STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

STAR HOTEL AND APARTMENTS
569-573 HUNTER STREET
NEWCASTLE WEST NSW 2300

Lot 1 DP 739153
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1. INTRODUCTION

EJE Heritage has been requested to provide a Heritage Assessment and subsequent Heritage Impact Statement for the proposed development of 569-573 Hunter Street, Newcastle West 2300, which seeks to undertake a mixed use development incorporating and adaptively re-using the existing buildings on the site.

The Heritage Assessment forms the investigative stage of the report; it places the site within an historical context, and includes the history of the site. The physical condition and context of the current building also informs its initial stage. With the history and physical condition and context of the building understood, an assessment of the site can be completed using the NSW Heritage Branch guidelines encompassing the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter heritage values: historical significance; aesthetic significance; scientific significance; and social significance.

The Statement of Heritage Impact follows the Heritage Assessment and examines the proposed works and identifies any impacts the proposal will have on the significance of the heritage items and any measures which should be taken to mitigate any negative impacts.

The Historical Context section of this report was researched and written by David Campbell.

This Statement of Heritage Impact was prepared by EJE Heritage. The project team consisted of:

- Barney Collins – (Director), Conservation Architect
- David Campbell – Heritage Consultant

1.1 METHODOLOGY

This report has been undertaken in accordance with the guidelines for Assessing Heritage Significance and Statements of Heritage Impact as issued by the NSW Heritage Branch, and the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter (1999).

1.2 HERITAGE LISTINGS

The site and building are not listed as an Item of Environmental Heritage in the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012 (‘LEP 2012’), Schedule 5, Part 1. They are, however, located in the Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area as defined by LEP 2012, Schedule 5 Part 2, in Map HER 004_G.

1.3 SITE IDENTIFICATION

The site is identified as 569-573 Hunter Street, Newcastle West NSW 2300. The subject site is located within the Newcastle Local Government Area. The real property description is: Lot 1 DP 739153. The site is zoned B3: Commercial Core.
Figure 1. Site Image 1. Google Maps
1.4 CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS

EJE Heritage is not qualified to offer structural opinions and this report is not intended to convey any opinion as to the structural adequacy or integrity of the structure, nor should it be construed as in any way so doing. Similarly, the author's observations are limited to the fabric only, and he does not comment on the capacity, adequacy, or statutory compliance of any building services.
2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The main Historical Context section, prepared for Heritas Architecture by Hunter History Consultants, is at Appendix A.

Figure 3. The 1910 - 1939 (Hunter Street) building in 1959. To the left is the commercial and residential building of 1890. To the right is the right-of-way leading to the 'showrooms' (shops) on the ground floor of the 1925 Wing. Beyond that is Light's household furnishings store, which later became the local branch of Grace Bros. The shop behind the car on the left later housed the Catholic Emporium. Newcastle City Cultural Collections

Figure 4. The 1925 (King Street) hotel building in 1979. Devonshire Street is at right. Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate
Figure 5. The 1910 - 1939 (Hunter Street) post-1979, undergoing alterations and additions as part of Kurt Piccardi's Star Village project. Note the extent of removal of internal and external fabric, including signage and the cantilever awning. The awning of the 1890 building, at left, will soon follow. *Newcastle Herald*
3. PHYSICAL CONDITION AND CONTEXT

3.1 THE SITE
The site covers an area of approximately 2,300m².

3.2 THE BUILDINGS
The site is occupied by a complex of five buildings of differing dates and provenance.

3.3 CURRENT USE
The site is currently subject to physical remediation and rubbish removal.

3.4 CONDITION
Having been unoccupied for many years save by unauthorised persons, the complex is in poor physical condition, dilapidation having taken place amidst a background of unauthorised occupancy. All buildings have contained a considerable amount of detritus and redundant materials.

3.5 SURROUNDING CONTEXT
The site is bounded by Hunter Street to the north, Union Street to the east, King Street to the south and commercial and mixed use structures to the west.

3.6 SURROUNDING HERITAGE ITEMS
Several Heritage Items are located nearby. These include:

- The Hunter Street Technical College;
- The former Newcastle West Police Station;
- The former Commercial Banking Company of Sydney building;
- The former City Bank building (MLA building);
- The former Stegga's Emporium;
- The former Hunter District Water Board building; and
- The Hunter Street Technical College and former Trades Hall.

All of these items are included in LEP 2012 as having local significance. The Technical College and Trades Hall complex stands opposite the subject site.
Figure 6. The 1910 – 1939 (Hunter Street) building, April 2013. Note Chinese characters, testifying to the long-established presence of that community at Newcastle West. EJE

Figure 7. The right-of-way behind the brick arch, April 2013. Note redundant beer kegs. EJE
Figure 8. The 1890 (Hunter Street) building, April 2013. EJE

Figure 9. The complex from Hunter Street, April 2013. EJE
Figure 10. The 1890 (Hunter Street) building, showing post-1979 alterations and the arches typical of Kurt Piccardi’s redevelopments, April 2013. The former CBC Bank is to the left. EJE

Figure 11. Rear of the 1890 (Hunter Street) building, showing post-1979 alterations and additions, April 2013. EJE
Figure 12. The void between the 1890 (Hunter Street) building and the terrace house, from Devonshire Street. The 1925 wing is in the background. Note the Australian Gas Light Co. standard, now surmounted by an electric light fitting. April 2013. EJE

Figure 13. Former terrace houses in Devonshire Street, April 2013. EJE
Figure 14. The 1925 (King Street) building, corner of King Street and Devonshire Street, April 2013. EJE
4. HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The NSW heritage assessment criteria encompass four generic values in the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter*, which are: historical significance; aesthetic significance; scientific significance; and social significance.

An item will be considered to be of State significance if, in the opinion of the Heritage Council of NSW, it meets one or more of the assessment criteria listed in the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW).

These criteria will be used in assessing heritage significance of the property/site.

The basis of assessment used in this report is the methodology and terminology of the *Burra Charter*, James Semple Kerr's monograph *The Conservation Plan*, and the criteria laid promulgated by the NSW Heritage Branch. Article 26.1 of the *Burra Charter* states that:

*Work on a place should be preceded by studies to understand the place which should include analysis of physical, documentary, oral and other evidence, drawing on appropriate knowledge, skills and disciplines.*

Once the place has been studied, the cultural significance can then be assessed. A determination of cultural significance philosophically aids in the establishment of value. Places and items of significance are those which display an understanding of the past and enrich the present. They allow values to be continually interpreted for the benefit of future generations.

The significance of the place is determined by the analysis and assessment of the documentary, oral and physical evidence. Having an understanding of significance allows decisions to be made about the future management of the place. It is, however, important that these future decisions do not endanger the cultural significance of the place.

The *NSW Heritage Manual*, prepared by NSW Heritage Branch and the former Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, outlines the same four broad criteria and processes for assessing the nature of significance, along with two criteria for assessing comparative significance of an item.

Following the preparation of the *Heritage Manual*, the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW) has been subject to amendments, in association with which Heritage Council promulgated revised criteria for assessment of Heritage significance. The evaluation of cultural significance in the following section is based on the approach adopted by the *Burra Charter* and the *NSW Heritage Manual*, but considers whether the study site meets the current criteria.

**Heritage Significance Criteria**

The NSW assessment criteria listed below encompass the following four values of significance:

- Historical significance
- Aesthetic significance
- Research/technical significance
- Social significance
Listed below are the relevant Heritage Assessment Criteria identified in the Heritage Act 1977 (NSW):

**Criterion (a)**  An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

**Criterion (b)**  An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

**Criterion (c)**  An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).

**Criterion (d)**  An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

**Criterion (e)**  An item has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

**Criterion (f)**  An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

**Criterion (g)**  An item is important in demonstrating the principle characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area's cultural places; or cultural or natural environments).

An Assessment of Significance requires that a level of significance for the place be determined and applied. This, the product of detailed analysis, uses the levels of significance below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL</td>
<td>Of significance to the local government area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE</td>
<td>Of significance to the people of NSW.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATIONAL</td>
<td>Exhibiting a high degree of significance, interpretability to the people of Australia.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1 ANALYSIS OF SIGNIFICANCE

General

The Historical Context report at Appendix A demonstrates the historical importance of the site. Some additional information has come to light as follows.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the cane or wicker shop in the Devonshire Street continued to trade for a comparatively long period of time. The ground floor of the terrace building, originally comprising three discrete dwellings, was eventually given over to commercial use. The front doors of these houses did not address Devonshire Street, but faced west, and were accessible via the passageway or pend. At one time part of the ground floor and possibly part of the first floor may have been occupied by the Taylor's Cycles shop, a supplier of British motorcycle parts which after its later relocation to a nearby site on the northern side of Hunter Street became Taylor's Cycles and Mowers. In the 1950s, at least some of the upstairs rooms remained available for residential purposes. In 1955 the young Mile Todorovski, a Macedonian immigrant whose father ran a shoe repair shop at 273 King Street but had room at the rear of the shop sufficient only for his wife and himself, took up residence in one of the terraces. Mile and his mother, newly arrived, had expected the family to live together in an ordinary dwelling. It will be noted that Mile had to pass through the passageway to reach the front door of the terrace in which he was to sleep for the next few years:

After a short stay of about half an hour, in the bedroom/living room/lounge room behind the shop, Dad suggested we go to a nearby flat, where I was supposed to 'live'... Dad had arranged it. Mum and I looked at each other; we didn't know what to say. I think we were in a state of shock, quite honestly. The three of us left Dad's shop, Dad carrying some bed sheets and a pillowcase under his arm. We went to Devonshire Street, to an old building next to the back door of the Star Hotel. It was dark, pitch black, but Dad knew his way and it wasn't far. He led us to a door, and along a narrow walkway through the old double storey building. We reached the back door entrance of sorts. Dad called out "Hello, are you there?" A man came out - Naum - and he pulled on a chord suspended from the ceiling to switch on a light (as I saw later). We shook hands...Not far behind Naum was another man, Todor, who shared the flat upstairs...We shook hands with him too.

There was some idle chit-chat, and then Dad suggested we all go upstairs. We went up a narrow steep staircase to a room - my room. It had a steel-framed bed and mattress, some blankets, an old two-door wardrobe with a full-length mirror and a drawer at the bottom. The floor was covered with vinyl, and the walls covered with wallpaper. Mum made up my bed, they said good bye and they left. What a night...what accommodation...what next...I went to bed, but could not fall asleep, thinking about what was happening to us.

I awoke next morning to my first day in Newcastle 12 August 1955. I got out of bed, dressed, and left my bare room, descended the terribly steep timber staircase, and walked about 250 metres along King Street to Dad's shop for breakfast.2

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1 Near the site of the present Centrelink building.
3 Prepared by EJE Heritage  
Nominated Architect - Peter Campbell #4294
Location of the flat in Newcastle where I slept from 1955-1960, and surrounding streets. I lived and ate meals with Mum and Dad at his shop nearby.

Figure 15. Plan of the area by Milco Todrovski.
http://www.montsuz.ca/familie/todd/index.htm

This source supplies some additional evidence as to the historic role in the locality of people of non-English speaking backgrounds. Moreover, in the post-1979 era, some of the ground floor rooms of the Devonshire Street terraces were occupied by a Thai restaurant. A variation on the theme is provided by present commercial activities in the former Commercial Banking Company of Sydney (CBC) bank premises at the corner of Hunter Street and Devonshire Street. Asian, and particularly Chinese, influence in Newcastle West has continued since the 1860s, despite the physical removal in the 1960s of the Chinese Presbyterian mission church, Devonshire Street. The occupancy by the Newcastle Trades Hall Council of Devonshire House, a former residential and commercial terrace property redeveloped by Kurt Piccardi in association with his Star Village, is evidence of the continuing involvement in the locality of the Labour movement, first evident in the building of the former Trades Hall in Hunter Street and in political activities at the Star Inn and later at the Star Hotel.

As an aside, after the post-1979 paving in brick of Devonshire Street and the installation on its western side of gas lights and standards, the thoroughfare came commonly to be called Devonshire Lane. This, however, has never been its official title, and motor traffic has never been prohibited from it.

A comment made in 1983 might well be said to have continued relevance:

The Star [has] been added to, altered, rebuilt, extended and remodelled as circumstances demanded. It [has] been a mirror of Newcastle’s history, life and culture from its emigrant pioneer beginnings in a rural landscape to the city of the late 20th century.3


Prepared by EJE Heritage
Nominated Architect – Peter Campbell #4294

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Historical Significance

Criterion (a) An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The Star complex is associated with significant activities and historical phases in a local context extending from the 1850s to the present, within the meaning of several NSW Historical Themes, including: ethnic influences; migration; commerce; events; mining; accommodation; labour; domestic life; leisure; sport; towns, religion; suburbs and villages; and persons. Although the fabric of the complex has been subject to alterations and additions, the buildings remain legible as evidence of the continuity of urban growth and change in inner Newcastle, and particularly of the important place of public houses and hostleries in Australian life.

Both the Hunter Street and King Street former hotel buildings are strongly associated with the Star Hotel Riot of Wednesday 19 September 1979. This association is of significance at a State level because of the many aspects of its physical occurrence and its importance in the State's history, legend and myth.

Criterion (b) An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The complex has a strong association with the development and continuity of social life in a local context. It is specially associated with the Cameron family, prominent publicans with strong connections with horse racing, after whom a long-standing annual local horse racing gala is named. It also has a special association with Kurt Piccardi, a post-War Austrian immigrant who made important contributions to the commercial development of inner city Newcastle in the 1970s and 1980s. It also has a special association with important social developments involving the local homosexual, lesbian and transgender communities.

Aesthetic And Technical Significance

Criterion (c) An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).

The fabric of the complex is an eclectic mix of architectural styles and technical features, ranging from the nineteenth century dry-pressed solid brick walls and gable ends characterising the former terrace houses in Devonshire Street, through the 1890 (Hunter Street) building to the cavity brick construction of the 1910 – 1939 (Hunter Street) building, 1925 Wing and 1925 (King Street) building. None of these, however, are architecturally important or distinctive, nor do they incorporate a significant degree of technical importance. Apart from the 1925 (King Street) building, the integrity of all of the items have been substantially degraded by the post-1979 alterations and additions that, with the involvement of local investor Peter Doyle, created Piccardi's Star Village. The 1925 (King Street) structure, on the other hand, is a corner building that, despite unsympathetic alterations such as the loss of the cantilever awning that formerly addressed King Street, retains some of its sensory appeal and some of its landmark qualities.
Social Significance

Criterion (d) An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

The site has a strong association with the leisure activities of the citizens of Newcastle, particularly those concerning what was once a large population of inner city manual workers and, later on, white collar workers. This began in the 1850s, and apart from a short interruption during the creation by Kurt Picardl with Peter Doyle of the Star Village, continued into the 2000s. The re-establishment of the sale of alcoholic beverages in the 1925 (King Street) building will reinvigorate this association.

The complex, particularly the portion addressing Devonshire Street, has a special association with the recreational and economic life of the local homosexual, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities, to whom the place was, for a time, something of an oasis amidst a strongly conformist, traditionally masculine and sometimes physically violent social culture.

The complex formerly had a special association with the local racing fraternity and industry. This, however, has been lost with the passage of time, and with the demolition or adaptation of the former stables and farriers' premises associated with Devonshire Street.

Research Significance

Criterion (e) An item has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The item has little potential to yield such information. Unsympathetic and sometimes intrusive internal alterations have obscured or destroyed the original building fabric upon which inquiries into its cultural history must depend. This is especially so for the 1910–1939 (Hunter Street) hotel building, which was generally frequented by working class males, sailors and maritime workers, the ground floor of which after 1979 was completely stripped for commercial use. Similar processes have affected the 1925 (King Street) building. The significance of the latter lay in its containing comparatively discrete but not absolutely separate areas, each favoured by different clienteles, namely bikie/biker groups; members of the homosexual, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities; and a diverse concourse of younger customers, particularly surfers. Evidence of this stratification, which varied by night as well as by day and between weekdays and weekends, was destroyed by the ambitions of successive licensees, who at whim adapted the ground floor in attempts to draw in various clienteles.

Rarity Significance

Criterion (f) An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The complex possesses no such significance.
Representative Significance

Criterion (g) An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area's cultural places; or cultural or natural environments).

Having been the subject of extensive alterations and additions undertaken at various times over a comparatively long period, the complex cannot be said to remain easily legible as a hotel. As an agglomeration of discrete buildings, it does not meet this criterion.

4.2 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The former Star Hotel complex, which between 1980 and about 1990 was known as the Star Village, has a moderate level of local heritage significance. Having long been associated with significant activities and historical phases in the life of the Newcastle community, its history is redolent of several NSW historical themes, ranging from sport and leisure to domestic life and commerce. The fabric of the complex has been subject to unsympathetic and intrusive alterations and additions, which have destroyed much of its legibility as a hotel. Despite this, the individual buildings continue to testify as to the continuity of urban growth and change in inner Newcastle, and in some measure to the important place of public houses and hosteltis in Australian life.
5. PROPOSED WORKS

5.1 General
The proposed works consist of a mixed used development, incorporating and adaptively re-using the existing complex of buildings. 18 car parking spaces and 13 motor cycle/motor scooter standage spaces will be provided. Entry will be via the existing eastern right-of-way. Exit will be by way of Devonshire Street, a proclaimed road to which public access is available as of right.

5.2 Ground Floor

5.2.1 1890 (Hunter Street) Building
Proposed works involve the adaptive re-use of this three-bay building for mixed commercial and residential uses. This necessarily involves the removal of the two-storey skillion-roofed rear elements, which in the post-1979 period were so unsympathetically altered as to be intrusive.

(a) The easternmost bay, at the corner of Hunter Street and Devonshire Street, will accommodate a commercial/retail unit with a new shop front. The existing, intrusive, concrete stairway will be removed. The existing, unsympathetic entry and lighting apertures will be filled in brick, and rendered and painted to match surrounding finishes. The commercial unit will feature a secure rear door providing access to a dedicated car parking space, and an open floor plate at rear addressing Devonshire Street.

(b) The remaining bays will each accommodate a one bedroom residential unit. Each will have a front courtyard addressing Hunter Street. The potential for unwanted attention or activity at footpath level will be discouraged by the specification of aluminium shutters, angled at the discretion of the occupant. Each unit will feature a secure rear door providing access to a dedicated car parking space.

5.2.2 1910 – 1939 (Hunter Street) Building
Proposed works involve the adaptive re-use of this building for mixed commercial and residential uses. These will incorporate an internal utilities space, and also a standage area for motor bikes/scooters, to which access will be gained from the existing eastern right-of-way. The footpath vehicular crossing available before the post-1979 alterations will be reinstated. The intrusive round arched brick entranceway and gates will be removed.

(a) The commercial/retail unit will occupy space at the north-eastern corner of the building, abutting the eastern right of way, which before the post-1979 alterations was the public bar.

(b) The one-bedroom residential unit will incorporate the majority of the space that before the post-1979 alterations constituted the entrance lobby and guests' staircase. The unit will feature a rear door providing access to a dedicated car parking space.

(c) The internal utilities spaces will include a plant and services room and a garbage room, accessible by residents and commercial tenants.

(d) The internal motor bike and motor scooter standage area will occupy the area which before the post-1979 alterations was the parlour and dining room. It will include 13 standage spaces, be accessible from the existing eastern right-of-way, and will be accessible to commercial tenants and residents.
5.2.3 1925 Wing

Proposed works involve the partial removal of some internal and external walls, together
with the closure of apertures created post-1979 in the area formerly occupied by the
'showrooms' (shops). The existing internal, non-compliant stairway will be removed, and
replaced by a compliant external stairway.

(a) The car park will occupy part of the area which before the post-1979 alterations was
taken up by guest rooms. Infill brickwork will be rendered and painted to match the
surrounding finishes. Other apertures will be joined so as to provide car access from
the existing eastern right-of-way to the car parking spaces. An accessible parking
space, together with three other spaces, will be provided.

(b) Three one-bedroom units will also occupy part of the area which before the post-1979
alterations was taken up by guest rooms. Two of the units will each have a front and
rear courtyard, while the third will have a rear courtyard. The rear courtyards will use
space formerly occupied by the eastern right-of-way. These and other units will be
served by a secure bicycle enclosure.

(c) Three rooms, which before the post-1979 alterations appear originally to have formed
the main hotel laundry area, will be demolished so as to provide access between the
1926 (King Street) building and the central landscaped courtyard, originally the beer
garden.

5.2.4 Terrace (Devonshire Street) Building

Proposed works involve the adaptive re-use for residential units of the existing building,
formerly composed of three adjoining two-storey terrace houses, two of which were
separated at ground level by a covered passageway, or pend. This had flat arched
entrances at front and rear, giving access from Devonshire Street to the rear yards for
sanitary purposes, coal deliveries and the like. A new external stairway and passenger lift
will provide access to the two first floor units.

(a) The southernmost unit (Unit G.02) will include one bedroom. Space which before the
post-1979 alterations was occupied by the covered passageway, or pend, will
necessarily be incorporated into the living space, to which internal access is already
available. The entranceway from Devonshire Street will provide access from that
thoroughfare, maintain legibility as to its former purpose. A paved courtyard with
appropriate screening plantings will take up part of the space originally occupied by
the back yards and later by the central hotel beer garden and courtyard, and also a
small part of the area presently occupied by the grossly intrusive post-1979
passageway and external stairway, both of which will be removed.

(b) The northernmost unit (Unit G.03) will include two bedrooms. A paved courtyard with
appropriate screening plantings will take up part of the space originally occupied by
the back yard and later by the central hotel courtyard.

5.2.5 1925 (King Street) Building

Proposed works involve the adaptive re-use of the building for commercial, retail or
hospitality purposes. This will involve minimal internal alterations to the ground floor,
including the removal of some sections of walling. The existing internal staircase will be
re-used. External alterations will include the removal of the red anodised aluminium doors
and windows.

(a) Most of the existing post-1979 internal layout will remain, in association with the re-
lowering of some floor areas to their original height.
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9642-SOH-001 Issue A

(b) A one-bedroom residential unit (Unit G.01) will occupy the former hotel kitchen and parlour. This will involve the reinstatement in brick and making good of sections of wall removed in post-1979.

(c) The intrusive post-1979 passageway and brick round arched entrance and planter boxes currently the building to the former terrace house will be removed, along with the concrete external stairway that occupies much of this space.

5.3 First Floor
5.3.1 1890 (Hunter Street) Building

Proposed works involve the adaptive re-use for residential purposes. This area was formerly used for office and residential purposes. Access from the proposed external stairway to the three residential units will be through rear external doors via a new external landing.

(a) Each of the units (Unit 1.20, Unit 1.21 and Unit 1.22) will include two bedrooms. Existing apertures between the party walls will be in-filled and made good to match the surrounding finishes. Some new internal walls will be constructed.

(b) External alterations will involve the replacement of the existing red anodised aluminium windows and doors.

(c) As for the ground floor, the intrusive rear elements will be removed.

5.3.2 1910 – 1939 (Hunter Street) Building

Proposed works involve adaptive re-use for residential purposes. Access to the three units will be via the new landing.

(a) Each of the units (Unit 1.17, Unit 1.18 and Unit 1.19) will include two bedrooms. Existing apertures between the internal walls will be in-filled and made good to match the surrounding finishes. Some new internal walls will be constructed.

(b) External alterations will involve the replacement of the existing red anodised aluminium windows and doors.

(c) The external balcony will be retained and re-used for the same purpose.

5.3.3 1925 Wing

Proposed works involve the adaptive re-use for residential purposes of the existing guest bedrooms. Access to the eight units will be via the proposed external stairway and existing internal corridor.

(a) Each of the units (Unit 1.09 – Unit 1.16) will include one bedroom. Apertures will be in-filled and made good to match the surrounding finished, or created as necessary to combine the requisite number of bedrooms into unified living and sleeping areas.

(b) New BCA-compliant access doors are specified.

(c) External alterations will involve the replacement of the existing red anodised aluminium windows and doors.
(d) The ensuite for Unit 1.13 will occupy part of the existing internal ramp joining providing the interface with dissimilar floor height of the 1926 (King Street) building. This portion of the floor will be lowered appropriately. The remaining portion of the ramp will remain.

5.3.4 Terrace (Devonshire Street) Building

Proposed works involve the adaptive re-use for residential purposes of the existing first floor rooms. The party wall, removed probably post-1979, will be reinstated. Access to each of the two units will be via the proposed external stairway and passenger lift.

(a) Each of the two units (Unit 1.07 and 1.08) will include one bedroom.

(b) External alterations will involve the replacement of the existing red anodised aluminium windows and doors.

5.3.5 1925 (King Street) Building

Proposed works involve the adaptive re-use for residential purposes of the existing first floor rooms.

(a) Each of the six units will include one bedroom.

(b) New BCA-compliant access doors are specified.

(c) A communal residents' lounge will be provided in the space presently occupied by the first floor ablutions.

(d) External alterations will involve the replacement of the existing red anodised aluminium doors and windows.

(e) The existing plant floor over part of the former beer garden has lost its structural integrity, and will be removed in favour of a smaller plant floor for the accommodation of air conditioning and condensing equipment.
6. STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

This is the Statement of Heritage Impact for: Star Hotel and Apartments

Date: This statement was completed in May 2013

Address and Property Description: 569-573 Hunter Street Newcastle West NSW Lot 1 DP 739153

Prepared by: EJE Heritage

Prepared for: Ramsay Property Group Pty Ltd

The following aspects of the proposal respect or enhance the heritage significance of the item or area for the following reasons:

General

The proposed works will have a minimal effect on the existing fabric of the complex. They will, indeed, go a considerable way towards concealing or removing fabric associated with the extensive alterations and additions undertaken post-1979 by Kurt Piccardi in association with Peter Doyle, and also those connected with the renovations of late 2000. Some of the intrusive and unsympathetic fabric, such as the tensile shade structure in the central courtyard that formed the ‘dancing’ area which, in the hotel’s last and rather controversial incarnation, was known as The Showroom, will be removed. This, along with the restoration of angular door and window forms as appropriate in the place of the post-1979 round arched apertures, will increase the legibility of the structures by which the complex is made up. This will complement the replacement of the post-1979 red aluminium windows and glazed doors that have so obviously altered the character of the complex. This will have a positive impact, also, on the surrounding heritage items, including the Technical College and former Trades Hall in Hunter Street, and the former Commercial Banking Company of Sydney (CBC) bank building of 1925, designed by Kent and Massie (Harry Kent and H.H. Massie, principals).

The proposed works, in large measure, enable the return of the buildings of the Star complex to their historic uses.

Ground Floor

1890 (Hunter Street) Building

The removal of the rear elements, which in the post-1979 period were altered to such a degree that they were made intrusive, will allow the adaptive re-use of the central portion of the building addressing Hunter Street. Removal of the intrusive post-1979 shopfronts will help to restore a measure of sympathetic design.

1910 – 1939 (Hunter Street) Building

The proposed works will involve minimal new construction. Access to the proposed scooter/motor bike standing space from the western laneway will re-use two of the existing entrance apertures supported by columns dating from the post-1979 shopfronts, while others will be in-filled in brick to match the existing fabric. This, along with the removal of the grossly intrusive brick entrance archway, will go some way towards restoring the original form of the building.

1925 Wing

Alterations and additions to this building will also be minimal, and will restore some elements previously removed, although the original ‘showrooms’ (shops) were removed post-1979 and cannot now be replicated. Construction of the three ground floor units and associated car spaces will involve the building of infill walls between the existing load-bearing columns, so re-enclosing this currently open area. The removal of some existing internal walls, and a small area of external walling, will have no negative effect.

Terrace (Devonshire Street) Building

The removal of the grossly intrusive brick archway between the 1925 (King Street) building and the former terrace houses, once the site of the garage serving as a cane or wicker shop, will restore their pre-1979 separation, and serve to differentiate the fabric of the former terrace houses from that of the 1925 building. The demolition of the existing, intrusive, concrete external stairway addressing Devonshire Street will allow for its replacement by a new stairway and lift shaft addressing the courtyard to the west, allowing the creation of courtyard complete with surrounding small-scale plantings.

Alterations to the current ground floor layout will create two residential units, so returning this portion of the building to its original residential use.

The re-use of the internal pedestrian passageway, alternately called a pend, that formerly provided access from Devonshire Street to the rear yards and entry doors of the three former terraces, will to some extent restore this original feature so much associated with terrace houses constructed without laneway access to their yards. The doorways at both ends will be rebated, allowing legibility as to original purpose of the passageway. The removal of the anodised red aluminium windows and doors will delete these grossly unsympathetic features.

1925 (King Street) Building

This, which in terms of community esteem is most associated with the later history of the Star Hotel, will be subject to minimal alteration. The removal of limited sections of internal walls, and the infilling of wall voids created post-1979, will have no negative effect. Removal of the grossly unsympathetic red anodised aluminium windows will have a positive effect on the legibility of the building.

First Floor

General

The first floor areas of the complex will be converted into a mixture of one- and two-bedroom units, so causing these areas to revert to their original uses. The removal of small areas of internal walling, and the reinstatement of areas of wall fabric removed during the post-1979 alterations and additions, will have no negative effect on the remaining heritage attributes of the fabric.
1890 (Hunter Street) Building

The proposed interior alterations and additions, creating three residential units, will return this portion of the building to its original use. The removal of the intrusive and highly modified rear elements is necessary to make room for a new external stairway and landing by which access to the units will be available.

1910 – 1939 (Hunter Street) Building

The conversion of the existing first floor, previously used for short- and long-term guest accommodation, will return this portion of the building to its historic use. The original internal fabric, stripped post-1979, cannot now be affected. Re-use for residential purposes of the former balcony will reintroduce this past element.

1925 Wing

Conversion for residential units of the first floor of this building, historically used for short- and long-term guest accommodation, will reactivate its historic purpose. The original fabric was stripped post-1979, and will not therefore be affected.

Terrace (Devonshire Street) Building

The conversion of the existing first floor area to two residential units will return this portion of the building to its original use. The works so involved will involve little disturbance to fabric already intrusively altered post-1979.

1925 (King Street) Building

The conversion of the first floor of this building, also, into residential units, will complement its historic purpose. Once again, the stripping post-1979 of the original fabric has removed this potential point of contention.

The following aspects of the proposal could detrimentally impact on the heritage significance of the item or area for the following reasons:

As the proposal incorporates so limited an amount of disturbance to the existing fabric, virtually none of which is original, and includes a range of sympathetic and non-intrusive uses, it is submitted that none of its aspects have such a potential.

The following sympathetic design solutions were considered and discounted for the following reasons:

None were so considered. As the photographic record associated with the Development Application shows, the first floor of every building of the complex has already been subjected to the removal of any and all historically significant or original fabric. This, generally, includes door and window architraves, window sashes, door leaves and furniture, timber and zinc ceilings, cornices, timber staircases, amenities, fire places, floor coverings, plumbing and electrical fittings. Timber joists and floor boards usually remain, although not in the case of portion of the ground floor of the 1925 (King Street) building and the ground and first floors of the former terrace (Devonshire Street) building. Most of this work occurred post-1979, although the 1925 (King Street) building has been affected, also, by the alterations and additions undertaken in the mid-1980s and also in 2000. Apart from
the removal of unsympathetic and intrusive elements, the external fabric of the buildings will remain unaltered save for painting and the renewal of downpipes.

The following actions are recommended to minimise disturbance and/or enhance the interpretation of the heritage significance of the item or area:

It is recommended that the photographic record already made of the internal and external fabric of the complex should be submitted to both University of Newcastle Cultural Collections and the Local Studies Section of Newcastle Region Library.
7. CONCLUSION

The several buildings making up the former Star Hotel and Village complex, while physically sound, have over the past 33 years been subjected to variously unsympathetic and intrusive alterations and additions. In the course of these, much of the original internal fabric of all of the buildings, including even the ceilings, has been removed. The external appearance of the complex has been altered through the replacement of original fenestration, doors and the like in red anodised aluminium; the removal or replacement of shopfronts; the sealing or opening of wall apertures; the rendering or painting of facade brickwork; and the removal of cantilevered awnings.

The transformation after 1979 of Devonshire Street into what became generally known as Devonshire Lane substantially altered the character of this portion of the immediate curtilage. To this was added the redevelopment of the properties on the eastern side of Devonshire Street, and the introduction in the former western footpath area of cast iron gas light standards relocated from Sydney. These may to some extent have discouraged motor traffic, although the street remains a public thoroughfare along which vehicles may be driven as of right. After some of the retail and culinary aspects of the Village concept became unviable because of the growth of suburban shopping centres, sporadic attempts at renewal could not arrest the general decline that followed the currency market-related eclipse of Kurt Picard’s commercial fortunes in the mid-1980s.

The efforts of subsequent hotel proprietors, including the further alteration of the heritage fabric, proved of little commercial avail. The failure of the numerous entities and operators who were from time to time connected with the complex, followed by the departure of the remaining commercial tenants, began a long period of unauthorised residential occupancy of the buildings. This led to further damage to fabric, together with vandalism and the dumping of rubbish and redundant building materials.

The proposed alterations and additions must now provide the best hope for the future of the complex.
8. **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

The principal bibliography is contained at the conclusion of the Historical Context report by Hunter History Consultants, at Appendix A. The following is a short biography pertaining only to the remainder of this Statement of Heritage Impact.


9. APPENDICES: APPENDIX A: HISTORICAL CONTEXT REPORT BY HUNTER HISTORY CONSULTANTS; APPENDIX B: PLANS AND ELEVATIONS
2 History

2.1 Introduction

The site under study is located on land in the west end of Hunter Street (formerly Blane Street) that was originally Lots 96, 95 and 38 Section A of the Australian Agricultural Company’s (A.A. Co.) Newcastle Estate. The Star Complex as it exists today comprises of a number of buildings that have been remodelled on numerous occasions. They include the Star Hotel rebuilt on Hunter Street in 1910 and extended to King Street in 1925, three terraces originally constructed in 1890 adjacent to the Star on the corner of Hunter and Devonshire Streets, and a group of houses erected in the late nineteenth century fronting Devonshire Street.

![Figure 1](image)

Sketch of AA Co. allotments (not to scale).

source: Hunter History Consultants

By far, the most historically significant section of the complex is that of the former hotel. Its chief significance is embedded in its social history which extends back to the mid 1850s. The Star provides a link to key aspects of Newcastle’s working, commercial and cultural past including its working communities and diverse social groups. “It has been a mirror of Newcastle’s history, life and culture from its emigrant pioneer beginnings and rural landscape to the city of the late 20th century.”

2.2 Early Development of the Honeysuckle Area

Town development was slow in the decade following the opening up of Newcastle to free settlement in the early 1820s and activity was centred to the east of Brown Street. However, during the 1830s and 1840s, people including Richard Furlong, Alexander Walker Scott, and Dr James Mitchell established farms and small industries on grants to the south east of the town and to the west of Throsby Creek as well as the north side of the harbour. Immigration into the town was increasing, bolstered by the opening of the A.A. Co’s coal mines. By 1841 the population of Newcastle totalled 1,377 and there were 193 houses in the town. Along with its mines, the A.A. Co. also developed a wharf, a coal loading system, engineering workshops and a salt works.⁴

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¹ The history of the Star Hotel has been researched and provided by Hunter History Consultants, Newcastle.
² Both street names have been used throughout this study in keeping with historical context.
³ Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980.

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In 1841 a one acre site for use as a Roman Catholic burial ground was secured near the former convict farm at Cottage Creek on the western outskirts of the township. The Government subsequently dedicated a further acre of land adjoining the Roman Catholic Burial Ground for use as a Presbyterian Burial Ground in 1845 and another acre further west (near the present Wickham Station) for a Wesleyan Methodist Burial Ground in 1846. At the time of their establishment these burial grounds were on the extreme western boundary of Newcastle. Cottage Creek was also the site of one of Australia’s first meat canning factories founded by the Dangar family in 1848.

In 1841 Dr James Mitchell secured land grants at Honeysuckle Point on behalf of a group of residents who wished to establish a private proprietary grammar school in the developing town. The land proved to be unsuitable for the purpose and was subsequently subdivided. By 1855 there were about 70 houses at Honeysuckle on what had become known as the Church Estate or the Bishop’s Settlement.

The A.A. Co’s 2,000 acres of land granted for the purpose of coal mining and known as the company’s Newcastle Estate, initially formed a barrier to westward expansion of the town, however, development of the western end of Newcastle hastened after 1853 when the A.A. Co. started to sell its land on the south side of Blane Street. A massive and ongoing programme of wharf construction, harbour dredging and foreshore reclamations was associated with the growth of Newcastle in the mid nineteenth century.

In the early 1850s, the route from Newcastle to Maitland was still nothing more than a dirt track. The decision made in 1853 to construct a railway between the two towns with a station at Honeysuckle Point (first located on the site of the present Civic Station) as the line’s terminus provided an impetus for the development of Blane Street. “As the population of Newcastle grew and its coal industry expanded rapidly after 1856, land near the railway became more and more valuable.”

### 2.3 The Star Hotel

The original Star Hotel, built by Ewen Cameron and initially known as the Star Inn or Cameron’s Inn, was erected in 1855 on the south side of Blane Street near the corner of present day Devonshire Street. The inn was built on land purchased by Cameron in 1855 for £24 being formerly Lot 96, Section A of the A.A.Co’s Newcastle Estate. Lot 96 was bounded:

Towards the east by the west boundary line of lot 95 Two chains fifty links (2.50) Towards the south by the north boundary line of lot 39 one chain (1) Towards the west by the east boundary line of lot 97 Two chains

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6 Elaine Sheehan, (ed.), *Newcastle West New South Wales: Wesleyan Methodist Burial Ground 1858-1881*, Family History Society Inc., Lambton, 1999, p.3. All three Newcastle West cemeteries were closed in 1881 after the opening of Sandgate Cemetery.

7 Turner, ‘Honeysuckle…’, p. 56.


10 Turner, ‘Honeysuckle…’, pp.45-46; Doring, ‘Honeysuckle Project…’, p.11.

11 Turner, ‘Honeysuckle…’, p.46.

12 Conveyance Registration No. 634, Book No. 488, NSW Land and Property Information (hereinafter referred to as LPI); *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 10 March, 1910.
fifty links (2.50) and towards the north by the south side line of Blane Street with a frontage of One chain (1) and containing Forty perches (40).\textsuperscript{13}

In the mid 1850s, Cameron's land was still regarded as being on the western outskirts of the Newcastle township. In an account of the appearance of the town in the late 1850s, the \textit{Newcastle Morning Herald} noted that west beyond the A.A. Co.'s Bridge across Hunter Street (near the corner of Crown Street), "the traveller was almost at once in the bush, Hunter-street West … being but a forest track."\textsuperscript{14} However, by the time Cameron had bought his land, construction on the rail line between Newcastle and Maitland had already commenced. The Star was one of the earliest hotels erected in Hunter Street West but Cameron was not the only developer who saw the potential in building a public house in close proximity to the new rail line and its Honeysuckle terminus. The Empire Hotel (originally named, the Railway Hotel) and the Black Diamond Hotel were also strategically located to take advantage of the trade that the Great Northern Railway (officially opened on the 30 March, 1857\textsuperscript{15}) would bring.\textsuperscript{16}

Born in Scotland, Ewen Cameron, the first owner of the Star, was descended from a Highlander family driven from their native village in western Argyll to the Isle of Mull by the Highland clearances. In 1838 Ewen was one of approximately 50 members of the Cameron clan who arrived in Sydney. Before moving to Newcastle, Ewen, like many other family members, took up farming along the Hunter River near Hexham. However, the Camerons soon made influential connections in the district. Married to notable businessman, James Hannel, Mary Cameron was Newcastle's first mayoress in 1859. Ewen's own sister Mary, was married to Peter Fleming, another prominent Newcastle businessman who also served as an alderman for Honeysuckle Ward in Newcastle's first borough council.\textsuperscript{17}

Ewen built the Star and purchased the land on which it was erected with money he had made at the Rockhampton goldrush.\textsuperscript{18} He was the first of the Camerons to enter the Newcastle hotel trade but was soon followed by his eldest son James. James held the first publican's licence in the inner suburb of Hamilton where he opened the Queen's Arms in 1859 and later built the Cameron's Family Hotel in 1885 on the corner of Hunter and Steel Streets, a block away from his father's Star. All of these hotels remained in the hands of the Cameron family for many decades. The main form of business income for these early hotels was accommodation rather than the liquor trade.\textsuperscript{19}

The earliest Australian inns were often private residences belonging to people who had obtained licences to sell liquor from their own homes. In such inns, guests and the publicans' families generally shared the same facilities. However, by the 1830s legislative requirements meant that the distinction between the licensee's living quarters and accommodation for guests had become more formalised.\textsuperscript{20} The Liquor Act of 1830 stipulated that:

\begin{quote}
Every house which shall be licensed under this Act shall contain at least two sleeping rooms for public accommodation, independent of the apartments occupied by the family of the publican, and if any licensed house upon any line of road in the colony shall without reasonable cause refuse a traveller or guest, the Licensee shall pay a sum of not less than five pounds not more than twenty pounds.\textsuperscript{21}
\end{quote}

Given its location in relation to the Honeysuckle terminus and Newcastle harbour, the Star was well positioned to cater to travellers. The earliest found description of the hotel is that provided in the first

\textsuperscript{13} Conveyance Registration No. 634, Book No. 488, L.PI.
\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Newcastle Morning Herald}, 7 June, 1909.
\textsuperscript{15} Turner, 'Honeysuckle...', p.45.
\textsuperscript{16} W.J. Good, 'Inns and Taverns of Old Newcastle', unpublished manuscript, n.d., n.p., Newcastle Region Library.
\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Newcastle Herald}, 20 December, 1980.
\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Newcastle Morning Herald}, 21 October, 1921.
\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Newcastle Herald}, 20 December, 1980; \textit{Newcastle Morning Herald}, 30 August, 1907.
\textsuperscript{20} Clare Wright, 'Of Public Houses and Private Lives: Female Hotelkeepers as Domestic Entrepreneurs', \textit{Australian Historical Studies}, Vol. 32, No. 116, April, 2001, p. 64.
council rate books for Newcastle in 1860-1861. Therein, the Star is described as a single storey, wooden, public house containing nine rooms with a shingled roof and valued at £110.22 It's large stables located at the rear of the hotel were a feature of the property.

During the first 25 years after the Star was erected, the Cameron family, whilst retaining freehold, did not always hold the hotel licence.23 An 1870 advertisement placed by the new publican, John Hopes, claimed that the "hotel has been newly decorated and put into a thorough state of repair, and the Accommodation for visitors is of a superior order. Excellent Stabling on the premises."24 Publican, Francis Lynch, who became licensee in 1873 found a new use for the stables. "He was a racing enthusiast who kept his own racehorses and he began that long association with racing that made the racing fraternity such a large part of the Star's clientele."25

2.3.1 Hugh Cameron and the Star

In the early 1880s one of Ewen's sons, Hugh Cameron, took over the licence of the Star. Hugh and his wife Ethie brought new life to the Star. Despite the large stables, there was still considerable land at the back of the hotel and Ethie had a fernery built, planted a rose garden and erected a large aviary where she kept parrots and canaries. Ewen had previously erected some wooden cottages on the grassy expanse at the rear of the hotel where cows and fowls also grazed. These dwellings "were usually occupied by Cameron relatives for the family retained its clan traditions and still spoke Gaelic among themselves."26

In 1878 Hugh purchased Lot 3 of the subdivision of Lots 95A and 38A for £390, providing Devonshire Street access to the hotel. This land with a 20 foot frontage on Devonshire Street shared its western boundary with the south east corner of the Cameron property on which the Star was situated. A brick house containing 5 rooms was erected on Lot 3 at No. 6 Devonshire Street during the same year that the land was purchased.27 By 1887 Hugh had bought the adjoining Lot 4 and erected two brick terraces each containing 5 rooms at Nos. 8 and 10 Devonshire Street.28

Until his death in 1921, Hugh was the person best remembered in connection with the original Star. "Hugh's life revolved around the hotel and the racecourse."29 Together with his brother James who owned the nearby Cameron's Family Hotel, and nephew J.G. Cameron, Hugh played a leading role in the foundation of the Newcastle Jockey Club. The Cameron Handicap was named in their honour.30

The 1880s were prosperous years for the Star. Commercial development of the Railways Department land to the west of the Honeysuckle Railway Workshops began after the opening of the second Honeysuckle Point Station in 1872, 35 chains west of the original. Although the Railways Department kept a tight hold on its land, leases were issued to private enterprises keen to be located close to the railway line and station.31 Business in this section of Hunter Street was doing well and the Star "was frequented by [horse] owners, trainers and jockeys and had a big dormitory for apprentices."32 Amongst the colourful clientele was Professor Godfrey and his Monkey Circus. Unfortunately, the 'Professor's' annual visits to the Star came to an end one year when the monkeys managed to partly demolish the stables. The stables were rebuilt and in

22 Honeysuckle Assessment Book 1860-1861, AB5419.
23 Index to Liquor Licences in the Hunter Region 1865-1921, Newcastle Region Library.
24 Newcastle Morning Herald, undated clipping c. 1870.
26 Ibid.
27 Conveyance Registration No. 315, Book No. 182, LP; Newcastle City Council Rate Books, Newcastle Region Library (hereafter referred to as NCC Rates), 1878, AB5375.
28 NCC 1887, AB5384.
29 Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980.
30 Ibid., Newcastle Morning Herald 30 August, 1907.
31 Turner, 'Honeysuckle…', pp.63-64.
1888 Hugh placed an advertisement in the *Newcastle Morning Herald*, “The Star Stables. Are noted for having reliable saddle and harness horses, single or double-seated buggies at reasonable charges. Horses stabled by the month, week, day or hour. Best forage. Civil grooms.”

33 The man in charge of the stables was known as ‘Big Mac’, the former coachman to coal baron John Brown who owned the nearby Black Diamond Hotel. “Hugh had a lifelong dislike of John Brown who was a Lowland Scot. When Brown dismissed Mac for dishonesty over a trifling sum, Hugh immediately hired him.”

34 The Cameron’s Family Hotel built by James Cameron and from 1890 owned by his son, J.G. Cameron, enjoyed just as colourful reputation as that of the Star. The original Newcastle Trades Hall was built on the northern side of Hunter Street opposite the Star and many of its members frequented both the Star and the Cameron’s Family Hotel. The Camerons had a reputation for being generous and helping those in need. During the 1909-1910 coal strike, the executive of the miners’ union withdrew all of the union’s funds from the bank fearing they would be seized by the government. The money as well as that donated throughout the strike to support the miners was given to J.G. Cameron for safe keeping who distributed it to the miners as needed via cheques referred to as being written on the ‘Bank of Cameron’. According to Hugh Cameron’s great granddaughter, Laurie Nilsen, Hugh was responsible for providing the bail money for union president Peter Bowling, his neighbour and fellow Scotsman, on the night that Bowling was arrested in December, 1909. As a result of such deeds, the Camerons were regarded highly by the miners’ union.

35 *Newcastle Morning Herald*, cited, Ibid.
36 *Newcastle Herald*, 20 December, 1980.
38 Wright, ‘ Of Public Houses...’, p.64.
39 Ibid., p.65.
40 *Newcastle Herald*, 20 December, 1980; NCC Rates, 1890, AB5387.

2.3.2 1910: Demolition and Rebuilding

During the second half of the nineteenth century, hotels increasingly served as centres for civic, community and political life.36 As hotels continued to evolve as social institutions they often required additional rooms to meet the needs of various communal purposes.37 By the beginning of the twentieth century the Star had become a rabbit warren of rooms, passages and sheds that had been added to and altered over the last 50 years as the need arose. Even by 1890 the Star had expanded from its original nine rooms to 14 rooms. The kitchen still remained detached from the main building and food had to be carried across the yard to the dining room.38

Following the death of Ewen in 1890, Hugh finally purchased the Star from his father’s estate in 1891 for £3,750 and in 1910 he decided to demolish the original hotel and rebuild. A new two storey, brick hotel was
erected on the site late 1910. Rebuilding of the Star was undertaken by contractor, Mr. T. Everett but unfortunately, no photos or detailed descriptions of the hotel at the time of its construction have been located. It is known that the new hotel consisted of bars, parlors, dining room and kitchen block on the ground floor and bedrooms on the first floor.39

2.3.3 Lena Campbell

Hugh’s wife died in 1901 and his youngest daughter Aimee took over the running of the household and as Hugh entered into retirement his son Percy was given the management of the bar trade. However, Percy died in 1919 and with Hugh no longer well enough to run the operation his eldest daughter Lena took control of the business.40

Lena had married George Campbell in 1894 but at only 28 years of age she became a widow with three young children to support when George died of pneumonia in 1903. With her father’s support she took over the licence of the Centennial Hotel in Hunter Street which she held for 15 years. Lena purchased the Star from her father for £6,000 in 1920, a year before Hugh’s death.41

Assisted by her son-in-law, Charles Parker, who later became Mayor of Newcastle, Lena shrewdly began to purchase adjacent property. The family already owned 6-10 Devonshire Street and in 1921 Lena purchased Lot 5 (forming part of the resubdivision of Lots 38 and 95) and the house at No. 12 Devonshire Street for £460 from James Mathieson as well as Lot 6 and the house at No. 14 Devonshire Street for £375 from the Newcastle Building and Investment Company Limited. Martin Doherty, the owner of Lot 7 and the house at No. 16 Devonshire Street, held out for a higher price before selling to Lena in 1922 for £670. Between the southern boundary of Lot 7 and King Street the Newcastle City Council owned a narrow strip of vacant

39 Conveyance Registration No. 72, Book No. 481, LPI; Newcastle Morning Herald, 10 March, 1910; Pender and Porter Architects to C. Parker, 20 September, 1923, Tooth & Company Ltd, Star Hotel Correspondence 1924-1939, A1344, Newcastle Region Library (hereinafter referred to as Tooth Correspondence).
40 Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980; Newcastle Morning Herald, 21 October, 1921.
41 Conveyance Registration No. 668, Book No. 1190, LPI, Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980.
land which Lena acquired in 1924 for £50. She also attempted to buy land directly to the south of Lot 96A but the owners, the *Newcastle Morning Herald*, refused to sell.43

2.3.4 The New Star: 1925 Expansion

At the time that the Star was established in the mid 1850s, Newcastle imported all its beer from Sydney but in 1876 a local brewery was established at the far west end of Hunter Street by brothers John and Joseph Wood, agents for the Castlemaine Brewery Company. Hugh had entered into an agreement with the company in 1900, however, in 1921 Tooth and Company Limited took over the Wood Brothers’ operation in Newcastle.45 When the ownership of the Star was transferred to Lena she decided to retain the freehold but lease the premises to Tooth’s who would then sublease the hotel to publicans. By 1923 Lena was negotiating a new lease with Tooth’s and had plans prepared for alterations and additions to the Star which included the erection of a new bar facing King Street.44

One of the major influences affecting hotel structural design in the post World War One era, and in particular the public bar, was the introduction of six o’clock closing in 1916. “The long and unrelenting work of the dedicated temperance forces, the increasingly effective influence of the churches…and the memory of the depression, had prepared a lot of the common people…to accept 6 o’clock closing of hotels as a progressive and desirable step”46 especially during wartime. By 1920 it was estimated that 90 percent of the beer consumed in hotels was done so between the hours of 5pm and 6pm in what would become known as the ‘six o’clock swill.’ Thirsty men crowded into hotels at the end of the working day trying to drink their fill before closing time.46

To meet the crisis, hotel after hotel knocked out walls to extend the small, corner-entranced public bar. The normal encircling passage and the adjacent parlour were thrown into public bar space. Every possible area that could be spared and still receive the approval of the licensing courts was converted to bar space, either public, private, or saloon. In the larger hotels, one of the first victims was the billiard room.47

Few of the old hotels escaped the change that occurred in the 1920s moving from buildings in which bars were only a small physical part of the whole operation to where they formed a far greater part and focus.48 With early closing came not only a transformation of physical space but also a change in pub culture. Whereas hotels had traditionally served as centres for social gathering and communal meetings they became, according to J.M. Freeland, “no more than high-pressure drinking houses.”49 However, whilst hotel owners clearly wanted to increase bar space, to meet the requirements of the licensing authorities new extensions had to include both sleeping and dining accommodation.50 Accommodation was not overlooked in the new design for the Star that incorporated a total of 39 bedrooms.

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42 *Newcastle Herald*, 20 December; Conveyance Registration No. 401, Book No. 1239, LPI; Conveyance Registration No. 776, Book No. 1241, LPI; Conveyance Registration No. 693, Book No. 1281, LPI; Conveyance Registration No. 808, Book No. 1348, LPI.
44 Pender and Porter Architects to C. Parker, 20 September, 1923; C. Parker to Branch Manager, 20 November, 1923; Tooth Correspondence.
46 Ibid., p.175.
47 Ibid., p.175.
48 Ibid., pp.175-176.
49 Ibid., p. 178.
50 Ibid., p. 177.
The plans for the new hotel fronting King Street provided "for Public & Saloon Bar, two Parlors, Cellar, Store room, & Lavatory accommodation on the ground floor & Four Bedrooms, Dining room, Kitchen & appointments, Bath room & W.C. on the first floor." Alterations and the erection of a new wing to the existing Star fronting Hunter Street provided for:

The removal of existing internal walls of Store & Parlors & erection of new Bar Counter & Fitments. Existing Dining room & Bedrooms over & Kitchen block to be demolished and new wing erected having, Cellar, Saloon Bar, one Parlor, Store, Stair Hall, Office, Kitchen, Pantry & Lavatory accommodation on the ground floor and Dining room, Lounge & two Bedrooms over. The conversion of existing Saloon Bar into Shop with Lavatory. The main Building to be extended back to include Six Showrooms 35ft. x 14ft. with Servery, Pantry, Housemaids room, Six Bedrooms 16ft. x 14ft, Six Bedrooms 12 ft. x 10ft., two Bathrooms & W.Cs. over Showrooms. Walls of all Bars, inside & outside to be Tiled to height of 5ft., and Bar Counters to be Tiled. New Laundry Etc. in yard...and the existing Building to Hunter Street, to be renovated.\textsuperscript{52}

In February 1924 the Licensing Court refused Lena's application for alterations, additions and extensions to King Street. However, she appealed and finally received approval in June of the same year provided some changes to the design were made.\textsuperscript{53} The original designs had been prepared by Newcastle architect, Wallace L. Porter, who was at the time working in conjunction with Pender’s, a well-known architectural firm based in Maitland. Revised plans were prepared by Walter Harold Pender.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{51} Pender and Porter Architects to C. Parker, 20 September, 1923, Tooth Correspondence.

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{53} Branch Manager to General Manager, 21 February, 1924, Branch Manager to General Manager 27 June, 1924, Tooth Correspondence.

\textsuperscript{54} Pender and Porter Architects to C. Parker, 20 September, 1923, Branch Manager to Bray & Cohen Solicitors, 12 February, 1924, Tooth Correspondence.
Wallace Porter was a Newcastle born architect who had served his articles with the office of E.G. Yeomans before moving to the firm of Menkens and Castleden in 1908. He set up his own business in 1915 and was for a time architect to Tooth’s for the northern district. Other hotels designed by Porter included the Oriental at Carrington, the Sunnyside at Georgetown, and the Grand Junction at The Junction. Porter died prematurely at the age of 38 in 1924. Walter Harold Perder was a second generation architect in his father’s firm established in Maitland in 1863. Walter became head of the firm in 1909 and opened a second office in Newcastle with Gordon Lee in 1925. He also had considerable experience in hotel design including the Hotel Ellalong at Ellalong, the Hotel Paxton at Paxton, as well as the Hotel Australia, United Services Hotel and the Hotel Wentworth all at Cessnock.  

Three houses at 12-16 Devonshire were demolished to make way for the extension of the Star to King Street. Builder, A. Young’s tender to complete the work for £17,500 was accepted on 18 September 1924 and the work was carried out under the supervision of architect, Theo Chiplin. The new King Street bar was opened on the 14 May, 1925. (A copy of the specification of goods required for the opening of the new Star is attached.)

The new and renovated premises consisted of a two storey brick building running right through from Hunter to King Street. Accommodation consisting of 39 bedrooms was provided for on the first floor along with dining room, servery, lounge room, linen room, bathrooms, lavatories and shower rooms. On the ground floor, public and saloon bars were provided for on both the Hunter Street and King Street frontages as well as cellars, kitchen, office, parlour and lavatories. Five shops were included on the ground floor, the entrance being through an Arcade from Hunter Street on the western side of the Star, and one shop facing Hunter Street and adjoinning the Public Bar.

Charles Parker negotiated the new lease between Lena Campbell and Tooth’s Brewery. Lena agreed to accept £40 per week for the first five years on the new Star excluding the shop in Hunter Street, the five showrooms and a garage with Devonshire Street access. Tooth’s made a loan of £118,000 to Lena for the cost of the new Star, the interest on which was paid back in monthly installments. The new licensee of the Star was publican Mervyn Atkins who signed a five year lease with Tooth’s in July, 1925. Lena and her family, together with her sister Aimee and brother Herbert moved out of the Star into their new home at New Lambton.

2.3.5 Tough Times

The reverberations of the financial collapse of Wall Street at the end of the 1920s had a devastating impact on the Australian hotel industry. “In common with other business, the stresses of the time sent many of them to the wall. In the depth of the depression, 1932, nearly 5 per cent of them shut their doors for the last time without any help from the licensing boards.”

The licence of the Star changed hands several times before the eve of the Great Depression when publican Roy Stanley had just taken over as licensee. By October, 1929 trade had fallen off in common with other hotels in the district and Stanley was requesting a reduction in his rent as he had made no profit in the time since he had become licensee. But the brewery was still confident that business would improve, claiming, “The hotel is in a very good position having frontage to the two main thoroughfares, King and Hunter

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56 Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980; Unsigned memorandum, 1924, Tooth Correspondence.
57 General Manager to Branch Manager, 17 September, 1924, Unsigned memorandum, 1924, Tooth Correspondence.
58 General Manager to Bray, Cohen & Cragg Solicitors, Tooth Correspondence; Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980.
60 Correspondence 1926-1928, Stanley to Branch Manager, 30 October, 1929, Tooth Correspondence.
Streets and is well patronised both for the Bar and accommodation, and with the return to normal times, should be one of the best hotels in Newcastle.\textsuperscript{61}

However, by the end of 1930, trade at the Star had still not picked up and Stanley owed almost £800 in arrears and Tooth's offered to reduce his rent to £20 per week.\textsuperscript{62} Stanley's financial concerns were not the only bone of contention he had with the brewery. One of his complaints concerned the use of the garage fronting Devonshire Street and next to the Star's King Street section. The garage was rented by a wicker worker and used as a small factory and Stanley wanted Tooth's to take control of the garage. Stanley complained that:

> For two years or more the Garage has been a Factory, and the noise at night is always a nuisance, and reacts against making a favourable impression to guests immediately overhead. Just recently it has been serving the dual purpose of Factory and Dwelling place for three people or more, and their nightly habits include hilarious parties, loud singing, drunken brawls and hearty banging of doors at all hours of the morning to the perfect annoyance of everyone.\textsuperscript{63}

Unfortunately, for Stanley the wicker factory remained. In 1934 Stanley transferred the license for the Star to his brother-in-law Harold Moran who had previously served as publican in 1928.\textsuperscript{64}

The only documentation found in relation to renovations carried out at the Star during the depression years is the 1930 demolition of the existing 53 foot long balcony facing Hunter which was bricked up and the doorway converted to a window. A new 53 foot long steel awning was erected in its place according to council requirements.\textsuperscript{65} This was necessitated due to a recently passed ordinance by Newcastle City Council requiring all existing balconies in Hunter Street to be replaced by suspended awnings. Similar legislation had first been enacted in the early 1920s by building authorities in Sydney and Melbourne and afterwards by most local governments. “Using light steel framework hung on steel tension rods anchored back to the brickwork, flat verandah canopies, lined on the underside with pressed metal sheets and above with corrugated iron, were added as protection on one pub after another.”\textsuperscript{66}

\section*{2.3.6 1934: Sale of the Star Hotel}

The Cameron family had been in possession of the Star for almost 80 years when in 1934 Lena Campbell agreed to sell the property to Tooth and Company Limited.

As usual, Lena's representative in the sale negotiations was Charles Parker. Tooth's had first raised the issue of taking over the freehold with Mr Parker in August, 1934. The following month Lena, aged 59 and in poor health, agreed to sell the property for £29,000. At the time of sale, the Star property consisted of the hotel, one shop in Hunter Street for which the sum of £4 per week was received, five small shops in the lane at the side of the hotel (known as the Star Arcade) each let at 15 shillings per week, and one garage in Devonshire Street let at 10 shillings per week. These buildings were spread across the land referred to as Lot 96A and Lots 5, 6 and 7 of the resubdivision of Allotments 38 and 95, as well as the strip of land between the northern boundary of King Street and the southern boundary of Lot 7.\textsuperscript{67}

\textsuperscript{61} Branch Manager to General Manager, 29 May, 1930, Tooth Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{62} Stanley to Branch Manager, November, 1930, Branch Manager to General Manager, July 1931, Tooth Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{63} Stanley to C. Cohen, Solicitor, 6 October, 1931, Tooth Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{64} Branch Manager to General Manager, 27 February, 1928, Stanley to Branch Manager, 21 May, 1934, General Manager to Branch Manager, 6 March, 1935, Tooth Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{65} A.F. Hall to Branch Manager, 29 January, 1930, Branch Manager to General Manager, 4 February, 1930, Tooth Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{66} Freeland, The Australian Pub, p. 176.
\textsuperscript{67} Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980; Branch Manager to General Manager, 22 August, 1934, Branch Manager to General Manager, 30 August, 1934, Parker to Branch Manager, 30 August, 1934, Tooth Correspondence; Conveyance Registration No. 794, Book No. 1706, LPI.
During the sale negotiations it was discovered that the King Street section of the Star encroached by approximately 16 square feet on the corner of King and Devonshire Streets. Newcastle City Council consented to the realignment of King and Devonshire Streets to conform to the existing occupation and vested the area excluded from the streets to Lena who then conveyed the area to Tooth's. The Governor's approval was required in order to execute the conveyance.68

2.3.7 1938: Renovations

In Australia, the worst of the Depression was over by 1936 and building was the cheapest it had been for sixty years. Those who were in a position to do so, namely the breweries, took advantage of the situation to erect new hotels and carry out renovations.69

In July 1937 an inspection report for Tooth's on the Star concluded:

The hotel is a good sound structure and on the top floor quite satisfactory from this point of view, with the exception of the small Lounge Room and old-fashioned Bathrooms and Lavatories. The Bars and Lavatory accommodation on the Ground Floor are quite unsatisfactory, and consideration should be given to a scheme of remodelling. The hotel is situated in Hunter Street West, opposite the Technical College and handy to the cargo shipping centre at Lee Wharf, and is also close to the local Sports Ground, only one hotel being between that area and the Star Hotel. This is the 'Commonwealth' Hotel, Cook's Hill. A scheme of remodelling embodying the Tobacconist shop in Hunter Street by using this as a Saloon Bar and doing away with the necessity of patrons using the Arcade, could be considered.70

In January, 1938 the licence of the Star was transferred from Moran to Mrs Wilkinson, former licensee of the Maitland and Morpeth Hotel.71 A further inspection was conducted by J.G. Dalziel for Tooth's. His findings are reported below:

After making an inspection of this property, I find that the building, which is a two storied one, is solidly and well constructed, in sound repair and capable of being converted into a reasonably good house without a great deal of demolition. The building extends from Hunter St. through to King St., and is built upon a site very irregular in shape. A large area of the ground floor is occupied with Showrooms, Shops and Workrooms that cannot, at the present time, be advantageously occupied by the Hotel.

The parts which I consider require attention, are:-
In Hunter St., the front of the building should be re-designed, re-tiled and made to present a more attractive appearance. The Public Bar, Saloon Bar, Parlour and Office should be remodelled, retiled and generally brought up-to-date. The walls, floors and ceilings are all in excellent condition, but the fittings are old-fashioned and unattractive. The Private Entrance Hall is very dark, necessitating a light burning all day long. The Kitchen is very dark and should be removed from its present position into the Showroom on the other side of the yard entrance, to enable it to get light from the right-of-way and from the yard.

With regard to the Bar at the King St. end, there is plenty of room and, I think, the Bars are ample in size. I suggest that the whole of the fittings behind the Public Bar counter be removed, that more space be given to the Staff for working, and the Bars re-tiled, both inside and outside and the fittings generally modernised. The walls of the Men's Lavatory should be tiled and the Lavatories brought up-to-date.

The yards should be paved, and the gates renewed. Skylights should be fixed in the awning which covers portion of the right-of-way, and prevents a good deal of light from entering the present Saloon Bar. On the first floor the whole of the existing Bathrooms and Lavatories should be tiled. The whole of the stamped steel partitions forming the front and rear Bedrooms of the Hunter St. section, should be replaced with solid partitions. Skylights should be inserted in the ceilings of the long corridors, which are at present very dark.

68 Brayce Cragg & Cohen, Solicitors to General Manager, 12 December, 1934, Brayce Cragg & Cohen, Solicitors to General Manager, 18 September, 1935, Tooth Correspondence.
69 Freeland, The Australian Pub, p. 179.
70 Inspection Report, 27 July, 1937, Tooth Correspondence.
71 General Manager to Branch Manager, 20 January, 1938, Tooth Correspondence.
The whole of the Bedrooms and Corridors should have the woodwork and ceilings painted cream and the
walls papered. The walls of the Servery should be tiled, and possible alterations made to the Kitchen below.
More light should be put into the Commercial Room by inserting skylight in the roof of the balcony at the
rear.\textsuperscript{72}

Newcastle architects, Pitt and Merewether, who were employed to carry out work on Tooth’s hotels in the
Newcastle district, were asked to draw up renovation plans incorporating Dalziel’s suggestions.\textsuperscript{73} Nigel Pitt
and Edward Merewether set up the practice of Pitt and Merewether in Newcastle in 1913 and became one
of the most productive architectural firms in the city. By the early 1920s they had built up a considerable
reputation with works that included Tyrrell House, Telford Street, Newcastle (1921). Following the death in
1924 of Wallace Porter, the architect for Tooth & Co.’s northern work, Pitt and Merewether were given
Tooth’s expanding hotel work. In the period up to 1943 they designed 29 new hotels (including the Crown
& Anchor (1924), the Orient (1925), the Burwood Inn (1929) and the Station (1937)) and renovated a
further 31 of Tooth’s hotels. Other major works designed during this time included the Classical styled office buildings for Stewarts & Lloyds, Port Waratah (1934), the Australian Wire Rope Works, Mayfield
(1935), and Nesca House (1937, in conjunction with Emil Sodersteen).\textsuperscript{74}

A. Bates’ tender for £9,797 to undertake the renovations was accepted in September, 1938. The alterations,
which were mainly focussed on the Hunter Street portion of the Star and the first floor, included the
bringing forward of the dining room and changes to the kitchen, installation of skylights in the main hall,
new tiled bathrooms and lavatories, new sitting room and the renovation of all bedrooms and corridors.
Both Hunter and King Street public and saloon bars were remodelled and a new balcony erected over the
Hunter Street entrance. The alterations were completed in May, 1939 and a new licensee, Henry Bonomini
was also in place.\textsuperscript{75}

A report by Tooth’s Newcastle Branch Manager to the Property Officer at the end of October, 1939, stated
that the Star property consisted of the hotel, four lock up shops in the arcade, one tobacconist shop in
Hunter Street and one garage occupied by a wicker worker in Devonshire Street.\textsuperscript{76}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Figure5}
\caption{Hunter Street West c1950s. Star Hotel marked by ‘star’. source: Newcastle Region Library}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{72} Report Star Hotel, 11 March, 1938, Tooth Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{73} General Manager to Branch Manager, 25 March, 1938.
\textsuperscript{74} Reedman, ‘Architects of Newcastle...’.
\textsuperscript{75} General Manager to Branch Manager, 21 September, 1938, Branch Manager to General Manager, 5 April, 1939, General
Manager to Branch Manager, 12 April, 1939, Tooth Correspondence; \textit{Newcastle Morning Herald}, 12 October, 1938.
\textsuperscript{76} Branch Manager to Property Officer, 31 October, 1939.
For many years the Star was a popular haunt for seamen visiting the port of Newcastle but in the late 1960s the King Street bar, known as the Star’s back bar, was opened to a gay and lesbian clientele; it was the beginning of one of the most colourful eras in the social history of the Star.

From the mid 1950s, the Orient Hotel had become a focal point for Newcastle’s gay and lesbian community to meet and socialise, however, with a change in licensee at the end of the 1960s they were no longer welcome. At the time, business at the Star was slow and patronage declining. It is claimed that local police helped to negotiate a meeting between the married couple who licensed the Star and some of the former patrons of the Orient. “After their initial shock, the licensees decided, in the words of the immortal Stella (the drag performer who came to symbolise the Star) ‘to give the back bar over to the queens,…” 77

The drag shows and all-male revues performed at the Star breathed new life into the old hotel. The shows were such a success that a bigger stage was built in what became known as the ‘middle bar’. “About 200 men and women stand shoulder to shoulder in the hotel’s ‘centre bar’ to watch them perform each week.” 78

As can be gleaned from the following description of the Star written in 1973, the hotel had been allowed to run down over the years, however, this was of little concern to the new crowds that made the Star one of Newcastle’s most well-known and popular hotels throughout the 1970s.

It is the biggest pub in Newcastle and currently the most popular. No description could do justice to the Star, it has to be seen to be believed – an immense, crumbling ruin of a place that exudes the seaminess and rough life one expects of a seaport. Four bars, in various stages of decay, and a beer garden courtyard make up the drinking area. The paint has peeled off the ceiling in places and plaster is chipped off the walls...The only attraction is its atmosphere, and of that there is plenty...The drinkers in the Star are a diverse lot. Depending on the hour and day any one of the bars could be crowded with business men, seamen, students or steelworkers. 79

The Star’s new and diverse clientele earned it a considerable notoriety. Whilst some members of the community regarded it as a den of iniquity, for others, “the Star was the place”. 80 When Newcastle entrepreneur, Lloyd Moffatt, took over management of the Star in October 1971, he claimed that he “simply lifted it to a respectable degree of decadence.” 81

The front bar, on Hunter Street, was traditionally a seamen’s bar, and, decked out with fishing nets, it continued to attract its clientele from visiting merchant and naval vessels, as well as from the biking and surfing fraternities. The back bar became a live music venue, with performances by local rock and jazz bands (at one point it employed eight Newcastle bands and provided ten gigs for them each week), and a youthful hedonistic clientele. Upstairs there was an art gallery and a function room. The legendary drag performers of this period, such as Stella, Glenda and Dianne, served at the different bars, and did special shows in the function room as well as regular shows in the middle bar, with numerous guest artists. There was considerable movement between the three bars, and many of the patrons from the other two bars came to the middle bar at show time. 82

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78 Cited, ibid., p.100.
80 Interview with Stella in Wafer, ‘Uncle Doreen’s…’, p. 113.
82 Wafer, ‘Uncle Doreen’s…’, p. 100.
From 1973 to 1979 the Star's main attraction for the city’s youth, and university students was the live music. Don Graham took over from Moffatt as licensee in December 1973 and revamped the Star's entertainment scene by introducing live rock and roll bands six nights a week, drawing attendances of up to 1000 on Friday and Saturday nights. “At one stage, there was a different band in every bar including a gay libber show in the middle bar, all on the same night.” The Star soon became the ‘most sought after gig in town’ and whilst many famous bands passed through the hotel, the biggest drawcard and the band most closely associated with the Star was Benny and the Jets. For many young people, the Star Hotel was the only place where, for six nights a week, one could listen to good bands for free...it was, because of the social variety characteristic of its clientele, an interesting and exciting place to go. For them the Star was:

the very hub of our entertainment in the city. It is here that we flock in our hundreds to listen to the best of bands, enjoy good company and just simply relax from the hassles of the daily rat race...To us it is part of Newcastle, an essential part of 'out town' that has a very real place in our daily lives.

According to Jim Wafer, it was the diversity of the Star’s clientele and the relaxed amicability between the various social groups that gathered there that made the hotel “famous well beyond the confines of the city.” The popular ABC TV rock show, GTK, featured a film about the Star and referred to the Star as “the most exciting place in Australia.” The Star had already become known throughout the world’s seafaring communities as a meeting place for sailors and when Star Hotel t-shirts were distributed in the mid 1970s they were “spotted in places like Iran and remote South American villages.”

However, at the beginning of 1979, in a move that appeared to go against the diversity of the clientele and the Star’s unique ambience, Graham banned homosexuals from entering the Star. There was an outcry from the gay and lesbian community who picketed the hotel but the size and fervour of the protest was eclipsed by the riot at the hotel eight months later upon the announcement of the closure of the Star.

### 1979: The Star Riot

It is believed that Ewen Cameron named the original Star after Scotland’s, Glasgow Star, a favourite haunt of Highland soldiers and the place where a mutiny of the Scottish regiments commenced. It is a quirky
The Star Hotel, Newcastle
Heritage Impact Statement

coincidence that Cameron’s own Star would one day acquire notoriety for insurrection. On the 12 September, 1979, Tooth’s commercial manager, George Spencer, announced the decision to close the Star at the end of trading on the night of 19 September. Mr Spencer said he was aware of the unique part the Star had played in the hotel life of Newcastle but the decision to close was made on purely economic grounds. The hotel had been in a state of disrepair for many years and Tooth’s claimed it would be more economical to demolish the building rather than bring it up to the standard demanded by the licensing authorities. Given only a week’s notice of the closure, patrons mobilised against the decision. A demolition protest petition attracted 10,000 signatures but Tooth’s remained unrelenting. Licensee Don Graham promised that “We’ll have the biggest wake the city has seen” but instead the city experienced the biggest riot in its history.

According to a report by Newcastle City Council Alderman, Paul Dunn, the sequence of events culminating in the riot began with people gathering at the Star early in the afternoon of the closing date. Free beer was supplied for an hour between 5pm and 6pm and the crowd grew to approximately 5,000 during the evening, overflowing into King Street and blocking traffic. At 10pm the police entered the back bar and requested the band to stop playing and the serving of beer ceased. The band played one more song and a car in King Street tried to drive through the crowd. A police van arrived and beer cans were thrown before police made some arrests and moved on. A highway patrol car then tried to move through the crowd and hit one person, infuriating the crowd. The crowd resisted the police attempt to clear the road and further arrests were made before violence broke out culminating in a brawl at approximately 10.35pm.93

![Figure 7](image_url)

Images from the 1979 Star Hotel Riot.
source: Newcastle Herald,
20 Sept 1989

Other reports estimated a crowd of up to 7,000 people. More than 20 people were taken to hospital, two police cars were burnt out and 43 people finally charged.94 Initially, many in the community viewed the riot with outrage. The then Premier of New South Wales, Neville Wran, referred to it as “a shocking, disgraceful episode.”95 The editorial in the Newcastle Morning Herald on the Friday after the riot was headed

92 Newcastle Sun, 12 September, 1979.
93 Dunn, Star Hotel...
95 Ibid.
“Newcastle’s Shame.” The riot attracted not only headlines around Australia but also received coverage around the world.88

In later years the riot has been portrayed as a protest against the discrimination shown towards the city’s counter-culture as opposed to a “disgusting exhibition of moronic behaviour”.89 A legacy of the riot is that the Star has enjoyed iconic status amongst sections of the community. A musical play based on the history of the Star was commissioned by the Hunter Valley Theatre Company in 1980. Called ‘The Star Show: Tonite Heroes – Tomorrow Forgotten’ it featured songs including ‘The Drag Song’ and ‘The Gay Song’. Renowned Australian band, Cold Chisel, who never appeared at the Star, recorded a song called ‘The Star Hotel’ which appeared on their ‘Greatest Hits’ album in the early 1980s.90 On the tenth anniversary of the riot former licensee, Don Graham, commented, “you know, even today people come up to me and say, ‘Don the Star was the most fabulous hotel that ever was’. And it was. There’ll never be another Star.”91

2.3.10 Star Complex Redevelopment

Following the closure of the Star on 19 September, 1979, Tooth’s did not demolish the building but sold it at auction to Newcastle property developer, Kurt Piccardi. Piccardi was a leader in the initiative to redevelop Newcastle’s West End in the early 1980s. His designs were influenced by his philosophy that, where feasible, old buildings should be recycled rather than demolished.92 Some of the many Newcastle buildings that received the Piccardi recycling touch were the former Ireland’s Bond Store in King Street, the old Mackies Furniture Store, the Theatre Royal and the David George Warehouse.93

By September, 1980, Piccardi had prepared plans for the large scale redevelopment of the Star site which included the former Macey’s furniture store on the corner of Devonshire and King Streets and the houses originally built by the Cameron family at Nos. 6-10 Devonshire Street which had also been acquired by Piccardi.94 The initial design (see below) incorporated the restoration of the Star’s King Street bar to its original condition for use as a tavern, bar and restaurant. It also included the redesign of the Hunter Street section of the Star. The Newcastle Herald reported:

With upgrading of some of the existing shops and development of more retail facilities there will be 22 shops on the site when the project is completed. Perhaps the most unusual feature of the plan is a proposed rock pool which will be about 11m by 8m...The entire site will be extensively landscaped and benches and covered walkways will predominate the outdoor area.95

Work on the redevelopment commenced in 1981 and was undertaken in several stages. Piccardi also purchased the old terraces at 563-567 Hunter Street between the corner of Devonshire Street and the former Hunter Street section of the Star which were also incorporated into the Star Complex redevelopment.96

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96 Newcastle Morning Herald, 21 September, 1979.
98 Ibid., pp. 101, 108.
99 Ibid., p. 102.
101 Transfer No. S365011, LPI; Newcastle Herald, 9 September, 1980.
103 Newcastle Herald, 9 September, 1980; Certificate of Title Vol. 7608, Fol. 26, LPI.
104 Newcastle Herald, 9 September, 1980.
105 Information supplied by Newcastle City Council, Plan Room, 24 October, 2003; Transfer Nos. T234702, T315175, S829244, LPI.
2.3.11 Recent Changes

Over the last 20 years the doors to the Star have opened and closed several times as the property changed hands and various alterations and modifications undertaken. In recent years changes in management have brought variations in usage and seen the Star linked with some intriguing identities including notorious former detective, Roger Rogerson, who claimed a stake in the hotel.106

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In 1986 ownership of the entire site was transferred from Piccardi to the State Authorities Superannuation Board who undertook restaurant alterations before transferring ownership to Ryner Pty Ltd in 1990. In the early 1990s the Star was resurrected as a musical venue but suffered another setback in 1995 when a rock and roll fire-breathing act accidentally set part of the building alight.

When new licensee, Mark Henderson, took over management of the Star in 1997 about $250,000 was spent on renovations. “He tried a more upmarket approach, with the hotel operating as the Acoustic Café and Star Motel. Attractions included a restaurant, conference centre, recording studio, gaming room and music publishing arm.”

By early 2000 the Star Complex consisted of the tavern in the former King Street section, 19 motel rooms, 10 shops and offices. Yet again under new management, plans to refurbish the hotel at a cost of $200,000 were prepared. A spectacular reopening of the Star went ahead on the night of 15 December, 2000 despite last minute problems with building and entertainment permits. Publican Ken Blackwell, told the *Newcastle Herald*, “the full impact of what we were doing in rebirthing this icon of the city did not sink home with me until we started getting calls from media outside the region…within days we were getting calls from members of the public as far afield as Darwin.”

The Star was embroiled in management problems in 2001 and in August of the same year the Star complex was sold to E-Lawnet.com.au Pty Ltd. Two months later, the *Newcastle Herald*, announced that under new management, the Star was about to be reborn once more time with an entirely new image. Renovations were still underway but, “Gone are the strippers, bikie gangs, table dancers and dim interior. They have been replaced by a bright décor and a Grecian Grill eatery.” By August, 2003 the Star had once again closed its doors.

### 2.4 Lots 95 and 38, Section A

Lots 95 and 38 Section A were originally part of the A.A.Co.’s Newcastle Estate. In total they contained one rood and 24 perches of land, bounded on the north by the southern side of present day Hunter Street, on the south by the northern side of present day King Street, on the east by the western side of present day Devonshire Street and on the west by Lots 96 and 39.

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107 Transfer Nos. W570838, Z076720, LPI.
114 Conveyance Registration No. 162, Book No. 120, LPI.

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*Figure 10*

Sketches of allotments, 1870.
Source: Conveyance Registration No. 162, Book No. 120, LPI.
In 1858, Newcastle property investor and businessman, George Tully, purchased Lots 95 and 38 Section A from the A.A. Co. Tully did not build on the land and transferred the lots to the first Bishop of Newcastle, William Tyrrell and to William Sparke. In 1870 the land was purchased by Alfred Atkinson Tighe for £400. Tighe promptly subdivided the land into eight separate allotments; two larger blocks with Blane Street frontage and six narrow blocks fronting Devonshire Street.

![Figure 11](image)

**Figure 11**
Sketch of Tighe’s subdivision of Lots 95 & 38, Section A (not to scale).

source: Hunter History Consultants

Tighe, who lent his name to the inner Newcastle suburb of Tighe’s Hill, was a well-known and successful businessman and politician in the district. Tighe ran a successful auctioning business and had considerable land holdings especially in the suburb of Waratah where he once served as police magistrate. He was an alderman on the inaugural Newcastle City Council formed in 1859 and represented the district in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly between 1862 and 1882.116

### 2.4.1 Hunter (Blane) Street Frontage

Lots 1 and 2 fronting Blane Street remained vacant until the mid 1880s.117 The 1886 Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map depicts a small single storey building on the north western corner of the property being leased by A.B. Cox and Co., Ironmongers. The council rate book for 1886 describes the building as a two roomed store with stables.118 In 1889 the ironmonger’s store and stables were demolished and in 1990 three, two storeyed brick terraces each containing nine rooms are erected on the site (see Survey Map of Newcastle Suburbs, 1896).119 According to the council rate books these buildings consisted of leased shops on the ground floor and rental flats on the upper floor. During the 1890s, grocery, drapery and music businesses were operating out of the shops.120

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117 NCC Rates 1860-1885.
118 Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map, January, 1886, Newcastle Region Library; NCC Rates 1886, AB5383.
119 NCC Rates, 1889, AB5386, 1890, AB5387.
120 Ibid., 1890-1899.
In 1898 Tighe divided his vast real estate holdings amongst his large family. He transferred Lots 1 & 2 and the properties thereon to one of his daughters Ada Angus. The Angus family resided in Sydney and continued to rent the properties, which were used for both commercial and residential purposes. The three terraces at 563-567 Hunter Street, remained in the hands of the Angus family until 1950 when they were sold to Coo-ee Clothing Limited.\textsuperscript{121}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure12.png}
\caption{Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map, January 1886. source: Newcastle Region Library}
\end{figure}

In 1946, architects Pitt and Merewether prepared three new designs for the properties.\textsuperscript{122} The plan which most closely resembles the outline of the current buildings is ‘9463C’ (see attached). However, rate book searches do not indicate that the buildings were completely demolished in order to implement the new design, and the outline of the terraces remains constant on 1896, 1922, and 1957 survey maps.\textsuperscript{123} Indeed, the outline of the buildings today (although they have been incorporated into the Star complex redevelopment post 1981) still resembles that depicted on the 1896 map.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure13.png}
\caption{Outline of terraces cnr Hunter and Devonshire streets. source: Survey Map of Newcastle Suburbs, 1896 (NSW Dept of Lands), Newcastle Region Library}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{121} Conveyance Registration No. 321, Book No. 624, Conveyance Registration No. 831, Book No. 2141, LPI.
\textsuperscript{122} Pitt and Merewether Architects, Angus Estate, Proposed Shops and Flats – Hunter Street and Devonshire Lane, Newcastle, September, 1946, Newcastle Region Library, AM-A2000/80.
\textsuperscript{123} Survey Map of Newcastle Suburbs, 1896 (NSW Department of Lands), Newcastle Region Library; Liverpool and London Globe Insurance Company, Detailed Survey Map of the City of Newcastle 1922, Newcastle Region Library; City of Newcastle Plan of subdivision of land in C.T. Vol. 6847 Fol. 79, April, 1957, LPI.
2.4.2 Devonshire Street Frontage

Measuring only 20 feet in width, Devonshire Street had the appearance more of a lane than a street. The first buildings on the western side of the street were erected in 1871. Tighe had sold Lot 6 to accountant, Alexander Farthing and his wife Harriet for £80 and Lot 5 to engine driver, William Mathieson for £70. A single storey, five roomed wooden house was erected by Farthing at No. 14 and next door at No. 12, Mathieson built a brick house containing six rooms. In the same year, Tighe sold Lot 7 to William Collins who made a quick sale to Edwin Harris for £65. Harris erected a single storey, six roomed brick house at No. 16 in 1872. All three of these properties remained standing until they were demolished by Lena Campbell in the early 1920s to make way for the construction of the Star's King Street bar. The 1886 and

\[124\] Conveyance Registration No. 793, Book No. 150, Conveyance Registration No. 394, Book No. 123, LPI.

\[125\] NCC Rates, 1871, AB5369.

\[126\] Conveyance Registration No. 940, Book No. 123, Conveyance Registration No. 405, Book No. 126, LPI.

\[127\] NCC Rates, 1872, AB5370.
1896 Survey Maps also depict a house at No. 18 which does not appear in the council rate books but was obviously demolished before Campbell took over the Star.

Owners of the Star, the Cameron family, purchased Lots 3 and 4 and in 1878 erected a two storey, brick house containing five rooms at No. 6. Two adjacent double storey brick houses, each containing five rooms, at Nos. 8 and 10 were also erected by Hugh Cameron in 1887. By the time that the Star’s King Street bar was built in 1925, these three properties were the only remaining houses fronting the western side of Devonshire Street. Two wooden cottages at Nos. 2 and 4 were erected by Tighe in 1885 but these houses were demolished in 1890 to make way for the terraces built on the corner of Hunter and Devonshire in the same year.

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Figure 16
Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map, January 1886.
source: Newcastle Region Library

From the end of the 1860s to the early 1900s, the A.A. Co. leased the land behind the Gasworks at the southern end of Steel Street to Chinese market gardeners. During this time other Chinese immigrants established market gardens throughout the Newcastle district and many set up businesses including produce stores and residences in Newcastle in the areas bound by Steel Street and nearby Devonshire Street. Beginning in the early twentieth century, the council rate books show members of the Chinese community leasing houses in Devonshire Street. In 1904 the Presbyterian Chinese Church was built on the eastern side of Devonshire Street and operated until 1939. However, according to Hugh Cameron’s great grand daughter, one of the houses owned by the Cameron family opposite the church, was used by the Chinese

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132 NCC Rates, 1901-1913.
133 *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 18 April, 1939.
tenants as a ‘Joss House’. This information is supported by the recollections of Astley Pulver who knew of a ‘Joss House’ (a place where Chinese deities were worshipped in idol form) operating in a side street near Union Street when he was a boy.  

Following the death of Hugh Cameron in 1921 the houses at Nos. 6-10 were owned by his daughters Aimee Cameron and Florence Myra Caston who held the properties for over 20 years until they were transferred to Frederick Fryer then on to Coo-ee Clothing Limited in 1950.

2.4.3 Re-subdivision early 1950s

Following Coo-ee Clothing Limited’s 1950 acquisition of 563-567 Hunter Street and 6-10 Devonshire Street, the land on which the properties stood was once again subdivided. As can be seen from the 1957 survey map, the land fronting Hunter Street was divided into three lots, namely Lot A of Part 95A at No. 567, Lot B of Part 95A at No. 565 and Lot C of Part 95A at No. 563. Nos. 6-10 Devonshire Street became part of Lot D of Part 95A.

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136 Conveyance Registration No. 315, Book No. 182, Conveyance Registration No. 97, Book No. 1902, Conveyance Registration No. 21, Book No. 2154, Application to Bring Lands Under the Protection of the Real Property Act, 1900, No. 37938, LPI.
137 City of Newcastle Plan of subdivision of land in C.T. Vol. 6847 Fol. 79, April, 1957, LPI.
By the early 1980s, all of the properties had changed hands before being acquired by Kurt Piccardi.\textsuperscript{138} Given Piccardi’s preference for recycling buildings in favour of demolishing, it is likely that these premises, which were incorporated into the Star complex redevelopment in the 1980s, were not demolished but simply remodelled. However, given the numerous alterations and remodelling that the buildings have undergone since their construction in the late nineteenth century, there is likely to be little remnants of their original Victorian features.

![Figure 18](image)

In 1986 the entire re-subdivision was transferred to the State Superannuation Authorities Board, then to Ryner Pty Ltd in 1990 before being conveyed to the present owners E-Lawnet.com.au Pty Ltd in 2001.\textsuperscript{139}

\section{Conclusion}

The history of the site can be linked to a number of NSW Heritage Council themes including Leisure, Commerce and Significant Persons. The original Star built in 1855 was one of the earliest hotels in Hunter Street West. Owned by the well-known Cameron family for 80 years, the Star has been rebuilt, extended and remodelled as circumstances required. However, it has become part of, as well as a reflection of, the Newcastle cultural landscape. The changing diversification of its clientele across the years from seamen, miners and steel workers to drag queens, surfies and rock ‘n’ rollers has mirrored the changing face and environment of the city. It has enjoyed a colourful history and its notoriety throughout the 1970s when it became a melting pot of various social groups placed Newcastle in headlines around the world. Few, if any other, Newcastle hotel could claim to be the subject of documentaries, academic research, plays, songs and verse. It is the hotel most readily identifiable with the city.

\textsuperscript{138} Transfer Nos. T234702, T315175, S829244, S881030, LPI.

\textsuperscript{139} Transfer Nos. T250150, W570838, Z076720, 7876841K, LPI.