

Newcastle Gaol Precinct



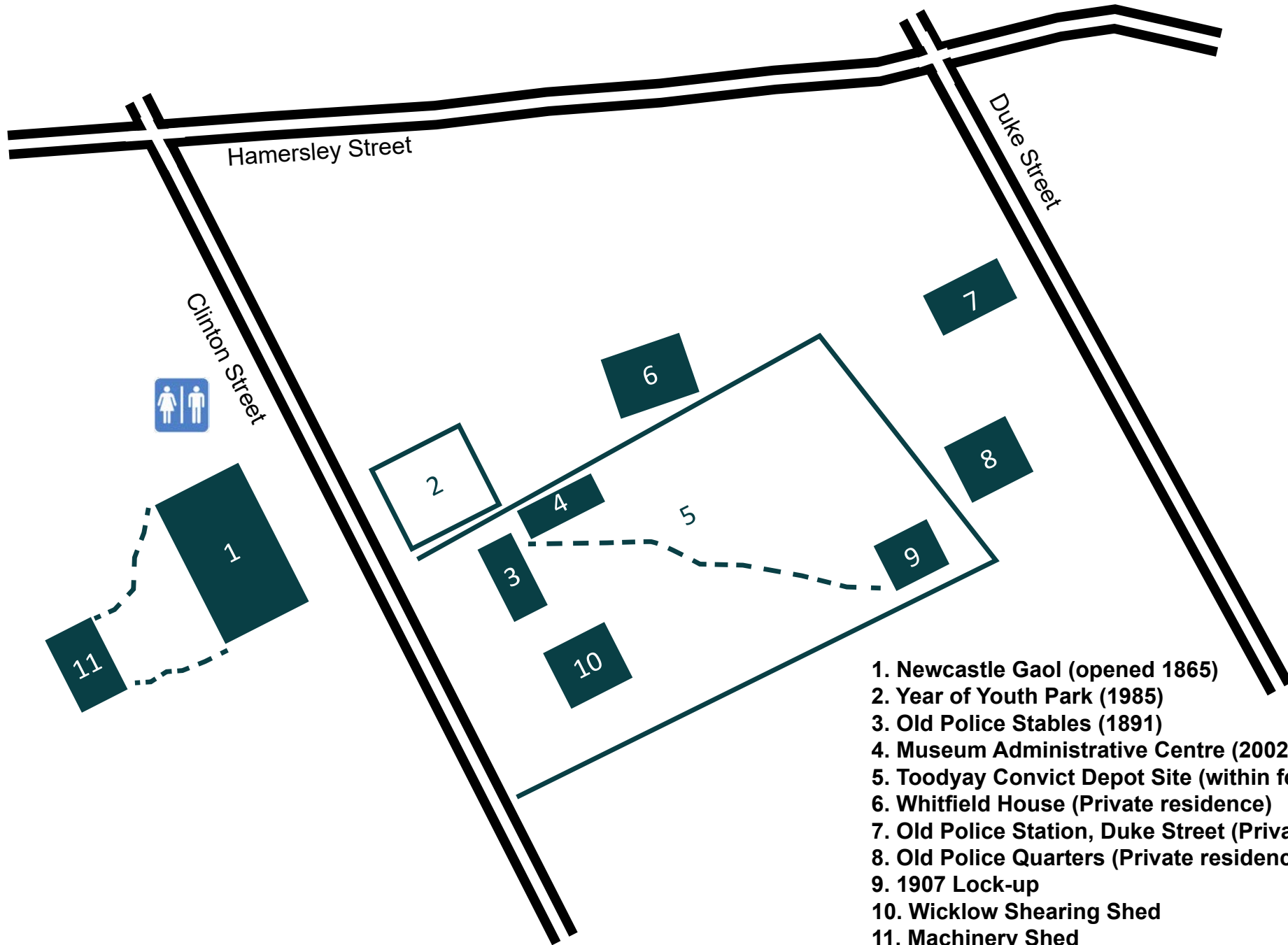
Toodyay Visitor Centre
7 Piesse Street, Toodyay
(08) 9574 9380
www.toodyay.com
visitorscentre@toodyay.wa.gov.au



@visittoodyay



Newcastle Gaol Precinct



1. Newcastle Gaol (opened 1865)
2. Year of Youth Park (1985)
3. Old Police Stables (1891)
4. Museum Administrative Centre (2002)
5. Toodyay Convict Depot Site (within fence boundaries)
6. Whitfield House (Private residence)
7. Old Police Station, Duke Street (Private property)
8. Old Police Quarters (Private residence)
9. 1907 Lock-up
10. Wicklow Shearing Shed
11. Machinery Shed

1. Newcastle Gaol

The Newcastle Gaol was built in 1865 to replace two previous lock-ups at old Toodyay (now West Toodyay) and Newcastle (now Toodyay).

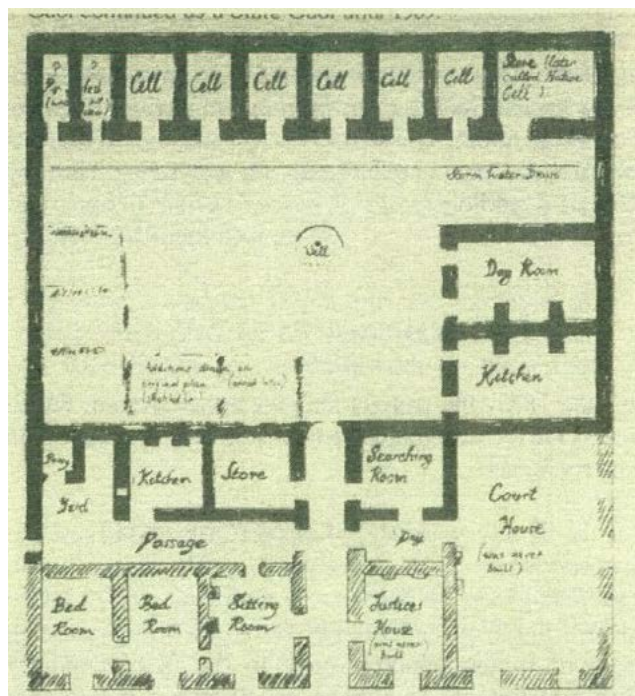
The building was designed by architect Richard Roach Jewell – he was also responsible for the Pensioners' Barracks in St. George's Terrace Perth, of which only the entrance arch now stands.

The plan for the Newcastle Gaol was Public Works Plan, P.W.D. No. 179. Timber from an old Lock-up from Bailup was utilized. Convict labour was used, with the work being supervised by a stonemason, (ex-convict), who was living in the area. He complained of having unskilled workers, (convicts), working with him and reported that the job was taking longer to do because of this.

Jewell's plan showed a timber lined security cell, which also had an iron bar for leg irons. This cell was probably used for prisoners who were high risk, but it may have also been used for Aboriginal prisoners who were still shackled and chained until the 1900s.

To the right is a copy of the original floor plan. "Kitchen" and "Day Room" are now merged into one room, used for temporary exhibitions.

The existing Gaol is much smaller than was originally planned. Resident Magistrate Durlacher did not get his Courtroom. The proportions were planned on a square, with more living accommodation than exists at present. The Gaol was eventually finished in 1864 and operational by 1865.



Shaded areas not built

The building was last used as a Gaol in the early 1900s.

The building came to be used as a private residence and from 1929 through to about 1945 the Dorizzi family lived here. The sons slept in the cells and the lavatory was one of the three cubicles dotted on the plan. The boys joined the Australian Army and in 1945, three of the brothers died at the hands of their enemy captors. One cell is now dedicated to them and to all local servicemen and women who did not return home.

For nearly 20 years, after World War Two, the building slowly deteriorated until a restoration program was undertaken, and in 1962 the Museum came into being.

In 2019 a project was undertaken to re-shingle the Newcastle Gaol Museum roof as the shingles from 1961 were deteriorating and letting water in. To keep the roof as authentic as possible the materials used were similar to the original shingles. The project was completed in early 2020.



2. Year of the Youth Park

In 1985 the Toodyay International Youth Year Committee was formed. It was decided to create a Youth Park in Clinton Street and trees were planted there. A plaque wall and pathway was constructed in late 1990. In 1991 the park was officially opened and a few years later the 1st Toodyay Scout Group undertook the responsibility for its maintenance. Further development of this park has stagnated in recent years

3. Old Police Stables

The first stables at this site were constructed in 1854 next to the Commissariat, (supply store), of the Toodyay Convict Hiring Depot. These early stables were wooden and catered for seven horses. There was a shingled roof and a floor paved with wooden blocks.

At this time Clinton Street did not exist and the stables were positioned in a north-south direction and faced depot tracks that do not remain today.

Nearby more wooden structures were built, including a harness room and sheds sufficient for four carts and twenty tons of hay. The area was enclosed by a three-rail wooden fence.

In 1856 the Toodyay Convict Depot was closed down for the first time and the military personnel left.

In 1860 a survey for the new town of Newcastle was undertaken. This included a part of the original depot site and as a result, the section of the depot where the stables were located came to be subdivided.

In 1861 the stable block was transferred to the Colonial Government and the stables were given over for the use of the Mounted Police.

The Newcastle Lock-up (later upgraded to Gaol status) was built by convicts diagonally opposite the stables and faced the newly laid out Clinton Street. Upon completion

in 1865 it was also handed over to the Newcastle Police to manage.

In 1890 the original Police Stables burnt down. Fire also destroyed the outhouses. Fortunately the horses and saddlery were saved. The fire started in a dung heap close to the stables on a December afternoon, at about 3.30pm. Marris' Steam Flour Mill had been established nearby and workers promptly sounded the whistle attached to the mill to bring help quickly onto the scene.

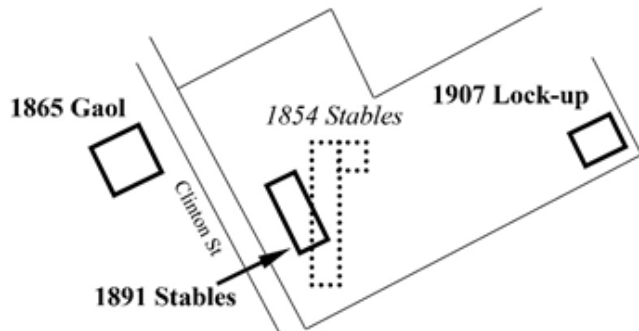
In 1891 a contractor was engaged to rebuild smaller stables in stone aligned to Clinton Street.

In 1970 the Newcastle Gaol, Lock-up and Stables Group was classified by the National Trust.

In 1974 it was resolved to use a portion of a recently allocated National Estate Grant on several projects including the repair of the stables, which by this time had deteriorated markedly.

The restoration of the Old Police Stables was completed in 1977. The site was leased as stables with one room set aside as a display for visitors to the Newcastle Gaol Museum opposite.

In 1978 the Newcastle Gaol, Lock-up and Stables Group in Clinton Street was added to the Permanent Register of the National Estate. All buildings, including the stables, are now being used as museum display areas.



4. Administration Centre

In 1997, a storage and display shed was built for the Gaol Museum. In 2002, the shed was lined and climate control was installed to become the Museum's Administrative Centre, which was officially opened in 2004.

Today the administration centre is used for display preparation and conservation of artefacts, as well as having special archival storage areas for fragile objects and computer workstations for database management.



From storage shed to Museum Administration Centre

5. Toodyay Convict Depot Site

The empty area behind the stables originally contained Convict Hiring Depot infrastructure relating to military personnel whose task was to supervise and instruct convicts. Built in 1852, this included the Commissariat (a store for depot supplies) and two Sappers' cottages. After the Depot closed in 1872, these buildings were used by the local police, and were still standing in the early 1900s.



Archaeological remains still exist in this site which is why development has not yet continued.

6. Whitfield House

This house is thought to have been built in 1867. Mrs. Elizabeth Whitfield ran a private school here in 1871. Retired farmer Augustus Lee Steere bought the property from James Everett in 1887.

After Lee Steere's death in 1903, the land and house was bequeathed to the Anglican Church, serving as the Anglican Rectory from 1904 to 1981.

Now a private residence, it has also seen service as a bed and breakfast business.

7. Old Police Station

The small weatherboard building next to the old police quarters originally came to Toodyay from the Day Dawn township in 1919. It was used at the Duke Street School until it was moved again to this location in 1955. It served as the Police charge room until 1967.

Since then various community groups have been in residence.

8. Old Police Quarters

Behind the lock-up are the old police quarters built around 1896. Today there is a fence separating the two buildings but this was not originally in place. The police officer's wife is likely to have been called upon to feed the prisoners.

This building is now a private residence.

9. 1907 Lock up

The 1907 Lock Up was used for the short term detention of people prior to a court hearing and replaced the Newcastle Gaol. It became the fourth lock-up built in the Toodyay area. Shortly after it was completed the town of Newcastle changed its name to Toodyay.

The Lock-up was constructed by local builder, Morgan.W.Ford from Coondle, for £450. It is a single storey brick building with no specific front or back, just an entry at each end. There are three cells, (two male and one female), and two exercise yards.

The male and female sections are completely separate with no internal doorway between the two areas. Currently, due to its proximity to private property, there is only limited public access to the larger male section, and no access to the female section.

A free-standing toilet, built sometime after the Lock-up, is located nearby.

GRAFFITI

If you look closely in the ablution alcove of the men's yard you will find graffiti dating from the internment era of the lock-up.

ESCAPES

The lock-up was not completely escape proof; there were at least two occasions when inmates managed to get out.

In 1935 a farm labourer escaped from the exercise yard and in 1946 two young inmates escaped, with assistance, into the night using Father Nolan's car.

It is not currently known how long the escapees managed to remain free



10. Wicklow Shearing Shed

11. Machinery Shed

The Wicklow Shearing Shed was relocated to the Newcastle Gaol Museum site in 1999.

The shed was originally constructed on the Wicklow Hills property just outside Toodyay, along the Goomalling-Toodyay Road. It was estimated to be about 100 years old at the time it was moved. The photograph below, from the late 1990s, of the shed in its original location shows a much longer building with a number of the sections collapsed. The building you see today has been reconstructed from the sound materials remaining and is not an exact replica of the original shed. When earthworks were undertaken to level the site for the Wicklow Shearing



Photo supplied by the Toodyay Historical Society

Shed, the remains of two previously unknown constructions dating from the Toodyay Convict Depot era were discovered. These were identified as a well and a bread oven. Both were examined and then covered with sand to preserve them, prior to the erection of the shed.

In 2002 three excavation trenches near the Shearing Shed were made by students attending a University of WA Archaeological Practical course. Building materials found confirmed the existence of a structure at the investigation site.

In 2010 archaeological students from the University of WA attended a field school at Toodyay. Uphill from the Shearing Shed two trenches were opened. Trench one uncovered the remains of the former Toodyay Convict Depot Commissariat building. Trench two uncovered the remains of a convict era fence that bounded the site.

In 1958 the Public Works Department offered the then derelict Newcastle Gaol for sale.

With the assistance of the Tourist Development Authority, the Toodyay Road Board was able to purchase the site in 1961. An agricultural museum was planned for the area behind the gaol.

By March 1962 tenders had been advertised for the building of a Machinery Shed to house some of the historic farming artefacts being collected.

A further call was put out for donations of old farming equipment through the Countryman newspaper in the 24th May 1962 edition.

On 7th October, 1962 the Old Gaol Museum opened. Photos from this era suggest the Machinery Shed was completed in time for the opening.

In 1963 J.C. (Mac) Wroth donated half a block of land behind the museum to assist with landscaping.

A second Machinery Shed further up the hill from the existing structure was proposed, and the ground was prepared.

However a second shed was not built and today a 19th century hay baler is displayed on this levelled area.

In 2015 agricultural machinery was shifted around the museum site, and some artefacts located here for many, years were moved out. The wool press, for instance, was relocated to the Wicklow Shearing Shed.

Other objects including two ploughs, some smaller cast iron artefacts and saw blades located elsewhere were moved into the Machinery Shed for display.

Custom made metal object supports for machinery, ploughs and saw blades were installed. In recent years artefacts located here have been regularly cleaned and monitored for signs of deterioration.



Newcastle Gaol Precinct

Toodyay Museums

(08) 9574 9393

www.toodyay.com

museums@toodyay.wa.gov.au



@toodyaymuseums



Toodyay Visitor Centre

7 Piesse Street, Toodyay

(08) 9574 9380

www.toodyay.com

visitorscentre@toodyay.wa.gov.au



@visittoodyay

