

EXTENT



WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

MILPERRA CAMPUS

Statement of Heritage Impact for the subdivision of the Milperra Campus

Prepared by Extent Heritage Pty. Ltd.

Prepared for Mirvac

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project background

Extent Heritage Pty Ltd has been engaged by Beveridge Williams on behalf of Mirvac to prepare a Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI) for the subdivision of the former Western Sydney University (WSU) Milperra Campus (hereafter referred to as the 'site'). The subdivision forms part of redevelopment of the former WSU campus into a low-rise neighbourhood incorporating a range of attached, semi-detached and free-standing homes. The proposal seeks to facilitate the redevelopment through the subdivision of the site over seven (7) stages.

While the subject site is not a heritage listed item, it is bordered by Bullecourt Avenue to its north and Ashford Avenue to its west, roads that form part of the locally listed heritage item *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)* on the *Canterbury Bankstown LEP 2023*. This report concludes that the proposed development will not have any impact on these roads as all works proposed are to be contained within the subject site, and as such will not affect the alignment of the roads which is key to the item's significance. The subdivision will facilitate the suburban redevelopment of the area, which seeks to improve the residential amenity of the wider area, as it will provide much needed housing in the area and its surrounds. The proposed subdivision will not result in any adverse impacts on the significance or character of the heritage item in the vicinity or on the identified heritage values of the *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)*.

Recommendations

In recognition of the historical associations of the site with the *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)*, the following recommendations are provided to inform the proposed development.

- It is recommended that all future development proposals should give regard to the heritage controls outlined in Chapter 4 of Canterbury Bankstown Development Control Plan (DCP) and Section 3.9 of the draft Site-Specific DCP for Western Sydney University Milperra Former Campus. The objectives outlined in the DCP seek to ensure that adjacent development does not have a detrimental impact on the identified heritage values, is a compatible development, and retains key features that contribute to the character of the area. For the subject site, retaining the historical form of the road corridors of Bullecourt and Ashford Avenues will be integral to the conservation of heritage values.
- Under Clause 5.10(5) of the *Canterbury Bankstown Local Environmental Plan 2023*, subsequent Development Applications for construction may require a Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI) to assess the potential impacts to the heritage significance of the *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)*. Given the significance of the heritage item is embodied in the layout of the Bullecourt and Ashford Avenues, it is considered unlikely that built form in the adjacent lot would adversely impact the identified heritage values of the item, however, pre-DA advice from Canterbury Bankstown's Council heritage officer should be sought.

- Section 3.9 of the DCP stipulates that a Heritage Interpretation Plan should be provided as part of any future Development Application or subdivision of the former Western Sydney University Milperra Campus. It is recommended that an Interpretation Plan is prepared following the subdivision, in line with the controls provided in Section 3.9 of the DCP cited above. The Heritage Interpretation Plan would establish a thematic framework to interpret the Milperra Soldier Settlement by exploring the historical and social values associated with the site. The interpretation plan would identify suitable interpretative devices for implementation based on a thorough site analysis.
- The site, like all places in NSW, is subject to the general conditions of the *Heritage Act 1977*, there are however no specific permitting or consent requirements under the Act for this site. As part of the on-site environmental management process, an unexpected finds procedure should be put in place, developed by an archaeologist with demonstrated experience and understanding of the required obligations in accordance with the *Act*. This protocol would include a pre-start briefing of contractors regarding the type of material that may be uncovered during works and their obligations under the *Act*. The procedure should also outline a process for protecting and identifying unexpected archaeological material, if uncovered during works.

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1. THE HERITAGE ITEM

Extent Heritage Pty Ltd has been engaged by Beveridge Williams on behalf of Mirvac to prepare a Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI) for the subdivision of the former Western Sydney University (WSU) Milperra Campus (hereafter referred to as the 'site'). The subdivision forms part of redevelopment of the former WSU campus into a low-rise neighbourhood incorporating a range of attached, semi-detached and free-standing homes. The proposal seeks to facilitate the redevelopment through the subdivision of the site over seven (7) stages.

The purpose of the report is to analyse the proposed subdivision pattern of the site, and the potential impacts on the heritage significance of the *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)* (LEP I218). The methodology used in the preparation of this Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI) is in accordance with the principles and definitions as set out in the guidelines to *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (the Burra Charter) (Australia ICOMOS 2013)* and the latest version of the *Statement of Heritage Impact Guidelines* (Department of Planning and Environment, 2023). This SOHI will review the relevant statutory heritage controls, assess the impact of the proposal on the site and heritage items in the vicinity and make recommendations as to the level of impact. This report specifically relates to built heritage and historical archaeological potential and includes recommendations and conclusions drawn from the impact assessment.

1.1. Site description

The site forms part of the former WSU Milperra campus located in the southwest Sydney suburb of Milperra within the Local Government Area (LGA) of Canterbury Bankstown. It is located at 272 Horsley Road, Milperra, and comprises land legally defined as Lot 2 in DP 1291984 and Lot 1 in DP 101147 (refer to Figure 1 below). Within this context, the site is bounded by the M5 Motorway to the south, Horsley Road to the east, Bullecourt Avenue to the north, and Ashford Avenue to the west.

The site contains a complex of educational, administration, and accommodation university campus buildings that date from the c.1970s. The buildings are predominately low scale in massing and are interconnected by a network of paved pathways and carparks with large open spaces at the south and north of the site.



Figure 1. Aerial photograph showing the defined site extent indicated in red. Source: Nearmap 2024 with Extent Heritage mark-up.

1.1.1. Heritage item

The site is bordered by Bullecourt Avenue to its north and Ashford Avenue to its west, roads that are part of the locally listed item *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)*. The heritage item is significant at the local level for its conservation of the last surviving evidence of the former subdivision pattern of the Milperra Soldiers Settlement, a national scheme that was intended to repatriate returning servicemen during and after World War I.

1.1.2. Heritage listings

The site, being part of the former WSU Milperra campus, **is not listed** as a heritage item on any statutory register or planning instrument.

The site is located within the vicinity of one (1) heritage item, the *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)* (LEP I218) which is an item of local heritage significance listed on Schedule 5 of the *Canterbury Bankstown Local Environmental Plan 2023*.

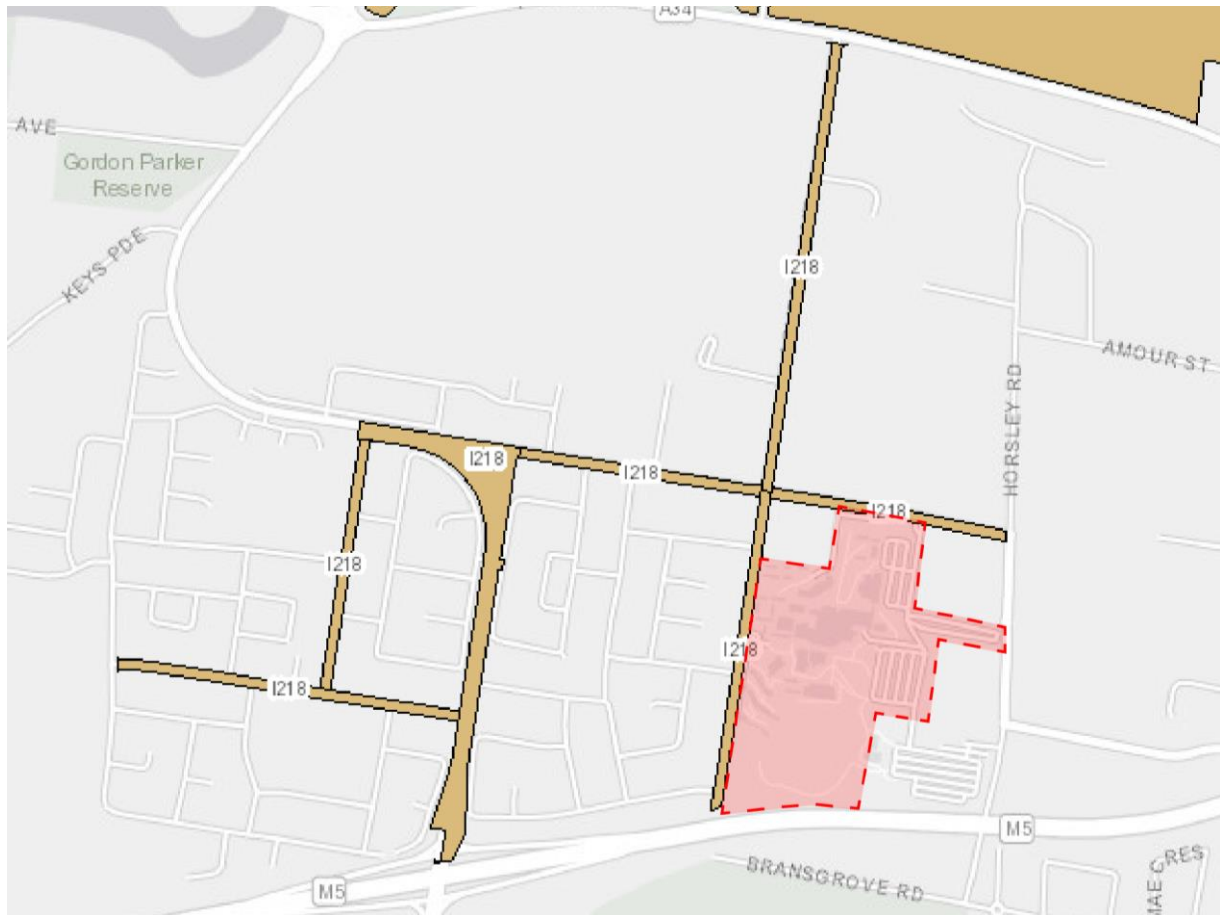


Figure 2. Heritage map showing the defined site indicated in red within context of the heritage curtilage of the *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)* (LEP I218)

1.2. Historical context

1.2.1. Traditional owners

The site is located within the suburb of Milperra. The wider area is land that has been lived on and cared for by the Aboriginal people for millennia. Natural features such as the Georges River (to the west of the site) formed geographic boundaries for the various clans of the Eora Nation. Land north of the Georges River is reported to be the home of people from Darug language groups, while land to the south was the home of people who spoke the Dharawal language (Georges Riverkeeper n.d.)

The Aboriginal groups hunted for kangaroos, emu, and possum while foraging for wild honey, plants, and roots, and also collected fish and shellfish from the rivers and coast. Life for the Darug, Dharawal and other Aboriginal peoples forever changed with the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788, bringing dispossession through the spread of agricultural land, frontier conflict, and the introduction of foreign disease.

The current name of Milperra is derived from an Aboriginal word that means 'a company, a welcome, a place of recovery of men injured in tribal war or initiation, or a gathering of people' (also spelled milpera) (Beckett 1984, 145 in Allison 2009, 144-157).

1.2.2. Early land tenure

The present suburb of Milperra extends across land grants that were made to William Heath, Thomas Bevan, William Mitchell, John Connell, James Connell, Edward Weston, Esther Julian, George Johnston and George Johnston Junior from the late eighteenth century (Figure 4).

The site is located on land granted to George Johnston Junior in 1819. Johnston Junior first received 500 acres of land at Bankstown in 1804, granted by Governor Philip Gidley King. It was reported that Johnston Junior's father, Captain George Johnston as Lieutenant-Governor, made a conditional grant to his son of 2,000 acres along the Nepean River which was rejected by then-Governor Lachlan Macquarie as inadmissible. However, Macquarie eventually restored parts of the conditional grant to Johnston Junior which included 650 acres comprising part of the site on 31 August 1819 (HLRV Primary Application No. 8299) (Yarwood 2006).

The Johnstons accumulated large tracts of land in the region, including the family's homestead, which was located at the confluence of Prospect Creek with the Georges River (approximately 3.2 kilometres north of the site). Many of the elder Johnston's landholdings passed to Johnston Junior following his death in 1823. Johnston Junior resided at the family homestead, and it was noted that areas of the estate were cleared and used for cultivation (SHR n.d.). Specific land use within the former WSU Campus site is not known.

1.2.3. Soldier Settlement Scheme

The aim of this scheme was to assist returned men to settle on rural land by offering preferential terms and conditions for repayment (Allison 2010). The settlement at Milperra contained forty-eight poultry and eight vegetable farms, with farm sizes ranging from four to ten acres (Allison 2009).

The settlement had five roads – Bullecourt, Amiens, Fleurbaix, and Pozieres Avenues, which were named after French towns and key World War I battlefields, and Ashford Avenue, which was named after the then-New South Wales Minister for Lands (Department of Lands, NRS 8052).

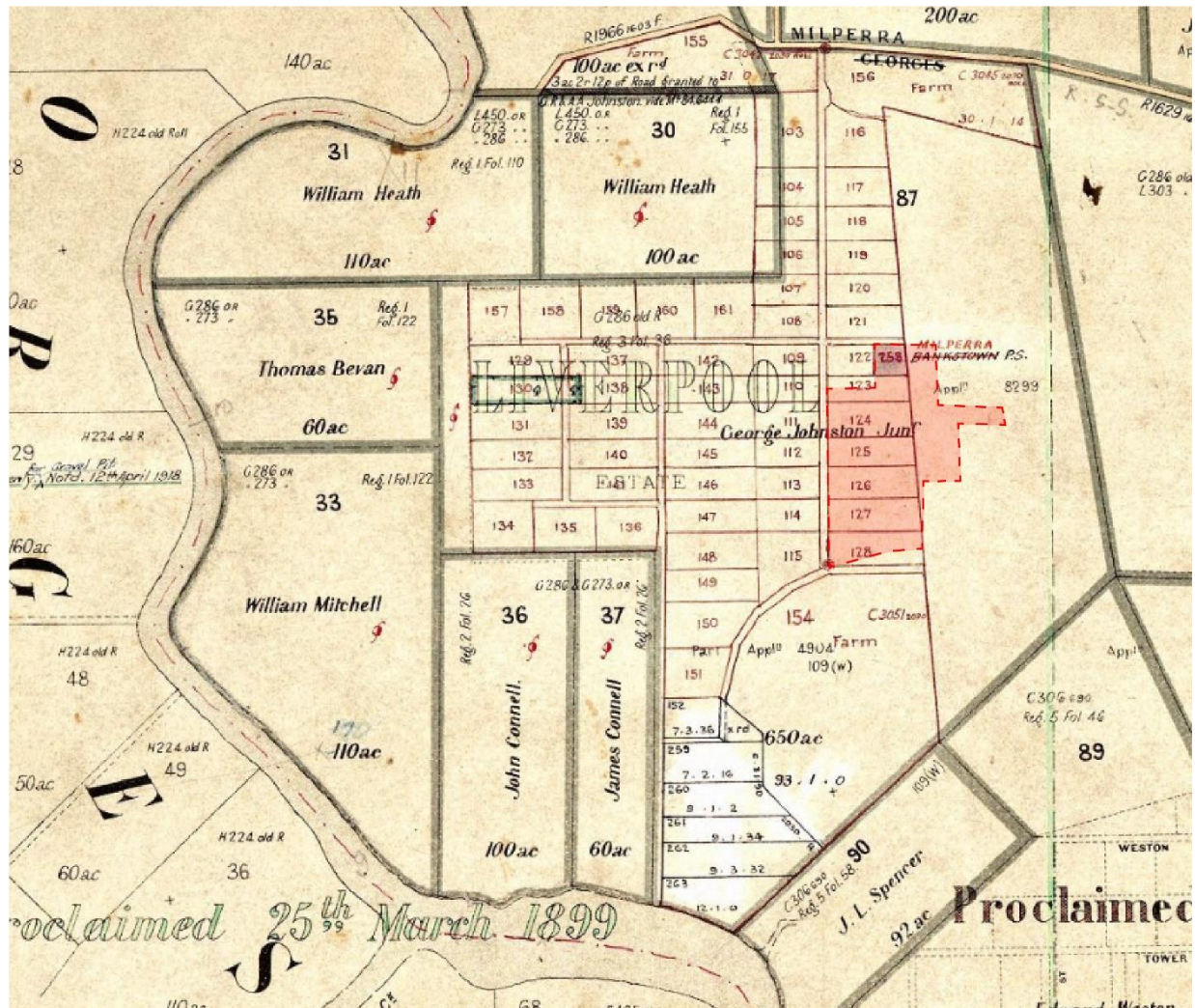


Figure 4. c.1918 Parish of Bankstown map showing the Milperra Soldier Settlement road alignment and subdivision. The extent of the site is indicated in red. Source: NSW Planning Portal with Extent Heritage overlay.

A c.1918 parish map (Figure 4) shows the Soldier Settlement road alignment and planned subdivision. The western portion of former WSU Campus site falls within the planned settlement area. Land at the north of the site, fronting Bullecourt Avenue, was set aside for Milperra Primary School. The eastern extent of the site is outside of the planned settlement.

The Soldier Settlement received returned soldiers and their families between 1917 and 1923. By this later date, only eighteen of the fifty-six farms were occupied. Subsequently, the remaining vacant blocks were offered to civilians. Residences constructed on each plot of land were reported to be standard two-bedroom weatherboards cottages each with verandahs and galvanised iron roofing home to 120 ex-servicemen and their families (Allison 2010).

With the establishment of a Public School and Post Office in 1918, Milperra slowly began to develop as a residential suburb. The Bankstown Soldier Settlement was largely unsuccessful with one-third of the ex-servicemen living there for less than two years (Allison 2010). All that remains of this soldier settlement is the original streets which retain their original names and alignments.

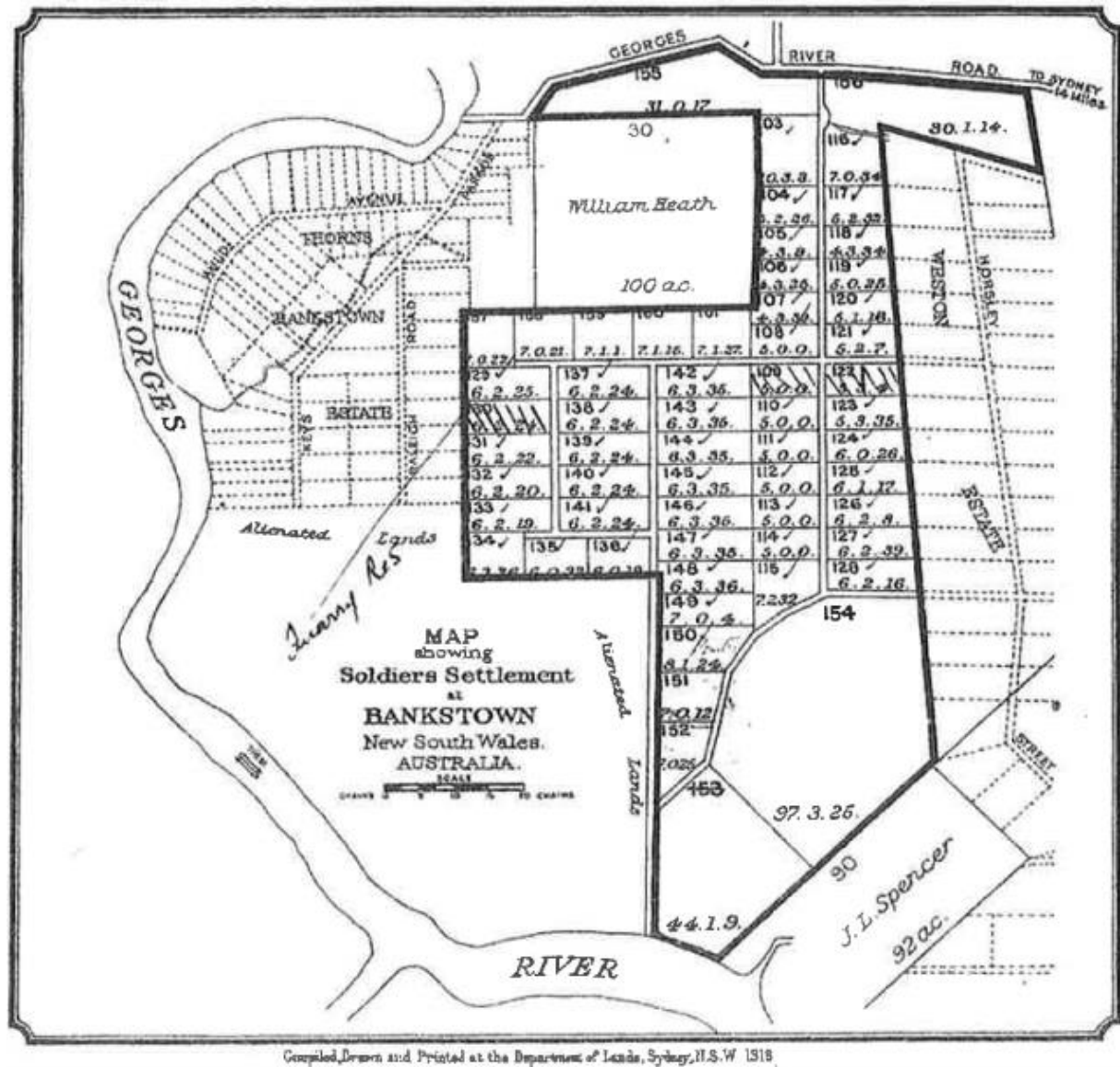


Figure 5. Bankstown Soldiers Settlement, 1918 showing block numbers and acreage. *Source:* State Records NSW Department of Lands, Closer Settlement Promotion Files Call No. 10/137114 in Allison 2009, 149



Figure 6. Bankstown Soldiers' Settlement Estate clearing land. *Source:* State Archives and Records, 2017.



Figure 7. Bankstown Soldiers' Settlement Estate – initial stages of development. *Source:* State Archives and Records, 2017.



Figure 8. Bankstown Soldiers' Settlement Estate general view of cleared and uncleared land. *Source:* State Archives and Records, 2017.



Figure 9. Bankstown Soldiers' Settlement Estate settlers' cottages. *Source:* State Archives and Records, 2017.



Figure 10. Bankstown Soldiers' Settlement Estate spraying the crops. *Source:* State Archives and Records, 2017.



Figure 11. Bankstown Soldiers' Settlement Estate attending the poultry. *Source:* State Archives and Records, 2017.

1.2.4. Development in the early twentieth century

As Milperra continued to develop as a residential suburb, the site of the Milperra WSU campus underwent a series of changes. Land at the north of the site was occupied by Milperra Public School from 1918. The location of the 1918 school building is indicated on the below 1943 (Figure 12). The 1918 school building comprised of a two-roomed, gabled roof building with a front verandah covered by a skillion roof (Figure 14). Built on brick piers, the original school building was of brick and timber construction with galvanised metal sheets to the gable and skillion roofs. The school was relocated to its present site on Pozieres Avenue in 1975 (southwest of and outside the defined site boundary) (WSU 2017; Allison 2009, 150).



Figure 12. 1943 historical aerial of Milperra showing the indicative extent of the site outlined in red. The location of the school is indicated outlined in blue. *Source:* NSW Historical Imagery with Extent Heritage overlay



Figure 13. Closeup view of the 1943 historical aerial of Milperra showing original school building outlined in blue. *Source:* NSW Historical Imagery with Extent Heritage overlay



Figure 14. The original 1918 Milperra Public School. *Source:* History of Padstow Revesby Panania Picnic Point East Hills Milperra, 2017



Figure 15. 1955 historical aerial showing the indicative extent of the site outlined in red. The location of the school is indicated outlined in blue. *Source:* NSW Historical Imagery with Extent Heritage overlay



Figure 16. 1965 historical aerial showing the indicative extent of the site outlined in red. The location of the original school which appears demolished by this time is indicated outlined in blue. *Source:* NSW Historical Imagery with Extent Heritage overlay.

The site and wider area remained predominantly agricultural in land use throughout the c.1950s and c.1960s (Figure 15 and Figure 16). By 1965 it appears that much of the development associated with the Milperra Soldier Settlement within the site boundary was demolished. The allotments remained agricultural in use, with new industrial development established to the east and north of the site (Figure 16). The 1965 historical aerial also shows that the 1918 Milperra Public School building was demolished by this time, with new school buildings surrounding its original location (Figure 16).



Figure 17. 1971 historical aerial showing the indicative extent of the site outlined in red. *Source:* NSW Historical Imagery with Extent Heritage overlay.

The 1971 historical aerial (Figure 17) shows that most of the agricultural buildings within the site was demolished by this time with the surrounding area largely suburbanised. The former Milperra Public School site remains visible at the northern side of the site with buildings along its eastern, southern, and western internal boundary.

The closeup extract of the 1975 historical aerial (the year of the school's relocation) shows the school buildings located within the site at the time. It also shows the establishment of the off-street return driveway which remains extant in its alignment on the southern side of Bullecourt Avenue (Figure 18).



Figure 18. Closeup of the 1975 historical aerial showing the extent of the school grounds and building along Bullecourt Avenue. *Source:* NSW Historical Imagery with Extent Heritage overlay

1.2.5. Establishment of Western Sydney University

The Milperra College of Advanced Education (CAE) was established on the site in 1973 to cater to the growing need for teachers' education in NSW. Changes made to the site while it was the CAE campus included the construction of the current multipurpose Building 1 in 1976 (Figure 20). The 1975 historical aerial (Figure 19) shows the site cleared of all previous agricultural structures, with site establishment works for the new educational campus underway.



Figure 19. 1975 historical aerial showing the indicative extent of the site outlined in red. *Source:* NSW Historical Imagery with Extent Heritage overlay.



Figure 20. The 1976 College of Advance Education building. *Source:* History of Padstow Revesby Panania Picnic Point East Hills Milperra, 2017

In 1983, the Milperra CAE was renamed Macarthur Institute of Higher Education (State Records NSW Call No, AGY-2956). Original plans to accommodate 2,500 teachers on site were altered, and there was a push to start tertiary education programs. The Macarthur Institute of Higher Education was absorbed into the University of Western Sydney in 1989 becoming the third campus in its growing network of campuses. During the 1980s, the site underwent numerous changes including extensions to Building 1, the construction of Building 19 and Building 2; and in the 1990s with the construction of Building 4. Most of the structures on the site dates from the 1990s onwards (Western Sydney University 2017).

1.2.6. Contemporary development

The site remained in use as one of the eleven campuses for WSU until c.2020s. The campus supported students, staff, and faculty through providing education spaces, student accommodation, staff offices, parking and all other typical amenities. In 2016, the campus supported approximately 8,166 students, 195 academic staff and 128 professional staff (NSW Department of Planning and Environment 2022).

The site is currently not in use, as the area is earmarked for redevelopment and subdivision following the establishment of a development agreement between WSU and Mirvac. The redevelopment seeks to create a low low-rise neighbourhood incorporating a range of attached, semi-detached and free-standing homes.

1.3. Physical analysis

Extent Heritage carried out a physical assessment of the site on 14 February 2024. The inspection was undertaken as a visual study from the public domain only with limited views to the site. Internal photographs of the site are utilised from Extent Heritage's previous site inspection, undertaken in November 2019, and are cited accordingly.

The analysis involved an investigation into the built form and landscape setting. It does not provide a detailed investigation of all fabric but an overview of the elements of the place to assist in determining significance.

1.3.1. WSU Milperra campus

The WSU Milperra campus contains twenty-nine (29) educational, administrative, and accommodation facilities. The campus buildings date from the c.1970s to the c.2000s, and are generally low-scale in massing and form of one to three-storeys. The buildings are generally brick veneer and steel structures with corrugated sheet metal roofing and large areas of glazing. The buildings are interconnected by a network of paved pathways with large open carparks to the east of the campus buildings accessed off Horsley Road (Figure 25 to Figure 34). Internal roads within the campus include Ian Smith Avenue, First Avenue and Third Avenue (Figure 35).

Refer to the campus map below (Figure 35) showing the internal campus layout and buildings.



Figure 21. View along the internal Third Avenue looking south from Bullecourt Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 22. Overview of the campus viewed south from Bullecourt Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 23. Overview of the campus viewed southeast from Ashford Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 24. Overview of the campus oval viewed northeast from the Ashford Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 25. View of building 1 – the 1976 building with extensions. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2019.



Figure 26. View of buildings 2 and 3. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2019.



Figure 27. View of building 11. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2019.



Figure 28. View of building 12. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2019.



Figure 29. View of building 23 (Margot Hardy Gallery). *Source:* Extent Heritage 2019.



Figure 30. View of Library. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2019.



Figure 31. View of WSU village. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2019.



Figure 32. View of WSU village. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2019.



Figure 33. View of WSU Bankstown Campus Oval to the southern end of campus. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2019.



Figure 34. View of existing university student housing from Ashford Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2019.

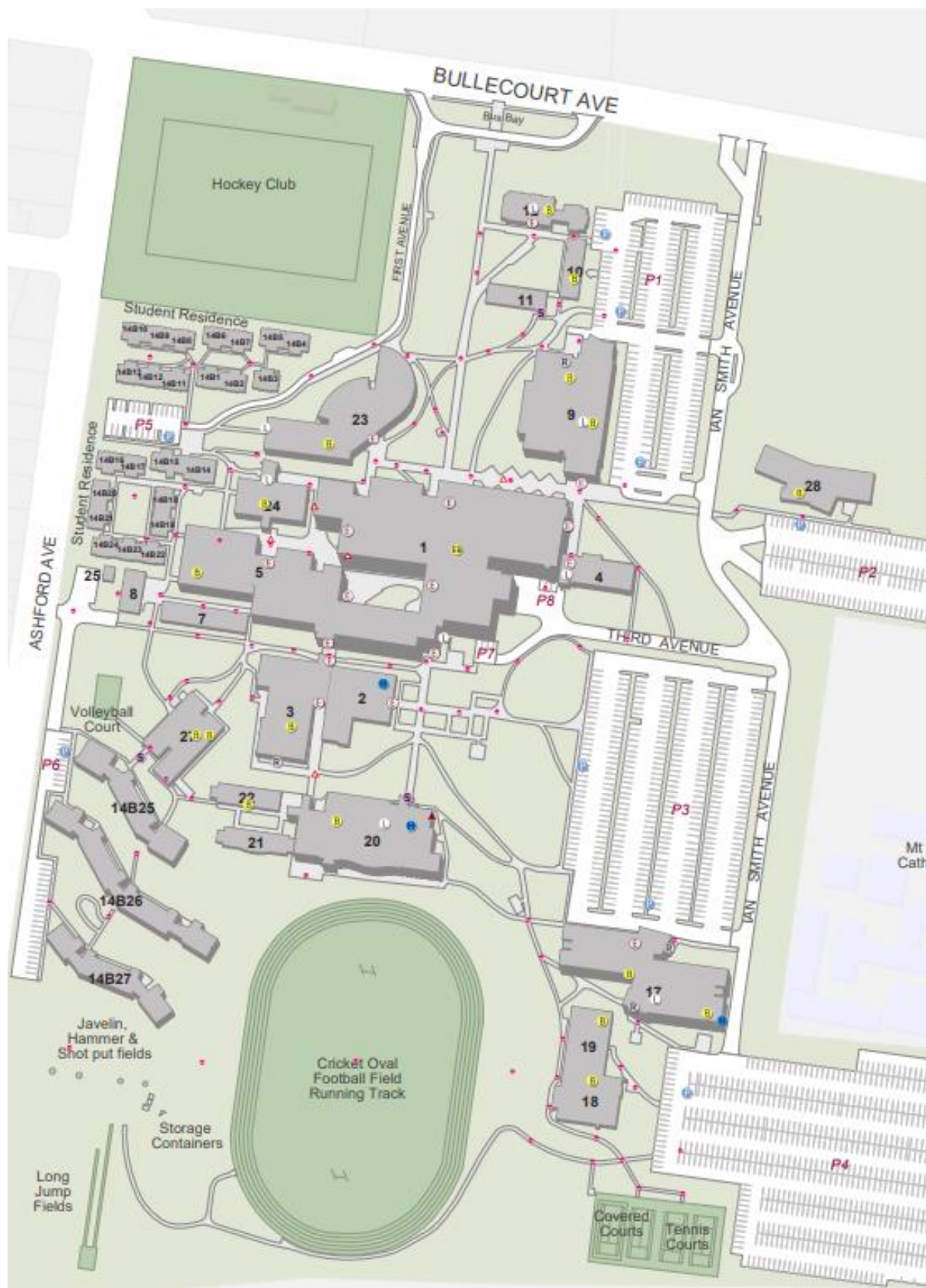


Figure 35. WSU Milperra campus map showing the various buildings at the site. Source: WSU

1.3.1.1. Location of the former Milperra Public School

The former Milperra Public School was located along Bullecourt Avenue, along the northern side of the campus and defined site boundary. It operated in this location between 1918 – 1975. Historical aerals showing the former school site indicates that it was situated within an area that presently contains a bus bay. The bus bay was established in the c.1970s while the site was still used for the former public school.

There are no visible remnants of the 1918 Milperra Public School building or other associated structures at ground level when viewed from the public domain. The grounds which comprised the former Milperra Public School has been integrated into the wider campus lawn landscape with paved pathways and interspersed tree planting, and a roadside bus stop and university sign along Bullecourt Avenue (Figure 37 to Figure 40).

However, an overlay of the school buildings visible in the 1975 historical aerial (Figure 18) over a present 2024 aerial photograph shows two (2) campus buildings (identified as Building 10 and 11 on the WSU campus map) occupying the footprint of the former school buildings which were constructed between 1955-1965 (Figure 15Figure 15 and Figure 16). However, limitations of site access excluded the direct inspection of Building 10 and 11. Any association with the former Milperra Public School, and the potential existence of these former school buildings has not been ascertained. The two (2) structures appear on the 1965 historical aerial and are indicated in green in Figure 36 below.



Figure 36. Overlay of the former Milperra Public School buildings (in blue) within the site boundary indicated with the red dashed line. The two c.1960s school buildings that appear to have been integrated into the university campus (now Building 10 and 11) is indicated in green.



Figure 37. Overview of the general location of the former Milperra Public School and bus bay from Bullecourt Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 38. Closeup view of the landscape of the former school site from Bullecourt Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 39. Closeup view of the landscape of the former school site from Bullecourt Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 40. Closeup view of the landscape of the former school site from Bullecourt Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.

1.3.1.2. Remnant Cumberland Plains Woodland

A tract of remnant Cumberland Plains Woodland is located at the northeastern side of the site. It is heavily vegetated with mature trees and occupies a roughly square block bordered by Bullecourt Avenue to the north, Horsley Road to the east, and the internal campus carparks to the south and west (Figure 41 and Figure 42). This area remains outside the site boundary.



Figure 41. Overview of the remnant woodland viewed southwest from the junction of Bullecourt Avenue and Horsley Road. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 42. Overview of the remnant woodland viewed southwest from Bullecourt Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.

1.3.2. Milperra Soldier Settlement (former) (LEP I218)

The Milperra Soldier Settlement was subdivided in the c.1910s as part of the national effort to repatriate soldiers returning from WWI. The wider area which contained part of the campus and defined site was subdivided into market garden and farm allotments set on a neat, grid road alignment. The settlement at Milperra contained five streets, Bullecourt, Fleurbaix, Amiens, and Pozieres Avenue, and Ashford Avenue. Residences constructed on the farm allotments were reported to comprise two-roomed timber cottages.

The timber cottages were mostly demolished by c.1970, and the site was redeveloped as a higher education campus (Figure 17). No structures associated with the Soldier Settlement remain within the site boundary. The agricultural landscape and allotments of the wider landscape surrounding the site have since been re-subdivided for suburban development from the c.1970s.

The existing road layout of the principal streets named above, as well as street names relating to the post-1970s subdivision, remain the only tangible evidence of the former Milperra Soldier Settlement.

1.3.2.1. Bullecourt Avenue

Bullecourt Avenue forms the northern boundary of the site and is adjacent to industrial development. It is a bi-directional road on an east-west axis, laid with bitumen with concrete gutters, kerbing, and crossovers. Street furniture and other elements including street signs, bus stops, power lines, and boundary fencing are contemporary in nature. It includes concrete footpaths and a nature strip on either side with inconsistent street tree planting. The remnant Cumberland Plain Woodland is located along Bullecourt Avenue to the northeast side of the site. Bullecourt Avenue forms the junction with Ashford Avenue off the northwestern side of the site (Figure 43 to Figure 46).



Figure 43. Overview of Bullecourt Avenue generally looking east along the campus showing the adjacent industrial development. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 44. Overview of Bullecourt Avenue generally looking west along the campus. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 45. Overview of Bullecourt Avenue generally looking west along the campus towards the junction with Ashford Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 46. Overview of the junction of Bullecourt and Ashford Avenue looking west. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.

1.3.2.2. Ashford Avenue

The section of Ashford Avenue bordering the western boundary of the site extends south from the junction with Bullecourt Avenue. Suburban streets extend from the west of Ashford Avenue, which include Sinai Avenue, Zonnebake Crescent, and Flanders Avenue, which are not associated with the original settlement alignment. Ashford Avenue is a bi-directional road laid on a north-south axis with contemporary street furniture. However, it only includes a concrete footpath on the western side between Bullecourt Avenue to Sinai Avenue. The eastern side of Ashford Avenue does not include a footpath and comprises a wide nature street with inconsistent street tree planting (Figure 47 to Figure 50). Ashford Avenue retains a residential character with a mix of single and double-storey housing along its alignment.



Figure 47. Overview of Ashford Avenue looking south. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 48. Overview of Ashford Avenue looking north. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 49. Overview of Ashford Avenue looking south from the junction with Zonnebeke Crescent. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 50. Overview of the southern extent of Ashford Avenue at the junction with Flanders Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.

1.3.3. Settings and views

The site is surrounded by low scale suburban development to its west and southeast, and industrial development to its east and north. The area to its immediate south, across from the M5 Motorway comprises undeveloped areas and a series of open sports field which connects to the Georges River towards the southwest.

The site is bordered by a council-owned sports field to the north-west of the site, and the Mount St Joseph Catholic College Milperra to the east. In addition, the site is bounded to the north-east by a sizeable tract of protected remnant Cumberland Plain Woodland. These areas are not included within the site boundary.

The present scale of the campus is consistent with that of the surrounding modern residential and industrial development. Given the extensive frontage of the campus with the main suburban road network, it is highly visible along the adjacent streetscape, particularly along its frontages with Bullecourt Avenue and Ashford Avenue (Figure 51 to Figure 56). However, wider views of the campus from the public domain are largely screened by tree plantings and buildings. Secondary views to the

site can be obtained from Horsley Road to the east. Views from the south along the M5 Motorway to the site cannot be obtained due to highway noise barriers.



Figure 51. Overview of the suburban setting surrounding the site. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 52. Overview of the suburban setting surrounding the site. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 53. Overview of the Council sports field adjacent to the campus. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 54. View to the campus from Ashford Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 55. View of the commercial development at the junction of Bullecourt and Ashford Avenues. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.



Figure 56. Overview of the adjacent industrial development along Bullecourt Avenue. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.

2. SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

This chapter provides the basis for assessing heritage significance in New South Wales as outlined in the *Guidelines for preparing a statement of heritage impact* (Department of Planning and Environment 2023b, 16-18).

2.1. Statement of significance

The following statement of significance is quoted from the State Heritage Inventory (SHI) inventory sheet for the *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)* (LEP I218):

The Milperra Soldiers Settlement is historically significant because it was part of a national scheme that was intended to repatriate returning servicemen during and after World War I. It reflects then-current attitudes towards the appropriate ways to develop the country and ensure its growth and prosperity. The Settlement was a rare event in the history of Bankstown and was a relatively late and unusual form of agricultural development in the Bankstown area. Apart from this, it represents very early settlement within the area and resulted in the locality being named Milperra.

The road layout of the principal streets provides the only tangible evidence of the subdivision that was formed to accommodate the Settlement.

2.2. Significance of the site

The subject site comprising part of the former WSU Milperra campus has undergone considerable changes in terms of its built fabric from its early agricultural landscape associated with the early land tenure and the former Milperra Soldier Settlement to its present use as a campus of higher education from the mid-1970s.

Historical aerials also indicate that structure associated with the Milperra Soldier Settlement were mostly demolished by the c.1970s in place of the redevelopment of the area for educational purposes. It is unlikely that any former structures associated with the settlement remain extant at the site and that the only known extant feature of the settlement comprises the now-heritage listed road alignment (with Bullecourt Avenue and Ashford Avenue respectively forming the northern and western boundaries of the campus and site).

The site also contains the grounds of the former Milperra Public School which was established in 1918 as part of the settlement development. It operated within the grounds until 1975 when it was relocated to its present location southwest of the campus. Historical aerials indicate that the original 1918 Milperra Public School building was demolished between 1955-1965. Other school buildings generally date from c.1955 and was integrated for use as part of the CAE and subsequent institutions. However, these buildings were progressively demolished in place of more modern educational facilities and updated campus landscaping throughout the late twentieth century. However, two structures which date from c.1955-1965 were possibly integrated into the existing

campus facilities based on a comparison of historical aerals provided in the historical analysis above (Figure 12 and Figure 15 to Figure 19). The existing campus map identifies the structures as Building 10 and 11. However, due to internal site access limitations, the possibility that Building 10 and 11 is associated with the former Milperra Public School is uncertain.

The earliest known existing campus building (Building 1) dates from 1976 and was originally constructed as part of the CAE, later forming part of the Macarthur Institute of Higher Education then the University of Western Sydney (now WSU). Building 1 and other existing campus structures are modern examples of higher education buildings and are not considered to be of heritage significance. The campus landscape is also highly altered and contemporary in setting and apart from the remnant Cumberland Plains Woodland (located outside the site boundary), do not include any landscape items of note.

3. PROPOSED WORKS

3.1. The proposal

Mirvac is partnering with Western Sydney University to develop a proposal for a low-rise medium density master planned neighbourhood incorporating a range of attached, semi-detached and free-standing homes. The proposal is intended to sensitively integrate with the surrounding neighbourhood, enhancing the area for future residents and the wider Milperra community.

This feeds into the wider evolution of WSU's aim to transform the current 'suburban' campus network into a hybrid campus model which includes both suburban and consolidated city centre vertical campuses. The facilities, staff, and students formerly located at the Milperra Campus have been transitioned to the new Liverpool Central Business District (CBD) and Bankstown CBD WSU campuses.

To achieve this vision, the proposed works seeks to subdivide the site through a seven (7) staged program to facilitate the redevelopment of the former Western Sydney University (WSU) Milperra Campus. The subdivision pattern proposed is consistent with the Structure Plan identified in the Draft Site-Specific Development Control Plan and is shown in Figure 57 below.

Stage	No. of residential lots
Stage 1	16
Stage 2	11
Stage 3	135
Stage 4	19
Stage 5	96
Stage 6	105
Commercial	0



Figure 57. Staging Plan showing for the proposed subdivision of the site. *Source:* Mirvac, DRG No. 010

4. HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This chapter assesses the impacts of the proposed works on the heritage significance of the heritage item in accordance with the *Guidelines for preparing a statement of heritage impact* (Department of Planning and Environment 2023b, 18-20).

4.1. Matters for consideration

This Statement of Heritage Impact has established the subject site and the associated buildings contained within are of no heritage significance. This site is however located in the vicinity of one local heritage item, *Milperra Soldiers Settlement*, listed on Schedule 5 of the Canterbury-Bankstown LEP 2023. The roads – Bullecourt Avenue and Ashford Avenue – to the north and western edges of the site form part of the curtilage of the item. The road layout is significant as it provides the only tangible evidence of the subdivision pattern that was formed to accommodate the Settlement to accommodate repatriated soldiers after World War I, later contributing to the residential development of the suburb of Milperra.

The proposed subdivision will facilitate the proposed redevelopment of the former campus into a low-rise medium density residential development. The subdivision of the site will have a minor and inconsequential impact on the road alignments themselves, with the creation of new roads and sixteen (16) driveways adjoining the heritage listed streets.

4.1.1. Fabric and spatial arrangements

The proposed subdivision will be wholly contained within the former campus boundary to a pattern that is consistent with the draft Site-Specific DCP for the former Western Sydney University, Milperra Campus. While the proposed activity will have some interface with the historic subdivision pattern, this is limited to the creation of new linking roads and a total of sixteen (16) driveways off Ashford Avenue. This is consistent with the existing pattern of development along Ashford Avenue and a necessary change required to facilitate the development outcomes for the area.

While the proposal will alter the urban streetscape pattern, Bullecourt and Ashford Avenues will retain their prominent alignment within the streetscape and remain legible in the wider landscape. The proposed subdivision will see a minor and inconsequential impact to the spatial arrangement *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)* and no impact to significant fabric that contributes to the heritage values of the item. Impacts to the spatial arrangement of Bullecourt and Ashford Avenues could be mitigated through the introduction of formalised landscaping to reinforce the axis of the historic streetscape pattern.

4.1.2. Setting, views and vistas

Views to Bullecourt Avenue and Ashford Avenue have changed considerably since the establishment of the Milperra Soldier Settlement, with large industrial warehouses along Bullecourt Avenue and one to two storey residential and retail developments along Ashford Avenue.

The proposed development will not affect these existing views but reflect the changing character of the area. The residential nature of the proposed development will help retain the largely residential character of Ashford Avenue and the wider area by providing much needed housing in the area with increased residential amenity. The views and settings will generally remain unchanged as the subdivision proposed is similar to that which currently exists within the adjoining neighbourhoods.

4.1.3. Use

The proposed subdivision is consistent with the existing use of the wider landscape, which is characterised as a residential landscape.

4.1.4. Demolition

The demolition of existing buildings formed part of the impact assessment in the rezoning application. As noted in the previous impact statement, the demolition of existing buildings on the subject site will not impact the road alignments themselves, which will be retained as part of the new development, nor will it impact on the heritage significance of the item.

4.1.5. Curtilage

The proposed works are wholly contained within the former campus. Where the subdivision will create new driveways off Ashford Avenue and new linking roads, this will have a minor and inconsequential impact on the heritage curtilage of *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)*.

4.1.6. Aboriginal cultural heritage

An Aboriginal Archaeological Due Diligence report was prepared for the site in 2017. The report established the following with regards to Aboriginal cultural heritage:

- With the exception of the area identified as a remnant Cumberland Plain Woodland to the northeast of the site (outside of the study area), development work for the majority of the subject area may proceed with caution.
- It is considered that there is a low risk of Aboriginal objects being present within the subject area. However, the nature of disturbance does not preclude the potential for isolated finds, which is a common site type across the region, even in disturbed contexts.
- In the event of unexpected Aboriginal objects, sites or places (or potential Aboriginal objects, site or places) are discovered during the subdivision and later construction, all works in the vicinity should cease and the contractor should determine the subsequent course of action in

consultation with a heritage professional and/or Heritage NSW as appropriate. A process of consultation with Aboriginal community representatives would also be required in this event.

- This document may be summarised within and/or appended to a Development Application, Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) or Review of Environment Factors (REF). If any Aboriginal objects are later identified within the proposed activity area, this report cannot however be used to support an application for an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP). Such an application would require more detailed investigation involving a formal process of Aboriginal community consultation and the preparation of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHA).

4.1.7. Historical archaeology

Following the major University developments in 1973 for buildings, sports fields, parking and associated services, it is unlikely that substantial archaeological evidence has been preserved. The topography of the site has been modified through both cutting and filling to meet the functions of the university. This activity is likely to have reduced the integrity and survival of physical remains including structural remains, landscape elements, archaeological deposits and 'relics'.

There is no documented evidence for developments within the site during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that are likely to have left significant physical remains. Archaeological evidence of buildings associated with the soldier settlement are likely to be restricted to building piers and foundations associated with housing, poultry-shed footings, postholes and fence lines. If such remains survive, they are likely to be of local significance with a low research potential. Physical remains associated with the post-1920 development of the site is unlikely to provide any substantive information that would contribute to our understanding of the historical development of the site.

The presence of historical archaeological remains of local significance is considered to be low. Any remains that do survive are likely to have a low research potential.

4.1.8. Natural heritage

A remnant portion of Cumberland Plain Woodland is conserved to the northeast of the site, outside the site boundary. The area is to be retained and zoned Woodland Conservation. The proposed subdivision will have no impact on the natural heritage values of this area.

4.1.9. Conservation areas

There are no heritage conservation areas within the vicinity of the subject site.

4.1.10. Cumulative impacts

The subdivision forms part of a wider plan to redevelop the subject site for additional residential dwellings in accordance with objectives outlined in the Draft site-specific DCP for Milperra Campus

and master plan prepared for the site. The subdivision will have no cumulative impacts to the heritage significance of the *Milperra Soldiers Settlement (former)*.

4.1.11. Other heritage items in the vicinity

The site is in the vicinity of one local heritage item, the *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)*. As previously stated, it is the alignment of the streets Bullecourt Avenue and Ashford Avenue, which directly abut the subject site to the north and west, that contribute to the heritage significance of the former settlement. The street alignment will not be altered by the proposed subdivision, and thus the proposed works will have no impact to this heritage item.

4.2. Assessment against statutory and non-statutory controls

4.2.1. Canterbury Bankstown Local Environmental Plan 2023

Clause 5.10 of the Canterbury Bankstown LEP 2023 applies to heritage conservation and 5.10(4) requires, among other things, that before granting consent under clause, Council must assess the effect of a proposed development on the heritage significance of the item or conservation area and concerned. Clause 10(5) specifies that Council, before granting consent, may require a heritage management document to be prepared that assesses the extent to which the carrying out of the proposed development would affect the heritage significance of the heritage item or heritage conservation area. This applies to land in the vicinity of a heritage item or heritage conservation area.

Extent Heritage comment

The subject site is not listed as local heritage item on schedule 5 of the Canterbury Bankstown LEP, nor is it located within a heritage conservation area. However, the site is located within the vicinity of one (1) local heritage item, *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)*. Clause 5.10 requires a heritage management document and an assessment of the heritage impacts of the proposal. This Statement of Heritage Impact fulfils that requirement.

4.2.2. Canterbury Bankstown Development Control Plan 2023

The Canterbury Bankstown LEP 2023 is supplemented by the Canterbury Bankstown Development Control Plan (DCP) 2023. The DCP provides a unified set of controls that provides detailed planning and design guidelines to support the planning controls in the LEP. It is important the controls are adhered to as the Consent Authority is required to take into consideration the relevant provisions of the DCP in determining an application for development affecting a locally listed heritage item.

The draft WSU Milperra Site Specific Development Control Plan 2023 (DCP) was adopted by Council on 2 November 2023. It provides a site-specific framework and supporting guidelines for the future redevelopment of the site and is applicable to land which comprises the site assessed in this report.

The following general controls relevant to the proposed subdivision of the site and guidelines related to heritage outlined in the DCP are listed in the table below.

DCP Controls
Heritage
4.4 Heritage in the vicinity of a heritage item
<p><u>Objectives</u></p> <p>O1. To ensure that adjacent development does not detrimentally impact upon the heritage significance of places of heritage significance or their settings.</p> <p>O2. To ensure that new development is compatible with the heritage values of adjacent places of heritage significance.</p>
<p><u>Development controls</u></p> <p>1.1 The design of development must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) respond to the setting, setbacks, form, scale and style of nearby places of heritage significance; (b) maintain significant views to and from the place of heritage significance; (c) ensure adequate setbacks from the site of the place of heritage significance to retain its visual setting; (d) retain original or significant landscape features that are associated with the place of heritage significance or that contribute to its setting; (e) use materials, finishes and colours selected to avoid strong contrast with the place of heritage significance in order to retain its visual importance or significance.
<p><u>Extent Heritage assessment</u></p> <p>The proposed subdivision and redevelopment will improve the amenity of the area with the inclusion of low-rise medium residential development. This is a compatible use that will see no impact to the heritage significance of the locally listed item, <i>Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)</i>, an item consisting of a series of road alignments surrounding the site to the north and west. While the subdivision will see the creation new roads and driveways intersecting the Bullecourt and Ashford Avenues, this will not detract from the heritage values of the item.</p>
Draft WSU Milperra Site Specific
3.9 Heritage
<p><u>Objectives</u></p> <p>O1. To preserve the significant historical form of road corridors contributing to the character of the precinct, specifically along Bullecourt and Ashford Avenue.</p>
<p><u>Controls</u></p> <p>C1. A Heritage Interpretation Plan must be provided as part of any future Development Application or Subdivision that highlights the historical and cultural significance of the subject site.</p> <p>C2. For all residential subdivisions or developments on lands adjacent to or lands containing a C2 Environmental Conservation zone, an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) must be prepared prior to any ground disturbances in the area.</p> <p>C3. An Unexpected Finds Protocol is required to be issued prior to any remediation, earthworks or construction is undertaken on any lands identified in the Heritage Interpretation Map.</p>

DCP Controls

Extent Heritage comments

The proposed subdivision has made a considered effort to ensure the new pattern of development has a minimal impact on the existing road corridors that contribute to the heritage significance of the *Milperra Soldiers Settlement (former)* retained and conserved in Bullecourt and Ashford Avenues. This could be enhanced by additional placemaking initiatives explored in a Heritage Interpretation Plan.

5. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary

This report seeks to address the impacts of the proposed subdivision of the former Western Sydney University Milperra Campus. While the subject site is not a heritage listed item, it is bordered by Bullecourt Avenue to its north and Ashford Avenue to its west, roads that form part of the locally listed heritage item *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)* on the *Canterbury Bankstown LEP 2023*. This report concludes that the proposed development will not have any impact on these roads as all works proposed are to be contained within the subject site, and as such will not affect the alignment of the roads which is key to the item's significance. The subdivision will facilitate the suburban redevelopment of the area, which seeks to improve the residential amenity of the wider area, as it will provide much needed housing in the area and its surrounds.

This report has assessed the heritage impacts of the proposed works against the relevant objectives and development controls within the *Canterbury Bankstown LEP 2023* and *Canterbury Bankstown DCP 2023*. The proposed subdivision generally comply with the relevant heritage controls within the LEP and DCP to result in an improved outcome for the heritage items in the vicinity. The proposed subdivision will not result in any adverse impacts on the significance or character of the heritage item in the vicinity or on the identified heritage values of the *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)*.

5.2. Recommendations

In recognition of the historical associations of the site with the *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)*, the following recommendations are provided to inform the proposed development.

- It is recommended that all future development proposals should give regard to the heritage controls outlined in Chapter 4 of *Canterbury Bankstown Development Control Plan (DCP)* and Section 3.9 of the draft *Site-Specific DCP for Western Sydney University Milperra Former Campus*. Broadly, the objectives outlined in the DCP seek to ensure that adjacent development does not have a detrimental impact on the identified heritage values, is a compatible development, and retains key features that contribute to the character of the area. For the subject site, retaining the historical form of the road corridors of Bullecourt and Ashford Avenues will be integral to the conservation of heritage values.
- Under Clause 5.10(5) of the *Canterbury Bankstown Local Environmental Plan 2023*, subsequent Development Applications for construction may require a Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI) to assess the potential impacts to the heritage significance of the *Milperra Soldier Settlement (former)*. Given the significance of the heritage item is embodied in the layout of the Bullecourt and Ashford Avenues, it is considered unlikely that built form in the adjacent lot would adversely impact the identified heritage values of the item, however, pre-DA advice from Canterbury Bankstown's Council heritage officer should be sought.

- Section 3.9 of the DCP stipulates that a Heritage Interpretation Plan should be provided as part of any future Development Application or subdivision of the former Western Sydney University Milperra Campus. It is recommended that an Interpretation Plan is prepared following the subdivision, in line with the controls provided in Section 3.9 of the DCP cited above. The Heritage Interpretation Plan would establish a thematic framework to interpret the Milperra Soldier Settlement by exploring the historical and social values associated with the site. The interpretation plan would identify suitable interpretative devices for implementation based on a thorough site analysis.
- The site, like all places in NSW, is subject to the general conditions of the *Heritage Act 1977*, there are however no specific permitting or consent requirements under the Act for this site. As part of the on-site environmental management process, an unexpected finds procedure should be put in place, developed by an archaeologist with demonstrated experience and understanding of the required obligations in accordance with the *Act*. This protocol would include a pre-start briefing of contractors regarding the type of material that may be uncovered during works and their obligations under the *Act*. The procedure should also outline a process for protecting and identifying unexpected archaeological material, if uncovered during works.

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List of definitions

Term	Meaning
Consent authority	The person or body with whose approval that act, matter or thing may be done or without whose approval that act, matter or thing may not be done.
Conservation	Conservation means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance (as defined in <i>The Burra Charter</i>).
Development	The erection of a building, carrying out work, use of or subdivision of land.
Heritage significance	Term used in the assessment and understanding of heritage items that have significance in relation to their historical, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic value.
Moveable heritage	A moveable object that is not a relic.
<i>National construction code</i>	A code that sets minimum requirements for design, construction and performance of buildings, as well as plumbing and drainage systems throughout Australia.
Relic	Any deposit, artefact, object or material evidence that is of state or local heritage significance.
Setting	The area around an item, which may include the visual catchment.
State Heritage Inventory	An online database containing heritage items and conservation areas on statutory lists in NSW. This includes the State Heritage Register and local government items.
State Heritage Register	The NSW State Heritage Register. A list of places and items of importance to the people of NSW. Only places of state heritage significance are listed on the State Heritage Register. The State Heritage Register protects these items and their significance.
State Heritage Register item	A term to describe a heritage item that is of state heritage significance and is listed on the State Heritage Register.

List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
CMP	Conservation Management Plan
DA	Development application
DCP	Development Control Plan
DP&E	Department of Planning and Environment
EP&A Act	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
HCA	Heritage Conservation Area
Heritage Act	<i>Heritage Act 1977 (NSW)</i>
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
NSW	New South Wales
S170 Register	Section 170 State Agency Heritage and Conservation Register
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policies
SHI	State Heritage Inventory, NSW
SHR	State Heritage Register
SOHI	Statement of Heritage Impact