

**EUROPEAN CULTURAL HERITAGE  
ASSESSMENT**

**SANDY BEACH NORTH**

**NSW MID NORTH COAST**

**Dan Tuck [MDCA]**

**Final Report - April 2007**

**Report to Sandy Shores Development Pty Ltd**

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## 1.0

## Introduction

Sandy Beach North is a pending residential subdivision south of Woolgoolga on the NSW Mid North Coast. The study area, described as Lot 22 DP 1070182, accounts for approximately 50 hectares of coastal grazing land and is bordered to the north by Hearnes Lake – Double Crossing Creek; to the east by Sandy Beach; to the west by the Pacific Highway; and to the south by the settlement of Sandy Beach (refer **figures 1 - 3**).

Sandy Shores Development Pty Ltd (the developer) has sought approval from the NSW Department of Planning (DoP) for a concept plan proposing sub-division of the study area into approximately 295 lots. Subsequently, the Director General (DG) of the DoP has issued a series of requirements regarding environmental assessment of the study area in advance of approval.

### **The Director Generals requirements**

DG requirement 11.2 states:

*"Identify any other items of European Heritage significance and provide measures for conservation of such items".*

This report has been prepared in response to the DG's requirement and constitutes a European Cultural Heritage Assessment. It was commissioned by John Oliver and prepared by Mary Dallas Consulting Archaeologists (MDCA) associate Dan Tuck with input from Paul Irish. It compliments a comprehensive Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment of the subject property undertaken by MDCA in 2004.



**Figure 1:**

Sandy Beach & Hearnes Lake  
(view SW)

(NSW Department of Land and  
Water Conservation 2000 -  
[www.dlwc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dlwc.nsw.gov.au))

## European Cultural Heritage Assessment

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Figure 2:

**Regional map showing  
Sandy Beach**

(North Coast Monthly 2003)



Figure 3:

**Topographic Map section  
showing the study area**

The study area is described  
as 3/248762 in this image

(Moonee Beach 1:25000  
Topographic map)

## 2.0

## Methodology

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The aim of this report was to identify European cultural heritage items within the study area. A secondary objective was to discuss the impact of historical land use on the local environment and landscape. To this end, the assessment process involved the following tasks:

1. *Review of materials relating to the history of the development of the study area*

This included the inspection of select historic maps and plans, historic air photos, land title documents, and relevant reports and publications. Resources utilised included:

- Coffs Harbour Regional Library
- State Library of NSW (SLNSW) – particularly the Mitchell Library (ML)
- NSW Department of Lands Head Office (also referred to as the Land Titles Office)
- State Records of NSW SRNSW – formerly the Archives Office (AO)

2. *Review of all relevant statutory and non-statutory heritage registers and lists*

This included review of the heritage schedules attached to local planning instruments

3. *Physical inspection (survey) of the subject area* by MDCA associate archaeologist Dan Tuck (21 February 2007).

## 3.0

## History

The following brief history of the study area has been prepared from a review of the following:

- Coffs Harbour Regional Library  
*Documents, maps and plans held in the Local History, Reference and General Collections.*
- State Library of NSW  
*Documents, maps and plans held in the Mitchell and State Reference Library collections.*
- Land Titles Office  
*Select land title documents*
- Parish maps from the LPI parish Map Preservation Project
- Historic air photos spanning the period 1949 to 2004
- Dallas, M & Tuck, D. 2004. *Aboriginal Archaeological Assessment - Lots 21 & 22 in DP1070182, Sandy Beach North, NSW*. Unpublished report prepared by Mary Dallas Consulting Archaeologists for Sandy Shores Development Pty Ltd.

Elaine Robinson, a former owner of the property, also provided information (phone conversations 27 March 2007; 2 April 2007).

### 3.1 Regional Context

The greater Coffs Harbour district was once the sole domain of the *Gambaingirr* who utilised the resource rich coast and hinterland for thousands of years prior to the arrival of Europeans.<sup>1</sup>

Timber getters appear to have been the first Europeans to make incursions into the region and were established on the Bellinger River by the mid 1840s and throughout much of the North Coast by the 1870s. Coffs Harbour was inadvertently 'discovered' by wayward naval architect John Korff in 1847 and the townsite was reserved for settlement in the 1860s.<sup>2</sup>

Settlement in the Coffs region was limited and tentative at first – unlike other North Coast settlement areas such as Grafton on the Clarence, there was no major river system in the

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<sup>1</sup> NSW DEC 2005: 47; Dallas & Tuck 2004

<sup>2</sup> Yeates 1993; NSW Department of Planning 1989; *ADB* Volume 5 (1974). Pp 40-40.

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Coffs region to facilitate industry and transport. Much of the district remained unoccupied until the 1880s when commercial fishing, agriculture and coastal grazing commenced and the discovery of local goldfields (such as the Bucca and Orara fields) drew settlers to the area.<sup>3</sup>

### **Woolgoolga**

Timber getters and pastoralists pioneered the Woolgoolga area. The Weelgoolga (Woolgoolga) run was established in 1872, with the village established in the late 1870s and gazetted in 1888. By the 1890s the village was a 'timber town' supporting a wharf, sawmill and allied industries. Other early local industries related to pastoralism and agriculture and included cane farming (relatively unsuccessful), grazing, and banana farming (which took off in earnest and defined the district from the 1930s).<sup>4</sup>

### **3.2 Hearnese Lake/Sandy Beach**

The study area is situated to the south of Woolgoolga. It is separated from the Woolgoolga area by Hearnese Lake (formerly Double Crossing Lagoon) and its associated creek system.<sup>5</sup> A review of data relating to the European development of the study area indicates that use of the site has been restricted to coastal grazing and sandmining, with some minor activity relating to recreational use of the foreshore area (on the east) and the re-routing of the Pacific Highway (on the west).

#### Coastal Pastoralism

Early 20<sup>th</sup> century parish maps indicate that the 50-hectare study area was originally part of a larger holding of 174 acres (70 hectares) held by early Woolgoolga landholder and farmer William Redpath.<sup>6</sup>

#### *William Redpath*

William Redpath held the land (portion 85) south of the lake as a conditional lease (CL). He also held an additional 65-acre (26 hectares) block to the immediate west (portion 84), which fronted the former State Highway No.10 (now Graham Drive).

Census data (1891) and a map relating to the distances of householders from the Corindi school (1900) show that Redpath did not live on the land – rather, he lived on Redbank Creek

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<sup>3</sup> NSW Department of Planning 1989: 27

<sup>4</sup> Yeates 1984

<sup>5</sup> Hearnese Lake appears to be named after early district resident George Hearne. Hearne is noted in correspondence relating to schooling proposals for the Woolgoolga area in 1888. An 1888 sketch by District School Inspector A Lobban shows that he lived with his three children on the North Coast road; to the north of Double Crossing Creek, and to the northwest of Hearnese Lake – refer Yeates 1984: 27 – 29.

<sup>6</sup> Parish Map Preservation Project - Map of the Parish of Woolgoolga, County of Fitzroy (1914).

(and had one child).<sup>7</sup> Prior to Redpath's lease the 174 acres appears to have been unoccupied Crown Land.<sup>8</sup> Refer figures 4 & 5.



**Figure 4:**

**Map of the Parish of Woolgoolga 1904)**

The study area is shown in the centre of frame. A proposed railway (never built) is shown along the western margin of the study area as a dotted line.

(SLNSW ML Parish Maps - Woolgoolga)



**Figure 5:**

**Map of the Parish of Woolgoolga (1914)**

The study area is shown in the centre of frame. Both of William Redpath's land holdings are shown,

(LPI – Parish Map Preservation Project)

<sup>7</sup> Yeates 1984: 31; 61

<sup>8</sup> SLNSW ML Map of the Parish of Woolgoolga, County of Fitzroy (1904).



It is uncertain what the study area looked like in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as information in this regard is typically scarce. One source that does provide some indication of the nature of the property is a homestead allotment auction plan from 1911 that shows the land area immediately south of Redpath's holdings. This plan features some limited descriptions as to landscape and vegetation (refer **figures 6**).

The landscape of allotment 252 (immediately south of the study area) is described on the auction plan as 'undulating ridges' giving way to low level land with fair soil'. The foreshore is fringed with 'teatree, honeysuckle and oak' with the ridges dominated by 'oak, blackbutt and mahogany' and the low lands dominated by 'mahogany, oak and teatree' with some 'oak, blackbutt, ironbark and mahogany on the ridges rising to the west.'<sup>9</sup> It is perhaps reasonable to assume that the subject study area was similarly vegetated to allotment 252 at the southern end, while there was properly variation at the northern end of the study area due to the influence of Hearn's Lake.



**Figure 6:**

**Map of Four Homestead Selection Blocks in the Land District of Bellingen (1991)**

The study area is shown to the immediate north of block 252

(SLNSW Subdivision Plans - County Properties. CP: F8/9)

<sup>9</sup> SLNSW ML Subdivision Plans (County properties: Fitzroy) – CP: F8/9

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*Arthur Hay*

In May 1922, Arthur Hay of Woolgoolga received Redpath's former holding by way of a conditional sale. Land title documents indicate he paid £174 for the property.<sup>10</sup> When Hay purchased the property in the early 1920s he was already in possession of the 65-acre block to the immediate west, fronting the former state highway. Refer **figure 7**.

There appears to have been no significant development of the study area during the tenure of Redpath and Hayes and it is likely that the land was used solely for informal coastal grazing. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, much of the North Coast coastal heathland and grassland was subject to seasonal cattle grazing. Refer **figure 8 & 9**.

Arthur Hay held the property until 1957 when ownership was transferred to Eric Winston Walsh (Hotelier). The property was mortgaged to Ernest Rockley Goodenough (banana grower) in 1961. Bananas were grown on a small area of high ground near Graham Drive.

The coast area north of Coffs Harbour became attractive to developers in the 1960s and was bought up by Northwind Pty Ltd in 1964. Thereafter, the property was traded between a number of investment companies (including Town & Country Investments Pty Ltd and Orleans Investments Pty Ltd), before being purchased by the Robinson family in the period 1967 – 1969.<sup>11</sup>



**Figure 7:**

**Map of the Parish of Woolgoolga (1958)**

The subject land is shown in the ownership of Arthur Hay. The old state highway is visible to the west of the study area.

(LPI - Parish Map Preservation Project)

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<sup>10</sup> LTO Register Book Vol. 5615; Fol. 230.

<sup>11</sup> LTO Register Book Vol. 5615; Fol. 230.

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**Figure 8:**

**Air photo (1949)**

The study area is shown with a number of cleared areas about the southern arm of lake and in the southern portion of the property. The sand track (fisherman's track) leading from the latter settlement of Sandy Beach towards the lake entrance is also shown.

(SRNSW – Forestry Commission Air Image – Woolgoolga Set B1. Box 11/42)



**Figure 9:**

**Air Photo (1956)**

The study area is shown at approximately the time of the previous parish map.

The lake is clearly shown and the area appears undeveloped, though cleared across much of the property.

(Paterson Britton)

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*The Robinsons*

The Robinson family owned the study area property for most of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The family began acquiring land in the Coffs – Woolgoolga area from 1963 and obtained the subject land in 1967. By March 1969, Robert, Francis, Elaine and Pearl Robinson were official owners of the property as tenants in common in equal shares.<sup>12</sup>

When the Robinsons arrived in the late 1960s the property had been extensively cleared. Elaine Robinson described the holding as a 'sea of dead trees' - a consequence of the ringbarking land clearing practices of a previous development company owner.

Like some of the investment/development company owners before them in the early 1960s, the Robinsons intended to develop the property. Initial plans include the erection of 12 cabins and a botanical garden sited near the lake. While planning the development, the Robinsons erected a shed and nursery within the southeastern part of the property - the purpose of the nursery was to grow plants for the proposed botanical garden. The nursery was enclosed in a 6-foot fence and numerous trees were grown there including various palms.<sup>13</sup> Planning approval was slow (and ultimately fruitless) and in the interim the Robinsons leased the property to graziers. The property was kept clear (with the exception of select shade trees) through slashing and land clearing with a bulldozer. The slashing extended into Hearn's Lake when it was low or dry.<sup>14</sup>



**Figure 10:**

**Air Photo (1969)**

This image shows considerable changes to the margins of the study area.

The Pacific Highway realignment has been commenced (creating the properties western boundary); sandmining has commenced at sandy Beach; and roads of the sandy Beach subdivision have been cleared.

The land itself appears to have been further cleared. Major clearings exist about the southern arm of the lake and in the southern and southwestern portions of the study area.

(Paterson Britton)

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<sup>12</sup> LTO Register Book Vol. 5615; Fol. 230

<sup>13</sup> Elaine Robinson pers. comm; 27 March 2007

<sup>14</sup> Elaine Robinson pers. comm; 27 March 2007

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Ultimately, the Robinsons ran their own cattle on the property. Stock numbers during the Robinsons time varied but were in the order of 35 head per acre.<sup>15</sup>

The Robinsons did not live within the study area but rather rented in Woolgoolga. In 1979 they eventually built on the western part of the property (outside the study area) near the former State Highway (No.10) and local sawmill.

### The Locals

When the Robinsons arrived in the late 1960s there were two families resident on nearby reserve areas. To the northeast of the Robinson's property (and accessed via the fisherman's track that ran from Sandy Beach to the mouth of Hearn's Lake) were the Norris's who were encamped on a 25-acre government lease. The Norris's intended to build a van park in the area – this never eventuated and the Norris's accommodation (generally resided in by a caretaker called Norry) was later removed from the lease area.<sup>16</sup> The lease area appears to have been that shown as Reserved for Public recreation (R87962) in October 1970 on land title documentation.<sup>17</sup>

The other family in the area at the time, also resident on the external beachfront government reserve were an elderly couple called the Dunns. The Dunns lived in an unlined hut and were regularly visited by Aboriginal families from Corindi who with camped with them. Among the Corindi Aboriginal families who visited were the Perons The Dunns appear to have vacated the site in the 1970s and their hut was salvaged.<sup>18</sup> Figures 9 & 10 appear to show the Dunn's hut to the east of the southern end of the property, on the beach, near the bluff.

### Sandmining

Mineral sandmining took place at a number of coastal locations between Coffs Harbour and Woolgoolga between the 1940s & 1970s.<sup>19</sup> Historic aerial photography shows that mineral extraction from the primary dune system on the eastern margin of the study area occurred some time in the 1960s, with rehabilitation works underway by the early 1970s. Refer **figures 10 & 11**.

It is uncertain at this stage as to who conducted the mining at Sandy Beach - a number of companies are understood to have operated in the district in the period when the mining was undertaken. The most likely companies are probably *Rutile and Zircon (Rutile N-Z)* or *Cudgen R-Z* who worked extensively in the areas north of Coffs Harbour between 1967 and 1977.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Elaine Robinson pers. comm; 27 March 2007; 2 April 2007

<sup>16</sup> Elaine Robinson pers. comm.; 27 March 2007; 2 April 2007

<sup>17</sup> LTO Cancelled Title Vol. 15411 Fol. 249

<sup>18</sup> Elaine Robinson pers. comm.; 27 March 2007

<sup>19</sup> Morley 1981

<sup>20</sup> Morley 1981; Ernest Armstrong pers. Comm. 29 March 2007



Sandmining was restricted to the dune area between Sandy Beach and the southern arm of Hearn's Lake. Fine details of the workings are unknown but the operation is likely to have featured a standard dredge with a spiral classifier. The typical localised landscape changes wrought by sandmining at Sandy Beach included broadening and lowering of the frontal dune; landward displacement of the frontal dune; and removal of indigenous dune vegetation.



**Figure 11:**

**Air Photo (1974)**

This image shows that post-mining dune rehabilitation has commenced.

The majority of the of property has been cleared for grazing and few stands of trees exist. Remnant patches of vegetation are restricted to the elbow of the southern arm of the lake and the area northeast of the Sandy Beach settlement area.

(Paterson Britton)

The revegetation of mined areas typically involved the use of fast growing species that were not necessarily indigenous to the area. Bitou bush (imported from South Africa) was widely promoted and utilised sand mining revegetation species. Its widespread use is rued today and it is generally considered a major weed species, despite its dune stabilizing properties.

Elaine Robinson remembers the sandmining operation in the late 1960s and early 1970s. She states that the operation was supposed to be restricted to the beach area beyond her property but there was some surreptitious encroachment. The mining dredge dug under the common

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road (the former fisherman's access track, improved by the Norris's, and gravelled by the mining company) to such a degree that the road subsided in parts.<sup>21</sup>

#### Highway construction

In the late 1960s the realignment and re-routing of the Pacific Highway saw this major thoroughfare move from its former location well west of the study area to its current location. The establishment of the highway easement saw the Robinsons property effectively split in two and created the layout of the study area as it presents today. Once the easement was established, the study area became Lot 3 DP 248762 (64.08 hectares).<sup>22</sup>

Construction of the highway in its new location appears to have been undertaken in the late 1970s with works appearing well advanced in air photography from 1980. Communications and other service lines appear to have been installed along the western boundary of the property near the new highway at this time. Refer **figure 12**.



**Figure 12:**

#### **Air Photo (1980)**

This image shows a partly regenerated dune system; the primary grazing area in the southeast; and major works (possibly duplication) on the Pacific Highway.

As with previous air photo, much of the property is cleared. The Robinson's shed and nursery site is visible as a white rectangle in the bottom right of frame.

(Paterson Britton)

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<sup>21</sup> Elaine Robinson pers. comm.; 27 March 2007

<sup>22</sup> LTO Cancelled Title Vol. 15411; Fol. 249

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### Sandy Beach Village

The Sandy Beach subdivision was established in the mid 1970s with construction and infrastructure well underway in the early 1980s. Impacts on the study area, which resulted from the establishment of the subdivision, included the construction of a sewerage pumping station in the southwest corner of the property and two open drainage channels. The latter features drain the subdivision via pipes and open concrete drainage channels and run south-north across the study area towards Hearn's Lake. It is likely that over the past 20 years or so, these channels, which are now lined with casuarinas and the occasional paperbark, have altered the pre-existing drainage and vegetation regime of the area. Refer **figure 13**.



**Figure 13:**

**Air Photo (2002)**

The linear features running north-south between Sandy Beach settlement and the south arm of Hearn's Lake are the Council cut storm water drainage channels. The channels are lined with new growth, and the area where the channels discharge into the southern arm of the lake appears to be being revegetated – presumably a consequence of the modified drainage regime.

(Paterson Britton)

### Sandy Shores Developments

Lea Darby and Colleen Hosking purchased the property in 2004 and are the current property owners.<sup>23</sup> The property has been redefined as Lot 22 DP 1070182 and is the subject of the development plans currently being considered by the DoP. Peter Darby has managed the property as small scale grazing concern since the recent purchase.

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<sup>23</sup> LTO Title Search 22/1070182



## 4.0

## Heritage Listings Review

A number of relevant statutory and non-statutory heritage registers and databases were reviewed to determine if items of historical significance were listed within the subject land. These included:

### **State Heritage Register & Inventory**

The *State Heritage Register* (SHR) is a list of heritage items that have been assessed and acknowledged as having state heritage significance. The NSW Heritage Office maintains the register, and any development proposal that is likely to impact on items on the register generally requires NSW Heritage Council approval (s.60).

The *State Heritage Inventory* (SHI) lists items of both state and local heritage significance. Generally the listing of items on the SHI results from their inclusion in local and regional planning instruments or heritage studies.

### **Australian Heritage Database**

The AHD is a heritage database managed by the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Water Resources. It contains information about more than 20 000 natural, historic and Indigenous places and includes sites listed on the following registers:

- World Heritage List
- National Heritage List
- Commonwealth Heritage list
- Register of the National Estate.

### **Coffs Harbour LEP 2000 (amended)**

The Coffs Harbour LEP is a local government planning instrument that addresses heritage issues at *Part 4 – Heritage*. It lists heritage items within the LGA at *Schedule 5*.

### **Coffs Harbour Heritage Study (1998)**

EJE Town Planners conducted this shire-wide heritage study.

*There are no listed items or locations of European cultural heritage significance within the study area.*

## 5.0

## Survey

Archaeologist and heritage consultant Dan Tuck undertook a site inspection (survey) on behalf of MDCA on 21 February 2007. This involved an initial drive-over with the property owner to clearly determine property boundaries, and a subsequent walk over and recording of the subject land. The inspection was concerned with the identification of relics and of significant culturally modified landscapes.

### Setting

The study area consists of relatively low lying, flat to gently undulating land to the west of Sandy Beach. The dune system bordering the eastern property boundary is heavily modified (a result of sandmining activity) and is heavily colonised with weed species including bitou bush and lantana.

West of the dune the landscape is near flat and dominated by dense pasture grass interspersed with stands of woodland. The shallow southern arm of Hearn's Lake and its tributary Double Crossing Creek mark the northern margins of the property. The lake itself forms part of a localised wetland.

Soils within the study area vary from east to west grading from medium grey, loamy sand (immediately west of the dune system), to grey-black silty loam and alluvium.

The majority of the property is currently used for grazing with the exception of extensive fenced buffer zones around areas of extant vegetation and the lake.

Refer **figures 14 – 22**.

### Features

Built items and culturally modified landscapes recorded during the site inspection related to site development post-dating the 1960s and included:

- The flat, broad dune area on the eastern margin of the site characteristic of coastal sandmining activities and post-mining dune rehabilitation (**figure 14**)
- A cattle yarding area comprising a c.1970s post and rail race and ramp modified more recently with demountable steel yards (**figure 15**)
- A small dam (tank) dating to the c.1950s and re-excavated by the Robinsons in the c.1970s in the central part of the property
- Drainage works dating from the c.1970s/1980s establishment of the Sandy Beach subdivision to the immediate south of the study area (**figure 20**)

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These works comprise open concrete dish drains and concrete pipes that drain the Sandy Beach settlement area and discharge into the southern arm of Hearn's Lake via two machine excavated, casuarina lined, drainage channels. These works are understood to have been constructed by Council.

- A c.1980s sewerage pumping station (**figure 21**)
- A concrete post and barbed wire perimeter fence probably constructed in association with the c 1970s establishment of the Pacific Highway section bordering the western property boundary (**figure 22**).

*None of the items recorded could be defined as 'relics' under the NSW Heritage Act (1977) and no items or features of European cultural heritage significance were identified during the site inspection.*

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**Figure 15:**

Sandmining modified dune system on the eastern boundary of the study area (view S)

The scale bar marks the location of a former access track used by the sand miners.

(D. Tuck 21/2/07)



**Figure 14:**

Cattle Yard in the southeast corner of the study area (view NW)

The yard features part post and rail construction c.1960s with more recent portable metal additions.

(D. Tuck 21/2/07)



**Figure 16:**

Southern arm of Hearn's Lake (view NNW)

Until c.1900 this lake was known as Double Crossing Lagoon

(D. Tuck 21/2/07)

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**Figure 17:**

Pacific Highway – Double  
Crossing Creek Bridge

Highway section and  
bridge constructed in late  
1970s/early 1980s.

(D. Tuck 21/2/07)



**Figure 18:**

General view across the  
south central part of the  
study area (view NW)

(D. Tuck 21/2/07)



**Figure 19:**

General view across the  
southwestern part of the  
study area (view N)

(D. Tuck 21/2/07)

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**Figure 20:**

Casuarina lined drainage channel (view S)

This feature is one of two excavated open drains that take stormwater from Sandy Beach to Hearn's Lake.

(D. Tuck 21/2/07)



**Figure 21:**

Sewerage pumping station (view WNW)

An open drain and culvert can be seen in the foreground leading into the drainage channel shown in the image above.

(D. Tuck 21/2/07)



**Figure 22:**

Western (highway) boundary fence (view N)

This fence features concrete posts. Such posts were commonly used in the 1970s – but were little used before or thereafter.

(D. Tuck 21/2/07)

## 6.0

## Significance Assessment

### 6.1 Principles & Evaluation Criteria

“Heritage significance” and “cultural significance” are terms used to describe an item’s value or importance to our society. The Australian ICOMOS Burra Charter defines cultural significance as,

*Aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations*

This value may be contained in the fabric of the item, its setting and relationship to other items, the response that the item stimulates in those who value it now, or the meaning of that item to contemporary society.

Accurate assessment of the cultural significance of sites, places and items, is an essential component of the NSW heritage assessment and planning process. A clear determination of a site’s significance allows informed planning decisions to be made, in addition to ensuring that heritage values are maintained, enhanced, or at least minimally affected by development.

Assessments of significance are made by applying standard evaluation criteria. These criteria are as follows:

- (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)
- (b)** An item has strong or special associations with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW’ cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)
- (c)** An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area)
- (d)** An item has strong or special associations with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons
- (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)
- (f)** An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)
- (g)** An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW’s cultural or natural places; or cultural and natural environments.

The above criteria were established under Part 3A of the NSW Heritage Act 1977 (as amended in 1998) for the listing of items of environmental heritage (defined as ‘buildings,



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works, relics, moveable objects and precincts') which are of state heritage significance. These criteria are commonly used to assess all items of heritage significance whether state or local.

## 6.2 Assessment

**(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)**

The study area reflects changes to the landscape (land clearing and landscape modification) wrought by common coastal enterprises in grazing and sandmining. The study area is not remarkable in this respect as grazing and mining modified landscapes are replicated along much of the North Coast and are well represented in reserve areas such as the nearby Yuraygir National Park.

*The study area is not considered significant under this criterion*

**(b) An item has strong or special associations with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW' cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)**

The property has some association with identifiable figures early Woolgoolga farmer William Redpath and Coffs Harbour councillor Ronald Robinson (c.1979 – 1989) – both of whom have been in possession of the property. Despite their association, neither of these men lived within the study area and there is no significant tangible link (i.e.: relics, remnant structures &c) between these individuals and the property.

*The study area has low, local significance under this criterion*

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

*The study area has low, local significance under this criterion*

**(d) An item has strong or special associations with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons**

*The study is not considered significant under this criterion*

Community interest in the study area is predominantly environmental and reflects broader statewide concerns about the potential impact of ongoing coastal development.

**(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)**

The area has little potential to provide information that will significantly contribute to our greater understanding of the European cultural history and development of the study area.



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Significant relics or areas of historical archaeological potential have not been identified within the study area and the property features no extant structures or other items of cultural heritage significance. Features within the study area (such as the cattle yards, drains, fencelines and dam) date to the last 30 – 40 years and have low archaeological and cultural heritage value.

*The study is not considered significant under this criterion*

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

The study area with its landscape modified by grazing activity and sandmining is not uncommon or rare within the North Coast region – numerous examples of similar landscapes with a similar history exist within the extensive Yuraygir National Park system that runs from Red Rock (north of Woolgoolga) to Yamba.

*The study is not considered significant under this criterion*

**(g) An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural and natural environments.**

The study area is one of a number of former grazing and sandmining areas on the NSW North Coast. It is of a site type well represented on the north coast and demonstrated within numerous state parks including the aforementioned Yuraygir National Park.

*The study is not considered significant under this criterion*

Summary Statement of Significance

The study area is one of a numerous North Coast grazing properties that features a landscape modified by past use – namely land clearing and sandmining. While this landscape reflects the history of use of the place, it is a landscape that is common to the area and well represented locally and in other nearby contexts (such as the Yuraygir National Park).

The culturally modified landscape is the only manifestation of past use of the place. There has been no significant development within the study area and there are therefore no identifiable relics or locations of historical archaeological potential.

The common nature of the cultural modified landscape and the absence of tangible heritage items ensures that the site has low cultural heritage significance and sensitivity.

## 7.0

## Conclusions

### History

Historical data indicates:

- The study area has predominantly been utilised for coastal grazing - with sand mining occurring on its eastern margin in the late 1960s/early 1970s, and road construction occurring along the western margin in the 1970s/1980s.
- Grazing (particularly land clearing associated with the maintenance of open grazing areas and promotion of pasture) and mining, have altered the physical landscape.
- Evidence of past use is the modified landscape itself – which is replicated at other locations in nearby areas
- No residential structures (such as houses) are known to have been constructed within the study area.

### Heritage

Given the history of the site there are unlikely to be any other significant tangible physical traces of past use (relics).

- Historical research indicates that it is unlikely that relics of European cultural heritage significance exist within the study area.
- No items listed within statutory or non-statutory heritage lists, databases or schedules exist within the study area.
- No sites or items of European cultural heritage significance or areas of historical archaeological potential were identified within the study area during the site inspection.

The majority of built features on the site date to the last 30 years or so and include drainage features associated with the Sandy Beach subdivision development to the immediate south, and modern cattle management features (yards and fences).

### Significance

The study area has been assessed as having low cultural heritage significance and low archaeological potential and sensitivity.

## 8.0

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