



Assessment of Heritage Impact  
on the listed heritage item (PLEP Item 311) at

Melrose Park  
for PAYCE

*Final Report, March 2017*



1960s Lemon-scented gums (*Corymbia citriodora*) at the eastern side of the Pfizer Australia site (near Wharf Road)

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## Executive Summary

In this assessment, the heritage Item 311 (**Appendix B**) is shown to be a number of remnant mature trees from the 1960s and 1970s that represent a relatively early use of Australian native plant species in the site planning and design of large-scale industrial sites within the Parramatta LGA.

This review confirms that these trees have cultural significance for present and future communities within the Parramatta LGA. Not only do the remnant plantings mark a significant period in the history of Australian site planning and design, the trees also make a notable contribution to the local Wharf Road streetscape.

Provided the recommendations of this report are followed there is likely to be minimal heritage impact on the LEP listed Item 311 or the two moveable heritage items located nearby at the former Reckitt Benckiser site resulting from the proposed redevelopment of the site. In view of these findings it is recommended that:-

- 1 The listing details within the Parramatta LEP, 2011 covering the remnant mature trees be revised to more accurately describe what the heritage items are. The same applies to the two moveable heritage items if they are to be retained on the site.
- 2 The proposed redevelopment of the site should incorporate the larger mature trees (as indicated in **Figures 16 to 19**) in the detailed site planning and design as these elements retain the most important aspects of the assessed cultural value of the landscape as shown by the map for Item 311.
- 3 The vintage mobile fire pump should be properly conserved and housed under cover. As the early fire apparatus may be of State heritage value, consideration should be given to donating the unit to the Powerhouse Museum as part of its comprehensive technology collection. Care is advised in its handling as the apparatus may also hold some danger if it is still under pressure and may still have toxic substances associated with it.
- 4 The existing millstones should be considered for incorporation within an appropriate public precinct of the development or alternatively, as their actual operational history belongs elsewhere, consideration should be given to donating the millstones to either the National Museum of Australia in Canberra (as it already has Reckitt's blue interpreted within its collection) or the Powerhouse Museum.
- 5 There is an opportunity for the redevelopment to engage its future communities through appropriate and informative interpretive material about both the natural and cultural history of the overall site. The material should include references to the pre-European landscape, the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century agricultural uses as well as the later substantial industrial expansion and uses covering a wide range of familiar products. Ideally this interpretation would be part of a broader, integrated program of cultural and natural heritage interpretation for the Parramatta LGA.

## I Introduction

This report was commissioned by PAYCE to review the potential for heritage impact on the area of land off Wharf Road, Melrose Park listed as Item 311 on the Parramatta Local Environmental Plan, 2011. The heritage item is described as “landscaping (including millstones at Reckitt)” under Item 311 on Schedule 5 of the LEP and as having cultural value at a Local level. The site area that was the specific concern of this report is shown at **Figure 1**.

This review is in the context of a proposal to redevelop the overall site as part of a total development extending further to the south to Hope Street that includes residential, commercial and retail space along with reconfigured parklands. The overall proposal is shown on a Structure Plan (SP\_L02 Rev. R)(**Figure 20**) and Masterplan (14073 Amendment B)(**Figure 21**) by Allen Jack + Cottier architects. The existing total development area is shown on a 19 sheet site survey (16.12.14) by LTS Lockley (Ref. No. 42480DT). Sheets 6, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 13 are specifically relevant to the site area nominated as heritage Item 311.

Mapping of heritage items within the Parramatta LEP shows the location of heritage Item 311 to encompass the Pfizer Australia site (38-42 Wharf Road) and the much smaller JAE MY Holdings site (8 Wharf Road) to the north. Confusingly, it excludes the two millstones (though these are mentioned in the item description) and an antique mobile fire extinguisher which are located a further 150m to the south of the mapped area within the adjacent former Reckitt Benckiser site (44 Wharf Road). Although these items are not included within the mapped area, this review regards them as part of the heritage item (as suggested by the description under Schedule 5) and includes them within the considerations of the present report.

In the context of the LEP a **heritage item** means “a building, work, place, relic, tree, object or archaeological site the location and nature of which is described in Schedule 5” and **heritage significance** is described as “historical, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic value”. These attributes are discussed further in **Section 3** of this report.

The Parramatta LEP 2011 Dictionary also describes a **heritage impact statement** as a document consisting of “a statement demonstrating the heritage significance of a heritage item or heritage conservation area, and, an assessment of the impact that proposed development will have on that significance, and proposals for measures to minimise that impact”. The present report is largely structured accordingly on this basis.

The cultural significance of the site was assessed through site visits in October and November 2015 and a review of relevant archival material that included aerial photography.

This report follows the standard procedure for reviewing the heritage context of places based on recommendations by the Heritage Division of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage. After considering the nature of the site’s cultural significance, the proposed development works are tested against various benchmark criteria such as cultural significance and relevant expectations arising from the LEP heritage listing.

All ground photography was taken in 2015 by Geoffrey Britton who authored this report.



**Figure 1** A recent aerial photograph of the study site where the heritage Item 311 area (encompassing the Pfizer Australia site and relative to this Proposal) is shown along Wharf Road. The star at lower right indicates the location of the two moveable heritage items within the former Reckitt Benckiser site. (Source: NSW Land & Property Information SIX Viewer)



**Figure 2** A Wharf Road panorama taken from 19 Wharf Road looking across to the northern-most access gate of the Pfizer Australia site. Just to the right of the blue gate is a pear tree with a line of Liquidambar on the left of the gate. The group of tall gums further to the left (south) are part of the remnant plantings from the 1960s that form the basis of heritage Item 311.

## 2 Site Context

The site area covered by heritage Item 311 has frontage to Wharf Road, Melrose Park (facing east) and northern frontage to Bartlett Park (currently a disused site). The southern side adjoins the Reckitt Benckiser site while the western side adjoins other industrial premises off Hughes Avenue (**Figure 1**). The northern and southern parts of the site area are dominated by typically large plate industrial manufacturing and warehouse buildings with the eastern edge having a generous setback from Wharf Road. This eastern frontage is where the majority of plantings are located. Collectively this landscaped edge makes a conspicuous contribution to the local townscape amenity of Wharf Road.

Overall the industrial site landscape is partly unified through its use of Australian native plant species though there are also many exotic species present such as Oriental Plane (*Platanus orientalis*), *Camellia* cv., Sweet Gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), *Pyrus* sp. (**Figure 2**), Queen Palm (*Syagrus romanzoffiana*), Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) and *Yucca* sp. A more unusual, dominant tree to the rear of the Pfizer Australia site is a Cook Island Pine (*Araucaria columnaris*) (**Figure 4**) that, despite its Gondwanan affinities, could be regarded as an exotic also – at least no more a locally indigenous species as most of the other Australian species used along Wharf Road.

Australian plant species (mainly along the Wharf Road frontage) include *Melaleuca* sp., *Banksia robur*, *Callistemon* spp., *Casuarina* sp., *Grevillea* cv., *Waterhousea floribunda*, *Ficus rubiginosa* (**Figures 3, 6 and 15**), *Corymbia citriodora* (**Figures 5 and 14**), *Eucalyptus microcorys* and *Glochidion ferdinandi*. Most of these appear to have been planted within the last three decades though the fig trees (and the Cook Island Pine) may have been several decades older. The reason for the presence of Cheese Tree (*Glochidion ferdinandi*) is unclear as the examples on site may have been planted as part of the general Australian native plant theme or they may be natural recruitments as the species is a representative of the locally indigenous flora for this general area. All of the larger trees appear to be in good health although at least one of the fig trees has a sparse canopy suggesting some level of stress. A 1980 aerial photograph of the site shows a substantial earlier building (now demolished) to the immediate west of the fig trees.<sup>1</sup>

About half way along the frontage to the Reckitt Benckiser site there is a pair of substantial sandstone millstones mounted on a circular steel plate and concrete foundation (**Figures 6, 10 and 11**). Close by, a vintage mobile fire pump is fixed to a concrete slab (**Figures 7 and 8**). While not included within the designated heritage Item 311 site area, these two moveable heritage items are clearly of cultural significance warranting proper conservation actions.

The fire pump consists of a large cylinder mounted on an axle with two large iron wheels with its rubber hose and brass nozzle intact and handles for transport and manoeuvring. It is very similar to types manufactured in the USA by the American LaFrance – Foamite Corporation after 1926.<sup>2</sup> It operated using water, sodium bicarbonate, an aluminium compound and a patented chemical that produced a foam enabling it to extinguish petroleum fires. This type contained 40 gallons of solution and generated 300 gallons of foam. As the fire extinguisher (pump or portable engine) has been kept outside in the elements for many years, the rubber hose is showing some signs of deterioration and the red paint is fading and discolouring.

The millstone pair is mounted with a small brass plate attached to the top of the western stone that reads (almost illegibly now) "MILL STONE This mill stone was commissioned in 1909 for grinding ultramarine used in the manufacturing of Reckitts blue. It was used continuously for 54 years prior to the stone being moved to West Ryde in 1963". The millstones were probably used

<sup>1</sup> The 1980 aerial photograph is reproduced as Plate 32 (though with the image reversed) in Jack Edwards, *Out of the blue: a history of Reckitt & Colman in Australia*, Reckitt & Colman, Artarmon, 1982

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.hallofflame.org/handhorsesdrawn9.htm#Hand drawn 40 gallon portable foam fire engine](http://www.hallofflame.org/handhorsesdrawn9.htm#Hand%20drawn%2040%20gallon%20portable%20foam%20fire%20engine)

at the Reckitt factory in Bourke Street, Redfern which the company acquired in 1902. The 1963 date coincides with the time the company – by then Reckitt & Colman<sup>3</sup> – had completed its move from Redfern to its new West Ryde factory (the current Melrose Park site).<sup>4</sup> Pairs of millstones shown to be in use at the Redfern factory (in a photograph in the history of the Reckitt & Colman company by Jack Edwards) are identical to those at Melrose Park.

Unlike the millstones, the vintage fire extinguisher has no interpretive information attached to it so its relevance to the present site is unknown. Presumably it was part of the fire safety equipment used at Reckitt's Redfern site and was already superseded by more modern equipment by the time the company moved to its new West Ryde (Melrose Park) site during the 1961-1963 period. Although an identical fire pump, and part of the comprehensive collection at the Hall of Flame in Phoenix, Arizona, was used at Milwaukee by the Wisconsin Electric Power Company from 1930 till as late as 1967 (Figure 9).



**Figure 3** View within the Pfizer Australia site from Wharf Road showing the various layers of plantings including some early ones. To the left of the white CCTV security camera post is one of two Port Jackson fig trees (*Ficus rubiginosa*) that relate to an earlier phase of the industrial site's development.



**Figure 4** View across the rear of the Pfizer Australia site from the northern edge of the Reckitt Benckiser site showing the most significant tree within the view – the Cook Island Pine (*Araucaria columnaris*).

<sup>3</sup> Reckitt & Colman merged with Benckiser in 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Edwards, 1982



**Figure 5** The main entry gate to the Pfizer Australia site with a group of 1960s Lemon-scented gums (*Corymbia citriodora*).



**Figure 6** The southern-most of two Port Jackson fig trees within the Pfizer Australia site towards Wharf Road. The fig trees were probably planted soon after an earlier factory was built to the immediate west of the trees. The factory was demolished about 30 years ago when Pfizer Australia bought the site.





**Figures 7 and 8** The vintage fire extinguisher near the main entry to the Reckitt Benckiser site while, below, **Figure 9** shows a very similar fire pump in the Hall of Flame museum collection in Phoenix, Arizona, USA that was used by the Wisconsin Electric Power Company at its Milwaukee site from 1930 till 1967. **BELOW RIGHT Figures 10 and 11** Views of the millstones near the front of the Reckitt Benckiser site.



At various places within the Pfizer Australia site there are pear trees (*Pyrus* sp.) that appear to be several decades old at least. They are not generally evident in the 1943 aerial photography though two trees (**Figure 12**) (to the immediate east of Pfizer Australia's most recent building of c. 2001 and marked on **Figures 13** and **14**) do coincide with two trees on the boundary of two earlier agricultural lots on the 1943 photography. If this is the case, then the trees would probably date to the 1930s. However, the pear trees are not uncommon and would be of moderate cultural significance in a local context. All pear trees within the site could be relocated as part of the new development scheme. Also within the Pfizer Australia site is a large Blue Quandong (*Elaeocarpus grandis* syn. *E. angustifolius*) (**Figure 13** and indicated on **Figure 17**) that is less common though is likely a recent addition to the site as they are capable of fast growth.



ABOVE LEFT **Figure 12** Two pear trees near the front of the Pfizer Australia site that coincide with two trees shown on the 1943 aerial photography. ABOVE RIGHT **Figure 13** Canopy of the Blue Quandong wedged in between factory buildings. BELOW **Figure 14** 1960s Lemon-scented gums near Wharf Road.





**Figure 15** The northern-most Port Jackson fig near Wharf Road. An earlier factory building was located to the immediate west (right) of the tree. Although there is dieback evident in the canopy of both the fig trees there are also signs of recovery. The figs warrant arboricultural care to enhance their viability as they are a long-lived species.

### 3 Consideration of Significance

#### 3.1 Assessment of Significance

This section includes an assessment of the cultural significance of heritage Item 311 along with the moveable heritage items at the front of the Reckitt Benckiser site.

On the basis of the Parramatta LEP a place has heritage significance when it is demonstrated to have “historical, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic value”. These attributes are not mutually exclusive and each is now briefly considered in relation to the Wharf Road sites.

*Historical value:* As with much of the local area, the heritage Item 311 site was largely developed after WW II as the 1943 aerial photography clearly shows the locality under small plot agricultural uses with only a few farmhouses (all now demolished) along Wharf Road. Most of the industrial development appears to be from the 1960s and the plantings within the heritage Item 311 site are associated with this phase of use though only some of the present plantings would date to this period – many are later. Of the earlier plantings, the two Port Jackson fig trees (*Ficus rubiginosa*), the solitary Cook Island Pine and the large eucalypts and gums along Wharf Road are likely candidates. On the basis of the 1943 aerial photography (**Appendix A**), one of the demolished farmhouses along Wharf Road (opposite 21 Wharf Road) had a tall Araucarian pine associated with it (opposite 23 Wharf Road) that was a tall, mature tree at 1943 suggesting a late 19<sup>th</sup> century or very early 20<sup>th</sup> century planting. The tree is where there is a current driveway. The form of its shadow on the 1943 photograph strongly suggests it was a Cook Island Pine.

While many of the plantings within the Item 311 site have little historical value, some trees (such as the largest gums and the fig trees) appear to date to the earliest phases of industrial development of the site and as such would have moderate cultural significance.

The moveable objects to the south of Item 311 hold considerable historical value at a local level though the portable fire extinguisher, at least, may be rare and warrant consideration at a State level.

*Scientific value:* There appears to be little or no scientific value attached to the heritage Item 311 site.

*Cultural value:* While 'cultural' is not defined as a separate attribute, it is taken here to have a broad meaning and refers to all of the attributes. In this case heritage Item 311 may be considered to have moderate cultural significance for its amenity value and its contribution to the Wharf Road streetscape. The moveable objects certainly have cultural value and that likely at a high level.

*Social value:* This attribute has not been tested as part of this review. However given the site frontage's amenity contribution to the adjacent residential area and the streetscape generally, it is likely that the site will hold some value, at least, by the local community as well as for those who have worked at the site.

*Archaeological value:* The setback along Wharf Road may hold archaeological interest as, prior to industrial development, various former farmhouses were located there and, as there has been relatively minimal disturbance, some archaeological evidence may remain. The two moveable heritage items would also hold considerable interest for their archaeological research value.

*Architectural value:* This attribute carries little relevance for the present site.

*Natural value:* This attribute carries little relevance for the present site.

*Aesthetic value:* Plantings collectively, and the older more mature trees as well as those near the boundary fence (eg Camellias) in particular, within the heritage Item 311 site likely hold moderate aesthetic value for their contribution to the local streetscape.

Looking at these attributes in a different way, the Heritage Division of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage has developed a relative basis for the assessment of cultural significance in reference to various benchmark criteria. These have been adapted to the Parramatta LGA for this site and the two moveable items.

*Criterion (a) An item is important in the course, or pattern, of the Parramatta LGA's cultural or natural history. [Historical value]*

Collectively, the extant plantings within the Pfizer Australia site area (relevant to Item 311) hold some historical value as part of the program to improve the site after its progressive industrial development. However, the older plantings – including the Cook Island Pine, the two Port Jackson fig trees and the various mature *Eucalyptus* and *Corymbia* spp. - hold moderate historical value as the surviving landscape from the earlier post-WW II (mainly 1960s) industrial development of the site. These older plantings also have cultural value for their ability to demonstrate the relatively early use of Australian natives (and that within the context of an industrial site) at a time when these species were only just beginning to be shown more attention in landscape design.

The millstone group further to the south holds considerable value, at least at a local level, as part of the equipment in the manufacturing of the world famous Reckitt's blue laundry whitener although the millstones were not actually functional at the Melrose Park site.<sup>5</sup> The vintage portable fire extinguisher also holds considerable historical value, at least at a local level, as it demonstrates the nature of fire safety technology used in a factory context from the interwar and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century periods though, as with the millstones, it is unlikely the equipment was ever used at the Melrose Park site.

*Criterion (b) An item has a strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the Parramatta LGA's cultural or natural history. [Associational value]*

The millstones hold considerable value being associated with the former Reckitt & Colman company in the development of the Reckitt's blue product at Redfern. The vintage portable fire extinguisher likely also holds associational value as part of the former Reckitt & Colman factory from its Redfern period.

The oldest surviving plantings across the Pfizer Australia site area are directly associated with the development of industrial land uses in the 1960s, displacing the previous market gardens and small lot farms. The association is particularly noteworthy as the 1960s landscape design of the sites demonstrates a relatively early concern to use Australian native plants over the use of exotics that were otherwise prevalent. In this case the surviving original plantings would hold moderate associational value at a local level.

*Criterion (c) An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in the Parramatta LGA. [Aesthetic/Technical value]*

The extant plantings representing Item 311 hold moderate value for their contribution to the amenity of the local streetscape.

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<sup>5</sup> Reckitt's blue was even used by Australian Aborigines in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to colour wooden fighting implements demonstrating an intriguing early contact between the two cultures (c/- National Museum of Australia).

*Criterion (d) An item has strong or special association with a particular community, or cultural group in the Parramatta LGA for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. [Social value]*

It is likely that the extant plantings representing Item 311 hold some value, at least, for the local community on account of their contribution to the amenity of the local streetscape.

*Criterion (e) An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the Parramatta LGA's cultural or natural history. [Research potential]*

While the extant plantings representing Item 311 may hold some value for their ability to demonstrate a relatively early use of Australian plant species in the development of industrial sites, the two moveable heritage items would hold considerable research potential as part of the technologies of earlier Australian manufacturing industries.

*Criterion (f) An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the Parramatta LGA's cultural or natural history. [Rarity]*

The older Australian native plantings comprising Item 311 may now be rare in the context of early post WW II industrial sites within the Parramatta LGA though the two moveable heritage items are certainly rare in any context.

*Criterion (g) An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of the Parramatta LGA's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments. [Representativeness]*

There is likely to be representative value for the extant older plantings forming Item 311, as they are illustrative of an emerging approach to landscape design in the 1960s and 1970s. The two moveable heritage items are likely excellent representative examples of their type.

*Integrity/Intactness:*

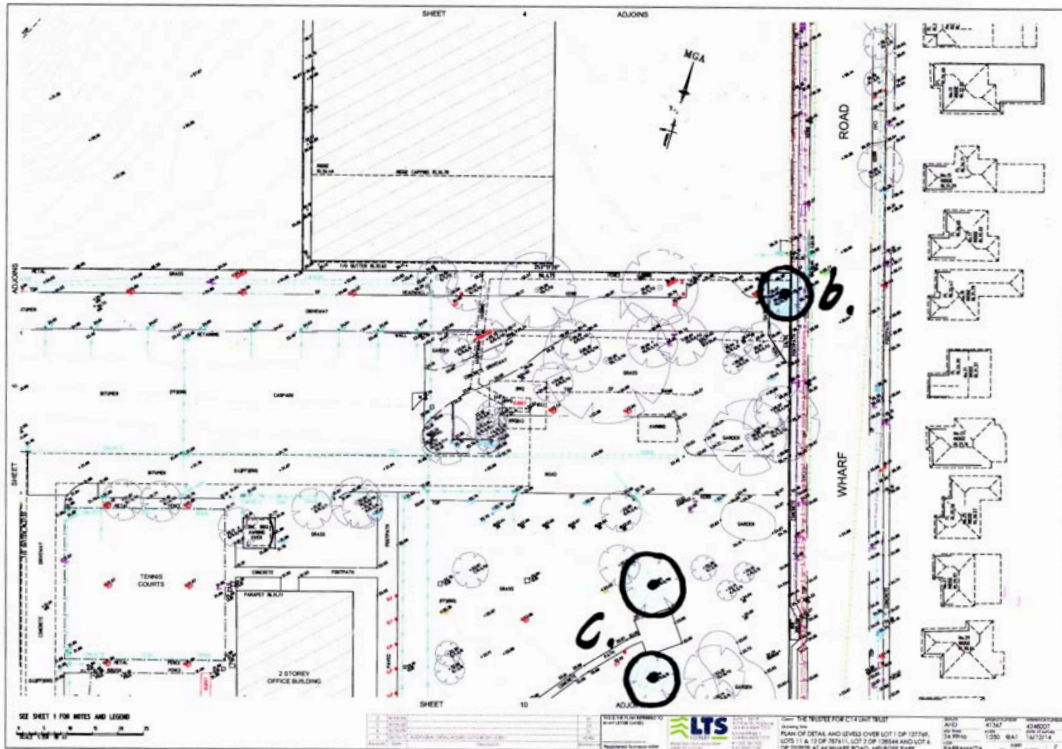
With regard to Item 311, it is difficult to state how intact the landscape is as no evidence of its original design or planning was available. However it is reasonable to assume that, with the passing of many decades and evidence that various new access roads and structures have been built within the site, the original landscape design is probably not intact. The site would have been subject to natural attrition and the site layout modified as recent aerial photography demonstrates. The moveable items individually appear to hold considerable intactness despite being stored outside over many years.

### **3.2 Statement of Significance**

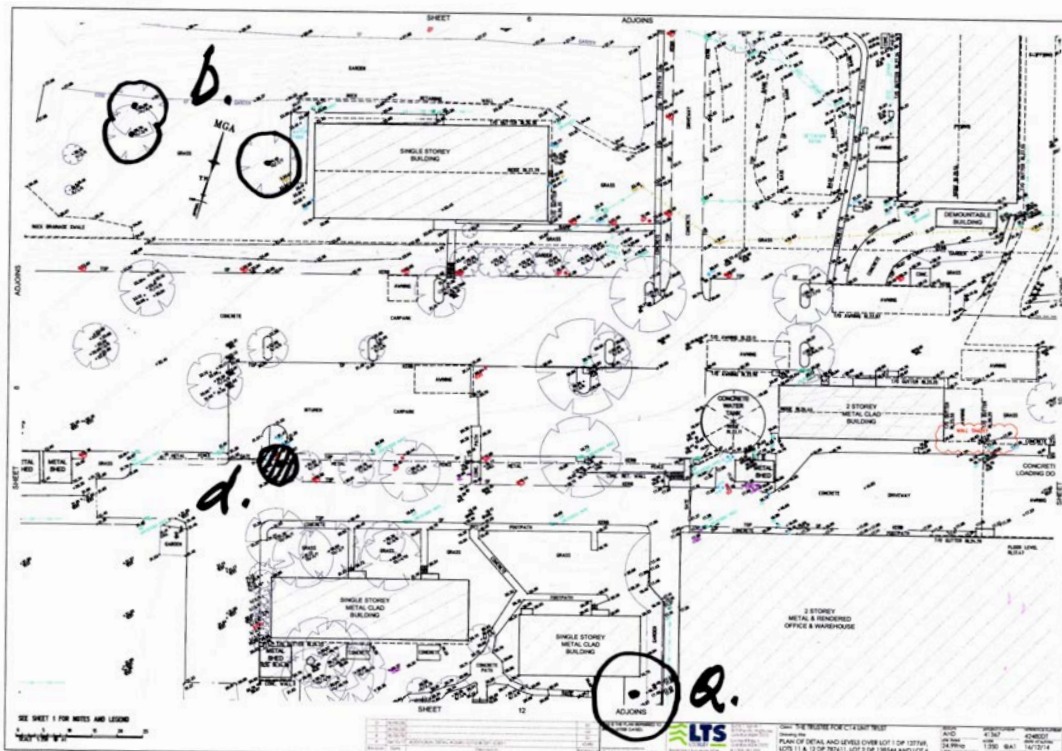
The two moveable heritage items are of considerable cultural significance at a local level and where the millstones are probably rare within the Parramatta LGA while the vintage portable fire extinguisher may be rare at a State level. Together they have the ability to demonstrate the types of technologies used for the development of industrial manufacturing during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The surviving older plantings (including the Cook Island Pine, the two Port Jackson fig trees and the various mature *Eucalyptus* and *Corymbia* spp.) within the Pfizer site area have moderate cultural value as an example of the relatively early use of Australian native species in the planting of industrial sites within the Parramatta LGA. Together with later plantings, these mature trees make a notable contribution to the amenity of the Wharf Road streetscape.

NB. Plantings considered to be of moderate cultural significance are noted on the survey sheets as **Figures 16 to 19** along with other items worthy of retention.



**Figure 16** Site survey showing the northeastern corner of the Pfizer Australia site. A pear tree (b.) is shown at the actual site corner. Two Port Jackson fig trees (c.) are also shown that were probably planted about the time an earlier factory building was built nearby (demolished about 30 years ago). The latter trees should be incorporated into any new scheme for the site.



**Figure 17** Site survey of the rear section of the Pfizer Australia site with the lone Cook Island Pine (d.): the most significant tree within this rear site area. Pear trees (b.) that could possibly be relocated as part of the new redevelopment. While large, the Blue Quandong (Q.) is a relatively recent addition and is only of some cultural significance.

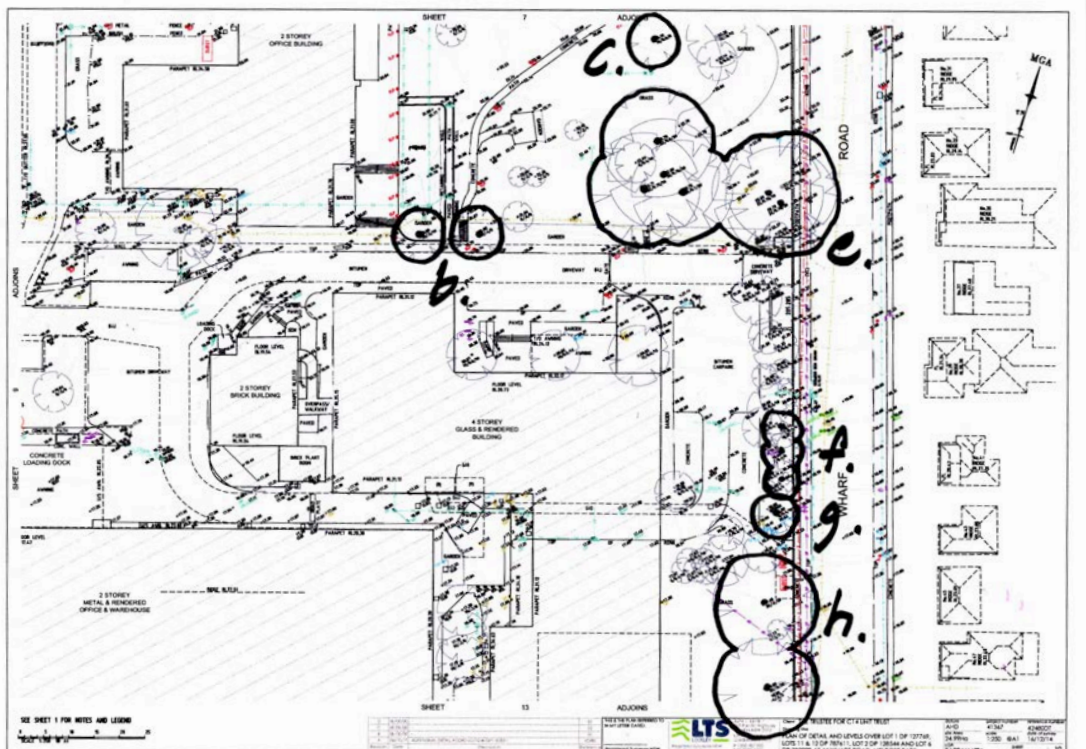


Figure 18 Site survey showing the Pfizer Australia site with one of the fig trees (c.) at the top and a group of 1960s Lemon-scented gums (e.). Further south along the Wharf Road frontage is a line of camellias (f.) and a locally indigenous Cheese Tree (*Glochidion ferdinandi*)(g.) that would be desirable to retain. The mature trees at h., should be retained. Pears trees (b.) could possibly be relocated elsewhere on site.

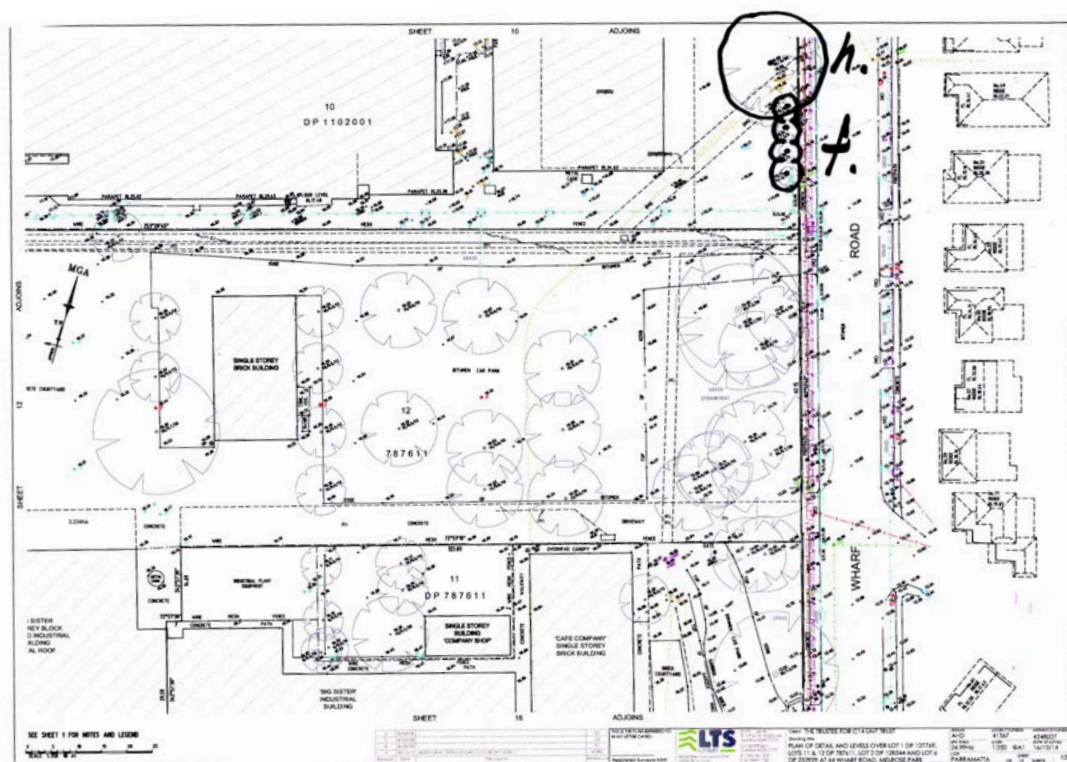


Figure 19 Site survey showing the southern part of the Pfizer Australia site with one of the mature trees (h.) and another line of camellias (f.) at the top.



## 4 Heritage Impact Assessment

### 4.1 Proposal

It is the intention of PAYCE to redevelop the site of heritage Item 311 as part of a larger area (south to Hope Street and west to existing residences off Hughes Avenue) that encompasses the Pfizer Australia and Reckitt Benckiser sites along with additional industrial sites to the west for residential, commercial and retail uses together with public open space areas.

The overall proposal is shown on a Structure Plan (SP\_L02 Rev. R)(**Figure 20**) and Masterplan (160208)(**Figure 21**) by Allen Jack + Cottier. Of the 19 sheet site survey (16.12.14) by LTS Lockley (Ref. No. 42480DT) for the total development area, Sheets 6, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 13 are specifically relevant to the site area nominated as heritage Item 311.

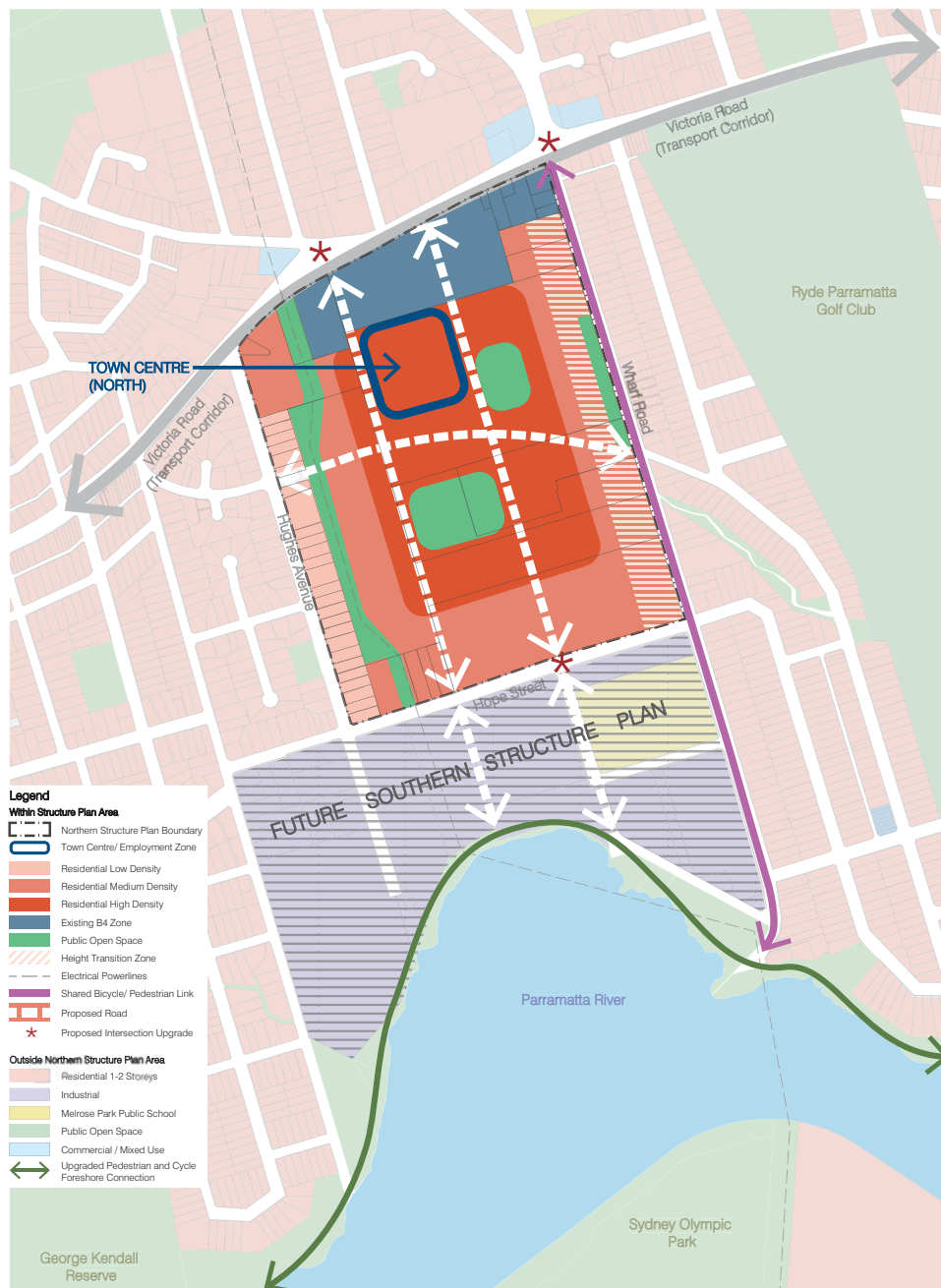


Figure 20



Figure 21 AJ + C Master Plan of the proposed Melrose Park development

## 4.2 Assessment of Heritage Impact

### 4.2.1 Impact on the Wharf Road Setting

The context to be considered here is particularly the Wharf Road streetscape. So a pertinent consideration is whether the loss of the vegetation along this frontage would be detrimental for this setting. If, for example, the plantings along Wharf Road were relatively recent, the answer to this question may be that the loss would be tolerable if replaced shortly thereafter by new plantings. However, in the case of the current mature vegetation along Wharf Road, the loss of the larger trees would represent a dramatic change and likely be seen negatively as it would take many decades to replace the amenity these trees presently provide.

As it happens, it is these larger mature trees that represent the basis of heritage Item 311 so retaining these trees would not only retain the significance of the heritage item, it would also ensure the setting of the Wharf Road streetscape is minimally affected by the proposed new development. The most important components of the site landscape are noted on **Figures 16 to 19**.

### 4.2.2 Impact on Significant Layout

No significant layout was determined to be relevant for the area encompassed by heritage Item 311 or in areas in the vicinity of the item.

### 4.2.3 Impact on Significant Fabric

Significant fabric in this case includes the older trees within the heritage Item 311 site area as well as the two moveable heritage items. The same issues are relevant here as were noted above in **Section 4.2.1**. Where the landscape components noted on **Figures 16 to 19** are retained and integrated into the proposed development, the impact on significant vegetative fabric would be minimal.

The 1943 aerial photography shows a number of earlier farmhouses and cottages along Wharf Road (as well as the beginnings of suburban development in the area). Although these earlier buildings were demolished by the early 1960s for the development of the industrial factories, the latter buildings were all given a generous setback off Wharf Road such that there may well remain some evidence of the earlier structures along the Wharf Road frontage. This would not preclude future building within this zone though it may warrant further investigation to determine the status of the site's archaeology before any excavation is undertaken.

### 4.2.4 Consistency with the Statement of Significance

The assessed significance summarised in the statement of significance at **Section 3.2** (and restated below) is now considered. For the proposed new development to impact on the heritage significance of Item 311 or the two moveable heritage items, it would need to negatively affect these assessed cultural values.

#### *Statement of Significance*

*The two moveable heritage items are of considerable cultural significance at a local level and where the millstones are probably rare within the Parramatta LGA while the vintage portable fire extinguisher may be rare at a State level. Together they have the ability to demonstrate the types of technologies relevant to the development of industrial manufacturing within the Parramatta LGA during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

*The surviving older plantings (including the Cook Island Pine, the two Port Jackson fig trees and the various mature Eucalyptus and Corymbia spp.) within the Pfizer and JAE MY Holdings site areas have*

*moderate cultural value as an example of the relatively early use of Australian native species in the planting of industrial sites within the Parramatta LGA. Together with later plantings these mature trees make a notable contribution to the amenity of the Wharf Road streetscape.*

Considering each of these aspects of significance in turn, the proposed site development would not affect the two moveable heritage items if these are appropriately integrated within the new development and conserved or otherwise offered to major museum collections as recommended.

The cultural significance of the site (Item 311) would be retained where the larger mature trees noted in **Figures 16 to 19** are retained and appropriately integrated as is also recommended in this report. Beyond the noted trees, the retention of other site vegetation within the Item 311 area would be discretionary, as these do not affect the assessed significance of the site.

#### 4.2.5 Consistency with the Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011

Relevant sections of the Parramatta LEP 2011 include Clause 5.9 Preservation of trees or vegetation and Clause 5.10 Heritage Conservation. Considering Clause 5.9 first, the initial section of the clause states that its objective *"is to preserve the amenity of the area, including biodiversity values, through the preservation of trees and other vegetation"*. Heritage Item 311 comprises some mature trees that contribute substantively to the amenity of the Wharf Road streetscape while also being components of a listed heritage item under the LEP.

To remove the vegetation listed as part of Item 311 will require development consent. However, much of the vegetation included under this listing is found to be either relatively recent. In this case the loss of this later vegetation would not unduly prejudice the heritage item. The new development is expected be planned and designed with its own substantial landscape that would effectively replace much of the less culturally significant site vegetation. The real loss to the community in terms of cultural heritage and amenity would be the loss of the larger mature native trees. However in this case, most of these trees occur along the Wharf Road frontage where there may be more scope to design new buildings in conjunction with the trees, allowing them to be a feature of the development and ensuring the amenity of the Wharf Road streetscape is retained.

The proposed new development is now considered in the context of each of the relevant clauses from Section 5.10 of the Parramatta LEP.

PARRAMATTA LEP 2011 SECTION 5.10 HERITAGE CONSERVATION	
CLAUSE	RECONCILIATION AGAINST PROPOSALS
<p><i>The objectives of this clause are as follows:</i></p> <p><i>(a) to conserve the environmental heritage of Parramatta,</i></p> <p><i>(b) to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views,</i></p> <p><i>(c) to conserve archaeological sites,</i></p> <p><i>(d) to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.</i></p>	<p>The degree to which the proposed new development is consistent with this clause depends on the extent to which existing site vegetation is removed. If all of the site vegetation is removed then the nature of significance bound up with Item 311 on Schedule 5 of the LEP will be lost. Such a result would not only remove a significant aspect of the Parramatta LGA's cultural history, it would also affect the amenity of the Wharf Road streetscape that has been traditionally important to the local community. Alternatively, if the large mature trees (mainly) along Wharf Road are retained and incorporated into the site's new design, this aspect of Parramatta's cultural heritage and its associated streetscape setting would be conserved. The trees would also serve as a feature and focus within the proposed development, providing a sense of age</p>

	<p>and establishment within an otherwise new site.</p> <p>There are no known Aboriginal cultural resources within the proposed development site and are unlikely to be given the scale of disturbance from development of the site for agriculture initially then the extensive post-war industrial expansion.</p>
<p>(2) Requirement for consent  <i>Development consent is required for any of the following:</i></p> <p>(a) demolishing or moving any of the following or altering the exterior of any of the following (including, in the case of a building, making changes to its detail, fabric, finish or appearance):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) a heritage item,</li> <li>(ii) an Aboriginal object,</li> <li>(iii) a building, work, relic or tree within a heritage conservation area,</li> </ul> <p>(b) altering a heritage item that is a building by making structural changes to its interior or by making changes to anything inside the item that is specified in Schedule 5 in relation to the item,</p> <p>(c) disturbing or excavating an archaeological site while knowing, or having reasonable cause to suspect, that the disturbance or excavation will or is likely to result in a relic being discovered, exposed, moved, damaged or destroyed,</p> <p>(d) disturbing or excavating an Aboriginal place of heritage significance,</p> <p>(e) erecting a building on land:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) on which a heritage item is located or that is within a heritage conservation area, or</li> <li>(ii) on which an Aboriginal object is located or that is within an Aboriginal place of heritage significance.</li> </ul>	<p>Sections (2)(a)(i) and (e)(i) confirm that consent is required for the proposed new development</p>
<p>(3) When consent not required  <i>However, development consent under this clause is not required if:</i></p> <p>(a) the applicant has notified the consent authority of the proposed development and the consent authority has advised the applicant in writing before any work is carried out that it is satisfied that the proposed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) is of a minor nature or is for the maintenance of the heritage item, Aboriginal object, Aboriginal place of heritage significance or archaeological site or a building, work, relic, tree or place within the heritage conservation area, and</li> </ul>	<p>Notwithstanding Section (3), the proposed new development requires consent.</p>

<p>(ii) would not adversely affect the heritage significance of the heritage item, Aboriginal object, Aboriginal place, archaeological site or heritage conservation area, or</p> <p>(b) the development is in a cemetery or burial ground and the proposed development:</p> <p>(i) is the creation of a new grave or monument, or excavation or disturbance of land for the purpose of conserving or repairing monuments or grave markers, and</p> <p>(ii) would not cause disturbance to human remains, relics, Aboriginal objects in the form of grave goods, or to an Aboriginal place of heritage significance, or</p> <p>(c) the development is limited to the removal of a tree or other vegetation that the Council is satisfied is a risk to human life or property, or</p> <p>(d) the development is exempt development.</p>	
<p>(4) Effect of proposed development on heritage significance</p> <p>The consent authority must, before granting consent under this clause in respect of a heritage item or heritage conservation area, consider the effect of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the item or area concerned. This subclause applies regardless of whether a heritage management document is prepared under subclause (5) or a heritage conservation management plan is submitted under subclause (6).</p>	<p>This report provides a basis for Council to consider the context of the proposed development in relation to the Melrose Park site and make informed decisions regarding the proposals in relation to culturally significant site components.</p>
<p>(5) Heritage assessment</p> <p>The consent authority may, before granting consent to any development:</p> <p>(a) on land on which a heritage item is located, or</p> <p>(b) on land that is within a heritage conservation area, or</p> <p>(c) on land that is within the vicinity of land referred to in paragraph (a) or (b),</p> <p>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 concerned.</p>	<p>This report provides a basis for Council to assess the extent to which the proposal would affect the heritage items concerned as well as the other heritage issues raised in this report.</p>
<p>(6) Heritage conservation management plans</p> <p>The consent authority may require, after considering the heritage significance of a heritage item and the</p>	<p>A CMP has not been required for this site.</p>

<p><i>extent of change proposed to it, the submission of a heritage conservation management plan before granting consent under this clause.</i></p>	
<p><i>(7) Archaeological sites  The consent authority must, before granting consent under this clause to the carrying out of development on an archaeological site (other than land listed on the State Heritage Register or to which an interim heritage order under the Heritage Act 1977 applies):</i></p> <p><i>(a) notify the Heritage Council of its intention to grant consent, and</i></p> <p><i>(b) take into consideration any response received from the Heritage Council within 28 days after the notice is sent.</i></p>	<p>At this stage it is not known if the heritage Item 311 constitutes an archaeological site, however a possibility exists that some evidence of the former farming structures may remain along the Wharf Road frontage.</p> <p>This report should be submitted to the Heritage Council when notifying it of the proposed new site development.</p>
<p><i>(8) Aboriginal places of heritage significance  The consent authority must, before granting consent under this clause to the carrying out of development in an Aboriginal place of heritage significance:</i></p> <p><i>(a) consider the effect of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the place and any Aboriginal object known or reasonably likely to be located at the place by means of an adequate investigation and assessment (which may involve consideration of a heritage impact statement), and</i></p> <p><i>(b) notify the local Aboriginal communities, in writing or in such other manner as may be appropriate, about the application and take into consideration any response received within 28 days after the notice is sent.</i></p>	<p>This aspect of the site has not been addressed in this report as no studies or reports have been available, however the site is likely to have very low Aboriginal archaeological sensitivity.</p>
<p><i>(9) Demolition of nominated State heritage items  The consent authority must, before granting consent under this clause for the demolition of a nominated State heritage item:</i></p> <p><i>(a) notify the Heritage Council about the application, and</i></p> <p><i>(b) take into consideration any response received from the Heritage Council within 28 days after the notice is sent.</i></p>	<p>No nominated items of State heritage value are proposed to be demolished.</p>

#### 4.2.6 Consistency with the Parramatta Development Control Plan 2011

The Parramatta Development Control Plan 2011 (Part 1 Section 1.6) has as its stated aims to:

- \* Ensure that development contributes to the quality of the natural and built environments
- \* Encourage development that contributes to the quality of the public domain

- \* Ensure that development is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable
- \* Ensure future development has consideration for the needs of all members of the community
- \* Ensure development positively responds to the qualities of the site and its context
- \* Ensure development positively responds to the character of the surrounding area.

Section 3.5 of the DCP “contains the general principles and controls that apply to development on and in the vicinity of heritage items and heritage conservation areas identified in the Parramatta LEP 2011...” and it begins with the following objectives:

- O.1 Appropriate management of heritage in the Parramatta LGA.
- O.2 Retention and reinforcement of the attributes that contribute to the heritage significance of items, areas and their settings.
- O.3 Maintenance and improvement to residential amenity and open space areas.
- O.4 Development that is compatible with the significance and character of the area.

Objectives O.1 and O.2 are probably the most relevant here. In this case, the appropriate management of heritage Item 311 in the context of the proposed site development is to follow the approach outlined in this report. That is, because the essence of the cultural significance is bound up with the larger mature trees on the site – and that, particularly, along the Wharf Road frontage – there is no heritage impediment to developing the much greater area beyond this (with the exception of the Cook Island Pine). Even within the Wharf Road frontage there is scope to build with a closer setback as long as the mature trees are respected in the detailed planning of the development. This basic idea is expanded further through the following design principles and controls.

The DCP helpfully outlines a number of design principles that have relevance to the Wharf Road site in relation to heritage Item 311. In particular, design principles such as siting, architectural form, original fabric, the aging process and curtilage - although superficially written more for the context of buildings than landscape areas - are especially applicable to Item 311.

#### *Siting*

Of the total site area for Item 311, those components of the site found to hold the most cultural value are almost entirely located along the Wharf Road frontage. Exceptions are the two fig trees which are located a little further into the Pfizer Australia site, and the lone Cook Island Pine which is located at the rear of the site. On the basis of the AJ + C master plan, the Item 311 trees along Wharf Road have been accommodated.

#### *Architectural Form*

This relates closely to the previous design principle in that the eventual form of the buildings designed for the overall site should take into account the retention of the larger mature trees such that these are seen to be successfully integrated within the proposed development.

#### *Original Fabric*

In the context of environmental heritage, the concept of original fabric is paramount. Where original and early fabric remains there also remains the ability to testify to the actual history of the place. Conversely, where the original or early fabric is lost there is a corresponding loss in the ability of the place to ‘speak’ of its past because those elements that were there in the past have been removed or ‘silenced’. In the case of Item 311, the larger mature trees are those that testify to a particular history of interest within the Parramatta LGA – the relatively early use of Australian native plants in the planning and design of large-scale industrial sites. Where these older trees are incorporated within the overall site, the cultural significance attached to it would be retained.



Of course 'original' fabric with respect to vegetation strictly refers to the vegetation that would have been at this place before 1788, however this was largely displaced by the 19<sup>th</sup> century though there is the opportunity for the theme of locally indigenous vegetation to be revived within the site for new development if that approach is taken.

#### *The Aging Process*

As with the retention of original or early fabric, the concept of allowing age to be revealed in the context of environmental heritage is also important. The retention of the older mature trees on the proposed development site would be an asset as it would allow the eventual development to be seen with an immediate sense of establishment and maturity. The inevitable newer plantings would have a benchmark and reference point within the site.

#### *Curtilage*

Curtilages are often either seen as the lot boundary of a site with a heritage item or an extended area beyond a heritage item boundary in order to retain important visual connexions such as views to historically related features as part of the item's traditional setting. In the present case, the visual curtilage involves the Wharf Road streetscape which, since the 1960s, has developed a strong landscape character that would be desirable to retain as it has become a local environmental asset.

Developing the design principles further, the DCP then introduces a number of design controls to assist in ensuring the earlier Parramatta LGA objectives are met. The DCP design control that is relevant to this proposal is:-

\* Control C.3 relating to *development near Heritage items* where new development needs to have regard to and respect the existing heritage items and their setting. In relation to Item 31 | this control would be demonstrated with the proposed new development positively responding to and integrating the larger mature trees along Wharf Road as well as the Cook Island Pine within a refined site layout.

Section 3.5.2 of the Parramatta DCP, 2011 deals with archaeology which may be relevant to the Melrose Park site where evidence of earlier farmhouses and cottages may remain along the Wharf Road frontage. The Parramatta Historical Archaeological Landscape Management Study (PHALMS) is not relevant to the site as its study area ends further to the west. Accordingly, design principles P.1 and P.2 of Section 3.5.2 are not relevant to this development. However the subsequent principles P.3 and P.4 may be relevant:

- P.3 If necessary, the applicant shall, prior to any excavation work commencing, make an application to the NSW Heritage Office for an application permit under the terms of the Heritage Act 1977. The applicant shall allow sufficient time and resources for the determination of the application and for completion of the archaeological programme required.
- P.4 At all times when excavation is being carried out, the applicant (or any persons acting for the applicant) should aware of any excavation permit requirements including the need for monitoring, stopping work and reporting any relics found to the NSW Heritage Office.

The final section of the Parramatta DCP, 2011 concerning 'heritage' is Section 3.5.3 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage. There are no known Aboriginal cultural heritage resources relevant to the Melrose Park site and it is considered unlikely to be, given the nature and extent of past disturbances to the local landscape through many decades of intensive agricultural activity then broadscale industrial development over 50 years.

### 4.3 Statement of Heritage Impact

In this assessment, the heritage Item 311 is shown to be a number of remnant mature trees from the 1960s and 1970s that represent a relatively early use of Australian native plant species in the site planning and design of large-scale industrial sites within the Parramatta LGA.

This review confirms that these trees have cultural significance for present and future communities within the Parramatta LGA. Not only do the remnant plantings mark a significant period in the history of Australian site planning and design, the trees also make a notable contribution to the local Wharf Road streetscape.

Provided the recommendations of this report are followed there is likely to be minimal heritage impact on the LEP listed Item 311 or the two moveable heritage items located nearby at the Reckitt Benckiser site resulting from the proposed redevelopment of the area.

Also at the edge of the Pfizer Australia site boundary along Wharf Road there are rows of mature camellias and a pear tree (northeast corner of the site) that have some cultural value and, where possible, should be retained. These plantings are indicated on **Figures 16 to 19** as species that are desirable to be retained.

The two highly significant moveable heritage items at the front of the Reckitt Benckiser site are likely relicts from the old Reckitt factory in Redfern and probably have no operational relevance to the current site. Their association with the site is solely on account of the Reckitt presence at the site. On this basis the items could be retained on site as part of the site's interpretive history and, together with the mature trees, a tangible reminder of the industrial phase of use of the site (as this phase will be difficult to visualise after completion of the proposed redevelopment), or the items could be offered to appropriate major museums for a wider audience and, likely, more appropriate long term conservation attention.

## 5 Recommendations

In view of the findings of this report it is recommended that:-

- 1 The listing details within the Parramatta LEP, 2011 covering the remnant mature trees be revised to more accurately describe what the heritage items are. The same applies to the two moveable heritage items if they are to be retained on the site.
- 2 The proposed redevelopment of the site should incorporate the larger mature trees (as indicated in **Figures 16 to 19**) in the detailed site planning and design as these elements retain the most important aspects of the assessed cultural value of the landscape as shown by the map for Item 311.
- 3 The vintage mobile fire pump should be properly conserved and housed under cover. As the early fire apparatus may be of State heritage value, consideration should be given to donating the unit to the Powerhouse Museum as part of its comprehensive technology collection. Care is advised in its handling as the apparatus may also hold some danger if it is still under pressure and may still have toxic substances associated with it.
- 4 The existing millstones should be considered for incorporation within an appropriate public precinct of the development or alternatively, as their actual operational history belongs elsewhere, consideration should be given to donating the millstones to either the National Museum of Australia in Canberra (as it already has Reckitt's blue interpreted within its collection) or the Powerhouse Museum.
- 5 There is an opportunity for the proposed redevelopment to engage its future communities through appropriate and informative interpretive material about both the natural and cultural history of the overall site. The material should include references to the pre-European landscape, the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century agricultural uses as well as the later substantial industrial expansion and uses covering a wide range of familiar products. Ideally this interpretation would be part of a broader, integrated program of cultural and natural heritage interpretation for the Parramatta LGA.

Appendix A 1943 Aerial Photograph of the Site



NB. A tall Araucarian pine shown with the arrow near a former farmhouse at Wharf Road by 1943 – probably a Cook Island Pine. Note the agricultural context of the site at this time along with traces of old drainage lines. (Source: NSW Land & Property Information SIX Viewer)

Appendix B Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011 Heritage Item 311 Map

