STATION STREET EXTENSION
HUNTER ECONOMIC ZONE
HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

Prepared by
HBO+EMTB Heritage Pty Ltd

For
HUNTER ECONOMIC ZONE
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Project no. 280217

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS STATEMENT

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared for the Hunter Economic Zone, to accompany a Development Application for extension of Station Street, Weston, to the south, across a section of the South Maitland Railway rail line. The road route is in close proximity to the remnants of Weston Station and runs through land associated with Hebburn No.1 Colliery. The report assesses the impact of the proposed works on the neighbouring recognised heritage items.

1.2 STUDY AREA

The subject site is the former Weston Station and associated structures identified in the plan below:

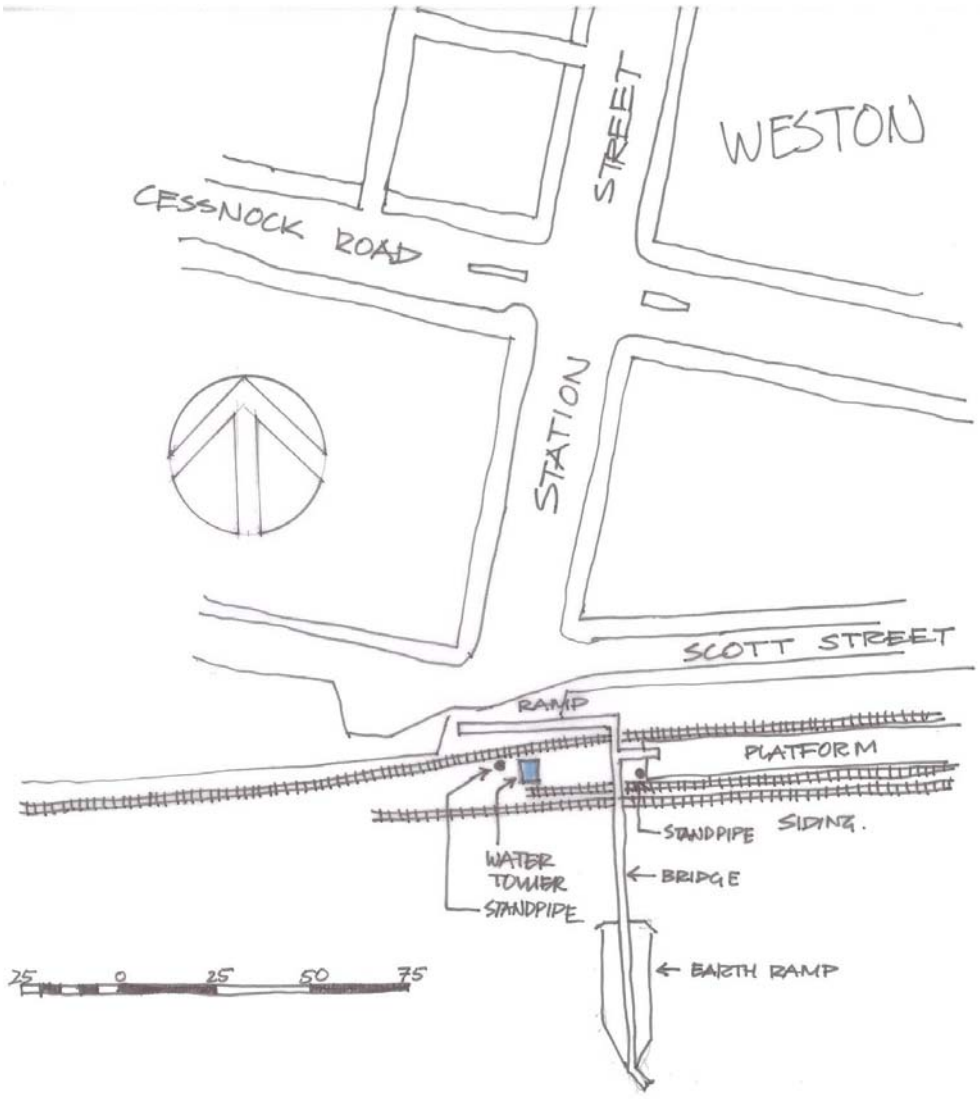

Figure 1: Locality Plan of site.

1.3 SCOPE OF THIS STATEMENT

The statement has been based on the following sources of information:

- Heritage Assessment No.1 Colliery, Weston, NSW. EJE Heritage July 2004.
- Preliminary Historic Heritage Assessment, The Tomalpin Employment Zone. Employment Zone, Paul Rheinberger, Umwelt Australia Pty Ltd. February 1999.
- Detail survey Lot 7, DP 1037092, Dwg No. 24127-1A 31 January 2007. Harper Somers O'Sullivan.
- Plan showing boundaries, contours and aerial photo of Station Street Extension HEZ – Harper Somers O'Sullivan, 18 October 2006 (origin QASCO).
- Detail survey corner Station Street and Cessnock Road, Hunter Economic Zone, Harper Somers O'Sullivan, 4 November 2005.
- Draft Cessnock Heritage inventory form No. 1340631 – Weston Railway Platform and No. 1340877 Aberdare Railway (now part of South Maitland Railway)

The statement assesses the impacts of construction on the proposed road linking from the intersection of Station Street and Scott Street and the temporary end of the Hunter Economic Zone Stage 2 Road. The route crosses the Hebburn No.1 Colliery Rail line and passes to the east of the former Hebburn Colliery Office building.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

Preparation of this Statement follows the general guidelines set out in the Heritage Manual 2000, prepared by NSW Heritage Office and the Department of Planning.

1.5 AUTHORSHIP

This report was written by Brian McDonald director of HBO+EMTB Heritage Pty Ltd and reviewed by Rosemarie Canales, Heritage Specialist in accordance with the HBO+EMTB Pty Ltd quality assurance program.

The photographs included in this report, were taken by Brian McDonald of HBO+EMTB Heritage Pty Ltd in February 2007.

1.6 LIMITATIONS

Examination of historical documentation was limited to the comprehensive secondary source material contained in the reference documents listed in Section 1.3 of this report.

2.0 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

2.1 PREAMBLE

The background history to the Hebburn No.1 Colliery section of the South Maitland Railway network Railway at Weston and the setting is based on the Historical Context section of the Heritage Assessment, Hebburn No.1 Colliery by EJE Heritage, August 2004 and the Preliminary Historic Heritage Assessment: The Tomalpin Employment Zone, Paul Rheinberger, Umwelt (Australia) Pty Ltd, February 1999.

It is not considered necessary, for the purpose of establishing the significance of the items assessed in this statement, to reproduce an exhaustive history of exploration, settlement and the development of the coal industry in the Hunter region because the issues relate specifically to the physical and visual impact on the structures associated with Weston Station. Sufficient historical background is provided for the structures at Weston in the vicinity of the proposed Station Street extension. Sources of information from the two reports are identified by footnote with the sources quoted in those reports in brackets where applicable.

2.2 CONDENSED HISTORY

2.2.1 DEVELOPMENT OF THE COAL INDUSTRY

During the 1870s lumps of coal were detected in the locality south of Maitland, leading to investigations in 1884, 1886 and 1887 by TW Edgeworth, David and Edwin Pepper, that found significant coal seams.

As a result of these finds the Department of Mines reserved an area of approximately 23,700 acres (10,500 hectares), south of Deep Creek for coal mining purposes.

Consequently, in the vicinity of the now township of Weston, collieries were developed at:

- Pelaw Main (originally known as Stanford Greta No.2) to the south east from 1891, in production from 1902 to 1961.
- Hebburn No.1 Colliery immediately to the west, from 1902, in production from 1903 to 1958.
- Abermain No.1 Colliery from 1903, further to the west, in production from November 1903 to 1960.
- Richmond Main Colliery to the south east from 1890, in production from 1891 to 1892, closed down and resumed production from 1897 to 1967.
- Hebburn No.2 Colliery to the south commenced sinking in 1918 and in production from 1921 to 1972.
- Abermain No.2 Colliery to the south west, commenced sinking in 1910 and ceased working in 1964.
- Abermain No.3 Colliery also to the south between Weston and Abermain No.2, commenced sinking in 1917 and in production until 1960.
- Elrington Colliery, to the south of Hebburn No.2 Colliery commenced sinking in 1927 and produced coal from 1930.

The later mines did not generate the growth of nearby townships as did the earlier development. Transport linkages became very important for moving the extracted coal and also for miners to travel to and from work.

More concentrated settlement occurred in the form of mining towns at Pelaw Main, associated with Pelaw Main Colliery, and Weston in proximity to Hebburn No.1 Colliery and later Hebburn No.2 Colliery. Similarly the townships of Abermain and Kearsley supported Abermain No.1, 2 and 3

Collieries. Kurri Kurri grew as a centre for these small townships as well as for Stanford Methyr, Heddon Greta and Richmond Main.

Figure2 (from the Historic Heritage Assessment, 1999) shows the rail line that runs past Weston collecting branch lines to the south west extending through Hebburn No.1 Colliery nearby as far as Stanford Main Colliery, Pelton Colliery and through Cessnock to the extension of Aberdare Colliery. The lines travelling north from Aberdare south and Abermain Nos 1, 2 and 3 merged with the lines from the south at Abermain before turning west to pass through Weston and on to Kurri Kurri, Maitland and Newcastle.

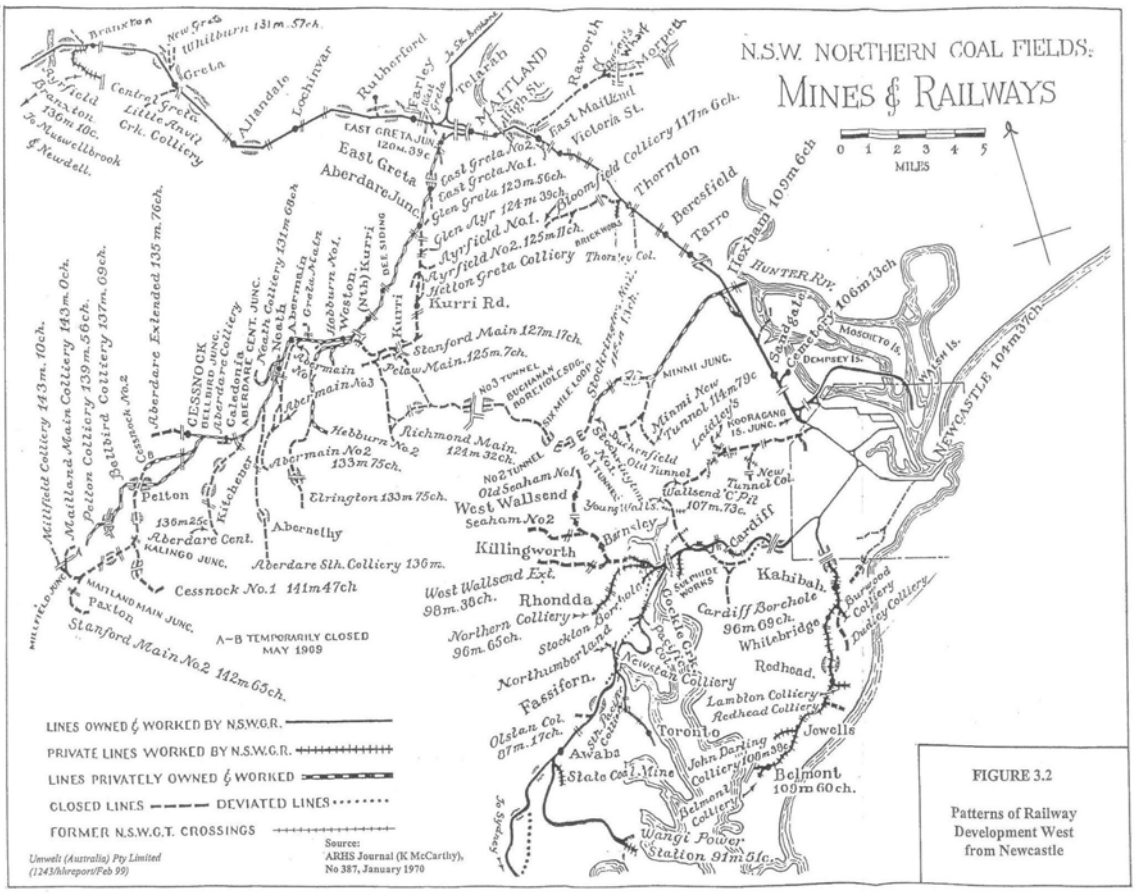

Figure 2: NSW Northern Coalfields Mines and Railways. ARHS journal (K McCarthy) No.387, January 1970

2.2.2 HEBBURN NO.1 COLLIERY

Hebburn Colliery (later called Hebburn No.1) was established by the Australian Agricultural Company in April 1902. It was taken over in 1914 by Hebburn Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of the AA Company.

The Hebburn Collieries provided the impetus for the township of Weston and establishment of the railway station and rail sidings established on its southern side through the early 1900s.

2.2.3 WESTON TOWNSHIP AND RAILWAY STATION

The site of the township was part of a 640 acre estate purchased by James Weston in 1856.[1] His son and heir James Junior, responding to the establishment of Hebburn Colliery and nearby Abermain Colliery, subdivided this part of this property to establish the town of Weston. Rail access to the town was provided by constructing a siding from the Aberdare Railway to the proposed station site. By July 1903 there were fifteen houses; two stores and a bakery were under construction.

Development of the rail networks serving the collieries was undertaken by private interests, including the AA Company which owned an extensive network connecting its mines to the Port of Newcastle.[2]

The AA Company and Aberdare Collieries of New South Wales applied to the State Government in 1900 to construct a railway from the Stanford Methyr extension (to the south west of Weston) to the proposed Hebburn Colliery. Following approval, the line was in operation by the time Weston Station was opened in 1902, consisting of a platform with a flat roofed weatherboard ticket office and waiting rooms on the northern side of the single track line between Aberdare Junction and Abermain.[3]

In 1906, a passing loop was installed, followed by duplication of the line in the following year. The separate “up” and “down” platforms were replaced by the present island platform between the tracks in 1909. The brick station building erected in 1909 has since been demolished. The steel pedestrian overbridge at the western end of the platform survives in part, although its stair treads from the platform are gone and the stair on the northern side of the line has been replaced by a ramp.

The date of the water tank and stand pipes is not indicated in the 2004 Heritage Assessment. However, as an essential requirement for the operation of steam locomotives these items can be assumed to date from the early period of the establishment of the railway through Weston and the presence of the AA Company’s logo on the water tank would mean that it could not have been erected later than 1914 when the ownership of the line passed to its subsidiary, Hebburn Ltd.

The overbridge to the south and the ramp section are dated in the 1950s in the Heritage Assessment by F & E. However, it is not clear how this date was arrived at. The construction techniques and materials are consistent with this period but are also typical of the earlier Inter-war period. The purpose of this section of the overbridge would appear to have been to enable persons to cross above the coal wagon storage sidings from the residential precinct that developed east of Hospital Road apparently much later than the main township.

[1] Heritage Assessment Hebburn No.1 Colliery, Weston, NSW – EJE Heritage, July 2004, p17 (WS Parkes, J Comerford & M Lake, Mines, Wines & People, Cessnock, 1979 p131)
[2] Heritage Assessment Hebburn No.1 Colliery, Weston, NSW – EJE Heritage, July 2004, p48 (J Armstrong (ed) Shaping the Hunter, the Engineering Heritage, Newcastle 1983, p87)
[3] Heritage Assessment Hebburn No.1 Colliery, Weston, NSW – EJE Heritage, July 2004, p53

3.0 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

3.1 LOCALITY

The proposed Station Street extension will traverse the rail line east of the former Weston Station platform structure. There is at present a level crossing on Station Street rail line and an unformed track leading off to the south west to the end of Webb Street. South of the railway on the proposed road alignment there is an area of modified bushland disturbed by clearings and bush tracks. Scott Street runs parallel to the rail line on the north side. On the eastern side of Station Street the rear yards of residential properties back onto Scott Street. To the west Scott Street has a mix of residential and small scale industrial development. Station Street is a wide space containing the majority of Weston's commercial/retail activity including a hotel. The locality contains a number of elements that are strongly associated with the railway: the water tank; two stand pipes; a pedestrian overbridge; the station platform structure; the main railway line and a siding.

Further south is the 1930s Hebburn No.1 Mine Office building. This is a brick and tile single storey structure with outbuildings currently tenanted. The proposed road works would be well to the east of this item. No impacts are envisaged and therefore there is no further discussion in this statement.

Photograph 1: View of the water tank and bridge ramp from Station Street

Photograph 2: View from west end of platform looking west to bridge and water tank. Eastern stand pipe in foreground.

3.2 WATER TANK

3.2.1 DESCRIPTION

The water tank is located approximately 30 metres to the west of the western end of the former Weston Station platform and within the proposed road reservation extension on the alignment of Station Street. It is 7.12 metres high and given its position on open land adjacent to the railway line an in the main vista south along Station Street, it has a landmark presence.

The square steel tank is supported by three rows of three cylindrical columns with steel rod cross bracing to each structural bay. Each column stands on a concrete pad footing. Three universal section steel beams running east/west support more closely spaced north/south members on which the base for the tank rests. Vertical inlet and outlet pipes with large stop valves are located under the tank.

The upper part of an access ladder to the top of the tank is still attached to the western side. The tank and support structure are painted a light blue/grey colour.

The letters “AA Co” recording the role of the Australian Agricultural Company are still evident on the north side of the tank.

3.2.2 CONDITION

The tank is in sound structural condition with minor surface rust showing through the paint in some places and disfigured by graffiti.

Photograph 3: Water tank from the north west. The letters AA Co are on the north face.

Photograph 4: Valve to inlet pipe under tank.

3.3 WESTERN STAND PIPE

3.3.1 DESCRIPTION

The stand pipe sits on a concrete footing located about 4 metres to the west of the water tank adjacent to the northern rail line. At the base of the black painted pipe are four welded stiffeners onto a square base plate bolted onto the footing. The upper portion, painted white, comprises a curved swivel spout and counter weight. There is a stop valve low down on the stand pipe.

3.3.2 CONDITION

The stand pipe is in reasonable condition with minor surface rust showing through the paint in some locations. The concrete pad footing has spalled at the north east corner.

Photograph 5: Western stand pipe.

3.4 EASTERN STAND PIPE

3.4.1 DESCRIPTION

The stand pipe is on a concrete footing at the south west corner of the platform structure adjacent to the southern rail line. This stand pipe is a different design with a thicker vertical pipe, widened at the base into a base plate, and a separated stop valve – all painted black.

The white painted upper spout is not as curvaceous as the western stand pipe and does not have a counter weight element. The end of the spout is a piece of canvas pipe.

3.4.2 CONDITION

The stand pipe is in similar condition to the western stand pipe with minor surface rust in some locations. The canvas section of the spout shows evidence of prolonged exposure to the elements.

Photograph 6: Eastern stand pipe and station platform

3.5 STATION PLATFORM

3.5.1 DESCRIPTION AND CONDITION

The surviving element of Weston Station is the platform situated between the two rail lines. The sides of the platform remain relatively intact sloping down at each end. The top of the platform is overgrown with weeds.

3.6 THE RAIL LINES

3.6.1 DESCRIPTION AND CONDITION

The main line on the north side of the platform appears to be maintained with the gravel ballast and sleepers in reasonable condition and the upper surface of the rails showing bright steel as evidence of their continuing intermittent use by coal trains.

The southern line and siding to the west remain intact but with surface rust to the rails on all faces and weed growth between the rails and the sleepers.

3.7 PEDESTRIAN OVER-BRIDGE

3.7.1 DESCRIPTION

The on-site inspection revealed three different construction methods had been employed to build this item, indicating two, and possibly three, different phases of construction.

The bridge consists of the following elements:

- At the southern end a ramped approach on a formed earth mound up to a brick abutment. The ramped pathway is bitumen and has simple pipe rail fences both sides.

- From the top of the south ramp to the station platform the bridge is in the form of two trussed girders supporting a reinforced concrete deck spanning between three steel framed supports. The two southernmost support structures consist of four steel universal section columns with angle section girts and diagonal braces. Each column stands on a reinforced concrete pad footing with mortar topping sloped to shed water from the steel base.

- From the station platform to the north side of the rail line the bridge is a different form of construction. The shorter spans between the supports are achieved by two universal section beams between which hardwood joists are set to take hardwood planks running north/south. Remnants of the stair to the platform survive in the form of steel channel section stringers and timber handrails and posts. The treads are gone. The bridge railing consists of vertical posts and horizontal rails spaced apart and not conforming to the current requirements of the Building Code of Australia. The two support structures consist of four corner columns fabricated from four steel angles between which the horizontal and diagonal flat web members are fixed by bolts.

  At their bases the posts are bolted to upright steel flat sections cast into reinforced concrete pad footings with a mortar weathering to the top surface.

- On the northern side a ramp descends to the west, the ramp is supported on steel trestles of varying height comprising two universal section columns with angle braces. Each trestle supports a steel channel on which the reinforced concrete ramp rests. The sides of the ramp have hardwood posts and railings, which also do not comply with the requirements of the Building Code of Australia.

  The bridge is fenced off at each end and welded mesh has been temporarily attached to the railings on both sides.

There is a correlation between the physical and documentary evidence.

In 1902 the station platform stood on the northern side of the single track accessible from the township. In 1906 duplication of the line resulted in separate up and down platforms and in 1909 the existing brick faced island platform with a new brick station building and a steel pedestrian overbridge built between the tracks.[4]

The remnant stair and two northernmost support structures remain from the 1909 construction. The timber deck appears to have been renewed over time.

[4] Heritage Assessment Hebburn No.1 Colliery, Weston, NSW – EJE Heritage, July 2004, p53

The bridge to the south spanned the southern rail line and sidings where coal trucks were stowed, it is assumed to provide access to the housing that developed there.

The whole bridge appears in a 1965 photograph (plate 29) of the 2004 Heritage Assessment[5] and is described as "the 1950s pedestrian overpass."[6]

The source of the 1950s date is not clear but the construction method employing universal steel sections and reinforced concrete is consistent with this period.

The northern ramped access is not dated in the Heritage Assessment by EJE but is likely to have replaced a stair dating from 1909 about the same time the southern section was built to provide ramped access both ends probably for bicycles or prams. In the 1950s statutory requirements for wheelchair access had not been introduced.

Photograph 7: Partly demolished stair and bridge dating from 1909 central island platform.

[5] Heritage Assessment Hebburn No.1 Colliery, Weston, NSW – EJE Heritage, July 2004, p54
[6] Heritage Assessment Hebburn No.1 Colliery, Weston, NSW – EJE Heritage, July 2004, p59

Photograph 8: Timber deck of 1909 section of bridge.

Photograph 9: Severely corroded steel at base of 1909 bridge support.

Photograph 10: Later phase trussed girder bridge abutting 1909 bridge and stair.

Photograph 11: Later phase bridge and support structure at brick abutment to southern ramped access.

Photograph 12: later phase bridge. Severe spalling to concrete deck due to corroded steel reinforcement.

3.7.2 CONDITION

It is important to note that the overbridge does not comply with the requirements of the Building Code of Australia with regard to the balustrades at any point. The gradients of the ramped access at each end have not been checked to see whether they are1:14 or less. In any event, should the bridge be used again there is a need for significant alterations. Due to the intermittent use of rail line it appears that the present arrangement of an on grade pedestrian crossing has been in place for some time. This arrangement would continue with the road extension, but as a level crossing with automatic gates, warning lights and bells, to conform to statutory requirements.

Inspection of the bridge indicates that it is a very poor condition. The following defects were identified:

SOUTHERN SECTION

Severe spalling of the concrete deck at the underside and edges leaving large gaps at the side supports due to advanced corrosion of the steel reinforcing bars. Experience of similarly deteriorating reinforced concrete structures suggests that when corrosion is so severe it is very likely that carbonation of the concrete has occurred also. The extent of damage is assessed as beyond repair and the whole deck would have to be replaced.

Corrosion of steel components appears to be mainly surface scale with limited loss of cross section. A more detailed survey of the structure from close quarters would determine whether corrosion is more advanced, particularly at junctions of the members. Corrosion may be greater at the base of support columns where partially covered by mortar topping. Spalling of the topping on the north west footing of the central support structure suggests there may be hidden corrosion.

Photograph 13: View of northern ramp from west end.

Photograph 14: Underside of northern ramp and support trestles.

Photograph 15: Spalling concrete at underside of ramp.

PLATFORM SECTION

The hardwood decking appears reasonably sound as viewed from below. Access to the upper side was not available. The steel members show a greater degree of corrosion than the southern part of the bridge, particularly at the column bases where significant loss of cross section has occurred. The stair from the platform has been dismantled except for the stringers and railings.

NORTHERN RAMP SECTION

There is corrosion of steel reinforcing bars causing spalling of the underside of the concrete ramp. The side and support channels of the concrete ramp show extensive rust scaling. The extent of cross section loss was not assessed due to inaccessibility of these members. The support trestles appear to have been preserved better by the paint finish.

The hardwood railings are generally dilapidated with several missing members.

4.0 HERITAGE STATUS

4.1 PREAMBLE

The precinct around Hebburn No.1 Colliery, including the Weston Station structure, is recognised for its heritage value by statutory listings. The historic and social associations are well grounded in the strong economic inter-relationships between the mining industry and the townships.

4.2 STATUTORY LISTINGS

4.2.1 CESSNOCK LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN

The Hebburn No.1 precinct is included in schedule 3 of Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 1989. The South Maitland Railway is also listed in schedule 3 including "all earthworks, structures and ancillary equipment along the south Maitland Railway including a corridor of land 100 metres wide centred on the railway track bed centreline.

Clause 36 of the LEP requires the Council's consent to any works that way affect an item of environmental heritage following an assessment of the significance of the item, the extent to which the carrying out of the work would affect the significance of the item and its site and whether the item constitutes a danger-to-the users or occupiers of the heritage item or the public.

Clause 37 requires an assessment of the affect of the environmental heritage and its setting.

4.2.2 HUNTER REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 1989

The Hunter Regional Environmental Plan 1989 identifies the Hebburn No.1 and Hebburn No.2 precincts; and specifically the water tank at Weston Station as heritage items of regional significance.

4.2.3 NSW STATE HERITAGE INVENTORY

Hebburn No.1 and the Hebburn No.2 Colliery precincts and the South Maitland Railway (in similar terms to Schedule 3 of Cessnock LEP 1989), Weston former station platform, overbridge, water tank, stand pipes and rail lines fall within the 100 metre zone and are thus included in the NSW Heritage Inventory. The water tank at Scott and Station Streets is also listed in the NSW Heritage Inventory. The station platform, water tank and overbridge at Scott and Station Streets are also listed as a separate item No 1340631 in the NSW Heritage Inventory. These items are not listed in the State Heritage Register.

5.0 ANALYSIS AND EVIDENCE OF SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 PREAMBLE

The assessment of heritage significance of the Weston Station precinct is based on the conservation principles set out in the ICOMOS Australia, Burra Charter, November 1999. The assessment defines the importance of the item and its cultural significance.

The concept of cultural significance, Article 1.1 of the Burra Charter, defines Cultural Significance as "the aesthetic, historical, scientific/technical or social value for past, present or future generations."

Demonstrative Ability of a place to demonstrate its past and present through physical evidence (of philosophy, custom or design, process, use, taste, techniques and material or events).

Associational Value and links without discoverable physical evidence (association with events or development, impact of persons on place or of place on persons, or mythological or symbolical association).

Formal or Aesthetic Value, and qualities (scale, form, materials and texture, relationships and views, and other non-visual sensory qualities).

There are four broad values in the ICOMOS Australia Burra Charter accepted as generic values by Australian heritage agencies and heritage consultants:

Group 1	NATURE OF SIGNIFICANCE	MEANING
Criterion 1	HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (evolution and association)	An item having this value is significant because of the importance of its association with, or position in the evolving pattern of our cultural history.
Criterion 2	AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE (scenic/architectural qualities/creative accomplishment)	An item having this value is significant because it demonstrates positive visual or sensory appeal, landmark qualities and/or creative or technical excellence.
Criterion 3	SCIENTIFIC/RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE (archaeological, industrial, educational, research potential and scientific values)	Items having this value are significant because their contribution or potential contribution to an understanding of our cultural history or environment.
Criterion 4	SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE (contemporary community esteem)	Items having this value are significance through their social, spiritual or cultural association with a recognisable community.

5.2 NSW HERITAGE OFFICE METHODOLOGY

The Weston Station precinct has been evaluated according to the assessment criteria established by the NSW Heritage Office, published in the New South Wales Heritage Manual, 2000 This methodology is generally accepted for evaluations of heritage significance and introduce more specific criteria for evaluation than the generic values of the Burra Charter. The criteria are part of the system of assessment that is centred on the Burra Charter of Australia, ICOMOS. The assessment of heritage significance is formalised through legislation in the NSW Heritage Act 1977 (amended 1999).

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

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

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

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

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

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

Criterion g) an item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's
Cultural or natural places
Cultural or natural environments, (or a class of the local area's)
Cultural or natural history,
Cultural or natural environments).

Each of the above criteria has been applied to the Weston Station site as a whole, to establish the broader significance for the property to provide a context for assessment of the individual elements being the water tank and stand pipes, the station platform, the pedestrian overbridge and the rail bed and remaining rails.

5.3. EVALUATION OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

5.3.a CRITERION (A) EVOLUTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (state significance); or an item is important in the course, or pattern, of the local area's cultural or natural history (local significance).

Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
Shows evidence of a significant human activity	Has incidental or unsubstantiated connections with historically important activities or processes
Is associated with a significant activity or historical phase	Provides evidence of activities or processes that are of dubious historical importance
Maintains or shows the continuity of a historical process or activity	Has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association

5.3.a CRITERION (A)

The Weston Station structures demonstrate the important inter-relationships of the South Maitland coal field, rail transportation to the Hunter sea port and the development of townships to accommodate a local workforce. In particular, the presence of the station at Weston marks its former role in relation to the collieries in closer proximity, especially Hebburn No1 and 2, Abermain and Elrington.

The water tank is a powerful symbol of the reliance of the coal industry on the steam powered locomotive.

5.3.b CRITERION (B) ASSOCIATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

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

Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
Shows evidence of a significant human occupation	Has incidental or unsubstantiated connections with historically important people or events
Is associated with a significant event, person, or group of persons.	Provides evidence of people or events that are of dubious historical importance
	Has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association

The station platform and overbridge stand as a reminder of the generations of miners that daily travelled from homes in Weston to the collieries via the South Maitland Rail System. The remnants of the sidings are tangible evidence of the scale of operation that necessitated storage of large numbers of coal wagons used in transportation of the coal won by the local workforce.

The site has a strong association with the Australian Agricultural Company who developed the Hebburn Colliery from 1902, still marked by the Company's initials on the Water Tower.

5.3.c CRITERION (C) AESTHETIC AND TECHNICAL SIGNIFICANCE

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

Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
Shows or is associated with, creative or technical innovation or achievement	Is not a major work by an important designer or artist
Is the inspiration for a creative or technical innovation or achievement **Is aesthetically distinctive**	Has lost its design or technical integrity Its positive visual or sensory appeal or landmark qualities have been more than temporarily degraded
Has landmark qualities **Exemplifies a particular taste, style or technology**	Has only a loose association with a creative or technical achievement

The water tank and its two associated stand pipes are important for their aesthetic appeal and interpretive value in demonstrating the essential requirements of well placed reliable supplies of water to replenish the boilers of steam locomotives. This technology was later superseded by the use of diesel engines and the surviving evidence of the former type of railway engine on which the South Maitland Railway relied is an important link with the history of the Hunter coal fields.

The station platform with the removal of its brick platform building and partial dismantling of the steel stair has lost much of the ability to interpret its former functions and aesthetic qualities.

5.3.d CRITERION (D) SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (State significance); or an item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in the area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (Local significance).

Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
Is important for its associations with an identifiable group	Is only important to the community for amenity reasons
Is important to a community's sense of place	is retained only in preference to a proposed alternative

Although not operational for some years the structures at Weston Station stand as a tangible link between the township and the collieries that brought it into being. The water tank is highly visible from the main Street, Station Street, and Scott Street and of considerable symbolic value for the local community. The pedestrian overbridge, although a more common feature of railway stations, is also to a lesser extent a visual link with the past when the railway served the local community.

5.3.e CRITERION (E) ARCHAEOLOGICAL /RESEARCH POTENTIAL

An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (state significance); or an item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the area's cultural or natural history Local significance).

Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
Has the potential to yield new or further substantial scientific and/or archaeological information **Is an important benchmark or reference site or type** **Provides evidence of past human cultures that is unavailable elsewhere**	Has little archaeological or research potential Only contains information that is readily available from other resources or archaeological sites The knowledge gained would be irrelevant to research on science, human history or culture

The structures associated with Weston Station provides evidence of the vital link the railway formed between the township and the nearby collieries as well as the transport connection between the mining of coal and distribution to industry and export at the Port of Newcastle.

Even though other townships in the South Maitland coal fields were also similarly connected to the rail system, all surviving elements of this past aspect of the regional culture are significant for future generation to understand the nature and extent of this no longer functioning system.

5.3.f CRITERION (F) COMPARATIVE CULTURAL HISTORY

An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (state significance); or an item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the area's cultural or natural history (local significance).

Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
Provides evidence of a defunct custom, way of life or process **Demonstrates a process, custom or other human activity that is in danger of being lost** **Shows unusually accurate evidence of a significant human activity** Is the only example of its type Demonstrates designs or techniques of exceptional interest Shows rare evidence of a significant human activity important to a community	Is not rare Is numerous but under threat

The water tank and stand pipes provide rare evidence of the role of the Australian Agricultural Company in establishing the Hebburn Collieries and the rail system that served them.

These mining and transportation processes were major determinants of the pattern of human settlement in the region, major generators of employment and the main economic driving force. The decline of the mining industry in the locality means that these items: the station platform; water tank and stand pipes; pedestrian overbridge and rail sidings (which are more common place railway related items) are no longer functioning and in danger of being lost.

5.3.g CRITERION (G) COMPARATIVE PLACES

An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's: cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (State significance); or an item is important in demonstration the principal characteristics of a class of the area's: cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (local significance).

Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
Is a fine example of its type **Has the principal characteristics of an important class or group of items** **Has attributes typical of a particular way of life, philosophy, custom, significant process, design, technique or activity** **Is a significant variation to a class of items** **Is a part of a group which collectively illustrates a representative type** Is outstanding because of its setting, condition or size Is outstanding because of its integrity or the esteem in which it is held	Is a poor example of its type Does not include or has lost the range of characteristics of a type Does not represent well the characteristics that make up a significant variation of a type

The elements of Weston Station meet the inclusion guidelines for Criterion G to varying degrees.

The water tank and stand pipes are very fine examples of their type and important components of the wider remnant structures that collectively mark the nature and extent of the South Maitland railway.

The station platform and remnants of the local track sidings are more commonplace rail related structures that nevertheless are parts of the more important whole that continues to provide tangible evidence of the coal industry rail network of the region.

The pedestrian overbridge represents to varying degrees the transportation and industrial themes of the area – the older section at the station being most closely connected with the origins of the station.

5.4 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

A broader assessment of the significance of the structural elements of Weston Station is provided in the following schedule, which encapsulates the preceding evaluation of significance and introduces an assessment of the level of significance. In the NSW Heritage Manual methodology of assessment, an item may be significant for the State or at a local level

CRITERION	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE	ITEM	DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE
a) EVOLUTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE	State	Water tank & stand pipes	High
	Local	Station platform	Moderate
	Local	Pedestrian bridge 1909 sections	Moderate

	Local	Pedestrian bridge later sections	Low
	Local	Rails and siding	Moderate
b) ASSOCIATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE	State	Water tank and stand pipes	High
	Local	Station platform	Moderate
	Local	Pedestrian bridge 1909 sections	Moderate
	Local	Pedestrian bridge later sections	Low
	Local	Rails and siding	Moderate
c) AESTHETIC AND TECHNICAL	State	Water tank and stand pipes	High
	Local	Station platform	Moderate
	Local	Pedestrian bridge 1909 sections	Moderate
	Local	Pedestrian bridge later sections	Low
	Local	Rails and siding	Low

d) SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE	Local	Water tank and stand pipes	High
	Local	Station platform	Moderate
	Local	Pedestrian bridge 1909 sections	Moderate
	Local	Pedestrian bridge later sections	Low
	Local	Rails and sidings	Moderate
e) ARCHAEOLOGICAL/RESEARCH POTENTIAL	State	Water tank and stand pipes	Moderate
	Local	Station platform	Low
	Local	Pedestrian bridge 1909 sections	Low
	Local	Pedestrian bridge later sections	Low
	Local	Rails and sidings	Moderate
f) COMPARATIVE CULTURAL HISTORY	State	Water tank and stand pipes	High
	Local	Station platform	Low
	Local	Pedestrian bridge 1906 sections	Low
	Local	Pedestrian bridge later sections	Low
	Local	Rails and sidings	Moderate
g) COMPARATIVE PLACES	State	Water tank and stand pipes	High
	Local	Station platform	Low
	Local	Pedestrian bridge 1906 sections	Low
	Local	Pedestrian bridge later sections	Low
	Local	Rails and sidings	Moderate

5.5 SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The structures associated with Western station are of State and local historic significance as evidence of the South Maitland Railway, one of the largest and most heavily used private railway in Australia between 1892 and the 1960's conveying coal from the Greta coal seam to the junction within the

Great Northern Railway and to the Port of Newcastle. The section of the network that runs through Weston was built to serve the Hebburn and Aberdare collieries and later extended to Cessnock.

The station precinct is of significance to the local community as a tangible symbol of the establishment of the collieries that generated the township - for its role in providing transport for the miners to their workplaces and for the product of their labour. The Water Tank has a landmark presence and serves as a highly visible reminder of the role of the railway and of the AA company in particular, which played an important part in the development of the coal industry in this locality.

6.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORKS

6.1 BRIEF OUTLINE OF WORKS

The proposed work for the Station Street extension for the Hunter Economic Zone southwards from the intersection with Scott Street, Weston, across the South Maitland rail line and land associated with the former Hebburn No.1 Colliery.

6.2 CONTEXT OF THE WORKS

The area to the south of the township of Weston is planned for development as an employment generating zone in convenient proximity to Kurri Kurri, and the township of Weston and Abermain. Access to this area will be via a roadway extending from the alignment of Station Street southwards to connect with a road system to be established to the south.

The new roadway will cross the South Maitland Railway on the south side of Weston which is still in use daily for infrequent passage of coal trains. It is proposed to install automatic gates, lights and bells at the level crossing. The infrastructure plan produced for the Hunter economic Zone shows the railway line between Maitland and Cessnock passing Weston as a part of the transportation network and it is understood that it may become more actively used in the future.[7]

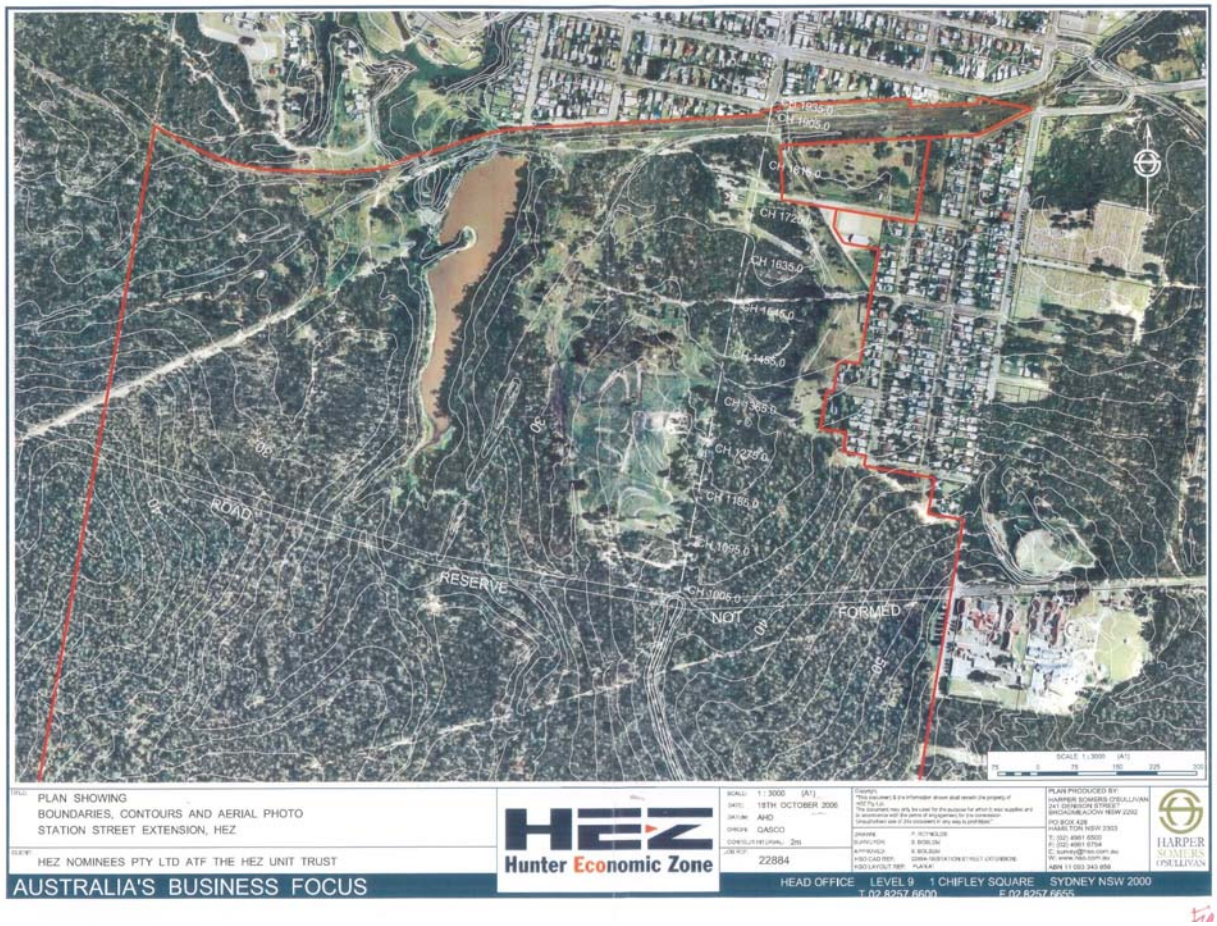

Figure 3: Plan showing line of Station Street extension. Harper Somers O'Sullivan, October 2006.

[7] HEZ website: www.hez.com.au

6.3 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE WORKS

The route of the proposed roadway is shown in figure 3 superimposed over an aerial photograph. The line of the roadway is shown in white with chainage points which are referred to in the following description of the road design.

- The northern section will be a dual carriageway. Each carriageway will be 8 metres wide with a median strip 5 metres wide. A landscaped nature strip will be provided on both sides – 4.5 metres wide on the south side.
- The overall road reserve width of the northern section will be 33 metres.
- The southern section will be single carriageway 13 metres wide with a 4.5 metre wide nature strip on the east side and 6.5 metre wide nature strip on the west side.
- The overall road reserve width of the southern section will be 24 metres.
- There will be a gradual taper where the dual carriageway becomes single carriageway.
- A concrete cycleway 2.5 metres wide will be constructed on one side of the roadway.
- At the connection with the (currently unformed) Stage 2 Road a four way concrete roundabout of approximately chainage 1000 will be built.
- At approximately chainage 1905 the proposed road crosses the singe track line privately owned and operated by South Maitland Rail, where there will be an automatic level crossing.
- The land traversed by the Station Street extension is flat with only four metre rise between chainage 1905 and chainage1455 at about the half way point.

The following sketch indicates the approximate road crossing showing the water tank standing within the route of 8 metre wide western dual carriageway road and the stand pipe in the median strip. Although the detailed design of the roadway has not been completed, based on the general description and taking into account the fixed points of the existing Station Street road reservation, Scott Street and the railway line there is no scope to make a deviation where the new roadway joins the existing roadway that would avoid the water tank and a safely designed level crossing.

The stand pipe appears to be situated within the space that would correspond to the median strip. It is understood that current road design standards would prohibit structures within a median strip, particularly near an intersection.

The proposed roadway construction would also take up approximately two thirds of the length of the ramp from the pedestrian overbridge but would be about fifteen metres away from the bridge at the end of the former railway platform.

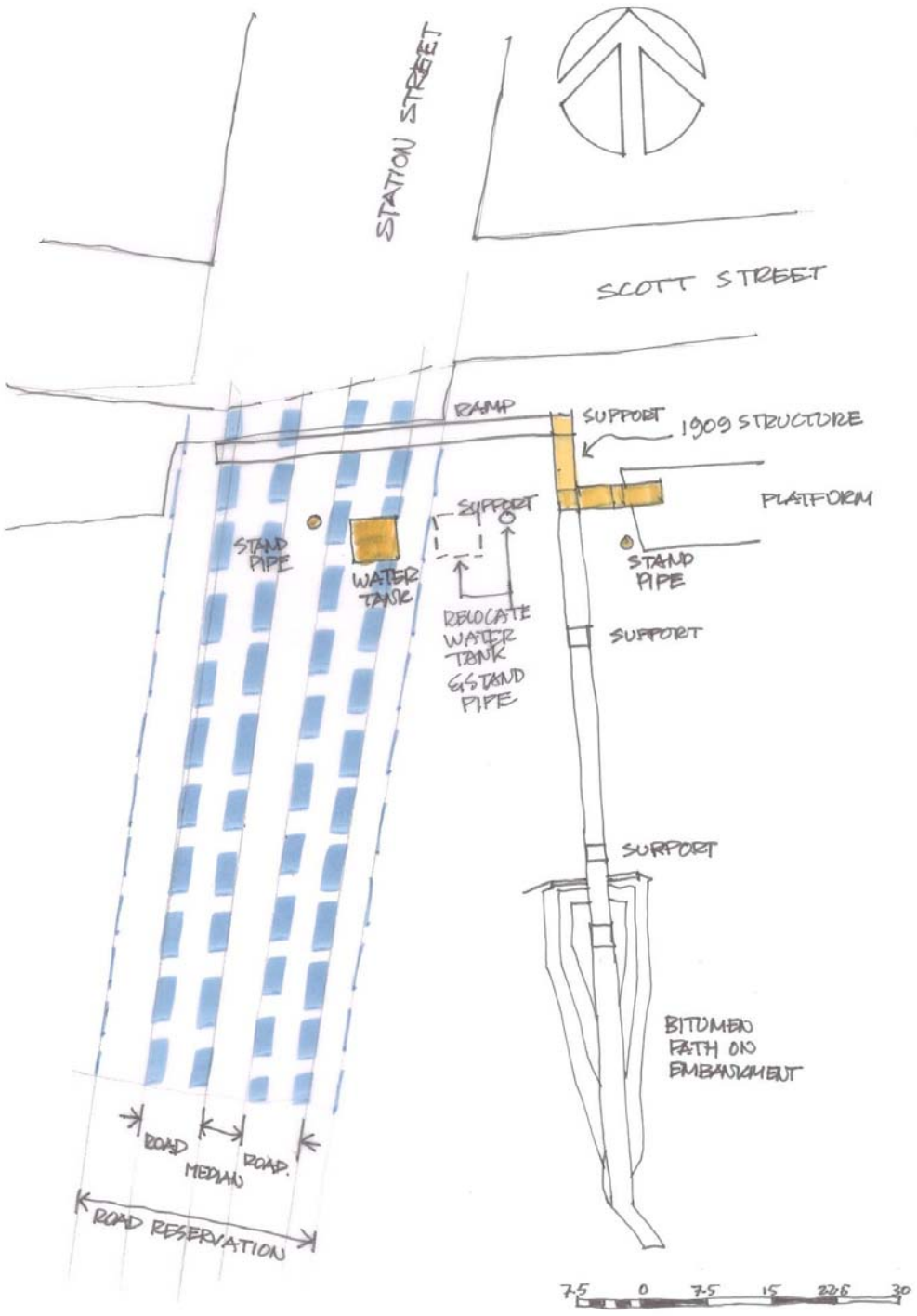

Figure 4: Sketch showing approximate relationship of Weston Station and associated items to road reservation.

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT ON SIGNIFICANCE

7.1 WATER TANK AND STAND PIPE

The proposed roadway construction would be in conflict with retention of the water tank in its existing location. The alignment of the existing southern end of Station Street would determine the crossing point of the South Maitland Rail line and not allow any significant deviation to avoid the water tank and the nearby standpipe.

The water tank's level and degree of significance is such that it must be retained. Relocation of the water tank approximately 8 metres to the east would take it out of the roadway reserve, at the same time keeping its visual connection with the station and its ability to be an historic landmark in the vista from the township along Station Street, from Scott Street and from the rail line also. The stand pipe could be relocated adjacent to the water tank.

This arrangement would require detailed engineering resolution of the method of relocation to ensure minimal physical change to the fabric of the water tank and construction of new pad footings.

In these circumstances the water tank's high significance at State level and interpretive value would not be diminished.

7.2 STATION PLATFORM AND STAND PIPE

The station platform and stand pipe will not be affected physically or visually by the proposed road works.

7.3 PEDESTRIAN OVERBRIDGE

The northern section of the pedestrian overbridge will need to be demolished to enable the proposed road works to be undertaken.

The 1909 section of the bridge associated with the platform and the later southern section spanning the former siding and its associated earth formed ramp would not be affected physically or visually by the proposed works.

Loss of the northern ramp would result in a minor impact on the significance of the bridge as a whole because it is of later construction at a low level of local significance. When it was built its construction involved renewal of the stair that would have been part of the 1909 bridge.

The issue of retention or otherwise of the remaining elements of the bridge is not one that arises from construction of the Station Street extension and is more related to whether, given the future development in the area generally and future frequency of use of the South Maitland rail line, there is a need to provide this form of pedestrian access between the township of Weston, the Station and living and working places to the south.

Should it be found that there is a need to reinstate the bridge for future use, substantial repairs and reconstruction will need to be undertaken which would most likely involve complete replacement of the spalling concrete deck and construction of a new northern ramp running east or running east and returning in itself to the west.

Whether the bridge is ultimately retained or removed entirely, or in part, loss of just the northern ramp would not greatly affect the significance of the station precinct.

8.0 MEASURES TAKEN TO MITIGATE IMPACT

8.1 WATER TANK AND STAND PIPE

The water tank and stand pipe should be accurately recorded in their present state for archival purposes before any works are undertaken in their vicinity. The recording should involve measured drawings and photographs in accordance with the guidelines established by the NSW Heritage Office.

Repositioning of the water tank will be preceded by a thorough engineering assessment of the structure, identification of a suitably experienced and qualified contractor and approval of a detailed method statement that will show how the structure can be repositioned with the minimum extent of dismantling.

Retention of the stand pipe in its present location would be in conflict with the road construction and would be a safety issue. Its proximity to the water tank can be retained by relocating it close by. The present distance between the two items was not a functional requirement as demonstrated by the greater separation of the stand pipe at the end of the station platform.

Its new position would be east of the new position of the water tank to enable the water tank's eastern movement to be the minimum distance to clear the road works zone.

8.2 STATION PLATFORM AND STAND PIPE

No measures are considered necessary as a consequence of the proposed road works as there is no impact on thee significance of these items to be addressed. The future treatment of these elements is more related to other development within the Hunter Economic Zone outside the scope of this statement.

8.3 PEDESTRIAN OVERBRIDGE

Removal of the late phase structure of the northern ramp, being a low level impact does not necessitate any mitigating measures. Decisions about the future of the pedestrian overbridge are otherwise unrelated to the proposed road works project and outside the scope of this statement.

9.0 CONCLUSION

This statement has given consideration to the impacts arising from the proposed road extension of Station Street on the significance of the structures associated with the Weston Station precinct, as part of the south Maitland Railway and showing a history with the Hebburn Colliery.

These structures are significant to varying degrees for their contributions to the wider significance of the development of the local coal industry and associated rail network on the South Maitland coal fields. The most significant elements, rated high at a State level, are the Water Tank and stand pipes. The main issue this assessment addresses arises from the Water Tank and western stand pipe standing squarely within the proposed road reserve. While the proposed construction of the road will require removal of the northern ramp of the pedestrian overbridge, this impact is considered to be at a very low level given the low significance of this later phase portion of the bridge construction.

No recommendations are made to relation to the station platform, the remaining sections of the overbridge, the eastern standpipe and the rails as the impacts of the road works would be of no consequence, or in the case of removal of the southern rail track, where within the road works zone, minimal - provided the ability to interpret the route and the sidings to the east is maintained,

10.0 REFERENCES

Planning Documents

- Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 1989.
- Cessnock Heritage Inventory SHI No 1340065.
- South Cessnock Railway System – between Pelton Colliery triangle and LGA boundary at Cliftleigh.
- Cessnock Heritage Inventory SHI No 1340876.
- Aberdare Railway now part of South Maitland Railway – Aberdare Junction at LGA boundary at Cliftleigh to Cessnock.
- Cessnock Heritage Inventory SHI No 1340631 Weston Railway Platform.

Reports

- Heritage Assessment: Hebburn No1 Colliery, Weston NSW, EJE Heritage, July 2004.
- Detail survey Lot 7, DP 1037092, Dwg No 24127-1A 31 January 2007. Harper Somers O'Sullivan.
- Plan showing boundaries, contours and aerial photo of Station Street extension HEZ – Harper Somers O'Sullivan, 18 October 2006 (origin QASCO.)
- Detail survey corner Station Street and Cessnock Road, Hunter Economic Zone, Harper Somers O'Sullivan, 4 November 2005.
- Preliminary Historic Heritage Assessment: The Tomalpin Employment Zone.
- Paul Rheinberger, Umwelt (Australia) Pty Ltd, February 1999.

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Maps, Plans

- Detail survey Lot 7, DP 1037092, Dwg No. 24127-1A 31 January 2007. Harper Somers O'Sullivan.
- Plan showing boundaries, contours and aerial photo of Station Street extension HEZ – Harper Somers O'Sullivan, 18 October 2006 (origin QASCO).
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