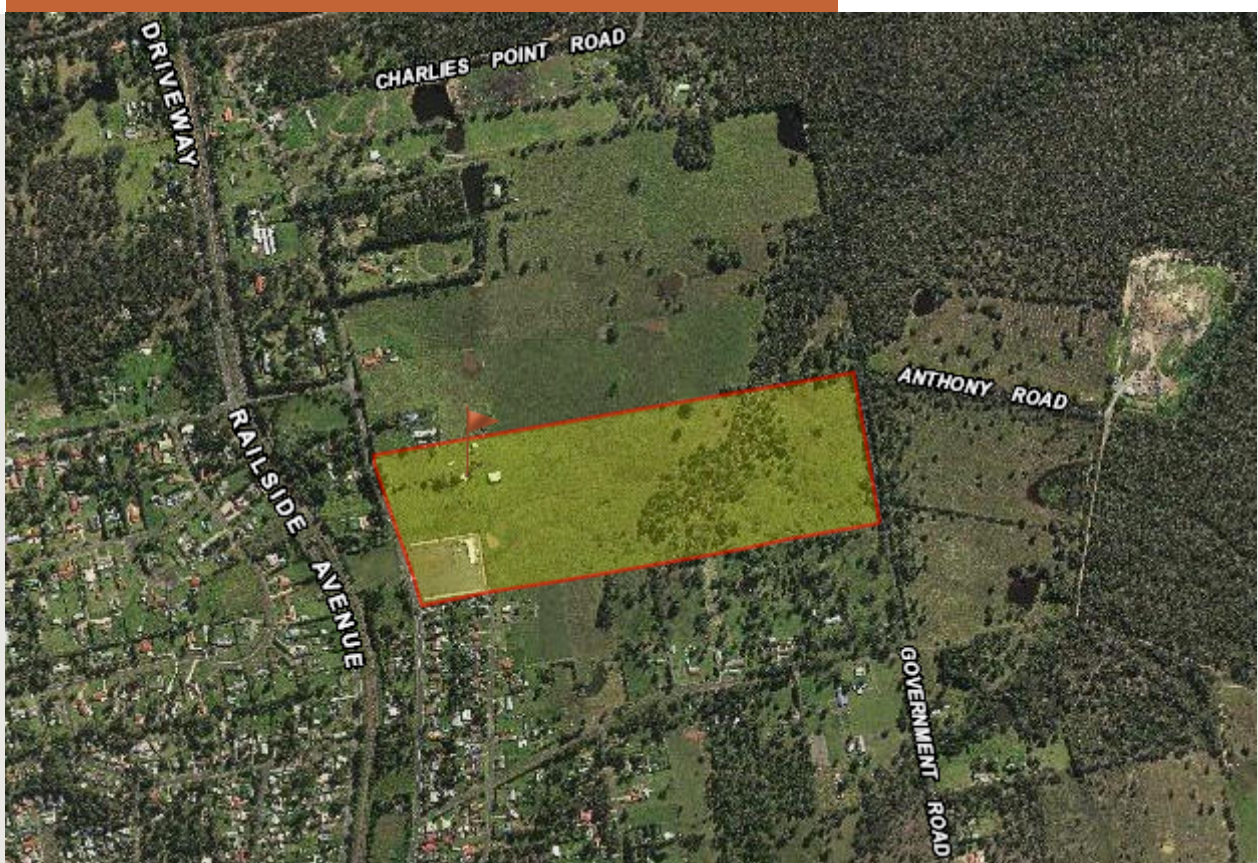


Heritage Impact Statement



No. 95 Great Southern Road, Bargo
May 2017

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared for the proposed rezoning at No. 95 Great Southern Road, Bargo New South Wales.

The purpose of this report is to consider the potential impact on the heritage significance of the Old Coomeroo Cottage and Silo, and to provide suggested guidelines for future redevelopment so that the impacts are appropriately managed.

The site is located within the Wollondilly Shire Council. The principal planning control for the site is the *Wollondilly Local Environmental Plan 2011 (LEP 2011)*. The site is listed a heritage item, described as “Old Coomeroo Homestead, Silo and Slab Shed” (I20) as defined by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Wollondilly LEP 2011*. Under Part 5.10 of the *LEP 2011*:

(4) Effect of proposed development on heritage significance

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).

(5) Heritage assessment

The consent authority may, before granting consent to any development:

- (a) on land on which a heritage item is located, or
- (b) on land that is within a heritage conservation area, or
- (c) on land that is within the vicinity of land referred to in paragraph (a) or (b), 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.

The appropriate heritage management document in this instance is a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS).

This statement has been prepared at the request of the owners of the site.

1.2 Authorship

This statement has been prepared by Anna McLaurin, B.Envs.(Arch), M.Herit.Cons., and James Phillips, B.Sc.(Arch), B.Arch, M.Herit.Cons.(Hons), of Weir Phillips Heritage.

1.3 Limitations

A detailed history of the site and a full assessment of significance to NSW Heritage Division standards were not provided for. The history contained in this statement was compiled from readily available sources listed under Section 1.5 below.

An Aboriginal history and assessment was not provided for. No historical archaeology was carried out on the site by Weir Phillips Heritage.

1.4 Methodology

This HIS has been prepared with reference to the NSW Heritage Division publication; *Statements of Heritage Impact* (2002 update) and with reference to the Council planning documents listed under Section 1.5 below.

A site visit was carried out in April 2017.

1.5 Site Location

No. 95 Great Southern Road, Bargo is located on the eastern side of Great Southern Road between Charlies Point Road to the north and Ironbark Road to the south. The site has a secondary access point from Government Road to the east (Figure 1). The site is identified as Lot 1 of D.P. 996286. Figures 2-3 give an indication of the site context along Great Southern Road.

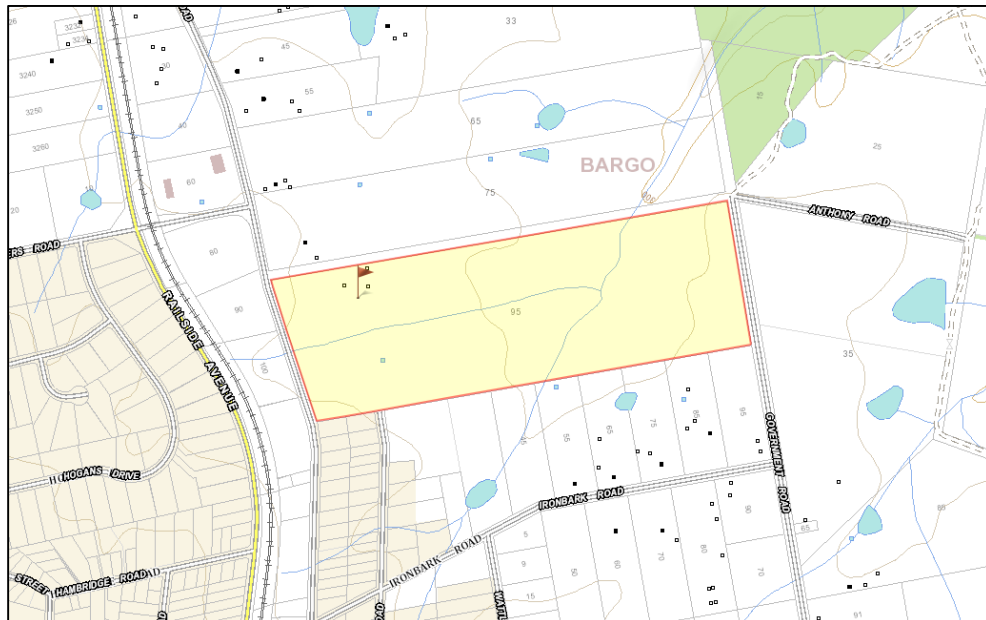


Figure 1: The location of the subject site.

SIX Maps 2016



Figure 2: Looking south along Great Southern Road from the entry to the site.



Figure 3: Looking north along Great Southern Road. Note the stock ramp at the front of the site.

2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The history of the site is available from an earlier Heritage Impact Statement (2015) by Niche Environment and Heritage.

3.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

3.1 The Site

For the following, refer to Figure 4, an aerial photograph over the site, and to the survey that accompanies this application.



Figure 4: An aerial photograph showing the subject site and its surrounds.

SIX Maps 2016

The subject site boundary adjoins the Great Southern Road. Next to the entrance gates are the ruins of a stock yard and ramp. The entrance driveway is lined with an avenue of trees and cleared paddocks to both sides. (Figure 5).

The driveway ends at the Old Coomeroo house, a cottage constructed of a mix of slabs, weatherboard and asbestos cement sheet. The cottage has brick chimneys with the central chimney being constructed of a combination of concrete blocks, decorative concrete blocks and brick. (Figures 6 - 10). Between the house and a large steel shed (Figure 11) there is a prominent brick silo (Figure 12). To the north of the silo is a concrete Octagonal cement slab, probably the remains of another silo, and an animal feeding shed.

There are also some stables and stockyards to the north of the house.



Figure 5: The driveway to the homestead and avenue of trees.



Figure 6: Old Cameroo Homestead.



Figure 7: A detail of the dilapidated state of the homestead.



Figure 8. The cottage viewed from the silo.



Figure 9. Detail of the middle chimney.



Figure 10. Upper part of the middle chimney.



Figure 11: The iron shed and brick silo.



Figure 12: A detail of the brick silo.

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 Summary of Existing Citations and Listings for the Site

No. 95 Great Southern Road, Bargo:

- Is listed as a heritage item as defined by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Wollondilly LEP 2011*.
- Is within the vicinity of a number local heritage items as defined by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Wollondilly LEP 2011*.

It is noted that the site is:

- Is not listed as a heritage item on the State Heritage Register under the auspices of the *NSW Heritage Act 1977*.

4.2 Heritage Items in the Vicinity of the Site

For the following, ‘in the vicinity’ has been determined with reference to physical proximity, existing and potential view corridors and the nature of the proposed works.

There are no heritage items listed on the State Heritage Register, under the auspices of the *NSW Heritage Act 1977*, in the vicinity of the site.

Figure 10 shows the location of heritage items, listed by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Wollondilly LEP 2011*, within the vicinity of the site. Heritage items are coloured brown and numbered.

- “Kalinya Gardens and landscape” 60 Great Southern Road, Bargo (I19)
- “Bargo Railway Bridge (North)” Wellers Road, Bargo (I40)



Figure 13: Detail of the Wollondilly Heritage Map. The green arrow identifies the site. WLEP 2011.

4.3 Integrity

The following discussion of the Old Coomeroo Homestead has been sourced from the earlier Heritage Impact Statement by Niche Environment and Heritage.

In general, Old Coomeroo is in very poor condition. The house is no longer habitable. Internal timbers on roof and floor are damaged. The brick chimneys are cracked and in disrepair. Verandah floorboards are missing and the floors in the interior of the house are broken/missing and appear unstable. There are holes in the external fibro walls. An independent condition assessment of the homestead has found it to have extensive rot and damage throughout, as well as extensive termite damage.

See Figures 14 – 17 for further clarification.



Figures 14 and 15: Exterior photographs of the Old Coomeroo Homestead showing the extent of dilapidation.



Figure 16 and 17: Internal photographs showing poor condition of the homestead.

4.4 Statement of Significance

The State Heritage Inventory provides the following Statement of Significance for the Old Coomeroo Homestead, Silo and Slab Shed.*

The homestead, silo and shed at "Old Coomeroo" provides rare evidence of the changing practices in farming in the Bargo area from the initial period of the settlement of the Bargo area through to experimentation with new crops between WWI and WWII. The complex has possible archaeological potential to reveal much information about changes in farm practices in the Bargo area.

5.0 SCOPE OF WORKS

This proposal seeks to rezone the subject site from its current RU2 Rural Landscape zone to a mix of R2 Low Density Residential with minimum lot size 700sq m and R5 Large Lot Residential with minimum lot size of 2000sqm and 4000sqm. Once rezoned, the site will be redeveloped for residential housing. The proposal includes a larger lot encompassing the heritage items.

The purpose of this report is to consider the potential impact on the heritage significance of the Old Coomeroo Cottage and Silo, and to provide suggested guidelines for future redevelopment so that the impacts are appropriately managed.

6.0 EFFECT OF WORK

6.1 Effect of Rezoning the Site

The most tangible evidence of the history of the site lies in two areas:

- (i) The subdivision pattern dating back to 1822.
- (ii) The existing structures on the site, in particular, the weatherboard cottage and the brick silo, believed to have been used for the storage of tung nuts.

6.2 The Subdivision Pattern

The original subdivision boundaries will be maintained as the rezoning and subsequent subdivision pertain to the one lot of land. It is not intended to add or subtract from this land, therefore the original lot boundary will be maintained and all subdivision will take place within it.

Maintaining the original lot boundary preserves the early subdivision of the site. Regardless of internal subdivision the pattern of the original

* <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/ViewHeritageItemDetails.aspx?ID=2690221>

6.3 The Structures on the Site

6.3.1 The steel shed and stock ramp

The steel shed dates from the latter part of the twentieth century. It is typical of sheds of the period. These sheds are represented throughout rural Australia. The shed of little or no heritage value.

The stock path is also typical of vernacular stock ramps. It also is of little heritage value.

6.3.2 The silo

The silo is an unusual structure in that it is not rendered and is of a larger diameter than a typical rural silo of the period. Recent illustrations indicate it had a gabled roof structure.

It is difficult to date its construction and use. Access openings indicate it may have been used to store feed as well as grain. It is noted that grain production in the Southern Highlands diminished in the late nineteenth century as areas west of the Great Dividing Range were opened up with the construction of railways.

The silo may have been used for the storage of tung nuts during the 1930s.

6.3.3 The cottage

The cottage has undergone extensive and unsympathetic alteration over time. From the outset, it was poorly built, without adequate underfloor ventilation and damp proofing. Later additions made extensive use of asbestos cement. The building and its structure have not been maintained for many years.

The cottage is typical of many rural cottages where a modest structure has been added to over time. It is utilitarian in appearance and has few decorative features extant.

6.4 Effect of Rezoning on Heritage Items in the Vicinity

There is little or no impact on Heritage Items in the vicinity. These Items are of sufficient distance from the subject site such that the proposal would only have a minor impact on view corridors to along Great Southern Road towards them.

Residential development is anticipated in this area and therefore a change in the view from the Items in the vicinity is acceptable.

7.0 RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT

7.1 Options for Management

A number of options arise from the rezoning to provide for historical interpretation of the site. These options are discussed below followed by a recommended course of action.

These options are as follows:

1. The conservation of the cottage.

This option is not considered viable for the following reasons:

- (i) An attempt to restore the cottage would require the removal and replacement of such a large percentage of original fabric that the cottage would become a reproduction rather than a restoration.
- (ii) Major structural works to raise the floor level of the cottage would also diminish its integrity.
- (iii) The cost of removal of asbestos and restoration would be prohibitive in relation to the value of the cottage fully restored.

There is a risk that the cottage would be fenced off left in its current state, containing asbestos as a danger to the public.

2. Conservation of the silo.

This option has potential as the basic structure of the silo is still intact. A new gable roof would be relatively simple to construct as it is a vernacular structure and photographic evidence exists of it.

The silo could form part of the development of its site and be the location for the interpretation of the entire site.

3. The potential to use the immediate site currently containing the cottage, silo and sheds and ultimately only the silo for a use other than residential.

The site containing these elements would potentially be a larger block. Such use would make interpretation of the site potentially more accessible for the public.

As part of any subsequent subdivision arising from the rezoning there is the potential to interpret the history of the site in a number of different ways:

- Using the alignment of the existing driveway as the alignment for a future road.
- Naming the road for the property, *Coomeroo Street* or *Road*.
- Planting trees to form an avenue along the road to commemorate the orchards and tung trees originally planted on the site.[†]
- Naming other streets that may be formed for prominent previous owners, in particular: William Scott, William Anderson, Alfred Woolcott and John Cockerill.

[†] Note that almost every part of a tung tree is poisonous so it is not an appropriate species for planting.

7.2 Management Recommendations

7.2.1 The Cottage

The cottage, as outlined in previous reports, is in a parlous condition. Its original construction means that it is set right on the ground and to be made habitable would require lifting and replacement of almost every timber component. Extensive removal of asbestos cement sheeting would also be required. It is not viable to restore the cottage in a manner that would be true to the Burra Charter.

Recommendation:

- (i) That the cottage be archivally recorded to Heritage Office standards.
- (ii) That the cottage be removed by contractor with an asbestos removal licence.
- (iii) That the cottage be interpreted as part of an interpretation strategy.

A number of themes could be dealt with. These would include:

- The early settlement of the area and the use of slab construction.
- The construction of the Great South Road and its development into the current Hume Freeway.
- The cultivation of trees to manufacture oils in the Southern Highlands including Tung Oil and Eucalyptus Oil.

7.2.2 The Silo

The silo is unusual as it is of face brick construction. Normally silos are rendered and have a corrugated iron gable roof to ensure a level of waterproofness. The simple gabled roof has been removed and the brickwork is slowly decaying.

Recommendation:

The silo should be restored in the following manner:

- The gable roof should be reconstructed. There is sufficient evidence from recent photographs to carry out this work with little conjecture. Such roofs were of vernacular construction. (See Figure 18)
- The entrances to the silo should be secured for maintenance access only.
- Appropriate drainage should be put in place around the silo to ensure its stability and to, as best as possible, prevent further decay due to rising damp.



Figure 18: A photograph taken in 2015 shows the gabled roof over the brick silo.

Niche Environment and Heritage 2015

The silo will form part of the interpretation of the cultivation of tung nuts and it will be noted that it was also used for grain or other livestock feed.

7.2.3 Other Farm buildings

The early timber slab buildings have been removed from the site. The remaining buildings are modern steel structures. These buildings add little to the narrative of the site, or to the themes that could be explored in the interpretation strategy. As part of future works to a site containing the silo and the cottage or its remains, these structures could be retained for use as public shelter or removed entirely.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

The rezoning itself has no physical impact on the site or its surroundings. Works as a consequence of the subdivision approval will impact on the existing buildings on the site in that their current extensive curtilage will be eroded. This impact is limited by the nature of the existing curtilage. There is no evidence of gardens or of development of the land surrounding in a manner that could readily be interpreted.

The site is some distance from heritage items in the vicinity and as such has little or no impact on these sites.

It is recommended that the cottage and steel shed and livestock ramp be removed from the site. It is recommended that the silo be restored and used as a focus for interpretation of the site as outlined above.