ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

Australian Catholic University Campus, Strathfield

December 2011

Local Government Area:	Strathfield
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Summary

This report presents an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) for HASSELL who are preparing a Concept Plan Application on behalf of the Australian Catholic University (ACU) for the future development of the ACU Strathfield Campus, at Strathfield New South Wales. The project meets the assessment criteria under Part 3A of the Environment and Planning and Assessment Act 1979. The Director General's requirements were issued on 17 February 2011, and identify Aboriginal Heritage as a key issue.

An extensive historical disturbance footprint extends across the entire Subject Area, involving cut, fill and continual disturbance, meaning the Subject Area is unlikely to contain any Aboriginal archaeological deposits. The geotechnical survey conducted over the Subject Area indicates the absence of an A soil horizon.

An archaeological survey was conducted on the 17 July 2011 with Renee Regal (Niche Environment and Heritage) and a representative of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council. The survey confirmed the degree of disturbance across the Subject Area and did not identify any Aboriginal Objects or Potential Archaeological Deposits. No Aboriginal archaeological values or areas of scientific significance were identified.

There is an absence of landscape elements within the Subject Area, such as remnant vegetation, undisturbed terrain, focal points and resources that would have been suitable for exploitation by past Aboriginal people. The Subject Area is also located within a continuous urban environment in an area with limited recorded Aboriginal Objects and therefore has little to contribute to the regional cultural heritage landscape values.

The proposed works will not impact on any known Aboriginal archaeological or cultural values within the Subject Area.

The draft report was provided to the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council and the Yalbalinga Indigenous Education Unit A response was received from Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council on 8 December 2011. Indicating support for the report findings. A copy of their response can be found in the Appendix.

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Introduction

This report presents an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) for HASSELL who are preparing a Concept Plan Application on behalf of the Australian Catholic University (ACU) for proposed future development of the ACU's Strathfield Campus, at Strathfield New South Wales. The project, a proposed educational facility estimated at 30 million dollars, meets the assessment criteria under Part 3A of the Environment and Planning and Assessment Act NSW 1979. The Director General's requirements were issued on 17 February 2011 and identify Aboriginal Heritage as a key issue, with the following guidance for assessment:

The EA shall address Aboriginal Heritage in accordance with the Draft Guidelines for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment and Community Consultation 2005.

The objective of this Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment is to address these requirements; to identify the nature and extent of Aboriginal cultural heritage values associated with the Subject Area; and to provide an assessment of potential impacts to these values from the proposed Master Plan. In addition this Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment provides advice on the conservation of the heritage values, and recommendations for amelioration of potential impacts. For the purposes of this report Aboriginal cultural heritage includes archaeological objects (as defined by the *National Parks and Wildlife Act* 1974 NSW), cultural landscapes and contemporary Aboriginal cultural values.

This Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment has been prepared by Clare Anderson and Jamie Reeves of Niche Environment and Heritage. The site inspection was conducted by James Smith (Metropolitan LALC) and Renee Regal (Niche Environment and Heritage).

Location

The site is located in Strathfield, within the inner west of metropolitan Sydney and the Cumberland Plains physiographic region and is 14km west of the Sydney Central Business District. As described by Hassel (2010, p. 2), the campus is approximately 1.6 kilometres from the Strathfield town centre within an established residential area (Figure 1). The campus comprises Lot 11 DP869042 (179 Albert Road), Lot 12 DP1058289 (167-169 Albert Road) and Lot 12 DP1095571 (2 Edgar Street). The Subject Area is approximately 5 hectares in area.

Barker Road is the primary street frontage to the main part of Strathfield Campus. Albert Road is the primary frontage to the north eastern portion and also provides a secondary egress point from the main/western campus.

Several residential and education properties separate the main/western part of the campus from a small section to the north east, upon which a single building is situated.

Surface parking currently surrounds campus buildings. The primary parking area lies along the eastern extent of the site adjacent to the Albert Road access point, with access and egress to Barker Road and secondary egress to Albert Road. Additional parking areas are located in the western corner of the main/western campus and within the north eastern portion of the campus.

A large open space area is located in the north western portion of the site between the campus buildings and the adjacent school.

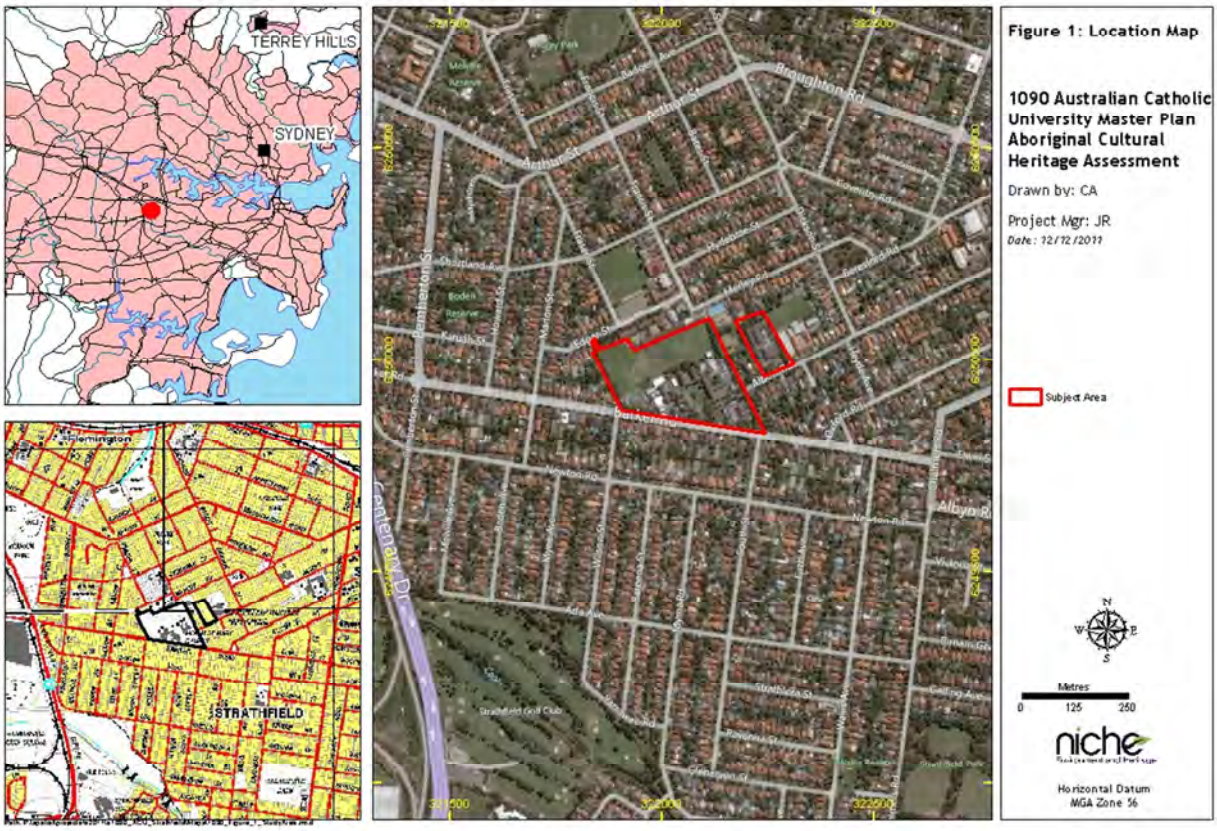

Figure 1: Location Map

Proposed Works

The proposed works are described in the Request for General Director's Requirements (Hassell 2010) and the Revised Concept Plan (6 December 2011) as follows:

> Australian Catholic University have been investigating opportunities to consolidate activities between its two Sydney campuses at Strathfield and North Sydney. This process has involved consideration of projected student numbers and distribution of activities between the two campuses. Part of this process has involved preparation of a master plan for the Strathfield campus based on projected growth rates. This master plan provides a conceptual framework for the Strathfield campus, including rationalised built form, parking and access arrangements within an improved and integrated public domain structure.

The key features of the master plan are summarised below.

- ❒ Four new development precincts within the campus to provide new library and education buildings.
- ❒ New underground parking area in the north west of the Campus and two basement parking areas with a total minimum of 674 spaces.

- Consolidation of main site access and egress into four gates along Barker Road. Staff only access off Edgar Street.
- New access point from Barker Road at the south eastern corner of the campus involving relocating existing traffic signals to form a new intersection with South Street (opposite).
- Refined internal circulation within the main Campus providing clear separation between service vehicle access, short term parking spaces, internal bus stop and set-down locations and car parking access.
- Improved site landscaping and public domain including new pedestrian corridors, open space and landscape improvements.
- New pedestrian links throughout the campus to improve internal site linkages to the north eastern campus and preserve opportunities for further consolidation of the campus in the future.

The precincts include the following:

- Precinct 1: Southeastern (library and learnings common)
- ·Precinct 2: Eastern (educational uses, lecture theatres & research space)
- Precinct 3: Western (educational uses, laboratories & arts studio)
- Precinct 4: Central (reuse of existing library, storage, campus facilities and educational uses)

Car parking breakdown is as follows:

- North western main car park (underground) – 282 spaces
- South eastern precinct (underground to library and learnings common) – 174 spaces
- Main accessway (in between gates 2 and 3) – 19 spaces
- Clancy building – 41 spaces

The current Concept Plan is provided in Figure 2.

The development of a Concept Plan is not an activity that in and of itself can cause harm to Aboriginal objects. Therefore the following impact assessment assumes harm could occur to objects as a result of activities conducted pursuant to the Concept Plan. The type of activities undertaken pursuant to the Concept Plan would include impacts such as excavation and land filling.

Figure 2: Concept Plan for Proposed Works

Aims

This Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment aims to:

- Identify the cultural and archaeological values that may be present at the Australian Catholic University, Strathfield;
- Determine the effect the proposal will have on the identified values; and,
- Propose measures to conserve heritage values through avoidance or amelioration of potential impacts to the Aboriginal cultural heritage and heritage values identified, if any.

Methods

The broad methodology for this project is outlined below:

- Undertake a background review of relevant literature and conduct searches of relevant heritage databases, including the Office of Environment (OEH)and Heritage Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS);
- Consult with the Aboriginal community via the Metropolitan LALC;
- Undertake a preliminary archaeological survey of the assessment area;
- Record any cultural and/or archaeological sites that occur in the assessment area;
- Assess the cultural heritage significance of the individual sites and the assessment area in accordance with the *Burra Charter* (Australia ICOMOS 1999) and OEH *Draft Guidelines for the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment and Community Consultation 2005* (DECC 2005) and *Standards and Guidelines Kit* (NPWS 1997);
- Determine the potential impacts from the proposal to the cultural heritage value of individual sites, the cultural landscape as a whole, and contemporary cultural values;
- Provide recommendations to avoid impacts and conserve values, or to mitigate impacts where avoidance is not possible.

The site inspection involved walking over the subject area on foot, and inspecting areas of exposure for the presence of Aboriginal objects on the ground surface.

A handheld GPS was used to record the area that was walked over, and the location of features and finds. A 12 megapixel digital camera was used to photograph finds and features, and the general landscape setting.

Consultation with the Aboriginal Community

There has been a long history of land use within the Subject Area. Project information was supplied to the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) and a site inspection conducted on 17 July 2011 with James Smith, a representative of the LALC. Comments regarding Aboriginal cultural heritage value were noted during the field survey, where appropriate. The representative noted the high degree of disturbance and indicated that the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council would have no objections to the project on the grounds that Aboriginal Objects would not have survived the past land use.

A phone call was logged with Yalbalinga, the Indigenous Education Unit at the Australian Catholic University's Strathfield Campus. Nereda White, the Director of the program, was not available at the time but may have possible input to the project in regards to the contemporary cultural values of the Strathfield Campus as they relate to the past and present Indigenous staff and students.

A copy of the draft report was provided to Metropolitan LALC Council and the Yalbalinga Indigenous Education Unit. A response was received from Metropolitan LALC on 8 December 2011 stating:

"The MLALC have reviewed the Aboriginal and Cultural Heritage Assessment report and concur with Niche Environment & Heritage Consultant findings.

If any further Aboriginal cultural materials[are] discovered during any stage of the proposed construction, all work is to cease immediately and MLALC and NSW National Parks & Wildlife are to be notified immediately."

Landscape Context

The assessment area is situated in a highly urbanised landscape and is characterised by gently undulating topography within the Cumberland Plain physiographic region. The highly urbanised landscape makes it difficult to identify natural watercourses within a 300 m radius of the Subject Area.

Geology, Soils and Topography

The Sydney 1:100 000 Geological Sheet suggests that the Subject Area is situated in the contact zone between Ashfield Shale and Bringelly Shale (Herbert 1983). There are no exposed rock outcrops within the Subject Area, indicating an absence of suitable raw materials for the manufacture of stone tools and the absence of Aboriginal site types such as rock art, engravings and occupation shelters.

The subject area is mapped as the Blacktown soil landscape (Hazelton & Tille 1990, p. 27-30, Figure 3). The Blacktown landscape consists of gently undulating rises on Wianamatta Group shale. These rises consist of local relief to 30 m, and slopes that are usually less then 5% gradient. The soils consist of generally shallow podzolic soils, with loams overlying clay and shale bedrock. Hazelton and Tille (1990, p. 28-29) describe the soils, in stratigraphic order from the surface as:

1. Friable greyish brown loam (topsoil) with occasional fine gravel and charcoal, abundant roots
2. Hardsetting brown clay loam (subsoil) with platy ironstone and gravel fragments, rare organic material
3. Strongly pedal, mottled brown, light clay (subsoil)

These soils have formed in situ from the weathering of the parent shales and therefore, in an undisturbed context, are likely to have preserved, through burial or incorporation into the soil matrix, any Aboriginal stone artefacts that have been discarded on the landscape in the past (Hazelton & Tille 1990, p. 28-30). Aboriginal artefacts, if present, would be most likely to occur in the topsoil or at the transition/boundary of the topsoil and underlying brown clay subsoil.

A geotechnical study of the Subject Area was conducted by Coffey Geotechnic in June 2011 and provides a more detailed picture of the conditions of soil within the Subject Area. Previous borehole drilling programs and a geotechnical pedestrian survey were used to develop a preliminary geotechnical model across the Subject Area.

The previous borehole program is described as five boreholes, drilled to a maximum depth of 6 m (Coffey Geotechnics 2011, p. 4). The boreholes encountered silty and sandy clay residual soils overlying fine to medium grained sandstone with some shale layers. Boreholes drilled in the south-west carpark and the eastern end of the site near Block G encountered up to 1m depth of existing fill (Coffey Geotechnics 2011, p. 4).

The pedestrian survey describes:

- The sports fields in the western portion of the campus as having been formed through cut in the southern and western portion of the fields while the northern portions were believed to be natural ground or relatively shallow fill;
- The southwest carpark as occurring on natural ground or relatively shallow fill, though borehole logs indicate fill up to 1m.
- The south east carpark as having been constructed predominantly through cut

Based on the above data, the preliminary geotechnical model divides the Subject area into geotechnical units, including a Fill Unit (from surface to up to 1 m in depth) and a Residual Soil unit with the depth of top of this unit ranging from 0.1 m to 1 m in depth and ranging in thickness from 0.4 m to 1 m. Of note the model describes the residual soil as a silty and sandy clay of medium to high plasticity and very hard to stiff consistency indicating that the artefact-bearing deposits (A Horizon) are absent.

Ecology and cultural heritage

The study area is a heavily urbanised environment and there is an absence of remnant native vegetation. Trees bearing evidence of Aboriginal cultural modification will therefore not occur within the Subject Area and it is unlikely that vegetation within the Subject Area will be of significance to contemporary Aboriginal people as an example or link between the landscape of today and that inhabited by their ancestors.

Disturbance and Modification

The Subject Area has a long history of past occupation, use and disturbance and a detailed heritage study of the Subject Area has been prepared by Weir Phillips to inform the development of the Master Plan (Weir Phillips 2010). Salient points relevant to ground disturbance have been extracted and are presented below.

The first land grant to include the current Subject area was made to the Chaplain of St James' Church, Sydney on 30 June 1823. The grant (Church Glebe) consisted of 450 acres and extended south from Parramatta Road to Liverpool Road. The land reverted to the Crown in

1826 and was subsequently subdivided into 256 and 283 acres respectively with Barker Road marking the division between the grants. The northern portion, upon which the current Subject Area is situated, was granted to Joseph Hyde Potts. The Potts grant in Strathfield is not known to have been subdivided again until the 1880s. It is unclear how the land was used during this period. The adjacent land to the east of the Church Glebe, known as Redmire (Redmyre) was granted to James Wilshire around the same time as Church Glebe. In 1886 the land was offered for sale. Development of the area was relatively contained (Weir Phillips 2010, p. 7)

An increase in subdivisions, particularly of the Redmire Estates, the construction of Redmire Station in 1877 and the creation of the Municipality of Strathfield was followed by an increase in the number of dwellings and residents within the suburb of Strathfield (Weir Phillips 2010, p. 8).

By the mid 1880s, the Subject Area comprised 3 acres and 29 perches of land and was owned by Messrs A Thomson, F.L Barker and John Hinchcliff. A villa, Mount Royal, was constructed in 1886-1888. This building now forms the oldest section of the existing Edmund Rice Building on the ACU Campus (Weir Phillips 2010, p. 10).

A ballroom and billiard room was added to Mount Royal some time between the initial construction and1888. An early undated photo shows Mount Royal in association with two additional mansions; the Ardross and Ovalau. Ardross, had been built for the Morgan family in 1885. Both the Ardross and Ovalau have since been demolished (Weir Phillips 2010).

Ownership of Mount Royal passed to Hinchcliff's son and father in law death in 1895. The building was subsequently leased to school teacher W. Stewart Page in 1896 who opened a private college. The grounds included tennis courts and cricket grounds (Weir Phillips 2010).

The property was vacant in 1899 and was subsequently occupied by a number of tenants, including Sir George Reid in the year prior his appointment as Prime Minister in 1904, until its purchase by the Christian Brothers in late 1907 (Weir Phillips 2010).

Mount Royal was subsequently renamed Mount Saint Mary with training of teachers commencing in 1908. A new wing was added to the original Mount Royal villa and a Gothic chapel added to this in 1909. The new wing involved the removal of a conservatory. Three handball courts were constructed. Three acres and 29 perches of land were acquired from Mr. J.H Potts of Hyde Brae to extend the playing fields to Edgar Street (Weir Phillips 2010).

Alterations and extensions to the ballroom and billiard room were made in 1912.

Adjacent properties Ovalau and Ardross were purchased in 1917 and 1918. .Ardross was renamed St Joseph's. It was partially destroyed by fire in the 1960s and later demolished (Weir Phillips 2010).

In 1922 a temporary building was constructed and was used for approximately 40 years, first as a temporary classroom and dormitory and subsequently as a recreation centre and auditorium. Three new handball courts were constructed (Weir Phillips 2010).

In 1925, a new chapel was constructed to accommodate an increase in students and staff (Weir Phillips 2010).

Mount Royal's gates were moved in 1925 after an agreement was reached between the Christian Brothers and Strathfield Council to incorporate a portion of Albert Road into the campus grounds whilst provided the Council with land to connect Albert and Barker Roads. A portion of Albert Road was later closed to form Mount Royal Reserve (Weir Phillips 2010)

A new classroom and dormitory building, now known as the Mullens Building, was completed in 1931. A two story brick arcade was also built to link the chapel, Mullen's building (Juniorate) and villa together (Weir Phillips 2010).

The 1943 aerial imagery shows a Stable Blocks, now the Arts Centre, a wing to the western side of the villa, two sets of handball courts and a swimming pool. It is unclear when the swimming pool was constructed (Weir Phillips 2010).

In 1959, a residential block was built. A brick extension was constructed in 1994 to form what is now the Brother Stewart Library (Weir Phillips 2010).

St. Edmund's Building was constructed from 1961, to provide for a new hall, science rooms, library, common room and oratory (Weir Phillips 2010, p. 24)

The Christian Brothers sold 5.8 hectares to the Diocese of Sydney. The Australian Catholic University took official responsibility for the property in 1993. Gleeson Auditorium and Lecture Rooms were added to the Mullens Building in 1995. The Biomechanics Building was constructed in 2005 (Weir Phillips 2010, p. 25)

Summary of Past Disturbance and Modification

A summary of relevant past ground disturbance works are provided below:

- Native vegetation has been cleared;
- Construction involving cut and fill of multi-storey buildings, single storey buildings, car parks, sports fields, swimming pool, stables, handball courts and fences
- Gardening, plantings and maintenance of gardens and sports fields over a hundred year period;

- ❒ Roads and pedestrian access;
- ❒ Buried infrastructure: sewers, pipes and cables.

The disturbance footprint extends across the entire Subject Area, involves cut, fill and continual disturbance, and is unlikely to contain any Aboriginal archaeological deposits. This interpretation of the above evidence is supported by the preliminary geotechnical model across the Subject Area and observations from the geotechnical survey which indicate the absence of an A soil horizon.

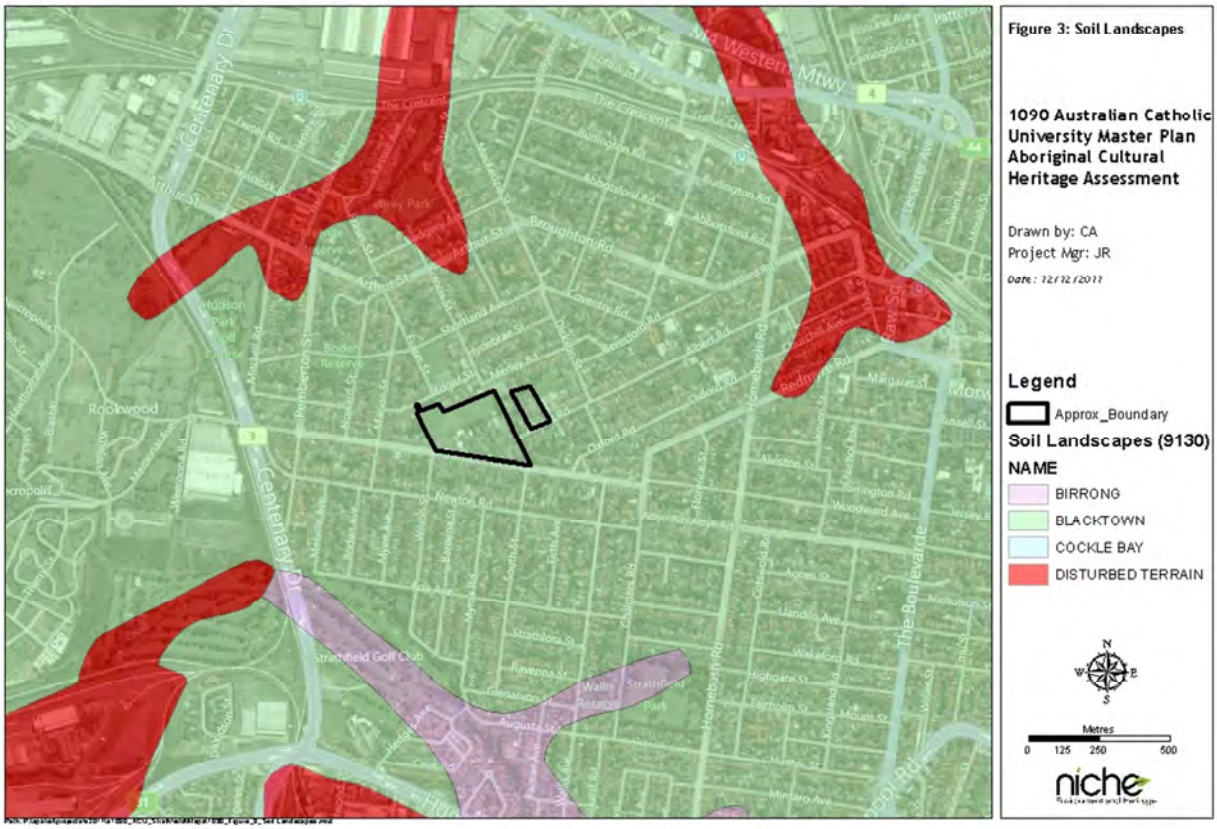

Figure 3: Soil Landscapes

Aboriginal History

Strathfield forms part of the Sydney Basin and is within the Cumberland Plain physiographic region. The earliest dated evidence of Aboriginal occupation in the Sydney Basin area was recovered from sandy deposits associated with Parramatta River, approximately 10 km north-west of the Subject Area. Calibrated radiocarbon dates support Aboriginal occupation in this area around 30,735 (±407) years (Jo McDonald Cultural Heritage Management 2005, pp. 107-125). An older but contested date of 41 700 (±3000) years was acquired at Cranebook Terrace near Penrith (Nanson, Young & Stockton 1987, p. 77; Stockton & Nanson 2004). The oldest dated sites within rockshelters were recovered at Shaw Creek K2 to the west of the Nepean River at 17,800 years and Darling Mills SF2 at West Pennant Hills at 11,800 years (Attenbrow 2010, p. 22)

The Cumberland Plain has been subject to a high number of archaeological studies which have provided material evidence of the period prior European contact. Despite this, there have only been a small number of Aboriginal archaeological studies within the Strathfield Municipality and archaeological evidence of past Aboriginal land use is limited.

References and material evidence of past Aboriginal ways of life within the Strathfield includes C.A Henderson's note (Henderson 1923):

'On the Redmire Estate was a leaning tree with native bear tracks upon it. It stood about one hundred yards from the present Strathfield Council Chambers'.

This tree, though no longer standing, has been interpreted as a culturally modified tree – either one that has been scarred in the process of gathering resources from the tree or one that has been carved for ceremonial purpose.

A stone axe, currently held in the Australian Museum, was also recovered from the local area. There is some dispute as to whether the axe originated from Homebush Bay, Parramatta River 1927 or was located in the Concord area by a Mr. Morgan in the 1950s (Geological Sites - Especially around Sydney n.d.).

An artefact scatter was recorded by Michael Guider approximately 2.7km to the north-west of the Subject Area in Rookwood Cemetery.

All three of these site types are typical to the Cumberland Plain. In some cases it has been argued that the Strathfield area was a less attractive area for Aboriginal occupation given the absence of rockshelters and platforms and the close proximity to estuary resources along the Parramatta (Strathfield District Historical Society 2007). This argument, however, is not supported by a range of open artefact scatters across the wider Cumberland Plain which are often found in association with creek lines irrespective of the presence or absence of rock outcropping. It is more probable that the relative lack of material evidence within the Strathfield area relates to the intensity of early urban development. Historical and

archaeological sources across the wider region can supplement our understanding of Aboriginal history in the area.

Contact to 1899

The earliest recorded contact between Aboriginal people near Strathfield occurred at Breakfast Point, Mortlake on 5 February 1788. Lieutenant William Bradley RN described the encounter:

'At daylight having a guard of marines proceeded to the upper part of the harbour again, passed several natives in the caves as we went up and on the shore near the place we left beads and some other things, who followed us along the rocks calling to us. We landed to cook our breakfast on the opposite shore to them. We made signs for them to come over and waved green boughs. Soon after seven of them came over in two canoes and landed near our boats. They left their spears in the canoes and came to us. We tied beads etc. about them and left them our fire to dress mussels which they went about as soon as we put off'.

In 1789, an outbreak of smallpox resulted in the death of what is estimated to be over half of the Sydney Aboriginal population (Attenbrow 2010, p. 22). The upheaval caused to traditional practices and use of lands from increasing European settlement makes it difficult to accurately map relationships between Aboriginal people in the Sydney region at contact and in the immediate decades after contact.

It is generally understood that local descent groups or clans associated with one another. Individuals from different clans may have fished, hunted and gathered together and may have been related to one another through marriage. These 'land-using groups' are referred to as communities or bands (Attenbrow 2010, p. 22). Languages and dialects varied across the region and people who spoke a specific language are said to fall within a language group. There have been a number of attempts to map language and local clan groups within the Sydney region (eg. (Tindale 1974).The Wangal clan roughly accords with the Strathfield area and is referred to by Philip as having occupied the south side of the harbour from the cove adjoining the settlement to Rose Hill. Hunter states that the Wanne extended along the south side of the harbour from Long Cove (Darling Harbour) to Rose Hill with the local inhabitants called Parramatta (Attenbrow 2010, p. 26). The Subject Area is roughly interpreted to fall within the area of the Darug language group (Attenbrow 2010, p. 34).

In 1791, Balloderry, thought to be a Wallumettagal man, speared a convict at Homebush Bay (then known as the Flats) in retaliation for the destruction of his canoe. It is argued that Wallumetegal, whose territory was north of the Parramatta River and Wanngal, had close ties.

Bennelong is a notable figure of the Wangal clan and has been the focus of an array of narratives in Australian history (Dortins 2009; Fullagar 2009; Smith 2009). Bennelong and Colbee were captured in 1789 by Governor Phillip as a means to learn the language and customs of the local population. Bennelong escaped after six months but continued contact with Phillip, subsequently spearing Phillip in the shoulder. Good relations were maintained

with Phillip after this event. In 1790, Bennelong was given a hut on what is now the site of the Sydney Opera House. In 1792 Bennelong travelled to England, returning in 1795 during a period of illness. In his later years, Bennelong participated in battles, and officiated at the last recorded initiation ceremony in Port Jackson in 1797. He died at Kissing Point on 3 January 1813, and was buried in the orchard of the brewer James Squire. As a member of the Wangal clan, Bennelong is theorised to have travelled through the area which now forms the Strathfield Municipality (Strathfield District Historical Society 2007).

Stories of hostility between Aboriginal people and European settlers during the early 1800s were published by C.A Henderson in 1923:

'During the early part of the nineteenth century the blacks were hostile about this neighbourhood, as was shown by Thomas Rose, a grandson of that Thomas Rose who had a grant of land between the Redmire grant and where the railway now is. Rose told Henderson that his grandmother was speared by a black-fellow in front of her dwelling. Fortunately the spear struck her stay-busk, which no doubt spared her life'.

In 1804, Governor King reported to the British Government that:

"the natives in the settlements (between Parramatta and Sydney) had been very quiet and in a great measure domesticated".

The last recorded sighting of an Aboriginal corroboree along the banks of the Parramatta River occurred in January 1805.

Aboriginal people remained living in parts of Sydney region, for example in Mulgoa Valley, Emu Plains, Plumpton, La Perouse, Salt Pan Creek and Campbelltown and in some cases on traditional lands until at least the mid 1800s. Despite the destructive nature of events in the 18th and 19th century, the Aboriginal community maintained a sense of cohesion and identity (Attenbrow 2010, p. 22).

20th Century

Indigenous figures associated with the Strathfield area include Monica Clare. Monica Clare's story provides an example of the wide geographical nature and diversity of Aboriginal social networks in the 19th century and the effects of social policy on Aboriginal family. The Australian Women Biographic Entry for Monica Clare (1924-1973) states that (Kovacic and Henningham, p. 2006):

Monica Clare was born in 1924, at Dareel on the Mooni River, ten miles from Mungindi, on the Queensland side of the border. Her father was an Aboriginal shearer, and her mother, surnamed Scott, was English. The family roamed the upper Darling until Monica's mother died in childbirth in c.1926. In 1931 Monica and her younger brother were taken by Child Welfare. They were first taken to 'Yasmar' Home, Haberfield, in Sydney, and then to ***Redmyre Road, Strathfield****, where Monica learned domestic service. By 1932 the two children were fostered to Bill and Stella Woodbury who owned a farm near Spencer on the lower Hawkesbury River. During World War Two, Monica worked as a servant, in the W.D.& H.O. Wills cigarette*

factory, as a waitress at a Greek café, and in Peggy Page, a well-known Sydney dress factory. Her first marriage ending in divorce, Monica became interested in Labor politics. In 1956 she met Leslie Clare, a well-known secretary of several trade unions, and decided to move to Wollongong. Leslie was sympathetic to Aboriginal people and took her to various Aboriginal missions along the New South Wales coast. They married in 1960.

Monica was the Secretary of the Aborigines Committee of the South Coast at Wollongong during the 1960s and subsequently of an Aboriginal committee called the South Coast Illawarra Tribe, from 1968 to 1973. She worked tirelessly for the political and social equality of Aboriginal people, and their independence. She died suddenly on National Aborigines Day, 13 July 1973, before she could revise and rewrite the manuscript for her autobiographical book Karobran: The Story of an Aboriginal Girl which was published in 1978.

Contemporary Indigenous Use

ACU developed and in 1989 implemented its program to serve the education needs of mature-aged Aboriginal people living in outer suburban Sydney and rural NSW and to contribute to overcoming the great shortage of Aboriginal teachers and professionally qualified Aboriginal Education Assistants (AEAs) (Grant 1996). A support unit (Yalbalinga) staffed mostly by Aboriginal people was established early .A Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation was expressed in 1999 encouraging participation, involvement and the inclusion of Indigenous people, culture and perspectives in higher education.

In 2002 the current Director of the Centre of Indigenous Education and Research, Nereda White, presented a paper to the Bennelong Society Conference highlighting the spiritual nature of education and its importance to the Australian Catholic University education program (White 2002).

Prior to the formation of the Centre for Indigenous Education and Research (CIER) in 2009, the Australian Catholic University included a number of Indigenous Support Education Units, working independently one of another. These were restructured into the CIER in 2009, which consists of four Indigenous Higher Education Units; Dhara Daramoolen in Canberra, Jim-baa-yer in Melbourne and Ballarat, Weemala in Brisbane and Yalbalinga at Strathfield and North Sydney.

Indigenous enrolment in the Strathfield Campus has ranged from 159 individuals in 2004 to 183 in 2009, accounting for approximately half of the Indigenous students enrolled in the Australian Catholic University. Indigenous academic and professional staff across the Australian Catholic University Network included 17 individuals during 2009 (Centre for Indigenous Education and Research 2009)

The CIER states its core aims as providing "excellence in teaching and learning, student support, research and community engagement related to Indigenous higher education." Strategies for achieving these aims are stated as:

- Establishing collaborative research partnerships;

- Continuing to contribute Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in the development and delivery of courses;
- Evaluation and refinement of Indigenous student support mechanisms;
- Strengthening the University's links to Indigenous communities through community engagement; and ,
- Contributing to leadership within and for the University through representation at key forums and in scholarship and educational initiatives.

Though beyond the scope of this assessment, the above history of Yalbalinga and the Indigenous Education Unit suggests that the Subject Area may hold contemporary cultural significance to past and current Indigenous students and staff.

Register Searches

An Extensive Search of the Office of Environment and Heritage AHIMS database was conducted by Jamie Reeves of Niche Environment and Heritage on 13 July 2011 (Search ID: 46801 Datum :GDA Lat, Long From : 151.03726, -33.89889 - Lat, Long To : -33.85032, 151.11836 with a Buffer of 0m). The search area consisted of a 3 km buffer around the Subject Area (Figure 4).

The search identified one Aboriginal site, an open artefact scatter recorded by Michael Guider in Phillips Park, approximately 2.7 km north-west of the current Subject Area.

As noted earlier, though the Cumberland Plain has been subject to a high number of archaeological studies there have only been a small number of Aboriginal archaeological studies within the Strathfield Municipality. The lack of registered sites in the area is likely a correlate to the relatively small number of studies in this area and the intensity of early residential development in the Strathfield Municipality.

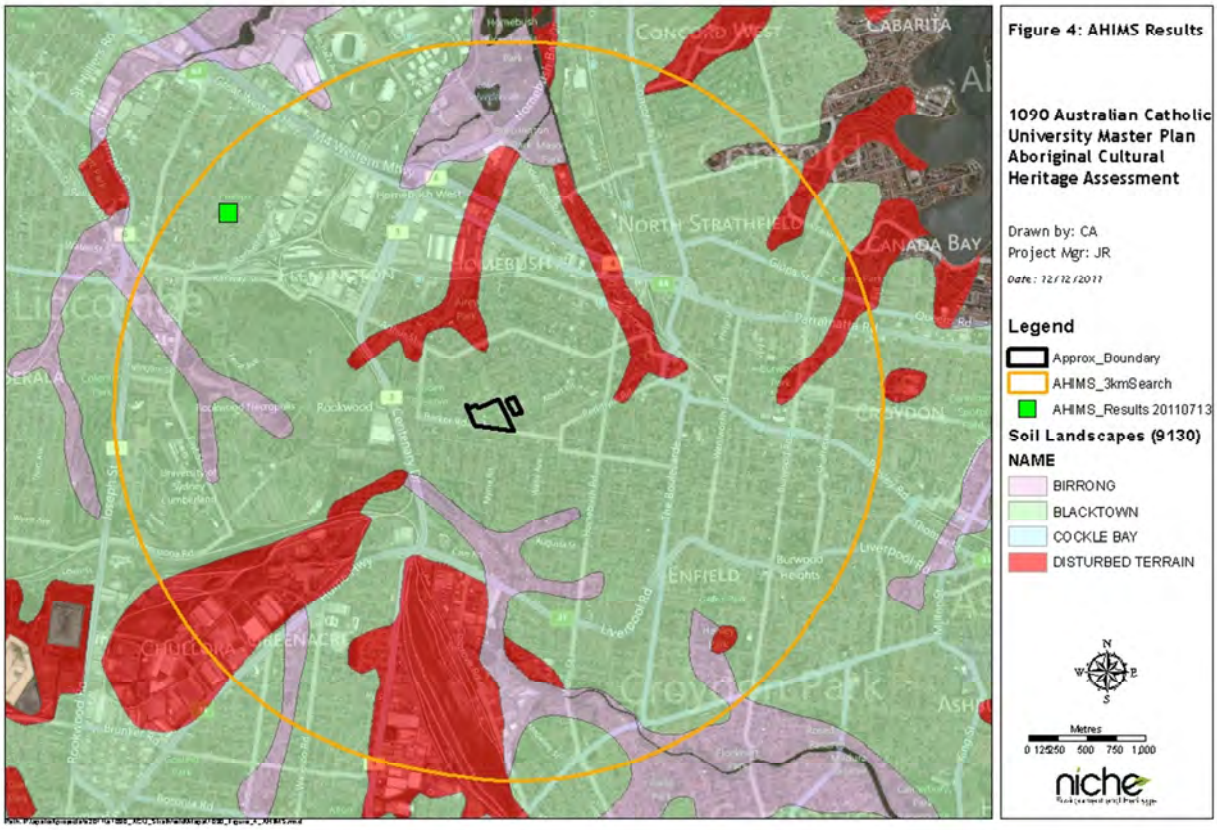

Figure 4: AHIMS Results

Previous Archaeological Work

There is one registered Aboriginal sites within 2km of the Subject Area, an open artefact scatter.

Overview of previous investigations

Open sites containing stone artefacts are the most abundant site type present in the area searched and indeed in the Cumberland Plain as a whole (Attenbrow 2010; p. 50). Typically for the Cumberland Plain the artefact assemblages in the local area comprise mostly silcrete flaked stone artefacts, with lower frequencies of the raw materials tuff, chert and quartz.

On the Cumberland Plain at Rouse Hill, west of Sydney, White and McDonald (2010) have analysed the distribution of stone artefacts across the Rouse Hill development Area, which measures around 5 km x 5 km. This is the first such peer reviewed and published analysis and predictive model. White and McDonald analysed several landscape variables against the results of sub-surface investigations (a database containing 4429 stone artefacts) and concluded that the stream order (the size of a drainage line) and landform were the most important factors in determining artefact density and distribution. In summary they conclude:

> *Factors influencing artefact density include (1) stream order, with higher order streams tending to have higher artefact densities and more continuous distributions than lower order streams; (2) landform, with higher densities occurring on terraces and lower slopes, and with sparse discontinuous scatters on upper slopes; (3) aspect on lower slopes associated with larger streams, with higher artefact densities occurring on landscapes facing north and northeast; and (4) distance from water, with higher artefact densities occurring 51-100 m from 4th order streams, and within 50 m of 2nd order streams.* (White and McDonald 2010: 36)

White and McDonald's observation about the importance of stream order and landform on artefact distribution and density is noteworthy. There are no high order streams within close proximity to the Subject Area (within 300m), with any natural watercourses having been heavily modified by urban development. Were the Subject Area to contain undisturbed soil profiles, this would suggest artefacts may have been present within the landscape, but they would have been more dispersed, and have concentrations containing relatively few (less than 50, for example) artefacts.

The above section provides a picture of archaeological research in the region and what may be present in relatively undisturbed contexts. As seen in the Landscape Context, the land in the study area is disturbed to the extent where artefact bearing deposits are unlikely to exist.

Predictive Model

Aboriginal Objects are not predicted to be present within the Subject Area due to the high degree of disturbance from past land use. This prediction is supported by the geotechnical model which indicates the absence of an A soil horizon and therefore the absence of artefact bearing deposits. There is also an absence of remnant native vegetation within the Subject Area meaning culturally modified trees will not be present. Sites associated with rock outcrops, such as rockshelters and rock engravings will not be present due to the lack of rock outcrops in the Subject Area.

Archaeological Survey - Results

A field assessment was conducted on 17 July 2011, in fine conditions. Participants in the survey were:

- James Smith, Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council
  Renee Regal, Niche Environment and Heritage.

No Aboriginal Objects or Potential Archaeological Deposits were identified. Observations during fieldwork confirmed the levels of disturbance described within the Landscape Context (eg. Plate 1-Plate 4)

Plate 1: South eastern view of proposed location of new library.

Plate 2: South western view of existing carpark at proposed library location

Plate 3: Western view. Note the cut on the left hand side of the photograph

Plate 4: Southern view of existing carpark on western side of campus.

Other cultural heritage values

At the time of the survey, the representative from the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council did not identify any other cultural heritage values associated with the property.

Analysis and Discussion

The predictive model suggested that there would be an absence of Aboriginal Objects and Potential Archaeological Deposits due to the long term urban use of the Subject Area, the high levels of disturbance and the absence of an A Horizon

The results of the survey support the predictive model. The survey of the Subject Area achieved reasonable effectiveness, despite the limited number of exposures and poor archaeological visibility from urban development. Observations regarding the disturbed nature of the Subject Area, including areas of cut, fill and construction were noted in this survey. This result supports observations made in the heritage study and the geotechnical survey. It is therefore argued that there is no Aboriginal archaeological potential within the Subject Area.

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Significance

The Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS 1999) defines the basic principles and procedures to be observed in the conservation of important places. It provides the primary framework within which decisions about the management of heritage sites in Australia should be made. The Burra Charter defines cultural significance as being derived from the following values:

Aesthetic value

Aesthetic value includes aspects of sensory perception for which criteria can and should be stated. Such criteria may include consideration of the form, scale, colour, texture and material of the fabric; the smells and sounds associated with the place and its use.

Historic value

Historic value encompasses the history of aesthetics, science and society, and therefore to a large extent underlies all of the terms set out in this section.

A place may have historic value because it has influenced, or has been influenced by, an historic figure, event, phase or activity. It may also have historic value as the site of an important event. For any given place the significance will be greater where evidence of the association or event survives in situ, or where the settings are substantially intact, than where it has been changed or evidence does not survive. However, some events or associations may be so important that the place retains significance regardless of subsequent treatment.

Scientific value

The scientific or research value of a place will depend upon the importance of the data involved, on its rarity, quality or representativeness, and on the degree to which the place may contribute further substantial information.

Social value

Social value embraces the qualities for which a place has become a focus of spiritual, political, national or other cultural sentiment to a majority or minority group.

Other approaches

The categorisation into aesthetic, historic, scientific and social values is one approach to understanding the concept of cultural significance. However, more precise categories may be developed as understanding of a particular place increases.

The NSW OEH guidelines for the significance assessment of Aboriginal archaeological sites are contained within the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Standards and Guidelines Kit (NPWS 1997).* The Kit identifies with two main streams in the overall significance assessment process: the assessment of cultural/social significance to Aboriginal people and the assessment of scientific significance to archaeologists.

This approach encapsulates those aspects of the Burra Charter that are relevant to Aboriginal archaeological sites. The guidelines specify the following criteria for archaeological significance, as paraphrased below:

Research Potential

It is the potential to elucidate past behaviour which gives significance under this criterion rather than the potential to yield collections of artefacts. Matters considered under this criterion include – the intactness of a site, the potential for the site to build a chronology and the connectedness of the site to other sites in the archaeological landscape.

Representativeness

As a criterion, representativeness is only meaningful in relation to a conservation objective. Presumably all sites are representative of those in their class or they would not be in that class. What is at issue is the extent to which a class of sites is conserved and whether the particular site being assessed should be conserved in order to ensure that we retain a representative sample of the archaeological record as a whole. The conservation objective which underwrites the 'representativeness' criteria is that such a sample should be conserved.

Rarity

This criteria cannot easily be separated from that of representativeness. If a site is 'distinctive' then it will, by definition, be part of the variability which a representative

sample would represent. The criteria might best be approached as one which exists within the criteria of representativeness, giving a particular weighting to certain classes of site. The main requirement for being able to assess rarity will be to know what is common and what is unusual in the site record but also the way that archaeology confers prestige on certain sites because of their ability to provide certain information.

The criterion of rarity may be assessed at a range of levels: local, regional, state, national, global.

Educational Potential

Heritage sites and areas should be conserved and managed in relation to their value to people. It is assumed that archaeologists have the ability to speak of the value of sites to members of their own profession. Where archaeologists or others carrying out assessments are speaking for the educational value of sites to the public the onus is on them to go to the public for an assessment of this value, or to reputable studies which have canvassed public demand for education. The danger, otherwise, is that archaeologists will be projecting their values onto a public which is itself given no voice on the matter.

Aesthetics

Archaeologists are not expected to include an assessment of aesthetic significance along with their assessment of scientific significance. In relation to heritage places, aesthetic significance is generally taken to mean the visual beauty of the place. Aesthetic value is not inherent in a place but arises in the sensory response people have to it.

Although the guidelines provide no expectation for archaeologists to consider *aesthetic values* it is often the case that a site's or a landscape's aesthetic is a significant contributory value to significance. Examples of archaeological sites that may have high aesthetic values would be rock art sites, or sites located in environments that evoke strong sensory responses – a local example would be the visually striking Illawarra Escarpment. For this reason we consider it appropriate to include aesthetic values as part of the significance assessment below.

The OEH Standards and Guidelines Kit (NPWS 1997) also provides advice on the assessment of Aboriginal cultural significance, based on the critical starting point that Aboriginal people are the primary determinants of the significance of their cultural heritage. OEH's Draft Guidelines for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment and Community Consultation (DEC 2005b) provides advice on the heads of consideration for project assessments under Part 3A of the

EP&A Act The Draft Guidelines focus on highlighting the multilayered and dynamic nature of Aboriginal cultural heritage and require that such considerations be included in heritage assessments. The Draft Guidelines also provide advice with regard to cultural landscapes:

> *…the significance of individual features is derived from their inter-relatedness within the cultural landscape. This means that features cannot be assessed in isolation, and that assessments need to consider the feature and its associations in a holistic manner. This may require a range of assessment methods with the close involvement and participation of Aboriginal people. Assessment will include lands, waterways, landscape features and native plants and animals that are culturally significant to Aboriginal people (DEC 2005b: 2).*

Assessment of Archaeological Significance – Aboriginal Archaeological Sites

No Aboriginal Objects, sites, places or potential Archaeological Deposits have been identified within the Subject Area. The Subject Area has no Aboriginal archaeological significance.

Assessment of Significance – the Cultural Landscape

There is an absence of landscape elements within the Subject Area, such as remnant vegetation, undisturbed terrain, focal points and resources that would have been suitable for exploitation by past Aboriginal people. The Subject Area is also located within a continuous urban environment in an area with limited recorded Aboriginal Objects and therefore has little to contribute to the regional cultural heritage landscape values. The Subject Area therefore has limited significance in terms of cultural landscape.

Assessment of Cultural Significance

The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal land Council representative did not identify any cultural values relating to the Subject Area during the site inspection or during review of the draft report..

The desktop assessment of the site history has identified contemporary Indigenous use of the Subject Area as an educational facility. There may be both tangible and intangible aspects of the Subject Area which hold cultural significance to past and present Indigenous staff and students.

Impact Assessment

Potential Impacts

The development of a Concept Plan is not an activity that in and of itself cause harm to Aboriginal objects. Therefore the following impact assessment assumes harm could occur to objects as a result of activities conducted pursuant to the Concept Plan. The type of activities undertaken pursuant to the Concept Plan would include impacts such as excavation and land filling. The potential for the proposal to impact the cultural landscape needs to be considered in terms of the further development and fragmentation of an already heavily modified landscape.

Sites and Areas of Archaeological Potential

There are no known Aboriginal Objects or area of Aboriginal archaeological value within the Subject Area and as such there are no predicted impacts.

The Cultural Landscape

There is an absence of landscape elements within the Subject Area, such as remnant vegetation, undisturbed terrain, focal points and resources that would have been suitable for exploitation by past Aboriginal people. The Subject Area is also located within a continuous urban environment in an area with limited recorded Aboriginal Objects and therefore has little to contribute to the regional cultural heritage landscape values. Overall, the proposed works will have limited impact on the wider cultural landscape of the region.

Other Cultural Values

The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal land Council representative did not identify any cultural values relating to the Subject Area during the site inspection or review of the draft report (See Appendix 1).

The desktop assessment of the site history has identified contemporary Indigenous use of the Subject Area as an educational facility. There may be both tangible and intangible aspects of the Subject Area which hold cultural, social and spiritual values or significance to past and present Indigenous staff and students. It is unclear whether any such values may be impacted by the proposed works. A copy of the draft response was sent to the Yalbalinga Education Unit but no response has been received to date.

Conclusion

No Aboriginal cultural heritage values have been identified by Metropolitan LALC. The university is likely to hold contemporary cultural significance as a place of education however no response to the draft report has been received to date by the Yalbalinga Indigenous Education Unit.

There are no Aboriginal archaeological constraints to the proposed works.

Recommendations

Based on the above Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment the following recommendations are made:

1. There are no Aboriginal archaeological heritage constraints to the proposed works.

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Appendix 1 – Consultation Documentation

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PO Box 1103 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012
Telephone: (02) 8394 9666 Fax: (02) 8394 9733
Email: metrolalc@metrolalc.org.au

Thursday, December 08, 2011

Niche Environment & Heritage

Clare Anderson

PO Box 231

Concord NSW 2137

RE: Due Diligence Advice for Aboriginal Archaeological Heritage for Australian Catholic University - Strathfield

Dear Clare,

An Aboriginal Site Assessment was undertaken at Australian Catholic University – Strathfield. The assessment was to identify any Aboriginal Archaeological Heritage constraints associated with the proposed site.

The site assessment was carried out on foot on the 18th July 2011 by Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (MLALC) representatives James Smith & Kevin Telford (site officer), and Niche Environment & Heritage Consultant Archaeologist Renee Regal.

The MLALC have reviewed the Aboriginal Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Assessment report and concur with Niche Environment & Heritage Consultant findings.

If any further Aboriginal cultural materials discovered during any stage of the proposed construction, all work is to cease immediately and MLALC and NSW National Parks & Wildlife are to be notified immediately.

If you require further information please do not hesitate to contact myself on 0412 733 157.

K Telford.

Kevin Telford

Aboriginal Site Officer