



Balranald
Discovery Centre
Modification Works
Review of Environmental Factors

Document Verification

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1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Balranald Shire Council has operated the Balranald Discovery Centre, in its various forms since cessation of the Crown's use of the land. This has been for the purposes of tourist/visitor, park, public transport and public convenience facilities. Urban Services was added as a reserve purpose in 2015 in line with the redevelopment of the site to its current form.

1.1 Council Area

The proposal is within the area of Balranald Shire Council.

1.2 Location of Proposed Project

83 Market Street Balranald NSW, see Appendix 1 for proposed site layout.

1.3 Description of Proposed Project

Council is proposing to modify the existing Visitor Information Building to create a foyer type area that provides connection between the Centre and Malcolm's Building in order to promote efficiency and flow in building operation. The 190m² of additional floor area will permit a greater opportunity to provide interpretative and community information in relation to the site and surrounding local government area.

The project involves:

- Modification works to existing retail and museum buildings
- Excavation for footings and slab
- Construction works including creating connectivity to Malcolm's Building
- Installation of heating and cooling
- Site isolation

See Appendix 2 for an architectural interpretation of the proposal outcome.

1.4 Objective of the Proposed Project

The objective of the project is to expand the Visitor Information Centre.

1.5 Consultation

General community consultation in relation to the building project was initially undertaken via online survey between 18/06/2020 – 01/07/2020.

Council resolution 2020/103 based on the presentation of the survey results required referral to the Growing Business Industry & Tourism Committee for advice on prioritisation of project elements.

Council has most recently presented the project to the Growing Business Industry & Tourism Committee on the 07/06/2022, with acceptance of the revised design due to budgetary constraints being adopted at the June 2022 meeting of Council, Resolution 2022/111.

Council's Community Participation Plan does not specifically require neighbour notification for this type of approval pathway. However, in the interest of public participation, this Review of Environmental Factors will be notified in line with the local development requirements of the Plan. The notification requirements for local development most closely relate to the intensity of this project. Results of this notification process will be advised to Council under separate report to consider this Review of Environmental Factors.

1.6 Previous Approvals

Previous approvals for the Discovery Centre site are listed below:

- Balranald Discovery Centre Modification Works Review of Environmental Factors V1.0 15/10/2021. Building works project not proceeded with. See Appendix 3 for Declaration/Decision Statement.
- Balranald Hire Bicycle & Storage Shed Review of Environmental Factors V1.0 14/05/2018. Construction of a 6m x 3m colourbond shed for the storage, works completed in 2018.

1.7 Options Considered

Council has considered two (2) options in relation to the project, the option to undertake the works over the *do nothing* option was chosen as it will enhance the efficiency and flow of the Visitor Information Centre while providing a greater opportunity for interpretative and informative materials related to the local government area.

2. HERITAGE OF PROPOSED PROJECT SITE

2.1 Landscape

The Balranald Township area is a heavily modified environment with remnant native vegetation (redgum, mallee and box trees), planted introduced species and lawns.

This REF aims to conserve both natural and cultural values. For reasons of clarity and document usefulness natural and cultural heritage are dealt with individually, but their inter-relationships are recognised.

The works are proposed to be located within the same constructed footprint as the buildings, formed walkways and planted landscaping so as not to increase overall environmental impacts.

2.2 Natural Heritage

2.2.1 Water

The project will not create additional water demand as there are no additional wet areas or consumptive uses proposed. The proposed works do not include ground water impacting works such as bores and deep excavation.

Storm water will be disposed of onsite to landscaping so as not to cause nuisance to neighbouring premises.

2.2.2 Flora

The Balranald Township area is a heavily modified environment with remnant native vegetation (redgum, mallee and box trees), planted introduced species and lawns. No significant or native vegetation impacts are envisaged due to the building footprint being contained to the existing modified and built area.

2.2.3 Fauna

As the work sites are located in highly disturbed environments, they are unlikely to contain threatened species, populations or ecological communities. Although threatened fauna and bird species may temporarily rest on vegetation located within the vicinity of the work site, the nature of the proposed works are not likely to result in significant impacts on native flora, native fauna or their ecosystems. Best practice safeguards for the management of flora and fauna during

construction will ensure that potential environmental impacts are avoided.

2.3 Cultural Heritage

2.3.1 Aboriginal Heritage

The project site is located on the traditional lands of the Muthi Muthi People. The locality of the proposed work is not known as a significant area for artefacts. The excavation for footings and slab is within introduced/disturbed soil further minimizing the potential for cultural impacts. The standard unexpected finds protocol will be implemented should a chance find occur.

The site in a general sense provides a low resolution interpretation of aboriginal heritage and linkages to key elements within the local government area. The proposal has potential to enhance this interpretation and strengthen linkages by providing greater opportunities for community exposure.

2.3.2 Non-Aboriginal Heritage

There are no items listed on Councils LEP in close proximity to the proposed building. However there are items of historical value within the Discovery Centre Precinct, specifically the Balranald Gaol, Wintong School Building, Malcolm's Museum and Horse/Dog Trough.

The proposal has synergy with these elements as the site operates to provide interaction and interpretation of these items.

3. STATUTORY POSITION

3.1 Description of the zoning applying to the proposal.

Balranald Township is within an urban area and therefore zoned as RU5 Village. The works are not prohibited under the RU5 Land Use Table of the Balranald Local Environmental Plan, 2010, and is permissible without consent under Clause 2.73(3)(a)(vi) of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021.

3.2 Confirmation that the proposal is subject to Environmental Impact Assessment under Division 5.1 of the EP&A Act

The RU5 Land Use Table of the Balranald Local Environmental Plan 2010 provides *Community Buildings* to be permitted with consent under Item 3 of the Table.

Clause 2.73(3)(a)(iii) of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021 provides *Visitor Information Centres* to be permitted without consent.

Therefore, the project is subject to assessment under Division 5.1 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1997, with the Balranald Shire Council being the determining authority.

3.3 Legislative and Policy Framework

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979* requires the assessment and mitigation of the environmental impacts of any works proposed in this plan.

3.4 Management Purposes and Principles

Council aims to provide and maintain community assets and infrastructure in a strategic and cost effective manner.

4. ASSESSMENT

4.1 Description of the affected environment.

The Township of Balranald with a population of 1200, encompasses approximately 600 properties, with Hospital, Police, Post Office, Shire Council, Churches and School, Service Centre and shopping, 3 Motels, Club and Hotel, 2 Service Stations and Recreation area and Racecourse. The town is relatively flat and located adjacent to the Murrumbidgee River with the Sturt Highway passing through as the main transport route. Balranald has a full range of utility services such as phone and data, electricity, dual water service and sewerage reticulation.

4.2 Detailed assessment of the likely environmental impacts of the Proposal

The potential impacts of the project have been assessed in Section 6.

4.3 Main Outcomes of the Proposed Project:

4.3.1 Summary of beneficial outcomes

The proposed works will enhance the efficiency and flow of the Visitor Information Centre by creating connectivity between Malcolm's Building and the Information Centre and additional floor area for information, interpretation and interaction. This will also allow greater building control by staff not having to manage separated buildings.

4.3.2 Summary of adverse outcomes

Minimal adverse outcomes will result from the proposed development. Minor short-term construction and traffic impacts including exclusion of vehicles and pedestrians from the immediate area of works will occur during construction, estimated to be around 16 weeks. Minor noise, odours, or dust impacts may occur.

5. IMPLEMENTATION STAGE

5.1 Work to commence

The proposed work will be conducted in early January 2023.

5.2 Period of construction

The construction for the proposed work is expected to be completed within 16 weeks.

6. CONSIDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

6.1 Clause 228(2) matters of consideration

When considering the environmental impacts of a project, the factors which need to be taken into account are listed in Clause 228(2) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation, 2000*. To ensure that the likely impacts of the proposed activities on the natural and built environment are fully considered, each of these factors have been addressed below.

Table 1: Clause 171(2) Factors to be considered

Environmental Factor	Impact	Reason
a) Any environmental impact on a community?	Minor	Noise, odour, dust, and traffic impacts are anticipated but these will be minor and temporary in nature. There will also be removal of demolition materials to the Balranald landfill for recovery and disposal. The proposed work would not have any impact on other community services and infrastructure such as power, water, waste management, educational, medical or social services.
b) Any transformation of a locality?	Nil	The locality affected by the proposed work is within the township area. It is not envisaged that the scale of the proposal is likely to be significantly locality transformative.
c) Any environmental impact on the ecosystems of a locality?	Nil	The township is a heavily modified environment with remnant native vegetation (redgum, mallee and box trees), introduced species and lawns. No ecosystem impacts are envisaged due to the small area of construction and no requirements for clearing.
d) Any reduction of the aesthetic, recreational, scientific or other environmental quality or value of a locality?	Nil	The work is not of a significant bulk or scale that will cause significant impact on the aesthetic, recreational, scientific or environmental qualities of the locality.
e) Any effect on a locality, place or building having aesthetic, anthropological,	Nil	The work will not adversely affect a locality, place or building known for its significant aesthetic, anthropological, archaeological, architectural, cultural, historical, scientific or social values.

Environmental Factor	Impact	Reason
archaeological, architectural, cultural, historical, scientific or social significance or other special value for present generations?		There are no items listed on Councils LEP in proximity to the works.
f) Any impact on habitat of any protected fauna (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016)?	Nil	No significant or native flora or fauna impacts are proposed.
g) Any endangering of any species of animal, plant or other form of life, whether living on land, in water or in the air?	Nil	The proposal would not endanger any species of animal, plant or other form of life, whether living on land, in water or in the air due to the limited scope of works for the activities covered in this REF and the implementation of the safeguards proposed in this REF.
h) Any long-term effects on the environment?	Nil	There are no anticipated negative long-term effects on the environment from the works due to the limited scope of these works and the implementation of the control measures.
i) Any degradation of the quality of the environment?	Minor	The proposal would potentially degrade the quality of the environment in the short-term through vehicular activities and noise, odour and dust impacts attributed to construction, however the potential impacts would be minor and temporary in nature. Works would be generally carried out during normal working hours.
j) Any risk to the safety of the environment?	Minor	The proposal would have minimal risk to the safety of the environment due to the limited scope of works for the activities covered in this REF, and the potential impacts would be minimised with the implementation of the control measures proposed in the REF.
k) Any reduction in the range of beneficial uses of the environment?	Nil	The proposal will not cause a reduction in beneficial uses of the environment.
l) Any pollution of the environment?	Minor	The proposal could potentially cause pollution of the environment however the potential impacts would be minimised with the implementation of the control measures proposed in this REF.
m) Any environmental problems associated with the disposal of waste?	Nil	The waste generated during the proposal would be contained and removed for disposal to approved recycling facilities or to appropriate landfill in accordance with the control measures proposed in this REF. No significant environmental impacts are anticipated for the disposal of waste.
n) Any increased demands on resources, natural or otherwise which are, or are likely to become, in short supply?	Nil	The proposal would not significantly increase demands on resources, which are, or are likely to become, in short supply. Relatively small amounts of materials would be required for the proposal.
o) Any cumulative environmental effect with other existing or likely future activities?	Nil	No significant projects are foreseen around the proposed works. Maintenance work will occur however these will not cause significant environmental effects.
p) Any impact on coastal processes and coastal hazards including those	Nil	The works are not proposed in proximity to coastal areas.

Environmental Factor	Impact	Reason
projected under climate change conditions.		
q) Any applicable local strategic planning statement, regional strategic plan or district strategic plan made under Division 3.1 of the Act	Supportive	The projects supports the general objectives of the Balranald Local Strategic Plan area <i>Tourism</i> in relation to providing improved visitor services at the Balranald Discovery Centre, allow greater opportunities to highlight the area's 'hero' attractions. In a similar vein, the project is in alignment with Direction 5 of the Far West Regional Plan 2036 in that the project supports improved tourism infrastructure for our area. The project also provides a greater potential to support interpretive and informative opportunities should these be delivered from the investigations identified in the Actions area of Direction 5.
r) Any other relevant environmental factors	Nil	No other environmental factors have been identified as being relevant to the project.

7. SUMMARY OF CONTROL MEASURES

Balranald Shire Council will ensure control measures identified in this report are implemented to reduce the potential for any adverse impacts of the project.

7.1 Landforms, Geology and Soils

- Appropriate stockpiling of materials will take place away from drainage lines, waterways and drains at the Balranald Shire Council Depot.
- Excavated material will be assessed for reuse as part of Councils normal urban activities.
- Spoil removed from site to be disposed of at Councils Waste Disposal site as appropriate.
- Site rehabilitation of disturbed area to be undertaken progressively as activities are completed during the proposal.
- Adequate drainage measures must be provided to control / prevent ingress of surface water runoff to open excavation trenches and public storm water drains.

7.2 Water quality, Hydrology and Soils

- Erosion and sediment controls deemed necessary will be inspected daily and recorded.
- Erosion and sediment controls will be implemented to protect existing council storm water infrastructure if deemed necessary.

7.3 Air Quality

- Dust suppression, to be carried out on site, using either water (in compliance with water restrictions) or ground cover.
- Any machine or plant that is producing excessive visual exhaust is to be repaired or removed from site.
- Trucks transporting spoil and other waste materials from the site will be covered appropriately.
- Disturbed areas will be rehabilitated as soon as practicable.

7.4 Biodiversity

- No significant or native vegetation clearing is proposed.
- If any fauna species are identified on site, Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Services (WIRES) will be contacted to relocate it offsite to a suitable habitat area.

7.5 Noise

- Hours of works to be maintained between 7am and 6pm Monday to Friday and 7am to 12pm Saturdays, no work to be undertaken on Sundays.
- Carrying out site inductions for all workers informing them of the surrounding receivers and the importance of reducing noise levels.
- Avoid the use of reversing alarms by designing the site layout to avoid reversing.
- Notifications will be distributed to potentially impacted local residents prior to construction, providing information such as total construction time, what works are expected to be noisy, their duration, what is being done to minimise noise and when respite periods will occur.
- A contact number for complaints will be available during construction phase and, all complaints to be taken into consideration with a view amicable resolution.

7.6 Indigenous Heritage

If any Aboriginal object is discovered and/or harmed in, or under the land, while undertaking the proposed development activities, the proponent must:

- Not further harm the object
- Immediately cease all work at the particular location
- Secure the area so as to avoid further harm to the Aboriginal object
- Notify Heritage NSW as soon as practical on 131 555, providing any details of the Aboriginal object and its location
- Not recommence any work at the particular location unless authorised in writing by Heritage NSW.

In the event that skeletal remains are unexpectedly encountered during the activity, work must stop immediately, the area secured to prevent unauthorised access and NSW Police and Heritage NSW contacted.

7.7 Non Indigenous Heritage

If any items suspected of being non-indigenous heritage are found, work will cease in the area until the item can be verified by a heritage consultant, be reported to the Heritage NSW and the relevant approvals sought.

7.8 Waste

- Separation of general waste from construction waste will be carried out on site.
- All excavated material will be inspected and assessed for contamination and disposed of accordingly.

7.9 National Construction Code 2019

The existing building arrangement consists of four (4) individual buildings:

Café area:	Class 6
Retail area:	Class 6
Interpretive area:	Class 9(b)
Malcolm's Building:	Class 9(b)

The connection of the Retail Area and Malcolm's Building will create a single building of around 470m². The proposal will incorporate National Construction Code 2019 requirements to the whole of the building, including, but not limited to:

- Fire services

- Emergency lighting
- Provision for escape
- Light and ventilation

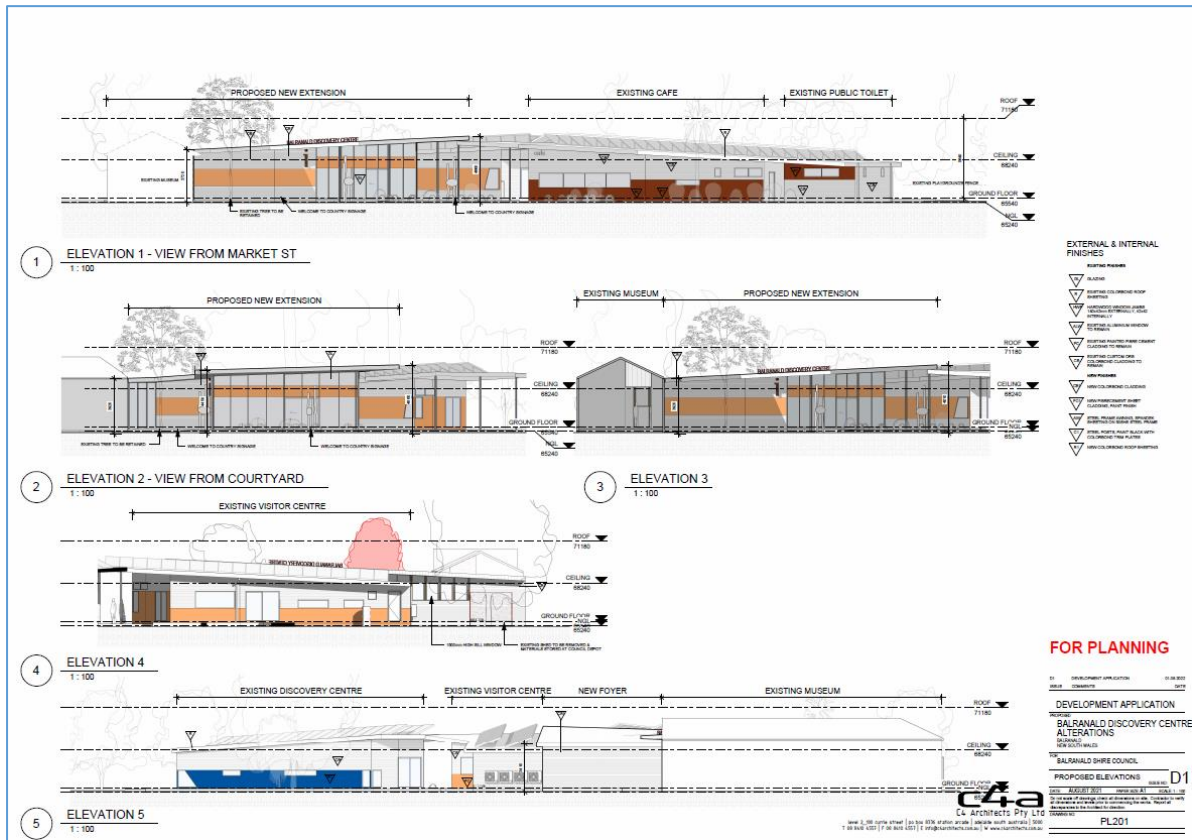
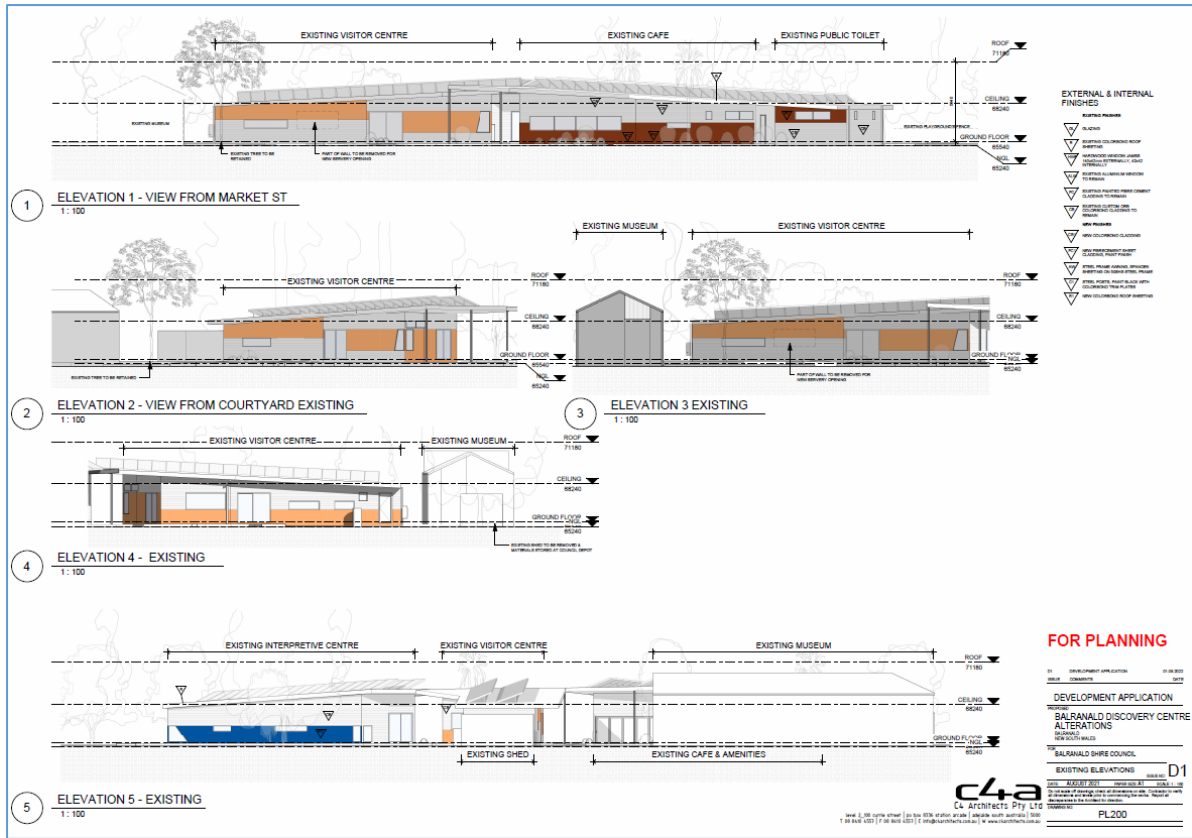
8. DECLARATION

I certify that I have reviewed and endorsed the contents of this REF document and, to the best of my knowledge, it is in accordance with the EP&A Act, the EP&A Regulation and the Guidelines approved under clause 170 of the EP&A Regulation, and the information it contains is neither false nor misleading.

Name: Ray Mitchell

Signed: 

Date: 31/08/2022



Appendix 3: Balranald Discovery Centre Modification Works Review of Environmental Factors V1.0 15/10/2021 Declaration/Decision Statement

Balranald Discovery Centre Modification Works - REF

8. DECLARATION

This review of Environmental Factors provides a true and fair review of the proposal in relation to its potential effects on the environment. It addresses to the fullest extent possible, all matters affecting or likely to affect the environment as a result of the proposed project.

Name (print): Ray Mitchell

Signed: _____

Date: 16/10/21

I have examined this Review of Environmental Factors and accept the Review of Environmental Factors on behalf of Balranald Shire Council.

Name (print): Ray Davy

Signed: _____

Designation: Director Infrastructure & Development

Date: 15.10.2021