

Oatlands Gaol

Use and development plan



Brad Williams
Manager – Heritage Projects
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**SOUTHERN
MIDLANDS
COUNCIL**



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The Gaoler's Residence

This document is intended to guide the overall usage of the Oatlands Gaoler's Residence, following the restoration of that building during 2010, as funded by the Tasmanian State Government's *Urban Renewal and Heritage Fund*. This document is to be read in conjunction with the following documents, to which it is pursuant:

- *Oatlands Gaol Conservation Management Plan 2006* - Williams 2006
- *Oatlands Gaol Master Plan* – Williams 2009
- Plans for Oatlands Gaoler's Residence refit – CDA Architects 2010
- *Southern Midlands Council Historic Heritage Strategy 2009-13* – Williams 2008
- *Oatlands Gaol and Court House Preservation Survey* – Paterson & Clark 2007.
- *Southern Midland Council Heritage Collections Store Scoping Paper* – Williams 2007.

In addition, an archaeological management plan, formal landscaping plan and interpretation plan for the site are currently being developed, which will be presented to Council for consideration once available.

It is proposed that the Gaoler's residence be used for four complimentary purposes, pursuant to the operations of the Heritage Projects Program being:

- Heritage collections storage and curatorial space
- Office for Council's Heritage Projects staff, and office space ancillary to the Centre for Heritage at Oatlands
- Accommodation and office space for visiting interns/students
- An archaeological interpretation space

The following plan of the Oatlands Gaoler's Residence depicts the intended use areas, which will be further detailed below.

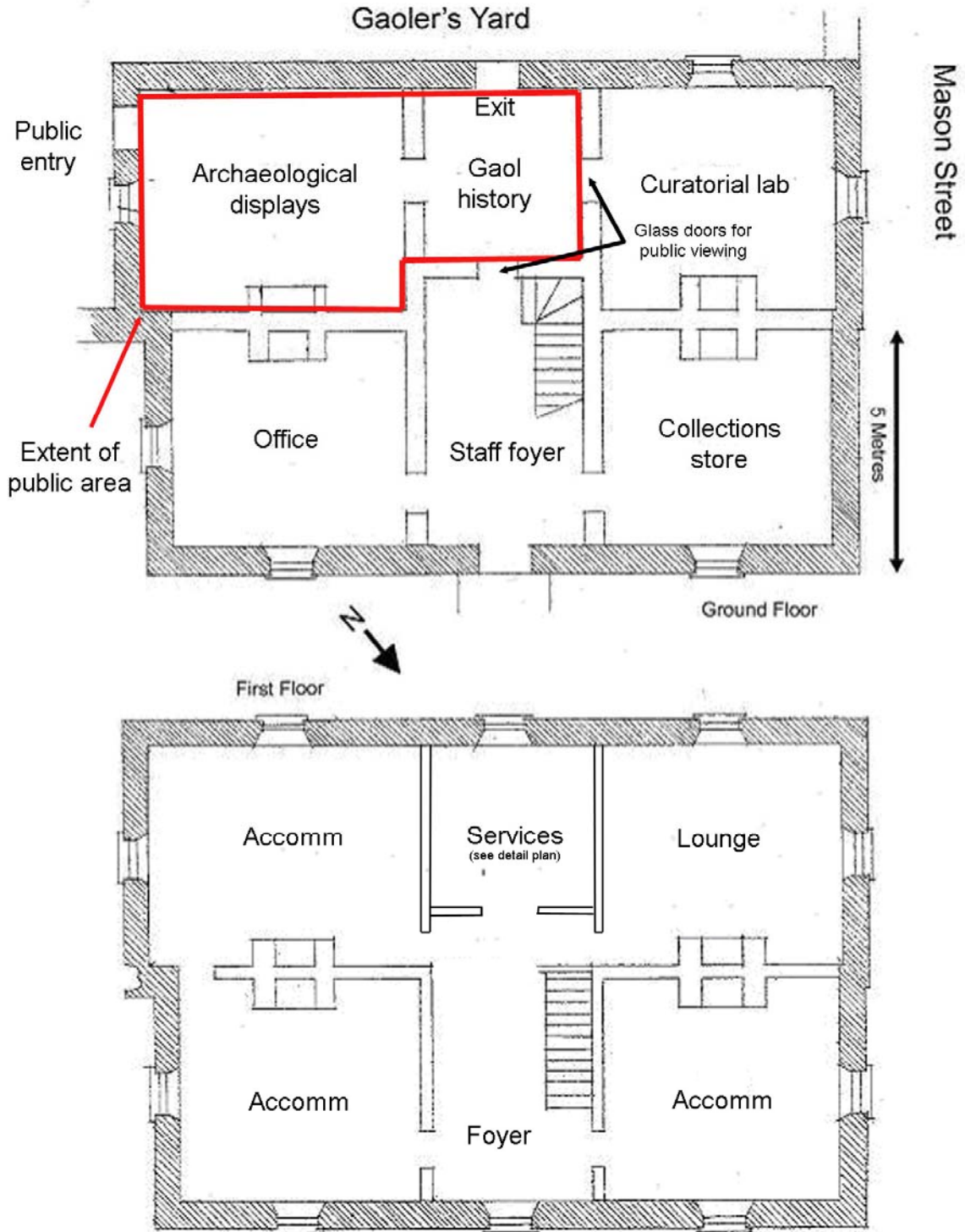


Figure 1 – Proposed usage areas, Oatlands Gaoler's Residence

Archaeological display area and historical display area

The former Men's Kitchen is proposed for use as an area for the display of archaeological material deriving from excavations at the Oatlands Gaol. Artifacts will be combined with interpretive media, in high quality physical installations, to tell the story of the gaol and the people therein – linking objects with stories with people. A forthcoming archaeological management plan for the site will propose excavations in selected areas of the site (in a collaborative project between Southern Midlands Council and the University of Sydney), and an interpretation plan for the building/site will also be developed, with material deriving from those excavations forming the basis for interpretation in this room. Development of installations is proposed to be part of a collaborative project between Southern Midlands Council and Deakin University/Arts Tasmania (proposal to form a future report to Council).

The rear foyer is intended for use as interpretation of the overall history of the Oatlands Gaol, and its place in colonial Tasmania. Static interpretation would be installed, utilizing the wealth of information already researched on the building. Secure glass doors would be installed (in a reversible manner) within existing door frames to the former Women's Kitchen and Foyer (whilst retaining existing doors), so that the public could see into other parts of the building (see below for further detail).

It is intended that this room could be open daily, and un-manned (secure display cases would need to consider this). CCTV would be installed which would be monitored by Visitor Centre/Council staff. Public could enter by the side door of this room, and exit by the rear door, with the remainder of the building being secured. It is not considered feasible to staff this interpretation space, although it is likely that staff will be on-site much of the time that the space is open.

Below is an example of some high-quality un-manned archaeological interpretation (Menzies Centre, - Hobart, and Hyde Park Barracks - Sydney), from which concepts for the Oatlands Gaol could be modeled.



Figure 2 – Archaeological interpretation space, Hyde Park Barracks, Sydney.



Figure 3 – Detail of recently installed archaeological interpretation, Menzies Centre, Hobart.

Curatorial space

The former Women's Kitchen is proposed to be used as collections management/curatorial space for archaeological collections. Some modern installations would be required to be installed (i.e. sink, benches), however this is not contrary to the Conservation Management Plan for the building as these would be installed in a reversible (and free standing) manner. Flagstones may need to be covered in areas where functional floor surfaces are required, or wet areas.

It is intended that this curatorial space will be viewed by the public, through a glass door installed within the existing door frame (the original door being retained also). A similar facility exists at Hyde Park Barracks (Sydney) where curatorial space is within a heritage building, and visible to the public. Whilst this is a modern addition to the building, the use as an artifact/collections management space is considered appropriate, and provided that the installations do not have irreversible heritage impact, use and interpretation of the space for heritage administration is considered to be beneficial in centralization of heritage administration operations, and provision of a spectrum of heritage management processes to the public.



Figure 4 – Publicly visible collection store and curatorial space within a heritage building, Hyde Park Barracks – Sydney.

Archaeological collections store

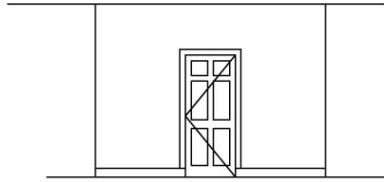
The former Porter's Lodge of the Gaoler's Residence will be used as a store for Southern Midlands Council's archaeological collection – mostly deriving from works at the Oatlands Gaol (although will rapidly expand as heritage projects progress). Whilst this is not the ideal situation, until a more permanent facility is available, this is considered a feasible alternative (see *Southern Midlands Council Heritage Collections Store Scoping Paper*, Williams 2007). The space will be adjacent to the proposed curatorial space and office, as well as archaeological display space, therefore providing a good alternative (until such time if/when the collection outgrows the space). Required shelving etc will be transferred from the current location in Roche Hall, and be temporary and reversible so as not to contravene the principles of the conservation management plan. If eventually the collection can be moved, then this room might form further office space or a meeting/training room.

Accommodation space

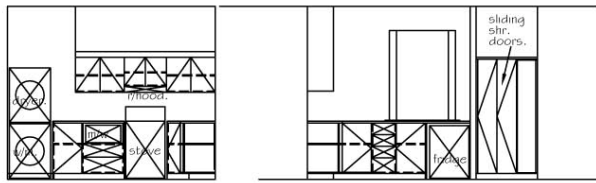
The upper floor of the Gaoler's Residence is intended to be used as short-term accommodation space for persons working on SMC heritage projects, and for students undertaking heritage skills training at Oatlands. Three twin-bedrooms, plus bathroom & kitchenette facilities (as detailed by the CDA Architects specifications – see Figure 5) will be available for such use. As detailed by the *Oatlands Gaol and Court House Preservation Survey* (Paterson & Clark 2007), the upper floor of the Gaoler's Residence is not feasible for staff/public usage, due to the constraints of the stairs (and lack of emergency exits), therefore the best feasible use of that part of the building is considered to be accommodation for persons associated with SMC heritage projects/training. This may be for a nominal fee to cover costs (to be decided in future). A building surveyor will need to certify that this use meets requirements.

Preliminary plans by CDA Architects detail the installation of kitchenette and bathroom facilities to service this area. Whilst not the best heritage outcome, these installations are considered essential to the ongoing use/viability of the building, and the Architects engaged to specify the works were given a brief that these installations be as unobtrusive and reversible as possible. The facilities will be within an existing single room which will be partitioned to meet separation requirements of kitchen/bathroom. The upper 1 metre of the partition walls will be glass, so as the feeling of the original space can still be appreciated, and for better natural lighting (whilst maintaining privacy between the rooms). These specific plans will form part of a forthcoming

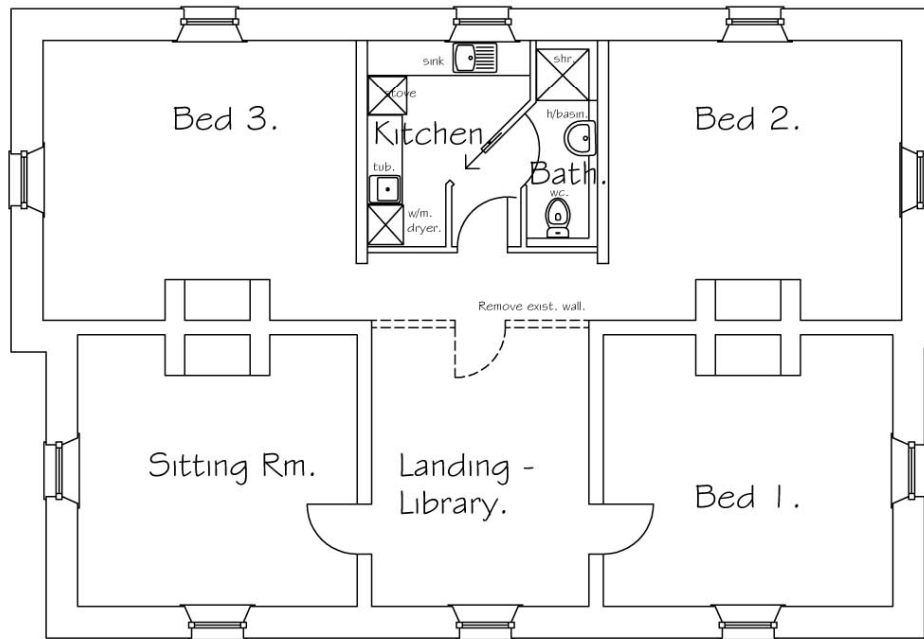
Development Application to Southern Midlands Council and a Works Application to the Tasmanian Heritage Council (details currently being finalised).



Elevation new wall from landing.



Elevations - cupb'ds. in kitchen.



Proposed new First Floor Kitchen & Bathroom for Gaoler's Residence - Oatlands.

Figure 7 – Preliminary design concept for the layout of the proposed kitchen and bathroom. Peter Cripps, CDA Architects.

Office space

It is considered beneficial for Southern Midlands Council to relocate heritage projects staff to the Oatlands Gaoler's Residence, given the need for proximity to curatorial/storage space, and to free-up space in Roche Hall for the *Centre for Heritage at Oatlands* initiative. The former store room of the Gaoler's Residence will serve as office space for the Manager Heritage Projects and Heritage Project Officer, which will also have a 'hot-desk' for visiting consultants/students/researchers to use.

Landscaping

Whilst the landscaping and overall interpretation of the Oatlands Gaol is not possible while it remains a functional swimming pool, as part of the overall project a Landscape Architect, has been commissioned to provide a formal landscaping master plan for the Gaol, the aim being to:

- Provide an overall 'concept' master plan for the Oatlands Gaol, assuming future removal of the pool. This will assist in future proposals for relocation of the pool.
- In the short-medium term, provide a landscape plan to separate the Gaoler's Residence from the pool, in a reversible manner which does not inhibit pool use, so that the two sites can operate separately, (i.e. the pool as currently operated, the Gaoler's Residence as a heritage site) but be easily combined in the future.
- Interpret the original landscape and layout of the Gaoler's Yard, Javelin Men's Yard and Outer Yard alongside the Gaoler's Residence (the Men's, Women's and Debtor's division yards will still be obscured by the pool).

The plan below has been provided to locate the different areas/functional precincts of the original Oatlands Gaol layout, as referred to below:

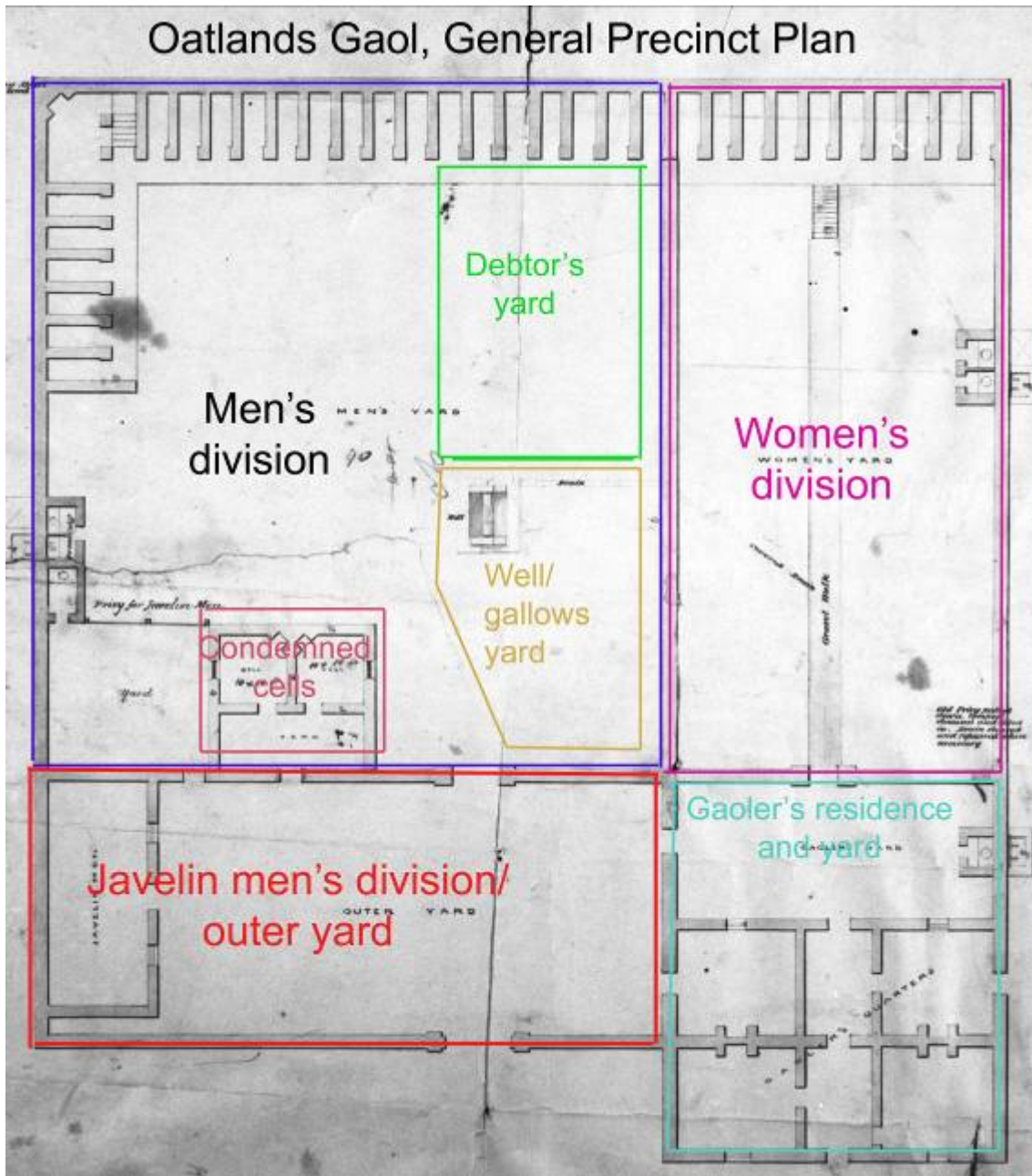


Figure 7 – General precinct plan of the Oatlands Gaol (the Gaoler's Residence in the lower-right corner).

It is envisaged that the landscape plan will propose:

- Very simple gravel surfaces to the Gaoler's Yard, Outer Yard and Javelin Men's Yard (as per recent works to the Richmond Gaol).
- A graveled approach to the site, up the existing driveway off Barrack Street.

- Footprinting, either through exposure of archaeological remains (subject to relevant approvals) or by interpretive landscaping, of the Javelin Men's Division building, and various cross walls as per the forthcoming archaeological management plan.
- A gabion stone wall running along the former line of the wall between the Gaoler's/Outer/Javelin Men's division yards and the Men's/Women's division yards, with nibs at appropriate placements to interpret former cross/intersecting walls. This would replace the existing colourbond and wire fence which currently separates the gaol and pool sites. The exact location of this wall would need to be determined after discussion with pool staff to ensure that it does not inhibit use of the open areas around the pool. Gabion walling has been chosen as it requires no excavation (hence does not disturb archaeological remains), is consistent with the materials traditionally used around Outlands, and can be moved easily in future. This walling system has been successfully used at the Cascades and Ross Female Factories, and is commonly used on heritage sites. This wall would serve the purpose of security for the pool, and be sympathetic to the Gaol site without any heritage impact, and be easily removed or relocated in future if desired (i.e. once the pool is removed).



Figure 8 – Examples of gabion walling at an historic site, Ross Female Factory (installed 2009).

Where statutory approvals are necessary, the proposed landscape plan will form part of a forthcoming Development Application to Southern Midlands Council and Works Application to the Tasmanian Heritage Council.

Conclusion

It is considered that the uses for the Gaoler's residence and immediate environs as outlined above are an appropriate use for that building. These uses (and associated works – subject to statutory approvals) are not inconsistent with the provisions of the *Oatlands Gaol Conservation Management Plan 2006*, *Oatlands Gaol Master Plan* and *Southern Midlands Historic Heritage Strategy 2009-13* (all previously endorsed by Council) and further the initiatives outlined in other relevant council heritage planning documents.

No other feasible adaptive reuse for the building has been proposed, therefore it is considered that use of the building by Southern Midlands Council as one of the hubs of heritage administration and interpretation, whilst still maintaining the flexibility of the use of the building for other purposes in future if desired, is entirely appropriate.

Should Council resolve to further these initiatives, additional detail will be provided to Council and the public through the consequent statutory approvals processes.

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