

AWTM Pty Ltd ATF Witherby Family Trust (ABN 50 285 185 541) T/A Wakefield Planning E: admin@wakefieldplanning.com.au W: www.wakefieldplanning.com.au

Heritage Asset Action Plan

"Palmerston" and Curtilage 347 Dangarsleigh Rd Armidale

In accordance with proposed modification to Condition 18 of Development Consent DA-164-2019

(Version 2.0)

Client: YES Group (SA)



Project No. 6581

PO Box 594
MOREE NSW 2400
M 0427 257 244
W wakefieldplanning.com.au

Document Control Details

| | Details | | | |
|--------------------|---|------------------|--|--|
| Document Author(s) | Angus Witherby, James Green | | | |
| Project Reference | 6581 Dangarsleigh Road | | | |
| Client Reference | 147- Dangarsleigh Rd Solar Farm | | | |
| Document Revision | | | | |
| 1.0 | Draft for Client Review | 26 February 2023 | | |
| 1.1 | Incorporate landscape information, incorporate client feedback. | 7 March 2023 | | |
| 1.2 | Correct minor typos | 7 March 2023 | | |
| 2.0 | Review following Council Heritage Advisor advice | 7 November 2023 | | |
| 2.1 | Minor modification re tree cover and avenue plantings | 9 November 2023 | | |

Disclaimer

This Report is copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission. Enquiries should be made to the Business Manager, Wakefield Planning, PO Box 594 Moree NSW 2400.

This report has been prepared to inform the Client about particular matters. Use of material herein for any other purpose is at the end-user's own risk. The information contained in this report is to the best of Wakefield Planning's knowledge true and correct. Every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy; however, to the extent permitted at law, Wakefield Planning does not accept responsibility for any loss, injury or damage arising from the use of such information.

Principal Author Certification

I certify that I have prepared the contents of this Report and to the best of my knowledge:

- The information contained in this Report is neither false nor misleading; and
- It contains all relevant available information that is current at the time of release.

Angus Witherby

BA - Geography & Economics, Grad. Dip. Urb. & Reg. Planning, FPIA, CPP



Table of Contents

| 1 | Intr | oduction | 5 | | |
|----|----------------------------|---|----|--|--|
| 2 | Bac | kground | 5 | | |
| | 2.1 | The Heritage Item | 5 | | |
| | 2.2 | Purpose | 6 | | |
| | 2.3 | Scope | 6 | | |
| | 2.4 | Choice of HAAP rather than CMP | 6 | | |
| | 2.5 | Authorship | 7 | | |
| | 2.6 | Limitations | 7 | | |
| 3 | App | proach to the plan | 7 | | |
| 4 | The | Site | 8 | | |
| 5 | Statements of Significance | | 13 | | |
| | 5.1 | Register of the National Estate | 13 | | |
| | 5.2 | National Trust (NSW) | 13 | | |
| | 5.3 | State Heritage Inventory | 13 | | |
| | 5.4 | Historical review | 14 | | |
| | 5.5 | Assessment of Heritage Significance | 15 | | |
| | | 5.5.1 Historic Significance | 15 | | |
| | | 5.5.2 Historic Association | 16 | | |
| | | 5.5.3 Aesthetic/creative/technical achievement. | 16 | | |
| | | 5.5.4 Social, cultural and spiritual significance | 16 | | |
| | | 5.5.5 Research potential | 16 | | |
| | | 5.5.6 Rare | 16 | | |
| | 5.6 | Supplementary statement of significance | 16 | | |
| 6 | Ass | Assessment of current status and management recommendations | | | |
| | | | 17 | | |
| | 6.1 | The grazing component | 17 | | |
| | 6.2 | The driveway component | 18 | | |
| | 6.3 | The hawthorn hedge component | 18 | | |
| | 6.4 | The entry | 19 | | |
| | | 6.4.1 The entry gate (figure 6) | 19 | | |
| | | 6.4.2 The secondary entrance | 19 | | |
| | 6.5 | The Gatehouse (figure 7) | 20 | | |
| 7 | Ger | neral Reference List 20 | | | |
| 8 | APF | PENDIX – Existing Consent and Proposed Condition | 22 | | |
| 9 | APF | PENDIX – Landcaping Plan and Recommendations | 23 | | |
| 10 | APF | PENDIX – Supplementary Management Advice | 24 | | |
| | 10.1 | Property Tree Planting Plan and Establishment Advice | 24 | | |



| 10.2 Driveway Planting Plan and Establishment Advice | |
|---|----|
| 10.3 Hawthorn Hedge Maintenance Advice | 24 |
| Table of Figures | |
| Figure 1 - Heritage Listing Area | 5 |
| Figure 2 - Location of Solar Farm | 6 |
| Figure 3 - Existing site | 8 |
| Figure 4 - Main Building Cluster | |
| Figure 5 - Gatehouse and entrance | 9 |
| Figure 6 - Entry with heritage feature and gatehouse through trees to the right | 10 |
| Figure 7 - Gatehouse | 10 |
| Figure 8 - Main Driveway | 11 |
| Figure 9 - Main Homestead | 11 |
| Figure 10 - Former Stables | 12 |
| Figure 11 – Site showing constructed solar farm. | 12 |
| Figure 14 - Example of traditional farm gate | 19 |
| Figure 15 - Secondary entrance with traditional gate. | 20 |

1 Introduction

This Heritage Asset Action Plan (HAAP) has been prepared in accordance with the proposed modification of Condition 18 of the development approval of the Dangarsleigh Solar Farm at 347 Dangarsleigh Road, Armidale. The consent and proposed modified condition are appended for reference.

2 Background

2.1 The Heritage Item

The heritage item is the homestead "Palmeston" together with its curtilage, as defined by the heritage listing in the Armidale Regional LEP 2012. The overall property the subject of the heritage listing is shown on the diagram below:

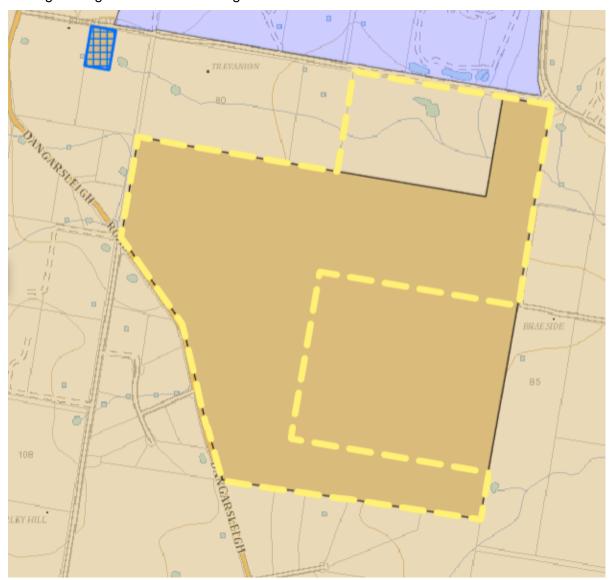


Figure 1 - Heritage Listing Area

The solar farm location is shown on the figure below:

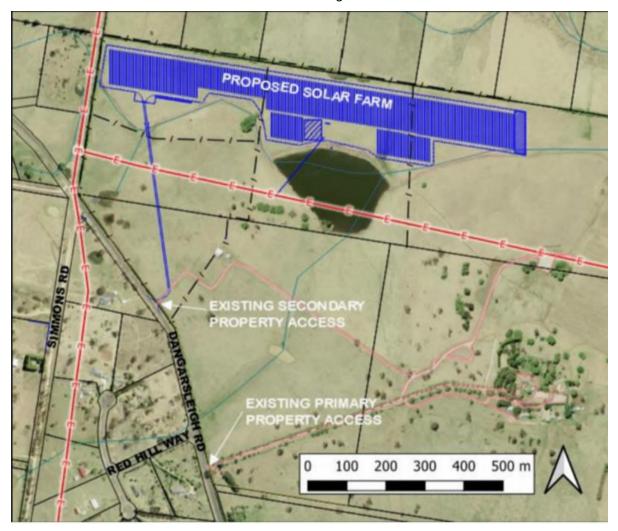


Figure 2 - Location of Solar Farm

2.2 Purpose

The primary purpose of this HAAP is to address the management of landscaping and the existing hawthorn hedges that are affected by the solar farm. In addition, it gives consideration to the broader heritage aspects of the rural curtilage to the homestead "Palmerson" and its landscaped grounds.

2.3 Scope

The works associated with the solar farm are at some remove from the homestead "Palrmerston" and its associated outbuildings together with the gatehouse at the entry to the property. The central building cluster is meticulously restored and maintained, as are the gardens immediately adjacent. The plan will therefore concentrate on the wider property, although advice will be given on the care of other outbuildings and other artefacts on the property as well as overall vegetation management.

2.4 Choice of HAAP rather than CMP

The choice of a HAAP has been guided by the following considerations:

1. The development has been approved. While there is a benefit in an integrated Conservation Management Plan over the entire of the land, the relevant considerations in this HAAP

- relate to the management of the landscaping and maintenance of the hawthorn hedges to ensure that the visual curtilage of "Palmerston" is respected.
- 2. The choice as to whether to undertake a HAAP as compared to a CMP is set out in the statement of best practice for heritage asset action plans as follows: The decision whether use of a CMP or HAAP should be made by the owner/manager of the heritage item, informed by their expert advisor (where necessary) and in consultation with any relevant regulatory heritage authority. Informal advice has been sought from two heritage consultants, both of whom do not see why a CMP is appropriate in this instance. The owner of the heritage item has determined that they want to proceed with a HAAP. Consultation has been undertaken with the Council, and it is noted that the Council, on the advice of its heritage advisor, are seeking a full CMP.

2.5 Authorship

The primary author is Angus Witherby, of Wakefield Planning, with input from James Green, Historian. Angus is an urban and regional planner with extensive experience in dealing with heritage buildings and grounds both as a development proponent as well as an assessing officer in a Council. He does not have any architectural or heritage qualifications.

The secondary author is James Green, Historian, who utilises the historic method to further understand the significance of the broader landscape of the property, and key landscape elements.

Editorial responsibility is taken by Angus Witherby

2.6 Limitations

This HAAP is limited to addressing the rural curtilage of the property outside the homestead and outbuildings area and associated landscape grounds. It has not been prepared by heritage professionals, but is intended to give effect to a modified Condition 18 to the Solar Farm approval.

3 Approach to the plan

The Plan is guided by the following documents:

- The Burra Charter
- Statement of Best Practice for Heritage Action Plans
- Practice Note Heritage and Sustainability Built Heritage
- Heritage Maintenance Information Sheen 9.1 Heritage Gardens and Grounds
- A Stitch in Time Maintaining heritage properties
- How to carry out work on Heritage Buildings and Sites
- Statement of Heritage Impact (Zenith Town Planning 8 November, 2019)
- Cultural Heritage Assessment, Dangarsleigh Solar Farm. Iwatta Aboriginal Corporation, 5 November, 2019.

Development of the plan firstly identifies the choice of a HAAP, then describes the site, drawing specific attention to the landscape elements that are relevant to the rural curtilage, and into which the solar farm has been inserted. The existing statements of significance are identified, and, together with an additional historical review are then synthesised into an updated statement of significance. While, strictly speaking, this is outside the normal scope of a HAAP, it is considered desirable so that full weight can be given to the management of the rural curtilage in the overall management of the property. Specific management



recommendations are then made. These incorporate the requirements of Condition 17 of the solar farm approval as well as address additional management issues.

4 The Site

The site is set out below. It is clearly defined by a Hawthorn Hedge boundary. This image represents the pre-development condition of the property.



Figure 3 - Existing site1

The figures following show a close-up of the main building cluster and the gatehouse building. They also show the vineyard plantings which now provide a different ambience to the rural curtilage as compared to the traditional grazing practices. The vineyard is now an established component of the landscape, and represents a natural evolution in farming practices toward higher value tree-based horticulture. In addition, the winery component demonstrates a movement towards vertical integration on the site, value adding to the grapes. Traditional grazing practices continue on the balance of the land, according to seasonal conditions.

The development of the homestead into a guest house represents an adaptive reuse of the existing dwelling.

Together these elements, now with the solar farm as an added element, indicate a growth in diversity of uses which are now layered on top of the traditional grazing background.

This confirms that items of heritage significance are not necessarily locked in a period of time (although this is a valid approach in the case of Saumarez for example) but evolve and develop in a way that maintains relevance. The important aspect is to ensure that the ongoing heritage significance is acknowledged and respected, and the appropriate management is put in place.



¹ Source: Six Maps



Figure 4 - Main Building Cluster



Figure 5 - Gatehouse and entrance Following, are images of the key elements of the site:



Figure 6 - Entry with heritage feature and gatehouse through trees to the right



Figure 7 - Gatehouse



Figure 8 - Main Driveway



Figure 9 - Main Homestead



Figure 10 - Former Stables

The central building cluster of the property can be described as being in immaculate condition, with adaptive re-use in place as a guesthouse and winery.



Figure 11 – Site showing constructed solar farm.



Note also the extensive grape plantings also on the site. The landscaping plan (see appendix) demonstrates the role of the screen planting. It is noted that maintenance of the existing hawthorn hedge is to be undertaken.

5 Statements of Significance

The current statement of significance is set out in the Statement of Heritage Impact

5.1 Register of the National Estate

Statement of Significance

"the uniqueness and dash of the architectural design and the historic association with the Dangar family, built 1910".

The listing describes the property as:

"Indian Hill Station bungalow influence evident. Built of red bricks. Chiefly single story with roof of red shingle tile. Round arched portion cursory striking feature of northern façade. Grand reception hall with exposed darker stained Oregon beams and Art Nouveau plaster ornament. Also brass ornamentation. Formal spacious garden."

5.2 National Trust (NSW)

Information from the national trust listing card is:

Palmerston was designed by F.G. and A.C Castleden as a station homestead for A.A. Dangar, a grandson of the famous surveyor and pastoral magnate, Henry Dangar. The main building was completed in 1912, though a nursery was added to the east in c. 1916, and in recent times the house was altered in order to accommodate the family of the son of the present owner. It was named after Arthur Hunter Palmer, at one time manager of Henry's entire estate.

The style has variously been described as Queen Anne and Edwardian, but a major influence was the Indian hill station bungalow. The red bricks, laid in stretcher bond, were baked on the property it is chiefly single storeyed, with two in the servants' wing. The foundations are brick, and the roof is of red shingle tile.

A striking feature of the main northern façade is the round-arched porte cochere, which gives access through elaborate cedar double doors to a grand reception hall, with exposed dark stained Oregon beams, and Art Nouveau plaster ornament in the panels. Here brass ornamentation is much in evidence, sustaining the Indian image. Elsewhere the furniture is diverse in style and period, with fine paintings in many rooms.

The garden is formal, spacious, and well maintained; a gravel road bordered by lawn and hedge leads to magnificent stables. On the surrounding pastures graze beasts which have made up one of the great Hereford Studs in Australia.

5.3 State Heritage Inventory

Statement of significance

"The building, grounds and property is of regional significance in evidencing the expansion of the Dangar pastoral interests into the New England area and the establishment of the family there in the mid 19th century. Aesthetically the design is of a type very rare in the region having been executed by an eminent Newcastle Architect. Socially the property has regional significance for its association with the early career of a Queensland Premier of the latter 19th century. The current home and property have regional social significance for their continuous association with the pioneering Dangar family over a period of almost ninety years. Scientifically the property and home are representative of the scale and type of changes in the lifestyle of an eminent New England family over the course of the 20th century."



The current statement of significance from the National Heritage Register focuses on the main dwelling and its historical associations although the statement of significance in the state Heritage inventory does make reference to the property as a whole, albeit briefly. This statement of significance is considered relevant for the current plan, as it correctly identifies the need to see the building, grounds and property in a holistic sense.

The hedge planting and driveway treed corridor are seen as significant landscape elements together with the lightly timbered pasture. It is noted the more recent planting of grapes represents an evolution in the commercial development of the property which is considered to be a typical and appropriate adaptive reuse through time to assist to maintain the property as a viable enterprise.

5.4 Historical review

"The finest open country, or rather park, imaginable". Following the disappointment of his efforts to pursue the Lachlan River in 1817, the words of John Oxley, Surveyor General of New South Wales, upon observing the New England tablelands one year later, would prove prescient indeed. Commissioned by Governor Lachlan Macquarie, Oxley's 1818 expedition would be one of a string of geographical breakthroughs in the early 19th century which, along with the successful crossing of the Blue Mountains in 1813, would prove the tripwire for a wave of interest in the Australian interior.

No less significant a development, for the New England area in particular, was the extraordinarily rapid evolution of Australia's nascent wool trade. The first attempt to introduce sheep to the continent, with the First Fleet itself in 1788, would end in dismal failure. Yet within three generations, Australian wool production would exceed that of all of Europe combined, an extravagant success due largely to the introduction of the Spanish merino sheep. So prized that prior to the 18th century, their illicit export from Spain incurred the death penalty, merino sheep promised certain profits to any able to breed them successfully, and the pastures of New England, that fine open country of Oxley, would prove an ideal habitat for the lucrative flocks.

Though the merino had already been introduced to Australia, both from the Cape of Good Hope in 1796, and the Royal Flock of King George III in 1804, it would be the Australian Agricultural Company, founded by Act of the British Parliament in 1824, that would truly drive its success. Established with the understanding that the potential for merino wool was to be explored and exploited in Australia, the Company's activities would gather rapid pace when, following the recommendation of Henry Dangar, it acquired 600,000 acres on the Liverpool Plains.

Those who had already sought either fortune or solace there were consequently driven away, with many crossing into today's New England. Among the first squatters was Waterloo veteran Henry Dumaresq, who settled Saumarez Station around 1835. Such estates however, inhabiting a legal 'no-man's land', would for decades remain fairly basic, consisting of pastoral land punctuated by simple timber structures. This situation began to change in the late 19th century however, following the greater stability and certainty afforded by the introduction of the Robertson Land Acts in 1861, which allowed the legal purchase and ownership of estates within Crown land.

Along with the arrival of the railways to Armidale in 1883, and its formal proclamation as a city two years later, the construction of impressive country estates became both desirable and a logistical possibility.

Now no longer solely commercial enterprises, several of the estates of New England evolved into residences of prestige for the grazier families. Henry Arding Thomas, who had purchased Saumarez from Sophia Dumaresq in 1856, would be an early example of this. By gaming the complications of the Robertson Acts, he expanded the property substantially, beginning the construction of a permanent brick house, and the planting of a garden to the English taste. This process would achieve particular fruition under the later owner, Francis John White, of the wealthy pastoralist dynasty. Between 1888 and 1910 he transformed the Thomas property

into a genuine Edwardian homestead, complete with a 30 room mansion. Such tastes would also be found in Francis's uncle, Frederick Robert White. His own residence at Booloominbah, designed as an antipodean take on the English country house, and today a core venue of the University of New England, was one of the largest mansions built anywhere in Australia in the 19th century.

The Palmerston property in question, named after the 5th Premier of Queensland Sir Arthur Hunter Palmer, who briefly owned the estate between 1857 and 1861, would belong entirely to this trend. In 1910, pastoralist Albert Augustus Dangar, the fourth son of the famed Henry, as a successful breeder of merino sheep and staunch Anglophile noted for his generous public gifts, including a donation of the then princely sum of £10,000 to the Dreadnought Fund, established at Palmerston a uniquely modern approach to the English country estate. Built in the Art Nouveau style, the homestead incorporated materials both local, such as bricks handmade on the property itself, and terracotta roof shingles procured from as far away as Brittany.

Beyond the central homestead, the Palmerston estate itself would also embody a desire to reimagine English landscaping tastes, most notably in the planting of hedgerows. While it had been a common practice in the British Isles since Saxon times to plant hedges to demarcate land, enclose livestock or else serve as a windbreak for orchards, the settlers of 19th century Australia would meet mixed results in their attempts to follow suit.

Indeed Charles Darwin, on his visit to New South Wales in 1836, would explicitly remark that "The whole land is enclosed with high railings, for the farmers have not succeeded in rearing hedges".

By the turn of the twentieth century, with a variety of species having becoming naturalised, the planting of hedgerows became more consistent, and Palmerston indeed represents a successful example of this, where hawthorn was planted around the perimeter of the property not merely to delimit the estate, but also for recreational purposes, encouraging a local population of Vulpes vulpes for arguably the most historically iconic of British countryside sports - fox hunting.

As a result, Palmerston constitutes a unique asset in the cultural heritage of New South Wales, representing both the depth of association of the Dangar family with the New England area, and an immaculately preserved example of the transition of a working property to a recreational summer residence.

5.5 Assessment of Heritage Significance

The criteria for assessing heritage significance are outlined below:

5.5.1 Historic Significance

Palmerston, together with its outbuildings, manicured grounds and rural curtilage together represent an important development in NSW's cultural history. As set out in Section 5.4 it is the product of the evolution of landuse from squatters to landed gentry as properties developed from workmanlike rural production to also incorporate gracious living. The overall landscape demonstrates overlays of the continued use of the landscape from European settlement to the present time. It contributes to our understanding of the evolution of land use from the 1830's to the present day. In particular it is an early example of successful hedging as a key landscape element in the English model. Those hedges survive intact today, and are a critical landscape element.

Significance Indicator: The site is considered to meet the local significance threshold through its association with the historical events associated with the formalisation of land occupancy in the district and the evolution of landholdings into pastoral residences.



5.5.2 Historic Association

As set out in Section 5.4 the place has an association with more than one historical figure. The fifth premier of Queensland, Sir Arthur Palmer, briefly owned the property, however a more significant figure in the history of the property is Albert Dangar, a descendent of the famous Henry Dangar, a significant figure in early European settlement in the district. Albert established a unique approach to the construction of the homestead in the early 20th Century.

Significance Indicator: The site is considered to meet the local significance threshold, due to association with well-known historic figures as well as the physical development achieved by Albert Dangar.

5.5.3 Aesthetic/creative/technical achievement.

As set out in Section 5.4, the building "Palmerston" represents a uniquely modern approach to the English country estate, being constructed in the art nouveau style.

Significance Indicator: Not only is the building the product of a notable Newcastle architect, but is a rare example of the art nouveau style in a country residence of this type. It is considered to meet the threshold for local significance as it is distinctive in the local context, and is an excellent example of the work of a notable architect. It utilises, in part, local materials.

5.5.4 Social, cultural and spiritual significance

The place is one of a number of heritage places that represent a particular era in rural settlement in the district

Significance Indicator: The place is not considered to reach the local significance threshold under this criterion.

5.5.5 Research potential

The site has some limited research potential associated with the existing buildings and structures as well as the main garden elements, and the hawthorn hedges. In particular it illustrates the original context and setting for the homestead and outbuildings despite more recent land use changes.

Significance Indicator: Despite having some research potential, this criterion is not considered to meet the threshold for local significance.

5.5.6 Rare

Looking across the district, the New England and other parts of NSW, the property overall is not considered to be particularly rare, other than for notable hawthorn hedges and the architectural form of the main building with its art nouveau character.

Significance Indicator: The place is considered to reach the local significance threshold for this criterion, based on the rarity of the architectural style in the district.

5.6 Supplementary statement of significance

The property is seen as an exemplar of a particular type of grazing property associated with key families that were once common in the New England. The distinctiveness lies in the grand house placed within manicured gardens in the broader context of a grazing park-like environment defined by key landscape elements such as scattered trees, the avenue driveway and the peripheral hawthorn hedging. The hedging represents a rare example of the establishment of a traditional hedgerow in an Australian context.

Considering the review of the six criteria, and the historical narrative in Section 5.4 consideration was given to a revised statement of significance. The revised statement is based on that developed in the State Heritage Register. The modified statement places greater weight on the setting of the buildings and landscaped grounds, as well as



acknowledging the key role of the hedgerows in defining that setting. Additional wording is outlined in **bold**.

"The building, grounds and property is of regional significance in evidencing the expansion of the Dangar pastoral interests into the New England area and the establishment of the family there in the mid 19th century. The property has historical significance in being an early successful example of the establishment of hedgerows in the European tradition, while also demonstrating the layering of evolving land uses through time. Aesthetically the design is of a type very rare in the region having been executed by an eminent Newcastle Architect. Socially the property has regional significance for its association with the early career of a Queensland Premier of the latter 19th century. The current home and property have regional social significance for their continuous association with the pioneering Dangar family over a period of almost ninety years. Scientifically the property and home are representative of the scale and type of changes in the lifestyle of an eminent New England family over the course of the 20th century."

6 Assessment of current status and management recommendations

The aim of this section is to outline the key elements of the setting provided by the grazing component of the property, and make recommendations for the ongoing management of each of these areas.

6.1 The grazing component

Current Circumstances: The property continues as a grazing enterprise, although now with grape plantings for wine production. An open vista is maintained across the grazing portions of the property. There are comparatively few remnant eucalypts remaining – this is likely a product of both historical clearing, and also eucalyptus dieback which emerged in the 1970's. A number of standing trees are dead.

Management Recommendations: It is recommended that succession planting be undertaken to restore a "park-like" atmosphere. This would also have benefits for pasture



production. This should utilise local endemic eucalypt species, which would require protection from grazing stock during their establishment period. Advice can be sought from the Armidale Tree Group on species and specific recommendations for their establishment. Planting should replace any dead standing or fallen trees, together with replacing any trees becoming or having become senescent. Originally vegetation consisted of open forest

and grassy woodland. Grassy woodland is identified as one of the twelve vegetation formations developed by Keith (2004). "The Grassy Woodlands are a widespread and quintessential feature of rural Australia. Dominated by eucalypts, typically boxes and red gums, grassy woodlands have a relatively open canopy with sparsely distributed shrubs and a conspicuous and diverse ground cover of tussock grasses and herbs". This vegetation has been modified through European settlement, including through clearing and pasture improvement. Remnant New England Grassy Woodland is shown on the image to the left. This shows a much denser vegetative form than was typical after clearing activities of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Supplementary planting should be consistent with the historical partly cleared landscape.

Although information on tree density is sparse, there are mixed views regarding the likely historical landscape after European intervention. For example Butzer and Helgren³ maintain

³Karl W. Butzer and David M. Helgren. Livestock, Land Cover, and Environmental History: The Tablelands of New South Wales, Australia, 1820-1920. Annals of the Association of American Geographers Vol. 95, No. 1 (Mar., 2005), pp. 80-111



_

²https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedSpeciesApp/VegFormation.aspx?formationName=Grassy+woodlands

that the landscape experienced very little modification. Others, such as the Environment NSW website asserts that the New England grassy woodlands have been: "Extensively cleared for pastoral uses. Tree decline due to rural dieback." Personal observations of the landscape over some 50 years indicate a marked decline in tree cover since the 1960's, in particular due to the impacts of dieback in the 1970s and 1980s.

It is difficult to develop a recommended tree density. Work by the CSIRO in the 1970s (pers comm) established that 25% tree cover would optimise pasture growth, however this was likely to be higher than the grazing landscapes established by pastoralists. Although arbitrary, a suggested tree canopy cover of between 1% and 2% is identified as being sufficient to reestablish the "park like" character.

It is suggested that a property tree plan be developed in conjunction with a group such as the Armidale Tree Group to achieve appropriate planting densities in different areas of the site and to optimise planting success.

6.2 The driveway component

Current Circumstances: Avenue plantings are a core characteristic of the properties of many of the key historical families in the grazing industry. The driveway has mixed planting elements but also many gaps in what was originally a contiguous avenue planting scheme consisting of Plane trees with hawthorn hedges. As with the balance of the property, succession planting needs to be undertaken.

Management Recommendations: One approach is to plant a new avenue planting outside the existing planting, and then remove the inner tree row once the outer row is established. A fresh inner row can then be planted. A key challenge with this type of landscape feature is that it is has a natural lifespan, and therefore full replacement needs to be planned for within 30-40 years of establishment. Based on the remnants of the driveway, it is recommended however that the owners consider infill plantings of the hawthorns that partially line the driveway together with (re) establishing the historic exotic avenue of plane trees. Aborist advice should be sought as to recommendations for effective establishment.

6.3 The hawthorn hedge component

Current Circumstances: Hawthorn hedging is a key feature of the property, and notwithstanding its noxious weed status is nevertheless considered to have heritage value. While reasonably intact, there are areas of senescent or dead plants.

Management Recommendations: Continuity of the peripheral hedge should be maintained as per the recommendations in the landscape plan (see Appendix). Areas approaching or at senescence should have supplementary plantings undertaken to ensure succession. Dead hawthorns should be removed and replaced. Again, succession planning is an essential element in maintaining the integrity of this landscape feature, noting hawthorn may have an effective life of up to 70 years. In general, plantings should take place in Autumn, to allow establishment before winter, with spring growth assisting survival during the summer. In order to address the issue of spread of noxious weeds, trimming of the hedges should take place before the setting of fruit after flowering. This would minimise the further spread of the plant, which occurs through the distribution of the fruit by birds⁵. Horticultural advice should be sought on the preferred methods for replacing hawthorns in order to minimise disruption to the remaining plantings.

⁵ https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/Hawthorn



Page 18 of 24

⁴ https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedSpeciesApp/VegFormation.aspx?formationName=Grassy+woodlands

6.4 The entry

6.4.1 The entry gate (figure 6)

Current Circumstances: This is an historical feature, and retains some integrity as a historical entry feature. Its condition at the present time is only rated as "fair" due to some evidence of rot in the lower rail to the left, together with some deterioration of the main posts. The right-hand component appears to be in comparatively better condition. It is noted that the actual gates are modern metal farm gates.

Management Recommendations: Where possible, existing elements should be stabilised and retained. Paint removal, timber stabilisation and if necessary repairs should be undertaken, and then the feature should be re-painted in sympathetic colours.

A core element in future durability is addressing water ingress from the top of the posts, which are uncapped. The posts should be reviewed for incipient and actual rot, treated, and then finished in a manner that limits water ingress while keeping the flat top. This could be achieved by caps on the top, that do not turn down over the sides, and therefore maintain the current appearance. Resin compounds can be used to fill areas where rot is removed, or, potentially, new timber elements could be introduced, depending on the amount of timber to be removed.

Consideration could be given to reviewing historical photographs, and reinstating a more original gate form.

This example is from the southern highlands of NSW however similar gates were used in the New England.



Figure 12 - Example of traditional farm gate

6.4.2 The secondary entrance

Current Circumstances: More traditional but plainer gate forms were previously used on the secondary entrance and could also be used on internal gates, subject to meeting the operational needs associated with livestock. In this respect it is acknowledged that traditional gates are ineffective with cattle.

Management Recommendations: Should sheep be re-established in the future, further consideration could be given to gate types within the property.



Figure 13 - Secondary entrance with traditional gate.

It is noted that timber gates do require regular maintenance and upkeep. This should be preemptive, rather than when full replacement is needed. Compatibility between fasteners and wood can assist in longevity. Double hot-dipped galvanised fasteners are recommended, as is the use of class one hardwoods. Merabu and Blackbutt are two recommended timbers.

6.5 The Gatehouse (figure 7)

Current Circumstances: This is a relatively plain building, located just inside the main entrance. It has a defined yard, however that is lacking in anything but very rudimentary landscaping. The building appears (externally) in reasonable condition, but would benefit from timely maintenance works. In this respect, maintenance of timber elements in particular, requires re-painting prior to a breakdown of the paint surface with the consequential risk of damage to timber elements. In addition, there is a need to review the roof fastenings, which may be showing some signs of loosening.

Maintenance Recommendations: Although outside scope for this plan, it is recommended that the owners undertake a HAAP for the building and grounds. Again, historical research, in particular photographs, would be of value. This should be completed within twelve months of the date of this plan.

7 General Reference List

"A Stitch in Time – maintaining your property makes good sense and saves money" Institute of Historic Building Conservation in association with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (undated – accessed at https://ihbc.org.uk/page55/ihbc_publications/index.html on 26/02/2023.

"Heritage Maintenance: Corrugated Roofing. Information Sheet 4.1" (March 1998), Heritage Office of NSW - accessed at https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/research-and-publications/publications-search/heritage-maintenance-corrugated-roofing on 26 February 2023.

"Heritage Maintenance: Heritage Gardens and Grounds. Information Sheet 9.1" (March 1998) Heritage Office of NSW – accessed at https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/research-and-

publications/publications-search/heritage-maintenance-heritage-gardens-and-grounds on 26 February 2023.

"Removing paint from old buildings. Information Sheet 6.2" (1986) Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, London. Accessed at https://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/assets/Uploads/a-z-publications/m-o/Maintenance-Series-6.2-Removing-Paint-from-Old-Buildings-1998-rev-2004-w-permission-SPAB-hard-copy-scan.PDF on 26th February 2023.

"Heritage Maintenance: Preparing a Maintenance Plan: Information Sheet 1.1" (March 1998) Heritage Office of NSW accessed at https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/research-and-publications-search/heritage-maintenance-preparing-a-maintenance-plan on 26 February 2023.

Bioregions of New South Wales: New England Tableland (Chapter 13) accessed at: https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Animals-and-plants/Bioregions-new-england-tableland.pdf

(Keith 2004 Ocean Shores to Desert Dunes: The Native Vegetation of New South Wales and the ACT).



8 APPENDIX – Existing Consent and Proposed Condition



9 APPENDIX – Landcaping Plan and Recommendations



10 APPENDIX - Supplementary Management Advice

10.1 Property Tree Planting Plan and Establishment Advice

(to be inserted when commissioned)

10.2 Driveway Planting Plan and Establishment Advice

(to be inserted when commissioned)

10.3 Hawthorn Hedge Maintenance Advice

(to be inserted when commissioned)

