

## LEASING OPPORTUNITY

**EOI CLOSES  
30 MARCH 2020**

The National Trust of Western Australia is seeking expressions of interest from potential lessees to find a sustainable and compatible use for the York Courthouse Complex that complements this remarkable heritage property

# York Courthouse Complex

## OFFERING

Opportunity to lease the entire York Courthouse Complex, a highly-esteemed heritage site in the heart of the main street of historic York. Drawing on the business provided by both tourists visiting WA's oldest inland town and a lively local community, a variety of potential uses are possible.



**National Trust**  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# Steeped in history and brimming with potential

## OPPORTUNITY TO LEASE ENTIRE YORK COURTHOUSE COMPLEX ON AVON TERRACE, YORK

Imagine the business opportunities if you were to establish your business in iconic landmark premises right at the centre of York's main street. There's a constant stream of townspeople, farmers, and tourists passing the front door going about their shopping, trade or business and enjoying the remarkable lifestyle benefits the resurgent town offers.

Link your activities to the activation of an important heritage place which connects visitors to the early years of settlement and the need for law and order. As well as the historic fabric and rich stories there are a range of spaces which could be used for workshops, small conferences and meetings, dinners, markets and the like.

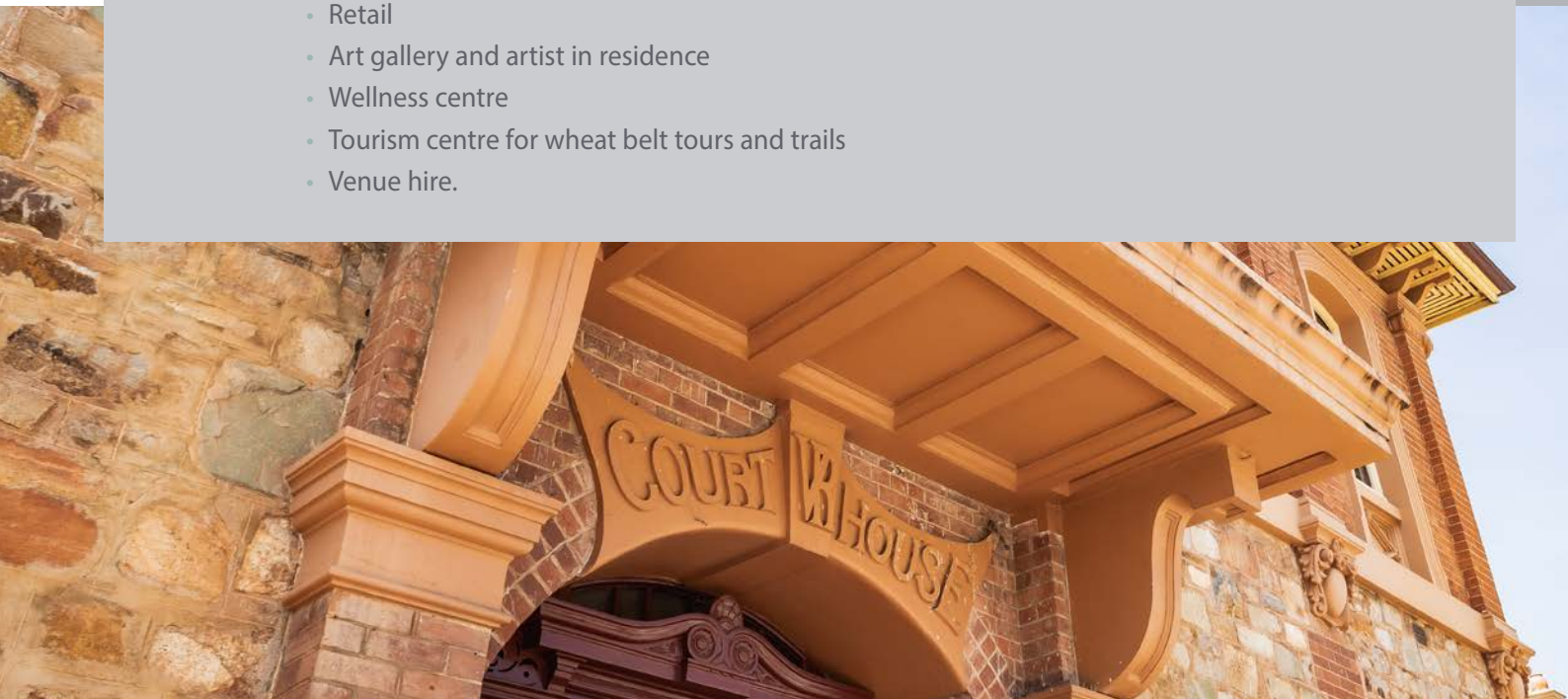
This is a multi-layered canvas and offers opportunities for established and emerging businesses to take a main street position and capitalise on the potential of York, Western Australia's oldest inland town.



### YORK COURTHOUSE COMPLEX

Businesses that would be an appropriate fit for the Courthouse include:

- Heritage learning centre—possibly aligned to TAFE
- Tourism training
- Commercial offices
- Function and conferences
- Retail
- Art gallery and artist in residence
- Wellness centre
- Tourism centre for wheat belt tours and trails
- Venue hire.





## THE HISTORY OF THE YORK COURTHOUSE COMPLEX

York is well known as being the first inland settlement in Western Australia and is now an important historic town with numerous buildings of significance making it a popular tourist destination.

The resident population currently stands at just under 3,500 people with visitor figures averaging over 53,000 annually (York Visitors Centre, 2019).

The York Courthouse Complex is centrally located in the main street of town. The Complex comprises a number of areas: the four main areas being the Gaol (1852–1880s), the Courthouse and public gallery (1896), the Police Quarters (1903 and 1910) and the Police Station (1908).

The Complex has great historic value for its strong links to so many key phases of development in York and throughout the State as a whole, particularly the convict era and the gold boom, and its association with prominent figures throughout its history.

The continuity of a civic presence on Avon Terrace and a long history of government and police use on site make an important contribution to the historic value of the town. The close association with the development of law and law enforcement in Western Australia gives York Courthouse Complex historic value at a State level.

The York Courthouse Complex is a remarkable assemblage of structures surviving from all major phases of its development with the exception of the 1830–1850s settlement period. The size, materials, form and detailing of the various buildings reflect the evolution of law enforcement and the changing circumstances and prosperity of York itself.

Remnant buildings include the original 1852 stone gaol with most of its original joinery and fixtures, and the attached exercise yard built in 1875. Some of the cells still display the graffiti etched into the plaster by prisoners. Much of it dates from a more recent period of use in the 1940–1960s. Some of the graffiti records astonishingly long periods of incarceration of up to three months as late as the mid-20th century in cells intended as overnight lock-ups.

“...The Complex has great historic value for its strong links to so many key phases of development in York and throughout the State...”



Most of the 1852 police station abutting the west wall of the cells was demolished in the late 19th century. However its form is preserved as a void between the later buildings, while traces of its fireplaces, stone walls and roof line remain in the outer face of the gaol and 1874 courtroom. More recently a deck, reminiscent of internal floorboards, has been installed in this space. Set into it are pieces of steel plate that mark the previous location of internal walls, while quotes carved into the floor timbers use words from the 19th century to explain the cramped and hot living conditions experienced by the police and their families. The first courtroom, built in 1859, has gone but the 1874 red brick courtroom survives, retaining its original open configuration. In the 1980s it was re-floored, re-painted, the ceiling re-lined and replica courtroom furniture installed (albeit based on original drawings and physical evidence). The attached four room brick and stone police station erected in 1908 is well preserved. Two rooms are leased to a local law firm as offices.

The two-storey 1895 courtroom designed by Government architect George Temple Poole has survived in excellent condition. Built in red brick and local stone, it displays distinctive ornamentation that denotes its high status as an important regional court. Internally it retains most of its original configuration, furniture and fixtures—only recently were the witness box and prisoners box returned to their original locations.



At the rear of the complex is the 1865 stable yard and the 1879 Troopers Cottage. Behind these on Lowe Street is the 1903 lock-up keeper's residence and the 1910 police quarters.

The Complex had remained in constant use until the 1980s, however one of the two Courtrooms is still used on occasion for local hearings. When the National Trust acquired the site in 1983 it was in need of urgent work. Since then a detailed conservation program, in addition to historical and archaeological research, has ensured that this important place is still accessible to the general public and used for education programs as well as recreation.

**The National Trust acquired the Complex in 1983.**  
**It is recognised on the heritage registers at Commonwealth, State and local levels.**

“...the Courtroom... displays distinctive ornamentation that denotes its high status as an important regional court...”



Hallway



Courtroom



## An exciting opportunity

The National Trust recognises the importance of the York Courthouse Complex and is committed to working towards keeping the York Courthouse open and operating as a venue to secure significant economic, social and cultural benefits for the community. This invitation for expressions of interest is the first step in working towards a new long term lease for the York Courthouse.

York Courthouse plays a notable role in the history of the area and the state. It attracts an estimated 1500 visitors a year and makes a strong contribution to York's architectural landscape. The role the York Courthouse plays in the community, combined with its potential as an educational experience and as a key venue for community festivals and events, is significant.

The Shire provides support for one-off community activities and projects initiated for community benefit and enjoyment. In their *Annual Report 2017/2018* the Shire expresses the aim of being 'A Leader in Cultural Heritage and Environment: To be a place which is renowned for its cultural heritage and the quality of its natural environment, and for the care taken by the community of both' (*Shire of York Annual Report 2017/2018 – Vision and Objectives*).

### OPEN DAY

The York Courthouse Complex  
will be open for inspection  
11am – 2pm

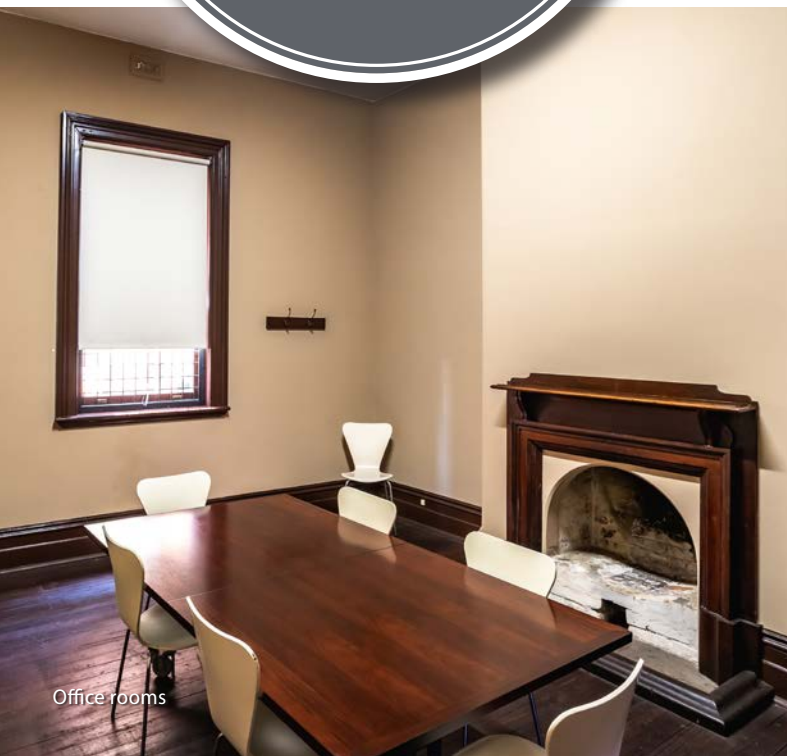
MONDAY 2 MARCH 2020  
for viewing by interested parties.

Please register your visit with  
[micaela.pereira@ntwa.com.au](mailto:micaela.pereira@ntwa.com.au)

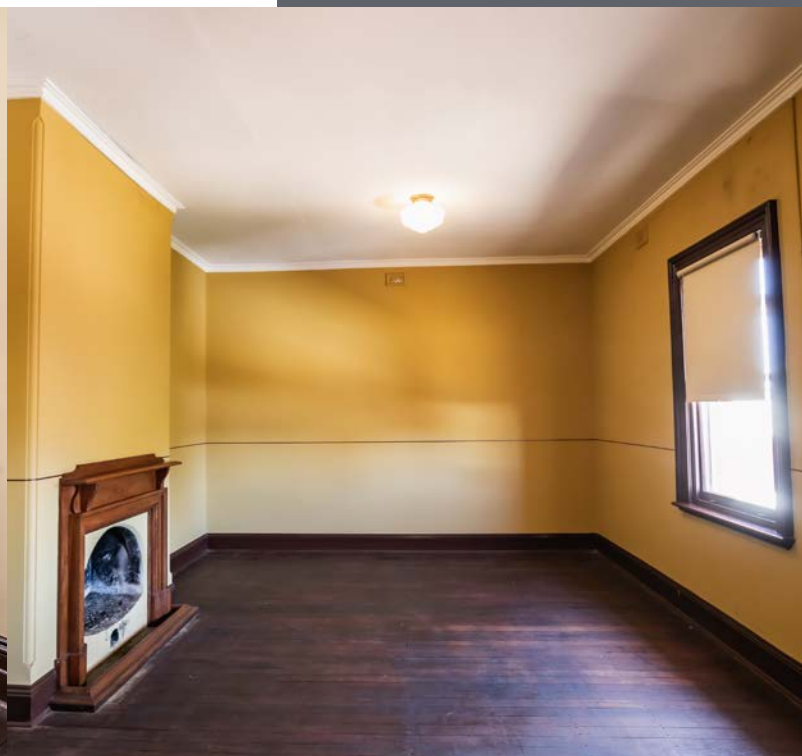


The National Trust manages two other Gaol/Courthouses:

- Pinjarra Courthouse has been transformed into a successful community space run by the local shire where local residents can hire a hot desk or community space.
- The Old Gaol at Geraldton is run by an artist group who operate tours and offer the premises for hire to different artists. Aligned with these activities is a monthly art market.



Office rooms



## DETAILS

<b>Total Floor Area</b> (excluding courtyards and external space)	<b>936.71 m<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>Museum</b>	<b>397.80 m<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>Potential Adaption</b>	<b>538.91 m<sup>2</sup></b>



## CONDITIONS

- **OPPORTUNITIES:**
  - encouraging increased use of the building by activating the premises offering an unique heritage experience
  - to offer functions in a range of spaces in outside areas
  - to manage venue hire, events and functions on behalf of the National Trust exclusive
  - to partner with tour operators
  - conditions maintenance building to be negotiated with the Trust
  - National Trust to make property lease ready, to be negotiated with potential tenant.
- **TERMS** negotiable 5 + 5 years.
- **RENTAL FEE** negotiable.
- **ENTRANCE FEE** to be collected by the tenant
- **APPROVAL** subject to, and conditional on, the Minister for Land's consent and relevant local government approvals.
- **INSURANCE** Professional Indemnity and Public Liability insurance cover of \$20 million each.





## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

The entry in the State Register of Heritage Places is based on the information contained in the Conservation Plan and recognises it as having cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

- The place is a landmark in York and makes an important contribution to the streetscape of Avon Terrace;
- The place has aesthetic values for its high degree of unity as well as the range of buildings and related spaces it contains. The level of craftsmanship within the complex represents a creative achievement;
- The place is significant for both the close association with the development of the law and law enforcement in Western Australia and because of the continuity of government and police use of the site;
- The place is rare in its intactness and clear depiction of the historical development of the precinct. It demonstrates a range of past ways of living and working, through a cohesive range of buildings of different periods;
- The place has a high degree of potential as a reference site for architects, historians and students for the development of architectural design and building technology in the State and the discovery and interpretation of the convict and social history of the place;
- The place has a close association with prominent Public Works architect, George Temple Poole;
- The place is held in high esteem by the local community and by the State and national visitors to the historic town;
- The Court House, Police Station and Gaol buildings have a close association with the key phases of development in York and in the State, particularly the convict era and the gold boom. These buildings are associated with the history of York, and contribute to its sense of place; and
- The former Police Quarters, at the rear of the complex, are significant because they define the streetscape of Lowe Street and maintain a domestic scale connection with the rest of the town, Lowe Street, and the river parkland.



Old Gaol.



The small Court.



## INTERPRETATION

In 2001 the National Trust of Western Australia embarked on a major project—the reinterpretation of the York Courthouse Complex.

The presentation of this highly significant heritage place was limited, the displays were run down, amateurish (at times irrelevant) and 20 years old. Overall it did not present well as a National Trust property, tourist site or public facility. Due to a desire by the Trust to upgrade the Complex and present a more contemporary interpretation, a master plan was commissioned in 2001.

The resultant Interpretation Plan provided a range of themes and a template for interpretation that, when implemented, would transform the York Courthouse Complex into a high quality, interesting and stimulating heritage destination and visitor experience.

The interpretation utilises the buildings as objects to be understood, investigated and revealed. It also considers the people who have lived, worked and been incarcerated there.

The ultimate aim of the interpretation of the York Courthouse Complex has been to increase knowledge, awareness and understanding of the place through innovative and engaging interaction with visitors using a variety of media. There has been a desire to promote visitor interaction and cross-generation communication while creating valuable experiences for all.

Heritage places are being continually re-thought, re-considered, re-investigated and re-interpreted. While it can be said that the implementation of the interpretation plan is essentially finished, the work will be on-going well into the future. There are always new stories to tell, topics to focus on and other perspectives to consider.

The completion of the project happily coincided with York's 175th anniversary celebrations. The National Trust declared York as an historic town in 1976.

---

**All interpretation can be left in the premises and used for future visitors of the site.**

---





Education room.

## EOI TIMEFRAME

15 November 2019	EOI live
2 March 2020	Open Day
30 March 2020	EOI deadline

## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST REQUEST

The National Trust of Western Australia is seeking expressions of interest from potential lessees to find a sustainable and compatible use for York Courthouse Complex. Suitable uses include:

- Heritage learning centre – possibly aligned to TAFE
- Tourism training
- Commercial offices
- Function and conferences
- Retail
- Art gallery and artist in residence
- Wellness centre
- Tourism centre for wheat belt tours and trails
- Venue hire.

The purpose of the EOI is to explore options for the future lease and development of York Courthouse to allow interested parties to:

- Explain their vision for the future of York Courthouse including possible community benefits.
- Relocate the main entrance of the York Courthouse to the entrance via the Police Station to capture and capitalise on the visitor experience.

The National Trust is prepared to consider a diverse range of lease proposals for the entire property or separate components.



Education room.



Open court.



Police Station (shop).

## SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### POTENTIAL USE

The National Trust will consider expressions of interest proposals against criteria including: financial sustainability; community benefit; and potential impact on heritage values.

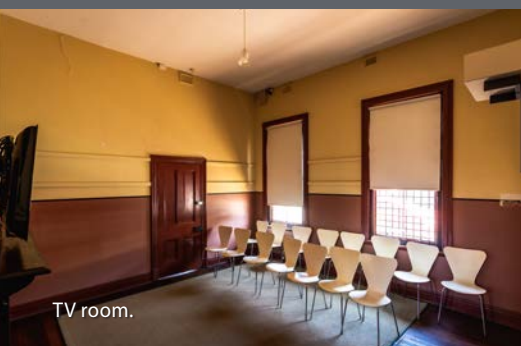
When assessing each proposal, the National Trust will also focus on:

- a) Level of activity generated by the proposal;
- b) Investment required; and
- c) Compatibility with site and heritage values.

**Expressions of Interest are to be submitted to  
the National Trust via [trust@ntwa.com.au](mailto:trust@ntwa.com.au)  
from 15 November 2019 onwards  
and on or before 3pm Monday 30 March 2020.**

Expressions of Interest should include the following details:

- Name of the proponent(s), business address and relevant contact details.
- Details of any proposed team members, consultants/contractors.
- Details of proposed use of the place and any anticipated impact on heritage values considering:
  - Use of York Courthouse.
- Business case.
- Details of proposed lease terms including but not limited to:
  - promote the heritage significance of the site
  - provide opportunities for community access and engagement
  - length of the desired lease
  - extent of lease
  - proposed rental fee
  - proposed capital expenditure (cash and in kind)
  - any other relevant terms and conditions
- Names and contact details of three referees who have had recent dealings with the proponents.
- Level of insurances and name of the company that holds the policy.



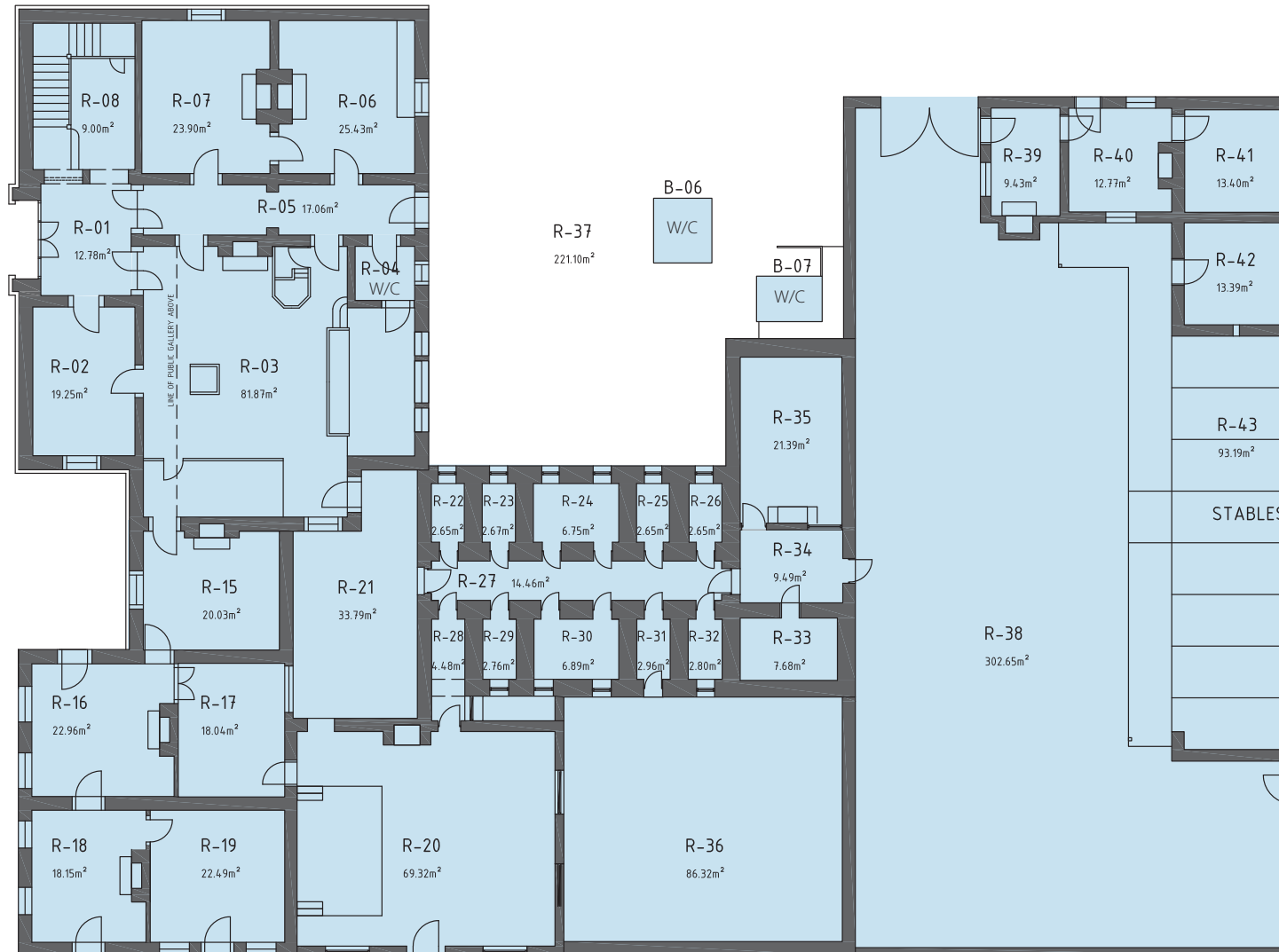
TV room.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT

Ms Micaela Pereira  
Lease and Property Officer  
Telephone: (08) 9321 6088  
Email: [trust@ntwa.com.au](mailto:trust@ntwa.com.au)



# York Courthouse Complex Ground Floor Plan



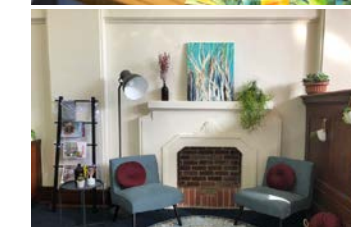
The National Trust of Western Australia  
trust@ntwa.com.au  
PO Box 1162, West Perth, WA 6872

Scale 1:150 @A3







potential lease area





NOT TO SCALE

-  existing museum  
 potential adaptation  
 connection to river  
 proposed lease boundary



note

All works are subject to approval of final proposal- this drawing is to be used as a guideline only