

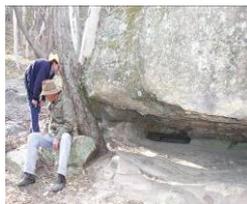
Appendix D Heritage



Western Rail Coal Unloader Pipers Flat, NSW

Cultural Heritage Assessment

February 2007



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A Report to Sinclair Knight Merz

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Delta Electricity proposes to construct a rail unloader facility to source coal from a wider selection of mines to supply its power stations. A feasibility study has identified a potential suitable location for construction of a rail loop and unloader facility at Pipers Flat. The loop would connect to the Mudgee rail line branch between Portland and Wallerawang. The proposed rail track would connect to the Mudgee rail line and form a loop, before connecting back to the Mudgee line.
- The coal would be transferred from the unloader to the power station via a conveyor. The conveyor would run in a northerly direction from the rail loop to the Mount Piper power station.
- Sinclair Knight Merz commissioned a cultural heritage assessment of the development works area which included a review of relevant heritage literature and databases, Aboriginal consultation and field inspections.
- Background research indicated that no historic sites were listed on heritage registers as occurring in the Pipers Flat study area.
- Background research indicated that two Aboriginal sites (#45-1-0075 and #45-1-0076) and an area of archaeological potential (PAD7) had been previously recorded as occurring in the Pipers Flat study area.
- A single isolated find (WCU 1) and seven areas of potential archaeological deposit (WCU PAD1-7) were identified in the course of the field survey of the Pipers Flat study area.
- One historic site complex (WCU H1), a former farm site, was recorded on the rail loop alignment.
- *It is recommended that.*

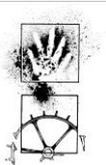
- If impact to the PADs WCU PAD 1 – WCU PAD 6 cannot be avoided then a program of archaeological subsurface testing should be conducted for the PADs. Testing should aim to determine the nature and significance of any Aboriginal cultural material present at each location.

If the PADs are likely to be disturbed prior to project approval under Part 3A, then a Section 87 *Preliminary Research Permit (PRP)* will be required from the NSW DEC to conduct the further archaeological investigations.

- If impact to the site 45-1-0076 is to occur prior to project approval under Part 3a, then a Section 90 *Consent to Destroy Permit* will be required from the NSW DEC.
- Consultation should continue with the relevant Aboriginal community groups and representatives should be invited to participate in any further archaeological assessments that are conducted in relation to the Pipers Flat project.
- Historic site WCU H1 should be subject to an archival level recording prior to any adverse impact to the site. The recording would be to a standard acceptable to the NSW Heritage Office and lodged with the Heritage Office.
- If the project is approved under Part 3A then recommendations 1-4 should be included in the *Statement of Commitments* for the project.
- Applications for Section 90 Consents and Section 87 Permits from the DEC would involve implementation of the DEC *Interim Aboriginal Community Consultation Requirements for Applicants* (Jan 2005). The development proponent is advised to allow for sufficient time within the project schedule to conduct the protocols specified in the requirements.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Delta Electricity operates two power stations near Lithgow in the central west of NSW. Coal for the power stations is provided via local mines through conveyor or road transport. Delta Electricity propose to construct a rail unloader facility to source coal from a wider selection of mines.

A feasibility study has identified a potential suitable location for construction of a rail loop and unloader facility at Pipers Flat (Figure 1.1). The loop would connect to the Mudgee rail line branch between Portland and Wallerawang. The proposed rail track would connect to the Mudgee rail line and forms a loop, before connecting back to the Mudgee line (Figure 1.2). Construction of the rail loop is likely to involve some cut and fill and importation of fill from the nearby Lamberts Gully Mine for the rail embankments. The fill would be trucked from the mine down the alignment of the conveyor to the rail loop.

The coal would be transferred from the unloader to the power station via a conveyor. The conveyor would run in a northerly direction from the rail loop to the Mount Piper power station.

This report documents the results of an Aboriginal and historical cultural heritage assessment of the proposed development. The assessment was conducted to supplement an environmental assessment for the rail loop and conveyor and was commissioned by Sinclair Knight Merz.

1.1 Report Outline

This report:

- Documents the methodology implemented for the Pipers Flat study;
- Describes the environmental setting of the Pipers Flat study area;
- Provides a background of local and regional archaeology and history for the Pipers Flat study area;
- Documents the results of the study; and
- Provides management recommendations based on the results of the investigation.

2. ABORIGINAL PARTICIPATION

The study area falls within the boundaries of the Bathurst Local Aboriginal Land Council (BLALC). The BLALC was contacted by phone prior to the field study and informed of the project. It was arranged that Mr Richard Peters would attend and assist in the field survey. *Records of Aboriginal Participation* are provided as Appendix 1.

Brief discussions were held with Mr Peters on completion of fieldwork about possible recommendations for the Aboriginal heritage items identified in the study area. Mr Peters indicated that he would prepare a report based on the results of the survey. The Land Council's report is attached as Appendix 2. The report indicates that the BLALC is supportive of conducting additional archaeological investigations in the identified areas.

A copy of this report will be forwarded to the BLALC for their comment.

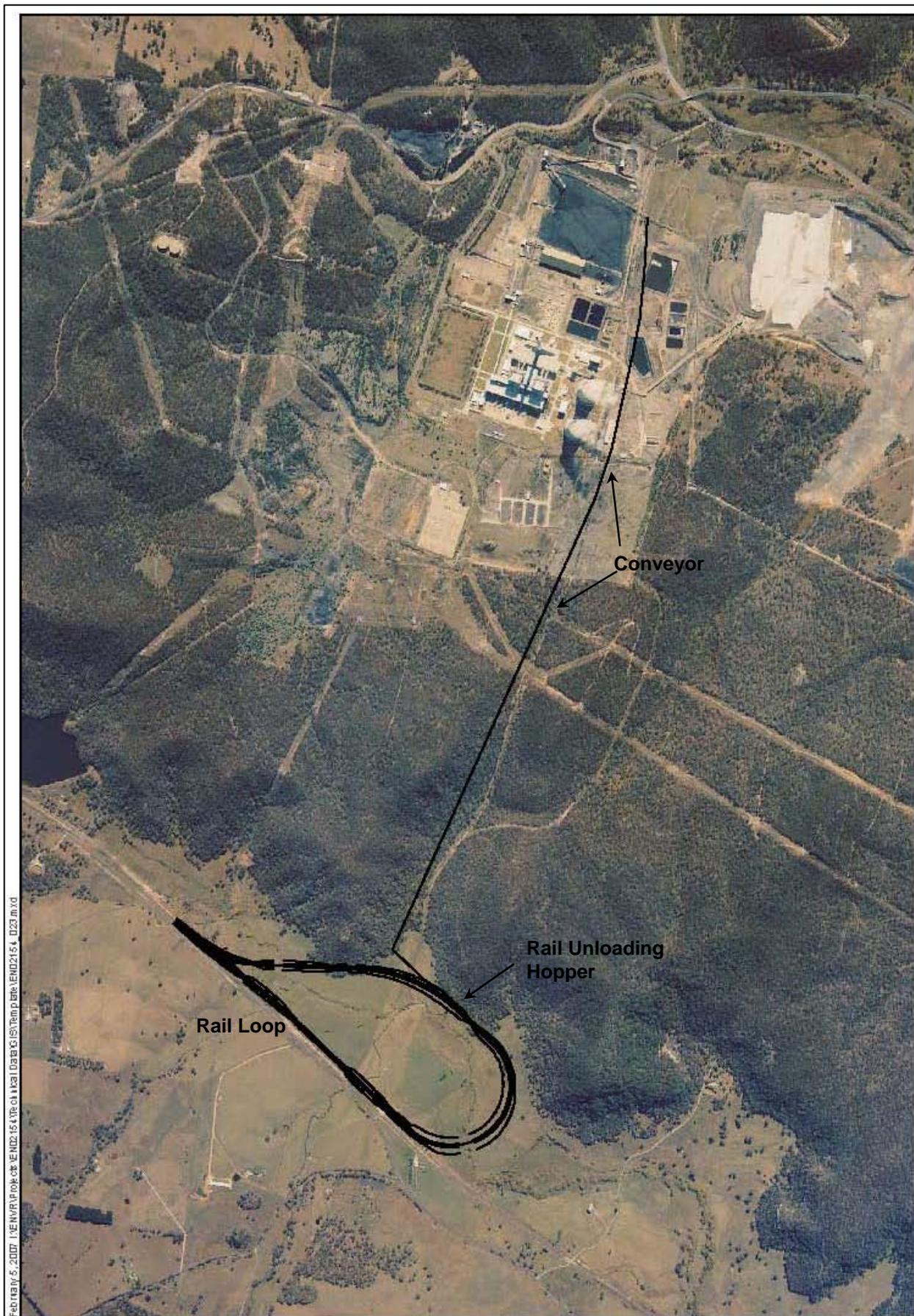


Figure 1.1 Location of Pipers Flat study area showing Rail Loop and conveyor alignment
(Map supplied by SKM)

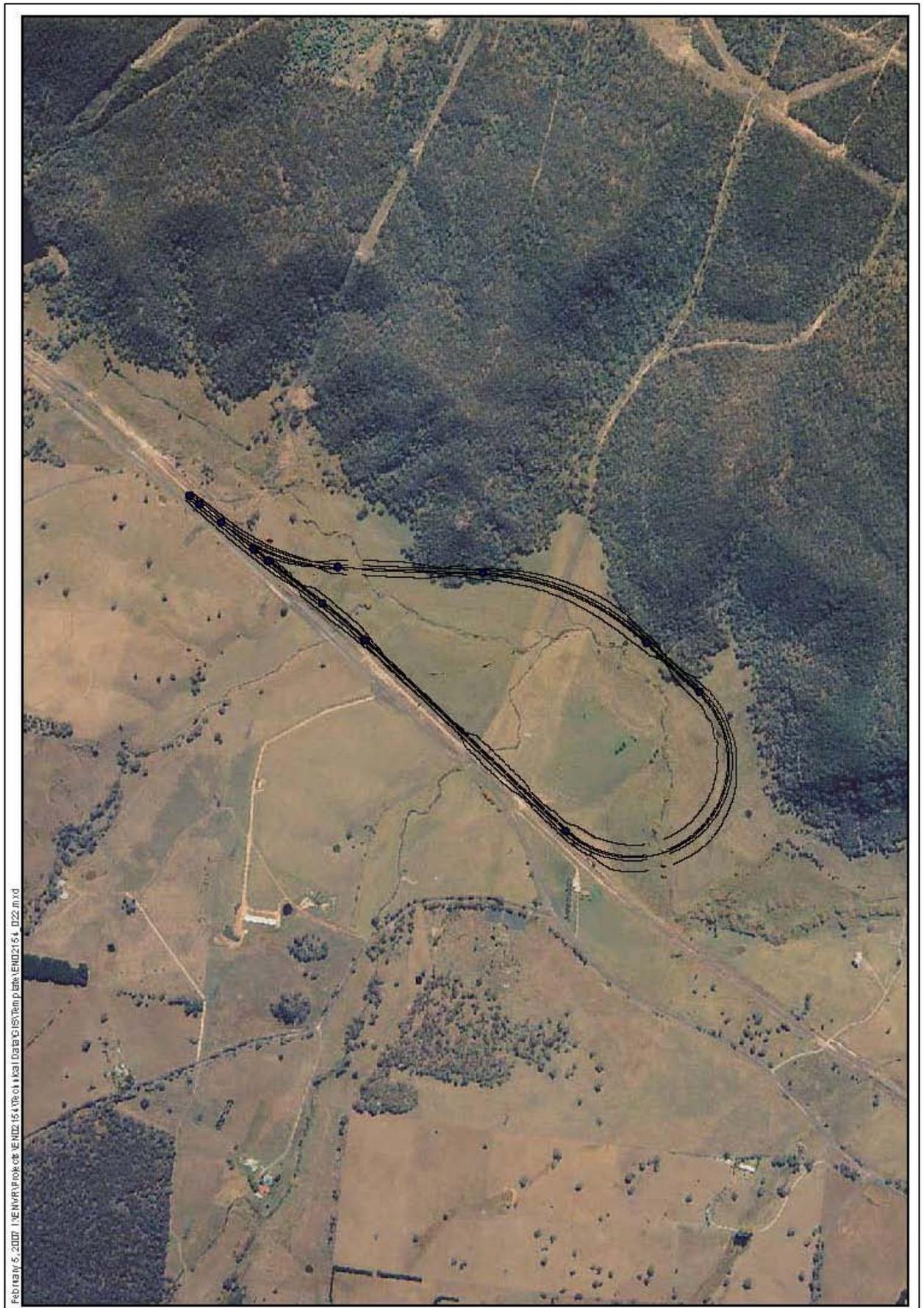
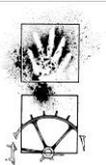


Figure 1.2 Detail of rail loop
(Map supplied by SKM).



3. STUDY METHODOLOGY

3.1 Literature and Database Review

A range of documentation was used in assessing archaeological and historical knowledge for the Pipers Flat study area and its surrounds. This background research was used to determine if known Aboriginal and historical sites were located within the area under investigation, to facilitate site prediction on the basis of known regional and local site patterns, and to place the area within an archaeological and heritage management context. The review of written and documentary sources included heritage registers, local histories and archaeological reports.

Aboriginal literature sources included the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) and associated files and catalogue of archaeological reports.

Sources of historic information included published monographs and parish maps.

The following heritage registers and schedules were searched:

- The National Heritage List (Australian Heritage Council);
- The Commonwealth Heritage List (Australian Heritage Council);
- The Register of the National Estate (Australian Heritage Council);
- The State Heritage Register (NSW Heritage Office);
- The State Heritage Inventory (NSW Heritage Office);
- Heritage Schedule(s) from the Lithgow Local Environmental Plan 1994;
- Register of the National Trust of Australia (NSW).

3.2 Fieldwork

Fieldwork was conducted by three people over a period of two days in August 2006. Areas subject to survey included the proposed location of the rail loop and a 50 m wide corridor of the proposed alignment for the conveyor. Other areas within the loop were also inspected including sections of the creekline. The survey also sampled areas outside the immediate impact areas and attempted to identify the location of previously recorded sites within and near the study area.

The archaeological survey aimed to identify material evidence of Aboriginal and historical occupation as revealed by surface artefacts and areas of archaeological potential not associated with surface artefacts. An assessment of landscape disturbance and archaeological sensitivity/potential was made for all subject areas.

3.3 Project Personnel

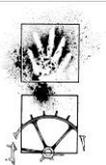
Field survey was conducted by archaeologists Matthew Barber and Tom Taverner, with assistance provided by Richard Peters of the Bathurst LALC.

This report was prepared by Matthew Barber and edited by Kerry Navin and Lindsay Smith.

3.4 Recording Parameters

3.4.1 Aboriginal

The Aboriginal archaeological survey aimed at identifying material evidence of Aboriginal occupation as revealed by surface artefacts and areas of archaeological potential unassociated with surface



artefacts. Potential recordings fall into four categories: isolated finds, sites, background scatter and potential archaeological deposits.

3.4.1.1 Isolated finds

An isolated find is a single stone artefact, not located within a rock shelter, and which occurs without any associated evidence of Aboriginal occupation within a radius of 60 metres. Isolated finds may be indicative of:

- Random loss or deliberate discard of a single artefact'
- The remnant of a now dispersed and disturbed artefact scatter; and
- An otherwise obscured or sub-surface artefact scatter.

Except in the case of the latter, isolated finds are considered to be constituent components of the *background scatter* present within any particular landform.

The distance used to define an isolated artefact varies according to the survey objectives, the incidence of ground surface exposure, the extent of ground surface disturbance, and estimates of *background scatter* or *background discard* densities. In the absence of baseline information relating to background scatter densities, the defining distance for an isolated find must be based on methodological and visibility considerations. Given the varied incidence of ground surface exposure and deposit disturbance within the study area, and the lack of background baseline data, the specification of 60 metres is considered to be an effective parameter for surface survey methodologies. This distance provides a balance between detecting fine scale patterns of Aboriginal occupation and avoiding environmental biases caused by ground disturbance or high ground surface exposure rates. The 60 metre parameter has provided an effective separation of low density artefact occurrences in similar southeast Australian topographies outside of semi-arid landscapes.

3.4.1.2 Sites

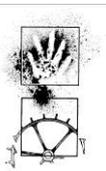
A site is defined as any material evidence of past Aboriginal activity that remains within a context or place which can be reliably related to that activity.

Frequently encountered site types within southeastern Australia include open artefact scatters, coastal and freshwater middens, rock shelter sites including occupation deposit and/or rock art, grinding groove sites and scarred trees. For the purposes of this section, only the methodologies used in the identification of these site types are outlined.

Most Aboriginal sites are identified by the presence of three main categories of artefacts: stone or shell artefacts situated on or in a sedimentary matrix, marks located on or in rock surfaces, and scars on trees. Artefacts situated within, or on, a sedimentary matrix in an open context are classed as a site when two or more occur no more than 60 metres away from any other constituent artefact. The 60 metre specification relates back to the definition of an isolated find (*Refer above*). In a rockshelter, a site is defined as one or more artefacts occurring within or immediately adjacent to the sheltered space. Unlike a single artefact in an open context, a rock shelter provides a probable occupational focus to the interpretation of a single artefact and can therefore be considered to be indicative of a site. An exception would be a single artefact which may have been deposited in the shelter through natural processes.

3.4.1.3 Potential Archaeological Deposits

A potential archaeological deposit, or PAD, is defined as any location where the potential for subsurface archaeological material is considered to be moderate or high, relative to the surrounding study area landscape. The potential for subsurface material to be present is assessed using criteria developed from the results of previous surveys and excavations relevant to the region. Where necessary, PADs can be given an indicative rating of their 'archaeological potential' based on a combined assessment of their potential to contain artefacts, and the potential archaeological value of the deposit. Table 3.1 illustrates the matrix on which this assessment is based. Locations with low



potential for artefacts fall below the threshold of classification. In such cases the potential incidence of artefactual material is considered to be the same as, or close to that for background scatter. Where there is moderate potential for artefacts, the predicted archaeological potential parallels the potential significance of the deposit. For deposits with high potential for artefacts, the assessed archaeological potential is weighted positively.

The boundaries of PADs are generally defined by the extent of particular micro-landforms known to have high correlations with archaeological material. A PAD may or may not be associated with surface artefacts. In the absence of artefacts, a location with potential will be recorded as a PAD. Where one or more surface artefacts occur on a sedimentary deposit, a PAD may also be identified where there is insufficient evidence to assess the nature and content of the underlying deposit. This situation is due mostly to poor ground surface visibility.

Table 3.1 Matrix showing the basis for assessing the archaeological potential (shown in bolded black text) of a potential archaeological deposit.

| | | Potential to contain Aboriginal objects | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | <i>Low</i> | <i>Moderate</i> | <i>High</i> |
| Potential archaeological significance | <i>Low</i> | --- | low | moderate |
| | <i>Moderate</i> | --- | moderate | high |
| | <i>High</i> | --- | high | high |

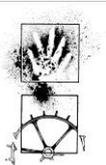
In the case of rock shelters contexts, the following criteria are used as guidelines for identifying the presence of potential archaeological deposits:

- Shelter should contain a sediment floor at least around one square metre in area;
- Deposit must be at least 15 cm deep (determined by inserting tent pegs);
- Deposit should be relatively compact and show evidence for a significant period of accumulation (deposit should not be spongy and contain only clean sand derived from recent stone weathering);
- The shelter space should be at least one metre high and one metre deep (but exceptions may occur, such as where the deposit is deep); and
- The shelter should be relatively dry.

3.4.1.4 Background scatter

Background scatter is a term used generally by archaeologists to refer to artefacts which cannot be usefully related to a place or focus of past activity (except for the net accumulation of single artefact losses).

There is, however, no single concept for background discard or 'scatter', and therefore no agreed definition. The definitions in current use are based on the postulated nature of prehistoric activity, and often they are phrased in general terms and do not include quantitative criteria. Commonly agreed is that background discard occurs in the absence of 'focused' activity involving the production or discard of stone artefacts in a particular location. An example of unfocused activity is occasional isolated discard of artefacts during travel along a route or pathway. Examples of 'focused activity' are camping, knapping and heat-treating stone, cooking in a hearth, and processing food with stone tools. In practical terms, over a period of thousands of years an accumulation of 'unfocused' discard may result in an archaeological concentration that may be identified as a 'site'. Definitions of background discard comprising only qualitative criteria do not specify the numbers (numerical flux) or 'density' of artefacts required to discriminate site areas from background discard.



3.4.2 Historical

As with Aboriginal archaeological field surveys, the effectiveness of historical archaeological field survey is to a large degree related to the obtrusiveness of the sites being sought and the incidence and quality of general and ground surface visibility. The methods used to investigate sites are based on trained observation, skilled interpretation and accurate recording of the physical remains, combined with the archaeologist's own experience of what is likely to be found.

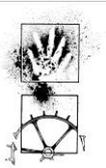
Unlike Aboriginal archaeological field surveys, in many instances historical surveys are aided by the availability of historical documents that assist in locating sites. In this regard, a range of historical research techniques may include the use of early town and rural directories, land title searches, analysis of early maps, photographs and aerial photographs, technological encyclopaedia, immigrant's guides, trade and popular journals, mail order catalogues, bankruptcy records, government records and other specialised sources. In some instances, oral histories may also be available to assist the archaeologist to locate sites.

Some sites are wholly below ground surface while others are partially or wholly above ground. They may be derelict, ruinous or still functioning.

For the most part, the visibility of wholly above ground historic standing structures, such as buildings, fences, etc., poses little problem for the field surveyor. This of course can be variable, particularly where the structure is partially or completely covered by vegetation, or has been covered or enclosed by additional construction.

For those structures or items that are partially above ground, visibility and full identification can be difficult. In such cases it may be necessary to undertake an archaeological excavation to ensure that the item is correctly and completely identified and recorded.

For items that are wholly below ground, there may be no visible indications of their presence on the surface, or in some cases only a few indications, such as an earth platform or fragmentary artefacts, visible on the surface of the site. In such cases it may also be necessary to undertake an archaeological excavation to ensure the item is correctly and completely identified and recorded. However, the option not to excavate should be a primary consideration for any site that is subject to development. Where a site is not under threat, archaeological deposits are safer left in the ground.



4. ENVIRONMENT

The study area is located about 14 km northwest of Lithgow within the Portland Plateau. It is on the western margin of the Sydney Basin which dominates east central New South Wales. The Sydney Basin is a large sedimentary basin consisting of various, approximately horizontally bedded sedimentary facies that accumulated during a marine transgression at the end of the Late Palaeozoic glaciation, and which was subsequently followed by a marine regression during the Late Permian and Triassic eras.

The Great Dividing Range is situated just to the west of the study area, in the vicinity of Portland. The major water course in the study area, Pipers Flat Creek, drains eastwards into the Cox River, which is part of the Hawkesbury/Nepean catchment. Watercourses to the west of Portland drain northwards to the Turon River and then westwards to the Macquarie River, within the Murray Darling Basin. The study area is therefore close to a major watershed within southeastern Australia.

Local geology is characterised by the Permian-age Illawarra coal measures, comprising interbedded shales, sandstone, chert and conglomerate and the Wolgan, Lidsdale and Lithgow coal seams which have provided the focus of coal mining operations throughout the region since the late nineteenth century. The Narrabeen group comprising sandstone, shale and tuff is more dominant to the east of Lithgow but outcrops in small areas within the hills north of the rail loop.

The topography of the main area of the rail loop is situated in the valley floor of Pipers Flat Creek, which is dominated by alluvial and colluvial deposits. Topographically, the rail loop crosses the valley floor creek flat and terraces of the creek and basal slopes of the adjacent sandstone hills. Sandstone escarpments exist on the mid slopes between the creek and the crest of the ridgeline on which Mount Piper (1077 m AHD) is located. The rail loop and the conveyor avoid the escarpment but cross the basal slopes of the ridgeline.

To the north of the rail loop the proposed coal conveyor alignment traverses the shale, sandstone and conglomerate geology of the Illawarra coal measures. The conveyor alignment generally follows a narrow valley with an ephemeral creek up to a saddle and from there along the side slope of a ridgeline to join the existing conveyor.

Most of the vegetation within the rail loop area has been cleared for grazing purposes. There are exotic willow trees along the margins of Pipers Creek and the occasional stand of regrowth Eucalypts within the valley floor.

In the hills to the north of the rail loop, the vegetation comprises native vegetation of open Eucalypt forest with some acacia and a sparse understorey of shrubs. Main tree species are red Stringybark, Brittle Gum and Scribbly Gum. Some clearance has occurred for vehicle tracks and high voltage power lines.



5. ABORIGINAL CONTEXT

5.1 Ethnographic Background

The study area falls within a larger area which was, at the time of European settlement, inhabited by members of the Wiradjuri linguistic group, and which falls into the tribal area delineated by Tindale (1974) as 'Wiradjuri'. This territory extends from Dubbo and Bylong in the north to Tallangatta in the south, and west from Lithgow to the Hay Plain and Ivanhoe.

It should be noted, however, that tribal boundaries within Australia are based largely on linguistic evidence and it is probable that boundaries, clan estates and band ranges were fluid and varied over time. Consequently 'tribal boundaries' as delineated today must be regarded as approximations only, and relative to the period of, or immediately before, European contact. Social interaction across these language boundaries appears to have been a common occurrence.

Wiradjuri territory extended into three general physiographic regions: the highlands (central tablelands) in the east, the riverine plains in the west and the transitional western slopes zone in-between (White 1986:39). The rail loop and conveyor study area is located in the central tablelands section.

Early explorers noted the presence of Aboriginal people throughout the Blue Mountains by the fires apparently deliberately lit across the area (Gorecki 1982). Ethnographic and archaeological evidence indicates that a small population inhabited the high plateaux, probably during the warmer months of the year, for at least 12 000 years (Johnson 1979 in Gorecki 1982).

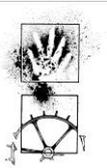
5.2 Regional Archaeological Setting

To date few academic archaeological studies have been conducted in, and immediately around, the study area. However, broad range and regional studies have been undertaken in the surrounding region within an academic research framework (Pearson 1981; White 1986).

In 1981 Pearson completed the only major and regionally based research investigation relevant to the study area. His thesis was an investigation of Aboriginal and early European settlement patterns within the Upper Macquarie River region of NSW. The majority of his field coverage was directed by information from informants and was thus skewed toward large or obtrusive sites which had been recognised by local residents. Pearson excavated three rock shelter sites (Botobolar 5, and Granites 1 and 2) which provided a regional record of Aboriginal occupation dating back to around 7000 years before present.

Pearson's analysis of the patterns of Aboriginal occupation involved an examination of site location characteristics in four sample areas. The following points summarise Pearson's results relevant to the present investigation:

- There is a strong relationship between site location and distance from water sources. Distance to water varied from 10 to 500 m, but in general the average distance from water decreased as site size increased;
- Sites were found on hilly or undulating places rather than on river flats or the banks of waterways. However it was found that the regional incidence of landform variation biased this sample;
- Good drainage and views over watercourses and river flats were also considered to be important site location criteria;
- Most sites were located in contexts which would originally have supported open woodlands, with small numbers in original grassland or forest contexts. However, this result is skewed by the predominance of the first vegetation type;



- Burial sites and grinding grooves were situated as close to habitation areas as geological constraints would allow;
- Ceremonial sites such as earth rings ('bora grounds') were located away from campsites;
- Stone arrangements were also located away from campsites in isolated places and tended to be associated with small hills or knolls or were on flat land;
- Quarry sites were located where stone outcrops with desirable working qualities were recognised and were reasonably accessible; and
- Based on ethnohistoric information, Pearson suggests that Aboriginal campsites were seldom used for longer than three nights and that large sites probably represent accumulations of short visits.

Archaeological excavation of rockshelters in the region, including Capertee Valley, Noola and other shelters in the western Blue Mountains have provided dates of Aboriginal occupation back to about 12,000 to 14,000 years ago (Tindale 1961; McCarthy 1964; Stockton 1970; Stockton and Holland 1974, Johnson 1979).

It has been argued that after this early phase of occupation there was a decline in occupation until about 3,000 years ago when there was an increase in population. This coincided with a change in stone technologies from the Core Tool and Scraper Tradition to the Small Tool Tradition. Part of the intensification has been attributed to change in diet with more carbohydrate based foods becoming available or exploited. The intensification of Aboriginal occupation has recently been challenged (Boot 1994).

Within the Lithgow region MacIntyre (1990) and Haglund (1990) proposed that Aboriginal site distribution was based on larger site complexes occurring at the head of open valleys where there was a range of resources. Large sites could also be found on the western edge of the plateau where streams entered the Coxs River. Smaller sites were to be found at the end of long ridgelines and ephemeral sites could occur anywhere below the cliff line.

Survey of open sites in the Blue Mountains has established a consistent picture of sparse, low density surface scatters with quartz as the predominant raw material. These sites were often located on elevated ground above swamps or permanent streams (Barton and McDonald 1994:11).

5.3 Local Archaeological Surveys

The Mount Piper area has been subject to a number of archaeological surveys as part of development-driven assessments, particularly in association with the coal mining industry and establishment of the Mount Piper power station.

Wright undertook a cultural heritage survey in 1980 as part of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Mount Piper Power Station. Wright did not find any Aboriginal sites or artefacts in either the main station area or the ash disposal area (Wright 1980:43).

In 1982 Haglund investigated eight areas from Portland Road in the north to Thompsons Creek in the south (1982a). Haglund recorded nine sites, including seven artefact scatters, a shelter with deposit and an axe grinding groove site. One of her survey areas was the escarpment and basal slopes of the ridge north of Pipers Flat Creek, part of which is within the present study area (see below). All of the artefact scatters were found on low spurs or creek flats elevated above flood-prone land. The artefacts were mostly low density and quartz was the dominant raw material, and Haglund noted that the sites probably had shallow soil profiles.

Haglund (1982b) undertook some subsurface testing at one of the sites (AHIMS Site No. 45-1-0067). Thirty artefacts were located in three test pits. The artefacts comprised flakes and fragments, a notched blade, a split pebble scraper and a pebble with a polished surface. Quartz dominated the assemblage, with quartzite the only other material recorded. The deposit was shallow (less than



15 cm) and the artefacts were found in a four centimetre band close to the surface. No other cultural features such as hearths were identified at the site.

Rich (1985) undertook a preliminary survey of the proposed conveyor and pipeline routes between the Mount Piper power station and the Angus Place colliery to the east of the present study area. Rich recorded a scarred tree and two open artefact scatters close to the Coxs River, and a small scatter of artefacts at Rydal Mount (Rich 1985 in Brayshaw and Dallas 1993:27).

Aitken (1985) reported on a survey conducted from Bayswater to Mount Piper for the proposed transmission line between the two locations. Aitken concluded that most sites occurred in the northern part of the study area, and sites were notably absent from the area near Mount Piper which she described as an area of 'adverse climate and poverty of resources on the more elevated plateaux' (Aitken 1985:25).

McIntyre conducted an archaeological survey ahead of construction of a dam across Thompsons Creek and augmentation of the water supply to the Mount Piper Station (McIntyre 1988). Two Aboriginal sites (AHIMS Nos. 45-1-73 and 45-1-75) were located in the course of her survey. Five Aboriginal sites and four historic sites were also identified south of Pipers Creek and the present study area. The pipeline route surveyed by McIntyre for her 1988 study is the same as that followed by the present conveyor proposal. No sites were recorded by McIntyre.

Brayshaw and Dallas (1993) surveyed an extended corridor of land for the proposed 500 kV transmission line between Mount Piper and Marulan in 1993. Twenty-six Aboriginal sites were located during the route survey. Two of these were located within relatively close proximity to the Pipers Flat study area. Site No. 45-1-239 was an open artefact scatter situated 300 m west of the confluence of Pipers and Irondale Creeks. This site is on the southern side of the railway line and therefore just outside of the rail loop study area.

The second site, No. 45-1-238, comprised a shelter with archaeological deposit, art and axe grinding grooves located approximately 300 m north of the rail loop study area, on a hillslope adjacent to a tributary of Pipers Flat Creek.

5.4 Archaeological Surveys within the Study Area

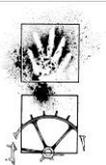
A number of archaeological surveys have included sections of the Pipers Flat study area.

A rockshelter with artefacts (Site No. 45-1-0018) was recorded on the escarpment just outside the eastern end of the study area in 1977. As this was an old recording there was some potential that the grid reference for the site was inaccurate (as it would have been based on smaller scale maps). Field survey conducted in the course of the current investigation confirmed that this site was located outside of the Pipers Flat study area (see Section 7 below).

Two Aboriginal sites, a shelter with deposit (No. 45-1-0075) and an open artefact scatter (No. 45-1-0076), were recorded in the Pipers Flat study area by Haglund in 1982 (Haglund 1982a). The shelter was noted as small, 4.5 metres long and 3.4 m deep, with a height of only 0.9 metres. The floor was mostly a flat rock shelf with only thin deposit about 10 cm deep. Haglund noted the presence of poor quality quartz artefacts outside the dripline and concluded that the site was likely to be poor in archaeological material.

The artefact scatter site was found 50-60 m downslope from the shelter. It consisted of a sparse scatter of about 12 quartz artefacts on a flat topped spur. The spur, which had only been partially cleared, was elevated about 12 m above the creekline. Haglund noted that the deposit was probably shallow but that testing would be required to prove this assumption. She also noted that the site should be subject to testing if threatened by development.

The shelter site, No. 45-1-0075 is located upslope of the proposed rail loop alignment. However the open artefact scatter 45-1-0076 is situated within an area likely to be impacted by the proposed rail alignment and coal unloading facility.



In 1998, Mills undertook a survey for the proposed Ivanhoe No 4 Colliery that included part of the present coal conveyor study area. Her study area, which comprised 375 hectares to the north of Pipers Flat Creek, included ridges and hill crests, steep hill slopes, gentle hill slopes and mostly ephemeral creeklines and swampy areas.

Mills recorded a total of six artefact scatters, two isolated finds and identified eight areas of potential archaeological deposit (PAD). One of these recordings, PAD 7, is located within the current investigation area. The PAD was situated on a series of raised creekline terraces stepping up from an ephemeral creekline. Mills noted that the northern and eastern areas of the terrace had been impacted by road construction and soil dumping associated with the construction of the Mount Piper Power Station. Mills further noted that the western side of the creekline appeared intact. Visibility was poor and no artefacts were observed (Mills 1998:19). PAD7 is crossed by the proposed conveyor from the rail loop and unloader facility.

Mills concluded that the survey confirmed the general model of site location within the district, that is, Aboriginal people used the ridgecrest areas and accessed the slopes and plateau through broad, ephemeral drainage lines from Pipers Flat.

In summary, two Aboriginal sites (Nos. 45-1-0075 and 45-1-0076) and an area of archaeological potential (PAD7) have been previously recorded as occurring in the Pipers Flat study area. Sites identified close to the rail and conveyor alignments are shown in Figure 5.1.

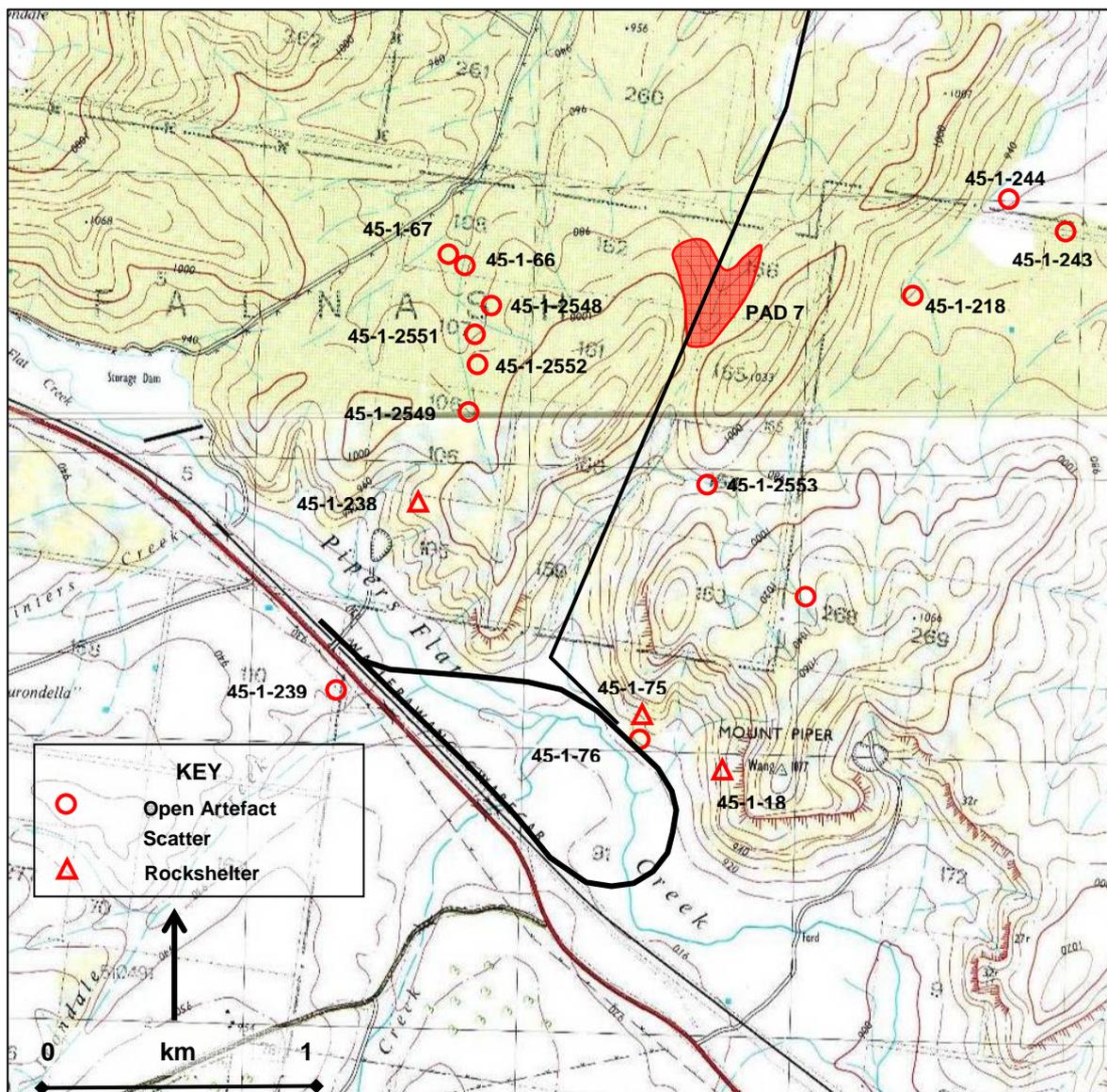
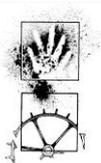
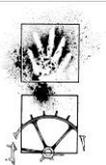


Figure 5.1 Previously recorded Aboriginal sites in proximity to rail loop and conveyor.
(Compilation of Cullen Bullen and Lithgow 1:25,000 topographic maps)



6. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

6.1 Regional Overview

European access was gained to the Lithgow region after a route was found over the Blue Mountains by Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson in 1813. A road was surveyed by Evans in 1814 and construction commenced in 1815. The road to Bathurst was completed in six months, opening up the region for exploration and grazing opportunities.

In 1822, James Walker was given a grant of 2,000 acres and named it Wallerawang [sic]. The first mention of the name Wallerawang was by the surveyor McBrien, who was surveying the road from Bathurst to Collitts Inn at Bowenfels in 1823. Upon crossing a stream, McBrien noted it was called Wallerawang by the natives, and meant 'place of wood and water' (Winchester 1972). Walker used the Wallerawang property as a base for an expansive empire that consisted of over five million acres, spread across, NSW and Queensland. Much of this was actually claimed by Walker through squatting.

Charles Darwin visited the area on his way from Sydney to Bathurst in 1836. He stayed at the Wallerawang property at the invitation of Andrew Brown. Darwin was impressed by the farm and the number of convicts employed but commented on the lack of comforts and how there was not a single woman in the area.

Walker had brought Andrew Brown with him to Australia. Brown was employed as an overseer of the Wallerawang property but also was given a grant of 200 acres at Bowenfels, just west of present day Lithgow. Here, Brown built a business that included a flour mill (1837) which was subsequently converted to a woollen mill (1867). Brown used coal to power the mill and is likely to be the first person to utilise the coal of the area from about the mid 1850s.

The railway line from Sydney to Bathurst was completed in 1869. Lithgow became a centre of industrial activity, centring on coal.

Coal mining became a major industry from the early 1860s, when it was vital for the railways. A number of coal mines were opened around Lithgow and the outlying towns. Some of the mines in the Wallerawang, Mount Piper, Lidsdale and Blackmans Flat area, generally following the railway line, included Irondale Colliery (1883), Ivanhoe Colliery (1893) and Commonwealth Colliery (1895), which became the first open cut mine in NSW (1940). The mines became the source of coal for powering Lithgow and to supply the Wallerawang power station, built in 1957.

Other early industries in the Lithgow area included copper and iron smelting, brickworks, wool milling and shale oil refining.

Rail was extended to Wallerawang in 1870. The Cobb and Co Coach Service provided transport between the station at Wallerawang and Bathurst and Mudgee, utilising the route approximating the current Castlereagh Highway.

Portland was established on what was the 1893 land selection of Thomas Murray. Portland was well known as a source of lime and the first Australian cement was made in 1889. A number of coal mines also operated around Portland.

The Mount Piper power station existed as a series of open cut mine pits prior to its current use as a power station. Construction of the Mount Piper Power Station commenced in 1992. Following construction of a conveyor belt between the Springvale Coal Mine and Mount Piper in 1992, and construction of the Thompsons Creek Dam to supply water to Mount Piper in 1993, the power station was operational by 1993-1994.

The land on which the rail loop is proposed appears to have been selected early in the history of the area. The 1887 Parish map of Falnash (Edition 2) shows that 800 acres was owned by Thomas Walker, a nephew of James Walker. Thomas Walker came to Australia in 1822 and joined his uncles, William and James, in business in Sydney.



The 1887 Lidsdale Parish map shows that the proposed conveyor alignment passes through a series of 50 acre lots owned by Thomas Chalder or H. W. Hammond. From these lots the alignment crosses into portion 19 of the Parish of Cox, which on the 1884 Parish map was owned by James Bishop. Figure 6.1 shows the development proposals in relation to the early Parish maps.

The study area has not been mined previously and the rail loop area seems to have been used solely for farming activities. The conveyor alignment is within forested areas that were probably at least partially cleared for grazing.

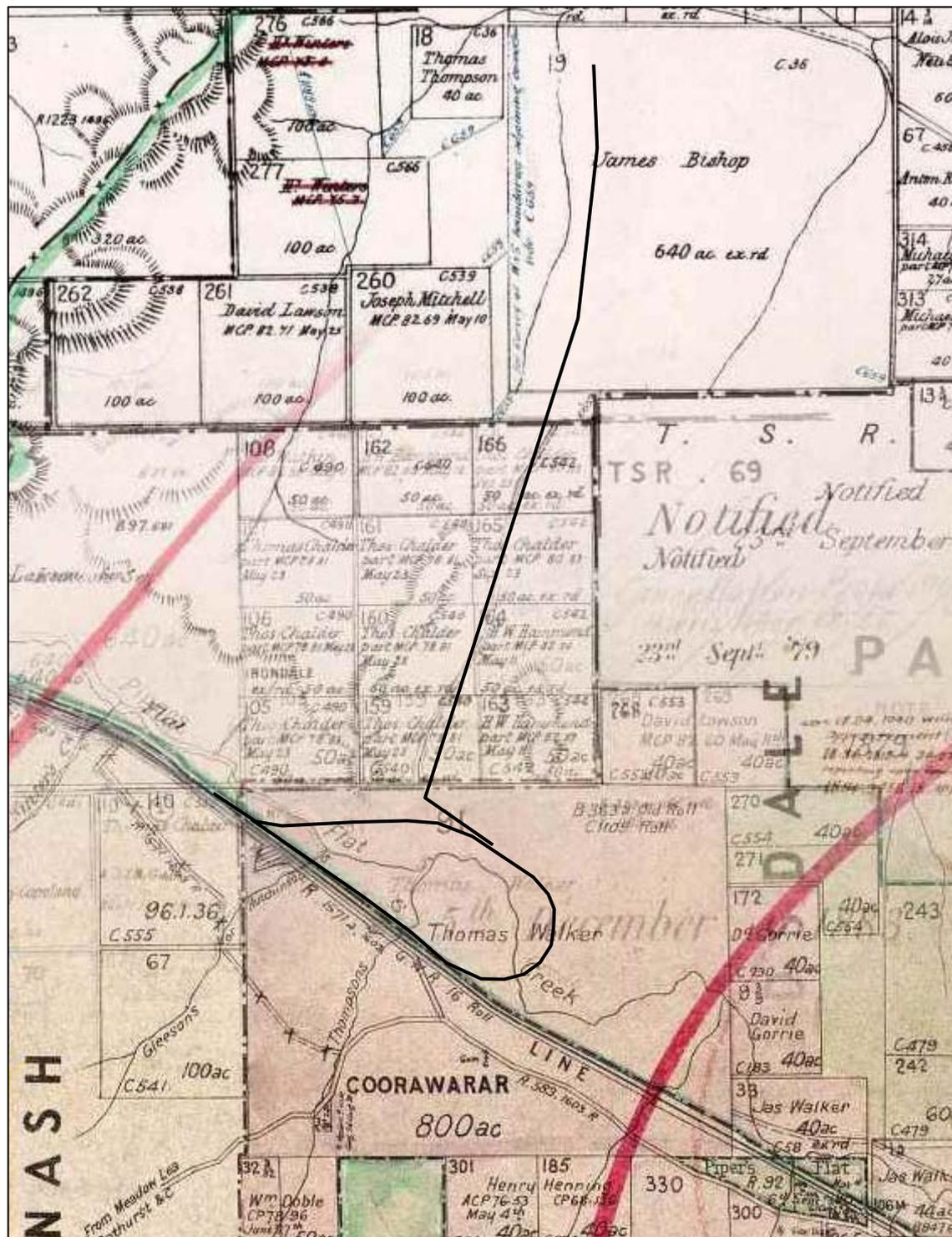
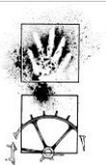


Figure 6.1 Approximate location of proposals in relation to early parish maps (Extracts from parish maps of Lidsdale 1892, Cox 1884 and Falnash 1887).



6.2 Predictive Historical Archaeology Statement

The types of places or items that may form part of the historical archaeology context include:

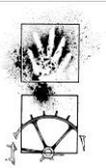
- Below-ground evidence, including building foundations, occupation deposits, features and artefacts; and above ground evidence, including buildings, works, industrial structures and relics that are intact or ruined; and
- Areas of land that display evidence of human activity or occupation.

Unrecorded historic sites and features of heritage significance may occur within the Pipers Flat study area.

- Structures of historic interest and heritage significance may be standing, ruined, buried, abandoned or still in use;
- Nineteenth century structures such as farm dwellings, outbuildings, selector's and timber-getters huts may survive as standing buildings, ruins or archaeological deposits and are most likely to survive on less developed rural properties, on early portion numbers, and in or near established farm building complexes;
- Traces of agricultural and industrial processing or extractive sites such as dairies, factories, and quarries may be found throughout agricultural lands on the valley floor and adjacent low ranges;
- Sites associated with early roads will be closely associated with early cadastral road reserves, watershed ridgelines, and related to early river and creek crossing points;
- Archaeological sites such as the occupation remains of former dwellings including homesteads, houses and huts, will be distributed in close association with land settlement patterns, and correlated with favourable agricultural lands, trading nodes and transport corridors;
- Transport and access routes such as bridle paths, stock routes, and road alignments of varying forms and ages, may survive as abandoned remnants adjacent to modern transport routes, or as alignments now followed by more modern or upgraded road and track infrastructure; and
- Old fence lines (such as post and rail fencing) may occur along road easement boundaries and farmlands, Other indications of field systems such as drainage channels and ridge and furrow ploughlands are likely to survive in low lying agricultural ground, especially in areas which are now used for grazing, rather than cropping.

6.3 The Pipers Flat Study Area

Register searches conducted for this investigation indicate that no historic sites are listed as occurring in the Pipers Flat study area.



7. RESULTS

7.1 Aboriginal Features

A single isolated find (WCU 1) and seven areas of potential archaeological deposit (WCU PAD1-7) were identified in the course of the field survey of the Pipers Flat study area. The site and the PADs have been given the prefix WCU (Western Coal Unloader) and are described below.

The survey relocated the two previously recorded rockshelters, Site Nos. 45-1-0018 and 45-1-0075, and identified the location of the artefact scatter, Site No. 45-1-0076 although no artefacts were visible at this latter site area. PAD7, recorded by Mills, was also inspected during the survey but no artefacts were identified. Previously recorded sites are discussed below.

Site and PAD locations are shown on Figure 7.17. All site grid coordinates were taken with a hand held GPS, based on the AMG (AGD66) datum.

7.1.1 Previously Recorded Sites

45-1-0018 Rockshelter with artefacts

AGD 223736.6301943

This site was recorded in 1977 and was potentially within the current study area, however, the site location was confirmed in the 2006 survey and the site is outside the boundary of the rail loop study area. It is located approximately 160 m east of the eastern section of the rail loop. The site consists of a long shelter at the base of a sandstone escarpment of Mount Piper. The shelter is approximately 20 m long and about 6 m deep, with a maximum height to the dripline of about 4 m.

The floor of the shelter is mostly flat sandstone but the main alcove contains a light coloured sandy deposit. The light colour of the deposit does not show any evidence of hearths.

There is a ledge of compacted, sandy clay deposit at the front of the shelter. One particular feature was an exposed bank of deposit which was semi-circular in shape and appeared to have been built up behind either a tree or rock (probably a tree). The tree since fallen or rotted away (no obvious evidence remains) leaving the deposit. Aboriginal artefacts were observed exposed in the deposit, which is about 1.2 m deep. Aboriginal artefacts were observed inside and outside the shelter. No evidence of art or grinding grooves was noted.

45-1-0075 Rockshelter with artefacts

AGD 223450.6302120

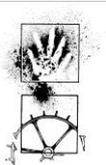
This site was identified by Haglund (1982a) and was relocated during the current survey. It is located approximately 60 m north of the eastern section of the rail loop. The shelter is very small with no headroom (height <1 m) and a rock platform floor with only recent, shallow sandy deposit. It is considered that there is no potential for archaeological deposit to be present within the shelter. Although the area outside the shelter is mostly level and offered good visibility (25%), no artefacts were found. Some natural pieces of quartz were observed in this area. There may be moderate potential for artefacts to occur based on the generally level area and the presence of a scatter of artefacts further down the slope.

45-1-0076 Artefact Scatter

AGD 223405.6302051

This site was identified by Haglund (1982a) and is approximately 60 m downslope from rockshelter Site No. 45-1-0075. The site was identified on a flat spur crest elevated about 12 m above Pipers Flat Creek. The flat is localised, about 80 x 20 m in area, and has gravelly loam deposit (Figure 7.1).

Haglund found 12 artefacts on stock tracks but visibility during the present survey was poor (15%) and these artefacts were no longer visible. The alignment of the rail loop crosses this spur and the coal unloading facility is also situated on part of the spur. The development is therefore likely to impact the site.



PAD 7

AGD 223700.6303600

PAD7, identified by Mills (1998) is crossed by the proposed coal conveyor. The eastern side of the PAD was noted by Mills to be disturbed and she indicated that the western side of the PAD was more intact, intimating that this was more likely to contain undisturbed deposits.

An assessment of the PAD 7 area and the ground surrounding the isolated find (WCU 1) during the current survey found that the area was a mostly gentle basal slope, elevated above the head of an ephemeral drainage line. It is considered that the drainage line was not likely to carry water except after a heavy storm and therefore was a poor source of water. Although an artefact was identified in the general area, the soil profile was very shallow, and offered little in the way of stratigraphic profile.

Using the matrix outlined in Table 3.1, the PAD is assessed as having only low to moderate potential to contain artefacts and the significance of any site found is likely to be low. The PAD does not therefore meet the threshold to require additional investigation.

7.1.2 Sites Recorded in the Current Survey

WCU 1 Isolated Find

AGD 223989.6303882

This site was found on a flat bench on a gentle side slope of a ridgeline, elevated above the head of a shallow, ephemeral drainage line. It is approximately 200 m east of the proposed conveyor from the rail loop and unloader facility and about the same distance north-east of PAD7. The artefact was found embedded in the soil at the base of a fallen tree (Figure 7.2). The exposure showed a predominantly clayey deposit which is likely to be shallow. Ground surface visibility in the general area was poor (10%) due to thick leaf litter.

Artefact:

1. Quartzite flake, 75% pebble cortex, 65 x 32 x 10 mm.

WCU PAD 1

AGD 223405.6302051

This PAD comprises a flat spur crest, approximately 80 x 20 m, elevated about 12 m above Pipers Flat Creek. It is located on a section of the proposed rail loop. The area is considered to have high archaeological potential. Any site found would likely to be of low to moderate significance. The PAD therefore meets the threshold for conducting additional investigation.

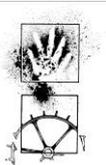
WCU PAD 2

AGD 223564.6301852

This PAD is located on a section of the proposed rail loop. It extends across the gentle to flat basal slopes of Mount Piper, which are elevated on a terrace-like feature about 5-8 m above the creek flats. Overall, the PAD extends for about 450 m around the base of the mountain, parallel to the meander of the creekline (Figure 7.3). Visibility was generally low at about 10%.

Soil was generally fine brown loam. A small peninsula of sandy deposit was identified on the southeastern end of the terrace feature. This area was only elevated about 2-3 m above the creek flats. Despite wombat burrows offering increased visibility in this area, no artefacts were located in this area.

The sandy area is considered to have high archaeological potential. Any site found is likely to be assessed as low to moderate significance. The PAD therefore meets the threshold for conducting additional investigation.



WCU PAD 3

AGD 223113.6301692

This PAD is situated on the southern side of Pipers Flat Creek on a section of the proposed rail loop. The PAD comprises a high, flat terrace elevated well above the creek flats with a steep bank dropping down to the creek flats (Figure 7.4). The PAD extends over an area of approximately 200 x 250 m, north towards the confluence of Thompsons Creek and Pipers Flat Creek. It gradually descends towards this junction until it is only a localised elevated, low spur crest. This area was recorded separately as WCU PAD 7 (see below).

The deposit mostly consists of sandy loam. Some disturbance has occurred through construction of a shed and cattle yards but most of the flat is relatively undisturbed. Visibility was generally poor, at only about 15%.

It was concluded that the flat area was of moderate to high archaeological potential. Any site found is likely to be assessed as low to moderate significance. The PAD therefore meets the threshold for conducting additional investigation.

WCU PAD 4

AGD 222855 6301870

This PAD comprises a high, relatively flat, elevated terrace situated south of Pipers Flat Creek, between Thompsons Creek and Irondale Creek (Figure 7.5). It is located on a section of the proposed rail loop. The elevated area extends for approximately 400 m between the creeks and from the existing rail line fence for about 100 m towards Pipers Flat Creek. A steep creek bank forms an obvious boundary to the area of potential. Soil was fine silty loam. Visibility was generally poor at about 15%.

It was concluded that the flat area was of moderate to high archaeological potential. Any site found is likely to be assessed as low to moderate significance. The PAD therefore meets the threshold for conducting additional investigation.

WCU PAD 5

AGD 222354.6302413

This PAD is situated on an elevated flat terrace between Irondale Creek and Winters Creek, south of Pipers Flat Creek, on a section of the proposed rail loop. The PAD is elevated well above the flood-prone creek flats (Figure 7.6) and extends over an area of about 380 x 80 m. The deposit is silty loam. Visibility was poor at about 10%.

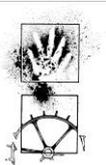
The western end of the terrace feature has been partly disturbed. There is a vehicle track accessing a former borrow pit from the main road, and there are small earth mounds noted that may be the result of rabbit warren ripping. Some of these mounds contain European rubbish such as corrugated iron and fencing wire. There is also a drain (?) excavated from a culvert under the existing rail line to Pipers Flat Creek. Part of the PAD area had also been disturbed as a result of the presence of a European historic site, comprising a small farm complex (see section 7.2).

The archaeological potential within this disturbed area is reduced by this landscape disruption. The area is nevertheless considered to have moderate to high archaeological potential. Any site found is likely to be assessed as low to moderate significance. The PAD therefore meets the threshold for conducting additional investigation.

WCU PAD 6

AGD 223072.6302337

This PAD comprises the gentle basal hillslopes on the northern side of Pipers Flat Creek, on a section of the proposed rail loop. The PAD is quite extensive, incorporating a large topographic feature (Figure 7.7), however the most sensitive areas of the basal slopes are the low gradient



elevated areas above the creek flats. These areas extend from the steeper break of slope out into the floodplain. These characteristics are not common across the entire basal slope area.

One area of particular potential was noted where the rail loop crosses a small micro-spur with a flat crest which is elevated above the creek flats. The GPS reading provided above is taken from this feature. Deposit in the PAD area is loam. Visibility was generally poor, at only about 10%.

The low gradient to level areas are considered to have moderate to high archaeological potential. Any site found is likely to be assessed as low to moderate significance. The PAD therefore meets the threshold for conducting additional investigation.

WCU PAD 7

AGD 223193.6302008

This PAD is an extension of WCU PAD 3 on the southern side of Pipers Flat Creek. It is a micro-topographic spur feature situated below the main high terrace of WCU PAD 3 (Figure 7.8). The feature is elevated above the creek flats and contains loam deposit. Visibility of 30% was afforded by a farm track but no artefacts were observed, while visibility off the track was only 10%.

The area is considered to have high archaeological potential. Any site found is likely to be assessed as low to moderate significance. The PAD therefore meets the threshold for conducting additional investigation.



Figure 7.1 View north along spur of 45-1-0076
Artefact Scatter and PAD (WCU PAD 1)



Figure 7.2 View southwest across site
WCU 1



Figure 7.3 View east to WCU PAD 2



Figure 7.4 View southwest up to elevated
terrace of WCU PAD 3

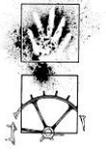


Figure 7.5 View east from WCU PAD 4 across Thompsons Creek to WCU PAD 3



Figure 7.6 View west along rail alignment up to elevated terrace of WCU PAD 5



Figure 7.7 View west across basal slopes of WCU PAD 6



Figure 7.8 View south along WCU PAD 7

7.2 European Features

One historic site complex, a former farm site, was identified during the field survey of the Pipers Flat study area. The location of this site, on a section of the proposed rail loop, is shown on Figure 7.17.

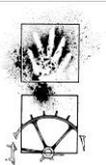
WCU H1 - Former Farm complex

AGD 222452.6302326 to 222433.6302345

This site consists of eight archaeological features most likely representing a former farm complex comprising a house and outbuildings. The site is on the flat, elevated ground between Irondale and Winters Creeks, immediately north of the railway line. A description of each feature is provided below.

Feature 1 This feature incorporates a benched platform outlined by quarried sandstone blocks with an apparent thin concrete internal slab. A partial brick-lined drain is evident at the northeastern corner (Figure 7.9). The bricks are probably early twentieth century in age. Two steel pins have been driven into the north (downslope) end of the platform, to possibly prevent downslope creep of the sandstone blocks. The area of the platform is approximately 3.8 x 5.1 m. The southern end of the platform abuts the property fenceline that forms a common boundary with the rail line easement.

Feature 2 Located approximately 40 m north of feature 1, this feature is a mound of dirt and rubble including broken bricks, stones and tin. The mound is approximately 11 m in diameter and there is a small hollow at the southern end containing modern bricks, rocks and galvanised tin. The mound appears to be the result of bulldozing the remains of a structure. No timber or other artefacts were observed.



- Feature 3** This feature is situated about 17 m west of feature 2 and incorporates the platform of a building with a concrete slab. The slab is approximately 3.5 x 3.5 m in size. The concrete slab is associated with a rectangular earthen depression, which is 8 x 4.2 m in area. At the southwestern end of this depression, is a concrete footing (Figure 7.10). The footing is 2.8 m long and about 6 cm deep. The concrete is scalloped on the inside - where the building would have stood - and appears to mirror the edge of a vertical timber slab structure (Figure 7.11).
- Feature 4** Situated 11 m west of feature 3, this feature is the base of a collapsed stone chimney (Figure 7.12). The chimney comprises large, quarried sandstone blocks, with one measuring 95 x 35 x 15 cm. There are broken bricks in cement render associated with the chimney. It appears that the hearth opened to the east, towards the elongated depression of item 3.
- Feature 5** This is a small platform located about 9 m south of the collapsed chimney. The feature comprises broken concrete slabs, broken bricks and scattered sandstone blocks. The feature measures about 5.5 x 4.4 m in area (Figure 7.13).
- Feature 6** This is a brick lined well that has been filled with rocks, bricks and concrete blocks. It is located about 6.5 m west of the collapsed chimney and is 1.5 m in diameter. The red bricks lining the well (Figure 7.14) are characteristic of others within the site complex and probably date to the early to mid-twentieth century (1920s-1950s).
- Feature 7** This is a three sided, rectangular shaped feature, about 3 m south of the well. The feature appears to be a concrete base or footings of a small storage area or building (Figure 7.15), possibly to an outhouse. It was difficult in the field to determine if the construction was concrete with a very coarse aggregate (pebbles ranging in size from 0.25 to 4 cm in diameter) or was a conglomerate. It is more likely to be a concrete.
- Feature 8** This feature is a concrete platform situated about 24 m west of Feature 1. It is 4.3 x 3.2 m in area, elongated along the property and rail easement fence. There are no other artefacts associated with this feature, except the mature exotic tree, located about 10 m to the north.

Other features noted were exotic trees close to the complex (Figure 7.16). None of the trees had leaves so it was not possible to identify them, but it is possible that some are fruit trees. A track was also noted leading from the site to a gate in the fenceline to the west to the site. The general site area was clearly disturbed and it appears that the structures were deliberately demolished as there was no evidence of other artefacts such as glass or structural timber left at the site.

All of these items appear to represent the remains of a small farm complex. The collapsed chimney is likely to represent the location of either the main house or separate kitchen building. The well is likely to have been used for domestic purposes, being located close to the house. It is possible that the platform with the brick-lined drain was either a slaughterhouse or more likely a milking shed, as drainage is important for this activity. Based on evidence of the bricks, the site is likely to date from between the 1920's to about the 1950's.

The site is located opposite the former Irondale Public School. The school location is shown on the Parish map of Falnash from 1929 but not before. Another public school shown on the earlier parish maps at Thompsons Creek, was also called Irondale. The school was first established in 1881 but changed variously from full time to provisional and half time with Mount Lambie. It was known as Pipers Flat School until 1902 and finally closed in 1932 (Fletcher and Burnswoods 1983).

The location of the school clearly changed during this time from the original location near Thompsons Creek to adjacent to the railway line. It is possible that the site complex identified during this study has some relationship with the former school but this cannot be determined on the current evidence. An association is also problematic as the school and site complex are on opposite sides of the railway which runs through a deep cutting at this location.



Figure 7.9 View south to Feature 1, scale in brick-lined drain



Figure 7.10 View east along Feature 3, scale adjacent to concrete edging



Figure 7.11 Close up of scalloped concrete edging to Feature 3



Figure 7.12 View west to collapsed stone chimney (Feature 4)



Figure 7.13 View east to Feature 6 (foreground) and Feature 5 (background)



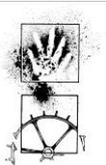
Figure 7.14 View east of brick lined well (Feature 6)



Figure 7.15 Feature 7



Figure 7.16 View south across the site complex

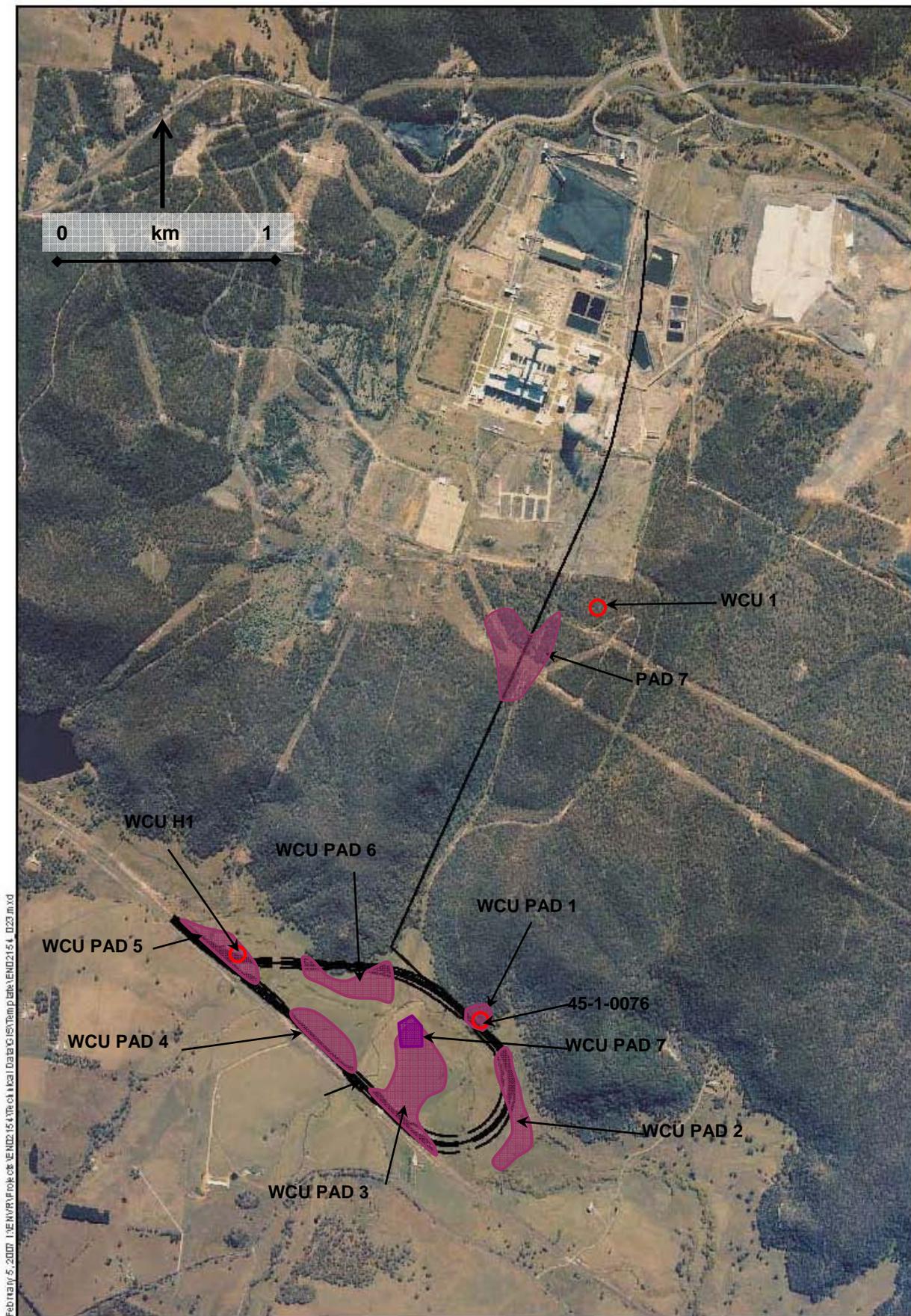


7.3 Inventory of Site Locations

Thirteen heritage recordings were reviewed and/or made during the field survey of the Pipers Flat study area. Ten of these recordings are located within the study area, being PAD7, 45-1-0076, WCU PADs 1 to 7, and WCU H1. Table 7.1 provides an inventory of recorded sites and PADs

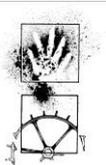
Table 7.1 List of sites identified during the study

| Recording Type | Recording Code | AMG Reference | Location relative to proposed development |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Rockshelter with artefacts | 45-1-0018 | 223736.6301943 | Outside study area (approx. 160 m east of eastern part of rail loop) |
| Rockshelter with artefacts | 45-1-0075 | 223450.6302120 | Outside study area (approx. 50 m north of eastern part of rail loop) |
| Potential Archaeological Deposit | PAD 7 | 223700.6303600 | PAD7 is crossed by the proposed conveyor from the rail loop and unloader facility |
| Artefact scatter | 45-1-0076 | 223405.6302051 | On rail loop and location of coal unloader facility |
| Isolated Find | WCU 1 | 223989.6303882 | Outside study area (approx. 200 m east of the proposed conveyor from the rail loop and unloader facility. |
| Potential Archaeological Deposit | WCU PAD 1 | 223405.6302051 | On rail loop |
| Potential Archaeological Deposit | WCU PAD 2 | 223564.6301852 | On rail loop |
| Potential Archaeological Deposit | WCU PAD 3 | 223113.6301692 | On rail loop |
| Potential Archaeological Deposit | WCU PAD 4 | 222855.6301870 | On rail loop |
| Potential Archaeological Deposit | WCU PAD 5 | 222354.6302413 | On rail loop |
| Potential Archaeological Deposit | WCU PAD 6 | 223072.6302337 | On rail loop |
| Potential Archaeological Deposit | WCU PAD 7 | 223193.6302008 | Inside rail loop |
| Historic Farm complex | WCU H1 | 222452.6302326 to 222433.6302345 | On rail loop |



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Figure 7.17 Location of sites and PADs recorded during the survey.
(Map supplied by SKM)



7.4 Survey Coverage and Visibility Variables

The effectiveness of archaeological field survey is to a large degree related to the obtrusiveness of the sites being looked for and the incidence and quality of ground surface visibility. Visibility variables were estimated for all areas of comprehensive survey within the study area. These estimates provide a measure with which to gauge the effectiveness of the survey and level of sampling conducted. They can also be used to gauge the number and type of sites that may not have been detected by the survey.

Ground surface visibility is a measure of the bare ground visible to the archaeologist during the survey. There are two main variables used to assess ground surface visibility, the frequency of exposure encountered by the surveyor and the quality of visibility within those exposures. The predominant factors affecting the quality of ground surface visibility within an exposure are the extent of vegetation and ground litter, the depth and origin of exposure, the extent of recent sedimentary deposition, and the level of visual interference from surface gravels. Two variables of ground surface visibility were estimated during the survey:

- A percentage estimate of the total area of ground inspected which contained useable exposures of bare ground;
- A percentage estimate of the average levels of ground surface visibility within those exposures. This is a net estimate and accounts for all impacting visual and physical variables including the archaeological potential of the sediment or rock exposed.

The obtrusiveness of different site types is also an important factor in assessing the impact of visibility levels. Sites based on rock exposures, such as rock shelters, open engravings and grinding grooves are more likely to be encountered than sites with no surface relief located on, or within, sedimentary matrices. Rock platform sites are still subject to visibility constraints in the form of obscuring ground litter, flood debris and sedimentation, however, rock shelters are less likely to go uninspected. The inspection rate of rock shelters is likely to be 100% in a comprehensive survey, however the extent of leaf litter and recent sediment on a rock shelter floor may be an important factor in a recorder's ability to detect either a site, or simply a potential archaeological deposit.

In another example, artefacts made from locally occurring rock such as quartz may be more difficult to detect under usual field survey conditions than rock types that are foreign to the area. The impact of natural gravels on artefact detection was taken into account in the visibility variables estimates outlined above. The natural incidence of sandstone platforms suitable for grinding grooves or engraving, together with the incidence of old growth trees, are important considerations in identifying both survey effectiveness and site location patterns outside of environmentally determined factors.

Table 7.2 summarises estimates for the degree to which separate landforms within the study area were examined and also indicates the exposure incidence and average ground visibility present in each case. A total of 36.7% of the ground area in the study area was inspected during the survey, with 10.6% providing useable archaeological exposures. A graphic approximation of the surface survey coverage achieved within the study area is shown in Figure 7.18.

Taking into account survey coverage, archaeologically useable exposures, and visibility variables, the effective survey coverage (ESC) was 1.4% of the total survey area. The ESC attempts to provide an estimate of the proportion of the total study area that provided a net 100% level of ground surface visibility to archaeological surveyors.

Subsequent to the field survey and completion of the draft report, the rail loop and conveyor were subject to realignment. Not all of the conveyor alignment was therefore inspected. Some of the realignment was within the heavily modified ground within the Mount Piper Power Station, where there is no chance of sites remaining. Part of the realignment was to the west of the original surveyed portion. Although this section was not subject to direct survey, the general terrain and topography was similar to the original alignment. The survey is therefore considered adequate to assess the archaeological potential of sites occurring. The realignment of the rail loop was only minor and most of the areas surveyed were comparable to the realignment. The results of the survey are therefore considered to be reliable and a reflection of the surface archaeological record.



Table 7.2: Survey Coverage Data

| Survey division | Survey unit | Landform | Survey mode | Main exposure types | Estimated Survey Unit area (ha) | Proportion of unit surveyed % | Area of unit surveyed (ha) | Exposure incidence % | Average exposure visibility % | Net effective exposure (ha) | Effective survey coverage of survey unit % | Aboriginal Archaeological recordings |
|--------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Conveyor alignment | 1 | basal slopes | foot | vehicle track | 5 | 50 | 2.5 | 20 | 50 | 0.2500 | 5.0 | nil |
| | 2 | drainage line | foot | animal tracks | 5 | 25 | 1.25 | 5 | 20 | 0.0125 | 0.3 | nil |
| | 3 | saddle | foot | vehicle track | 1.25 | 60 | 0.75 | 10 | 30 | 0.0225 | 1.8 | PAD 7 |
| | 4 | mid slopes | foot | vehicle track, animal tracks | 5.5 | 40 | 2.2 | 10 | 30 | 0.0660 | 1.2 | WCU 1 45-1-0075, 45-1-0076, WCU PAD 1, WCU PAD 2 |
| Rail Loop | 1 | basal slopes/terrace | foot | animal tracks | 3.2 | 40 | 1.28 | 10 | 25 | 0.0320 | 1.0 | nil |
| | 2 | creek flats | foot | animal tracks | 2.5 | 30 | 0.75 | 5 | 20 | 0.0075 | 0.3 | WCU PAD 3, nil |
| | 3 | terrace | foot | vehicle track, | 1.25 | 30 | 0.375 | 5 | 20 | 0.0038 | 0.3 | nil |
| | 4 | creek flats | foot | stock tracks | 0.75 | 25 | 0.1875 | 5 | 20 | 0.0019 | 0.3 | WCU PAD 4 |
| | 5 | terrace | foot | stock tracks | 1.75 | 30 | 0.525 | 5 | 20 | 0.0053 | 0.3 | nil |
| | 6 | creek flats | foot | stock tracks | 1 | 30 | 0.3 | 5 | 20 | 0.0030 | 0.3 | WCU PAD 5 |
| | 7 | terrace | foot | vehicle track, stock tracks | 1.75 | 40 | 0.7 | 15 | 30 | 0.0315 | 1.8 | nil |
| | 8 | creek flats | foot | erosion, stock tracks | 1.25 | 35 | 0.4375 | 10 | 20 | 0.0088 | 0.7 | WCU PAD 6 |
| | 9 | basal slopes | foot | stock tracks | 1.5 | 25 | 0.375 | 10 | 20 | 0.0075 | 0.5 | |
| <i>Total</i> | | | | | 31.7 | | 11.63 | | | 0.4521 | 1.4 | |

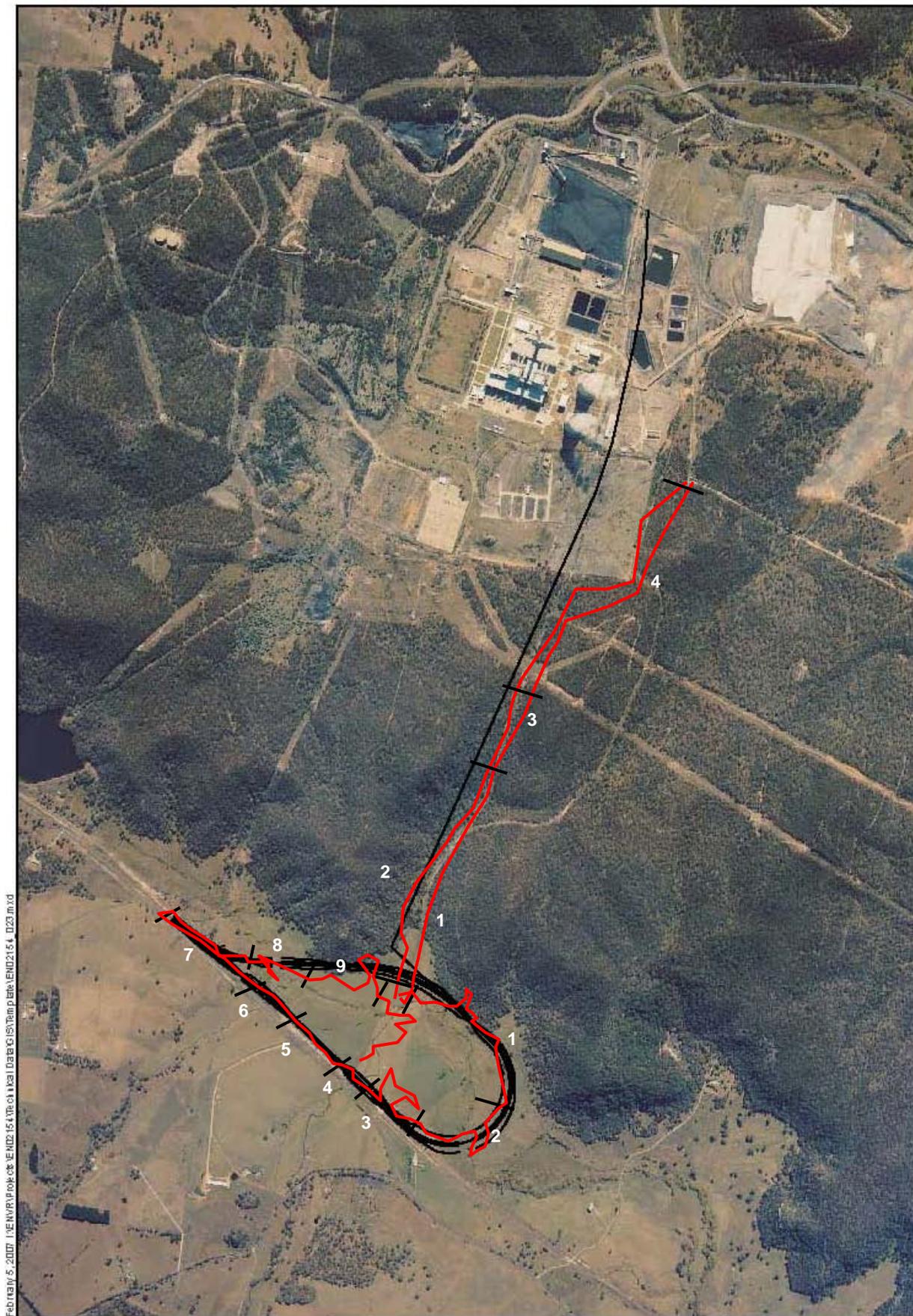
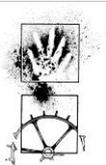


Figure 7.18 Approximate location of numbered survey transects within the study area.
(Map supplied by SKM)



8. SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

8.1 Aboriginal Heritage

8.1.1 Assessment Criteria

The Burra Charter of Australia defines cultural significance as 'aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present and future generations' (Aust. ICOMOS 1987). The assessment of the cultural significance of a place is based on this definition but often varies in the precise criteria used according to the analytical discipline and the nature of the site, object or place.

In general, Aboriginal archaeological sites are assessed using five potential categories of significance:

- Significance to contemporary Aboriginal people;
- Scientific or archaeological significance;
- Aesthetic value;
- Representativeness; and
- Value as an educational and/or recreational resource.

Many sites will be significant according to several categories and the exact criteria used will vary according to the nature and purpose of the evaluation. Cultural significance is a relative value based on variable references within social and scientific practice. The cultural significance of a place is therefore not a fixed assessment and may vary with changes in knowledge and social perceptions.

Aboriginal significance can be defined as the cultural values of a place held by and manifest within the local and wider contemporary Aboriginal community. Places of significance may be landscape features as well as archaeologically definable traces of past human activity. The significance of a place can be the result of several factors including: continuity of tradition, occupation or action; historical association; custodianship or concern for the protection and maintenance of places; and the value of sites as tangible and meaningful links with the lifestyle and values of community ancestors. Aboriginal cultural significance may or may not parallel the archaeological significance of a site.

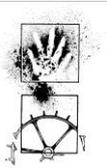
Scientific significance can be defined as the present and future research potential of the artefactual material occurring within a place or site. This is also known as archaeological significance.

There are two major criteria used in assessing scientific significance:

1. The potential of a place to provide information which is of value in scientific analysis and the resolution of potential research questions. Sites may fall into this category because they: contain undisturbed artefactual material, occur within a context which enables the testing of certain propositions, are very old or contain significant time depth, contain large artefactual assemblages or material diversity, have unusual characteristics, are of good preservation, or are a constituent of a larger significant structure such as a site complex.
2. The representativeness of a place. Representativeness is a measure of the degree to which a place is characteristic of other places of its type, content, context or location. Under this criteria a place may be significant because it is very rare or because it provides a characteristic example or reference.

The value of an Aboriginal place as an educational resource is dependent on: the potential for interpretation to a general visitor audience, compatible Aboriginal values, a resistant site fabric, and feasible site access and management resources.

The principal aim of cultural resource management is the conservation of a representative sample of site types and variation from differing social and environmental contexts. Sites with inherently unique



features, or which are poorly represented elsewhere in similar environment types, are considered to have relatively high cultural significance.

The cultural significance of a place can be usefully classified according to a comparative scale which combines a relative value with a geographic context. In this way a site can be of low, moderate or high significance within a local, regional or national context. This system provides a means of comparison, between and across places. However it does not necessarily imply that a place with a limited sphere of significance is of lesser value than one of greater reference.

The following assessments are made with full reference to the scientific, aesthetic, representative and educational criteria outlined above. Reference to Aboriginal cultural values has also been made where these values have been communicated to the consultants. It should be noted that Aboriginal cultural significance can only be determined by the Aboriginal community, and that confirmation of this significance component is dependent on written submissions by the appropriate representative organisations.

8.1.2 The Study Area

Isolated finds are not normally considered significant based on any of the criteria defined above. Site **WCU 1** is considered to be of low significance based on the above criteria.

Haglund identified rockshelter site **45-1-0075** and noted that there were quartz artefacts in front of the shelter. No artefacts were identified when the site was re-inspected for the current survey. The shelter is considered too small to have been extensively occupied and as it has a rock floor it does not contain archaeological deposit. There is only limited archaeological research potential outside the shelter. A number of other shelters which contain cultural material have been identified within the local area, so this shelter is not classed as rare or representative. The site is assessed as having low archaeological significance.

The artefact scatter **45-1-0076** was identified by Haglund as containing 12 artefacts and the current survey identified an area of associated PAD (**WCU PAD 1**). The scatter is the largest that is known within the current study area but is small compared to other recorded sites in the wider region. The site is likely to be limited in terms of its research value, as the artefacts noted by Haglund are typical quartz artefacts of the region. The site is assessed as having low archaeological significance.

The large rockshelter **45-1-0018** lies outside the study area and will not be directly impacted by the proposals. The shelter contains artefacts and potential archaeological deposit, although the deposit is probably shallow. The research potential would be moderate and the shelter site type is not rare for this region. The site is assessed as having moderate archaeological significance in a local context.

These assessments are based on the results of the present surface investigations. All of the sites have potential to be associated with additional cultural material which could alter the present assessment.

8.2 European Heritage

8.2.1 Assessment Criteria

The NSW Heritage Office has defined a methodology and set of criteria for the assessment of cultural heritage significance for items and places, where these do not include Aboriginal heritage from the pre-contact period (NSW Heritage Office & DUAP 1996, NSW Heritage Office 2000). The assessments provided in this report follow the Heritage Office methodology.

The following heritage assessment criteria are those set out for Listing on the State Heritage Register. In many cases items will be significant under only one or two criteria. The State Heritage Register was established under Part 3A of the Heritage Act (as amended in 1999) for listing of items of environmental heritage that are of state heritage significance. Environmental heritage means those places, buildings, works, relics, moveable objects, and precincts, of state or local heritage significance (section 4, Heritage Act 1977).



An item will be considered to be of State (or local) heritage significance if, in the opinion of the Heritage Council of NSW, it meets one or more of the following criteria:

- 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);
- 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);
- 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);
- 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;
- 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);
- 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);
- 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.

An item is not to be excluded from the Register on the ground that items with similar characteristics have already been listed on the Register. Only particularly complex items or places will be significant under all criteria.

In using these criteria it is important to assess the values first, then the local or State context in which they may be significant.

Different components of a place may make a different relative contribution to its heritage value. For example, loss of integrity or condition may diminish significance. In some cases it is constructive to note the relative contribution of an item or its components. Table 8.1 provides a guide to ascribing relative value.



Table 8.1 Guide to ascribing relative heritage value.

| Grading | Justification | Status |
|----------------|--|--|
| Exceptional | Rare or outstanding item of local or State significance. High degree of intactness Item can be interpreted relatively easily. | Fulfils criteria for local or State listing. |
| High | High degree of original fabric. Demonstrates a key element of the item's significance. Alterations do not detract from significance. | Fulfils criteria for local or State listing. |
| Moderate | Altered or modified elements. Elements with little heritage value, but which contribute to the overall significance of the item. | Fulfils criteria for local or State listing. |
| Little | Alterations detract from significance. Difficult to interpret. | Does not fulfil criteria for local or State listing. |
| Intrusive | Damaging to the item's heritage significance. | Does not fulfil criteria for local or State listing. |

8.2.2 The Study Area

The historic site complex **WCU H1** contains a number of elements that would be typical of farm complexes in the region and across the State. The features that comprise the complex are in poor condition due to the demolition of all above ground structures and removal of the debris. There is no known association with particular people or groups from the local area. The lack of artefacts at the complex suggests that there is little potential for excavation of archaeological remains. The site does not fulfil any of the Heritage Office criteria and has little relative value. It therefore does not meet the threshold for State or local listing.



9. MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 Site Impacts

The proposed Pipers Flat rail loop would directly impact one Aboriginal site (45-1-0076 – an artefact scatter) and directly impact six areas of Aboriginal Potential Archaeological Deposit (WCU PAD 1-6).

The rail loop will also directly impact one historic site (WCU H1).

The proposed Pipers Flat coal conveyor will directly impact one area of Aboriginal Potential Archaeological Deposit (PAD 7).. As noted in section 7.1.1 it is not considered that PAD 7 meets the threshold required for testing.

The potential impact to the identified Aboriginal sites and areas of archaeological potential cannot be avoided by realignment of the rail line and conveyor. Some form of assessment of the presence and significance of sites within the PADs is therefore required. The potential impact of the development proposals on the archaeological record could then be defined and informed management and mitigative measures could be provided for these areas.

The most effective method for assessing the presence of Aboriginal archaeological sites in the current proposal area is through conducting a subsurface testing program. This would involve excavation of a series of test pits across the proposed disturbance area of each PAD and sieving the deposit. Any cultural material recovered would then be examined and the significance of the site assessed.

Although it is likely that any sites identified would be of low to moderate significance, the need for testing is high as the true archaeological record within the study area, and therefore the impacts from development is unknown based on current information.

The historic site (WCU H1) has been assessed as having low significance and does not meet the threshold for listing on the State Heritage Register or Inventory. However, some form of archival recording is considered warranted for the site. The recording should include preparation of a detailed map of the complex and to allow for investigation into the age of the site.

9.2 Legislative Framework

Aboriginal Objects (as defined under the *NPW Act*) and *relics* (as defined by the *Heritage Act*) have been identified within the Rail loop and conveyor study area. The presence of these items means that if the *NPW Act* or *Heritage Act* apply to the development, then no activities can occur in the proposed development area that may disturb either known surface artefacts or subsurface archaeological deposits, without the receipt of an appropriate permit from the DEC or Heritage Office.

However, approval for the project at Pipers Flat is being sought through Part 3A of the *Environment Planning and Assessment Act* (1979). As such, Part 6 provisions under the *National Park and Wildlife Act* (1974) and Part 6 of the *Heritage Act* (1977) do not apply. These sections relate to the blanket protection of *Aboriginal objects* and heritage *relics* and outline the mechanisms and permits required to disturb such items.

Under a Part 3A development proposal, where Aboriginal and historic sites and objects have been identified in the project area then their effective management must be defined in a Statement of Commitments, which forms part of the project approval. The Statement of Commitments is subject to review and approval by the Department of Environment and Conservation and Heritage Office as part of the review of applications by the Department of Planning.

If the project is approved under Part 3A of the EP&A Act, then separate permits to impact the Aboriginal and European heritage sites would not be required. However, if the sites were to be impacted prior to Part 3A approval then the relevant permits from the DEC and Heritage Office would be required. If subsurface investigations were to be carried out prior to the Part 3A approval, then a section 87 permit under the NSW *National Parks and Wildlife Act* would be required. If the historic site was impacted prior to or without Part 3A approval, then an Excavation Permit Exception Notification (under Section 139 of the *Heritage Act*) would be required. A summary of legislative obligations is provided in Appendix 3.



10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on an assessment of the possible impacts of the development proposal on the known and potential archaeological resource, the results of the data review and field survey documented in this report, and an assessment of the significance of the identified sites, the following recommendations are provided.

1. If impact to the PADs WCU PAD 1 – WCU PAD 6 cannot be avoided then a program of archaeological subsurface testing should be conducted for the PADs. Testing should aim to determine the nature and significance of any Aboriginal cultural material present at each location.

If the PADs are likely to be disturbed prior to project approval under Part 3A, then a Section 87 *Preliminary Research Permit (PRP)* will be required from the NSW DEC to conduct the further archaeological investigations.

2. If impact to the site 45-1-0076 is to occur prior to project approval under Part 3a, then a Section 90 *Consent to Destroy Permit* will be required from the NSW DEC.
3. Consultation should continue with the relevant Aboriginal community groups and representatives should be invited to participate in any further archaeological assessments that are conducted in relation to the Pipers Flat project.
4. Historic site WCU H1 should be subject to an archival level recording prior to any adverse impact to the site. The recording would be to a standard acceptable to the NSW Heritage Office and lodged with the Heritage Office.
5. If the project is approved under Part 3A then recommendations 1-4 should be included in the *Statement of Commitments* for the project.
6. Applications for Section 90 Consents and Section 87 Permits from the DEC would involve implementation of the DEC *Interim Aboriginal Community Consultation Requirements for Applicants* (Jan 2005). The development proponent is advised to allow for sufficient time within the project schedule to conduct the protocols specified in the requirements.
7. A copy of this report should be sent to the Aboriginal community for their review and comment:

Mr Richard Peters
Bathurst LALC
PO Box 1500
BATHURST NSW 2795

8. Three copies of this report should be sent to the DEC for review:

Central Branch
Environmental Protection and Regulation Division
Department of Environment and Conservation
PO Box 1967
HURSTVILLE NSW 1481

10.1 Effectiveness of Management Recommendations

It is standard archaeological procedure to conduct subsurface investigations where it is considered that Aboriginal may sites exist but where the visibility and other environmental factors prevent their detection. Once the testing is completed, the true significance of any site present can be established and the development impacts assessed.

Subsurface investigations are routinely undertaken by archaeological consultants and a variety of techniques have been shown to be reliable in identifying the presence and patterns of Aboriginal sites within the landscape. Subsurface investigations are a suitable method for assessing the



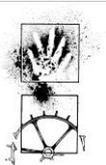
presence and significance of Aboriginal sites on the Pipers Flat Rail Loop. This is based on the open and cleared nature of the terrain and the type of sites (artefact scatters) likely to be present.

As with all such investigations, the subsurface testing would be undertaken in consultation with the relevant Aboriginal community. This would ensure that the Aboriginal community have the opportunity to identify the cultural significance of any sites found. Consultation would also ensure Aboriginal community input to any further management measures required for the sites.

If the subsurface investigations find that the PADs contain sites of low significance, then there are unlikely to be any additional mitigative measures required. In this instance, the results of the subsurface investigation would be an adequate record of the archaeological remains from the site.

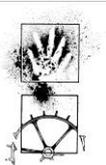
If the testing shows the presence of more significant finds, then additional recommendations for their management may be required. Recommendations would be made in consultation with the relevant Aboriginal community.

The recommendation for archival recording for the historic site (WCU H1) is considered a suitable measure to ensure some record is preserved of the site. The significance of the site is low and as such further mitigative measures are not considered warranted. The residual impact would be nil as there would be a public record of the site.



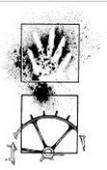
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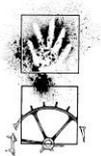
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APPENDIX 1

ABORIGINAL PARTICIPATION FORM



Record of Aboriginal Representative Participation*

Name(s) of Aboriginal Representative: RICHARD PETERS

Name of Aboriginal Organisation: BATHURST LALC

Archaeologist(s): name & address MATTHEW BARBER

Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd
4/71 Leichhardt Street, Kingston, ACT 2604

Project Name: WESTERN COAL UNLOADER

Client: name & address: CHRIS HAVELOCK
(please send your invoice to this address) SINCLAIR KNIGHT MERZ

100 CHRISTIE ST
ST LEONARDS NSW

- Type of participation:
- Guided inspection of study area and sites
 - Accompanied/participated in archaeological survey/salvage
 - Separate inspection or survey
 - Accompanied/participated in excavation program

Period of participation:

| Date(s) | Start | Finish |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| <u>15-8-06</u> | <u>10.00</u> | <u>5.00</u> |
| <u>16-8-06</u> | <u>8.30</u> | <u>12.00</u> |
| | | |
| | | |

Issues raised:

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Signed (archaeologist): M. Barber

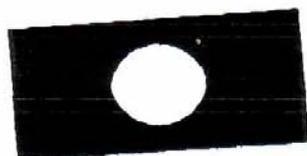
Signed (Aboriginal representative(s)): Richard J. Peters

* please note this form is not an invoice. For payment, please send an invoice from your organisation to the client name and address provided above.



APPENDIX 2

BATHURST LALC REPORT



BATHURST LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

149 Runcell Street
Bathurst NSW 2795

PO Box 1500
Bathurst NSW 2795

Phone: 02 6332 6835
Fax: 02 6332 3623

WESTERN RAIL COAL UNLOADER

A survey was conducted on behalf of Delta Electricity on the 15 and 16 August 2006 for the proposed Western Rail Unloader situated at Piper's Flat between Wallerawang and Portland NSW.

CONVEYER LINE SURVEY

One single artefact was located east of the Delta Mt Piper Power Station during this section of the survey areas.

Records from 1998 show that archaeologist Robyn Mills reported Possible Archaeological Discovery No: 7 in the Conveyer line area. After an extensive investigation of the area, it was decided that an archaeological dig in this area would not be required.

The Bathurst Local Aboriginal Land Council has no objection to the Conveyer Line proceeding.

LOOP UNLOADER SURVEY

Previously Open Scatters and two rock shelters had been recorded in this area. However the rock shelters are outside of the survey zone so they are protected while the open scatters are in the middle of the Loop Unloader section and their location will not be disturbed by the proposed project.

Due to the high sensitivity and potential of the Loop Unloader section several Possible Archaeological Discovery areas have been recorded. These Possible Archaeological Discovery areas can be located on the map provided by Archaeologist Matthew Barber. These areas are not to be disturbed by Delta Electricity until after the archaeological process has been completed and both the archaeological team and Bathurst Local Aboriginal Land Council are satisfied that this area has been cleared as a potential aboriginal habitats.

The Loop Unloader survey area was concealed by heavy ground cover that made for poor visibility.

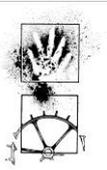
Present at this survey were:

Matthew Barber
Tom Taverner
Richard Peters

Archaeologist
Archaeologist
Sites Officer

Navin Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd
Navin Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd
Bathurst Local Aboriginal Land Council

Richard J Peters
RICHARD J PETERS
SITES OFFICER
18 August 2006



APPENDIX 3

STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS



The National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974

The following summary is based on:

- The provisions of the current *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NP&W Act) as amended. It should be noted that amendments to this Act were passed by both houses of the NSW State Government in 2001 (no.130, assented 19/12/2001). Some of these amendments are yet to be proclaimed.
- Department of Environment and Conservation policy as presented in the 1997 Standards and Guidelines Kit for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage provided by the (then) NSW NPWS, and as communicated orally to the consultants on a periodic basis. The 1997 Standards and Guidelines Kit is currently under review and subject to change in the near future.

The guideline documents presented in the 1997 Standards and Guidelines Kit were stated to be working drafts and subject to an 18 months performance review. The Standards Manual was defined not to be a draft and subject to periodic supplements.

With the exception of projects subject to the provisions of Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (as amended) provides the primary basis for the legal protection and management of Aboriginal sites within NSW. The implementation of the Aboriginal heritage provisions of the Act is the responsibility of the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC).

The rationale behind the Act is the prevention of unnecessary or unwarranted destruction of relics, and the active protection and conservation of relics that are of high cultural significance.

With the exception of some artefacts in collections, or those specifically made for sale, the Act generally defines all Aboriginal artefacts to be 'Aboriginal objects' and to be the property of the Crown. An Aboriginal object has a broad definition and is inclusive of most archaeological evidence. The Act then provides various controls for the protection, management and disturbance of Aboriginal objects.

An Aboriginal object is defined as:

'any deposit, object or material evidence (not being a handicraft made for sale) relating to the Aboriginal habitation of the area that comprises New South Wales, being habitation before or concurrent with (or both) the occupation of that area by persons of non-Aboriginal extraction, and includes Aboriginal remains.' [Section 5(1)].

In practice, archaeologists use a methodology that groups 'Aboriginal objects' into various site classifications according to the nature, occurrence and exposure of archaeological material evidence. The archaeological definition of a site may vary according to survey objectives, however a site is not recognised or defined as a legal entity in the Act. It should be noted that even single and isolated artefacts are protected as Aboriginal objects under the Act.

The investigation, use or destruction of Aboriginal objects is managed through a system of Permits and Consents under the provisions of Sections 87 and 90 of the Act. Section 87 relates to actions which do not involve direct damage to Aboriginal objects, and Section 90 relates to damage or defacement of Aboriginal objects.

Under Section 87 of the Act, it is an offence to do any of the following without a Permit from the Director-General of the Department of Environment and Conservation: disturb or excavate any land for the purpose of discovering an Aboriginal object; disturbing or moving an Aboriginal object; take possession of or removing an Aboriginal object from certain lands; and erecting a building or structure to store Aboriginal objects on certain land (Section 86). The maximum penalty is \$11,000 for individuals and \$22,000 for corporations.



Under section 90 of the Act, a person who, without first obtaining the consent of the Director-General knowingly destroys, defaces or damages, or knowingly causes or permits the destruction or defacement of or damage to, an Aboriginal object or Aboriginal Place is guilty of an offence against the Act.

Where salvage actions (such as collection or re-positioning) are proposed in conjunction with an application to destroy Aboriginal objects, then an application for a section 87 permit must accompany the section 90 application. This is because a consent issued solely under section 90 of the Act is not considered to permit actions other than those which destroy, deface or damage Aboriginal objects.

In January of 2005, the DEC introduced Interim guidelines for Aboriginal Community Consultation with regard to the preparation of applications for a consent or permit under Part 6 (section 87 and 90) of the NP&W Act. The DEC anticipate that the guidelines will be replaced with a more detailed policy later in 2005 following consultation with the Aboriginal community and other stakeholders. The Interim guidelines include a required process of notification of intended applications in the local media, an invitation for stakeholder groups to register interest, and various time periods providing an opportunity for registered stakeholders to comment and review proposed methodologies and assessments. A transition phase has been specified for the application of the Interim guidelines. Any project where a Planning Focus Meeting was held before the 1st of January 2005, or where the proponent can demonstrate that cultural heritage assessment work commenced prior to this date, may continue to prepare Part 6 applications according to the former processes. Alternatively a proponent may choose to comply with the new guidelines.

It should be noted that section 75U of the EP&A Act 1979 (as amended) establishes an exception to the application of sections 87 and 90 of the NP&W Act. It states that a Permit under section 87 or a Consent under section 90 of the NP&W Act 1974 is not required for an approved project subject to the provisions of Part 3A of the EP&A Act.

Section 175B of the NP&W Act outlines circumstances where corporation directors may be taken to have contravened these provisions, based on the acts or omissions of that Corporation.

The processing and assessment of Permit and Consent applications is dependent upon adequate archaeological review and assessment, together with an appropriate level of Aboriginal community liaison and involvement (refer Standards for Archaeological Practice in Aboriginal Heritage Management in 1997 NPWS Standards and Guidelines Kit).

The Minister may declare any place which, in his or her opinion, is or was of special Aboriginal significance with respect to Aboriginal culture, to be an Aboriginal place (Section 84). The Director-General has responsibility for the preservation and protection of the Aboriginal place (Section 85). An area declared to be an Aboriginal place may remain in private ownership, or be acquired by the Crown by agreement or by a compulsory process (Section 145).

The Director General may make an interim protection order and order that an action cease where that action is, or is likely to, significantly affect an Aboriginal object or Aboriginal place. Such an order is current for 40 days (Section 91AA, Schedule 3[10]). Such an order does not apply to certain actions, such as where they are in accordance with development consents or emergency procedures.

General Management Constraints and Requirements

Except where a project is subject to the provisions of Part 3A of the EP&A Act, the NP&W Act, together with the policies of the Department of Environment and Conservation provide the following constraints and requirements on land owners and managers:

- It is an offence to knowingly disturb an Aboriginal object (or site) without an appropriate permit or consent (Sections 87 and 90);
- Prior to instigating any action which may conceivably disturb an Aboriginal object (this generally means land surface disturbance or felling of mature trees), archaeological survey



and assessment is required (refer Standards for Archaeological Practice in Aboriginal Heritage Management in 1997 NPWS Standards and Guidelines Kit).

- When the archaeological resource of an area is known or can be reliably predicted, appropriate landuse practices should be adopted which will minimise the necessity for the destruction of sites/Aboriginal objects, and prevent destruction to sites/Aboriginal objects which warrant conservation (refer Standards for Archaeological Practice in Aboriginal Heritage Management in 1997 NPWS Standards and Guidelines Kit).
- Documented and appropriate consultation with relevant Aboriginal Community representatives is required by the Department of Environment and Conservation as part of the prerequisite information necessary for endorsement of consultant recommendations or the provision of Consents and Permits by the DEC (refer Standards for Archaeological Practice in Aboriginal Heritage Management in 1997 NPWS Standards and Guidelines Kit).

Statutory Constraints Arising from Artefacts which Constitute Background Scatter

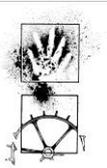
Background scatter is a term used generally by archaeologists to refer to artefacts that cannot be usefully related to a place or focus of past activity. There is no single concept for background 'scatter' or discard, and therefore no agreed definition. The recognition of background material within a particular study area is dependent on an appreciation of local contextual and taphonomic factors. Artefacts within a 'background' scatter can be found in most landscape types and may vary considerably in density.

Standard archaeological methodologies cannot effectively predict the location of individual artefacts within background scatters. Surface survey may detect background material either as individual artefacts ('isolated finds'), or even as small, low-density 'sites'. Subsurface testing may sample, and through analysis, characterise background material. However, beyond the scope of archaeological sampling, the potential to encounter background artefacts within the context of development related ground disturbance will always remain.

Most previous cultural resource management archaeological methodologies have acknowledged that there is little scientific justification for the conduct of archaeological salvage or ground disturbance monitoring to effect the recovery of background artefacts. The intrinsic scientific value of any recovered artefacts does not, in general, outweigh the expense of conducting the monitoring. However, low density distributions of artefacts are a current subject of interest by some heritage practitioners and DEC policy regarding this issue may change in the future. The monitoring of construction related ground works by Aboriginal groups is now increasingly practiced. The recovery of background scatter artefacts is often a probable outcome of such monitoring exercises.

Given the nature of statutory and DEC policy requirements in NSW, the detection of background artefacts during monitoring can be problematic. Except where a project is subject to the provisions of Part 3A of the EP&A Act, or where an Aboriginal object is covered by a current Consent or Permit (or Heritage Impact Permit (HIP)), from DEC, all further impact to an Aboriginal object detected during development works, and to the ground in its immediate vicinity, must cease until an appropriate Permit or Consent is gained. It may take up to eight weeks for this to occur. In the past, however, DEC has not as a general rule granted Consents to cover artefacts within background scatters which remain undescribed and undetected. This is because DEC sought to provide Consents where the significance and location of the Aboriginal objects to be impacted could be reliably defined. By their very nature, this may not be possible for artefacts that constitute a background scatter.

The present application of policy by the DEC does not provide for a consistent or proactive means of dealing with the statutory constraints posed by the detection of background scatter artefacts during development works. In those cases where the provisions of Part 3A of the EP&A Act do not apply, an option is the provision by the DEC of a section 87 Permit or section 90 Consent which includes all Aboriginal objects situated within the defined development site rather than specific sites or finds within it. This approach has been adopted by some DEC branch jurisdictions where an assessment has been provided which suitably investigates the known and predicted incidence of Aboriginal objects potentially subject to disturbance. Other DEC jurisdictions do not accept this approach and only provide Permits and Consents for known and defined Aboriginal object occurrences.



It should therefore be noted, that in the event that an Aboriginal artefact ('Aboriginal object') is detected during ground disturbance within a development study area, and that area or Aboriginal object is not covered by a Permit or Consent to Destroy (or Heritage Impact Permit), there may be considerable delays to development works while an application for a Consent to Destroy is processed.

The National Parks and Wildlife Amendment Bill 2001

Although this Act was passed by both houses of the NSW parliament in 2001, a number of its provisions with regard to Aboriginal cultural heritage have yet to be gazetted and are not yet law. These include the following provisions:

- The requirement for a section 90 'Consent to Destroy' from the Director General will be replaced by a 'heritage impact permit' (Schedule 3[1], 3[3-8]).
- The offence under section 90 of the Principal Act of 'knowingly' destroying, defacing or damaging Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal Places without Consent will be changed so that the element of knowledge will be removed (Schedule 3 [2]). The amended section 90, subsection 1 will read:

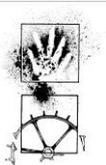
'A person must not destroy, deface, damage or desecrate, or cause or permit the destruction, defacement, damage or desecration of, an Aboriginal object or Aboriginal place.'
- Section 90 subsection 1 will not apply when an Aboriginal object or Aboriginal place is dealt with in accordance with a heritage impact permit issued by the Director-General (Schedule 3[3], Section 90(1B) in amended Act).
- It will be a defence to a prosecution for an offence against subsection 1 if the defendant shows that:
 - (a) 'he or she took reasonable precautions and exercised due diligence to determine whether the action constituting the alleged offence would, or would be likely to, impact on the Aboriginal object of Aboriginal place concerned, and
 - (b) the person reasonably believed that the action would not destroy, deface, damage or desecrate the Aboriginal object or Aboriginal place.' (Schedule 3[3], Section 90(1C) in amended Act)
- A court will be able to direct a person to mitigate damage to or restore an Aboriginal object or an Aboriginal place in appropriate circumstances when finding the person guilty of an offence referred to in section 90 of the Principal Act (Schedule 3[9]).
- Schedule 4[8] of the Bill provides for the Director-General to withhold in the public interest specified documents in the possession of the DEC which relate to the location of Aboriginal objects, or the cultural values of an Aboriginal place or Aboriginal object.

The NSW Heritage Act (1977)

Overview

The purpose of the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* is to ensure that the heritage of New South Wales is adequately identified and conserved. In practice the NSW Heritage Act has focussed on items and places of non-indigenous heritage to avoid overlap with the NP&W Act, 1974 which has primary responsibilities for nature conservation and the protection of Aboriginal relics and places in NSW.

The *Heritage Amendment Act 1998* came into effect in April 1999. This Act instigated changes to the NSW heritage system, which were the result of a substantial review begun in 1992. A central feature of the amendments was the clarification and strengthening of shared responsibility for heritage management between local government authorities, responsible for items of local significance, and



the NSW Heritage Council. The Council retained its consent powers for alterations to heritage items of state significance.

The Heritage Act is concerned with all aspects of conservation ranging from the most basic protection against damage and demolition, to restoration and enhancement. It recognises two levels of heritage significance, State significance and Local significance across a broad range of values. Some key provisions of the Act are:

- the establishment and functions of the Heritage Council (Part 2),
- interim heritage orders (Part 3), the State Heritage Register (Part 3A),
- Heritage Agreements (Part 3B),
- environmental planning instruments (Part 5),
- the protection of archaeological deposits and relics (Part 6), and
- the establishment of Heritage and Conservation Registers for state government owned and managed items (Part 7).

Generally this Act provides protection to items that have been identified, assessed and listed on various registers including State government section 170 registers, local government LEPs and the State Heritage Register. The Interim Heritage Order provisions allow the minister or his delegates (local government may have delegated authority) to provide emergency protection to threatened places which have not been previously identified. The only 'blanket' protection provisions in the Act relate to the protection of archaeological deposits and relics greater than 50 years old.

Protection of Archaeological Relics and Deposits

Section 139 of the Act specifically provides protection for any item classed as a relic. A relic is defined as "...any deposit object or material evidence -

- (a) which relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement; and
- (b) which is 50 or more years old."

(Heritage Act 1977, Part 1, Section 4)

Section 139 of the Act disallows disturbance of a relic unless in accordance with an 'excavation permit' from the Heritage Council. This section also allows the Heritage Council to create exceptions to the requirement for an excavation permit with respect to certain types of relic, contexts, or types of disturbance (refer below).

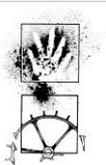
Section 146 of the Act requires that the discovery of a previously unknown relic be reported to the Heritage Council within a reasonable time of its discovery.

Permits and Approval Requirements

The Act includes two key approval requirements;

- A permit must be obtained for works which have the potential to interfere with a heritage item or place which is either listed on the State Heritage Register or the subject of an interim heritage order (Section 57); and
- A permit must be obtained to disturb or excavate land where it is known (or there is reasonable cause to suspect) that such action will or is likely to uncover or affect a relic (Section 139). This permit is known as an excavation permit and can be applied for under section 140 of the Act. Current interpretation of the Act by the Heritage Office indicates that excavation permits are only applicable to relics which are situated below the ground surface.

It should be noted that section 75U of the EP&A Act 1979 (as amended) establishes an exception to the requirement for an excavation permit. It states that an approval under Part 4, or an excavation



permit under section 139 of the Heritage Act 1977 is not required for an approved project subject to the provisions of Part 3A of the EP&A Act.

Exemptions from Permit Requirements

Certain activities are exempted from the Section 57 and 139 permit approval requirements. Exemptions from Section 57 requirements may be granted by the Minister, and the NSW Heritage Council may provide exemptions from Section 139 requirements.

A schedule of section 57 exemptions has been formulated which includes activities such as certain types of maintenance and repair, minor excavations, changes of use, some temporary structures and 'anything which in the opinion of the Director is of a minor nature and will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the item'. In many cases notification of such proposed activities must be made by the applicant to the Director, and written notification from the Director received regarding his satisfaction that the exemption criteria have been met.

A series of exemptions have also been established for Section 139 Permit approval requirements. This includes demolition and maintenance of bridges not listed on the State Heritage Register, some forms of excavation and maintenance of underground services, conservation and repair of monuments and grave markers, and the exposing of survey marks in the course of survey operations.

On the 5th March of 2003, the following section 139 exemptions were notified:

Excavation or disturbance of the following land does not require an excavation permit under Section 139, provided that the Director is satisfied that the criteria in (a), (b) or (c) have been met and the person to undertake the excavation or disturbance has received a notice advising that the Director is satisfied:

- (a) where an archaeological assessment has been prepared in accordance with Guidelines published by the Heritage Council of NSW which indicates that there is little likelihood of there being any relics in the land or that any relics in the land are unlikely to have State or local heritage significance;
- (b) where the excavation or disturbance of land will have a minor impact on the archaeological resource;
- (c) where the excavation or disturbance of land involves only the removal of fill which has been deposited on the land.

A person proposing to excavate or disturb land according to the above criteria must write to the Director and describe the proposed excavation or disturbance and set out why it satisfies the criteria. The Director shall notify the applicant if he or she is satisfied that one or more of the criteria have been met.

The Heritage Council of NSW

The role of the Heritage Council is to provide the Minister with advice on a broad range of matters relating to the conservation of the heritage of NSW. It also has a role in promoting heritage conservation through research, seminars and publications. The membership of the Heritage Council is designed to reflect a broad range of interests and areas of expertise.

Interim Heritage Orders

Under the provisions of Part 3 of the Act, the Minister can make an interim heritage order (IHO). A recommendation with respect to an order can come from the Heritage Council, either based on a request for the Minister, or the Council's own considerations. The Minister can also authorise Local Councils to make IHOs within their area. An interim conservation order may remain in force for up to 12 months, until such time as it is revoked or the item is listed on the State Heritage Register. A



heritage order may control activities such as demolition of structures, damage to relics, places or land, development and alteration of buildings, works or relics.

The State Heritage Register

Changes to the Heritage Act in the 1998 amendments established the State Heritage Register which includes all places previously protected by permanent conservation orders (PCOs) and items identified as being of state significance in heritage and conservation registers prepared by State Government instrumentalities. Sites or places which are found to have a state level of heritage significance should be formally identified to the Heritage Council and considered for inclusion on the State Heritage Register.

Heritage Agreements

Under Section 39 of the Act, the Minister can enter into an Agreement with the owner of a heritage item listed on the State Heritage Register to ensure its conservation. Such an Agreement can cover a range of responsibilities including financial or specialist assistance and can be attached to the title of the land.

Environmental Planning Instruments

Part 5 of the Act gives the Heritage Council the authority to request that an environmental planning instrument be prepared covering certain lands. It also directs that the Heritage Council shall be consulted by others when preparing a draft planning instrument affecting land to which an interim heritage order applies or which includes an item listed on the State Heritage Register. In addition it gives the Heritage Council the authority to produce guidelines for the preparation of such planning instruments.

Heritage and Conservation Registers

Section 170 of the Act requires all state government instrumentalities to establish and maintain a Heritage and Conservation Register that lists items of environmental heritage. The register is to include items which are, or could potentially be, the subject of a conservation instrument, and which are owned, occupied or otherwise under the control of that instrumentality.

The National Trust (NSW)

Whilst the National Trust Register does not provide any statutory obligations for protection of a site as such, the acknowledgment of a place being listed on the Register as a significant site lends weight to its heritage value. Also, the fact that the actual data for sites may be minimal, does not diminish the significance of a place. In fact, many sites were listed with only basic data added, especially in the early developmental stages of the Register.

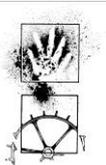
The Trust, over the last few years have been upgrading the information for places listed, with criteria for assessment for listing based on the Australian Heritage Commission Criteria of assessment for entry to the Register of the National Estate.

Environmental Planning & Assessment Act (1979)

The Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) and its regulations, schedules and associated guidelines require that environmental impacts are considered in land use planning and decision making. Environmental impacts include cultural heritage assessment. The Act was recently reformed by the passage of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Infrastructure and other Planning Reform) Act in June 2005.

There are four main areas of protection under the Act:

- Planning instruments allow particular uses for land and specify constraints. Part 3 governs the preparation of planning instruments. Both Aboriginal and Historic (Non-Indigenous) cultural heritage values should be assessed when determining land use.



- A separate streamlined and integrated development assessment and approvals regime for major infrastructure and other projects of significance to the State is defined by Part 3A.
- Section 90 lists impacts which must be considered before development approval is granted. Part 4 relates to the development assessment process for local government authorities. Impact to both Aboriginal and Historic (Non-Indigenous) cultural heritage values are included.
- State Government agencies which act as the determining authority on the environmental impacts of proposed activities must consider a variety of community and cultural factors in their decisions, including Aboriginal and Historic (Non-Indigenous) cultural heritage values. Part 5 relates to activities which do not require consent but still require an environmental evaluation, such as proposals by government authorities.

Under the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act (1979)* the Minister for Planning may make various planning instruments such as regional environmental plans (section 51) and local environment plans (section 70). The Minister may direct a public authority such as a Local Council, to exercise certain actions within a specified time, including the preparation of draft Local Environmental Plans and appropriate provisions to achieve the principles and aims of the Act (section 117).

These planning instruments may identify places and features of cultural heritage significance and define various statutory requirements regarding the potential development, modification and conservation of these items. In general, places of identified significance, or places requiring further assessment, are listed in various heritage schedules that may form part of a Local Environmental Plan (LEP) or a Regional Environmental Plan (REP). Listed heritage items are then protected from certain defined activities, normally including demolition, renovation, excavation, subdivision, and other forms or damage, unless consent has been gained from an identified consent authority. The consent authority under a LEP is normally the local Shire or City Council.

In addition to the development of these environmental planning instruments, the Director of the Department of Planning (DoP) or a local Council may prepare a Development Control Plan (DCP), where it is considered that more detailed provisions or guidelines are required over any part of land covered by an REP, LEP or their Drafts (sections 51A and 72).

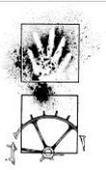
Recent amendments to the Act require a single LEP to be prepared according to a standard template, for each local government area within the next five years

In determining a development application (DA), a consent authority, such as a local Council, must take into consideration any of the following which are relevant to the subject application (section 79C(1) Potential Matters for Consideration):

- the provisions of any environmental planning instrument, or draft environmental planning instrument (which has been placed on public exhibition); any development control plan; and the regulations;
- the likely impacts of that development on the natural and built environments, and the social and economic impacts on the locality;
- the suitability of the site for the development;
- any submissions made in accordance with the Act or the regulations; and
- the public interest.

Best Practice Guidelines have been issued by DoP on the use of section 79C(1) and include an assessment of how the proposed development will affect the heritage significance of the property, or adjacent properties, in terms of the historic, scientific, cultural, spiritual and archaeological of Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal and natural heritage.

If a development consent is required from council under the provisions of a LEP and a permit or license is also required from a State Government Agency an integrated development must be submitted to the consent authority. A development is an 'integrated development' if it requires an approval under section 90 of the *NSW National Parks & Wildlife Act, 1974* or if the Director General



of DEC is of the opinion that consultation with an Aboriginal group or organisation should be consulted prior to a determination being made. Any development approval issued for an integrated development of this kind must be consistent with the general terms of approval or requirements provided by the relevant State Government Agency.

The *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act, 1979*, as amended, provides for the listing of heritage items and conservation areas and for the protection of these items or areas through environmental planning instruments (like LEPs and REPs) at the local government and State planning levels. These statutory planning instruments usually contain provisions for the conservation of these items and areas as well as an assessment process to reduce the impacts of new development on the heritage significance of a place, building or conservation area.

Part 3A of the Act is an amendment and establishes a separate streamlined and integrated development assessment and approvals regime for major State government infrastructure projects, development that was previously classified as State Significant development, and other projects, plans or programs declared by the Minister for Planning.

Part 3A removes the stop-the-clock provisions and the need for single-issue approvals under eight other Acts, including the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 and the Heritage Act 1977. Environmental planning instruments such as the heritage provisions within LEP and REPs, (other than State environmental planning policies) do not apply to projects approved under Part 3A.

Where warranted the Minister may declare any project subject to Part 3A to be a critical infrastructure project. These projects only require a concept approval in contrast to other Part 3A projects which require project approval. In most circumstances, a concept approval will be obtained to establish the environmental performance requirements and consultation requirements for the implementation of the subsequent stages of the project.

Under the provisions of Part 3A, proponents of major and infrastructure projects must make a project application seeking approval of the Minister. The application is to include a preliminary assessment of the project. Application may be for concept plan approval or full approval. Following input from relevant agencies and council(s), DoP will issue the proponent with requirements for the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and a Statement of Commitments. The Statement of Commitments will include how the project will be managed in an environmentally sustainable manner, and consultation requirements.

Following submission of an Environmental Assessment and draft Statement of Commitments to DoP, these documents are variously evaluated, reviewed, circulated and exhibited. The proponent may modify the proposal to minimise impacts in response to submissions received during this process. The proponent then provides a Statement of Commitments and, following any project changes, a Preferred Project Report. An assessment report is then drafted by the Director-General and following consultation with relevant agencies, a final report with recommendations for approval conditions or application refusal is submitted to the Minister. The Minister may refuse the project, or approve it with any conditions considered appropriate.