This report was prepared by GML Heritage, Trigger and Simon McArthur and Associates in good faith exercising all due care and attention, but no representation or warranty, express or implied, is made as to the relevance, accuracy, completeness or fitness for purpose of this document in respect of any particular user’s circumstances. Users of this document should satisfy themselves concerning its application to, and where necessary seek expert advice in respect of, their situation. The views expressed within are not necessarily the views of the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) and may not represent OEH policy.

© 2014 State of NSW and Office of Environment and Heritage

With the exception of photographs, the State of NSW and Office of Environment and Heritage are pleased to allow this material to be reproduced in whole or in part for educational and non-commercial use, provided the meaning is unchanged and its source, publisher and authorship are acknowledged. Specific permission is required for the reproduction of photographs.

Published by:
Office of Environment and Heritage
59 Goulburn Street, Sydney NSW 2000
PO Box A290, Sydney South NSW 1232
Phone: (02) 9995 5000 (switchboard)
Phone: 131 555 (environment information and publications requests)
Phone: 1300 361 967 (national parks, general environmental enquiries, and publications requests)
Fax: (02) 9995 5999
TTY users: phone 133 677, then ask for 131 555
Speak and listen users: phone 1300 555 727, then ask for 131 555
Email: info@environment.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.environment.nsw.gov.au

Report pollution and environmental incidents
Environment Line: 131 555 (NSW only) or info@environment.nsw.gov.au
See also www.environment.nsw.gov.au

ISBN 978 1 74359 631 9
OEH 2014/0363

April 2014
Contents

1.0 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1
  1.1 Key Objectives ............................................................................................................ 3
  1.2 Project Scope ............................................................................................................... 3
  1.3 Location ....................................................................................................................... 4
  1.4 Site Description .......................................................................................................... 4
  1.5 Methodology ............................................................................................................... 5
  1.6 Report Outline ........................................................................................................... 6
  1.7 Limitations ................................................................................................................. 6
  1.8 Authorship .................................................................................................................. 6
  1.9 Acknowledgements ..................................................................................................... 7
  1.10 Abbreviations and Terminology ................................................................................. 7

2.0 Research and Analysis ................................................................................................ 9
  2.1 Introduction ................................................................................................................ 10
  2.2 Plan of Management (NPWS) ................................................................................... 10
  2.3 Masterplan ................................................................................................................. 11
  2.4 Conservation Management Plan ............................................................................... 13
  2.5 Aboriginal Heritage .................................................................................................... 16
  2.6 Landscape Management Plan ..................................................................................... 17
  2.7 Cultural and Tourism Recreation Master Plan ............................................................. 19
  2.8 Heritage Interpretation Program ................................................................................ 19
    2.8.1 Rose Deco Planning and Design—Community Consultation .................................. 21
  2.9 Key Interpretive Resources ......................................................................................... 22
    2.9.1 The Holtermann Collection .................................................................................... 22
    2.9.2 Donald Friend’s Diaries ....................................................................................... 22
    2.9.3 The Hill End Story, Harry Hodge .......................................................................... 22
    2.9.4 Hill End Historic Site Oral History Project, Majorie Prior ..................................... 23
    2.9.5 Hill End Heroines & Tambaroora Treasures, Tambaroora Gathering Group ............ 23
    2.9.6 Hill End Hearsay: to the Best of my Memory, Malcolm Drinkwater ....................... 23
    2.9.7 National Film and Sound Archives, Video Recordings ......................................... 23
  2.10 Summary .................................................................................................................... 23

3.0 Hill End Historic Site Character Analysis .................................................................. 25
  3.1 Introduction ................................................................................................................ 26
4.6.5 Visitor Satisfaction ........................................................................................................... 46
4.6.6 Visitor Satisfaction with Guided Tours ............................................................................. 47
4.7 Marketing ............................................................................................................................. 49
4.7.1 Positioning and Brand ....................................................................................................... 49
4.8 Target Markets ..................................................................................................................... 51
4.9 Key Opportunities for Audience Engagement ...................................................................... 52
4.9.1 Emerging Opportunities .................................................................................................. 52
4.9.2 Specific Visitor Options .................................................................................................... 52
4.10 Summary ............................................................................................................................ 53

5.0 Key Outcomes and Findings ............................................................................................... 55
5.1 Introduction ........................................................................................................................ 56
5.2 Interpretive Themes/Storylines .......................................................................................... 56
5.3 Interpretive Approach .......................................................................................................... 57
5.4 Visitors and Audiences ....................................................................................................... 58
5.5 Activities and Events .......................................................................................................... 59
5.5.1 Walking Tracks and Trails .............................................................................................. 60
5.5.2 Ideas to Revitalise Current Tours and Activities ............................................................. 60
5.6 Marketing ............................................................................................................................ 62
5.7 Summary ............................................................................................................................. 62

6.0 Preliminary Interpretation (and Visitation) Concepts .......................................................... 63
6.1 Introduction ........................................................................................................................ 64
6.2 Arrival Experience .............................................................................................................. 64
6.3 Preliminary Interpretation Overview .................................................................................... 65
6.3.1 Interpreting Everyday Life through Creative Partnerships ............................................. 66
6.4 Physical Interpretation ........................................................................................................ 66
6.4.1 Interpretive Exhibition ..................................................................................................... 67
6.4.2 Interpreting Missing Buildings ...................................................................................... 69
6.4.3 Boom Town Signage ...................................................................................................... 69
6.4.4 The Fence as Interpretation ............................................................................................ 70
6.4.5 The Holtermann Collection Display .............................................................................. 70
6.4.6 Exhibition Design .......................................................................................................... 70
6.4.7 Walking Tracks and Trails—Outside of Town ................................................................. 71
6.4.8 Holtermann’s Nugget Tent Recreation .......................................................................... 71
6.4.9 Brochures ...................................................................................................................... 72
6.4.10 Booklet ........................................................................................................................ 72
6.4.11 Adaptive Reuse .......................................................................................................................... 72
6.5 Digital Interpretation .......................................................................................................................... 73
  6.5.1 Preliminary Concepts for Digital Interpretation in the Landscape ................................................. 73
  6.5.2 Preliminary Concepts for Interior Digital Interpretation ................................................................. 73
6.6 Co-ordination Across Interpretation Media and Marketing ................................................................. 74
6.6 Conclusion ........................................................................................................................................ 75
Report Register

The following report register documents the development and issue of the report entitled Hill End Interpretation Plan and Implementation Strategy—Research and Review Report has been undertaken by GML Heritage Pty Ltd in accordance with its quality management system. This Report has been written in collaboration with Trigger and Simon McArthur and Associates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job No.</th>
<th>Issue No.</th>
<th>Notes/Description</th>
<th>Issue Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13-0442</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Draft 1</td>
<td>21 Feb 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-0442</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Draft 2</td>
<td>17 April 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quality Assurance

GML Heritage Pty Ltd operates under a quality management system which has been certified as complying with the Australian/New Zealand Standard for quality management systems AS/NZS ISO 9001:2008.

The report has been reviewed and approved for issue in accordance with the GML quality assurance policy and procedures.

Project Director & Reviewer: Sharon Veale

| Issue No. | 2 |
| Signature |

Position: Partner, CEO

Date: 17 April 2014
1.0
Introduction
1.0 Introduction

This Research and Review Report has been prepared for the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) as part of the Hill End Historic Site Interpretation Plan and Implementation Strategy project by GML Heritage, Trigger and Simon McArthur and Associates (SMA).

The Interpretation Plan and Implementation Strategy project is comprised of several stages with a series of reporting requirements. This Research and Review Report is the first project deliverable. Subsequent stages of the project will include the following:

- draft Interpretation Plan;
- Priority Product Development;
- final Interpretation Plan; and
- Implementation Strategy.

This Research and Review Report provides overview and analysis of the documentation that has been considered by the project team with regard to interpretation planning at Hill End Historic Site. Hill End Historic Site has been subject of considerable investigation and research over an extended period. As part of the preparation of this report a range of background documents have been reviewed.

The physical character, attributes and qualities of the Hill End Historic Site are also reviewed in this report, as are visitation, audiences, interpretation currently provided and marketing of the destination. Based on the analysis of the Hill End Historic Site and the review of research materials, the project team has documented the initial impressions, findings, outcomes and issues in this report. This research — place-based analysis of Hill End and the review of current visitors and their experience — has informed and guided the formulation of the preliminary interpretation and visitation concepts that are presented in this document. At this stage of the project, the concepts for interpretation and visitation represent the initial ideas and concepts of the project team and have not been subjected to detailed consideration and evaluation. Such work will form the basis of the draft Interpretation Plan. The initial concepts for interpretation are presented in this report to generate discussion and feedback from National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). It is not anticipated that all concepts will proceed to the stages of further planning and development, but rather that PWG will review and comment on those presented in this report, and based on that feedback, the preferred options will be progressed during the next stage of interpretation planning.
1.1 Key Objectives

The Hill End Interpretation Plan and Implementation Strategy project has several objectives that are to be achieved. The key project objectives include:

- to provide a clear policy and a detailed, staged strategic planning framework to guide the development of all future Hill End Historic Site interpretation initiatives;
- to develop a range of facilities and programs to address the different needs and interests of visitors;
- to improve and enhance visitor enjoyment and understanding of the cultural significance of Hill End Historic Site;
- to contribute to and enhance visitor understanding and enjoyment of the area’s cultural heritage and provide a mechanism for all visitors to experience and learn more about the place;
- to identify opportunities for key community stakeholder engagement with interpretation project planning, development and presentation; and
- to demonstrate best practice interpretation facilities consistent with relevant state, national and international standards and guidelines.

1.2 Project Scope

The scope of works for this research and review stage of the broader Interpretation Plan and Implementation Strategy project includes:

- a review of visitor market research;
- visitor profiling and analysis of visitor behaviour and impressions of current interpretation;
- identification of opportunities for revenue generation;
- investigation of partnership opportunities with tourism operators, organisations and museums;
- development of opportunities and options for visitor experiences;
• review and synthesis of heritage and interpretation planning documents and consultation findings;
• analysis of current approaches to interpretation such as facilities, methods and materials;
• review and analysis of historical sources, images, plans and objects and the physical context of the Hill End Historic Site;
• review of documented interpretive themes and methods in existing documentation;
• review of the current way that the destination and interpretation experiences are marketed;
• identification of key gaps in existing themes and storylines and recommend methods to address them; and
• identification and development of key themes (including sub-themes) and storylines and connect these to physical experiences and places;
• proposition of target markets for interpretation and marketing to focus on; and
• identification of improvements to marketing of the destination and its interpretive experiences.

1.3 Location

Surrounded by some rugged gorges and mountains, Hill End Historic Site is located in the central west region of New South Wales, around 275 kilometres northwest of Sydney (via Turondale) in the northern tablelands. Hill End is located in the heart of the region and surrounded by a number of thriving centres. It is situated 85 kilometres from the regional city of Bathurst, around 72 kilometres south of the township of Mudgee, and approximately 135 kilometres northeast of the city of Orange.

There are three approaches to Hill End from Bathurst. The first is via the historic township of Sofala (78 km), the second is via Turondale (69 km), and the third is along the old bridle track (57 km). The Bridle Track is a scenic route which follows the Macquarie and Turon Rivers and which runs from Duramana north of Bathurst. It is unsealed and only accessible to 4WD vehicles or mountain bikes. Currently the Bridle Track is closed to vehicles due to a rock slide at Monaghans Bluff, although it is still trafficable for motor bike and mountain bikes.

Hill End Historic Site is predominantly within the land area administered by Bathurst Regional Council, though an area of the site to the north is within the Mid Western Council jurisdiction.

1.4 Site Description

Hill End Historic Site is comprised of approximately 140 hectares of land that is under the care, control and management of the PWG of the OEH.

The Hill End Historic Site was one of the first historic sites gazetted under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1967 (NSW). The Historic Site is comprised of several discontiguous parcels of land. Within and surrounding the Historic Site are a number of freehold properties, as well as crown land and common trust land reserves. The largest land area within the Historic Site includes the historic mining village of Hill End. The remnants of the former village of Tambaroora, the former industrial mining landscape of Golden Gully, Valentines Mine, and the Cornish Quartz Roasting Pit area are separate allotments to the north of the village of Hill End.
Set in a basin within the broader natural landscape and topography of the tablelands, the village of Hill End is an historic cultural landscape that comprises a rectilinear grid street pattern and lot layout, with cultural plantings, significant archaeological resources, ruins, and extant historic buildings and structures. The land and buildings at Hill End are used for a variety of purposes. The open space within the Historic Site is used for passive and active recreation. There are two established camping grounds. Much of the building stock at Hill End is used for private residences; however, there are buildings used for interpretation, civic functions and events, and also for commercial and retail purposes.

The Hill End Historic Site includes a population of approximately 120 residents. Some current residents of Hill End are descendants of people who moved to Hill End during gold rushes in the eighteenth century.

Since the Historic Site was gazetted in 1967, the PWG has maintained a continuing program of conservation planning, assessment, management, maintenance and interpretation. Within the Historic Site PWG also functions as a municipal authority and is responsible for water supply, sewage and garbage disposal. PWG also maintains some roads, walking tracks, open space and camping areas.

1.5 Methodology

This report has been prepared by a multidisciplinary team. In developing this report the team has worked collaboratively, focussing on integrating and relating history, heritage values, design and visitation to the process of interpretation planning.

Individually and collectively the project team has analysed the documentary and physical character and qualities of the Hill End Historic Site. The impressions and interpretations that we have arrived at during this initial research and review stage of the Interpretation Plan and Implementation Project have been considered and discussed with regard to each member’s professional disciplinary perspective to ensure the approach to planning interpretation considers the known and potential visitor market, heritage values and design as part of the experience.

This report has been prepared through critical reading and review of the background documentation. Some additional research to supplement the materials provided by PWG has been undertaken by members of the project team in areas relevant to their respective specialist disciplines.

All members of the project team attended a three to four day site inspection of the Hill End Historic Site and the surrounding area between the Thursday 6 and Sunday 9 February 2014. During the inspection, the team visited various buildings at Hill End Historic Site including the Royal Hotel, Beyers Cottage, Hosies, the General Store, Holtermans Corner, Fairfax House, Craigmoor House, the Rural Fire Shed (RFS), the Royal Hall, the Hospital (Visitor Centre) and Lyles Cottage. Some members of the team also travelled to the Bald Hill and Beaufoy Merlin lookouts, Golden Gully and the Quartz Roasting Pits. The team took part in a Bald Hill Mine tour, a Town Tour and a Ghost Tour of Craigmoor House and the hospital. The team also visited all of the accommodation, food and beverage and retail businesses, which form a key part of the cultural landscape and services for residents and visitors.

During the site inspection, SMA undertook visitor research to further define visitor profiles, behaviours and interpretive needs. SMA also evaluated 190 NPWS tour visitor evaluation forms issued to customers between 2011 and 2013. The team also met with some members of the local community. A meeting was held at the Royal Hall on Saturday 8 February 2014 to inform tourism business operators about the project, to introduce the project team and to gather local views and observations regarding the current visitor experience, types of visitors, and any key issues and opportunities.
1.6 Report Outline

This is the stage one report for the Hill End Interpretation Plan and Implementation Strategy project. This report responds to the Statement of Requirements as outlined in Schedule 2 of the Project Brief. This research and review report includes the following sections:

1.0 Introduction: An introduction to the Interpretation and implementation project, including the scope, key objectives, methodology, limitations, authorship and acknowledgements.

2.0 Research and Analysis: Summary overview of the statutory planning and policy context, Hill End Masterplan, Conservation Management Plan and previous interpretation reports.

3.0 Hill End Historic Site Character Analysis: Overview of the natural and cultural landscape, significant views and vistas, precinct character, current interpretive experience, current activities and events,

4.0 Hill End Visitor Management and Visitors: Visitor management, current visitation, arrival and circulation, visitor profile, visitor feedback on the Hill End experience, an evaluation of the NPWS visitor tour survey data, proposed target markets and key opportunities for audience engagement.

5.0 Key Outcomes and Findings: Interpretive themes and storylines, the suggested overarching approach to interpretation, visitors and audience, activities and events, and marketing of the destination and interpretive experiences.

6.0 Preliminary Interpretation and Visitation Concepts: Overview of the initial ideas and concepts that have emerged for interpretation and visitation based on the analysis of the background material and the physical attributes and qualities of Hill End Historic Site. This section covers physical and digital interpretation possibilities, the arrival/orientation experience and integration across media and marketing.

1.7 Limitations

This report is subject to the following limitations:

- In preparing this report the project team has relied upon materials supplied by PWG and other readily available background information about Hill End.

- No detailed community consultation has been undertaken with the Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal community of Hill End or the surrounding region.

- The only primary research undertaken was visitor surveys during the field trip between 7–9 February 2014. Due to the relatively low visitor numbers at that time, the sample size was lower than desired. To address this issue, secondary research was undertaken through an evaluation of 190 NPWS tour visitor surveys.

- History Hill Interpretive facility, just outside town, was not visited, therefore information about it in this report is from secondary sources.

1.8 The artefact store at Hill End Historic Site has not been inspected by the project team. Authorship

This report has been prepared by Sharon Veale—GML Heritage, Gregory Anderson—Trigger and Simon McArthur—Simon McArthur and Associates.
1.9 Acknowledgements

This Research and Review Report has been prepared with the grateful assistance of the following PWG staff:

- Lew Bezzina, Manager, Hill End Historic Site and Project Manager;

The following individuals are also acknowledged for their thoughtful insights and time:

- Sandra Thompson, NPWS Discovery Ranger;
- Kerrie Burns  The Hill End Ranch and Bald Hill Mine Tours; and
- Suzanne T, Hill End Bed and Breakfast, Collectables and Café (Hosies).

1.10 Abbreviations and Terminology

The following abbreviations and terminology are used in this report:

- Conservation Management Plan (CMP);
- National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS);
- Plan of Management (POM);
- Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH); and
- Rural Fire Service (RFS).
2.0 Research and Analysis
2.1 Introduction

Management and conservation at Hill End Historic Site is undertaken with regard to a statutory and non-statutory planning framework. This section of the Research and Review Report provides a summary overview of the statutory and non-statutory planning and policy context for Hill End Historic Site so as to understand the obligations, requirements and opportunities for interpretation.

A significant body of non-statutory planning documents exists for Hill End. In March 2013, a Masterplan was prepared by Conybeare Morrison and Context. The Masterplan is supported by a series of companion volumes including a Volume 2: Conservation Management Plan, Volume 3: Landscape Management Plan and Volume 4: Cultural and Tourism Recreation Master Plan. A Heritage Interpretation Program Hill End, prepared by Rose Deco Planning and Design Pty Ltd, in 2009 is reviewed in this section.

Combined, the statutes, policies and plans provide an overarching framework within which interpretation may be planned and implemented.

2.2 Plan of Management (NPWS)

A Plan of Management (POM) is a statutory plan that is prepared for each National Park and Historic Site under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. A POM for Hill End Historic Site was prepared in by the National Parks and Wildlife Service in 1988. The draft POM for Hill End Historic Site has never been formally endorsed by the Minister for the Environment and Heritage.

The POM identifies the heritage significance of Hill End Historic Site and provides the following policies and actions to conserve and manage the place:

- conserve the cultural significance of the site as a whole, the landscape, the historic buildings, their contents and surrounds;
- develop the site into an attractive tourist venue without compromising either its historic authenticity or community expectations; and
- encourage appropriate use of the site.
The statement of significance for Hill End in the POM reads as follows:

**Hill End is a place of national cultural significance due to its aesthetic, historic, scientific and social value to past, present and future generations of Australians.**

*From the period of its settlement and principal development, the 1870s, Hill End retains a unique collection of buildings, relics, artefacts, structures, archaeological sites and landscape elements which are, individually and collectively, of outstanding architectural, aesthetic and research value. The village is set along a gold bearing quartz seam within a tablelands landscape of rolling hills, accentuating the feeling of peaceful isolation. From the hectic gold rush era and subsequent years of decline, to the period of intervention of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the village buildings, vacant sites and gardens continue to reflect the social and economic forces which continue its survival.*

*The landscape and fabric of Hill End illustrate the early development of hard rock mining as well as the vernacular building methods and styles of late 19th Century New South Wales. The village contains a particularly rare and important ensemble of intact mud and bush timber structures, locally known as "wattle and daub", many of which are set in remnant early gardens with plantings, including fruit trees and flower bulbs of now-uncommon species. Other structures, variously of rubble, brick and timber, are of interest for the early efforts at formal conservation of their fabric undertaken by the Service during the 1970s, when parts of the village were designated as an historic site.*

*Dotted along streets, now depleted by loss due to decay or demolition, the surviving buildings, timber picket fences, and ruins are brought to life by comparison with the remarkable photographic plates of the town in the 1870s comprising the Holtermann Collection. Together with the village fabric this rare, extensive photographic record vividly illustrates the ebb and flow of mining and settlement by the people of various nationalities who worked the Turon goldfields, some of whose descendants continue to live in Hill End.*

The statement of significance and the overarching policies and actions for Hill End outlined in the POM provide valuable guidance for interpretation planning. One of the key concerns of the POM is to ensure that interpretation reflects a holistic view of the attributes and values of the site and is ensuring historically authentic.

The POM outlines specific issues to be addressed through interpretation at Hill End. In planning interpretation the POM states that it must be designed with regard to different user groups and the local community. The POM observes that Hill End is something of a ‘laboratory’ for learning and engagement and that a key component of the place’s value is that it retains a resident population and is therefore a living village.

A number of initiatives for interpretative experiences are recommended in the POM, ranging from guided, self-guided and driving tours to independent exploration. The Holtermann collection and in situ artefacts are regarded as key interpretive resources. Interpretation of mining and geological aspects is recommended in the POM, alongside the development of an orientation centre and a suite of sensitively designed discreet interpretive signage.

Many of the policies and actions in the POM remain pertinent and relevant to interpretation planning today. The cultural significance of the site, its historical authenticity, the evolving living village and experiences for visitors are key considerations.

**2.3 Masterplan**

The Masterplan prepared by Conybeare Morrison in March 2013 for Hill End Historic Site provides an overarching vision and planning strategy for the place. The Masterplan is underpinned and guided by
analysis of the physical attributes of the site, as well as an extensive range of background reports and documents. Three companion volumes were prepared to inform the Masterplan including:

- Volume 2: conservation Management Plan;
- Volume 3: landscape Management Plan; and
- Volume 4: Cultural and Tourism Recreation Master Plan.

The Masterplan contextualises Hill End Historic Site within the considerable economic and demographic change that has occurred in regional areas in NSW. The Masterplan argues that cultural tourism provides the best opportunity for Hill End to become economically sustainable. A series of strategies and opportunities are presented in the Masterplan to assist PWG plan, develop and support higher visitation to Hill End. As the Masterplan points out, achieving the vision for Hill End as an economically sustainable cultural tourism destination that offers an authentic experience of history and heritage is a challenging and complex proposition.

Several strategic opportunities are identified in the Masterplan, some of which relate to the interpretation of the heritage values of Hill End:

- the relocation of the Visitor Information Centre to the village centre;
- the development of an interpretation strategy to inform the story of Hill End;
- the development of trails and paths to reveal and interpret the activities of the original mining and art stories;
- the provision of new activities and experience which will enrich the Hill End experience;
- the development of trails and paths to reveal and interpret the activities of the original mining and art stories; and
- the enhancement of original landscape features such as orchards and gardens.

The vision in the Masterplan is founded on the value proposition of a ‘living village’ that will organically evolve new facilities and services to grow visitor engagement and tourism.

Twenty key actions are outlined in the Masterplan. The actions seek to holistically address the current issues at Hill End through conservation, research to address gaps and to ensure authenticity, interpretation of historic themes, adequate services and facilities, appropriate branding and marketing, experiences, augmentation of the cultural landscape, development of commercial capacity, and activities and events. Priorities identified in the Masterplan are to be implemented over a ten year period.

It is important to note that interpretation alone will not address or solve the immediate or broader economic issues. At Hill End, many issues are interconnected. Whilst a vibrant and engaging interpretation program may well attract and over time increase visitor numbers, if well promoted and marketed to the audiences, other aspects of the visitor experience will need to be addressed such as food and beverage, facilities, services, accommodation, information, access, etc.

The Masterplan proposes a new interpretive centre within the RFS shed. The shed is to include a range of visitor facilities and, due to its prominent and central location within the village, will provide for visitor orientation. An art walk and art interpretation associated with a proposed new art gallery in the Sacred Heart Catholic Church will address the significant history and the continuing practice of art, literature and
photography at Hill End. The Masterplan identifies opportunities for interpretation at Tambaroora through sculptural, scientific and artistic interpretation.

The Masterplan includes a range of concepts for interpreting and experiencing Hill End. Its interpretation recommendations relate to the history and heritage values of the Historic Site and seek to enliven and revitalise the township through specific projects, experiences and activities that will increase and extend visitation. The insights offered by the Masterplan are useful and informative, however, a more detailed process of distillation and refinement is required to ensure that in planning interpretation, Hill End does not try 'to be all things to all people', but rather remains true to its values.

2.4 Conservation Management Plan

A conservation management plan (CMP) was prepared for Hill End Historic Site in March 2013. The CMP was prepared in concert with the Masterplan and is one of the three companion volumes. It is the principal document guiding conservation management at Hill End.

The CMP provides an historical outline of Hill End, appraises the physical qualities and condition of the place, assesses the heritage significance and includes management policies to ensure the significant values of Hill End Historic Site are conserved.

The summary statement of significance for Hill End in the CMP is as follows:

- The Hill End Historic Site has exceptional heritage significance to NSW and Australia due to its historic, aesthetic, social and research potential values. The historic significance of the Hill End site as a gold rush town has been enhanced by the re-discovery of the Holtermann photographic collection that captured Hill End in 1872.

- Hill End is associated with prominent people in the history of NSW including Bernard Otto Holtermann, Russell Drysdale, Donald Friend, Paul Haefliger, Margaret Olley and Brett Whiteley. The place has inspired past and present generations of artists with its evocative imagery, and the significance of Hill End is enhanced by the ongoing Artists in Residence programme.

- Hill End and Tambaroora contain archaeological resources of exceptional significance, including industrial relics. The moveable heritage collection at Hill End is a valuable asset illustrating early NSW mining and domestic history.
The CMP includes a conservation vision for Hill End. In considering interpretation planning, it is important that the conservation vision is respected, including:

- conserving heritage authenticity for future generations;
- maintaining the unique heritage experience of the place while maintaining a living village;
- revitalising Hill End so it is sustainable;
- managing change with care;
- reinforcing heritage significance of Hill End by recognising all phases of occupation of the site;
- seeking National and World Heritage Listing; and
- encouraging shared values by stakeholders including the local community.

Several management policies and strategies in the CMP relate specifically to interpretation planning at Hill End. The following CMP policies are considered to apply to the development of interpretation for this interpretation plan and implementation strategy project:

- **Policy 7.1 Prepare a Heritage Interpretation Strategy and Plan for the Historic Site with an implementation program for the short to medium term, including for Tambaroora, Golden Gully and Valentines Mines.**
- **Policy 7.2 The interpretation of the Historic Site should be seen as an important element in the conservation of the place as well as to engage visitors in an educational and memorable experience.**
- **Policy 7.3 Utilise historic theme interpretation for the Historic Site, incorporating the ‘interpretive stories’ identified in the Section 2.0 Analysis of Historical Context.**
- **Policy 7.5 Signage, both interpretative, directional and informational should be coordinated in terms of design and colour. The colour of the signs should be related to the colour of the heritage buildings, that is of darker tones, was well as NPWS signage.**
- **Policy 7.6 Ensure Aboriginal heritage is incorporated as an interpretive expression of the site.**
- **Policy 7.7 Ensure all copyright clearances are obtained and intellectual property rights are protected before the use of material for interpretation.**
- **Policy 7.8 Coordinate and incorporate the interpretation objectives contained in Volume 3: Landscape Management Plan.**

A series of guidelines are also outlined in the CMP for interpretation including:

- Utilise alternative and innovative means to interpret the place.
- Inform and capture the essence of the place, its history and uses, and cultural significance in an easily accessible manner.
- Initiate a sculpture/installation programme that interprets the place and liaise with the local arts community as well as reference to the LMP.
- Utilise the Holtermann collection and obtain copyright.
- Liaise with the Bathurst Regional Art Gallery for use of artwork from the ‘Artists in Residence’ programme, as well as from the ‘Hill End Collection’.
• Liaise with local resident artists to establish an ongoing programme of exhibitions of their work.

• Review the report Heritage Interpretation Program-Hill End prepared by Rose Deco Planning and Design Pty Ltd, and utilise where appropriate for an interpretation strategy and plan.

• Instigate or broaden tour programs that include mining and artwork, including reference to the tour group ‘Hill End Ranch’.

Overall, these guidelines align with many of the findings and recommendations in the Rose Deco Planning and Design report and provide a suitable course of action for interpretation planning at Hill End.

In the Historical Context (section 2.0) of the CMP, historic themes and associated interpretive stories are identified. The historic themes reflect different chronological phases of evolution and development of the Hill End Historic Site. The following table lists the historical phases and the allied interpretive stories identified in the CMP:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historical Phases</th>
<th>Interpretive Stories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Geological                           | • Geological processes, including the formation of gold bearing quartz and alluvial deposits.  
                                          • Gold mining and its role in shaping and modifying the landscape.               |
| Aboriginal History and Culture       | • Aboriginal land management and patterns of occupation.                              
                                          • Aboriginal people and the changing circumstances of their lives following colonisation. 
                                          • Aboriginal involvement in gold mining.                                         |
| Pastoral Exploration 1850s           | • New frontier—exploration and pastoral expansion.                                    
                                          • Contact history—Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and the conflict over land. 
                                          • Grasslands beyond the Blue Mountains.                                            
                                          • Bridle Track as a route to move through country.                                 |
| Alluvial Gold Mining 1851–1870       | • The role of Aboriginal people in the discovery of Gold.                             
                                          • Alluvial mining processes.                                                       
                                          • A flourishing culturally diverse community.                                      
                                          • Gold, an economic powerhouse.                                                    |
| Reef Mining 1871–1874                | • The development and processing of reef mining.                                      
                                          • Life on the goldfields.                                                          
                                          • The industrial roar of stampers and roasting pits.                              
                                          • The men and women of Hill End.                                                   |
| Holtermann Photographic Collection   | • Stories of Holtermann, Merlin and Bayliss                                        |
|                                      | • Picturing Hill End.                                                                |
| Hill End Borough Council 1873–1908   | • Local government is formed.                                                        
                                          • Making a municipal township.                                                      
                                          • The role of State Government.                                                     |
This chronological phasing and associated stories for interpretation provides a helpful organising framework for interpretation planning at Hill End. Some further development, synthesis and refinement will be required as part of the project to ensure the interpretive themes and stories are powerful and memorable. The challenge is to develop all of the potential interpretive content into an integrated and inspirational visitor experience that can be organised around a smaller number of evocative ideas or themes.

### 2.5 Aboriginal Heritage

The CMP includes a report prepared by The Jambana Group that is focussed on Aboriginal heritage at Hill End. The Jambana Group report provides a summary overview of the state of research material related to Aboriginal history, heritage and culture. The report notes that archaeological evidence dates Aboriginal occupation at Hill End and the surrounding region to around 5,700 years ago. It also observes, following the findings of ‘Aboriginal Heritage Study, Hill End Historic Site’, Gabrielle Zilber, 2001, that the contact history of Aboriginal people at Hill End has not been comprehensively researched or documented. While it is generally known that following colonisation Aboriginal people continued to live in the region and actively participated in the pastoral and mining industries, there is scant research and analysis in this area.

With regard to interpretation planning, in particularly addressing the gap in the existing interpretive experience and tourism offer at Hill End, the Jambana Group report includes the following recommendations:

- develop a statement of significance for Hill End that addresses Aboriginal cultural heritage values;
- engage meaningfully with local Wiradjuri people to ensure that Aboriginal thematic content is well-integrated as part of the physical, intellectual and emotional interpretive experience;
- address the educational and tourist driven demand for Aboriginal content;
- interpret both the pre and post contact periods at Hill End within its broader regional context;
- ensure Aboriginal people are provided with opportunities for engagement in interpretation that are sustainable;
• commission sculptural artworks;
• implement thematic signage;
• implement thematic naming using Aboriginal language;
• host special events and festivals to acknowledge and celebrate local Aboriginal culture; and
• implement public domain and landscaping works such as paving, street furniture, bollards, etc.

A range of interpretive initiatives considered suitable for presentation of Aboriginal history and heritage content are identified.

The Jumbana Group report provides constructive guidance regarding Aboriginal engagement in planning interpretation and identifies some of the key issues that effect implementation, such as the lack of primary research. One of the challenges facing the Hill End Interpretation Plan and Implementation Strategy project is that the research gaps related to local Aboriginal history at Hill End are still evident and a longer-term primary research would be required to address the gap.

This interpretation and implementation project needs to establish a layered thematic interpretive structure that is flexible and provides sufficient opportunities for Aboriginal history and heritage content to be incorporated into the stories and the visitor experience as they evolve over time.

2.6 Landscape Management Plan

Prepared by Context Landscape Design in association with Craig Burton of CAB Consulting, the Landscape Management Plan (LMP) is Volume 3 of the Conservation Management and Cultural Tourism Master Plan for Hill End Historic Site.

The primary objective of the LMP is to:

conserve and interpret the cultural landscape of the Hill End Historic Site and Tambaroora to ensure the health and integrity of the natural environment and setting while providing greater tourism and recreational opportunities.¹

The LMP covers the natural landscape, the landscape structure and character, the cultural landscape and the visual catchment and curtilage. A statement of significance, landscape issues

and a vision are presented, and a range of interpretation and tourism opportunities are outlined.

The LMP provides many important insights about Hill End through landscape. In the LMP the landscape is viewed as a repository of memory where human endeavour is inscribed deeply into the surface and texture of the land. It is seen as an entity through which the hearts and minds of visitors may be engaged though such themes as memory, time, change and contrast.²

The historic cultural landscape of Hill End and surrounds provides many opportunities for interpretation. Conservation works and interpretation has tended to focus on the buildings at Hill End with scant regard to the landscape and its qualities. From an interpretation planning perspective, it is the landscape that provides the ‘text’ from which to write the stories of the people that have been and continue to live and work in Hill End.

Cultural plantings, historic fencelines, gardens, orchards, former mine sites and the locations where artists painted and created their interpretations of Hill End provide rich material for interpretation.

The natural systems of Hill End are also significant and provide an opportunity for interpretation. Understanding the soils, geology, water, plants and animals should be a core feature of any interpretation.

The LMP observes that much emphasis on the interpretive experience at Hill End has been placed on the conservation of the built environment. As such, the interpretation and presentation of the layered natural and cultural landscape including mining, art, and stories of human struggle and survival provides opportunities.

The LMP provides detailed guidance regarding interpretive opportunities in the landscape via tracks and trails that explore different dimensions of the past. Examples include the Hill End Creek Walk, the Stamper Battery Walk and Bald Hill Mine Walk, the Village Trail, the Artist Trail and some Regional Tracks and Trails outside of the formal boundaries of the Historic Site. More detailed interpretive design schemes are presented for some precincts:

- The Stamper Battery Interpretation Precinct is based on an interpretation of an 1871 Plan of the Village of Hill End. The design includes picnic grounds, shade facilities, and a network of gravel paths to connect with the village of Hill End.
- Fighting Gully Interpretation Precinct is an area proposed to interpret the regeneration of the formerly mined landscape. Fighting Gully was named because of the fights that occurred there between the Irish and American miners in the late 1800s.
- Interpretation of Cottage Gardens and Orchards is proposed in the LMP to enhance the contrast between the natural bushland and formerly thriving open spaces of Hill End. Known gardens are recommended to be reinstated in nineteen properties including the former Hospital Garden, Murray’s cottage, Lyle’s cottage, Great Western Store and Beyer’s cottage.

In summary, the LMP recognises the significance of Hill End as a unique evolving rural historic cultural landscape. With landscape as the central focus, the LMP promotes Hill End as an evocative and powerful story about human interaction and mastery over nature. This mastery over nature is demonstrated through Aboriginal land management practices, colonial settlement, mining, art and conservation and the living village. It is a continuingly evolving theme.

² Ibid, p 49.
2.7 Cultural and Tourism Recreation Master Plan

The Cultural Tourism and Recreation Master Plan (CTRMP) is one of the companion reports to the Masterplan. The key objective of the CTRMP is to ‘enrich the visitor experience, increase the understanding of Hill End’s rich history and improve the economic and social prospects of the town through an increase of visitors, their length of stay and their spending’.

The CTRMP provides guidance that is aimed at attracting, engaging, informing and satisfying visitors. Many of these aspects of the visitor experience interface with interpretation. For example, under the heading ‘attract’, the CTRMP states that people (visitors) should connect with experiences that most resonate with them. Core themes are suggested around engaging with authentic Australia history, nature and heritage based outdoor experiences, art and culture and relaxation and rejuvenation.

Under the heading ‘engage’ additional guidance is provided that is relevant to interpretation planning. A gateway experience that immerses visitors is suggested, as are themed cycle paths and walking tracks. Further, sound and light shows a, themed cottage hotel, arts centre and provision for web based information and research, are identified as an ‘experiences’ relevant to the market segments which include Wanderers, True Travellers and Compatriots.

Recommendations for improvements to tourism and other facilities are provided with regard to the LMP and the CMP. The recommendations are contextualised within the broader regional tourism market. Overall, the CTRMP seeks to identify the opportunities for cultural tourism at Hill End through developing a compelling experience supported by a unique brand and identity, and targeted marketing and promotion. Active physical participation and sensory engagement with nature, history, heritage, the cultural landscape, art, though activities and experiences is the key premise of the CTRMP.

2.8 Heritage Interpretation Program

A Heritage Interpretation Program Report was prepared by Rose Deco Planning and Design, in May 2009.

The scope of work for the project included:

---

recommendations for interpretive themes at Hill End;

- options and recommendations for interpretation that engages visitors and stimulates them to explore Hill End more widely;

- proposals for further interpretation that compliments and enhances existing interpretation; and

- a plan and strategy for extending Hill End’s existing interpretive offer with costings.

The report provides a review of existing interpretation at Hill End including signage, artworks, the Hill End Museum, and external display areas. Interpretation at a number of other sites such as the Seattle Art Museum, Titanic Museum, The Sydney Rocks Discovery Centre and the Eureka Centre Ballarat is considered. In summarising interpretation presented at sites other than Hill End, the report finds that increasingly sites are using digital technology to convey information and interpretation.

Themes for interpretation based largely on *Hill End An Historic Goldfields Landscape* are identified. The themes reflect the layered history of Hill End and include the following:

- Wiradjuri Possession;
- Natural Heritage;
- Pastoralism;
- First Gold Boom 1851–70;
- Second Gold Boom 1871–74;
- Third Gold Boom 1908–24;
- Poor Man’s Diggings;
- Artists Colony 1947–; and
- Historic Site and Public Ownership 1967–.

These themes are further distilled in the report into four key areas:

- Mining;
- Art;
- People; and
- Environment.

These four key subject headings provide a broad structure within which all stories about Hill End could be grouped. The coverage of the more recent past and current context is not developed in the proposed themes.

The challenge for interpretation at Hill End is to ensure that interpretation addresses and presents experiences in these four areas in ways that are meaningful and engaging to the unfulfilled needs of current visitors and potential growth markets. The Plan does not include any research on current visitor needs from interpretation. The Plan does not test the attractiveness of any of these themes with current visitors.
2.8.1 Rose Deco Planning and Design—Community Consultation

Community consultation was undertaken as part of Rose Deco Planning and Design's Hill End Interpretation Program. A number of interpretive concepts and suggestions for development and change of the visitor experience at Hill End were discussed. Many of the ideas and issues raised by the community are integrated in the interpretive program outlined in the report. Target markets are not identified in the report, nor are the findings validated through visitor research, nor is there testing of proposed interpretive concepts.

Several of the ideas remain pertinent and may be used to inform this Interpretation Plan and Implementation Strategy project including:

- audio tours;
- web;
- interpretive signage;
- artwork plaques;
- walking tracks;
- improved maps and brochures;
- a ‘What’s on in Hill End’ sign;
- art exhibitions;
- an art festival;
- promotion and advertising;
- the natural environment;
- engage volunteers;
- refresh Visitor Centre displays;
- work with regional tourism providers; and
- involve the community;

Overall, the report is a helpful resource that includes a number of ideas for enhancing interpretation at Hill End Historic Site. Whilst considerable work has been done since 2009 by PWG and several of the concepts and recommendations in the Rose Deco report have been implemented, there are still issues to be addressed and enhancements that can be made. Addressing gaps in the interpretive content, refreshing displays and signage, ensuring connection and cohesion between materials and the experience, and considering digital options are examples of areas where further interpretive work may be done.
2.9 Key Interpretive Resources

Below is a summary of key interpretive resources.

2.9.1 The Holtermann Collection

The Holtermann Collection is a series of photographs by Beaufoy Merlin and Charles Bayliss of the American and Australasian Photographic Company that documented life on the Australian goldfields, including the town of Hill End\(^5\). Their images were offered for sale as cartes-de-visite (post cards) and were collected in family albums or used as postcards. Hill End is comprehensively recorded in the series during the great gold boom of the 1870s.

Holtermann commissioned Beaufoy Merlin and Charles Bayliss to photograph the town systematically. This source references Holtermann’s mining activities and interest in photography at Hill End from 1864-1873 and includes letters to the editor of the Hill End and Tambaroora Times\(^6\).

2.9.2 Donald Friend’s Diaries

Donald Friend’s diaries of Hill End depict his art-making practice and detail life in the town\(^7\). He focuses on life after the gold rush and its signs of decay and describes the local characters and the raw Australian landscape. His diaries are not only a written record but contain letters, semi-fictional episodes and recollections. His experiences and observations of the town are enhanced by his drawings, and encapsulate aspects of past life at Hill End.

2.9.3 The Hill End Story, Harry Hodge

Harry Hodge was a Hill End Historian, who was born in the town. He contributes a wealth of local knowledge with *The Hill End Story*, first published in 1964\(^8\). The second edition appeared in 1973 and the third edition, revised by his son, Errol, in 1980. Hodge describes the local events and areas of Hill End which connect to broader historical themes. *The Hill End Story* provides a sequential history of phased periods of human occupation in the area.

---


\(^6\) Holtermann, Bernard O., Papers, 1864–1876, State Library of New South Wales, Mitchell Library MSS 968.

\(^7\) Friend, Donald, Donald Friend diaries, 1946-64, National Library of Australia, Canberra, MS5959, items 33-9.

\(^8\) Hodge, Harry, papers, chiefly notes for *The Hill End Story*, 1932-73, State Library of New South Wales, Mitchell Library MSS 2695.
2.9.4 Hill End Historic Site Oral History Project, Majorie Prior

Historian Majorie Prior undertook an oral history of the stories of local residents in 1980. This source records the memories of the elderly Hill End mining and rural community. Prior’s investigations revealed that some of the elderly people were descendants of early Hill End alluvial miners. It captures valuable life experiences of the community.

2.9.5 Hill End Heroines & Tambaroora Treasures, Tambaroora Gathering Group

Hill End Heroines & Tambaroora Treasures: the Women of the Goldfields, their Lives and Stories recount the journeys and struggles in the mid-nineteenth century goldfields, including Hill End. It provides a valuable focus on the lives of women in the gold rush, with stories contributed by members of the Hill End and Tambaroora Gathering Group.

2.9.6 Hill End Hearsay: to the Best of my Memory, Malcolm Drinkwater

Malcolm Drinkwater was born in the town of Hill End in 1964. His 2010 publication Hill End Hearsay: to the Best of my Memory captures memories and tales of the town following the slowing down of the gold rush. It focuses on the people in the village and how their character and lifestyle was shaped by the spirit of the goldrush. Hill End Hearsay is Drinkwater’s second book; his first book Hill End Gold also tells the stories of Australia’s first gold finds.

2.9.7 National Film and Sound Archives, Video Recordings

There are a number of video recordings of the site from the National Film and Sound Archives and the ABC, including documentaries, which provide valuable information and stories of Hill End.

The above resources provide a rich body of material for interpretation potential at the Hill End Historic Site.

2.10 Summary

A number of issues emerge across the range of background documents reviewed. Many of the documents span a considerable period of time yet many issues still resonate. The key issues for interpretation planning based on the review of the documents are:

- The natural landscape and its evolution.
- Aboriginal connections and changing circumstances of their life following colonisation.
- The cultural landscape of Hill End as a deeply layered and storied theatre of life and memory.
- The archaeology of the Hill End hidden beneath the surface.
- Shifting the focus from built heritage and the physical fabric of the past to ‘imaging the past’.

---


• The opportunity to interpret how the past has been pictured through photography and art.
• Living a life.
• The scale, simplicity, sophistication and squalor of the past.
• While there has been stakeholder input, there has been minimal input from visitors or testing of ideas with visitors.
• None of the plans have defined a target market and their needs, for interpretation to concentrate on.

Hill End is a living theatre. It is a past worth ‘picturing’, imagining and experiencing. Interpretation needs to be focussed on bringing this theatre to life though the community, the artists, the photographs and the place itself.

The streets were thronged by a motley crowd; the stores and places of business crowded with customers; the little theatre so densely packed by an admiring audience, that there was not what is facetiously called “standing room,” and even the public-houses, whose name is legion, were crammed. Yet I saw less, far less, drunkenness than can be met with in any street in the metropolis after 10 o’clock at night. There were very few inebriates, no filthy dishevelled women, no crouching loafers, no abject vice. The general aspect of the crowds of decently dressed folk who thronged “The Hill” was that of respectability rough indeed in many respects, and loud and noisy too, in some instances, but not disreputable, and altogether good-humoured.12

Combined, the range of plans and reports provide a comprehensive array of interpretive initiatives for Hill End. A process of careful and considered refinement is required to ensure that only the best and most compelling is presented to the target markets. It is in fact better to do less really well, than it is to do more with less attention to detail.

Today some of the valued qualities of the experience of Hill End include its tranquillity and beauty. These qualities contrast starkly with those of Hill End during the gold rush, which included industrial noise, filth and a stark denuded landscape. Interpretation needs to be carefully planned and designed so as to not intrude on the present day qualities and significance of the landscape, but gritty and robust enough to convey to visitors the sensory feel of the industrial past.

---

12 Hill End to Chambers Creek, via Turon, From an occasional correspondent, Empire, Sydney NSW Friday 7 June 1872.
3.0
Hill End Historic Site Character Analysis
3.1 Introduction

This section of the report provides an overview of the current interpretive experience at Hill End Historic Site. Tours, physical interpretive infrastructure, exhibitions and displays, brochures, events and activities are considered.

3.2 Current Interpretive Experience

Interpretive messages are immediately communicated to the visitor by the town’s landscape and historic architecture. From the entry experience of Tambaroora Road and Beyers Ave, flanked by European trees, to the Royal Hotel and General store, the visitor receives potent messages about the town’s character, independent of any interpretive support. At present there are a limited range of accompanying physical and interpretive experiences at Hill End. In short, the town is compelling but the interpretive support (physical and experiential) is not.

Most visitors travel by vehicle to the area where the Royal Hotel, General Store and Visitors Centre are located. This collection of buildings feels like the centre of town and its position at the edge of a small rise provides a select vantage point, a central place to begin further exploration.

The visitor has a limited number of prescribed interpretive experiences to pursue from this site—the options are:

- to self-navigate through the town using interpretive panels and a plan of the area (available from the visitors centre);
- to self-navigate to other sites around the town such as mining sites and lookouts; and/or
- to participate in a guided tour by conducted by the NPWS Discovery Ranger.

3.2.1 Attractions

The main attractions for visitors at Hill End are:

- the town and its environs;
- lookouts—Kissing Point Lookout (a spectacular view out from the town), Beaufoy Merlin Lookout (views of Hawkins Hill Mines) and Bald Hill Lookout (also a spectacular view of the town); and
- sites located outside of town—Golden Gully, Valentines Mine, Tambaroora site and Cemetery and the Quartz Roasting Pits.
3.3 Current Interpretive Infrastructure

The current interpretive infrastructure at Hill End broadly consists of outdoor interpretive panels situated along the streetscape within the central village, comprising:

- **Small panels interpreting buildings and sites where buildings once stood.** These use mainly Beaufoy Merlin/Holtermann photographs accompanied by brief texts. They are mono print/aluminium panels affixed to low rise metal posts along the street, and there are approximately 80 signs in total.

- **Panels interpreting mining sites and lookouts.** These dense text and image heavy mono print/aluminium panels are affixed to large metal posts. There are approximately six signs in total.

- **Panels interpreting iconic artworks situated in areas of Hill End attempting to reference the location depicted in the paintings.** These image-based colour panels are affixed to large metal posts. There are approximately six signs in total.

- **Large orientation boards.** These large scale panels (with shade structures) are located at various points in the town such as outside the Royal Hall and at the entrance to the old hospital. They provide basic orientation and some interpretation of the town. A number of boards exist at other sites such as the Quartz Roasting Pits, the Bald Hill Mine, the Village and Glendora campsites. Some do not contain graphics. These panels were intended to be used as noticeboards but the timber is too hard to drive in thumb-tacks.

3.3.1 Printed collateral

The *Hill End Historic Site* brochure, available in the visitor’s centre, provides a plan of the town with historic sites marked, interpretive images and information. The plan is not detailed or adequately coordinated with interpretation panels or signage.

*Exploring Hill End—the Buildings* guided tour booklet. This booklet is currently out of print.
The Artists of Hill End is a 4 page leaflet which is an interpretive guide to the six artist interpretive panels located in the town. It is available from the Old Hospital Gift Shop and is $4.50 (this is expensive for leaflet of this size).

3.3.2 Tours

Tours can be booked at the Visitors Centre for either set times (see tour times below) or special tours by demand.

The Town Tour conducted by Sandra Thompson, NPWS Discovery Ranger, once on Saturdays.

Sandra Thompson adapts tours to suit the interests and age range of participating visitors. The duration of the tour is either one or two hours, but tours frequently go over time. The tour focuses on town history, its characters, stories and personal anecdotes from Sandra, a fourth generation Hill Endian. The tour takes place in the streets near the town centre, the old hospital (housing the interpretive exhibition) and historic house Craigmoor, however the route is adapted according to visitor’s time and interests. Sandra takes an extensive array of photocopied photographs and archival material on each tour, though they are more reference material than regularly used props. There is minimal use of interactive experiences. The tours interpretive messages are not entirely unclear. There is no set conclusion.

The Ghost Tour conducted by Sandra Thompson, NPWS Discovery Ranger, Saturday and Sunday nights.

This tour is a mix of historical information, local legends and yarns and the spirit world. The tour begins at the Discovery Ranger Tours Office, proceeds to historic house Craigmoor and finishes at the old hospital. Lights can be dimmed or switched off for groups to attempt to hear, smell or sense activity. Otherwise there is minimal use of interactive experiences. Interpretive messages are unclear. There is an introduction but no set conclusion.

Town Tour conducted by Kerry Burns, Tour Guide, Hill End Ranch.

This tour is conducted by Kerry Burns, mainly catering to school groups. Kerry sometimes dresses in period costume when conducting these tours. (Note the interpretation team did not sample this tour).

Mining Tour conducted by Kerry Burns, Tour Guide, Hill End Ranch.
The Tour at the Bald Hill Mine (also known as ‘The Born Loser’ because it failed to produce gold) is a spirited and informative experience, providing a clear overview of Hill End’s gold mining history and gold mining techniques. There is a strong introduction and safety protocols form part of this stage of the experience. In the centre of the mine a range of props are used to demonstrate mining. The highlight of the tour is the opportunity for the visitor to climb through the mine shaft/exploration hole, providing a soft adventure. There is no conclusion to the tour.

Special bookings for these and other tours (see below) can be made at the Visitors Centre, The minimum is 10 people per booking. There are frequent occurrences of significantly larger groups—particularly organised coach groups.

Hill End Discovery Tours:
- Village Tours;
- Craigmoor House Tours;
- Ghost Tours;
- Golden Gully Tours; and
- Cemetery Tours;

Hill End School Excursions:
- Hill End Holiday Ranch—Bald Hill Mine and Village Tours; and
- History Hill Museum—Mine and Museum.

Hill End Open Days—Hill End and Tambaroora Progress Association:
- April and October.

Ted Abbott:
- Gold Panning Tours.

3.4 Current Activities

A range of activities and programs are offered at Hill End.

Artist in residence programs are provided at the Murray and Haefliigers Cottages (in partnership between NPWS and Bathurst Regional Art Gallery)

Tours by the National School of Art (2–3 per year)
Hill End and Tambaroora gathering Group:
- Easter Markets
- Family History
- Sydney Annual Gathering

Hill End Arts Council:
- Open Studio Day – September

Bathurst Regional Art Gallery:
- Exhibition openings – 4 to 5 annually

3.4.1 Walking Tracks
The Bald Hill Walking track is the only bush track in town listed in interpretive material. It leads from Reef St to the Bald Hill Mine and loops back.

3.4.2 Interpretive Exhibition in the Old Hospital Building
Following the gazettal of the Hill End Historic Site, the old hospital building was repurposed as the Hill End Visitors Centre. Visitors enter the hospital building by the front door which opens off the verandah. The front door also serves as the main exit from the building.

The entry to the old hospital opens onto a long central corridor revealing a space of generous proportions. Upon entry, there is no obvious orientation or introduction to the site or the exhibition itself. Corridor walls are covered in graphic wallpaper mainly consisting of human figures, sourced from the Holtermann Photographic Collection.

A gift shop is situated immediately to the right of the entry off the central corridor. The shop sells a small array of standard gift shop merchandise (such as tea towels, t-shirts and books).
The remainder of the hospital building is divided into a number of rooms. Of the four internal spaces used as interpretive spaces, the main one is the Village Room located further along the hall from the entrance. This dimly lit room displays reproductions of period newspapers and Hill End mining license documents, fashion garments and accessories, mining tools and implements, photography equipment and implements, and objects relating to hotels and pubs. Large format wallpaper graphics are backdrops for the displays. There is limited interpretive textual information and no opportunity for interaction with the objects or displays.

The exhibition is considered dated. The exhibition hardware and content is in need of a refresh. Most objects do not have high quality interpretive value, many objects are missing, as evidenced by empty display cases and plinths. The providence of many of the objects on display is also uncertain. The display is disjointed, the texts uninviting and difficult to read, and the space is poorly designed, inadequately illuminated, and unwelcoming. There is no clear narrative thread and the overall story is not communicated or presented to current museum or exhibition standards.

Another room concentrates on the former hospital with an eclectic selection of hospital objects, including the centre-piece—a metal bed used for birthing. The room has a ‘cabinet of curiosities’ feel because of the eclectic nature of the collection and the old-fashioned glass display vitrines. Many of the objects require conservation, particularly those made from paper and cardboard.

The final room includes a collection of objects that are of poor interpretive quality, not well thematically linked and lack compelling provenance to Hill End.

A lecture room containing an outdated large-format television is located in one wing of the building. The room is decorated with large-scale mining interpretive wall hangings. It also houses a number of cupboards and filing cabinets. The room is uninviting.

Along one of the corridors a plastic book atop a set of drawers that contains some of the Holtermann archive photographs. Images are small-scale with scant interpretive text accompaniment. It is not user-friendly and the book is in poor condition, though is an excellent visual resource.
The corridors are decorated with images of Hill End and interpretives (etched into purple tinted perspex with block mounted black and white photos) which introduce key sites at Hill End and historical sites at other National Parks such as La Perouse (Kamay, Botany Bay National Park).

The Jean Belette Gallery is a substantial room exhibiting contemporary artwork. It is jointly run by the Hill End Visitors Centre and Bathurst Regional Art Gallery. The lighting system requires an update but it is an effective gallery space.

Outside to the east of the old hospital building a large awning covered area houses large equipment used in the gold fields, such as stampers that were once powered by steam, coaches by Cobb & Co and wagons. Some objects are impressive but collectively they do not tell a cohesive interpretive story. The display does not have adequate interpretive content and therefore reads like a random collection of material stored in this location. The objects look neglected and as though they require conservation treatment.

3.4.3 The RFS Shed

The old RFS shed is located next door to the General Store. It houses a restored ‘blitz’ fire engine, one of the few surviving examples. This shed is not accessible to self-guided visitors and perhaps the only time that the fire engine would be seen is as part of a guided tour. It is proposed in the Masterplan that the RFS shed be adaptively reused as an interpretive centre.

3.4.4 The Discovery Centre

The Discovery Centre is located next door to the General Store and Café and seems to be focussed on the handling of customer enquiries and bookings for interpretive tours. There is no additional marketing collateral about the tours within the building (eg. maps and tour routes, descriptions and photographs).

The building also incorporates an eclectic display of objects that have a loose ‘daily life’ theme—cooking equipment, bottles, crockery mining equipment, furniture and photographs. There is little or no accompanying interpretive text. The display reads as ‘decorative’ rather than ‘interpretive’.

3.4.5 Other Facilities

It is noted that History Hill is a large private interpretive facility situated outside the sample area, which may be part of the
interpretive experience for visitors to Hill End. It is located to the east of the town. Its focus is on mining and the social history of the town. Our team did not visit this facility and our information is based on its promotional material and web presence.

3.4.6 Aboriginal

There is very little Aboriginal interpretation at Hill End.

3.4.7 Digital

There is no digital interpretation available at Hill End.

3.5 Evaluation of Interpretation

Interpretation at Hill End suffers from substantial omissions in content and delivery mechanisms. Interpretation is not user friendly, orientation and mapping is not clear and there is a lack of coordination between all interpretive forms of interpretation. The interpretive direction is unfocussed.

Interpretive material is out of date, looks worn and uninspiring. It does not adequately whet visitors’ appetites to explore. Tours on offer are very general in terms of content and do not provide a range of interesting choices for visitors. Some of the tours we participated in require more structure to determine a beginning, middle and end and also to incorporate more interactivity and physical aspects in addition to walking.

Interpretation does not adequately leverage the richness of the resources available. It does not convey the complex layers of the town’s history and its current ‘life’. It is mainly concerned with interpreting the mining boom of the late nineteenth century. The art/cultural layer is not adequately communicated through existing interpretation.

The Beaufoy Merlin / Holtermann photographic collection is the most important interpretive resource in Hill End. As a photographic record of the town in boom years these photographs are compelling and evocative. In addition to this they have value as artworks in their own right. In present interpretation these photographs are employed as support material rather than as a significant stand-alone collection—which would be a significant attraction. The collection is used as a backdrop for object displays and as small low quality printed images in current interpretives in the landscape. The photographs are not contextualised with adequate interpretive texts and the collection is truncated across the site.

Many attractions are under-visited. Many visitors are not made aware of the richness of the town’s history, the other sites that connect together to tell stories or that there is more to experience than the gold mining dimension. For example, Golden Gully is a spectacular landscape with a peculiar alien beauty formed by mining and erosion which has very low visitation. Visitors are missing out on rewarding and unique interpretive experiences.

One of the major issues to overcome at Hill End is the lack of access to the famous mines of the town is because of active mining leases, specifically those along Hawkins Hill. The location of the mine where Holtermann’s Nugget was found is unable to be experienced. Virtually all the town’s mines, the reason for the town’s existence, are invisible and inaccessible.

3.6 Current Activities and Events

Beyond the core interpretive experiences of displays, signs, tours and the overall cultural landscape, are a number of activities that add to the interpretive experience. These include:
3.6.1 Commercial Businesses Servicing Visitors and Locals

Hill End may be a small village but it still has several businesses operating for the benefit of residents and visitors. The most obvious business is the Royal Hotel. This business not only provides a basic level of short stay accommodation, meals and beverages, but it is also the primary place for locals to meet, share stories and relax. Throughout the day and evening, the Royal Hotel is the most accessible place to meet and speak with a local. In this sense, the property provides the principal access to interpreting the local living culture, and should therefore be considered a significant opportunity for indirect interpretation (people watching) and direct interpretation (conversing with locals).

The General Store is the second most important commercial venue, as it is the only shop open seven days a week. The property provides basic groceries, take away food, coffee and lunches for locals and visitors. Sitting outside this venue is another excellent place for direct and indirect interpretation of the living culture of Hill End. The display within the dining area, selections of Peter Adam’s Ore What! photographs of local people and their stories in text, could be considered one of the most contemporary and inspiring depictions of the local culture available.

Secondary businesses offering interpretive opportunities include the NPWS Visitor Centre/Museum and Discovery Centre, and the Hosies Café and crafts retail outlet. These facilities present significant opportunities for improved orientation, interpretation and customer contact with the local population.

3.6.2 General Daily Local Lifestyle and Activity

Visitors walking around the village can also shift their gaze from the static historic landscape and watch local residents going about their daily lives. The small scale and diverse array of homes and gardens reflects the diverse range of people and chosen lifestyles. The more confident and friendly visitors could use this space to converse with locals and further discover what it is like to live and work in the village. The unpredictability of the response reflects the authenticity of Hill End.

3.6.3 Special events

Events can be an excellent way to further interpret a destination and interlink local residents and visitors. Events can also raise the profile of a destination, generate economic returns and stimulate repeat visitation. Unlike the
surrounding regional townships, Hill End does not have a significant record in developing and running events. The population is too small to organise and run events, and there are insufficient businesses to contribute in kind and financial resourcing. There are also insufficient businesses to leverage the potential economic impact of an event, and most of the people who run these businesses are the ones also trying to run the event.

A small jazz festival was regarded as a success, but could not be replicated for the reasons above. Small scale ‘micro events’ involving 50–100 people and run on a regular basis would better suit Hill End. Opportunities that tap into interpretation could be based on art, ideally participating in a group artistic endeavour. A destination running an event like this should be able to deliver smaller scale experiences on a more regular basis—indeed this should be done first, with the event to follow.

3.7 Summary

Overall, the interpretation at Hill End requires refreshing. The content in some instances is sound, however, the presentation does not reflect contemporary standards. Whilst visitors may be interested in finding out about the history and heritage values of Hill End upon arrival, the current interpretive experience does little to support or stimulate their engagement or learning. Many gaps exist in terms of the content. For example, the natural values of the landscape, Aboriginal history and connection to the land, and the layered historic cultural and social landscape is not enlivened or presented in a way that is genuinely accessible to visitors. Given the sophistication of the target markets and visitors generally, many visitors are likely to consider the experience of Hill End quaint but lacking contemporary relevance and connection. Interpretation at Hill End must therefore be planned and designed to not only present the history and significance of Hill End through themes, stories and experiences that connect and enchant visitors, but must be creatively designed to evoke and celebrate the beauty and drama of the place.
4.0

Hill End Visitor Management and Visitors
4.1 Introduction

Interpretation works better if it can be designed and delivered to meet specific market (audience) needs. To be effective, interpretation should avoid trying to be all things to all people. Consequently, the purpose of this section is to provide an insight into visitation and visitors at Hill End in order to determine a future target audience and opportunities for engaging them. This provides valuable insight that can help guide and shape the interpretive experience.

4.2 Visitor Management

Visitor management is ‘the management of visitors in a manner that maximises the quality of the visitor experience while assisting the achievement of an area’s overall management objectives.’

Visitor management at Hill End has been observed as ‘reactive’. This may be caused by prioritisation, the lack of resources, or the absence of an approved POM or visitor management plan. Compounding this are a diverse range of on-site operational issues stemming from PWG role as a municipal manager of Hill End.

In Table 4.1 below some of the more common visitor management approaches and the extent to which they are used at Hill End are outlined. The table demonstrates that:

- The strongest use of visitor management is in the provision of visitor information and interpretation facilities.
- The weakest use of visitor management is in the strategic use of marketing to attract more visitation, shift the type of user, or increase length of stay and spend, or package products and increase value for money.

---

Table 4.1 Summarised use of Visitor Management Techniques at Hill End.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regulating access by area</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Significant parts of Hill End are private property or leased, which reduces visitor access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulating access by transport</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Visitors are required to use their own transport to move around the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulating visitation by numbers and group size</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>There is no carrying capacity for the site or parts of the site, and NPWS tours admit varying sized groups. However, the Department of Mines limits a commercial operator’s group size on a mine tour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulating visitation by type of user</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>There are no target markets to influence marketing, shaping of experiences or seasonality of visitation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulating behaviour</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Regulating beyond standard regulations set for all parks is problematic due to the presence of private properties and other uses throughout the area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulating equipment</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>There is one case of use of special equipment to manage visitors—at Craigmoor House tour groups must wear shoe covers to reduce impacts on the floors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry fees</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>There is no entry fee for Hill End—most experiences are free of charge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User fees</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>User fees are charged for the NPWS managed museum/gallery, NPWS tours and campgrounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modifying the site</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Bollards are used to control vehicles, and fences have been retained to control pedestrians. Raised walkways have been used inside one building (Beyers Cottage) to reduce direct impacts of visitor foot traffic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influencing visitation by price</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>There is no entry fee and most of the interpretation free.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor information</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Visitor information is continuously available through a website, site brochure, arrival orientation signage, visitor centre and directional signage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation facilities</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>The NPWS provides a brochure that acts as promotional collateral and an interpretive tool. There is a small Visitors Centre that is permanently staffed to respond to telephone and face to face enquiries. There is an extensive collection of interpretation signs across the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation services</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>The NPWS has run a number of tours under the structure of its Discovery Program, but currently only two are provided (Village Day Tour and evening Ghost Tour).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation through other suppliers</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>The operation of services by the private sector within the heritage buildings provides a significant way in which the site is used and interpreted (retail, food and beverage and accommodation). There is also a supplier of education programs and a mine tour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor monitoring and research</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>While there is no continuous program of visitor monitoring, there have been frequent efforts to collect visitor information, particularly on NPWS tours. An extensive piece of visitor research was undertaken in 2011. Local Tourism Information Centres monitor visitors regularly but this information in its current form has limited value to the visitor management of Hill End. There is minimal visitor monitoring by the private sector.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interpretation evaluation
The NPWS has collected feedback on its tour program. However, this scope is limited to satisfaction.

Market research
There has been no market research to test non-visitors, which is sometimes used to determine their level of awareness of the site and its experiences, why they are not coming and potential growth markets.

Marketing and de-marketing
There is light and sporadic marketing done by the local tourism sector, but little of it is done cooperatively and there is no packaging of complimentary products. There is no marketing done to change expectations or shift areas of use from one place or product to another.

4.3 Current Visitation, Arrival and Circulation

4.3.1 Current visitation
Visitation monitoring at Hill End is sporadic. Presently, the data is not sufficient to provide an adequate depiction of use patterns. Such data is critical to visitor management; particularly for determining the economic impact of visitation and for shaping grant applications to fund improvements to the site, facilities and services.

The manner in which the site is currently accessed (eg single entry/exit) provides an opportunity to count visitors numbers through the use of a car counter. Such an instrument could be permanently fixed into the road and continuously record data for analysis. To enhance the value of the data for visitor management and derive visitor traffic, some basic observation tests could be done to determine deductions for resident and commercial traffic.

During this stage of research and review it has become apparent that there is no co-ordination of private sector visitation. None of the operators could provide approximate indications of total bed nights per annum, total visitors on tours per annum or total covers sold in cafes and restaurants.

4.3.2 Current Arrival and Circulation
Visitor observations conducted to support this report suggest that most visitors arrive by personal vehicle, and to a lesser extent, coach, using the same road. Approximately half the visitors turn off the main entry road and visit the NPWS Visitor Centre and the other half drive on and stop at the main commercial area in the village (the General Store and Hotel). Typically visitors that have been to the Visitor Centre then drive to the same commercial area to park. Approximately 30% generally then visit the General Store or Hotel first, but almost all visitors walk a loop through part of the village. The extent of the loop and the duration of the walk depends on:

1. how comfortable the weather is; and
2. how interested and satisfied the visitor is with the interpretation.

The average duration on a walk is approximately 20–30 minutes.

Most visitors walk in a counter clockwise direction down Clarke Street and back along Tambaroora Street. The most common stops photographed (in order) are Hosies Store, Holtermanns Co and Beyers Cottage. It is likely that visitors would photograph the facades of the General Store and Royal Hotel more if the views to the buildings were not impeded by parked vehicles.
4.4 Key Visitor Sites and Experiences

Visitor research conducted to support this report indicates that independent visitors to Hill End were most likely to stop at and walk through:

1. the Royal Hotel (True Travellers, Wanders and Compatriots);
2. Hosies (True Travellers and Wanderers);
3. the General Store (Compatriots);
4. the wider village precinct and view interpretation signs about missing buildings (True Travellers and Wanderers); and

There were no tours marketed on the weekend of the sample.

4.5 Visitor Profile

4.5.1 Largest Research-based Profile

The most reliable profile of visitors to Hill End comes from visitor research conducted by AMR (2011), where 227 visitors to Visitor Information Centres in Bathurst, Mudgee and Orange were sampled. The research used the market segmentation system developed for Tourism Australia, and revealed that most visitors to Hill End were represented by the following segments, listed in order from greatest number to least:

- Wanderers;
- Compatriots; and
- True Travellers.

A profile of each segment and their representation is presented in Table 4.2. The proportion of Compatriots increased in school holiday periods and declines outside these periods, this is particular evident mid-week.
### Table 4.2 Market Segments Visiting Hill End.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market Segment</th>
<th>Prop’n visiting Hill End</th>
<th>Prop’n of Aust pop’n</th>
<th>Comments relevant to Hill End</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wanderers</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>This segment represents nearly half of all visitors to Hill End. Hill End attracts significantly more (30%) than the Australian population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent potters. Nearly half of the Wanderers segment is retired. Wanderers take many holidays. They seek out value for money and take their holidays outside school holidays.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatriots</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Generally Hill End can only attract these visitors in school holiday periods and long weekends, so they are generally not available to Hill End for most of the year. Generally only camping grounds are available for this segment to stay at Hill End.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Australia. Compatriots travel with their family. They have to budget and look for value and accessibility. The children of Compatriots often have a role in deciding a holiday destination. Holidays are usually taken in single blocks, to allow maximum recharge.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True Travellers</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>Hill End is missing out on some of this market, most likely because it does not look different enough to experiences closer to home, and doesn’t offer enough immersion and adventure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are travellers, not tourists. They often holiday overseas where they immerse themselves in a different culture. They favour spontaneity. They respond to physical activity, personal fitness travel, adventure, risk and things they would not do at home.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pampadours</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>Hill End attracts significantly fewer of these than are in the Australian population, probably because it doesn’t offer a distinctive cultural experience of distinctive/comfortable accommodation and food and beverage services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The indulgers who want it all. They seek out new places, new faces, a different culture, climate and food, and activities not available or taken up at home. They travel outside school holidays. They avoid caravans, self contained accommodation, day trips, adventure and risk.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groupies / Peer Group Travellers</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Hill End attracts significantly fewer of these than are in the Australian population, probably because Hill End doesn’t look fun enough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainly young, male, school and tertiary students. They travel in peer groups and in peak periods. They want party time, bright lights, clubs and pubs. Their trips include fishing or hunting for males, girls weekends, school reunions etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hill End attracts virtually no international travellers and low numbers of low interstate travellers. The origin of visitors to Hill End are:

- 47% Sydney / Central Coast;
- 22% North NSW / Queensland;
- 17% Southern NSW / Victoria; and
- 10% Hill End Region (Bathurst / Mudgee).

The proportion of regional visitors increases on weekends outside school holiday periods.
The same research asked respondents to nominate motivations for visiting the region and Hill End. Table 4.3 presents the full results in the order of frequency.

The research revealed that while almost all visitors to the Region (80–90%) were seeking to explore, discover and learn something new, only 64% were seeking to experience Australia’s history, and only 47% were seeking to experience arts and culture. This regional result reveals that attracting visitors to Hill End is not easy, even when they want to explore and learn and are already travelling within the region and using regional visitor centres, they are less inclined to chase history and culture.

The research also revealed that motivations to visit Hill End generally scored much lower than motivations for the region. These motivations to visit Hill End were more passively orientated around seeing the Historic Site rather than specific experiences to engage with it and generate emotional impacts. This means that Hill End is not perceived as an experience with a compelling motivation to visit.

Table 4.3  Motivations for Visitors to the Region and Hill End (in order of popularity).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation to visit the Region</th>
<th>Popularity</th>
<th>Motivation to visit Hill End</th>
<th>Popularity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spend time with partner, family or friends</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>Historical / historic tourist area</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to tour around and explore</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>Historic architecture / old buildings</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxation and rejuvenation</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>Gold heritage / historic mining sites</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chance to discover or learn something new</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Sight-seeing / natural beauty / bush walking</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature-based, outdoor experiences</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>Australian art and culture</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and wine experiences</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>Interesting tourist destination / explore the area</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience Australia’s history</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>Attended a function/seeing friends or family</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An adventure</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>Prospecting / panning for gold / fossicking</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to experience arts or culture</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>Passing/ travelling through</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good shopping</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>History Hill / the Museum</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something the kids would enjoy</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>The cemetery</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxury and indulgence</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>Have a look / something to do</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyable nightlife &amp; entertainment</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>A day out / the drive / picnic</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The same research identified that most visitors travel as a couple, and that the minority travel with family or children.

4.5.2  Tour Based Profile

To support this report, customer feedback from various guided tours conducted by the NPWS at Hill End between 2011 and 2013 were analysed. Some of the key profile findings were:

- Almost twice as many females as males lodged feedback (this could be who completed the questionnaire rather than who was present, but still indicates that it is the female who chooses the product and provides the feedback, so they are the more important gender to attract and satisfy).

---

2 Sample sizes were: 58 on the Day Village Tour, 58 on the evening Ghost Tour, 53 on the Day Craigmoor House Tour, and 20 on the Golden Gully Tour. Note only the first two are currently regularly operating.
• Elderly people travelling in groups dominate the single historic house tour market (Craigmoor) with 83% over 55 years of age.

• Elderly people travelling as couples represent just over half the visitor market for day historic tours of the village (55% over 65 years) but there is a second significant younger market (19% aged 25–44 years).

• Young to middle aged visitors travelling as families and couples dominate the evening Ghost Tours (29% aged 12 and below, 17% aged 13–25, and 20% aged 25–44)

There was a dramatic difference in the origin of FIT\textsuperscript{3} visitors between the two main Hill End tours:

• The day Village Tour largely attracts visitors from Sydney (57%), with equal numbers of visitors from the region (17%) and much further away (17%)\textsuperscript{4}.

• The evening Ghost Tour largely attracts visitors from the region, followed by Newcastle.

4.5.3 Most Recent Profile

Visitor research conducted to support this report\textsuperscript{5} indicates that on a weekend in February the dominant market segments visiting Hill End were:

1. Wanderers (almost all from Sydney, seeking to explore, discover, learn then relax);
2. True Travellers (almost all from the Region, seeking to explore, discover and learn); and
3. Compatriots (all from the Region, seeking to explore, discover, learn then relax).

There were no Pampadours or Groupies / Peer Group Travellers. The research further revealed that there were some small groups (particularly in groups comprising two couples) travelling together from different groups—mainly True Travellers taking friends from the Compatriots segment (without their children).

4.6 Use and Perceptions of Interpretation

4.6.1 The Desire to Explore/Discover/Learn in Motivating Visitation

Visitors come to Hill End to explore, discover, learn then relax. Visitor research conducted to support this report indicates that on a weekend in February visitors were most motivated to visit Hill End in the following order:

1. Exploring, discovery and learning, then relaxing.
2. Exploring, discovery and learning.

None of the visitors surveyed said they only came to Hill End to relax and none said they did not want to learn something from their visit.

4.6.2 Most Relevant and Appealing Subjects to Learn About

Visitor research conducted for this report indicates that on a weekend in February visitors to Hill End most want to learn about the historic lifestyle of Hill End. The visitor’s second and third preference

\textsuperscript{3} Free Independent Travellers (excludes visitors in organised groups).

\textsuperscript{4} Visitors from Maitland were excluded because they all came from one coach load.

\textsuperscript{5} A sample of 14 groups of couples and families totally approximately 40 people.
depended on which market segment they came from. Presented in order from greatest to least, the list below shows what visitors were interested to learn about:

1. Historic lifestyle (Wanderers, True Travellers and Compatriots).
2. Historic township (Wanderers, True Travellers and Compatriots).
3. Conservation of the site (True Travellers).
4. Multiculturalism (Wanderers and True Travellers).
5. Historic gold mining (Compatriots).

There was little to no interest expressed in learning about local Aboriginal people.

The same research also suggests that visitors would most like their interpretation to address (in order of emphasis):

1. Stories about people (Compatriots, True Travellers).
2. Stories that are controversial (True Travellers, Wanderers).
4. Stories about the place (True Travellers).

There was minimal interest in tragedy and disaster or straight facts (how big/old etc).

4.6.3 The Most Appealing Interpretive Method

Visitor research indicated that most visitors wanted to learn through guided tours and interpretation signs in situ. A visitor's second and third preference depended on which market segment they came from. True Travellers and Wanderers wanted several interpretive techniques at Hill End, while other segments are only looking for one or two. The most popular approaches that respondents wanted at Hill End were:

1. Guided tours (True Travellers and Wanderers).
2. Interpretation signs in situ (Wanderers).
3. Interactive Displays within a Visitor Centre (True Travellers and Wanderers).
4. Sculptures to interpret people and scale (True Travellers).
5. Participation in past activities (Compatriots).

There was little interest in demonstration of historic activities or hand held technological systems. The choice is typically a reflection of past experience, so a sample of respondents with wider past experience will ask for a wider or more sophisticated range of interpretation.

4.6.4 Use of Interpretative Signage

Observations of visitors walking the route suggested that approximately 20–30% of the total collection of interpretation signs are read. The most common signs read are:

1. The first few signs on the beginning of the route.
2. Signs in front of or next to a building.
3. Artwork signs.

Visitors reading interpretation signs in front of vacant land sustain the practice for 2–3 signs, and then drift away towards signs in front of existing buildings.

This is minimal visitor interaction with the signs—even couples holding hands and concurrently reading showed minimal interaction, other than occasional pointing to an image and a single comment, received by a nod or acknowledgement.

4.6.5 Visitor Satisfaction

The research conducted by AMR in 2011 found that appeal of Hill End after a visit was strongest with the Wanderers and Pampadours, and least appealing with the Groupies, True Travellers and Compatriots. Figure 4.1 presents the proportion of appeal across all market segments. Figure 4.2 presents the relative appeal of different aspects of Hill End, and suggests that the small scale, peaceful and intact streetscapes of the village holds more appeal than the landscape or specific goldmining elements.

---

4.6.6 Visitor Satisfaction with Guided Tours

The results from customer feedback from various guided tours conducted by the NPWS at Hill End between 2011 and 2013 are presented in Table 4.4. The table suggests extremely high satisfaction with the guided tour product, particularly the guide’s knowledge of the subject and style of presentation. Interestingly, there was a lower overall result for actually meeting expectations. This normally suggests that while the guide delivered really well, customers expected more from the tour and did not get everything they were anticipating.

Table 4.4 Results from Customer Feedback from Various Guided Tours Conducted by the NPWS at Hill End (actual counts not percentages).
Day Village Tour (58 Responses) | Poor | Satisfactory | Good | V Good | Excellent
---|---|---|---|---|---
Met expectations |  |  | 35 | 23 |
Guide knowledge of subject |  |  | 4 | 54 |
Style of presentation |  |  | 10 | 48 |

Evening Ghost Tour (59 responses) | Poor | Satisfactory | Good | V Good | Excellent
---|---|---|---|---|---
Met expectations |  |  | 8 | 20 | 31 |
Guide knowledge of subject |  |  | 11 | 48 |
Style of presentation |  |  | 11 | 48 |

Craigmoor House Tour (53 responses) | Poor | Satisfactory | Good | V Good | Excellent
---|---|---|---|---|---
Met expectations |  |  | 3 | 19 | 16 |
Guide knowledge of subject |  |  | 3 | 8 | 42 |
Style of presentation |  |  | 6 | 8 | 39 |

Golden Gully Tour (20 responses) | Poor | Satisfactory | Good | V Good | Excellent
---|---|---|---|---|---
Met expectations |  |  | 10 | 10 |
Guide knowledge of subject |  |  |  | 20 |
Style of presentation |  |  |  | 20 |

There is no doubt that the individual guide is the centre-piece of high levels of satisfaction. Customers particularly appreciate the personal connection the guide has to the place and the high levels of enthusiasm to the subject. Open ended feedback customer from the tours suggested the following potential improvements to the experience:

- Keep day tour groups typically below 15 (more than 20 is too large to develop a connection with the guide, feel the ambience of the place, and easily move within buildings).
- Ensure the guide does not stay in front of the same building or in the same room for more than a few minutes, so customers don’t get restless and bored—otherwise give them something to do rather than just listen.
- Ensure the guide does not spend too long on detail without pulling together each story into some kind of message or underlying conclusion.
- Offer customers one or two places to sit down rather than have to stand the entire time.
- Provide a conclusion at the end of the tour.
- Do not run tours over the forecast time.

Other customer feedback suggested that marketing needed to more comprehensively describe what the experience was—what the guide would do, what customers would do, what content would be covered and how customers would feel during and after the experience.
4.7 Marketing

4.7.1 Positioning and Brand

There is no brand for Hill End. The destination is loosely positioned as:

‘A snapshot of what life was like in an 1870s mining and commercial centre’

The lead paid site in a Google search is managed by Destination NSW, who position Hill End as:

*In 1851, gold was discovered at Hill End, and by 1872, at the height of the great gold rush, the town was the largest inland settlement in NSW. With its museum displays and many preserved buildings, Hill End offers fascinating insight into the 19th century gold rush.*

The best positioning for Hill End is done within the Hill End profile on the NPWS site [http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/hill-end-historic-site](http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/hill-end-historic-site) which positions as:

*History comes alive in Hill End; you can really feel the past.*

*Step back in time at Hill End Historic Site and discover the enduring legacy of colonial New South Wales and the roaring early days of the gold rush.*

**Promotion**

The lead website from a Google web search (Destination NSW) promotes Hill End as:

*This well-preserved, former Bathurst gold-mining town is set in an isolated valley surrounded by mountains and gorges. The rugged scenery of its Country NSW setting has inspired many renowned Australian painters, including Donald Friend and Russell Drysdale, who painted some of the finest Australian landscapes of the 20th century.*

*In its heyday in the 1870s, Hill End had a population of 10,000 and boasted a kilometre of colourful shopfronts, including 28 pubs, an opium den and an oyster bar.*

*Today, the town has changed very little. Silent ruins, remnants of gold fever and two historic cemeteries speak volumes about the town’s rich past. If you’re looking for things to do, take a self-guided tour of the gold-rush streetscape, go underground at the Bald Hill Mine or join a fossicking tour and search for gold among mounds of old mine tailings.*
Charming country accommodation in Hill End includes two campgrounds, and for more options plus information and tours, call in at the Visitor Centre at the Hill End Historic Site.

The most comprehensive and up to date promotional material for Hill End is the NPWS website http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/hill-end-historic-site. The site promotes Hill End as more of an experience:

Explore the town on a self-guided tour starting at the Hill End Visitor Centre and Museum. You’ll find streetscapes and buildings little changed since the village’s 1870s goldmining heyday. Join a tour of impressive Craigmoor House for an intriguing peek into the past, try your luck gold panning at the Fossicking Ground, and experience the subterranean world of a colonial goldminer on a guided tour of Bald Hill Tourist Mine. Spend a couple of days uncovering the layers of history at this remarkable site, home to a thriving community and artists’ retreat. You can camp at one of two campgrounds or stay in heritage accommodation in town.

Despite this, generally promotion of Hill End as an interpretive experience is limited and fractured:

- There is no editorialised approach that singles out the must do interpretive experiences. The NPWS destination brochure positions all the attractions and experiences equally next to each other.
- There are limited examples of co-operative marketing, where multiple operators combine resources to generate bigger impressions or wider circulation. There is no evidence of any product packaging (combining experiences and forming a single attractive price proposition).
- Local operators see limited value in co-operative advertising led by local tourism associations, because their product and Hill End generally is positioned in weak areas of collateral.
- The NPWS website listing for Hill End does not promote its own tours. Furthermore, the site promotes some places where operators deliver an experience (such as the Bald Hill Mine) but does not promote the guided/assisted experience, does not link to the operators website, site or assist with bookings.
- Attractions outside of the immediate township are not well promoted at the Visitor Centre. In particular the gold mining attractions outside of town, such as Golden Gully, are not well visited. Promotion is fragmented and ad hoc.
- Tours conducted by non NPWS providers (such as Kerry Burns, Tour Guide, Hill End Ranch) do not have easily accessible promotion available for these tours at the Visitor Centre.

Dominant distribution channels for visitor information

The AMR (2011) visitor research identified that the two dominant sources of information supporting the planning of travel to the region were:

- websites (46%) starting with Google and then regional tourist websites;
- regional brochures or guidebooks (42%);
- information from friends or relatives (41%); and
- a Visitor Information Centre (37%).
Feedback from customers on Hill End guided tours suggested additional sources of information include:

- the regional VIC and Hill End Visitor Centre for visitors taking up the day Village Tour; and
- word of mouth, followed by the regional VIC and Hill End Visitor Centre for the evening Ghost Tour.

4.8 Target Markets

You can’t be all things to all people. It is much more effective to choose the people that are most likely to want what you offer, and most likely to be satisfied with what you offer.

Target markets are the segments of people that a destination most wants to attract and satisfy. To choose target markets is not to suggest that a destination does not want other visitors, but it does mean choosing to deliver certain products over others, and market the products in certain ways and not other ways.

Wanderers will come to Hill End regardless, and so do not need to be specifically targeted. Compatriots will only come in school holiday periods. Groupies/Peer Group Travellers are unlikely to ever want to come because the product doesn’t meet their core needs.

Hill End should target the markets most prepared to immerse themselves in the site through an overnight stay. Overnight stay maximises the full interpretive potential of Hill End and the economic impact for the town. The target market segments most prepared to do this are:

- True Travellers and Pampadours residing in the Blue Mountains, Canberra, Newcastle, the Central Coast of NSW and the inner west of Sydney.

The needs of target markets should drive interpretation, product development, customer service and marketing.

Once the needs of the target markets are met, there is some potential to market to secondary markets, in order to generate visitation in school holidays and weekends. Secondary markets are:

- Compatriots residing in the region (especially from the Blue Mountains, Bathurst and Mudgee) prepared to visit as overnight campers and take up a tour in the school holidays, or visit as day trippers on the weekends.
• Elderly groups (eg Probus) prepared to pre-book and visit mid-week for a tour and lunch package.

Secondary markets will help support destination awareness and word of mouth, and trigger some (smaller but more frequent) economic benefits through spend on tours and food & beverage. The needs of secondary markets should be considered only after meeting those of target markets. If there are no more resources to develop/deliver/market interpretive experiences beyond what is needed for the target markets, then secondary markets should not be considered.

4.9 Key Opportunities for Audience Engagement

4.9.1 Emerging Opportunities

The first major opportunity for Hill End is to focus on the proposed target markets. This will provide significant direction on preferred content, style, interpretive techniques and the overall brand for the site. The target markets are looking for experiences that generate more interaction and engagement. They want to engage in activities that challenge them a little, not just read and listen. A good example of this is the Bald Hill Mine Tour, where customers finish the tour by climbing up a shaft via a series of ladders to the surface. To augment their experience, customers want photographic opportunities to quickly load up to social media sites.

The second major opportunity is to concentrate on shifting from interpreting the place to interpreting how the place has shaped the people. Visitors are more interested in people—both historically and in contemporary forms. They are looking for genuine revelations relevant to our present and future lives. Experiences need to be more entertaining and current. Ghost tours should be told where there was genuine emotional trauma that typically led to residual spiritual energy, and the Royal Hotel should be home to current locals telling stories about recent times after dinner as it is a place to eat and drink.

The third major opportunity is for the NPWS to move into the commercial centre and partner with the private sector. A revitalised Visitor Centre should be able to promote and book public and private sector experiences, and all tourism businesses should be promoting the core experiences as displays and compendiums. Perhaps a new co-operative could be formed to drive co-operative marketing, training, business development and customer feedback.

The final major opportunity from this section is to completely rework conservative governance arrangements, and incentivise people and businesses to market and deliver the key interpretive experiences needed. Leases of unique buildings could be shifted to attract businesses and people prepared to deliver interpretive services sought after but not fully delivered in the current operating environment. Stars in the tours, tourism and hospitality sectors could be incentivised and rewarded for generating additional business—think additional marketing emphasis and even commissions.

4.9.2 Specific Visitor Options

During visitor research for this report visitors were asked to openly suggest what further improvements to the interpretive experience they would like to see. The suggestions (in order of frequency) are presented in the following table.

Table 4.5 Visitor Suggestions to Improve Interpretation of Hill End.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpretive Subjects to Emphasise</th>
<th>The scale of the village within the village—how big was it and how quickly did it contract.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missing buildings presented to show where they were and how close they</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
were together.
- Where the mines and reef were located.

| Interpretive Methods to Emphasise | Host a Village Tour every Saturday and Sunday and a Ghost Tour every Saturday night.  
| Other Suggestions | Host a Children’s Ghost Tour in the school holiday period.  
| | Wider opening hours of the shops (particularly Mondays and Fridays).  
| | Greater contact with NPWS guides or second best, rangers.

A number of visitors also made several unsolicited suggestions to improve marketing of Hill End—particularly the guided tours, including:
- Stronger marketing of guided tours on the website; and
- A DL flier inside the Hill End brochure which covers the tours could be displayed within the Bathurst VIC, Hill End VIC, General Store, Royal Hotel, Hosies and in a distributor on the campground information sign.

4.10 Summary

This section has revealed the current profile of visitors, their use of and satisfaction with current interpretation, and some key opportunities for improvement. This section has also proposed a target market for interpretation and marketing to concentrate on, to avoid trying to be all things to all people.

Whilst the current target visitor markets are important and interpretation will provide these segments with a satisfying visitor experience, there is potential to also appeal to other markets that have not been identified through research to date. There are potential new visitor markets that are drawn to places that offer authenticity, creativity, crafted produce and bespoke experiences. Hill End is likely to attract younger markets if the history and heritage values of the place are interpreted and marketed effectively.

The research has revealed that there is an underlying need to develop and promote a small number of the most powerful and appealing interpretive experiences over everything else on offer. Finally, it has become obvious that marketing is less developed than the interpretation, and must be substantially reformed if Hill End is to attract more visitors and subsequently become a more sustainable proposition. Finally, if the public and private sector work in partnership to deliver and market interpretive experiences, the customer will be more satisfied and both sectors will operate more sustainably.
Key Outcomes and Findings
5.1 Introduction

This section outlines the proposed interpretive themes and storylines for Hill End Historic Site. The preferred approach to interpretation is presented, along with ideas for activities and events and marketing Hill End to the target markets and visitor segments.

5.2 Interpretive Themes/Storylines

Essentially a theme is an idea that succinctly sums up the core ideas that are to be interpreted. The themes that have been developed are based upon the history and heritage values of the Hill End Historic Site, combined with the findings of the research and review of documents.

The themes have been developed to be flexible and capable of accommodating a diverse range of storylines. To illustrate this, a selection of storylines relate to the five individual themes below.

- **Quartz Veins and Saddle Reefs**—the land and the natural shaping processes through deep time, including the formation of the tableland, its hills, gorges and valleys. The Turon River, its creeks and tributaries. The geology including the veins and reefs.

- **Muurruun**—the Wiradjuri and their continuing connections to Country, patterns of use and occupation, contact, guiding the way, the changing circumstances of life for Aboriginal people following contact, resistance and martial law, relocation and resettlement, continuing culture.

- **Pure Gold**—the discovery of gold, making a claim, the processes of extraction, from alluvial to reef, the mines, changing technology, pans, roasting pits, stampers, the gold economy, the changes/ transformation of the landscape, the diggers the prospectors, harsh work and conditions, a lucky few.

- **The Art of Life**—the evolving pattern of life and living in Hill End. Marking birth, life and death, the Holtermann collection, artistic inspiration in Hill End, the artists in residence program, poetry and writing, the social lives within the buildings (eg Craigmoor House, other dwellings, the Royal Hotel), cultural diversity at Hill End, domestic life, living conditions, gardens and being self-sufficient, the characters of Hill End.

- **Making History**—the community concern for Hill End, the processes of making, speaking and writing history (eg Harry Hodge), the gazettal of the Historic Site, its conservation over
four decades as a history of the evolving attitudes to heritage, presenting Hill End the yarns, myths and legends.

5.3 Interpretive Approach

Our vision for interpretation at Hill End is for world-class visitor experience to be realised in bespoke forms that speak to its unique characteristics. Our intention is to change the current interpretation mindset to a more powerful and resonating one that addresses contemporary audiences and aligns with marketing and promotion.

Hill End is built on powerful concepts of opportunity, spirit, identity and survival. Much of its history is not for the feint hearted. During the gold rush days it was an extreme place—a town open 24 hours a day, isolated by distance, populated by people focused on making their fortune and enduring unbelievable hardship in the process of doing so. This is a town where the landscape was transformed literally overnight, de-vegetated, intoxicated, pock marked and ravaged. Our directive in interpreting this is to bring this energy, this sex, dirt, excess, deprivation, impoliteness, swindling, death… this ‘life’ of the town. This plan will not fixate on sleepy heritage but compelling drama. Hill End has a unique ‘edge’ and this is what we seek to bring to the telling of its stories.

Artists came to Hill End to mine for very different materials. They were seeking inspiration, identity as Australians, an insight into the psyche of their countrymen, connectedness with the landscape, a place with a history of beauty and horror, a once visceral place, used, transformed and calmed by time. The artists were then and are now, not looking for answers but looking for questions to ask. This has become an enduring legacy of Hill End and an intrinsic to its identity. Interpretation will communicate this fire of purpose and drive. The art story is not about pleasing pictures and nice landscapes, it is concerned with the ongoing and relentless search for meaning—who are we, what is this place and where are we going?

We want to create interpretive experiences that provoke. Interpretation will communicate themes, concepts and stories intellectually, emotionally and spiritually. We want to make it real, bring it close, examine it. We want visitors to be inside the stories, daily life, the artworks. We want visitors to leave understanding that this place is special, memorable and continues to inspire, transform and transfix.
This leads to the importance of preserving Hill End as a crucible for these stories, which Australians and others from around the world can learn from. This has been the job of NPWS over the last 40 years—maintaining, appropriately rebuilding, revegetating and providing visitor with the tools to understand it. This is a significant period in the town’s evolution to be interpreted.

The interpretation plan has the following objectives in delivering interpretation:

Diversification of interpretive experiences—teasing out the story layers, sourcing the most evocative imagery, text, sound, video to do so and translating these to experiences that correspond to a variety of visitor impulses, wants and needs. Our view is that there is not only ‘one’ general or master experience at Hill End, there are many. We will define the most potent and important of them and deliver a comprehensive range of experiences using the most appropriate interpretive forms.

Co-ordination between different interpretive forms—guided tours, self-guided, tours, walking trails, physical interpretives, digital interpretives will link together, connecting to form rich, multi-layered experiences. Visitors will curate their own experiences using a set of tools designed by our team and NPWS.

5.4 Visitors and Audiences

Section 4.0 reviewed past and current visitors and proposed target markets for Hill End in detail.

Hill End should target the markets most prepared to immerse themselves in the site through an overnight stay. Overnight stay maximises the full interpretive potential of Hill End and the economic impact for the town. The target market segments most prepared to do this are:

- True Travellers and Pampadours residing in the Blue Mountains, Canberra, Newcastle, the Central Coast of NSW and the inner west of Sydney.

The needs of target markets should drive interpretation, product development, customer service and marketing.

Once the needs of the target markets are met, there is some potential to market to secondary markets, in order to generate visitation in school holidays and weekends. Secondary markets are:
- Compatriots residing in the region (especially from the Blue Mountains, Bathurst and Mudgee) prepared to visit as overnight campers and take up a tour in the school holidays, or visit as day trippers on the weekends.

- Elderly groups (eg Probus) prepared to pre-book and visit mid week for a tour and lunch package

Secondary markets will help support destination awareness and word of mouth, and trigger some (smaller but more frequent) economic benefits through spend on tours and food & beverage. The needs of secondary markets should be considered only after meeting those of target markets. If there are no more resources to develop / deliver / market interpretive experiences beyond what is needed for the target markets, then secondary markets should not be considered.

Table 5.1 presents a profile of these markets, their current representation and a key performance indicator that should be reached by 2020.

Table 5.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Market segments</th>
<th>Prop'n visiting Hill End 2011</th>
<th>Proportion visiting Hill End 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>True Travellers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are travellers, not tourists. They often holiday overseas where they immerse themselves in a different culture. They favour spontaneity. They respond to physical activity, personal fitness travel, adventure, risk and things they would not do at home.</td>
<td>13% mid week</td>
<td>20% mid week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pampadours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The indulgers who want it all. They seek out new places, new faces, a different culture, climate and food, and activities not available or taken up at home. They travel outside school holidays. They avoid caravans, self contained accommodation, day trips, adventure and risk.</td>
<td>8% mid week</td>
<td>15% mid week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary Market segments</th>
<th>Prop'n visiting Hill End 2011</th>
<th>Proportion visiting Hill End 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compatriots</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Australia. Compatriots travel with their family. They have to budget and look for value and accessibility. The children of Compatriots often have a role in deciding a holiday destination. Holidays are usually taken in single blocks, to allow maximum recharge.</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>35% school holidays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elderly groups and school groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probus groups and secondary schools</td>
<td></td>
<td>20% mid week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.5 Activities and Events

There is a lack of co-ordinated approach to the staging of activities and events in Hill End. A criteria or structure from which to initiate event and activity ideas, procure events and target special interest groups is required. One of the aims of the interpretation plan is to stimulate ideas in the area. Interpretive themes and messages will contribute to a structure that town stakeholders can use to target and attract events.

To create new events and to improve existing ones NPWS, town vendors and local community members need to be engaged in formulating new ideas and co-ordinating resources—food,
accommodation and other services. Criteria for events should play to the strengths of Hill End. Some ideas to engage in are:

- NPWS, vendors and other associated groups and institutions (such as the Bathurst Regional Art Gallery) to brainstorm events for the town, discuss what specialist groups that have synergies with the town. This group can co-ordinate accommodation, food and beverage, facilities and activities to attract specialist groups such as 4WD enthusiasts, bushwalkers, art followers, photographers or foodies.

- Use seasonal change as a springboard for events. For example: Autumn in Hill End—the beautiful colours, Winter—cosy charm.

- Use significant events in the town’s history to base an event around, such as anniversaries of milestone events. There are possibilities for re-enactments and dressing up.

- Target specific operators that have synergies with Hill End and leverage their following to attract visitors and participation.

Hill End is the perfect backdrop for an event. Its unique period character, authenticity, sense of intactness, seclusion and size provides opportunities for small to medium scale events. It is possible for an event to ‘own’ the town for short periods of time. The town is very appealing for weddings and creative conferences.

5.5.1 Walking Tracks and Trails

Hill End requires more trails, tracks and walks around the town and attractions outside of town. At mining sites like Golden Gully there are no clear paths prescribed. Dense information is provided at the entry but once on site the pathway is confusing. Clarity about walking trails, accompanied by subtle interpretive sign posting would vastly improve the visitor experience here.

Tours that use voice overs and soundtracks can be very powerful and should be considered for all sites.

5.5.2 Ideas to Revitalise Current Tours and Activities

1. Reinvent the NPWS Hill End leasing structure so that residential properties are tied to people prepared to offer an interpretive tourism experience.
2. Recruit successful tourism accommodation and food and beverage operators from the surrounding region and incentivise them to extend into Hill End (eg. grants, low interest loans, peppercorn leases and marketing support).

3. Liaise with the Department of Mines to permit tour access to the historic mine area, and assist an existing tour operator redevelop a mine tour into the area.

4. Concentrate NPWS resources on delivering a few experiences central to the interpretive themes and target markets really well, and consider the rest as extensions.

5. Hire a tourism orientated interpretation tour specialist to assist guide(s) restructure the Village and Ghost Tours to focus on a strong introduction and conclusion, focus on content based around the proposed themes and storylines, use more interactive techniques that appeal to the target markets, and finish on time. Change the Ghost Tour use lanterns to venture inside 3–4 buildings, reducing reliance and time in Craigmore House. Set a maximum group size for the tours. Run the revised tours every weekend.

6. Use the same specialist to assist the guide(s) of the Bald Hill Mine to reinvigorate the tour, including demonstrations of mining activity in the true lighting conditions and a second adventure akin to the shaft climb, and use of the NPWS Information Board to present visuals that assist introduce the tour and market other tours.

7. Hire an oral history researcher to assist the NPWS guide record the key content and then use the interpretive specialist to build a manual on how to run the tours. Then use the manual to recruit and train two additional guides.

8. Create symbolic depictions of the missing buildings in Hill End to reinforce the former scale of the town at its peak.

9. Establish a one way circuit walk through the town featuring a series of interpretive stations that present a sequential story of the lifestyle of past to present residents of Hill End.
10. Install a car counter at the entrance road to Hill End and calibrate the count to establish a formula for isolating visitors from the total count.

11. Establish a continuous visitor monitoring program for tours run by the NPWS and private sector.

5.6 Marketing

1. Develop a brand within the Interpretation Plan for Hill End that is based on a blend of interpretive concept and the lead interactive interpretive experiences.

2. Establish a destination website for Hill End that is a partnership between the public and private sector. The website should focus on the brand and lead product (including guided and self guided experiences and supporting services in accommodation and food and beverage. Write and design to appeal to the target markets.

3. Update the Hill End brochure to reflect the website.

4. Generate regular familiarisation tours for staff and volunteers of the Bathurst and Mudgee Visitor Information Centres.

5. Generate drink coasters for the Royal Hotel that promote local tours. Hotel to offer a deal where visitors that bring the coaster back stamped by the tour operator get a second drink free.

6. Generate packaged of tours, accommodation and food and beverage.

7. Generate displays promoting the core storyline and interpretive experiences for the accommodation and F&B operators to host.

8. Incentivise guides to visit the campsites, Royal Hotel and Hosies to generate sales and receive a commission.

5.7 Summary

Based on the research and review activities we have undertaken, this section provides an overview of our findings to date. The key themes and storylines for interpretation at Hill End Historic Site are outlined. The themes provide an integrated organising framework that may encompass the multilayered history and significance of the Historic Site. In preparing the interpretive themes we have endeavoured to ‘dig deeper’ and go beyond the obvious. The themes are intended to provide a framework for a powerful and innovative interpretive approach, combined with events and activities that engage authentically with the place’s history. The approach to interpretation has been conceived with regard to what we currently understand about the visitors to Hill End and the target markets.
6.0 Preliminary Interpretation (and Visitation) Concepts
6.1 Introduction

This section provides a preliminary overview of some of the concepts that have emerged during this research and review phase of the interpretation plan and implementation strategy project.

Interpretation at Hill End will:
- be compelling;
- be relevant to all target visitors;
- be intuitive;
- cleverly use a variety of media;
- offer a range of different options and feel abundant but not overwhelming;
- compliment the significance, character and ambience of the town and surrounding areas in the use of design and materials;
- focus on specific themes and stories that engage with the past on a deeper level;
- communicate the layers and representations of the town’s evolving history—not just the gold rush stories;
- build the greater story of Hill End importance to the national psyche—a crucible for Australia’s national identity;
- be realised in a variety of sophisticated and forms; and
- play to the town’s strengths.

What follows is a variety of preliminary interpretive strategies and concepts across and external, interior and digital applications.

6.2 Arrival Experience

Hill End is a beautiful town nestled in the hills, full of charm and character. After driving or riding through the tree lined main streets of town, the vast majority of visitors stop at Beyers Ave outside the Royal Hotel, General Store, Royal Hall and Visitor Centre (the old CWA cottage). This is the arrival location, the point where the arrival experience begins.

At this arrival point the town’s other points of interest, attractions and experiences are largely invisible. Existing maps, itineraries, tours and other attractions are not promoted in a clear or compelling way. Compounding this, the topography and landform is such that from the top of Clark Street, one may form the impression that the rest of the town is visible. The area functions as a lookout, and visitors may feel they can survey all the town from this vantage point. As a result they may return to their vehicles and leave without significantly engaging in what Hill End has to offer. It is crucial in the arrival area that there be a welcoming piece of physical interpretive that entices the visitor to engage with the town and to communicate that this is the location where Hill End interpretive experiences fan out from. An on foot experience is the best way to experience the town—this needs to be promoted.

In these preliminary stages our vision for the entry experience is as follows:
• The large interpretive/map sign currently located outside the Royal Hall is proposed to be redesigned and relocated to the grounds of the Visitor Centre cottage. It would provide detailed and navigable plans of the town and surrounding areas, highlight the main interpretive experiences, present up-to-date information of what is on, activities and accommodation, where to eat as well as contact information. It may include a digital screen that is updatable by NPWS and vendors, showing imagery of what is on offer. It could include seating, respite from the weather and would connect to the visitor centre. It would have a feeling openness and clarity.

One of the main aims of this sign is to promote exploration of and engagement with the town. It would also be to promote longer stays, perhaps providing suggested itineraries. The aim is to take the work out of planning an experience and offer an enticing program for all lengths of stay, encouraging visitors not to conclude their experience at this location, but to expand it.

• The vista south, looking down on Clark St from the arrival area, is proposed to have new fenced areas along the street and native grass landscaping marking the previous built forms on its western side. From this high vantage point the visitor would see an interpretation of the boom era commercial centre of town and the many footprints where these buildings once existed. Where bare paddocks are at present, a new interpretive interface will encourage visitor exploration.

The arrival experience interpretive plan is to provide connectors from this site to other attractions and experiences and to stimulate the visitor intellectually and emotionally. As part of this it is crucial is to communicate the key interpretive messages and areas of interpretive interest. Flexibility and range of experience is also an important consideration.

6.3 Preliminary Interpretation Overview

The visitor will experience connectivity across the town of Hill End. We propose dissolving the concept of a centralised interpretive exhibition and investing NPWS cottages—dotted throughout the town—with new life as venues for exhibitions on topics of specific interest.

Our vision is for a seamless exterior/interior interpretive model. Visitor experiences include a combination of walks in the town or landscape integrated with smaller bespoke interior exhibition
visits. In town, visitors will criss-cross the streets, venturing into buildings and emerging back into the street. Picnic experiences, as suggested in the LMP, would also be integrated. Each experience would encompass a diversity not attempted in current interpretation.

Visitors will have choices. Interpretives will be designed as a set of tools that can be used in unique ways by visitors. There will be a mix of prescriptive experiences and ones where the visitor curates. In this way we bring the language of art into the experience of the visitor. In the times in which we live this concept of ‘curating’ is more and more the way people live their lives—individual, bespoke, tailored and customised.

There will be a feeling of abundance of interpretive possibilities, but the visitor will never be overwhelmed. We will structure experiences, and the necessary tools required for them, with sense of clarity and purpose. These concepts will be tested to ensure they resonate and ring true.

Strategy and design for tours and physical interpretation will take precedence in this interpretation plan, but future stages will make provision for digital initiatives. Our direction is to get the basics right first.

6.3.1 Interpreting Everyday Life through Creative Partnerships

One key focus for interpretation at Hill End is the ‘art of living’. There is much to be curious about with regard to the history everyday life and living at Hill End. The Holtermann Photographic Collection, and other pictorial and documentary sources, provide fascinating insights for today’s visitors to conjure a richly imagined past. Drawing on this, Hill End can be interpreted as a place in which to engage in alternative ways of living that are simply and sustainably founded on artisanal processes.

The artists-in-residence program is an example of a current program that continues to interpret a significant aspect of Hill End’s history. Having artists living and working in Hill End stimulates engagement and interest in imagining the creative lives of artists. Likewise, if other experiences of life that interpret aspects of the past at Hill End could be supported and stimulated it would enrich and revitalise the town.

An example of this approach might be encouraging a partnership with an organisation such as the Australian Garden History Society or operators such as the agrarian kitchen (a sustainable farm-based cooking school offering paddock to plate experiences), or the Flannery Centre, Bathurst, to reinterpret some of the cottage gardens at Hill End with a focus growing food to live a sustainable life. Another example is to partner with a microbrewery that produces hand crafted beer, or a baker that produces organic artisan breads or a cheese maker. Enticing such operators to Hill End would not only interpret aspects of the past with contemporary relevance but also provide authentic experiences. If products are genuinely hand crafted and locally produced by skilled and passionate business entrepreneurs, visitors will be drawn to Hill End.

6.4 Physical Interpretation

Physical interpretation will be cohesively designed and tell stories that resonant and complement Hill End’s character. Visitors will experience a variety of interesting forms of interpretation more compelling than traditional text and images on panels. Many of the proposed new forms of physical interpretation will also adaptively reuse existing interpretives and other infrastructure.
6.4.1 Interpretive Exhibition

The enduring interpretive model for Hill End which has been carried through into the 2013 Masterplan has been for one all-encompassing interpretive exhibition. The Masterplan proposes that the RFS shed be repurposed as the main orientation and interpretation centre for the village.

During this research and review we have conceived of a new way of thinking about the interpretive experience at Hill End. Based on the significance and the qualities of Hill End, we consider that it would be more fitting and engaging to separate the interpretation along thematic and story lines across multiple spaces. The benefits of this approach are that it:

- allows more space to thoroughly present and explore stories and themes;
- fits with the character of the town as a series of small spaces;
- encourages flow and interactivity across the town, not just concentrated in the centre of town;
- provides visitors with a sense of purpose in navigating and discovering the township;
- echoes the patterns of movements of locals and people in the past, walking from place to place; and
- utilises available budgets more effectively.

Different properties in the extensive NPWS Hill End portfolio suit different uses and particular stories being told. This is an alternative to the one large exhibition strategy. In the interpretation plan we will address the possibilities of flexible interpretive spaces. This means that interpretive spaces could have other uses to maximise the amount of venue space and other possibilities for Hill End.

The key interpretive stories at Hill End are:

- Quartz Veins and Saddle Reefs;
- Muurrruun (Wiradjuri word for life);
- Pure Gold;
- The Art of Life; and
- Making History.
What follows are a list of initial options and comments on the use of available spaces:

- Use the space in the Discovery Centre (old CWA Cottage) for a focussed interpretive exhibition.

- Use the Holtermann corner buildings to house the Holtermann Photographic Collection. A contemporary structure bridging the two separate buildings on Tambaroora St is suggested. This will allow a large floor space area to be created and the street façade will interpret historic commercial facades, where at present there is a gap. This will also provide access to the extensive backyard area that is currently underutilised and provide a dual interpretive display/function space. This will re-establish the missing street-scape facade.

- Lyall’s Cottage on Clark St can be used as another interpretive space, perhaps interpreting The Art of Life, Quartz Veins and Saddle Reefs or Pure Gold.

- Beyer’s Cottage could be displayed as a dilapidated cottage. The pathway to and through the cottage would require rebuilding for visitation.

- The Great Western Store offers other opportunities as a space for interpretation.

- The Sacred Heart Catholic Church on Thomas St could become the new Jean Belette Gallery space, replacing the space in the old hospital building.

- The Royal Hall could house a flexible interpretive display. The constraints around this idea may be that it is tightly held by town residents and may have implications affecting other uses.

- The RFS shed is centrally located but has a significant number of constraints in housing an interpretive display. It would be expensive to fit out for interpretation. It is not an attractive or welcoming building and as does not have the presence that a museum use building should have. It is not large enough and the spaces are oddly shaped and accessibility is an issue. It could continue to be used to display the Blitz fire engine and some of the large items (stamper and carriages) that are currently on display in covered spaces in the old hospital grounds. Given its location at the top of the hill and its spectacular views, with some alterations the building could be repurposed as covered market area with stalls opening out to surrounding grounds. There are venue possibilities for this and other semi outdoor functions and events
6.4.2 Interpreting Missing Buildings

One of the main aims of re-energising Hill End’s interpretive experience is to bring awareness of the former buildings that once existed, in particular the former main commercial backbone of the town (Clark Street). This is one aspect many visitors are curious about.

Ideas such as the creation of ‘ghost frames’—structures that mimic the outlines of missing buildings—is a consideration, but they are extremely intrusive and would be detrimental to the town’s character. The question we need to solve is how should large architectural volumes be interpreted without disturbing high value archaeological areas or the charm/character of the town, and be easily manageable for NPWS to maintain over time?

We propose using low plantings, perhaps of native grasses, to mark the locations of previous built forms. Long grass would mark the footprints of the buildings, and the internal areas would be indicated with a mowed surface allowing the foundations and any other extant building material to be seen by the visitor. This is a soft interpretive technique that utilises natural forms. This new landscaping would improve the town on a visual level and be consistent with its aesthetic. In the evening these areas would be illuminated, providing a different interpretive dimension.

Timber fences defining the allotment boundaries and many views within Hill End would be erected in some areas to mark the edges of previous properties. They would show that in many cases a number of buildings housing different businesses, and dwellings were built behind one other. In Clark Street there were three properties between the road and the creek. The timber fences would help to communicate the scale and urban nature of the town, which, according to our surveys, is one of the topics that interests visitors.

6.4.3 Boom Town Signage

One of the most interesting aspects of the Holtermann photographs is its depiction of Hill End’s unique signage. Signs in boom town Hill End were extremely large and prominently placed; they were built to be noticed. This signage communicates a bustling mercantile, competitive, commercial and multicultural environment. The sophistication and creativity evident in the typographic forms are in many cases more interesting than the architecture. The signage communicates the vast range of different services, goods and experiences available; the town even had an oyster bar and
an opium den. Images of these signs show a townscape in stark contrast to the present day town where there is limited historic signage remaining.

We propose to selectively interpret the historic signage within the streets of Hill End as an inventive, considered and sensitive way of conveying the life and diversity of the village. The signage will be etched into new fences to be built in the town at the boundaries of missing buildings.

6.4.4 The Fence as Interpretation

It is proposed that throughout Hill End fencing will be used as an interpretive frame. At each interpretive location one or more timber fence posts will be removed and replaced with metal posts carrying interpretive imagery and text. These posts will either be etched or be fabricated in vitreous enamel. Each fence post can mark a different story or layer in the town’s history. They can also be touch points for different thematic tours. Existing metal signs in these locations will be removed. Using the architectural language of the town—such as fencing—as part of the interpretive fabric, is a much more considered and low impact method of interpretive infrastructure than intrusive additional signage. It also allows the stories to sit lightly in the landscape. This follows LMP recommendations.

6.4.5 The Holtermann Collection Display

It is proposed that the Holtermann buildings will display the Holtermann Collection. This affords the possibility for the photographs to be properly and respectfully displayed as per world-class museum standards.

An interactive component of the photography studio will allow visitors to take their own photographs. This new facility will also be used by photography groups. Possibilities exist to use the space for other photography exhibitions. The images by Peter Adams from his *Ore What!* book and associated stories could be displayed/told here. This use of the building is enhances interpretation because it re-establishes its original purpose as photographic studio and provides a fitting home for the Holtermann collection.

6.4.6 Exhibition Design

Exhibitions across town will be designed to allow flexibility, refresh and updates by non-professional curatorial and interpretive staff. Across interpretives there will be provision for object and information updates so that the collection can be refreshed and changed over and offer something new to visitors as they visit over time. Different interpretive experiences
will offer visitors new reasons for repeat visitation to Hill End. Again, thinking about Hill End as a place where the ‘art of life’ is creative, PWG could partner with arts institutions and organisations, including museums and universities, to develop a curatorial residency. Emerging and mid-career curators could be offered residencies at Hill End so as to create an exhibition. The documentary evidence, artefacts and other objects could be researched and thematically displayed as an outcome of the curatorial residency.

6.4.7 Walking Tracks and Trails—Outside of Town

At Valentines Mine, the Quartz Roasting Pits and Golden Gully there is little physical interpretation to encourage and maximise visitor engagement at these sites. When visiting these sites without a guide, it is difficult to know where to go or what the specific attractions are. Without any available interpretive material it is somewhat challenging to make sense of the landscape during a walk. Questions visitors may ask are: Is this it? Have I seen everything? This may generate a view that ‘something is missing’. A walking track would give structure to the experience and if physical interpretation was provided along the trails and at the key landmarks it would provide a sense of discovery.

At present, interpretive signage panels carry extremely dense swathes of text and imagery. Our vision would be to simplify the information and where relevant disperse it through a range of active experiences. Instead of the experience consisting of a long initial reading session and then a walk along a non-prescribed path, the intention would be to create a series of discoverable interpretive points through the landscape. Some of these walks need only be very short, but ideally a variety of options would be provided. Golden Gully has great potential for this approach as it is visually inspiring and historically has a significant story to tell.

Visually, the form of the physical interpretation would be visible enough to be seen along the walk, but not enough to impact on the natural setting. As consistent with the physical interpretive recommendations in this report infrastructure is minimal, serves a dual purpose or uses existing structural forms. Minimising unnecessary poles and other structure in the landscape is one of our key directives for this interpretation project.

6.4.8 Holtermann’s Nugget Tent Recreation

One of the wonderful stories told during the Bald Hill Mining Tour was the story of Holtermann’s Nugget and how it was
displayed in the town prior to it being melted down – in a tent in the centre of town with an admission charge. It showed the relentless opportunism of Hill End inhabitants using the gold rush. A recreation of this would make for a unique, spirited and charming display.

6.4.9 Brochures

Hill End requires a cohesively designed suite of printed material that allows visitors to undertake self-guided tours based on different interests and themes. This material could be a suite of brochures, each one including a plan of the area and thematic interpretation content. The brochures would integrate with the physical on site interpretives and provide a mechanism for feedback. The brochures would specify how long each tour would be and the level of difficulty in undertaking it.

6.4.10 Booklet

A pocket sized interpretive booklet could be prepared for Hill End. The booklet would use the pararoma of Hill End as a fold up map in the back and include a series of pages each focused key sites within the Hill End Village. The Holtemann Collection, Drysdale photographs and Donald Friend’s sketches and other artworks could be used to illustrate the individual sites within the village, each of which would be accompanied by an engaging interpretive caption. The booklet would be beautifully designed but cost effective to produce. It would be something visitors want to take home and a lasting reminder of their visit to Hill End.

6.4.11 Adaptive Reuse

Existing noticeboard shade structures are currently not utilised effectively. They are located at the Quartz Roasting Pits and the Bald Face Mine, among other locations. With low-cost changes these can be adapted to allow for:

- interpretation;
- outdoor lessons;
- shade for groups;
- shelter and seating;
- picnic areas; and
- functional noticeboards.
6.5 Digital Interpretation

There are significant possibilities for digital interpretation at Hill End.

6.5.1 Preliminary Concepts for Digital Interpretation in the Landscape

Where buildings no longer stand, digital interpretation provides opportunities to fill in the gaps in an evocative and interactive way. Missing buildings can be recreated using the Holtermann Collection of photographs as a resource, using the actual photographs or creating interactive 3D drawings. For example, a visitor could position their phone or tablet to view a site or streetscape and to transform the view from a vacant lot to a bustling town scene. It would even be possible to simulate entering buildings if original interior designs could be sourced and recreated.

There are many constraints for introducing a digital element of this type. Digital interpretation starts from a blank canvas in Hill End. There is no digital infrastructure in terms of delivery, access or wifi coverage. Therefore, infrastructure needs to be built from scratch. Phone coverage in the area is patchy, so wifi relay stations would be required to boost signal in the town. This would enable GPA location, required for apps to work. If the app used physical markers instead of GPS (not as effective as having wifi enabled) it could be downloaded prior to the visit, or at the Visitor Centre, but this is not the most effective option from a user experience point of view.

Interactive maps that locate and suggest interpretive experiences are effective and suitable concepts for Hill End. These would provide opportunities for higher value self guided tours and less, or no, reliance on physical interpretation. Bespoke digital tours can cater for a variety of interests which would not be feasible for the Discovery Rangers or other guides to provide.

Digital sound-based interpretives can provide an immersive experience for the visitor, and the possibilities are endless in Hill End. There are a variety of characters to reference and use for voice overs, and a myriad stories to tell.

The main constraint for digital interpretation is the cost, particularly for set up and delivery. Digital architectural drawings, animation, app creation, app delivery (placement on itunes and other online portals), promotion, maintenance, updates and wifi installation are big budget items. Additionally, daytime use of phones and tablets have screen glare issues, especially in unprotected external environments.

6.5.2 Preliminary Concepts for Interior Digital Interpretation

The iconic town-scape panorama is the starting point for a valuable digital resource. Interactive digital tables would use the panorama as a framework from which limitless interactive interpretive possibilities come into play. This platform allows the layers of the town’s history to be uncovered and overlaid according to each visitor’s individual interpretive journey.

Digital photographic interactives that allow the visitor to be photographed and integrated into historic Hill End scenes would allow visitors to interact with the archive in a fun way and email themselves a souvenir. It would also build the Hill End digital archive.

There are opportunities to gather digital content from visitors using platforms such as FlickR, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, NPWS Youtube channel and the NPWS website, among others. Making provision for visitors to contribute photographs, video and comments within digital initiatives such as apps, and digital interpretive displays within exhibitions would constantly create new interpretive content that can be used by NPWS in a variety of different ways. The material would create new digital
experiences, for instance to allow people to experience Hill End online. It would act as ‘below the line’ Hill End promotion (as opposed to paid ‘above the line’ advertising), and it would build a data bases of interest groups.

We see digital interpretation operating in two phases. The earlier phase of utilising existing digital platforms and encouraging visitors to make and post content on Hill End and a later phase of creating specific digital apps and on site digital interpretives. The earlier phase would be concurrent with the revamp of physical interpretation and tours.

6.6 Co-ordination Across Interpretation Media and Marketing

The vision for interpretation at Hill End is to create physical, digital and experiential schemes and strategies to enhance the experience for visitors.

The key interpretive messages for Hill End will translate to the key messages for marketing. One key message and central theme is the concept of the ‘Art of Life’. This plays on not only on the history and continuing traditions of artistic practice at Hill End, but refers to the art of living at Hill End in the past and present that is demonstrated though the skills and ingenuity and artifice that people practiced in order to live in Hill End. The Art of Life concept places the human story of existence centrally, it is at once a universal theme but cleverly plays on one aspect of what is unique and special about Hill End. It may be used to embrace Aboriginal people’s relationship to Country and also how miners and artist and others have created lives in Hill End.

The interpretation plan will tease out what is special about Hill End—what the highlights are and what the visitor will get out of coming here. New programs and interpretation will communicate these messages and may well be marketable attractions in themselves. The fact that Hill End will undergo program of renewal provides new material to market. Hill End is becoming more relevant in the tourism marketplace.

The themes and key interpretive messages can be used as structure for NPWS, vendors and associated organisations and institutions to brainstorm synergistic activities and events.

All marketing, digital, print, video and PR for Hill End should adhere to the key messages developed in the interpretation plan. This not only applies to the actual text and imagery chosen but also to the look and feel of all marketing. Visitors need to be offered a seamless experience from pre to post trip. The messages and experiences promoted as part
of the revitalised Hill End experience must be followed through at Hill End, and all communication must be consistent in its visual and tonal characteristics. There should also be opportunities for visitors to promote Hill End after their trip. Reminiscences, feedback, sharing and recommendations for Hill End need to be encouraged in the language of all marketing and interpretation.

The need to develop an identity for interpretation and a complimentary marketing identity is extremely important in ensuring messages are communicated clearly and that they ring true in the hearts and minds of visitors. Striking the right tone in language, verbal and written and design—including style of images—is critical. This must correspond and link to NPWS master identity but also must have a sense of uniqueness that promotes the essence of Hill End.

Digitally, there are many opportunities to co-ordinate between interpretation and marketing. Digital content can be gathered from visitors using platforms such as FlickR, instagram, facebook, twitter, NPWS Youtube channel and the NPWS website, among others. This content can be sourced during a visit or after a visit. Making provision for visitors to contribute photographs, video and comments within digital initiatives such as apps, and digital interpretive displays within exhibitions will constantly create new interpretive content that can be used by NPWS to promote the experience of Hill End. The content can be fed across digital channels to maximise exposure to audiences and therefore potential visitors. Feedback and comment from visitors online is one of the most potent sources of visitor encouragement. Overwhelmingly visitors trust this source more than any other.

To utilise these networks, and to effectively harness the potential of visitor content, a social media expert is required to develop and administer the program. Content and data must be evaluated and measured on a regular basis to determine if the current digital initiatives are yielding results and to facilitate online engagement.

**6.6 Conclusion**

This section outlines how our thinking has been influenced in response to the background research and analysis and the experience of the Hill End Historic Site. Hill End provides any number of opportunities for interpretation and the next stage of the interpretation plan and implementation strategy project will be to begin developing the interpretation plan. We envisage that the initial concepts we have outlined in this Research and Review Report will change and evolve following review and comment by PWG and during the process of preparing the Interpretation Plan.

There are any number of interpretation concepts that could be planned and implemented at Hill End. The work undertaken for this stage of the project indicates that interpretation needs to be specific, targeted, related to the significance of the place, people focussed and engaging.

The complex and layered history of the site, complete with documentary, pictorial and extant physical evidence, provides an opportunity to create a compelling visitor experience around the following interpretive themes:

- Quartz Veins and Saddle Reefs;
- Muurruun (Wiradjuri word for Life);
- Pure Gold;
- The Art of Life; and
- Making History.
The interpretive experience should mirror the character and qualities of the town. Fencing and plantings are proposed as key spatial interpretive devices that reflect the significance of the site and convey important messages about the former scale and density of the village without disrupting the peace and tranquility of the site today. By proposing to re-use several of the cottages as interpretation spaces, rather than creating one central exhibition space, the town may be animated by visitors exploring the intimate and ‘private’ cottages around the village. Through partnerships with creative enterprises, PWG may also develop interpretation through living activities such as productive gardens, boutique brewing, and other handcrafted or artisanal products that draw on the Art of Living.