



Birpai Local Aboriginal Land Council

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment

Lots 1-52 DP 776681

Sancrox Road

Sancrox

Prepared by

Birpai Local Aboriginal Land Council

In response to a

Proposed rezoning proposal by Land Dynamics

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1. Introduction

The subject land is located at Sancrox Road Sancrox and includes a number of lots in DP 76681. The land is approximately 90 ha and is located just over 10km west of the Port Macquarie CBD.

The Land is currently zoned as rural.

Port Macquarie Hastings Council's Development Control Plan states the following under Objective 8:

Objective 8 Development Provision 8.1'. This provisions states that *"Prior to any... clearing works... an inspection of the proposed development site is to be undertaken by an Aboriginal Cultural Sites Officer from the local Aboriginal Land Council and a report on the site inspection is to be obtained*

The objectives of this Inspection and report are:

- To identify whether the subject land contains objects or artefacts that are culturally relevant to the Birpai people.
- To determine if any potential harm on Aboriginal Cultural heritage would be likely to occur from the proposed development.
- To make recommendations to be included in the application to Hastings Council.

This report has been prepared for Land Dynamics for the proposed rezoning. It is not to be used for any other purpose

2. Investigator and Contributors

The Site Investigations have been undertaken by:

Mr. Jason Holten, Sites Officer of the Birpai Local Aboriginal Land Council

The site investigator has significant local experience in carrying out site survey investigations and regularly undertakes Sites works in the Port Macquarie area. Mr. Holten has a wealth of knowledge of Aboriginal Culture and Heritage in the local area.

3. Previous Archaeological work

A previous Aboriginal Heritage Assessment for the area was carried out by RPS in April 2012 for the developers.

A Development Control Plan exists for the site that requires an Officer from the Local Aboriginal Land Council inspect the site and provide a report prior to any clearing taking place.

4. Landscape context

General Coastal character & predictive model

The results of reviews of archaeological investigations to date indicate that rocky shore, sandy beach, estuarine and hinterland environments were typically utilised by Aboriginal groups. The densest and most diverse archaeological remains are generally found along the coast where food resources were richer. Reliance on estuarine and adjacent hinterland areas was probably sporadic, possibly using freshwater swamps as a primary resource.

A large proportion of recorded sites indicate they have been found on flat terrain, predominantly in coastal heath, along estuarine stream banks, some woodland and dry sclerophyll eucalypt forest and in subtropical rainforest. Less commonly, sites are also found in undulating to hilly terrain either in dry sclerophyll eucalypt forest. Even less so in steep rugged terrain.

There is a greater likelihood of the existence and discovery of Aboriginal sites into the coastal plain. Particularly the crests and basal slopes of low spurlines that extend into and are situated adjacent to flood prone valley floors.

Stone artefacts may occur as open artefact scatters and isolated finds. Midden deposits may occur subsurface on former beach ridges and other alluvial or colluvial deposits which fringe valley floors. Including the former shoreline of the marine embayment and subsequent estuary which formed following the last sea level rise at around 6000 years BP.

Open artefact scatters (or campsites) are considered more likely to occur on relatively flat terrain, well-drained and not too distant from sources of freshwater or along the crests of low ridgelines.

Scarred trees may occur wherever old-growth trees remain. Potential locations include road reserves, remnant riparian vegetation on farmlands, and isolated trees within the state forests.

Prehistoric burial sites are most likely to be found in locally elevated landforms with a relatively deep profile of soft sediments of in the deposits of midden sites.

Local Aboriginal History

Before European settlement, Aboriginal people roamed the area and used the land to hunt and gather food. Aboriginal ties to the land can be identified with the significant sites in and around the Port Macquarie area with some sites recorded, including burial sites at the Town Green in the CBD.

Location of the site

The subject land is located approximately 10km west of the Port Macquarie CBD. The site is generally surrounded by rural residential land to the North and rural land to the South and East

On site is still partially vegetated with a significant number of established trees and heavily grassed.

6 Site Survey & Results

Sampling Strategy

The sampling strategy is to attend the property by vehicle and undertake intensive walking inspection of the part of the site likely to be impacted upon by the proposed rezoning and future industrial lots.

In a landscape context, this area is consistent with the landscape unit “crests and basal slopes of low spurlines that extend into and are situated adjacent to flood prone valley floors”. In this context intensive walking survey of the area is considered the most appropriate survey strategy.

The site survey was undertaken on 4 July 2019 by Mr Jason Holten, Senior Site Officer of Birpai Local Aboriginal Land Council and Donna Clarke from Land Dynamics.

Survey Coverage

On 4 July 2019 exposure and visibility across the site is described as generally good.

No test excavations were considered necessary and were not undertaken.

7. Results of Survey of 4 July 2019

After a lot of walking over the area the senior site officer, Mr Jason Holten noted that in some areas there had been a lot of disturbance over the years, with the removal of trees and stumps from the site and movement of topsoil, however other areas appeared relatively undisturbed. It was difficult to fully access the whole site due to the thickness of the undergrowth.

Mr Holten, Senior Sites Officer who attended the property and undertook the survey concluded that no evidence of Aboriginal activity was located on Lots 1-52 DP 776681, however it is recommended that a sites officer be present when clearing or excavation commences.

A Search of the AHIMS database did not find a record of any known Aboriginal Sites on the subject land.

Analysis & Discussion

Consultation with local Aboriginal peoples with a relationship to the area revealed no knowledge of occupation or cultural heritage associations with the subject land.

No site recording is required as there are no material traces, evidence or expressed knowledge of Aboriginal land use of the site.

The proposed clearing of lot 100 DP 1228060 is not considered likely to impact upon or have any significance for the local Aboriginal community and their cultural heritage.

The assessing site officers can see no reason why the proposal cannot continue.

Recommendation

Based on the Site Inspection and other investigation, there is no reason from an Aboriginal Cultural and Heritage perspective that this rezoning cannot proceed, subject to the following:

1. An Aboriginal Sites officer be present when excavation or clearing commences
2. At such time as development site works start, should any artefacts be turned up or located, Birpai LALC Aboriginal Site officers are to be contacted immediately and work on site stopped pending further assessment.

Signed



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