

January 2005

Heritage Impact Assessment - Rezoning



Johnson Property Group Pty Ltd

Cooranbong Aerodrome, Avondale Road, Cooranbong

GRAHAM BROOKS AND ASSOCIATES PTY LTD
ARCHITECTS AND HERITAGE CONSULTANTS

Executive Summary

Graham Brooks and Associates Pty Ltd have been commissioned by Johnson Property Group Pty Ltd to advise and prepare this Heritage Impact Assessment of the Cooranbong Aerodrome in the context of potential rezoning and a concept master plan.

The property has been assessed to have some local community heritage value, primarily for social and historic association, in the use by the Adventist Aviation Association, established 1973, and their aircraft assisted volunteer country outreach and missionary programs. There are secondary levels of significance, such as the formation of the main strip by early Adventist community members in the late 1940s, and the development of a flying school in the late 1970s. The size and scale of the airstrips form distinctive landmarks when viewed from the air.

The proposal sets out the re-zoning of the site to allow for future development, and the concept master plan comprises pockets of developable areas set within retained areas and corridors of natural bushland. The airstrips have been incorporated into the future road patterns planned for the site and will remain prominent elements that contribute to the heritage nature of the place. Areas of open space allowing for specific heritage interpretation are planned into the scheme.

The following Heritage Impact Assessment concludes that the rezoning of the site for future development, as indicated on the Structure Plan and Indicative Development Plan prepared by Architectus in recent months, is acceptable in heritage terms.

Some recommendations have been identified to guide the development of the site-specific precinct master plan in order to build on the positives of the existing scheme and allow the project to be better integrated with its cultural heritage significance.

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1.0

Introduction

1.1 Context of the Report

This report has been prepared for Johnson Property Group Pty Ltd in the context of a proposal to rezone the existing Cooranbong Aerodrome site to allow for future re-development.

The site is currently not subject to any statutory heritage planning requirements but has been identified by NSW Heritage Office in recent correspondence to Lake Macquarie City Council as requiring a Heritage Assessment at a local level prior to any future development of the site.

The format of the report follows the standard format for the preparation of Heritage Impact documents as set out in the *NSW Heritage Manual*. The report has also been prepared in accordance with the guidelines of the *Burra Charter*.

Documentary research into the history and development of the property was undertaken to provide a contextual overview of the development of the site and area and facilitate the assessment of its significance. A site inspection was conducted in September 2004 to assess the existing fabric, and the contribution of the site to the immediate area. The resultant assessment of cultural heritage significance has been based on the insights gained by the historical research and the physical evidence of the property.

1.2 Documentary and Photographic Sources

Documentary material for this assessment relied primarily on research conducted in September 2004 at Avondale College, as well as the NSW Department of Lands. Historical sources used for the compilation of the background material include Milton Hook's *Avondale: Experiment on the Dora* and Michael Chamberlain's *Cooranbong, First Town in Lake Macquarie, 1826-1996*.

Contemporary photographs were taken in September 2004 by Bradley Hankey, specifically for the preparation of this report.

Acknowledgement goes to Dr Arthur Patrick for undertaking the initial research into the development of the site and identifying most of the primary source material.

1.3 Authorship

This Heritage Assessment has been prepared by Bradley Hankey and reviewed by Graham Brooks, Director, of Graham Brooks and Associates Pty Ltd, Architects and Heritage Consultants in January 2005.

1.4 Site Identification

Cooranbong Aerodrome is located within lands owned by Avondale College on the northern outskirts of the built township of Cooranbong. It is situated at the northern end of Avondale Road, to the western side of Avondale Primary School and High School being the terminus of Avondale Road.

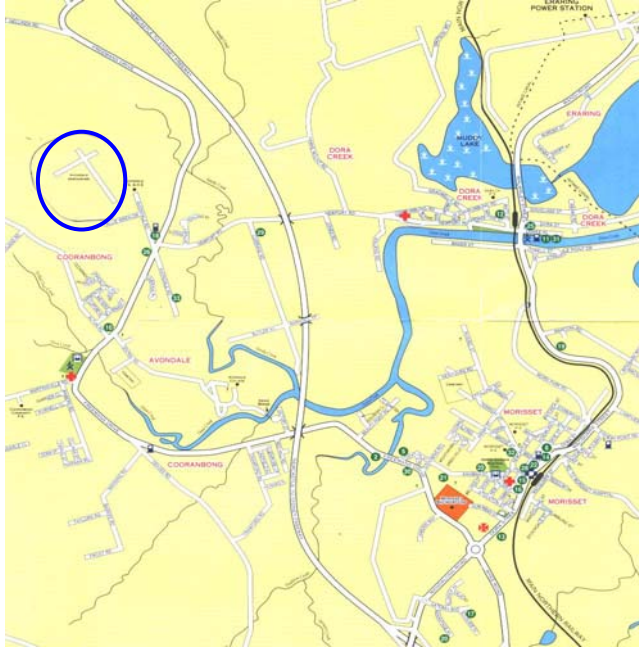


Figure 1
Site location map

2.0

Historical Background

The following history is based as much as possible on identifiable documentary evidence. In researching the subject, it is evident that some of the written texts and newspaper articles referring to the history of the Cooranbong airstrip are not consistent with the documentary evidence. In writing this Historical Background, some of the conjectural sources have been included and referenced, although attempts have been made to keep these sources to a minimum.

2.1 Historical development of Cooranbong

Note: Much of the early historical data included in this section is taken from the website www.lakemac.infohunt.nsw.gov.au. Information regarding the settlement of the Seventh-day Adventist community is taken from Hook.

A quick appraisal of the early history of Cooranbong illustrates lost prosperity and then quiet salvation:

Cooranbong was an important river port with up to ten ships trading here regularly for timber and agricultural produce. The town had a courthouse, shops, hotels and a ship yard. When the northern railway was coming, it was expected to pass through Cooranbong with a branch line to Newcastle and the main line to pass under the Gap as it went further north. The town's people saw the town as the administration centre of the south. But the line was eventually built through Morisset and over Dora Creek. This prevented the sailing ships from coming up the river and Cooranbong rapidly went into decline dropping the population from 700 to less than 200 in five years. About that time the Adventists arrived and moved the town a mile to the east ignoring the old town and to a large degree, the local people.¹

2.1.1 Settlement

'Cooranbong' is from an Aboriginal word meaning rocky bottom creek or water over rocks. The name was officially adopted with the opening of the Cooranbong Post office in 1866.

The area was often used by the Aboriginal people as a site for clashes between tribes over possession of available land.

The early land grant for the area was 2000 acres, in 1826, and was mostly left under the care of an overseer. A second adjoining grant was finally issued in 1837.

In 1861, seven lots ranging from 10 – 272 acres, mostly adjoining the western boundary of the early grant were sold and later became the area of the village centre. At which time families moved to the area and settlement slowly began.

¹ Sev-Ad News; Vol.2 No.7; July 1996

Portion 87 of the Parish was granted to Patrick Frederick Campbell in September 1851 and portion 40 was granted to Patrick O'Leary in August 1870. The main roads of present day Cooranbong were formed with Deposited Plan 3533 declared in May 1897 and situated in part of Portions 87 and 40.

Cattle and dairy farms were operating prior to settlement, and from the 1860s timber products were exported. The timber market slowed in the 1890s with the end of railway contracts and the national economic depression. Fishing and Shipbuilding were other early industries.

Cooranbong was by-passed by the Waratah to Homebush railway. This adversely affected the town's development, as Cooranbong began to rely on Morisset to fulfil transport needs.

In 1884 the population was about 700 but in 1891 only 200 people were shown on the census.

The Seventh-Day Adventists established a college and associated community settlement at Cooranbong in 1896.

2.1.2 Seventh-Day Adventists

The Australian Seventh-Day Adventist community was sparked with the coming of seven missionaries from California, USA in 1885. With growth came the desire for a missionary training centre similar to those contemporaneously being established in the USA.

Involved in the establishment of the Californian training school was William Clarence White and his mother, Ellen Gould White who also had experience at the Michigan school. They arrived in Australia in 1891. A temporary school was first established in St. Kilda, Melbourne in 1892.

The desires for a permanent site included a rural setting enabling a balanced program of mental, physical and spiritual development that was otherwise too distracting in a city environment. This school came to be the Avondale School for Christian Workers at Cooranbong, New South Wales. Its name changed to Australasian Missionary College in 1911 and, again to Avondale College in 1964.

Of many sites assessed in Victoria and New South Wales, the added bonus of the economic value of the deceased William Brett estate, Brettville, won out.

Situated to the east and north-east of the original Cooranbong village much of the estate lay north of the road which led to Maitland. The southern portion was bounded by Dora Creek and its tributary, Sandy Creek, which flowed into Lake Macquarie.²

The estate was purchased at Cooranbong in 1894, the official opening of the school being in 1897.

It was not a town of growth; Cooranbong was becoming synonymous with leaving ... There was a small Roman Catholic church languishing alongside a few headstones, and an even smaller Anglican church slumbering in bucolic calm. The two or three hotels stood all but abandoned, with the town's focal

² Hook; p.18

*point being the general store and a sandstone post office. Cooranbong, with a population of 200, was almost a ghost town.*³

In deciding on Cooranbong, Clarence White reasoned that parents would like to be near their children when they studied and planned an Adventist community around the school. The selling of estate property to do this would mean income for the college.

In ensuing years the College increased its lands to the south and the richer soils and borders of the creeks, and brought the total area to 1600 acres.

With much trials and tribulations the Seventh-day Adventist school and associated community was established in Cooranbong and grew to become synonymous with the town.

Avondale Post office was opened in 1910.

2.1.3 Avondale Road

Ellen Gould White's house, *Sunnyside*, was the first house built in Avondale Road, in the late 1890s. Later a house was built further south on the western side for WC White, and then later another for the gardener of Sunnyside. Two gates were located near Maitland Road as Avondale Road was a private Road at that time. Following the naming of the larger estate by the Union Conference as the Avondale Estate in January 1895, the road was named Avondale Road (previously Northern Road).⁴

2.2 Early aviation in Cooranbong

Between 1932-37 a few local aviation enthusiasts including Albert Harris built a Piertenpole, a high-wing monoplane, in the fowl houses and tool sheds in different parts of the town. The plane was made from crude parts including a ten-year-old, four-cylinder motorcycle engine; a homemade contraption mounted underneath the wing as an airspeed indicator, and barrow wheel tyres. The only instruments were an oil pressure gauge and a rev. counter.

The building of the plane was inspired by a visit in 1932 to Mascot aerodrome in Sydney and the viewing of the Clancy Brothers plane *Sky Baby*. (Bill and Allan Clancy were pioneers of private flying in NSW.) Blueprints of the plane were obtained from the Clancys and it took four years to complete, largely due to lack of finance and the Depression. The plane building crew started out as Harris, Mel Pengilley and Roy Leach, Leach later withdrawing and being replaced by Newton Lawson.⁵

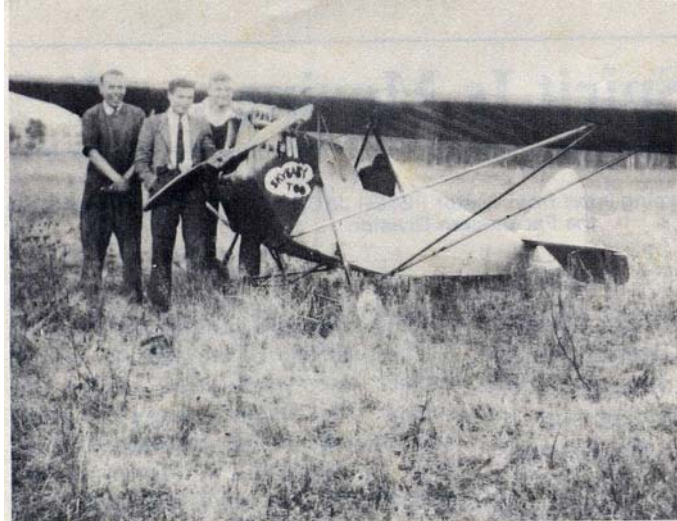
The plane, named *Sky Baby Too*, was first tested one morning in 1937. Albert Harris performed the flight and at the time did not hold a pilot's licence. Albert Harris was a printer by trade and had only received a few flying lessons totalling two hours and fifty minutes dual instruction. He had never flown solo.

³ Hook; p.15

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Miscellaneous typed account told by Mel Pengilley; Copy held Adventist Heritage Centre – confirmed, Australasian Record; December 21, 1981; p.11

The plane was launched in a paddock (Miller's paddock*) behind Alton Road, down a slope in order to build up enough speed for take off. The flight lasted three minutes and covered two miles before a landing in a flat field adjoining the Australasian Missionary College (opposite the dairy). There were a number of local keen onlookers who watched the take off and then with "a number of others attracted by the noise of the plane, followed in cars and on bicycles and horses. They reached the flat field in time to cheer him as he stepped down from the cockpit."⁶



Newton Lawson, Albert Harris and Sefton White in front of the *Sky Baby Too* in the college paddock after its first flight.

Figure 2

Sky Baby Too and Albert Harris (centre) with the first plane built by the aviation enthusiasts, 1937. (Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)

Some time after this event, the same enthusiasts made the first airstrip on the southern side of Cooranbong near the Post Office (near present day Martinsville Road). The site was bounded at one end by a dry creek and at the other end by telephone lines. It was 300 yards long. The Civil Aviation minimum requirements at that time were 500 yards. Despite not meeting regulations, the site is reported to have been used by the group until the outbreak of WWII.⁷

Sky Baby Too was damaged and repaired several times before coming to an end in an emergency landing in Lake Macquarie.

Harris and the other notable local enthusiast, Frank Wainman, put a second remodelled plane together. Intermediate tests with some crashes were performed on the first early Cooranbong strip, however the main tests for that plane was at Wamberal airstrip. Frank Wainman's first solo trip was during one of these tests at Wamberal and resulted in the wreck of the second plane.

Following the wreck of the second plane, Harris and Wainman bought and finished constructing a half finished plane from an amateur builder. During WWII they were forced to stay grounded.

* Miller's paddock is the area now comprising Meyers Crescent, off Alton Road.
(Miscellaneous typed account told by Mel Pengilley; Copy held Adventist Heritage Centre)

⁶ Gil Davidson; Cooranbong Gazette; April 1994; p. 8

⁷ Gil Davidson; Cooranbong Gazette; April 1994

2.3 Early land ownership of the site

The subject property was first brought under the provisions of the Real Property Act in Primary Application No.10410, in August 1897. The property was noted in the name of William Clarence White of Cooranbong, Clergyman.

The property consisted of 1443¾ acres, excepting three roads, and being part of the 1500 acres (Portion 87 of Parish) originally granted to Patrick Frederick Campbell by Crown Grant dated 22 September 1851. Campbell mortgaged the property soon after the Grant in September 1851. In November 1852 the property was conveyed from the mortgager, Horatio Brett to William Brett. From January 1866 up to the conveyance to White in August 1897, the property was in probate or trustees of the Will of William Brett.⁸

Portions of the property were progressively transferred from White between March 1899 and August 1900. The residue was transferred to the Australian Conference Association Limited in October 1912. The parcel of land containing the subject site being Lot 1 Section 4, Lot 11, 13 to 16 Section 5, and Lots 1 to 21, 25 to 33 and Lot 38 Section 6 in Deposited Plan 3533, was transferred to Metcalfe Hare of Cooranbong, Shipwright in August 1900.⁹

The property transferred to Hare was most of the northern portion of the Grant (north of Maitland Road – later Freemans Drive) and included at that stage the designation of the primary roads. Those roads were namely the northern extension of Avondale Road, the northern extension of Alton Road, and Northern Road running east west between the other two roads. [The roads were never physically laid out on the land and the subject airstrip was eventually laid out irrespective of the planned road pattern. The land designated as roads was eventually consolidated into the site in August 1978.¹⁰]

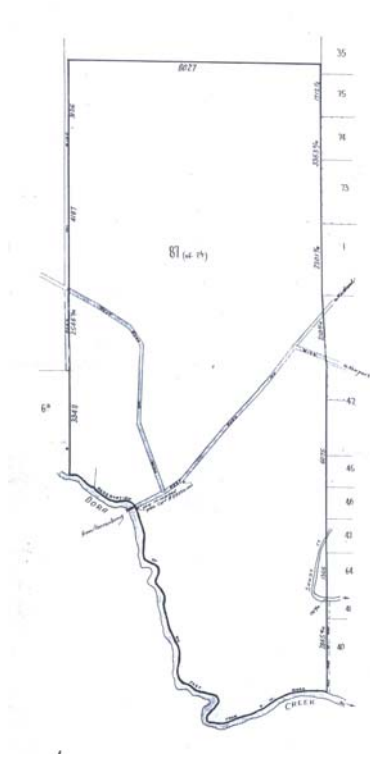
Hare further subdivided the land between March 1901 and December 1905 being mostly the southern portions along Alton Road and Maitland Road. The residue and majority of the land was transferred to Charles Walter Irwin in November 1907 being a total area of 664 acres 3 roods and 19¼ perches. There were a couple of transfers of smaller lots along Maitland Road in January 1911 and the property was transferred to Australasian Conference Association Limited in January 1911. [The Australasian Conference Association is the property trustee of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, including all property comprising the Avondale College Estate.] Most of the disparate College owned lands in Cooranbong, north and south, were brought under the one Certificate of Title in December 1951.¹¹

⁸ Primary Application No. 10410

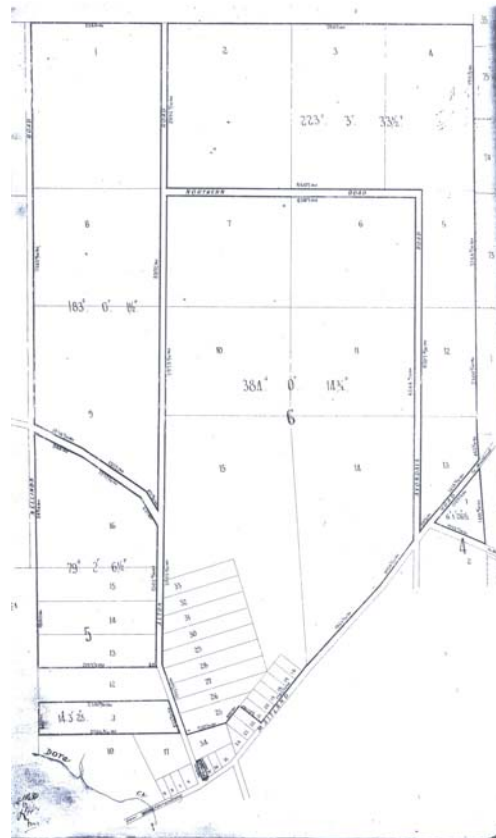
⁹ Certificate of Title, Volume 1238 Folio 38

¹⁰ CT Vol. 1360 Fol. 239, and CT Vol. 13541 Fol. 27

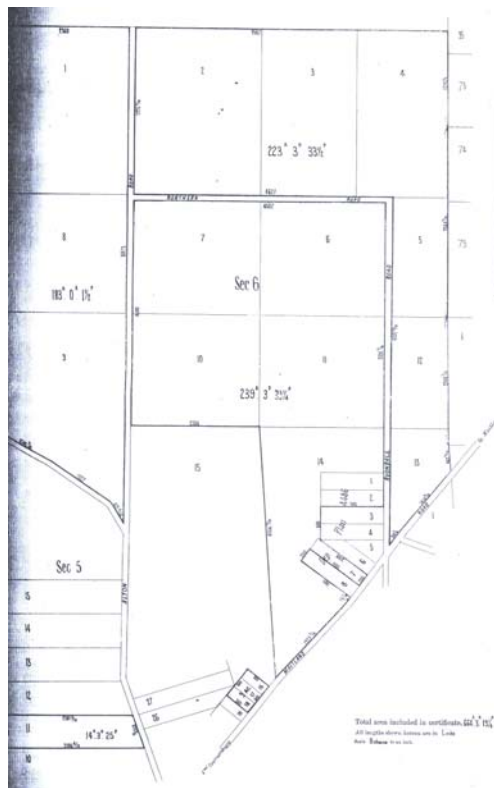
¹¹ CT Vol. 6423 Fol. 125



December 1897 (CT Vol. 1238 Fol. 38)



July 1901 (CT Vol. 1360 Fol. 239)



April 1908 (CT Vol. 1865 Fol. 153)



December 1951 (CT Vol. 6423 Fol. 125)

2.4 Historical development of Cooranbong Aerodrome

2.4.1 Clearing the land

The earliest record of the beginnings of the Cooranbong Aerodrome is set down in the Avondale College Board minutes for the meeting held 26 June 1946. The minute states:

A letter was received from Brethren Harris, Davis and Lantzke requesting permission to clear and prepare ground for an airstrip in the 600-acre back paddock.

The permission was granted and a letter, dated 26 June 1946, was sent advising Harris of the decision. The letter referred to the drawing up of a legal agreement and the permission to proceed (see appendix).

The matter was further discussed and resolved at a later board meeting, 18 September 1946, following a letter from the College solicitors regarding the airstrip. The minutes stated:

Reference was made to a letter from Allen Allen and Hemsley, regarding the legal aspect of matters pertaining to the use of the airstrip in the back section of the College property.

Voted. That we allow the airstrip to be used only in accordance with the advice of the Solicitors, namely, that no charge be made and that Messrs. Lantzke, Harris and Davis be required to sign a contract that the field will not be used in any commercial way.

Prior to this time the land was used for gathering firewood and cutting timber, especially pit props for use in the Hunter Valley coal mines.

The clearing of the heavily wooded natural bush land took much effort and six years in the spare time of the few locals who cleared it. [Some reports claim that at varying times the site was cleared single handed by either Albert Harris or Frank Wainman.] The main difficulty in clearing the land was the uprooting of the tree stumps. Methods applied for removing the stumps included grubbing, levering with a 'Forest Devil' instrument loaned by a nearby farmer, and blowing them out with gelignite. Bulldozers and graders were hired for the cleaning up and levelling of the surface.

[Note: There are many conflicting yet credible stories regarding the first official and unofficial flights using the strip and the first passengers accompanying these trips. The specific nature of the trips themselves are of dubious importance and as naturally expected would certainly have involved the makers of the strip and occurred within the timeframe of the strip's formation and accreditation. The most consistent account is set out below:]

"When [the strip] was 440 yards long Frank [Wainman] secretly landed on it in 1947 which was the year he received his unrestricted licence. When it was 550 yards long in 1949 the Civil Aviation Department approved it and [Wainman] made the first official landing on it on March 27, 1949. He continued to extend it to its present length (c. 1971) of 1,200 yards and he was the primary user of it for his garage business, joy flights and his aerial

*photography Avion views interest.*¹²

The third plane built by Harris and Wainman was short lived and, at around the time of the completion of the airstrip, it too was eventually wrecked. It was the last plane they would attempt to build themselves, Wainman preferring to hire from such places as the Newcastle Aero Club and Harris busying himself in his caravan making business.¹³

*"An air force man was asked ... to taxi the aircraft (third plane) on the strip. Though he was told not to take off, he did so, the plane stalled and finished in the trees on the side of the strip. This was the last home-made plane to use the Cooranbong strip."*¹⁴

Harris then lost interest in the strip and Wainman who had eventually become involved took over its development.¹⁵

In May 1952, the strip was again recognised by the Civil Aviation Department as a private landing ground.

*"The strip was 920 yards long by 100 yards wide. A better-prepared inner lane, fifty yards wide, was marked by kerosene tins cut into a triangular shape. At one end stood a windsock. Its classification as a private strip was denoted by a fifteen feet equilateral triangle, etched in the ground in white lime."*¹⁶

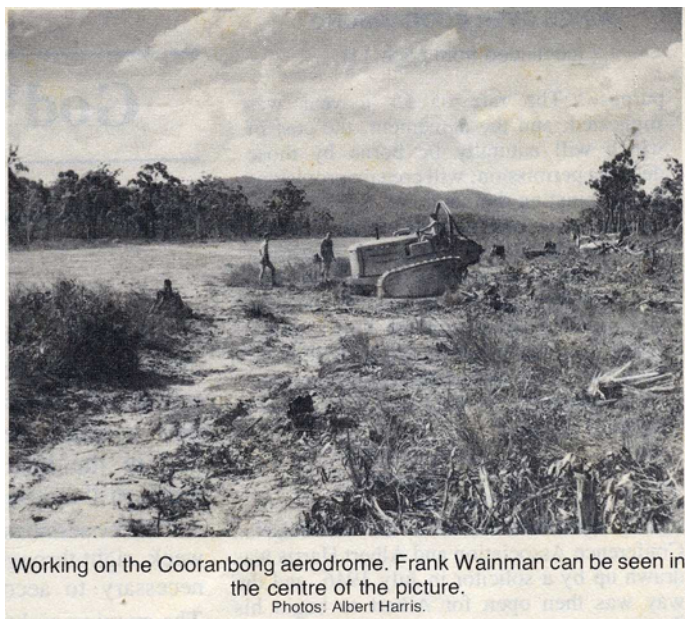


Figure 3

Clearing of the airstrip, date unknown (possibly 1949).
(Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)

¹² Account submitted to Cooranbong Gazette 27/9/04; Len Barnard (former AAA President for 10 years)

¹³ People; February 24, 1954; p.5

¹⁴ Sev-Ad News; Vol.9 No.3; April 2003

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Gil Davidson; Cooranbong Gazette; April 1994; p. 8



Figure 4

Cleared airstrip, date unknown (possibly 1949). – “Flying planes” are photomontage. (Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)



Figure 5

Cleared airstrip from the air, facing Avondale Road, date unknown (possibly 1949). (Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)

2.4.2 Early uses of the strip

The strip was used almost exclusively for private use by the small group of enthusiasts until the formation of the Adventist Aviation Association in the 1970s. More so than anyone else the site appears to have been used for the plausible excuses and enjoyment of Frank Wainman. His ‘work’ included assisting crashed planes, helping in emergencies, delivering freight, and photography, bringing Cooranbong and the Adventist community into favourable notice in leading newspapers.¹⁷

Frank Wainman was the local Garage proprietor. Some stories include the quick same day turn around of supplies using aircraft from Newcastle for otherwise stranded travellers. However, some of this practice is said to have been in place prior to the completion of the airstrip with articles being dropped close to the garage. Wainman was also an active community member on the ground.

At some time, cream from the dairy was also flown from Cooranbong to Newcastle.¹⁸

¹⁷ Australasian Record; 2/8/71; p.10

¹⁸ Australasian Record; 2/8/71; p.10

An air pageant was held on the airstrip in 1968, including several parachute drops. Noted at that time was the large dip in the middle of the strip that made for interesting landings and take offs.

Although almost exclusively private, the site was invariably used by others including the Royal Newcastle Aero Club and those seeking haven in poor weather conditions and mechanical trouble.

Frank Wainman died in the cockpit alongside Albert Harris at Kennetts Air Strip near Sydney in May 1971. At that time Harris had been living away from Cooranbong for sometime and the two men were in contact with each other infrequently. Albert Harris died at Concord Hospital, Sydney in November 1992. Davis and Lantzke had similarly moved away from Cooranbong and became deceased in recent decades.¹⁹

Whilst flight-assisted missions in Papua New Guinea were in operation with the *Andrew Stewart* since 1964, Cooranbong airstrip does not appear to have been used in this way until 1973 and the beginnings of the Adventist Aviation Association. (See Sections 2.4.3 and 2.4.4)



Figure 6

Advertisement for picnic day, 1967. Note: "FRANK WAINMAN'S PRIVATE AIRSTRIIP, COORANBONG". (Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)

¹⁹ Record; obituaries; various years

2.4.3 The Andrew Stewart

The *Andrew Stewart* was dedicated in Bankstown, Sydney, 27 June 1964 and was named after a Pastor who in 1907 went as a pioneer missionary to New Hebrides. The plane was for use by long term pastors associated with Cooranbong, as well as others, to serve the church in the South Pacific.

The idea for using a plane for such purpose was sparked by two local pastor Adventist missionaries in Papa New Guinea observing other mission organisations using aircraft in the region. Without the plane, many missions involved spending “days forcing their way through thick jungle, sinking knee-deep in mud, and wearily trudging over mountain peaks.”²⁰

After nine years of mission service in New Guinea, the *Andrew Stewart* was donated* to the North New South Wales Conference and used by the Adventist Aviation Association. The AAA replaced the *Andrew Stewart* soon after in September 1974 with a new larger six-seater Cessna 206 (*David Sibley*).²¹ (Other accounts say that the *Andrew Stewart* was purchased back from the Rex Aviation Company at \$10,990.²²)

The *Andrew Stewart* was traded and returned several more times through the hands of the Avondale Adventist community²³ and finally de-registered in 1986. In November 1987 the plane was erected as a memorial at “Sunnyside”, the Adventist Museum in Avondale Road, Cooranbong.



Figure 7

Dedication *Andrew Stewart*, Sydney 1964.

(Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)

²⁰ Record; February 24, 1990; p. 10

²¹ Conquering Wings in the Australian Outback; Flightwatch; Nov.-Dec. 1976; p.6

²² Australasian Record; 15/10/73; p.2

²³ Press release: Mary Stellmaker, Communications Secretary, Avondale Memorial Church



Figure 8

*Andrew Stewart in Laiagam,
Papua New Guinea.*
(Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)



Figure 9

*Andrew Stewart homecoming to
Cooranbong, 1981.*
(Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)



Figure 10

*Andrew Stewart mounted on
display at "Sunnyside" Museum.*
(Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)

2.4.4 Adventist Aviation Association

The Adventist Aviation Association inaugural general meeting was held on 1 April 1973. Its aim was to provide outreach programmes around Australia and Papua New Guinea.

The headquarters for the AAA were at Cooranbong, however, as more aircraft were added to the fleet some were stationed in outlying areas such as Lightning Ridge to cover the vast parishes of the outer areas.

The first hangar was built in 1974. At a similar time the fuel tank and electric pump were installed.²⁴

In March 1977, the places visited included Mungindi, Condobolin, and Lake Cargelligo. The visits mostly took place at weekends and relied much on volunteer layman (non-ordained) pilots.

The Adventist organisation North New South Wales Conference also undertook similar programmes. In the mid 1970s, some students were involved in flying out in mid-semester breaks to remote towns such as Mungindi, Walgett and Bourke in order to conduct Stop Smoking Seminars and Vacation Bible Schools.²⁵

In order for the airstrip to be used for regular organised flights, the strip was upgraded. These works included filling in a considerable dip and tarmacking the entire strip. "The little bush airstrip was rebuilt with voluntary labour"²⁶ and funding from Adventist Church sources.

Following the example of the AAA the North Queensland, South Queensland and Western Australian conferences also operated aircraft.

In 1990, the number of volunteer mission trips was recorded as approximately twenty trips per year.²⁷



Figure 11

Cooranbong Airstrip from a plane, circa 1975. Note northern end of Avondale Road and school site pre construction.

(Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)

²⁴ Account submitted to Cooranbong Gazette 27/9/04; Len Barnard (former AAA President for 10 years)

²⁵ Hook, p. 283

²⁶ Record; February 24, 1990; p.11

²⁷ Record; February 24, 1990; p.10



Figure 12

Airstrip from a plane looking north,
circa 1975.
(Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)



Figure 13

Flying over new hangar, circa 1975.
(Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)



Figure 14

Ground improvements, circa 1975.
(Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)

2.4.5 Avondale College pilot training programme and east-west runway

In the 1970s Avondale College made active steps to increasing its academic programme including a tertiary nursing program.

An aviation sub-committee report was submitted and recorded in the Avondale College Board minutes (77:46) in 1977 suggesting the viability of the pilot training programme proposed to begin in the second semester, 1977. In establishing the programme, the report further indicated the necessity to provide an east-west runway, a briefing room and to carry out upgrading of the airstrip. The purchase of a Cessna 150-type aircraft was also recommended for the training programme.

A board meeting was held on 16 March 1977, where the issue was further discussed. Permission was being sought from the Department of Transport for the construction of an east-west runway. Following the approval of the east-west runway, a licence would be required to operate the flying school. The minutes noted that facilities being the property of the North New South Wales Conference and the Adventist Aviation Association were extant on the southern side of the extant fuel bowser.

Later in 1977 a quotation was accepted for the construction of the proposed east-west runway at Cooranbong.²⁸

Early in 1978 the east-west runway was not yet constructed and it was voted to re-locate the runway, being 2700 feet, from 68° to 73°. The advantage was stated as increased safety, potential future expansion and simultaneous upgrading of the existing north-south runway to legalise night flying.²⁹

A Cessna 152 was donated to the Avondale Flying School and dedicated on 26 April 1978. The plane was named *John I. Tay*. [Tay was the first Seventh-day Adventist missionary to Pitcairn Island and Fiji.³⁰]

Authorisation was issued later in 1978, for the construction of Stage I of the Flying School facility at the College airstrip. The works comprised a building to house an Instructor's office, briefing room, storage rooms, and toilets and associated services and site works. The project was to be carried out by the College Applied Arts Department. The first flying instructor appointed was Pr Colin Winch.³¹

The earlier orthogonal road pattern, planned and designated circa 1901 but ignored by the laying out of the airstrip, and a potential hindrance to the desired transverse runway, was consolidated as College land in August 1978.

In 1979 flying training operations were extended to selected persons outside of the student group as opportunity arose, in particular during off-peak times. Also the use of the airstrip and tie-down facilities was extended to other selected private operators.

In 1980, the specific accommodation for the Flying School was constructed being a brick-veneer and tile building, situated on the edge of the aerodrome parking apron. The building included a large reception area, a simulator room/store room, briefing room and offices. A hangar for three aircraft was constructed behind the building and

²⁸ Board minutes 77:167

²⁹ Board minutes 78:21

³⁰ Hook, p.284

³¹ Board minutes 78:107

the apron to the aerodrome extended to connect to both new structures. At that time, the airport was reported as having two runways, one tar sealed runway and a gravel runway, both 2,800 feet long.³²

In 1990, The Flying School was reported as operating a commercial charter service including transportation for church personnel, as well as joy flights.³³

Not until 1993 did students from the flying school take part in College end of year graduations.³⁴

In 1995 the School took over the teaching of theory classes for Newcastle University's Bachelor of Science (Aviation) degree and became the place for all of the University's practical flying training. At that time Avondale owned five aircraft, cross-hired four aircraft and leased seven aircraft from Newcastle University. The amount of traffic movement at the Cooranbong strip was limited in response to local community concerns regarding increased aircraft noise. In response, some training is conducted at other airports.



Figure 15

Airstrip from plane from the north, circa 1980. Note: formation of east west runway.
(Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)

³² Australasian Record; 7/7/80; p.7

³³ Record; February 24, 1990; p.11

³⁴ Hook, p.284



Figure 16

East west runway from the west,
circa 1984.
(Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)



Figure 17

Two airstrips from the north, circa
1984.
(Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)



Figure 18

Two airstrips from the east, circa
1984. Note: adjacent school
development.
(Source: Adventist Heritage Centre)

2.4.6 Construction of the adjacent school

The Avondale Primary School and High School complex was first constructed in approximately 1981 at the very end of Avondale Road to the north east of the aerodrome buildings. The approach road to the aerodrome buildings was altered at that time from a curved road swinging around to the northern side and the car park to a more direct route and car park on the southern side. A garden area was constructed on the northern side replacing the former car park.

Until the construction of the school complex, the setting of the strip had largely been rural or natural bushland. Since that time, Cooranbong and the school complex have continued to grow at an expected steady pace.

Figure 19 Pictorial timeline of the airstrip development in the township context.



March **1954** aerial photograph (NSW Dept. of Lands)



August **1966** aerial photograph (NSW Dept. of Lands)



May **1975** aerial photograph (NSW Dept. of Lands)



April **1984** aerial photograph (NSW Dept. of Lands)

3.0

Description

3.1 The physical context

3.1.1 Location and surroundings

Cooranbong Aerodrome is located within lands owned by Avondale College on the northern-eastern outskirts of the built township of Cooranbong. It is situated at the northern end of Avondale Road, to the western side of the 1980s Avondale Primary School and High School being the terminus of Avondale Road.

Much of Avondale Road north of Freeman's Drive is adjoining large farming allotments dating from the early to mid twentieth century, with modest single story dwellings and outbuildings set on open land. The area just north of Freeman's Drive is more tightly developed.



Figure 20

Aerial photograph, October 2001.
(NSW Department of Lands)

3.1.2 “Sunnyside” and associated museum collections

“Sunnyside” was the original home of one of the more important founding members of Avondale College and the Seventh-Day Adventist community in Cooranbong, Ellen Gould White, and is a listed heritage item in Lake Macquarie Local Environmental Plan 2004. “Sunnyside” is currently used as a Seventh Day Adventist Museum and has good visitation rates. It is located on the eastern side at the southern end of Avondale Road, south of Freemans Drive.

Included in the grounds is an additional museum devoted to the work of the missionaries in Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific. Included as part of this collection, prominently displayed on the eastern wall, is a large photograph of the mission plane, the *Andrew Stewart* ‘in the field’.

Also located in the grounds, between the two buildings and visible from Avondale Road is the de-registered *Andrew Stewart*, mounted a moderate distance in the air on a single self-supporting column. A plaque commemorating the work of the *Andrew Stewart* is displayed on the column. The plaque reads:

VH-SDA
“ANDREW STEWART”

This Cessna 180 Aircraft was the first used by SDA Church in the South Pacific Division.

Purchased in 1964 initially for Mission support carrying Ministers, Doctors, medicines and various supplies around Papua/NG, it later saw service in Australia based at Lightning Ridge and at Cooranbong.

In mounting this Aircraft as a Static Display we acknowledge the benefit of Aircraft in the advancement of Evangelistic work of the Church.



Figure 21

Sunnyside Adventist Museum,
Avondale Road. Note: *Andrew Stewart*
mounted to right of building.



Figure 22

Andrew Stewart mounted on display at the Sunnyside Adventist Museum.



Figure 23

Plaque commemorating the *Andrew Stewart*.



Figure 24

Separate museum building housing the collection from the South Pacific missions. Located in the immediate vicinity south of the "Sunnyside" building and the *Andrew Stewart*.



Figure 25

Mural depicting the *Andrew Stewart* on location within the South Pacific collection.

3.2 Cooranbong Aerodrome

3.2.1 The site

To a great extent, the site is a square, approximately 600-acre, area of bushland at the northern end of the township. (Located within Area 1 as indicated on the Structure Plan prepared by Architectus. See Appendix 2.) Other than the approximate north-south and the approximate east-west runways, much of the surrounding development is concentrated to the south east of the site being, the Avondale Primary School and High School, and those properties at the northern end of Avondale Road.

Noted from the aerial photograph (2001), there is a clearing located to the north east and another clearing located to the south west. These clearings are thought to be either quarries or waste depositories. Walking and off-road vehicular tracks traverse the site, mostly in the area to the north west.

The aerodrome buildings and structures are located at the south eastern corner of the site accessed by Avondale Road.



Figure 26

Aerial photograph of the subject site, including the northern end of Avondale Road and the adjacent school precinct.
(NSW Dept of Lands, 2001)



Figure 27

Entry to the Cooranbong Aerodrome at the northern end of Avondale Road.



Figure 28

Facing north at the end of Avondale Road towards the school entry. Entry to the Aerodrome is to the left of the school entry.



Figure 29

Redundant driveway to hardstand on northern side of hangars.



Figure 30

Current entry drive to south of buildings.

3.2.2 The airstrips

There are two airstrips located on the site. The first is the north-south runway originating from the clearing established by the local aviation enthusiasts in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The second is the approximate east west runway formed in the late 1970s as part of the establishment of the flying school. Each of the runways has generous clearings of bush to the sides and at each end.

The north south runway is much altered from its early crude beginnings and is located to the eastern portion of the site. It is flat and tarmacked for its entire length. Gazing along its length the slight elevated ranges denote the distant horizon.

The east west runway runs almost through the centre of the site, from the lower lying land of the south west up to the north east. The runway is gravelled and meets the north south runway at the eastern end at approximately two-thirds the length of the north-south runway. A large grass clearing is located at the eastern side of the north south runway opposite the end of the east-west runway.

A triangular portion of bushland in the south western junction of the two strips has been 'thinned' in recent years, to facilitate the observation by the instructors on the ground situated at the aerodrome of students using the east west runway.



Figure 31

Looking along the western side of north south airstrip, facing north.

3.2.3 The buildings and structures

There are a few different buildings in the aerodrome grouping at the south eastern end of the main runway. These include three hangars, the flying school offices, demountable classrooms and a fuelling station. These buildings are predominantly located on an east-west axis, with the entry drive from Avondale Road located on the southern side, whilst the buildings address the hard stand on the northern side.

The hangars are typical post 1970, large span, gable roofed, steel framed, steel clad hangars. The centre hangar has had a later extension along the western side.

An undated plaque commemorating the efforts of the local aviation enthusiasts is displayed at the entry to the centre hangar. The plaque reads:

*IN COMMEMORATION OF
THE PIONEERS
OF COORANBONG AERODROME
ALBERT HARRIS
FRANK WAINMAN
AND OTHERS*

The 1980s single storey, brick and tile, gabled and skillion roofed flying school administrative building sits alongside the eastern end of the eastern hangar. A small car parking area is located to the south east of this building.

To the east of the flying school administrative building is a weatherboard demountable classroom building with a northern verandah. A similar building is located on the southern side of the entry drive.

A recently constructed storage facility is located on the northern side of the hard stand and an open air fuelling station is located within the northern side of the hard stand.

The Avondale College Flying School and Adventist Aviation Association continue to operate from the site.



Figure 32

Car-parking area at the end of driveway to the south east of the buildings.



Figure 33

Flying school administration building (foreground) and hangars in the background.



Figure 34

Demountable classroom building to the north of the car-parking area.



Figure 35

Demountable classroom, from the north.



Figure 36

The hangars, from the north east.



Figure 37

The three hangars, from the north.



Figure 38

Commemorative plaque to Frank Wainman and Albert Harris, adjacent to centre hangar.



Figure 39

Facing east towards former car-parking area. Note: flagpole.



Figure 40

Fuelling station and storage shed adjacent to the north south airstrip.



Figure 41

Fuelling station, from the south west.



Figure 42

Storage facility, from the south west.



Figure 43

Area south of hangars, facing east.



Figure 44

Rear of hangars, from the east.

4.0

Heritage Significance

4.1 Heritage Management Framework

The Heritage Management Framework outlines the procedures and expectations of the various heritage bodies. These influence the formulation of the conservation policies and options available, and are distinct from the requirements of the client. The Framework provides a number of constraints, some of which are statutory, including those from the Lake Macquarie City Council, while others, such as those from the National Trust, are merely advisory.

4.1.1 Australian Heritage Council

From 1st January 2004 a new heritage management regime became operative for National Heritage Places and Commonwealth Heritage Places within Australia and internationally. A new Australian Heritage Council replaced the former Australian Heritage Commission and the *Register of the National Estate* no longer has any formal role in the management of Commonwealth owned heritage places.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999*, (EPBC Act) was amended to include Aboriginal and Cultural Heritage values within the Act, in addition to the natural heritage values already protected.

Cooranbong Aerodrome is not subject to the EPBC Act.

4.1.2 NSW Heritage Council

Cooranbong Aerodrome has not been included on the State Heritage Register and is not currently subject to any conservation instrument under the *NSW Heritage Act*.

A letter from the NSW Heritage Office to Lake Macquarie City Council, dated 19 August 2004, outlines the NSW Heritage Office recent position regarding the site. The NSW HO assessed the site following a community nomination for listing on the State Heritage Register.

The Heritage Office found:

On the basis of the information submitted with the nomination ... the item does not meet the threshold of State heritage significance to fulfil the Heritage Council criteria for listing on the State Heritage Register at this stage. ...

And recommended:

... that Council assess the Cooranbong Airstrip for heritage listing on the LEP at the earliest available opportunity, and prior to decisions on the redevelopment, demolition, alterations or maintenance programs for the property. This assessment should be undertaken by taking into account the recommendations of a heritage assessment prepared by Council's heritage

adviser or another independent heritage consultant with appropriate qualifications and experience in accordance with the Heritage Council guidelines for Assessing Heritage Significance.

This report is based on an earlier independent Heritage Assessment of the site prepared by Graham Brooks & Associates Pty Ltd. The *Assessment of Heritage Significance* contained in this report is in strict accordance with the Heritage Council guidelines and acts to satisfy the Heritage Office recommendation.

4.1.3 Lake Macquarie City Council

This section is informed by the documents listed below. It specifically relates to European heritage and does not make reference to any aspects of natural, Indigenous or archaeological heritage.

- Lake Macquarie Local Environmental Plan 2004
- Lake Macquarie City Council Heritage Guidelines March 2004
- Lake Macquarie City Council Development Control Plan No.1 Part 2.4 Heritage, March 2004
- Lake Macquarie City Council Development Control Plan No.1 Part 4.10 – Cooranbong Area Plan – Seventh Day Adventist Community, March 2004
- Lake Macquarie City Council Lifestyle 2020 Strategy

Cooranbong Aerodrome is not listed in Schedule 4; Heritage items other than of indigenous origins and including potential archaeological sites of Lake Macquarie Local Environmental Plan 2004. Of the 18 items listed for Cooranbong, only one item is listed for Avondale Road being the house at No.27 “Sunnyside” and is noted as being of local significance. “Sunnyside” is located towards the southern end of Avondale Road and is not considered to be in the vicinity of Cooranbong Aerodrome.

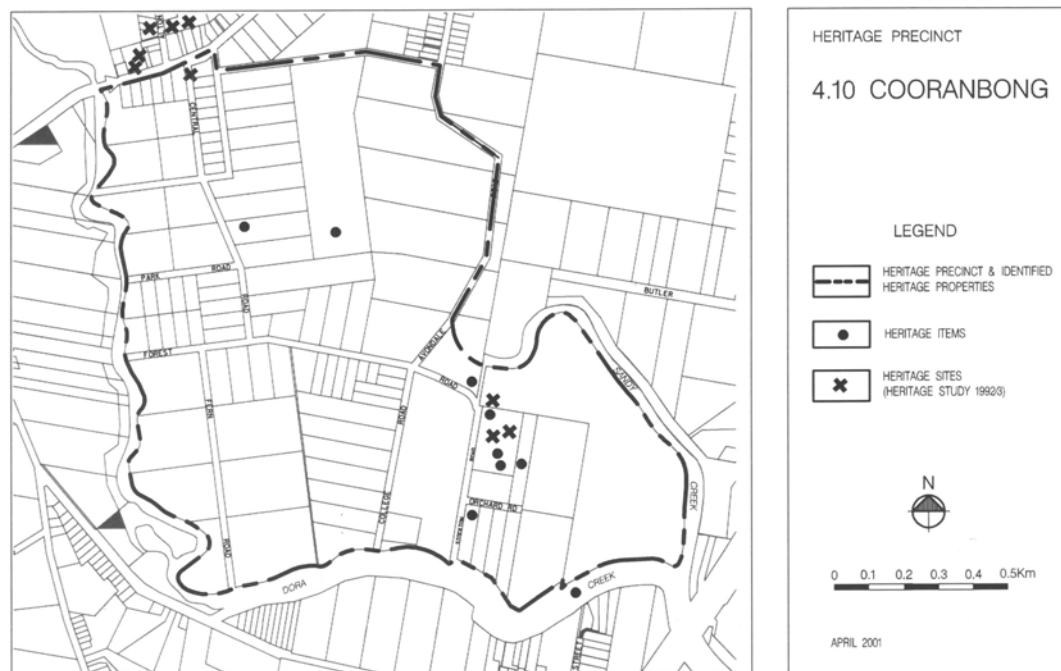
As such, Part 6 Heritage Provisions of *Lake Macquarie Local Environmental Plan 2004* do not apply to Cooranbong Aerodrome.

Lake Macquarie City Council Heritage Guidelines March 2004, Section 9.0, Supplementary list of potential heritage sites does not identify any potential sites in Cooranbong.

Whilst not identified as a potential (or provisional) heritage item, this Heritage Assessment report satisfies Lake Macquarie City Council DCP No. 1 Section 2.4.1 Performance Criteria P3 and Acceptable Solution A3.1 in identifying the level of significance of the property. Following their review of this report, Council may consider the level of significance warrants a Statement of Heritage Impact to accompany any future development proposals for the property (A3.2).

Lake Macquarie City Council Development Control Plan No.1 Part 4.10 – Cooranbong Area Plan – Seventh Day Adventist Community, March 2004 identifies the Cooranbong Heritage Precinct (Map 1). The area is confined to the southern section of Cooranbong primarily defined by Dora Creek, Sandy Creek, Avondale Road and Freemans Drive. Cooranbong Aerodrome is not located within the Cooranbong Heritage Precinct.

Map 1 – Cooranbong Heritage Precinct



Lake Macquarie City Council Lifestyle 2020 Strategy Section 6.2.8 notes both Belmont and Cooranbong as important to the economic development of the City.

Belmont Airport supplements the Region's domestic airport at Williamtown and Sydney's domestic and international airports. Cooranbong Airport provides for private air traffic and incorporates training facilities. They are vital to Lake Macquarie as components of this larger air movement system.

It is intended that development in proximity to these Airports will not prejudice the function or further development of airport related activity.

These comments are separate from the heritage issues related to the site, however the long term exclusively private nature of the Cooranbong strip is considered to limit any contribution to Lake Macquarie City and the general community.

4.1.4 National Trust of Australia (NSW)

The site has not been classified by the National Trust of Australia (NSW).

4.2 Assessment of Significance

Heritage' significance, or 'cultural' significance is a term used to describe an item's value of importance to our current society. Significance may be contained within the fabric of an item, in its setting and relationship with other items, in historical records that allow us to understand it in terms of its contemporary context and in the response that the item stimulates in those who value it.

The following Assessment of Significance has been compiled using the NSW State Heritage Register Criteria and the Heritage Assessment guide of the *NSW Heritage*

Manual. The assessment encompasses the four values (historic, aesthetic, social and scientific significance) identified in the Australian ICOMOS *Burra Charter*.

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)

The north south Cooranbong airstrip was the second strip formed by and for the personal aviation pursuits of a select few locals between 1946-49, namely amateur plane builder, Albert Harris. From the early 1950s to 1971 the strip was almost exclusively for the private use of the other primary local aviation enthusiast, Frank Wainman. Between 1971 and 1973 the site was dormant after the death of Wainman. The strip at that time remained largely undeveloped as an unsealed clearing. Whilst the events regarding the development of the strip leading up to the formation of the Adventist Aviation Association in 1973 are of local historical interest, they did not aid greatly in the historical development of the town or the people, and were primarily for the personal hobby of mostly one man, and at best of a few local hobbyists. The specific benefits attained by Frank Wainman in his garage supplies and aerial photography businesses are considered to not have had the required level of impact on the development of the community or place. These early historical points of interest are of dubious importance in the cultural history of the local area and do not meet the criterion for historical significance.

The availability of the strip in 1973 is of historical significance in providing opportunity for the establishment of the AAA.

Criterion (b)

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 (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The formation of the airstrip is associated with the early local enthusiasts who formed it and their personal aviation pursuits, most notably Albert Harris and Frank Wainman. Frank Wainman is noted as having been a pro-active community member and was eager at any opportunity as a good samaritan to use his flying abilities or his truck to assist the local community. These links are of some intangible significance but are mostly of dubious importance (as demonstrated in criterion (a) above) and do not meet the criterion. Frank Wainman and his flying stories were often captured in the local and general print media, a large collection of which is held in the Adventist Heritage Centre.

The development of the Cooranbong north-south airstrip, and more so the questioning of its use following the death of its user and caretaker, is of some historical significance to the local community in its association with providing the opportunity for the establishment of the Adventist Aviation Association in 1973. The AAA was formed and based in Cooranbong. The AAA was first within the Adventist community to provide aircraft-assisted volunteer outreach and missionary programs within New South Wales, and provided an example for other States to follow in ensuing years.

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 long axial nature of the north south clearing, and in recent decades the addition of the east west runway, as viewed from the air, are distinctive landmarks set in the bushland at the northern end of the Cooranbong township and are subsequent to the scale required for their purpose. These are not readily discernable or appreciated from the ground plain. Otherwise, the site has little distinguishable aesthetic features.

The north south strip has been much altered over time, especially with the extensive upgrading in the late 1970s and retains little of its original rustic imagery.

As such, the site has little aesthetic significance, other than from the air.

Criterion (d)

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

The use of the north south strip has some social significance to the people of Cooranbong and the Seventh-day Adventist community to varying degrees and levels of importance:

- some association to the older generations who attended the picnic days and aerial displays hosted by Frank Wainman in the 1960s.
- some intangible connection with the sounds experienced by the widespread community over the years, of the aircraft arriving, departing and flying over the area.
- some to the people involved in the aircraft-assisted volunteer outreach and missionary programs conducted by the Adventist Aviation Association and the North New South Wales (Adventist) Conference since 1973. The specific social/community activities were conducted elsewhere either in Cooranbong or the outreach towns and the strip is mostly important for amenity reasons.
- some to the people involved in the Avondale College flying school and associated programs since 1979.

The buildings on the site are only for amenity reasons and are considered of little to no significance.

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).

The airstrips, buildings and structures are built to typical standards and yield little research potential. As such, the item does not meet the criterion.

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 buildings and their functions on the site are not rare.

Whilst this is the only private airstrip in the local area, the size of the area is such that another airstrip is simply not warranted. As such, it is unreasonable to apply the guideline that it is the only example of its type in the area to constitute rarity.

Should the aerodrome be closed in the near future, there are other airfields within the Local Government Area that will allow aircraft-assisted outreach and missionary programs to continue to be provided, as well as the other AAA stations elsewhere in NSW. Similarly, there are other locations within the LGA to facilitate the flying school programs. There is much documentary evidence to demonstrate the functions and processes of these uses held in the Adventist Heritage Centre.

As such, the item does not meet the criterion.

Criterion (g)

An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments; or a class of the local area's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments.

The site is typical of a private country airstrip. Although it may be a good example it is not outstanding and is not considered to be of a level of importance to meet the criterion.

4.3 Statement of Significance

The north south airstrip at Cooranbong Aerodrome is primarily of social significance to the local community and more so the Adventist community, as the home base for the aircraft-assisted volunteer outreach and missionary programs conducted by the Adventist Aviation Association and the North New South Wales (Adventist) Conference since 1973. The site will also have some social significance to those associated with the Avondale College flying school operating since 1979; and to the general community who will have heard the increasing aircraft activity over the township, mostly since the mid 1970s, and; to those who may have attended the occasional aerial picnic days held on the site in the 1960s.

The north south strip is of some historic association to the two community members who formed the early strip in the late 1940s and early 1950s - Albert Harris and Frank Wainman. More importantly, of historic significance and historic association to the local community, is the availability of the vacant strip in 1973 and the establishment of the Adventist Aviation Association.

The airstrips are of some aesthetic distinction in the general landscape as viewed from the air.

Other than the north south strip, much of the other developments and structure on the site are of little significance or importance.

The site is of no research or technical significance and is not of important rarity or representative value.

4.4 Essential Conservation Philosophy

The Cooranbong Aerodrome site is noted as being of some heritage significance to the local community. This significance is directly related to the form of the north south airstrip and the Adventist community based aviation activities on the site since 1973. The other associated elements on the site are of little heritage value.

In the event that the Avondale College and Adventist community should cease operations on the site and seek to dispose of the land, the form of the north south strip identifiable in the evolving cultural landscape should be retained and conserved as part of any future proposals for the site.

An appropriate level of recording of the activities on the site should be undertaken prior to any future developments, and an appropriate level of interpretation of the heritage significance of the place incorporated in the planning of future developments for the site.

5.0

Assessment of Heritage Impact

5.1 The proposal

This Assessment of Heritage Impact is specifically related to an application for the rezoning of the Cooranbong Aerodrome site as part of a larger structure plan for future development of the northern portions of the Cooranbong Township.

The Structure Plan has been prepared by Architectus Pty Ltd in October 2004 and is included in the Appendix to this report. Essentially the Structure Plan includes:

1. Retained areas and corridors of natural bush landscape and associated creek lines.
2. Establishing pockets of developable land and associated open space within the overall retained natural areas noted above.
3. Retaining and enhancing existing key roads, whilst providing for sympathetic new roads within the developable areas and identifying potential road links to integrate to the greater community road network.
4. The subject north south airstrip in its entire length has been incorporated into the future road pattern. Parts of the east west airstrip, minus an extension of natural bush corridor, have also been incorporated. A main open space is incorporated at the junction of the two existing airstrips.

An Indicative Development Plan has been prepared based on the Structure Plan and includes further recommendations from Graham Brooks and Associates. The Indicative Development Plan is included in the Appendix to this report.

5.2 Assessment of Impact

5.2.1 Positive Heritage Impacts of the Proposal

The positive heritage impacts of the proposal are:

1. The form of the north south airstrip is to be retained and incorporated as the major element in the cultural landscape within the future planning of the site.
2. The form of the east west airstrip as a secondary element is incorporated into the planning of the site. Whilst this element is considered of low heritage significance its consideration in the master planning is welcomed.
3. The location of the main public open space within these evolving cultural landscape elements allows for greater interpretation opportunities and public appreciation of the earlier layers of the site.

4. Much of the greater bushland context is maintained.
5. Access from Avondale Road is maintained.

5.2.2 Negative Heritage Impacts of the Proposal

The negative heritage impacts of the proposal are:

1. The aviation activities on the site will cease.
2. The aircraft noise within the township will be reduced.

5.3 Summary of Heritage Impact

Should the North New South Wales Adventist community dispose of the land, and Adventist aviation activities are no longer conducted on the site, then the rezoning of the site allowing for continued yet sympathetic cultural evolution of the landscape of an otherwise redundant site is generally considered acceptable in heritage terms.

In the context of the current Structure Plan and Indicative Development Plan, it is considered that the heritage significance of the site can be conserved within such a scheme (see Section 4.4, Essential Conservation Philosophy), provided an appropriate level of interpretation is incorporated into future development approvals.

6.0

Conclusions and recommendations

The following conclusions and recommendations arise from the foregoing analysis:

6.1 Suggestions for future master planning

Following rezoning approval, an appropriate Heritage Interpretation Plan, to be assessed by Council, should be prepared as part of a more detailed Master Plan for the site. This Heritage Interpretation Plan should consider and build on the following suggestions:

- Visual demarcation to illustrate the length and location of the former north south airstrip element in the built landscape, either at the end or running the length of the roadway. This could possibly include the narrowing of the street/roadway, flagpoles, street plantings etc.
- The new street running the length of the former north south airstrip element should be wider than the surrounding proposed streets in the built landscape. We suggest a wide boulevard possibly including a significant median strip and/or wide verges.
- Placement and content of appropriate signage within the public open spaces along the street/roadway, illustrating the evolution and heritage significance of the airstrip and aerodrome. This could include reference to external locations such as the Heritage Adventist Centre or Sunnyside Museum for further information.
- Careful naming of certain streets to commemorate former uses and associations within the former aerodrome within the Area 1 former airstrip precinct.

6.2 Suggested procedural actions

- In the context of the current Structure Plan and Indicative Development Plan, Council should have no concerns on heritage grounds with rezoning the Cooranbong Aerodrome site for future development.
- In the event the rezoning application is supported by Council and the land rezoned to enable residential development and conservation (natural) activities on the site, then the first two bullet points in Section 6.1 would need to be documented in any future development application and the second two bullet points could be the subject of development consent conditions issued by the Council to any future development application.

7.0

Bibliography and References

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Chamberlain, Michael; *Cooranbong, First Town in Lake Macquarie: 1826-1996*; 1997

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Lake Macquarie City Council; *Development Control Plan No. 1*; 2004

Lake Macquarie City Council; *Heritage Guidelines*; March 2004

Lake Macquarie City Council; *Lifestyle 2020 Strategy*

Lake Macquarie City Council; *Local Environmental Plan 2004*

Patrick, Dr Arthur; *The history of the Cooranbong Airstrip: A preliminary survey*; 23 September 2004 (Unpublished)

www.lakemac.infohunt.nsw.gov.au

Plus various materials held by the Adventist Heritage Centre, Avondale College, Cooranbong.

8.0

Appendix

8.1 Permission letter to A. Harris, 1946

8.2 Architectus Proposed Structure Plan

8.3 Architectus Indicative Development Plan