

Hill End Interpretation Plan
Second Visitor Research Program
18-19 April 2014

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Hill End Interpretation Plan - Second Research Program Report

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Executive Summary

This is the second primary visitor research undertaken to support the development of an Interpretation Plan and Implementation Strategy for Hill End Historic Site. The first study investigated current visitor profiles, behaviour and preferences for interpretation experiences. This research has two objectives:

- 1. Test a baseline long term visitor monitoring system and refine it to become part of a long term evaluation system supporting the Interpretation Plan
- Test some of the key strategies within the Draft Interpretation Plan, to determine which ones visitors like and why, and to determine the implementation order preferred by visitors.

Results of the visitor research, as documented in this report, have been provided to the consultant team and National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS) to assist in the formulation of Priority Product Development and ultimately the preparation of the Final Interpretation Plan and the accompanying Implementation Strategy.

Visitors were asked to rank their preferred implementation of seven interpretation strategies. Seven interpretation concepts were presented to respondents. The most popular concepts in overall ranking by the visitors were:

- The moving of the orientation centre from the former Hospital to the RFS Shed, and its
 role providing an introductory interpretive experience and information about the
 experiences available at Hill End. It was acknowledged that the outside structure
 would remain largely unchanged and the former use of the rear cottage would be
 interpreted.
- Reinstate the heritage façade of Holtermanns Cottage and create inside a multifunction space housing the Holtermanns photographic exhibition, other photographic collections and the family history centre.

- Interpret the missing buildings of the 1870s commercial town centre along Clark St, using a combination of plantings to reveal building footprints and etched fence interpretives to reveal former use / users.
- 4. New guided tour of the former mine workings area that is otherwise inaccessible to visitors
- Restoration, independent access and revitalization of the Beyers Cottage interpretive experience.
- Creation of a flexible exhibition space and a series of guest curators within Lyle's Cottage
- 7. Establishment of an application to further interpret missing buildings (usable on IPad)

Every market ranked the Orientation Centre first, and every market believed that it should be done before anything else, even if displays within the centre require updating at the point when other interpretive experiences are created. Holtermanns Corner and the reinstatement of missing buildings are a joint second priority. The third priority is tour reform and ideally a tour of the mine workings. Other initiatives fall far behind in importance to those already mentioned – creating a logical further stage in an implementation program.

A number of suggestions were made by respondents to further improve the strategies.

The testing of the baseline survey for ongoing monitoring evaluation produced several minor improvements; but the questionnaire was found to be otherwise robust and ready for operation. For the Orientation Centre, visitors suggested:

- Structure what to do based on interests and time available
- Include where you can eat and all tours

For the Holtermanns Cottage strategy, visitors suggested:

- Offer choice to interrogate collection
- Present the images big
- Print images life size so people can photograph themselves in front of images, colour some images to enhance true portrayal, and include personal stories associated with the images

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of visitor research

This is the second primary visitor research undertaken to support the development of an Interpretation Plan and Implementation Strategy for Hill End Historic Site. The first study investigated current visitor profiles, behaviour and preferences for interpretation experiences. This research has two objectives:

- 3. Test a baseline long term visitor monitoring system and refine it to become part of a long term evaluation system supporting the Interpretation Plan
- Test some of the key strategies within the Draft Interpretation Plan, to determine which
 ones visitors like and why, and to determine the implementation order preferred by
 visitors.

Results of the visitor research, as documented in this report, have been provided to the consultant team and National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS) to assist in the formulation of Priority Product Development and ultimately the preparation of the Final Interpretation Plan and the accompanying Implementation Strategy.

1.2 Approach

This second visitor research was undertaken during the Easter period (18-19 April). Two visitor researchers stationed themselves at the shop / café – 'Hosies', one outside the shop and one on the opposite side of the road. Pedestrian visitors targeted were those who had just explored the town and were heading towards the centre of town. Each visitor was asked if they would like to participate in a visitor survey , approved and authorised by the NPWS, to assist in the improvement of the Hill End visitor experience and specifically the interpretation offered. Visitors were interviewed and responses recorded on a questionnaire.

In total, over 2 days, 40 interviews were undertaken, representing the views of approximately 90 people (most were couples or groups. When there was more than one visitor (couple or

group), they were given the opportunity to be interviewed separately. Two pairs of visitors declined to participate, on the basis that they preferred to relax.

During the Easter holiday break, which overlaps with school holidays, the mix of visitor segments changes to what it looks like for most of the year at Hill End (as defined in the previous visitor research report). Specifically, there is a:

- high number of families representing the Destination NSW market segment known as Compatriots;
- high number of groups representing the market segment known as Groups; and
- low number of visitors representing the Wanderer market segment.

Table 1 below contrasts the market segment sample collected during the Easter period, with the indicative distribution of segments observed to visit Hill End during the Easter break. The sampling goal was to capture all market segments but concentrate sampling on the segments identified in the Draft Interpretation Plan as being the target markets. The table below shows that this goal was achieved.

Table 1 Sample of market segments contrasted to Easter visitor mix and typical visitor mix (green segments are the target markets)

Market segment	Typical distribution	Overall Easter distribution	Sampled	distribution
Pampadours	8%	5%	18%	7
True Travellers	13%	10%	25%	10
Compatriots	27%	45%	25%	10
Wanderers	47%	10%	20%	8
Groups / Peers	5%	35%	12%	5
Total interviews				40
Total respondents				90

Visitors were asked to rank their preferred implementation of seven interpretation strategies. To analyse the responses, responses were indexed as #1 = 6 points, #2=5, #3=4, #4=3, #3=2, #2=1 and no ranking offers no points. The points were added up per strategy, and the

points were also calculated per market segment, to determine if there was any significant difference in rankings.

2. Results of baseline monitoring test

2.1 Modifications to monitoring system

Most of the base line monitoring worked well, and there are only minor changes proposed.

The Destination NSW market segments are difficult for some visitors to comprehend. However, with some guidance, all respondents chose a segment¹. It is recommended to:

move the market segmentation question to occur after several simpler questions, to generate more respondent confidence.

The tour question needs to be adjusted to target the tour being offered during the sampling period. In this sampling period there was no tour being offered by the NPWS, and the questionnaire was not structured to handle the Bald Hill Mine Tour. It is recommended that:

✓ survey staff notate on the survey tour question whether they were targeting the Village Tour, Ghost Tour, Bald Hill Mine Tour or other tour.

The questionnaire singled out elements of 'The Art of Life' for participants to tick (Domestic or social lives within the town, Living conditions, Characters of Hill End, The Holtermann Photographic Collection, Gardns and being self sufficient, Artistic inspiration at Hill End). It is recommended that, this could be collapsed into examples for a single tick.

Questions relating to learning something and having an emotional impact from the 'Art of Life' theme can list the elements as a collection not as individual variables to tick.

The question exploring visitors' interest to learn did not tease out a lot of variation. It is recommended that:

✓ The question relating to desire to explore / learn / relax be deleted

2.2 Results from baseline test

Table 2 presents the results of the baseline data test.

There were two indicators that performed below the acceptable range:

- 3.A. The proportion of the target market visitors that read and were extremely or very satisfied with the interpretation provided on the building-based interpretation signs.
- 3/B. The proportion of the target market visitors that read and were extremely or very satisfied with the interpretation provided on the artworks-based interpretation signs.

The total visitor sample met the acceptable range, but the target markets had higher expectations and so were less satisfied than the other market segments. The most frequent criticisms were:

- that the signs were difficult to read because they were dirty, scratched or faded; or
- that there was an implicit expectation to read all the signs, because there was no way of knowing what each sign covered and whether it was of more or less interest.

The target markets suggested that the signs should either be updated or if resources prohibited this, that the signs should be thematically sorted and the themes presented on individual notesheets / maps / phone apps.

There were a very high proportion of visitors that did not notice the interpretation signs based around artist works at Hill End. Even after these were clarified as the only colour signs, visitors still did not recall reading them. The performance of the artworks-based interpretation signs was poorer among the non-target markets. The most frequent criticisms were:

 did not notice the signs, because they were not facing the road or positioned in strange places; or

¹ Look through the options and choose one that has one strong element representing you, even if not all the elements relate, just choose the one that has the strongest element – if you are split, choose the one relating to the type of experience you like.

the signs lacked any content about what the artist was thinking / feeling / trying to achieve, and could also have included a story about how the painting was produced (did they live at Hill End, were the people painted locals etc).

Table 2 Results of baseline data test from Easter 2014 sampling period

Target	markets	Standard	expected	Easter 2014 results	
		Acceptable range %	Benchmark %	Data %	Summary
1.A.	Total visitors from outside the Region	60-80	96	83	Acceptable
1.B.	Proportion of target markets (True Travellers and Pampadours) from outside the Region	80-95	88	90	Acceptable
1.C.	The proportion of visitors represented by the target market Pampadours	8-20	8	18	Acceptable
1.D.	The proportion of visitors represented by the target market True Travellers	13-25	13	25	Acceptable
1.E.	The proportion of visitors represented by the target markets of True Travellers and Pampadours	21-45	21	21	Acceptable
2.A.	Proportion of target market visitors that believed they learnt something significant from an aspect of The Art of Life theme ²	70-100	100	100	Acceptable
2.B.	The proportion of the target market visitors that believed they felt emotionally stirred from an aspect of The Art of Life theme	70-90	88	88	Acceptable
3.A.	The proportion of the target market visitors that read and were extremely or very satisfied with the interpretation provided on the building-based interpretation signs	50-80	29	29	Un acceptable
3.B.	The proportion of the target market visitors that read and were extremely or very satisfied with the interpretation provided on the artworks-based interpretation signs	50-70	12	12	Un acceptable
3.C.	The proportion of the target market visitors that took and were extremely or very satisfied with the Village Guided Tour3	50-80	55	-	No data

² Benchmark data collected at Easter 2014, so data is the same. Also the Art of Life theme comprises: Domestic or social lives within the town, Living conditions, Characters of Hill End, The Holtermann Photographic Collection, Gardens and being self sufficient, Artistic inspiration at Hill End)
3 There were no NPWS tours run during the sampling period, so no data available

3.0 Results of visitor testing interpretation strategies

3.1 Ranking importance

Seven interpretation concepts were presented to respondents. The most popular concepts in overall ranking by the visitors was:

- 8. The moving of the orientation centre from the former Hospital to the RFS Shed, and its role providing an introductory interpretive experience and information about the experiences available at Hill End. It was acknowledged that the outside structure would remain largely unchanged and the former use of the rear cottage would be interpreted.
- Reinstate the heritage façade of Holtermanns Cottage and create inside a multifunction space housing the Holtermanns photographic exhibition, other photographic collections and the family history centre.
- Interpret the missing buildings of the 1870s commercial town centre along Clark St, using a combination of plantings to reveal building footprints and etched fence interpretives to reveal former use / users.
- New guided tour of the former mine workings area that is otherwise inaccessible to visitors
- Restoration, independent access and revitalization of the Beyers Cottage interpretive experience.
- Creation of a flexible exhibition space and a series of guest curators within Lyle's Cottage
- 14. Establishment of an application to further interpret missing buildings (usable on IPad)

Figure 1 and **Table 3** presents the results of the analysis of the ranking by target markets and by other markets. **Table 3** shows that every market ranked the Orientation Centre first, and every market believes that it should be done before anything else, even if displays within the centre require updating at the point when other interpretive experiences are created,

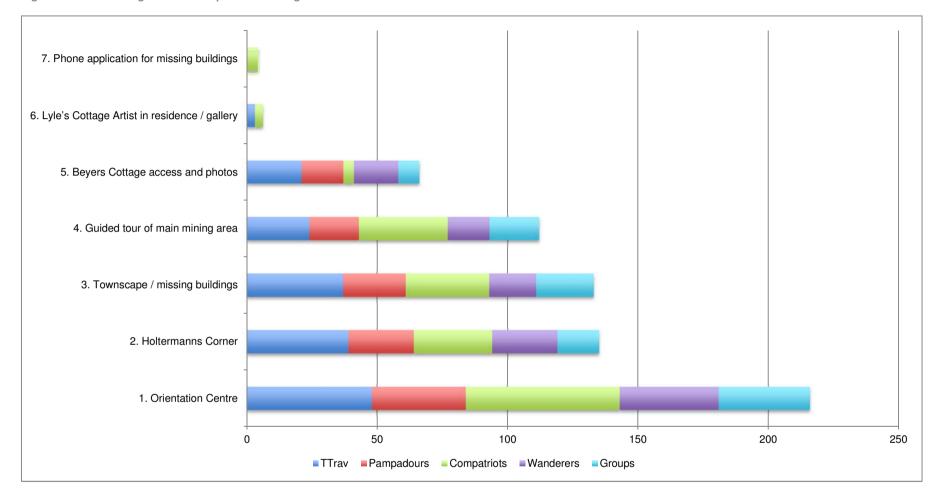
Table 3 also shows that Holtermanns Corner and the reinstatement of missing buildings are a joint second priority. The third priority is tour reform and ideally a tour of the mine workings. Other initiatives fall far behind in importance to those already mentioned – creating a logical further stage in an implementation program.

Table 3 Results of baseline data test – performance of interpretation

Strategies	Taro	et markets	Ot	Overall		
Otrategies	TTrav	Pampadours	Compatriots	her markets Wanderers	Groups	Overall
Orientation Centre	48	36	59	38	35	216
2. Holtermanns Corner	39	25	30	25	16	135
3. Townscape / missing buildings	37	24	32	18	22	133
4. Guided tour of main mining area	24	19	34	16	19	112
5. Beyers Cottage access and photos	21	16	4	17	8	66
6. Lyle's Cottage flexible exhibition space	3	0	3	0	0	6
7. Phone application for missing buildings	0	0	4	0	0	4

Table 4 presents visitor's rationale for these choices, and some suggested value adding to make the strategies more appealing.

Figure 1 Visitor rankings of draft interpretation strategies



3.2 Additional feedback

Table 4 presents visitor's rationale for their ranked choices, and some suggested value adding to make the strategies appeal to them more.

Table 4 Feedback on why a strategy was chosen, and ideas to further enhance the strategy

Strategies	Rationale for choice	Additional suggestions to enhance strategy
1. Orientation	 Logical to fit with arrival, and more convenient (17) 	 Structure what to do based on interests and time available (9)
Centre	 Better introduction to town (7) 	 Include where you can eat and all tours (4)
	More visible (6)	 Include tour interaction opportunities in tour profiles
	 Better introduction to big picture of significance (2) 	 Better maps of the town and how to move around it
2. Holtermanns	Good for wet / hot days (4)	 Offer choice to interrogate collection (3)
Corner	Educational	Present the images big (3)
	 Having the photos in one place makes it more accessible (3) 	 Print images life size so can photograph visitors in front of images (2)
	 Help make town feel more realistic 	 Colour some images to enhance true portrayal (2)
	 Opportunity to see more of the missing buildings 	 Include personal stories associated with the images (2)
3. Townscape /	Feel scale of town at its peak (9)	Make access to footprints so people can stand on them / have their photos taken
missing buildings	 Great photo opportunity (3) 	
	 Visual as opposed to narrative approach to interpretation (3) 	
4. Guided tour of	Finally see what drove the town, up close (4)	 Make the tour interactive (3)
main mining area	 Access an area otherwise inaccessible (3) 	 Run more frequent tours
	 Tour the area that produced gold (Bald Hill did not) 	 Capture more about life in the 1870s, eg. the drinking and pub life
	Extend visitor stay	 More children orientated
5. Beyers Cottage	 Understand the characters 	 Explain how people used the house and lived their lifestyle
access and photos	 Bring characters to life 	
	 Enhance the authenticity 	
6. Lyle's Cottage flexible exhibition Space and guest curatorial	 More accessibility to artists (2) 	Opportunity to purchase work
7. Phone application	Individual choice in what to learn more about and when to do it (2)	 Allow information to be downloadable after the experience
for missing buildings	 Provide more information 	 Use QR codes on existing signs to trigger access to more information



4.0 ATTACHMENTS

4.1 Questionnaire used to test monitoring system

HILL END VISITOR SURVEY TO TEST 18 & 19 April 2014

1.	Where	Where is your normal place of residence?									
		Sydney		Northern	NSW		Southern NSW				
		Interstate		Internation	onal		Region (Bathurst / Orange / Mudgee)				
2.	Which best fits who you are during this visit at Hill End?										
		Have a variety of new experiences while taking time out for me and having the same comforts I enjoy at home (P)									
		Go away for longer than most p spectator (TT)	people, hav	ve new exp	periences and adv	entures and	get involved in activities rather than be a				
		Choose holidays that the kids will enjoy, spend quality time and with my partner and spend money on local tourism									
		Avoid busy times like the school holidays, take it pretty slow, do things myself and be self-sufficient (W)									
		Travel with my friends/those of similar interests and eek out the nightlife and have a good time everyday (G/PGT)									
3.	Please rank which of the following might have motivated you to visit Hill End?										
		No real exploring, discovery or learning, just relaxing									
		Exploring and maybe discovery, but not learning									
		Exploring, discovery & learning									
		Exploring, discovery and learning, then relaxing									
4.	After your experience at Hill End, do you believe that you have learnt anything significant about:										
		The domestic or social lives within the town									
		Living conditions			Gardens and bei	ing self suffi	cient				
		Characters of Hill End			Artistic inspiration in Hill End						
		The Holtermanns photographic collection									
5.	After y	our experience at Hill End, do yo	ou believe t	that you we	ere emotionally sti	rred by any	of the following:				
		☐ The domestic or social lives within the town									
		Living conditions			Gardens and bei	ing self-suffi	cient				
		Characters of Hill End			Artistic inspiratio	n in Hill End					
		☐ The Holtermanns photographic collection									
6.	If you read any of the building-based interpretation signs at Hill End, how satisfied were you with them?										
		Extremely satisfied			Very satisfied						
		Satisfied			Unsatisfied						
		Didn't look at any of them									

7.	If you rea	ad any of artworks-based interpretation	signs at Hill	end, how satisfied were yo	ou with them?	
		Extremely satisfied		Very satisfied		
		Satisfied		Unsatisfied		Didn't look at any of them
8.	If you	u took the Village-based guided tour of	Hill End, how	w satisfied were you with it	?	
		Extremely satisfied		Satisfied		
		Very satisfied		Unsatisfied		Didn't do a tour
9.	Som	e new ways to revitalise the way Hill Er	nd is present	ed are being considered (s	ee Boards). V	Which proposals interest you and why?
10.	If you	u were in charge of introducing the new	ı initiatives, v	which ones would you prop	ose?	
		Orientation Centre		Beyers Cottage		
		Holtermanns Corner		Guided tours of former	mining areas	
		Townscape/Missing Buildings		Lyle's Cottage		

4.2 Revised questionnaire

HILL END VISITOR SURVEY (for Quarterly application)

1.	If you	If you read any of the building-based interpretation signs at Hill End, how satisfied were you with them?								
		Extremely satisfied				Satisfied				
		Very satisfied				Unsatisfi	ed			
						Didn't loc	k at an	y of them		
2.	If you re	ead any of artworks-based	d interpretation s	igns at Hill e	end, how	satisfied we	e you v	vith them?		
		Extremely satisfied				Satisfied				
		Very satisfied				Unsatisfi	Unsatisfied			
						Didn't loc	k at an	y of them		
3.	If yo	If you took a guided tour of Hill End, how satisfied were you with it?								
		☐ Extremely satisfied				Satisfied	Satisfied			
		Very satisfied				Unsatisfi	ed			
						Didn't tal	ke a tou	r on this visit		
4.	After	After your experience at Hill End, do you believe that you ha				t anything	signific	eant about:		
		Yes				No				
	The d	The domestic or social lives within the town				Living conditions				
	Characters of Hill End				Artistic	Artistic inspiration in Hill End				
	The F	The Holtermanns photographic collection				Gardens and being self-sufficient				
5.	After your experience at Hill End, do you believe that you were emotionally stirred by any of the following:									
		Yes				No				
	The c	domestic or social lives wi		Living o	conditions					
	Chara	Characters of Hill End				Artistic inspiration in Hill End				
	The Holtermanns photographic collection				Gardens and being self-sufficient					
6.	Wher	re is your normal place of	residence?							
		Sydney		Northern	n NSW			Southern NSW		
		Interstate		Internati	onal			Region (Bathurst / Orange / Mudgee)		
7.	Which best fits who you are during this visit at Hill End?									
		Have a variety of new experiences while taking time out for me and having the same comforts I enjoy at home (P)								
		Go away for longer than most people, have new experiences and adventures and get involved in activities rather than be spectator (TT)								
		Choose holidays that the kids will enjoy, spend quality time and with my partner and spend money on local tourism (C)								
		Avoid busy times like the school holidays, take it pretty slow, do things myself and be self-sufficient (W)								
		Travel with my friends/those of similar interests and eek out the nightlife and have a good time everyday (G/PGT)								