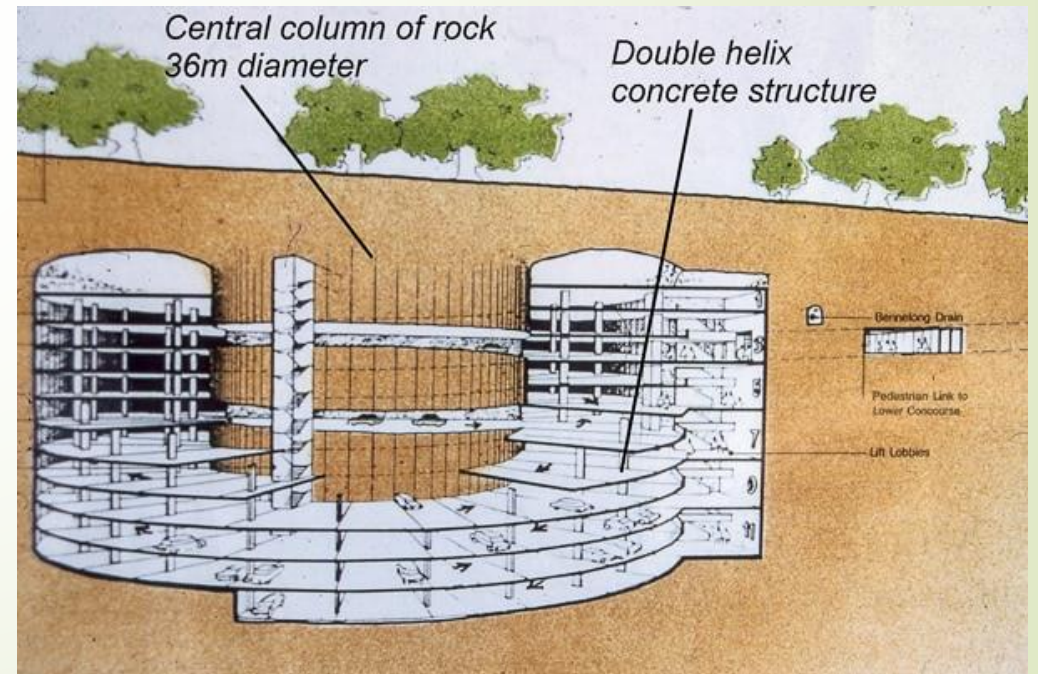
➤ **Engineer**      **D S Thomas and partners.**

- Bega Valley County Council Building (1966)
- King George Towers, Sydney (1976)
- Grosvenor Place, Sydney (1988)



## ➤ Structural Engineers Ove Arup and Partners

- Sydney Opera House consulting structural engineers
- Sydney Opera House carpark
- Russell Building 14, Canberra (1970)



# Notable people/ businesses involved in construction of Gosford Library

## ► Joinery Hardy's Joinery Pty Ltd

- Australian War Memorial, Canberra
- Academy of Science, Canberra
- Havelock House, Northbourne Ave, Canberra





## ► Builders A W Edwards

- The Century Hotel, George St Sydney
- Bushells Tea House, The Rocks, Sydney
- New Parliament House, Canberra
- High Court of Australia, Canberra (Design)
- Rural Bank, now Lauchlan Macquarie Chambers, Parramatta



# Notable people/ businesses involved in construction of Gosford Library

## ► Concrete Fabricator Fabbrostone Pty Ltd

- Mutual Insurance Building, Northbourne Ave, Canberra
- The Carillion, Canberra
- The National Library, Canberra
- 35 Venice Road, Pretty Beach. ( local house of distinctive design )





# What makes Gosford Library worthy of nomination?

- Gosford Library is a locally rare example of a “***Sydney School Nuts and Berries***” style that **offers a mid-century Australian visionary architectural purpose-built library** that is unique to the Central Coast.
- Gosford Library is of outstanding State significance for its **strong historical association to important mid-century architectural and building industry professionals in NSW and Canberra.**
- Gosford Library is important in **demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (Criterion C) inclusive of the mid-century modern features of exposed rustic materials of brick, timber and pressed concrete.**

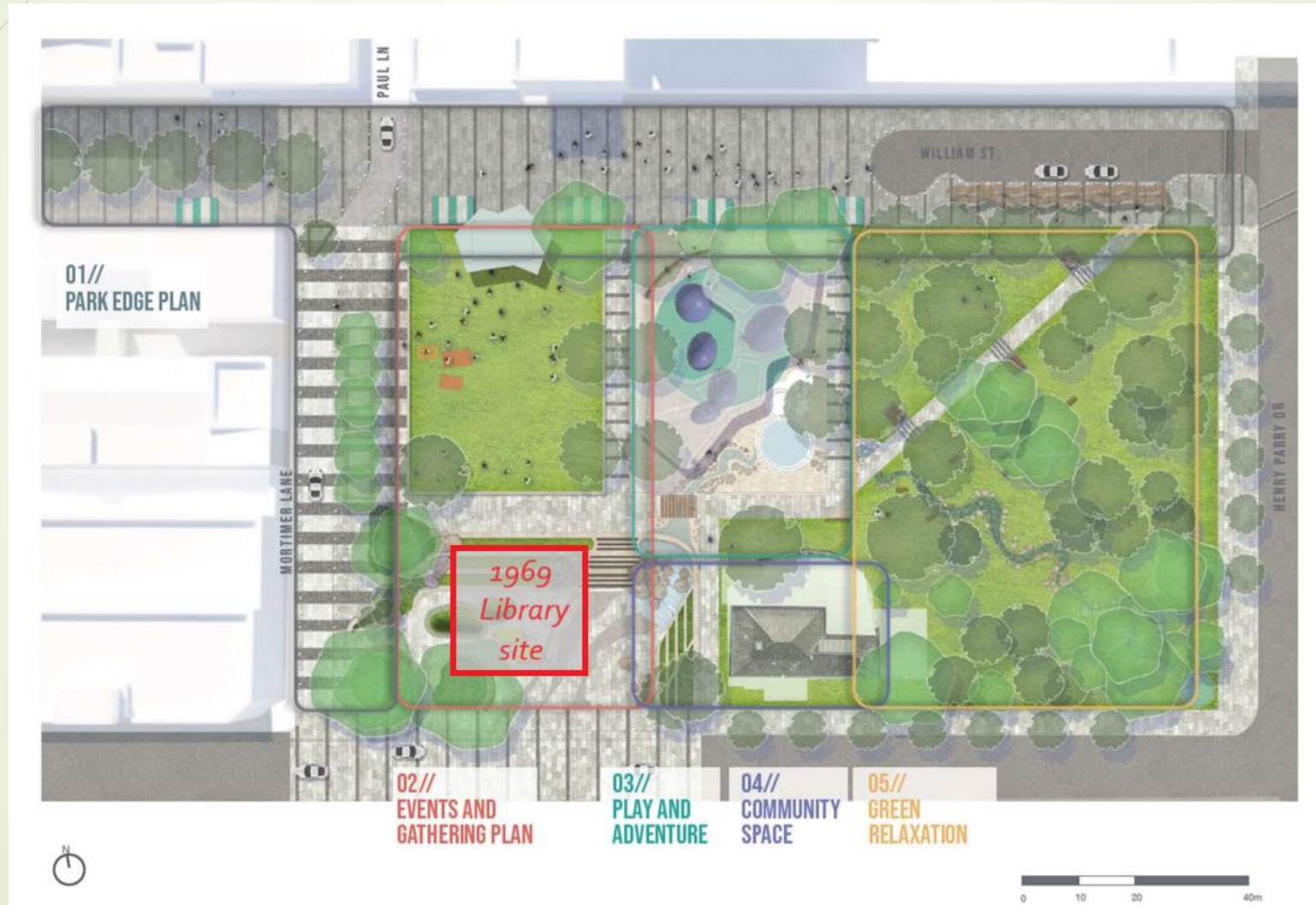


# Central Coast Council's Kibble Park Place Pan and Kibble Park Concept Plan.

Presented by Glenn Cannard at the Heritage Advisory Committee meeting in August 2023. Item 2.3.

Adopted by Council Administrator on 26 September, 2023.

# Proposed redevelopment of Kibble Park





During 2023, Council exhibited and consulted the community about the Kibble Park Place Plan and the Kibble Park Concept Plan.

There was **no** direct consultation about the demolition of the existing Gosford Library building at 118 Donnison Street, Gosford.

Screenshot from a Council promo video from September 2020 with Library still in situ.





# Central Coast Council's Consultation report for Kibble Park.

- ▶ What we heard, Council received a total of 6 written submissions, 42 online feedback form responses and 72 comments on the interactive concept plan.  
*(that is 120 submissions / comments from 350,000+ residents)*
- ▶ Key themes and issues raised throughout consultation include:
  - ▶ There is a strong sentiment for Council to 'just get on with it'.
  - ▶ Some qualms around the removal of trees and the need to retain the mature trees within the park.
  - ▶ **Some hesitation around the removal of the Gosford Library due to its heritage significance.**
  - ▶ That there is a desire to manage perceptions of safety within the Park.
  - ▶ Questions around the spend on Kibble Park.

## 2.6

### Adoption of Kibble Park Place Plan and Kibble Park Concept Plan (contd)

The following table provides an overview of the consultation themes/categories, the number of responses and community sentiment:

Theme/Category	Responses	Attractor	Detractor	Neutral
Playspace	12	75%	0%	25%
Trees & Shade	14	71.4%	14.3%	14.3%
People	20	30%	30%	40%
Parking	14	57.1%	7.1%	35.7%
Governance	9	0%	66.7%	33.3%
Current Library	24	29.2%	29.2%	41.6%
Heritage	20	15%	30%	55%
Cost & Financial Recovery	24	8.3%	67.7%	25%
Revitalisation	24	25%	58.3%	16.7%
Accessibility	9	88.9%	0%	11.1%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>46.6%</b>	<b>23.3%</b>	<b>30.2%</b>

# Council has determined the following:

## Gosford Library

- As indicated above, direct commentary on the proposed removal of the existing Gosford Library upon completion of the new Gosford Regional Library was split evenly between those in favour and those opposed, with most responses neutral.
- A ***“high level financial analysis of projected costs associated with repurposing the current Gosford Library, which would entail significant structural repairs in addition to extensive external and internal refits, supports the proposal to repurpose the existing ‘Parkhouse’ building to provide a flexible community space”***.



Library

Comments about  
the current  
Gosford Library

This building was designed by ALAN WILLIAMS and ASSOCIATES (1969) and is such a heritage asset that could easily be adapted or repurposed to cater as a Gosford City community art and history hub etc. Removing such an iconic mid-century building designed by Allan Williams is totally nonsensical and wasteful of a heritage asset that would enhance strong economic development and deliver appropriate heritage outcomes.

Leave the current library building where it is. There can be plenty of other uses for this building.

The existing library building has a higher value from a heritage and architectural perspective than the kiosk.

I support the removal of the old Library. the new regional library will have

Theme	Summary of theme	Example comment
		<p>adequate space to meet community needs, and the creation of an amphitheatre is a great idea for bringing music into CBD. the removal will create an improved open space area.</p> <p>I'm glad the old, ugly library building is being demolished. How is this building even classes as heritage? Plus it's a haven for drug-users at night and makes the area unsafe.</p>
Heritage	Comments about the heritage elements within the park	<p>It (library) has local heritage value. The design of the building has been recognised by the Australian Institute of Architects.</p> <p>The existing library building has a higher value from a heritage and architectural perspective than the kiosk.</p> <p>Heritage does not mean pretty or quaint, or even very old, it's about telling the story of a place and the people who use it now and before. What better example of this than to have the first purpose-built library sitting across from the marvellous new regional library to show not just the change in needs in a library and style of architecture but also the growth of the city of Gosford.</p>



Gosford Library under construction in 1969.



# Observations on Kibble Park redevelopment

- ▶ The Gosford Library building is of Heritage importance to the Gosford CBD and Central Coast.
- ▶ There was no direct consultation conducted by Council in respect of the demolition and removal of the Library building.
- ▶ The small number of community members who provided comment on the Kibble Park redevelopment were divided on any mention of removal of the library.



Image: Salty Dingo

## Reuse of existing library

With the formation of a new library, the existing library has the potential to be readapted for other public uses. The Council has been considering community uses, or the function of a Town Hall. The building is centrally located in the heart of Kibble Park on Donnison Street. The building was finished 1973 and designed by Alan Williams and Associates. It is considered to be architecture of significance by the Australian Institute of Architects.

**Taken from NSW Government Architect, New South Wales, (GANSW)  
'Urban Design and Implementation Framework: Setting the Scene and  
Early Recommendations. (2018)**



## From Gosford Urban Design Framework. (2018)

### Built Form Assets

Gosford's existing built environment forms a strong base for the city to grow. Gosford is layered with unique urban assets including heritage buildings, rail infrastructure and a high street with a strong north-south axis through the centre of the city. Key building assets include the first Gosford Courthouse (1833) and the first post office (1835) to the south of Mann Street and St Mary's Church (1858) to the east of Gosford **and more recently the Gosford Library building in Kibble Park.**

2.3. Protect and enhance existing heritage value Encourage the adaptive reuse or continued use of significant buildings **eg existing library**, Conservatorium of Music, fine grain shop fronts on Mann Street. Key opportunities are identified in the place chapters of the UDF

Kibble Park becomes the green open space which pulls a range of community focused uses together. The existing library becomes a community space with exhibition space, meeting space and amenities for the park.



## A detailed master plan should resolve:

- character of a flexible open civic space on William Street Plaza
- how commercial buildings on William Street Plaza can engage with the new civic space, including landmark building on corner of Mann Street
- location of amenities to service the park, particularly on weekends and out of business hours when the shopping centre may be closed
- laneway and truck access to commercial developments
- drop off points for buses or mobility limited people
- connection and integrated design with the new library
- consultation with the public on the future public uses of the old library***
- options for improved pedestrian crossings of Donnison Street to the new library and Henry Parry Drive.

**NOTE: Council failed to consult with the public on the future use of the library!!**





Has Council taken and implemented any of the advice supplied by the NSW Government in the Urban Design Framework from 2018 re the Kibble Park Plan?

# Adaptive reuse or repurposing of the Library.

- Adaptive reuse is the process by which historic structures are repurposed for different use.

The goal of adaptive reuse is to merge the historically accurate nature of a once-underutilised or abandoned property with contemporary economic viability.

An example of adaptive reuse:

Tate Modern Art Gallery, London – once a power station



- <https://www.planradar.com/gb/everything-you-need-to-about-adaptive-reuse-of-buildings/>



Gosford Police Station and Court House until 1984



Central Coast Conservatorium of Music





## ➤ Built Heritage Conservation

A structure's form, integrity, and materials are maintained through historic preservation. This treatment focuses on minimally invasive mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) renovations rather than exterior expansions and modifications. It helps to create a feeling of place and continuity by preserving the historical, architectural, and aesthetic character and heritage of a community or location.

<https://www.planradar.com/gb/everything-you-need-to-about-adaptive-reuse-of-buildings/>



## ➔ Waste Reduction & Resource Conservation

Building projects that require an existing structure be demolished typically end up producing a significant amount of waste—waste that, more often than not, ends up in a landfill.

Adaptive reuse projects, on the other hand, seek to recycle and reclaim as much of the original building stock as possible, which in turn helps conserve energy and resources.

<https://gbdmagazine.com/adaptive-reuse/>







# Possible alternate uses of Gosford Library with minimal conversion costs.

## ➤ Gallery / Display / Museum Space

- Given the size of the Library building, a large amount of space could be allocated to *displays which highlight local History, Art, Culture, etc.*
- Community art display / Affordable Art space project.

## ➤ Tourist Information Centre

- Currently there is only one Tourist Information centre for Central Coast Area and this is located at The Entrance. The Entrance location is not ideal for visitors to the Central Coast.

## ➤ Basement Café “Fabbro’s”

- Using the current staff rooms, opening out onto terrace area at side of building.
- Would cater for new users of the Kibble Park development.

## ➤ Restaurant space



- ▶ **Digital Study Hub**

- ▶ A quiet place for community users to use High Speed Data access for study purposes.  
*with an increasing number of university students in the CBD, this could be vital.*

- ▶ **Meeting, study room.**

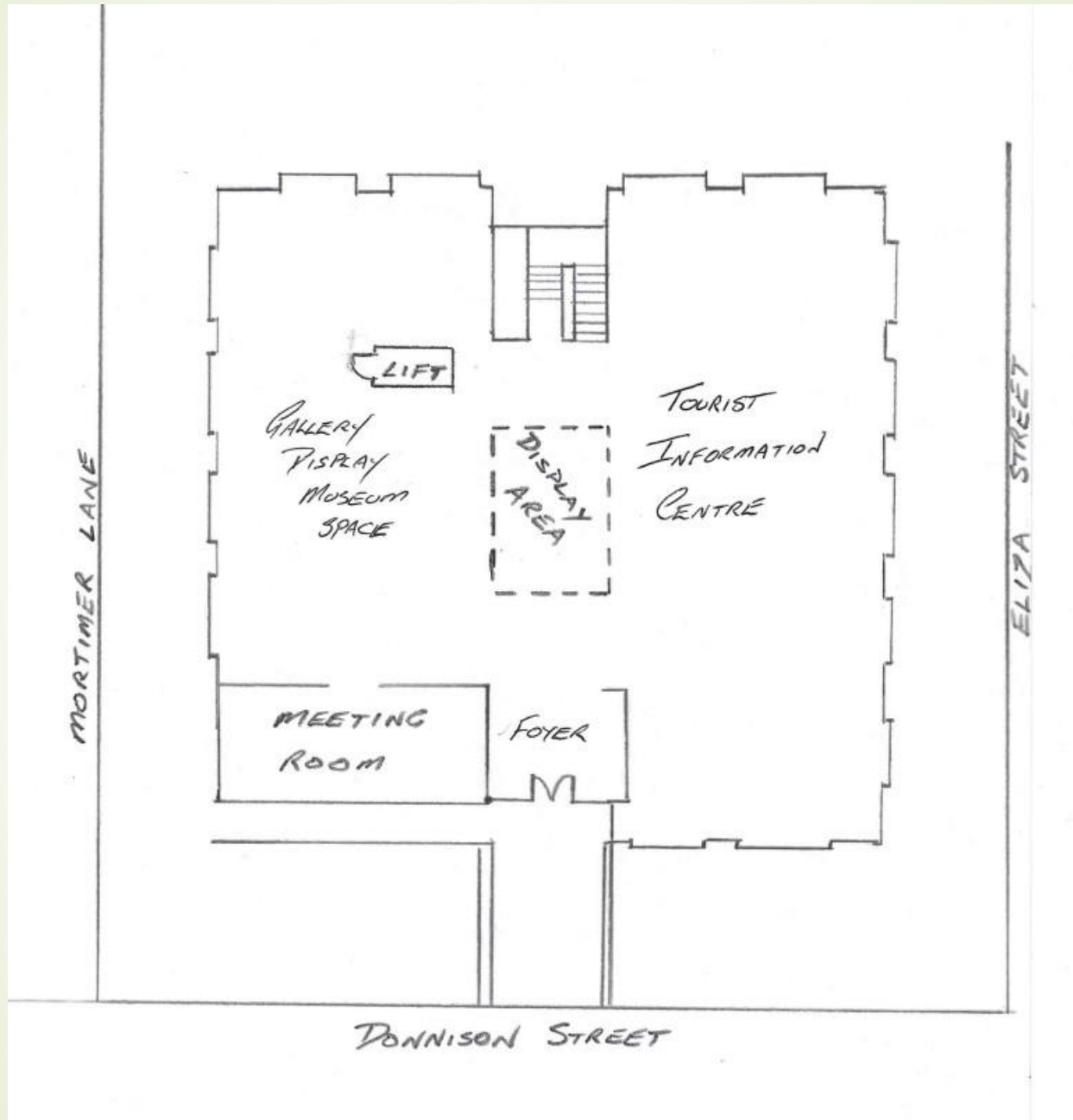
- ▶ The space where the Book-mobile dock was previously located could easily be converted into a meeting room.
- ▶ See design drawing on following slides.

- ▶ **The Human Library**

- ▶ Based on a Danish model where people meet and have conversations about their life with others. This project is active in 85+ countries.

- ▶ **A Sense of Place (based on St Albans School of Arts model)**

- ▶ A venue for free cultural, knowledge-sharing and celebratory events.

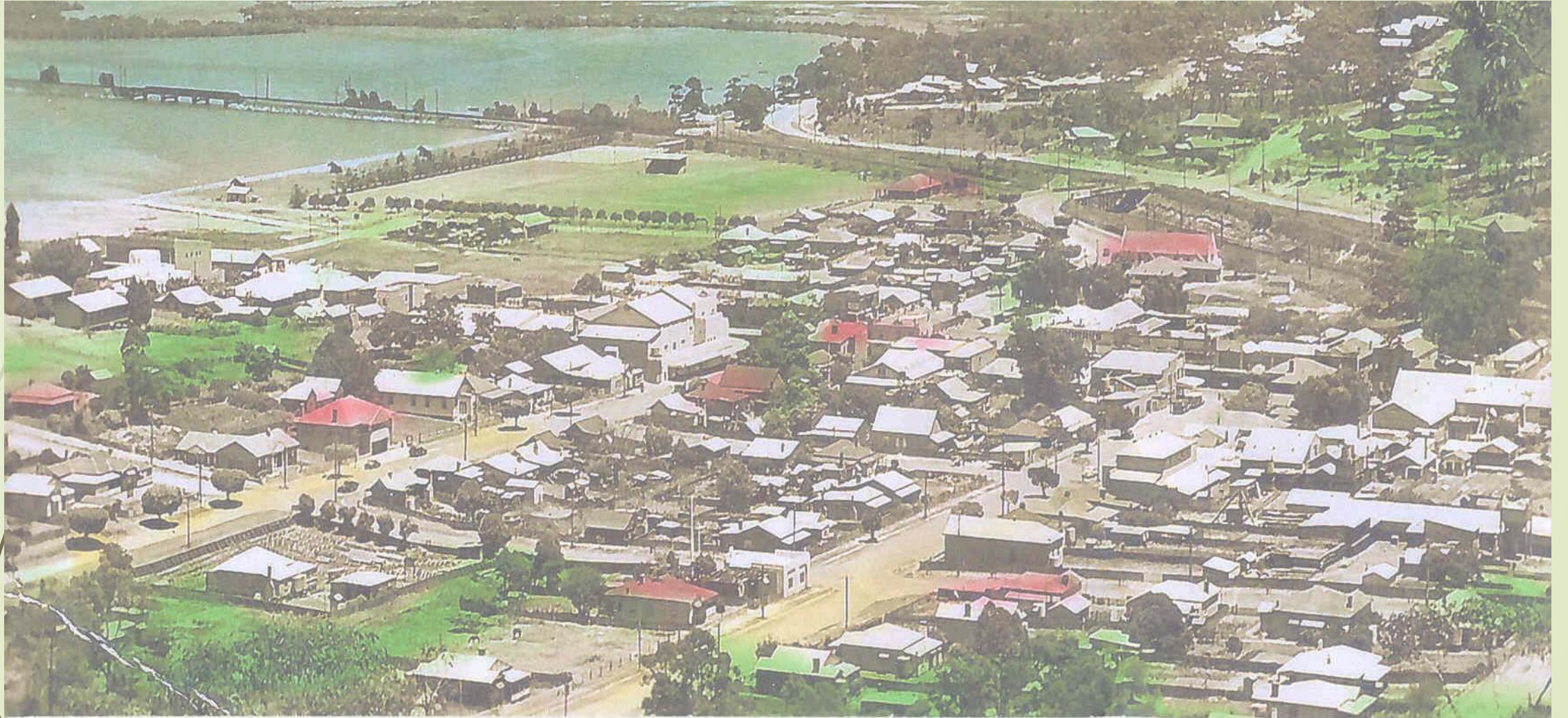





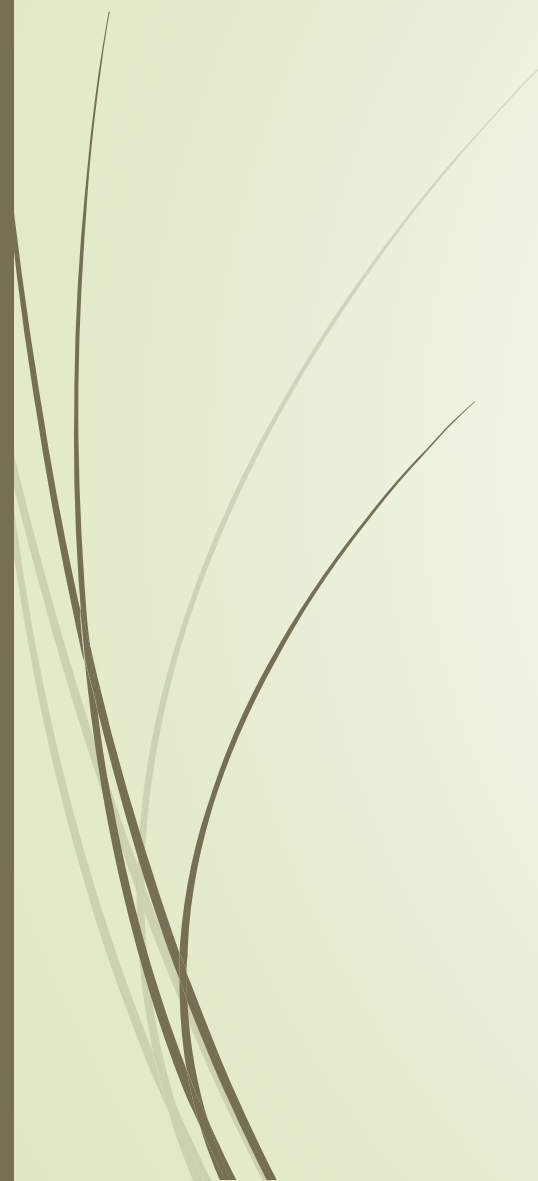
The location of Gosford Library building was the site of James Kibble's original home in Gosford.

If the Library building was to be repurposed, perhaps the name "**Kibble House**" could be given to the building as an acknowledgement of our local history and the importance of James Kibble.

If there was to be a café in lower section of the building, perhaps the name "**Fabbro's**" café in acknowledgment of the library's concrete fabricator.



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- Does the cost of conversion / repurposing of the existing Library building outweigh the cost of demolition?
  - By retaining this notable building, there will be a usable facility available to cater for the future needs of Gosford's growing population.







The Committee request that Council give consideration to the following prior to any further decisions to demolish the library building:

- ▶ Australian Institute of Architects – building of significance list
- ▶ Pending National Trust listing of Gosford Library  
(To be tabled at April NT Meeting)

Also, the community of the Central Coast should be consulted **about the future of the Gosford Library building** and allowed to

**“Have your Say”.**

# NOTE: From Council Meeting on 26/9/2023


## ► Critical Dates or Timeframes

To achieve the objectives outlined within the Kibble Park Place Plan and Kibble Park Concept Plan, minimise disruption to the Gosford CBD, and align to the February 2025 opening of the Gosford Regional Library, three projects are proposed to commence shortly.

**1** A detailed traffic study and design of traffic movements on Donnison Street, William Street and Mortimer Lane will be conducted with work to be completed by June 30, 2024.

**2** Targeted consultation with community and cultural organisations and event organisers will be undertaken to inform the design of the Community Space. Final design and construction documentation for this component, new public amenities and the upgraded play space will be completed by June 30, 2024.

**3** *Preparation of relevant documentation and approvals to demolish the existing Gosford Library in March 2025.*

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- ▶ The Council resolution was not to demolish the Library but “to prepare relevant documentation and approvals to demolish the existing Gosford Library in March 2025”.

**There is still time to resolve this matter.**



# Important

Prior to any further work being done on the Gosford Library building, there is a need for a Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI) report to be carried out.

## **Guidelines for preparing a statement of heritage impact. NSW Govt 2023**

### **Purpose of the document**

The Guidelines for preparing a statement of heritage impact explains how to prepare an effective and fit-for-purpose statement of heritage impact (SOHI). These guidelines replace the Statements of heritage impact (Heritage Office and Department of Urban Affairs & Planning 1996, revised 2002).

The guidelines apply to SOHIs prepared for works (works can be activities and/or change) to:

- items on the State Heritage Register (SHR) listed under the NSW Heritage Act 1977 (Heritage Act)
- items listed in Schedule 5 of local environmental plans (LEPs) prepared by local governments
- items included in heritage and conservation registers prepared under section 170 of the Heritage Act
- **non-statutory heritage lists**
- works in the vicinity of heritage items.



End of Presentation



# Proposed Recommendation of the Central Coast Council Heritage Advisory Committee

1. That the Gosford City Library building at 118 Donnison Street, Gosford be listed on the Central Coast Council Heritage Inventory.
  - Consideration also be given to NSW State Heritage listing of this building.
2. That Council consider the Heritage significance of the Gosford Library Building and reconsider the Council's resolution (**Item 2.6, dated 26/9/2023**) to prepare to demolish the library.