



AHMS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
& HERITAGE
MANAGEMENT
SOLUTIONS

ABN 45 088 058 388
ACN 088 058 388

www.ahms.com.au
info@ahms.com.au

SYDNEY
2/729 Elizabeth St
Waterloo NSW 2017
P 02 9555 4000
F 02 9555 7005

MELBOURNE
2/35 Hope St
Brunswick VIC 3056
P 03 9388 0622

PERTH
13/336 Churchill Ave
Subiaco WA 6008
P 08 9381 5206

Parkview

PO Box R1779
Royal Exchange NSW 1225

Attn: Jenny David

27 May 2013

Re. Potential Aboriginal Heritage Impacts - Revised Masterplan, Nepean Green Project, Penrith.

Dear Jenny,

We write to you regarding the revised masterplan for the Nepean Green project and any potential Aboriginal heritage impacts which may result from these revisions. The potential impact of the development following the revision of the masterplan has been considered, and the findings outlined below.

Background

Parkview Penrith Pty Ltd engaged Archaeological & Heritage Management Solutions Pty Ltd (AHMS) to undertake an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA). The ACHA was completed in August 2012 and determined that the southern part of the study area had potential to contain shallow buried archaeological deposits in the upper soil levels, and that at deeper levels the entire study area was situated on the Cranebrook Terrace - a highly complex geomorphological feature with potential (in some areas) to contain some of the oldest Aboriginal objects in Australia (AHMS, 2012). The Cranebrook Terrace consists of two units; the Richmond Unit and the Penrith Unit. Only the former is of archaeological interest, as the Penrith Unit is older than the accepted age of Aboriginal colonisation of Australia (50,000 years ago).

To determine whether the study area was situated on the Cranebrook Terrace, it was recommended that sub-surface investigations focussing on both the shallow surface deposits and the deeper Cranebrook Terrace deposits be undertaken in future stages of the development. Following lodgement of the ACHA (as part of the wider Project Application) with Department of Planning and Infrastructure (DoPI), Parkview was asked to undertake these subsurface investigations prior to any approval being granted. Subsequently, AHMS undertook a test excavation program in October 2012. Since the Project Application only included the southern portion of the study area, the test excavations, similarly, were

constrained to this area. No investigations were undertaken in the northern portion of the study area, although some inferences can be made based on the test excavations undertaken in the southern portion of the study area.

AHMS undertook a two-stage excavation methodology across the southern portion of the study area, which composed of a grid of hand dug test pits and several machine dug test pits to ensure the deeper deposits were investigated. A total of 28 manual test pits (equating to 7m²) and two machine pits (equating to 4.8m²) were excavated.

The excavations recovered no Aboriginal objects, and the entire southern portion of the study area was considered of low likelihood to contain undiscovered or undisturbed Aboriginal objects/sites. The excavations did reveal a thin strip of the Cranebrook terrace (20-30m) along the western margins of the site, which was also considered to extend into the un-investigated northern portion of the study area (Figure 1). Post-excavation analysis and OSL dating revealed that this section of the Cranebrook Terrace was probably part of the Richmond Unit, and its deposition dated to between 14-8,000 years ago. These findings had two significant implications: 1) the study area provided a reliable indicator of the extent of the Richmond Unit (which is of archaeological interest more generally) in this region of Penrith; and 2) the study area had low potential to contain Aboriginal objects that could be at the farthest extent of the possible occupation of the Australia as found in other parts of the terrace (i.e. the deposits were not 40,000 years old, so neither could any Aboriginal objects recovered within it).

AHMS' report concluded the following in relation to the study area:

It is considered that the development will cause low to nil impacts to Aboriginal objects in the southern portion of the subject area. The recommendations below have, therefore, been modified from the August 2012 assessment to reflect these findings.

In the northern portion of the subject area, the heavy disturbance is likely to have removed much of the well-drained Richmond Unit, perhaps leaving only a small strip along the western boundary. This area has some potential for Aboriginal objects to occur (being part of the Cranebrook Terrace Formation), but based on the results of the test excavations, such potential is low and any finds would date to <14ka. It should also be highlighted that most Aboriginal objects within the Cranebrook Terrace Formation are found on, or near, the surface, which in the case of the northern portion of the subject area has been completely truncated. For this reason, recommendations below are constrained to 'stop work' provisions in the event that Aboriginal objects are identified during construction, rather than proposing any further testing/salvage excavations prior to development.

Based on these findings, it was concluded that works could proceed without Aboriginal heritage constraints, but with a range of stop work measures proposed in the event of unexpected Aboriginal objects or human remains being found during construction.

The Revised Masterplan

The excavations revealed that the southern portion of the study area had low potential for Aboriginal objects to be present, and that similar findings were expected in the northern portion of the site. It did, however, highlight the importance of parts of the Richmond Unit soil profile identified within 30m of the western margin of the site.

Originally, the proposed development would have impacted upon a small portion of this deposit (Figure 1). The Masters hardware store was proposed for the southern portion of the study area, with residential high-rises being located in the northern portion. This design would have led to significant impacts to the northern portion of the Richmond Unit, and some

minor impacts to the southern portion (a part of the hardware store extending in this direction).

The revised master-plan reverses the location of the hardware store to the northeastern portion and the residential development to the southern portion of the study area (Figure 2). This re-configuration will result in the greater preservation of the un-investigated parts of the Richmond Unit in the northern parts of the site, which are now proposed for shallow carparking that require minimal excavation. The greater impact is now proposed in the southern parts of the study area, which have been investigated (see above) and revealed low likelihood of Aboriginal objects being present.

Based on the information above, there is no requirement to re-consider Aboriginal heritage issue within the study area. The re-design will result in greater impacts to areas where test excavations have occurred and revealed no Aboriginal objects; and reduce the level of proposed impact to the parts of the Richmond Unit that could not be excavated in the northern part of the site. For this reason, AHMS recommends the existing recommendations for the project are maintained, specifically:

- Consultation between Parkview Penrith Pty Ltd and the Registered Aboriginal Parties should be maintained as appropriate throughout the design and construction stages of the proposed development.
- If the boundaries and/or design of the proposed development are revised to include areas not investigated during this archaeological assessment and the overall ACHA, assessment of these additional areas should be undertaken in order to identify and appropriately manage Aboriginal objects, sites and/or places that may exist in these areas.
- Parkview Penrith Pty Ltd should ensure that the removal of any Aboriginal object or the disturbance or destruction of any Aboriginal site or place is undertaken professionally, in consultation with relevant Registered Aboriginal Parties, according to applicable heritage statutory requirements and is documented, as appropriate to the level of significance of the object, site or place.
- Parkview Penrith Pty Ltd should ensure that any project-related Aboriginal heritage reports or documents are prepared in accordance with and/or comply with applicable statutory requirements and best practice professional standards. Where appropriate, findings of this work are to be provided to the OEH AHIMS Registrar and the relevant Registered Aboriginal Parties.
- Parkview Penrith Pty Ltd should advise all relevant personnel and contractors involved in the design, construction and operation of the proposed development, of the relevant heritage issues, legislative requirements and recommendations identified in the present ACHA.
- In the event that previously undiscovered Aboriginal objects, sites or places (or potential Aboriginal objects, sites or places) are discovered during construction, all works in the vicinity of the find should cease and Parkview Penrith Pty Ltd should determine the subsequent course of action in consultation with a heritage professional, relevant Registered Aboriginal Parties and/or the relevant State government agency.

- Should any skeletal material be identified that may be Aboriginal, the Coroner's Act 1980 requires that all works should cease and the NSW Police and the NSW Coroner's Office should be contacted. Should the burial prove to contain Aboriginal ancestral remains, consultation with a heritage professional, relevant Registered Aboriginal Parties and/or the relevant State government agency, should be undertaken by Parkview Penrith Pty Ltd.

If you have any questions regarding the matters discussed in this letter, or in relation to any other part of the project, please do not hesitate to contact me on (02) 9555 4000.

Yours sincerely,



Alan Williams MAACAI
Manager NSW - Aboriginal Heritage

References

AHMS. 2012. Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment - 164 Station Street, Penrith. Unpublished Report for Parkview Penrith Pty Ltd.



Figure 2: Potential impact of the proposed development on the Richmond Unit (deeper parts in red; shallower parts in yellow) as per the revised master plan.