



Melrose Park South – West

Statement of Heritage Impact for SSDA

Wetlands—Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2013 (I011)

Report prepared for Wharf and Hughes Developments Pty Ltd

January 2026, Issue 3

Acknowledgement of Country

We respect and acknowledge the First Nations peoples of the lands and waterways on which we live and work, their rich cultural heritage and their deep connection to Country, and we acknowledge their Elders past and present. We are committed to truth-telling and to engaging with First Nations peoples to support the protection of their culture and heritage. We strongly advocate social, cultural and political justice and support the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Cultural warning

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this report may contain images or names of First Nations people who have passed away.

Report register

The following report register documents the development of this report, in accordance with the GML Heritage Pty Ltd (GML) Quality Management System.

Job No.	Issue No.	Notes/description	Issue date
24-0091D	1	Draft Report	27 March 2025
24-0091D	2	Final Report	16 April 2025
24-0091D	3	Revised Final Report	12 January 2026

Quality management

The report has been reviewed and approved for issue in accordance with the GML quality management policy and procedures.

It aligns with best-practice heritage conservation and management, *The Burra Charter: the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013* and heritage and environmental legislation and guidelines relevant to the subject place.

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Executive summary

Wharf and Hughes Developments Pty Ltd is proposing to build a mixed-use and affordable housing development at 82 Hughes Avenue, Ermington, NSW, referred to as Melrose Park South – West. The site is approximately 5.2ha and predominantly characterised by industrial development with warehouse like buildings dating from the mid to late twentieth century.

The site contains one heritage item, 'Wetlands' (I011), listed on Schedule 5 of the *Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2023* (Parramatta LEP). The site is also in the vicinity of three other statutory heritage items: 'Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve' (State Heritage Register #01850), 'Bulla Cream Dairy' (Parramatta LEP, I151), and 'Well in George Kendall Reserve' (Parramatta LEP, I160).

This Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI) has been prepared to accompany a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) for the development of the site. This report identifies the site's heritage context and assesses the potential impacts of the proposed development of the Wetlands and nearby heritage items.

This State Significant Development Application seeks consent for:

- construction of a mixed use development comprising approximately 123,197sqm of Gross Floor Area in Melrose Park South – West;
- basement carparking and servicing; and
- landscaping, and construction of one new waterfront park.

A separate Infrastructure DA (DA/75/2024) is under assessment by City of Parramatta Council which seeks consent for demolition of the buildings on site. This Infrastructure DA is an enabling DA which supports the SSDA. The matters considered under the SSDA works, which are the subject of this SOHI, have been coordinated with the works under the Infrastructure DA.

This report concludes that the development would have:

- a neutral impact on the fabric and spatial arrangement of the Wetlands, or a minor adverse impact if a linkage to the Ermington Bay nature trail walkway is built;
- a minor adverse impact to the settings, views and vistas of the Wetlands;
- a neutral impact to the natural heritage values of the Wetlands, because of overshadowing;
- a minor adverse impact to the setting of the Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve; and
- a neutral impact to heritage items in the vicinity.

A range of recommendations are provided in Section 6.1 to help minimise and mitigate the identified heritage impacts of the proposal during detailed development and construction.

GML considers the impact of the proposal to be acceptable from a heritage perspective, as it would have only minor heritage impacts.

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1 Introduction

Wharf and Hughes Developments Pty Ltd is proposing to build a mixed-use and affordable housing development at 82 Hughes Avenue, Ermington, NSW, referred to as Melrose Park South – West. The project has been designated as State Significant Development (SSD) and Planning Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) have been issued for the project (SSD-71558711).

This statement of heritage impact (SOHI) has been prepared as a standalone document to accompany the State Significant Development Application (SSDA) for the proposed development.

This report identifies the subject site’s heritage context and the items in the vicinity of the site, and assesses the potential impacts of the proposed development on nearby heritage items.

1.1 Background

Melrose Park South – West is a mixed-use development located at 82 Hughes Avenue, Ermington NSW 2115, on land zoned as R4 high-density residential and RE1 Public Recreation under the *Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2023*.

The site is located within the City of Parramatta Local Government Area (LGA) and is bounded by Atkins Road to the west, industrial properties to the north, Hughes Avenue to the east, and Ermington Bay to the south.

The site is approximately 5.2ha and predominantly characterised by industrial development with warehouse like buildings proposed to be demolished under a separate development application (DA/75/2024). The surrounding area is a mix of industrial, recreational, educational infrastructure and low-density residential. There are a number of green spaces within a 1km radius of the site, including Archer Park, George Kendall Riverside Park, and Meadowbank Park, which has several sporting facilities.

The site has been identified for redevelopment as a part of the broader renewal planned for Melrose Park. This renewal will see the redevelopment of the precinct over time into a highly urban mixed use precinct.

This State Significant Development Application seeks consent for:

- construction of a mixed use development comprising approximately 123,197sqm of Gross Floor Area in Melrose Park South – West;
- basement carparking and servicing; and
- landscaping, and construction of one new waterfront park.

A separate Infrastructure DA (DA/75/2024) is under assessment by City of Parramatta Council which seeks consent for:

- demolition of existing structures and tree removal on site;
- earthworks to form design levels of the proposed roads and basins and future development lots;
- infrastructure and servicing to enable the future development sites including trunk stormwater and utilities; and
- construction of footpaths and roads.

This Infrastructure DA is an enabling DA which supports the SSDA. The matters considered under the SSDA works which are the subject of this report have been co-ordinated with the works under the Infrastructure DA.

1.2 Site location

Refer to Figure 1.1 for the location of the site. The site is Lot 3 DP 602080.



Figure 1.1 Overview of the site location. (Source: Google Maps with GML overlay)

1.3 Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements

This report has been prepared in response to the relevant requirements outlined within the SEARs issued on 7 June 2024 for application SSD-71558711.

Table 1.1 addresses the relevant SEARs requirements and provides a response.

Table 1.1 Response to SEARs.

SEARs issue	Documentation requirement	Response
19. Environmental Heritage Where there is potential for direct or indirect impacts on the heritage significance of environmental heritage, provide a Statement of Heritage Impact and Archaeological Assessment (if potential impacts to archaeological resources are identified), prepared in accordance with the relevant guidelines, which assesses any impacts and outlines measures to ensure they are minimised and mitigated.	Statement of Heritage Impact Archaeological Assessment	This SOHI has been prepared in compliance with this requirement of the SEARs. GML has prepared a separate historical archaeological assessment report to address the impacts of this SSDA on potential archaeological resources.

1.4 Methodology

This report has been prepared with reference to the following documents and guidelines:

- *Guidelines for Preparing a Statement of Heritage Impact*;¹
- *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013* (the Burra Charter);² and
- *Assessing Heritage Significance: Guidelines for Assessing Places and Objects Against the Heritage Council of NSW Criteria* (Assessing Heritage Significance guidelines).³

1.5 Limitations

This report does not assess the historical archaeology or Aboriginal cultural heritage values of the site.

GML has assessed these separately in the following reports:

- Melrose Park South – West, Historical Archaeological Assessment (HAA), prepared by GML Heritage (2025);⁴ and
- Melrose Park South – West, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR), prepared by GML Heritage (2025).⁵

1.6 Authorship and acknowledgements

This report has been prepared by Patrick Atkinson, Senior Heritage Consultant, and Leonie Masson, Associate and Historian, prepared the history. Julian Siu, Principal, provided input and reviewed the report.

1.7 Endnotes

- ¹ NSW Department of Planning and Environment, *Guidelines for preparing a statement of heritage impact*, NSW Department of Planning and Environment, June 2023
<<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/publications/guidelines-preparing-statement-heritage-impact>>.
- ² Australia ICOMOS Inc, *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, 2013, Australia ICOMOS Inc, Burwood, Vic, 2000.
- ³ NSW Department of Planning and Environment, *Assessing heritage significance: Guidelines for assessing places and objects against the Heritage Council of NSW criteria*, NSW Department of Planning and Environment, May 2023
<<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/publications/assessing-heritage-significance>>.
- ⁴ GML Heritage 2025, Melrose Park South – West, Historical Archaeological Assessment, report prepared for Wharf and Hughes Developments Pty Ltd.
- ⁵ GML Heritage 2025, Melrose Park South – West, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report, report prepared for Wharf and Hughes Developments Pty Ltd.

2 The heritage items

2.1 Site description

2.1.1 Heritage items

The Melrose Park South – West site contains one heritage item, 'Wetlands'. The listing details of this heritage item are provided in Table 2.1 below and its curtilage is shown in Figure 2.1.

Table 2.1 Statutory listings of heritage items within the site.

Listing type	Item name and document details	Listing number
Local heritage item	'Wetlands' <i>Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2023 (Parramatta LEP)</i>	I011

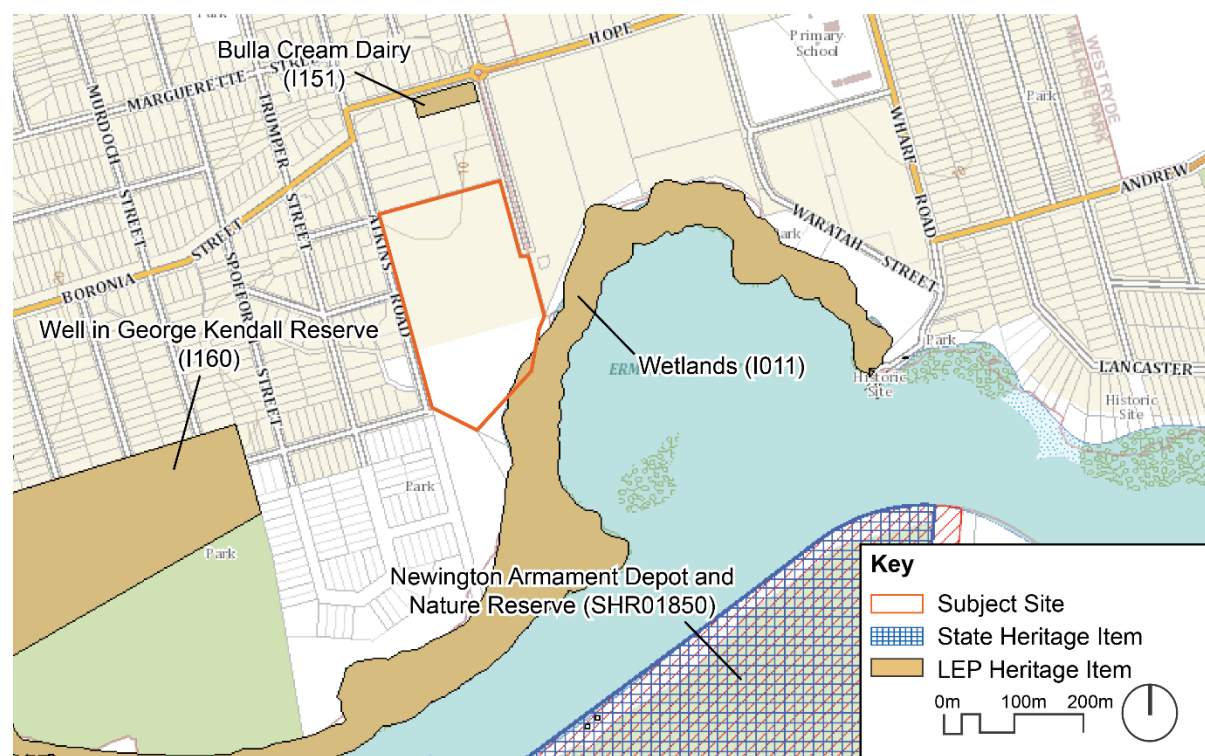


Figure 2.1 Map showing heritage items in the site. (Source: NSW Planning Portal Spatial Viewer with GML overlay 2026)

Heritage items in the vicinity

There are several heritage items in the vicinity of the site that have the potential for direct or indirect impacts to arise as a result of the proposal. These are identified in Table 2.2 below.

Refer to Figure 2.1 for a map identifying heritage items in the vicinity of the site.

Table 2.2 Statutory listings of heritage items in the vicinity of the site.

Listing type	Item name and document details	Listing number
State heritage item	'Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve' State Heritage Register	01850
Local heritage item	'Bulla Cream Dairy' Parramatta LEP	I151
Local heritage item	'Well in George Kendall Reserve' Parramatta LEP	I160

2.1.2 Site and its context

The site is surrounded by a mix of industrial and recreational infrastructure and low-density residential dwellings. To the south, the site joins Ermington Bay, Archer Park and George Kendall Riverside Park, which contains the heritage listed wetlands. The wetlands is comprised of a Samphire Saltmarsh community and a Mangrove forest in the areas closest to the site. Archer Park contains an elevated public walkway as part of the Ermington Bay nature trail, which provides a continuous public route along the foreshore of Ermington Bay.

West of the site is the residential neighbourhood of Ermington, which is primarily composed of one or two storey detached private residences.

North and east of the site are various industrial and commercial lots and buildings.



Figure 2.2 Ermington Bay.

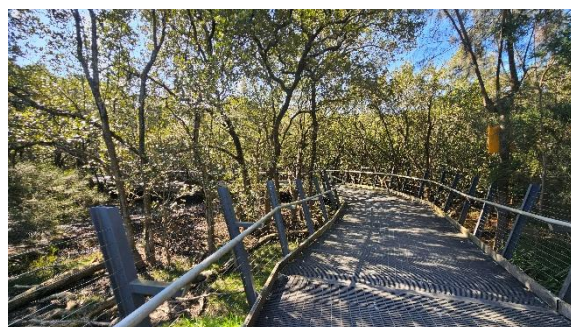


Figure 2.3 The wetlands and Ermington Bay nature trail south of the site.



Figure 2.4 Atkins Road, showing the residential dwellings to the west of the site.



Figure 2.5 The industrial and commercial lots and buildings north of the site.

2.2 Site summary history

2.2.1 Introduction

The following summary history places the development of the site within the context of the natural and cultural setting, including Aboriginal connections to Ermington in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century. This section is based on the history in the 2022 report by Tropman & Tropman Architects, Holdmark Planning Proposal Melrose Park South Heritage Assessment & Heritage Impact Statement, supplemented with additional primary and secondary source research and graphics where necessary.

2.2.2 Aboriginal Country: the early colonial period and ongoing connections

Ermington is part of the traditional land of the Wallumedegal people, which stretches from the north bank of the harbour from Turrumburra (Lane Cove River) in the east to the head of Parramatta River in the west. To the Wallumedegal this area was known as Wallumetta, likely originating from Wallumai, the name for the snapper fish, combined with Matta, a word for describing water places.¹

The Wallumedegal were adept at using the natural resources their land provided. Being near the water, they would have been skilled fishers, using the creeks, mangroves and river as a regular source of sustenance. The Wallumedegal would have lived in campsites located by these water sources, more frequently by large bodies of water than small creeks.² Marine animals would have been caught using pronged spears and handlines made from carved bone or shell.³

Like other Aboriginal groups in the Sydney region, the Wallumedegal would have also used fire-stick farming to encourage new plant growth and attract wallabies and kangaroos, which were additional sources of sustenance for the group.⁴

The Wallumedegal had cultural, familial and social ties to other Aboriginal groups in the Sydney region, often via the women who would marry outside the group. Movement through Country and farther afield would have been quite fluid between the Wallumedegal and neighbouring groups, as they would travel to meet the obligations that these ties entailed.⁵

The Wallumedegal were among the first Aboriginal groups to interact with European colonists after their arrival. These initial encounters were marked by friendly curiosity, such as when Governor Phillip and an exploration party met with a Wallumedegal man who examined their boats and equipment. He was gifted an iron hatchet and looking glass during this interaction, giving the name to Looking Glass Bay, as it is known today. The same excursion proceeded farther up Parramatta River where the group encountered a park-like landscape of tall grass in good soil with well-spaced trees, the result of Wallumedegal land management practices.⁶

Despite initial goodwill, the interactions between Aboriginal groups and European colonists increasingly turned towards confrontation as the Europeans' intentions became clear. In 1789, the smallpox epidemic devastated the Aboriginal population and disrupted clan boundaries in Sydney. However, the Aboriginal people did not vanish or die. From 1792 grants were given in the district, dispossessing the Wallumedegal of their land. Between 1793 and 1805 a period of low-level conflict occurred with many instances of Aboriginal groups comprising the Wallumedegal and others raiding the farms established on the grants.⁷

In May 1797 an attack took place at Kissing Point when an Aboriginal group 'dangerously wounded a settler and his wife, first burning every article belonging to them'.⁸ The following day soldiers fired at 'a large body of natives' who 'instantly fled, leaving behind their spears, etc and about 40 bushels of Indian corn which they had stolen'.⁹ The settler, John Wood, died after the attack; his wife Mary survived.

William Small, born in 1796 on his family's farm at the Field of Mars, recalled in 1888, 'I remember this place [Ryde] when we were a handful of white men camping in an unknown country crowded with hostile or doubting blacks', and that he feared going outside the house unarmed.¹⁰ This low-level conflict was not ubiquitous, as Aboriginal people continued to live and fish in the area through to the 1810s.¹¹ Others adapted to live within the colonial system, like Bennelong. He was a Wangal man whose kidnapping by and friendly relationship with Governor Phillip defined the early interactions between Aboriginal people and European colonists. Bennelong came to live in the early 1800s on James Squire's farm on Kissing Point near Small's farm, or what would become the Willandra Estate, and was well known to Europeans of the area.

The Australian reported in January 1834 that the 'Kissing Point tribe', formerly a 'very numerous one', was reduced to six individuals including one child.¹²

During the nineteenth century, conflict gave way to coexistence and more peaceful relations. This was often not on Aboriginal peoples' terms, however, as successive colonial governments created institutions and enforced policies, beginning with the Native Institution in Parramatta, aiming to integrate Aboriginal people into European society.¹³ Aboriginal people continued to live in the area into the twentieth century and beyond, as was the case with Maria Smith and her family.¹⁴

2.2.3 Tynan's Farm

The site is comprised wholly within 80 acres (32.37 ha) granted in March 1792 to Thomas Tynan at the Field of Mars, 'on the North Shore, at the entrance of the Creek leading to Parramatta'.¹⁵ This was one of the first land grants in the colony given to a group of eight former marines who had opted to remain in the colony after completing their term of office. The same year Tynan, a devout Catholic, was one of several colonists who petitioned Governor Phillip to ask the Home Government to send out a Catholic priest.

Tynan appears to have conveyed his land to Reverend Samuel Marsden in June 1802, though no paperwork has survived for this transaction. Likewise, there is no documentary evidence for how Marsden used Tynan's Farm, but given his interest in sheep farming and cattle grazing, it is possible the land was used in connection with his farming enterprise at the Field of Mars and in the District of Parramatta.

According to Marsden's entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*:

By 1802 he had received 201 acres (81 ha) in grants, and had purchased 239 (97 ha) from other settlers; he had 200 acres (81 ha) cleared and grazed 480 sheep. Three years later he had over 1000 sheep, 44 cattle and 100 pigs on his farm which by then had increased to 1730 acres (700 ha) seven miles (11 km) from Parramatta.¹⁶

There is a brief newspaper account in 1806 of an unnamed recently executed convict who had admitted prior to his death to stealing sheep from Marsden's farm, though the precise location of the land is not known.¹⁷

Reverend Samuel Marsden died on 12 May 1838, three years after his wife, Elizabeth. The land passed by transmission to his daughter Jane Catherine Marsden.¹⁸

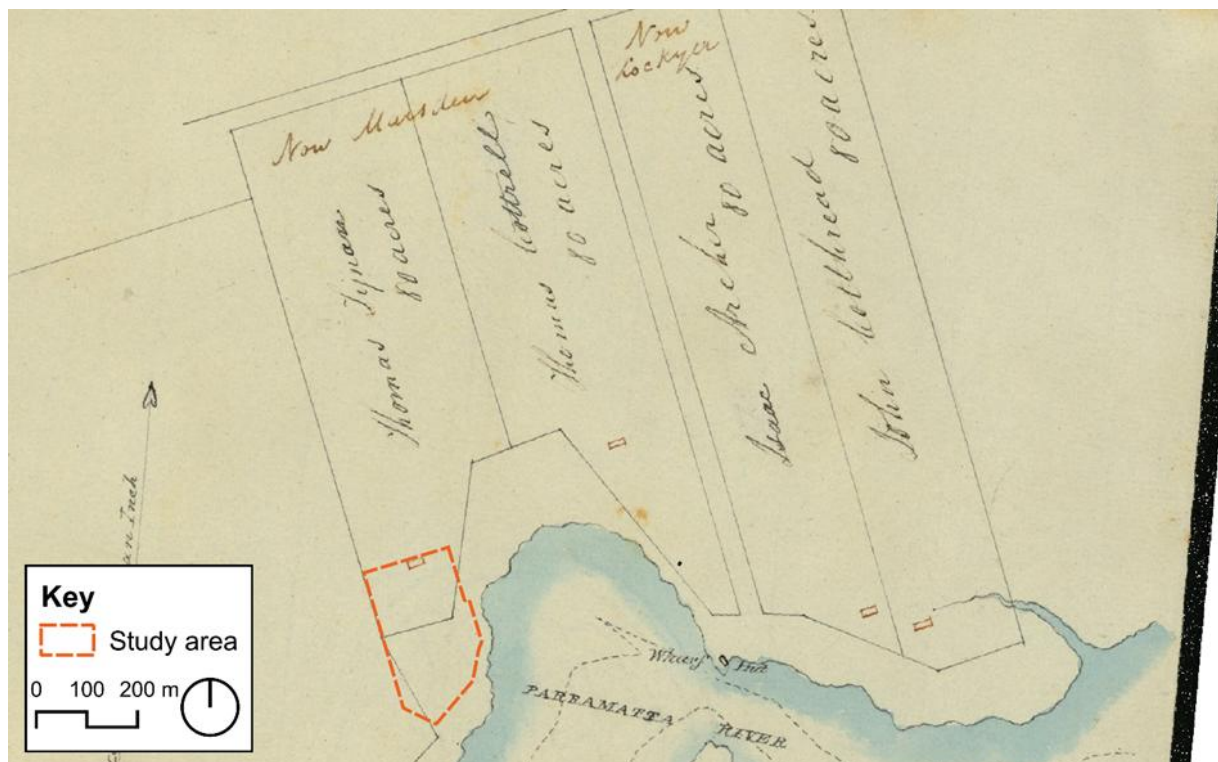


Figure 2.6 Copy of old map showing the 1832 Cottrell and Tynan land grants in the Field of Mars, 1822: Thomas Tynan (80 acres) and Thomas Cottrell (80 acres), both 'now Marsden', and Isaac Archer (80 acres) 'now Lockyer'. (Source: Museums of History NSW, State Archives Collection, NRS-13886-1-[X752]-Volume 2-3-17 with GML overlay)

2.2.4 The Marsden Estate

Jane Catherine Marsden married her cousin Thomas Marsden in 1831 at Parramatta; however, she was widowed in 1837. After the death of her husband, she took their surviving children to England to be educated. Jane lived in England until 1869 when her son, Samuel Edward Marsden, received his ordination appointment to the See of Bathurst. Jane accompanied her son to Bathurst where she lived for the remainder of her life, dying in 1885.

Following her death the Tynan Farm landholding was conveyed to her sister Anna Maria Marsden in 1885. She subsequently lodged an application to convert the land to Torrens title. At this date it comprised 96 acres (this included the land between the high water mark and the line of the original grant given to Tynan, which she purchased about 1889). According to the application the land was in the occupation of nurseryman Edward Atkins junior under a verbal lease from Marsden. Presumably the land was used in conjunction with his Eulalia Nursery at Ermington. The survey plan of the land included in Primary Application 7936 is shown at Figure 2.7. A certificate of title was issued in 1890 for the land then owned by Anna Maria Marsden.¹⁹

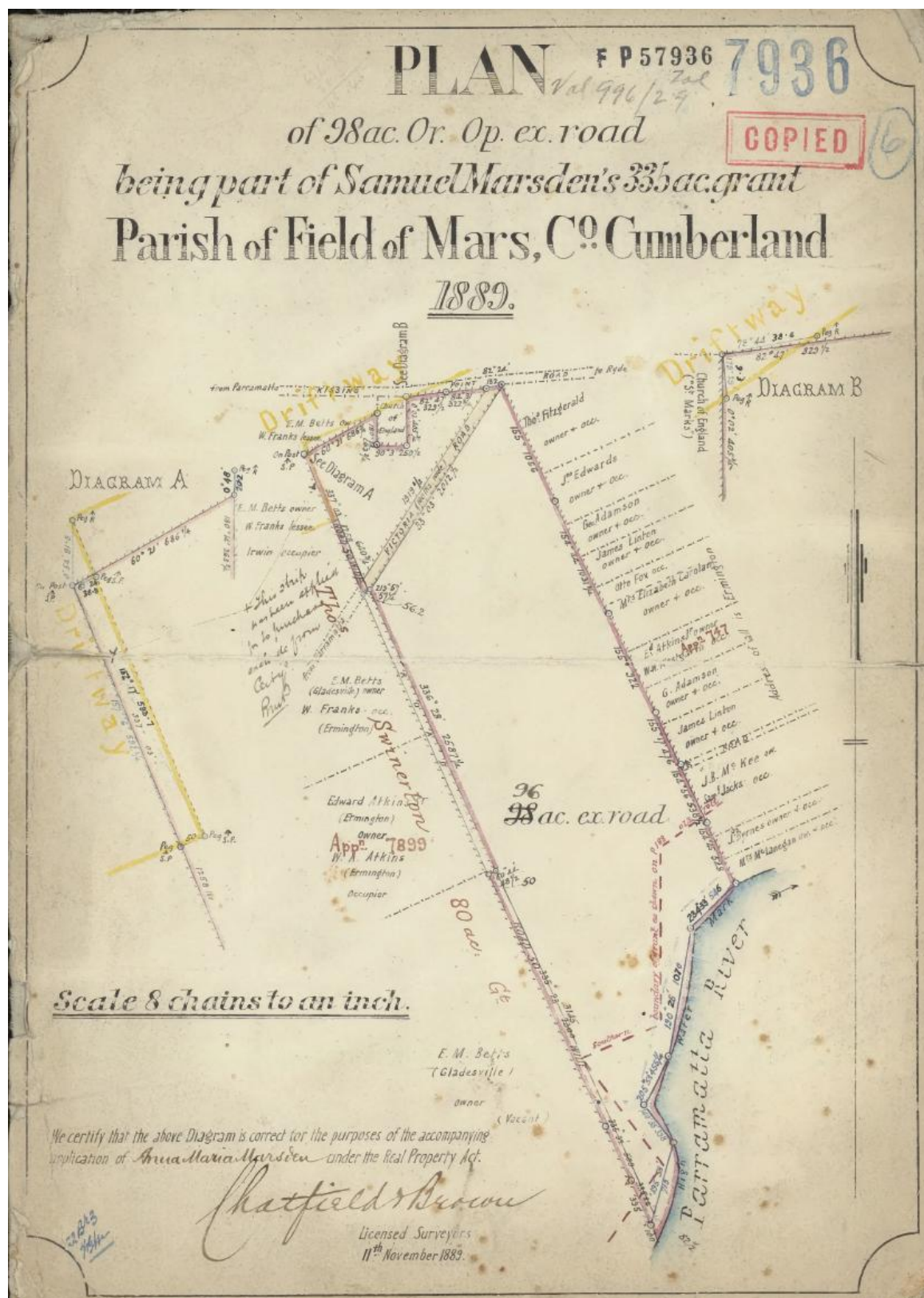


Figure 2.7 Plan of land in Primary Application 7936 owned by Anna Maria Marsden, November 1889. (Source: NSW Land Registry Services, PA 7936)

As Anna Maria Marsden was living in Bristol, England, in this period, she conveyed power of attorney to Sydney solicitors Alfred Edmund Jaques and Alfred Consett Stephen.²⁰ On her behalf the northern portion of the Marsden landholding north of Victoria Road was subdivided as Deposited Plan 2916 (not related to the subject site). In late 1894 part of the southern portion of the Marsden land was subdivided as DP 3370 with 16 allotments formed. A significant portion of this second subdivision is within the subject site, principally all of Lots 5, 6, 7, 8 and 16, and parts of Lots 4 and 9 (Figure 2.8).

In 1899 the Mayor of Ermington and Rydalmere Council moved a successful resolution that Wharf Street 'from the north-east corner of Nr S Jack's orchard to Atkins Lane, be re-named and known from that date as Hope Street'.²¹

Sales in the second subdivision of the Marsden Estate were slow and the first transaction was not registered on the certificate of title until July 1897. Between then and 1904 all of the allotments in the second subdivision were purchased as follows: Lots 1 and 12 by Catherine Elizabeth Betts; Lots 2–10 by Edgar Henry Swane; Lots 13–15 in two transactions by John Woodcock; and Lot 16 by Samuel Dean Jack.

Samuel Dean Jack established a nursery business in Hope Street, close to the riverbank on Lot 16. He lived a short distance away in Auld Reekie' in Kissing Point Road. He arrived in Australia in 1881 and worked for some years with John Woodcock on his fruit cargo boat, which plied the river between Ermington and Sydney. He subsequently worked for noted nurseryman John Brown McKee at Ermington. His sons later joined the business, formerly called Riverside Nursery, which was renamed SD Jack and Sons.²² The nursery specialised in citrus trees and roses. Samuel Dean Jack was also a former mayor and alderman of Ermington and Rydalmere Council. He sold off a portion of Lot 16 to one of his sons, William Ray Jack, in 1920. According to the 1932–1933 *Sands Directory*, William H Jack, nurseryman, was listed in Hughes Avenue. The nursery appears to have ceased operation by this time.

To the north of Lot 16, nurseryman Edgar Henry Swane owned Lots 2–10 of the Marsden Estate. Edgar Henry Swane had come to Australia in about the 1870s and had a career change from bookbinder to orchardist at Ermington. He was one of the first aldermen and mayors of the Ermington and Ryde Council and was the town clerk for almost 40 years. Enterprise Nursery was established on this land (Lots 2–10) by Edgar and Harold Swane, the eldest and youngest sons of the late Edgar Swane senior, after Edgar's return from the war in 1919. The partnership remained in place until 1926 when Edgar Norman Swane purchased the business and operated the Enterprise Nursery as a sole proprietor from that date. In the intervening period Swane Bros had applied, in 1923, to erect sheds and stables in Hope Street. The following year, EN Swane lodged a successful application to build a new cottage in Hughes Avenue and submitted a subdivision application, though the newspaper reference does not identify its location.²³

Edgar Henry Swane passed away at his home in Hughes Avenue in late 1927 survived by a family of 10 adult children.²⁴

According to the *Cumberland Argus* in 1941:

The principal lines stocked by this firm are fruit trees, both citrus and deciduous, rose plants (bush and climbing) in a wide range of old and newer varieties, as well as the well known standard roses. These lines have been and still are very popular among all classes of plant lovers. But apart from these, Swane Bros. have a wonderful assortment of all the most popular shrubs and flowering and ornamental trees. Likewise, they have catered for the customer who wants an immediate affect in the garden by growing shrubs and trees in suitable containers. These advanced plants have really no very definite season for planting, which makes this line very popular. Some idea of the vastness of this section can be gathered from the fact that they have on hand at least 35,000 advanced plants. Citrus trees, too, of the following varieties:— Lemons, oranges and mandarins are also available in the advanced plant section.²⁵

The nursery operated on this site until 1965 when it relocated to Galston/Dural.



Figure 2.8 Detail of survey plan of second subdivision of Anna Maria Marsden's estate in 1894. The Melrose Park South – West site comprises Lot 16 at Ermington. (Source: NSW Land Registry Services, DP 3370 with GML overlay)

The size and location of the Marsden Estate allotments coupled with the proximity of Pennant Hills Wharf (later Ermington Wharf) transformed Ermington and the present Melrose Park into a rural farming area.

Around the early 1900s this part of Sydney was the home of well-established poultry farms, orchards and plant nurseries such as Swane Brothers, Jack and Sons 'Riverside' Nursery, Lindsay's Dairy, Vines' Riding School, Rogers' Riding School, Dovgan's Poultry Farm, Southeron's Nursery, Edwards' Rose Nursery, Cahill's Nursery, Palmer's Nursery and a Chinese market garden.

2.2.5 Interwar and postwar development

In the interwar period, government authorities viewed Ermington as a growth centre for employment and population due to its strategic central proximity to both Parramatta and the City of Sydney. Proposed planning for industrial areas and community living in Ermington began as early as 1919 in the area bounded by Hughes Avenue and Wharf Road to the east of the site. However, further planning proposals for the locality were temporarily halted in World War II. As can be seen in the 1943 aerial photograph the site remained predominantly rural with a small number of houses along Hughes Avenue, and a nursery in the northwest, possibly part of Swane Bros. Enterprise Nursery.



Figure 2.9 Extract from 1943 aerial showing the site. (Source: NSW Land Registry Services, SIX Maps with GML overlay)

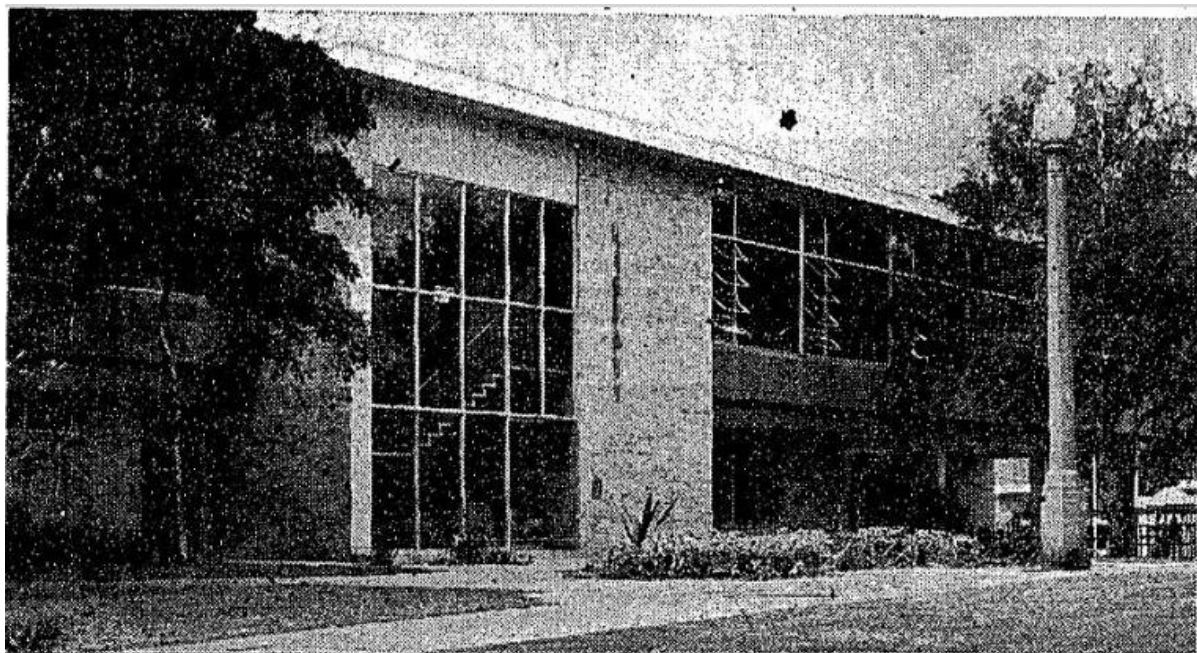
Following World War II the government revived its planning proposal for the area encompassing Ermington and Melrose Park. By this time the parcels of land in the subject site were owned by various individuals.

Of these the largest portion (part of Lot 16) was sold by the Jack family to 2SM (formerly known as Catholic Broadcasting Co Pty Ltd), which owned it from 1939 to 1950; Albert Arthur Thompson, 1950–1951; John McGrath Limited/John McGrath Industries Limited/Australian National Industries Ltd, 1951–1957; and Sterling Drug Inc from 1957.

In the same period EH Swane subdivided part of his property (Lots 2–3 DP 3370) and sold off Lots A, B, C and D. These allotments were also acquired by Sterling Pharmaceuticals (previously named Sterling Drug Inc) as it bought up most of the allotments forming part of the Marsden Estate 2nd Subdivision (DP3370).²⁶ Sterling Pharmaceuticals commissioned noted architects Stephenson & Turner to design the offices, amenities and laboratory on the site in 1959.

In the same area a raft of established food processors, cosmetic and pharmaceutical factories and warehouses, most notably British and American companies such as Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline and Eli Lilly, acquired land in the neighbourhood.

In 1981 all of the allotments in the ownership of Sterling Pharmaceuticals at Ermington were consolidated on a single title (Vol 14530 Fol 43) as Lot 3 DP 602080. The survey plan is shown at Figure 2.12.



STERLING'S £1m ERMINGTON LABORATORY

Figure 2.10 Sterling Pharmaceuticals' new buildings at Ermington designed by architects Stephenson & Turner. (Source: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 February 1959, p 19)



Figure 2.11 Sterling Pharmaceuticals, Ermington, 1960. (Source: Lawson's
<https://www.lawsons.com.au/auction-lot/unknown-sterling-pharmaceuticals-pty.-ltd-s-bui_C29424F853>)

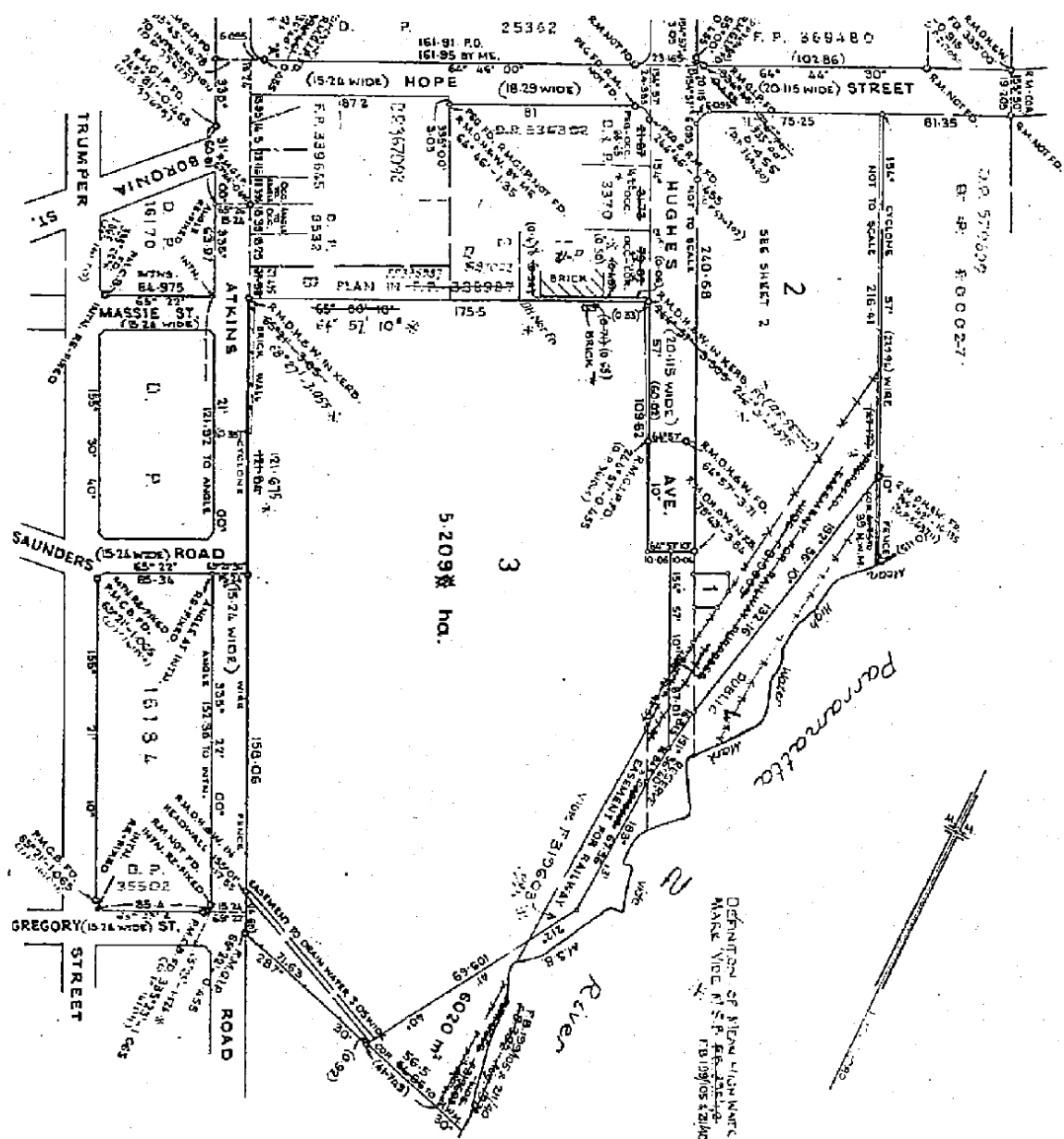


Figure 2.12 Block plan of land registered on CT Vol 14530 Fol 43, 1981. (Source: NSW Land Registry Services)

2.3 Physical analysis

2.3.1 82 Hughes Avenue

82 Hughes Avenue is a large, irregular shaped lot on the western edge of the Melrose Park/Ermington industrial area. The site contains a large warehouse building, ancillary buildings/infrastructure, carparks and landscaping. The lot is bordered by Atkins Road to the west, industrial and commercial tenancies to the north, Ermington Bay to the south and Hughes Avenue to the east.

The brick warehouse building on site was constructed in 1959 for Stirling Pharmaceuticals and designed by architects Stephenson & Turner, and is now heavily modified. The building comprises offices in a wing to the north, and the warehouse/laboratory/factory building to the south. The 1959 building was approximately half the current size, having been extended in several phases in 1971, 1978 and 2002. These extensions included modifications to the original warehouse and office building, including replacement of its front (northern) and eastern elevation shown in Figure 2.11. Presently, the building has a contemporary glass façade. South and east of the building are modern ancillary buildings and infrastructure, including a loading dock, carparking and services (Figure 2.13 to Figure 2.19).

The site includes landscaped lawns with mature trees on its southern and eastern boundaries, some of which date from earlier landscaping schemes in the 1970s. These soften the edges of the site as it joins to the wetlands in Archer Park and George Kendall Riverside Park. The northern boundary to the adjacent warehouses and commercial lots also features landscaping with mature trees from earlier landscaping schemes (Figure 2.20 to Figure 2.24).

A modern fence encloses the site.



Figure 2.13 Northern elevation of 82 Hughes Avenue.



Figure 2.14 Northern elevation of 82 Hughes Avenue from a different angle.



Figure 2.15 Eastern elevation of 82 Hughes Avenue.



Figure 2.16 Eastern elevation of 82 Hughes Avenue, showing the loading dock.



Figure 2.17 Western elevation of 82 Hughes Avenue.



Figure 2.18 Southwestern corner of the warehouse building at 82 Hughes Avenue.



Figure 2.19 Ancillary buildings and infrastructure south of the warehouse building.



Figure 2.20 An area of landscaping south of the warehouse building.



Figure 2.21 Landscape lawns and the carpark (used for storage) south of the warehouse building.



Figure 2.22 A mature fig tree east of the warehouse building near the loading dock, part of the 1970s landscaping of the site.



Figure 2.23 Landscaping on the northern boundary of the site.



Figure 2.24 Landscaping on the northern boundary of the site.

2.3.2 Views

Views to the site from nearby heritage items are presently unavailable due to the size of the buildings on site, their distance, and the buildings in between that screen views.

Figure 2.25 shows the view towards the site from the Bulla Cream Dairy. The present warehouse building can barely be seen, but taller buildings would be more visible.

Views to the site from the wetlands are partially obstructed due to the dense canopy. Figure 2.26 shows a typical obstructed view.

Views to the site from the Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve on the southern side of the Parramatta River are similarly obstructed by the wetlands. This provides a sympathetic setting of regenerated mangroves for the nature reserve and contributes to a sense of isolation for the armament depot. Refer to Figure 2.27 and Figure 2.28.



Figure 2.25 View towards the site from near the Bulla Cream Dairy.



Figure 2.26 View from the wetlands to the site.



Figure 2.27 View from the Newington Armament Depot wharf to the site (Source: Urbaine Design Group, 2025)



Figure 2.28 Approximate view to the site from the Newington Nature Reserve, taken from the water (Source: Urbaine Design Group, 2025)

2.3.3 Historical archaeology

The archaeological potential of the site has been assessed by GML in the HAA.²⁷

The HAA has identified that the site has low to moderate potential for historical archaeological remains associated with the development of the area from the 1790s onwards (Figure 2.29). There is low to moderate potential for remains of local significance of a pre-1820s structure associated with early land grants in the northern part of the site. Across the remainder of the site there is low potential for archaeological evidence of early to mid-nineteenth century agriculture, of local significance. Archaeological evidence of late-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century commercial nurseries, orchards, and early-twentieth century houses is not considered to meet the threshold for significance.

The HAA includes recommendations for management and mitigation measures to be implemented post-approval and should be referred to for further information.

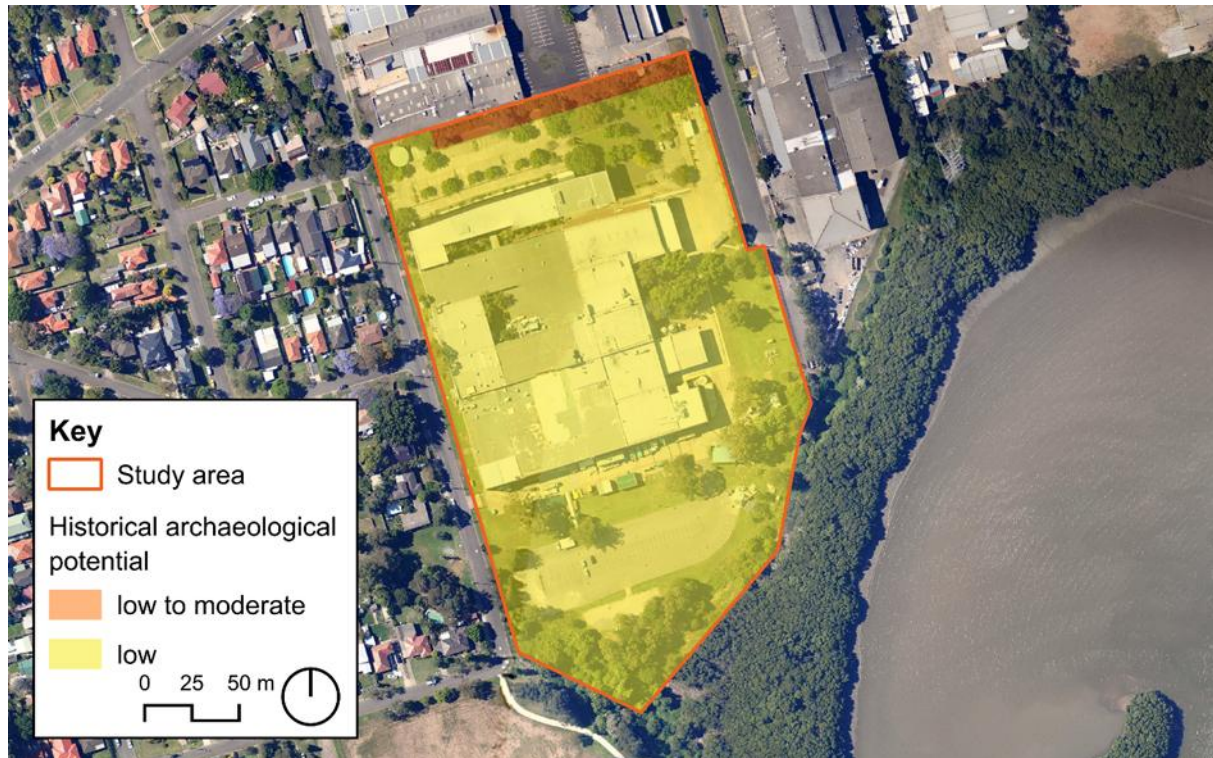


Figure 2.29 Historical archaeological potential mapping within the site. (Source: Nearmap with GML overlay)

2.4 Endnotes

- ¹ Smith, K 2017, 'Aboriginal History', City of Ryde Council, accessed 6 September 2024 <<https://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/Library/Local-and-Family-History/Historic-Ryde/Aboriginal-History>>.
- ² JMcDCHM, Archaeological Survey - Lots 5 and 6, Victoria Road, Castle Hill, report prepared for Peter Malony and Consultants on behalf of G.D. Webb and Capital Commercial, June 2009, p 11.
- ³ Smith, K 2017, 'Aboriginal History', City of Ryde Council, accessed 6 September 2024 <<https://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/Library/Local-and-Family-History/Historic-Ryde/Aboriginal-History>>.
- ⁴ Attenbrow, V 2010, *Sydney's Aboriginal Past: Investigating the Archaeological and Historical Records*, University of New South Wales Press, Kensington, NSW, p 42.
- ⁵ Irish, P 2017, *Aboriginal History along the Cooks River*, Cooks River Alliance, NSW, p 11.
- ⁶ Irish, P 2017, *Aboriginal History along the Cooks River*, Cooks River Alliance, NSW, p 13.
- ⁷ Smith, K 2005, *Wallumedegal: An Aboriginal History of Ryde*, City of Ryde Council, pp 10–11.
- ⁸ Smith, K 2005, *Wallumedegal: An Aboriginal History of Ryde*, City of Ryde Council, p 16.
- ⁹ Smith, K 2005, *Wallumedegal: An Aboriginal History of Ryde*, City of Ryde Council.

- ¹⁰ 'AUSTRALIAN PATRIARCHS', *Daily Telegraph*, 23 January 1888, p 6 (Centennial Supplement to the Daily Telegraph), Trove, National Library of Australia, accessed 6 September 2024 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article239337330>>.
- ¹¹ Smith, K 2005, *Wallumedegal: An Aboriginal History of Ryde*, City of Ryde Council, pp 16–18.
- ¹² No title, *The Australian*, 6 January 1834, p 4, Trove, National Library of Australia, accessed 6 September 2024 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article42005486>>.
- ¹³ Smith, K 2005, *Wallumedegal: An Aboriginal History of Ryde*, City of Ryde Council, p 18.
- ¹⁴ Irish, P 2017, *Hidden in Plain View*, NewSouth Publishing, Sydney, pp 28–29.
- ¹⁵ Museums of History NSW, State Archives Collection via ancestry.com.au Series: NRS 898; Reel or Fiche Numbers: Reels 6020-6040, 6070; Fiche 3260-3312.
- ¹⁶ Yarwood, AT, 'Marsden, Samuel (1765–1838)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, accessed 6 September 2024 <<https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/marsden-samuel-2433/text3237>>, published first in hardcopy 1967.
- ¹⁷ 'Sydney', *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 9 November 1806, p 1, Trove, National Library of Australia, accessed 6 September 2024 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article627327>>.
- ¹⁸ NSW Land Registry Services, Primary Application Search Book 7996.
- ¹⁹ NSW Land Registry Services Certificate of Title Vol 974 Fol 13.
- ²⁰ NSW Land Registry Services Certificate of Title Vol 996 Fol 29.
- ²¹ 'Ermington & Rydalmere Council', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 29 July 1899, p 11, Trove, National Library of Australia, accessed 9 September 2024 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article85783557>>.
- ²² 'Sudden Death of Ex-Mayor S. D. Jack', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 10 March 1923, p 4, Trove, National Library of Australia, accessed 9 September 2024 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article105921452>>.
- ²³ 'Ermington and Rydalmere Council.' *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 7 June 1924, p 9, Trove, National Library of Australia, accessed 27 March 2025 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article104458690>>
- ²⁴ 'Mr E H Swane', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 December 1927, p 21, Trove, National Library of Australia, accessed 9 September 2024 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article16425490>>.
- ²⁵ "'Enterprise" is apt name', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 26 March 1941, p 7, Trove, National Library of Australia, accessed 9 September 2024 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article107297750>>.
- ²⁶ NSW Land Registry Services, Certificates of Title Vol 3025 Fol 243, Vol 3625 Fol 84, Vol 5943 Fol 11, Vol 6185 Fol 36, Vol 6637 Fol 184, Vol 6590 Fol 40, Vol 7436 Fol 186.
- ²⁷ GML Heritage 2025, Melrose Park South – West, Historical Archaeological Assessment, report prepared for Wharf and Hughes Developments Pty Ltd.

3 Significance assessment

3.1 Statements of significance

Statements of significance for heritage items in the vicinity of the site are provided in the subsections below.

3.1.1 Wetlands

The following statement of significance is drawn from the State Heritage Inventory (SHI) listing of the wetlands:

The wetlands along Parramatta River are of significance for Parramatta area as remnant representative areas of mangroves and salt marshes which once extensively lined the foreshores and tidal water flats of the region.¹

3.1.2 Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve

The following statement of significance is drawn from the SHI listing of the Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve:

The former Royal Australian Navy (RAN) Armament Depot - Newington known as Newington Armament Depot and including the area now known as the Newington Nature Reserve, is potentially of State heritage significance as a place which demonstrates the historical and technical development of systems and regulations of explosives handling and storage from the 1890s to 1999 and also demonstrates the importance of Sydney as a Navy Port. Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve is historically significant as it contains physical evidence demonstrating the history of European occupation through to the end of the 20th century. The site is a valuable tool for research relating to the early settlement and development of the colony of NSW and the development of defence from colonial times.

Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve is potentially of State significance as an extensive cultural landscape containing features from all periods of its human occupation as well as regionally rare forest and wetlands. Newington Nature Reserve is reserved under the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 because of its significant ecological values; these extend beyond the boundaries of the Reserve into other parts of the site. The site's estuarine wetland and forest communities are rare remnants of ecological communities that once dominated this region. These provide a valuable resource for research and include a number of rare and endangered ecological communities, flora and fauna including Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest, Coastal Saltmarsh, the Green and Golden Bell Frog, *Wilsonia backhousei* and the White Fronted Chat. The site supports 144 bird species and ten bat species including the only known maternity roost of the White-striped Freetail bat in the Sydney area.

In addition, it supports the only remaining example of a complete zonal succession from eucalypt forest, saltmarsh, mangroves and tidal mudflats on the Parramatta River estuary.²

3.1.3 Bulla Cream Dairy

The following statement of significance is drawn from the SHI listing of the Bulla Cream Dairy:

The property Willowmere, 64 Hughes Avenue, Ermington constructed in c1924, is of historical significance on a Local level, for being built and resided in by the Swane family for a period over 40 years. The house and garden were the domestic centre of the Swane families' horticultural and commercial operations and the garden and former paddock (western half of the allotment) were both used at one time for the propagation of plants sold at the adjacent nursery, Swane Bros. Enterprise Nursery on Hope Street. The original house, garage and laundry (albeit altered) and the early addition billiards room, all built for Ted (Edgar Norman) Swane, survive together with a garden that contains plantings associated with the establishment period of the house. The Phoenix *canariensis* Canary Island date palms located along its southern boundary are of historical value for their association with the period the Swane family lived at the property.

As the Swane family home, the place is associated with notable members of the Swane family including Ben Swane, who "raised" the Swane's Golden Cypress Pencil Pine, a popular domestic garden plant in the late 20th century and a founding and life member of the International Plant Propagators' Society in Australia; and with Valerie Swane, who was an extremely influential horticulturalist and the first woman President of the NSW Association of Nurserymen.

Although a representative example of a suburban Californian Bungalow style residence, the house is of some significance for being largely intact and unusual in configuration, designed to be viewed from two street frontages. The weatherboard billiards room is also of significance as a rare, surviving early structure.

The place also contains three historically significant Canary Island Phoenix palms that date to the establishment period of the 1920s and make a strong visual contribution in the broader landscape, clearly identifying the location of the Swane's family home.

The place is one of a very small number of properties surviving in the local area known to be associated with the historically significant period of development that occurred from the mid 19th to mid 20th century in Ermington, when the area was dominated by orchards, plant nurseries and fruit growers, making No. 64 Hughes Avenue rare on a Local level.³

3.1.4 Well in George Kendall Reserve

The following statement of significance is drawn from the SHI listing of the well in George Kendall Reserve:

The site of the blocked well at 1 Spurway Street is deemed to possess potential to contribute to an understanding of early farming settlement in the area.⁴

3.2 Significance of the proposed work area

The Melrose Park South – West site is not listed on any statutory heritage register, though a small portion of the heritage listed 'Wetlands' (Parramatta LEP I011) crosses over into the site.

A review of the site shows it contains a warehouse/factory building constructed in 1959 and designed by notable architects Stephenson & Turner. When it was built, the factory was considered state-of-the-art in terms of technology and design, costing £1m to build.

The building and landscape are now heavily modified, with its original front façade now completely lost and several extensions obscuring its original form. Internally, the building has been modified to suit the needs of a succession of commercial operators and uses in line with its utilitarian purpose. Though potentially of some historical interest, the building and its site are not considered to be of heritage significance themselves.

3.3 Endnotes

- ¹ Heritage NSW, State Heritage Inventory, 'Wetlands' [2240429], accessed 19 March 2025 <<https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=2240429>>.
- ² Heritage NSW, State Heritage Inventory, 'Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve' [5054828], accessed 5 January 2026 <<https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=5054828>>.
- ³ Heritage NSW, State Heritage Inventory, 'Bulla Cream Dairy' [2245057], accessed 19 March 2025 <<https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=2245057>>.
- ⁴ Heritage NSW, State Heritage Inventory, 'Well' [2240526], accessed 19 March 2025 <<https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=2240526>>.

4 Proposed works

4.1 The proposal

Following the demolition of the existing buildings and road network under DA/75/2024, the proposed SSDA works involve the construction of three blocks of multistorey mixed-use buildings, referred to as B1, B2 and B3 (Figure 4.1). Basement carparking is proposed to extend across the majority of the footprint, to the limits of the setbacks around the boundary of each block.

New roads are proposed separating the three blocks, with access points off Atkins Road and Hughes Avenue, as well as a potential connection to Mary Street.

A new public open space, referred to as OS4, is proposed along the southeastern portion of the site fronting to Ermington Bay (Figure 4.2). Many of the existing trees would be retained in the park. Park features include a playground, picnic areas, amenities building, bioretention basin, and a potential pedestrian connection to the Ermington Bay nature trail boardwalk.

The design includes a publicly accessible pedestrian link on the northern boundary of the site which joins Atkins Road and Hughes Avenue. This has been designed to retain the mature trees that date from the c1970s along the northern boundary of the site.

Trees towards the centre and southeast of the site would be removed to make way for the new buildings and roads.

No trees from the heritage listed wetlands would be removed.

4.1.1 Proposed buildings

Blocks B1, B2 and B3 are planned to consist of apartment buildings centred around an internal green courtyard (Figure 4.3, Figure 4.4 and Figure 4.5). Two different architecture firms have been engaged to design the blocks to ensure there is visual differentiation and a unique identity for each building within the precinct.

B3 is proposed to include retail space in addition to apartments.

Details of each block are provided in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Details of the proposed buildings on each block.

Block	Architect	Gross floor area (GFA)	Dwellings	Levels
B1	FK Australia	Residential—24,898 sqm Non-residential—0 sqm	268	RL 38.30 to 52.60 (6 to 11 levels)

Block	Architect	Gross floor area (GFA)	Dwellings	Levels
B2	SJB	Residential—39,940 sqm Non-residential—0 sqm	455	Building A—RL 50.65 (10 levels) Building B—RL 109.85 (29 levels) Building C—RL 41.25 (8 levels) Building D—RL 41.25 (8 levels)
B3	SJB	Residential—57,738 sqm Non-residential—621 sqm	652	Building A—RL 97.35 (26 levels) Building B—RL 43.30 (8 levels) Building C—RL 85.75 (24 levels) Building D— RL 37.05 (8 levels)

Due to the height of the towers, overshadowing of the areas south, east and west of the proposed buildings would occur. This includes the heritage listed wetlands to the south and west. A shadow study prepared for the project indicates that the new buildings would result in overshadowing of parts of the wetlands. Refer to Figure 4.6 for the shadow diagrams.

The *Biodiversity Development Assessment Report* prepared by Eco Logical Australia Pty Ltd (2025) for the project includes an assessment of the impact of overshadowing on the ecological communities of the heritage listed Wetlands. This includes the Samphire Saltmarsh community and the Mangrove Forest. This report identifies there would be five hours of shading over the Samphire Saltmarsh in the study area between 9am and 3pm during the winter solstice, which is the worst-case scenario. This would affect 72.1% of the saltmarsh in the report's study area. For the Mangrove Forest, there would be 7 hours of shading affecting 42% of the mangroves in the study area during the winter solstice.

During the summer solstice, which is the best-case scenario, there would be two hours of shading affecting 28% of the saltmarsh and four hours of shading affecting 2% of the mangroves.¹



Figure 4.1 Plan of the site showing the layout of the proposed new buildings B1, B2 and B3, and the public open space fronting to Ermington Bay (OS4). (Source: Wharf and Hughes Developments Pty Ltd 2025)



Figure 4.2 Detail of OS4. (Source: Wharf and Hughes Developments Pty Ltd 2025)



Figure 4.3 Elevation of the B1 building. (Source: FK Australia 2025)

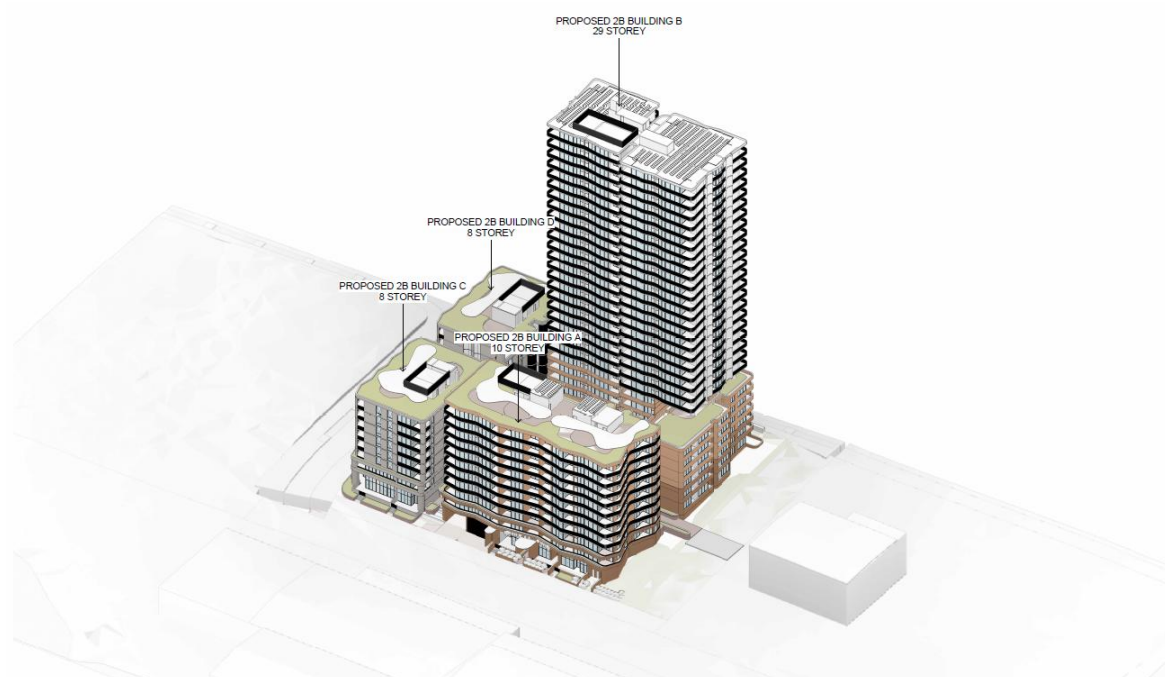


Figure 4.4 An axonometric view of the buildings of B2. (Source: SJB 2025)



Figure 4.5 An axonometric view of the buildings of B3. (Source: SJB 2025)

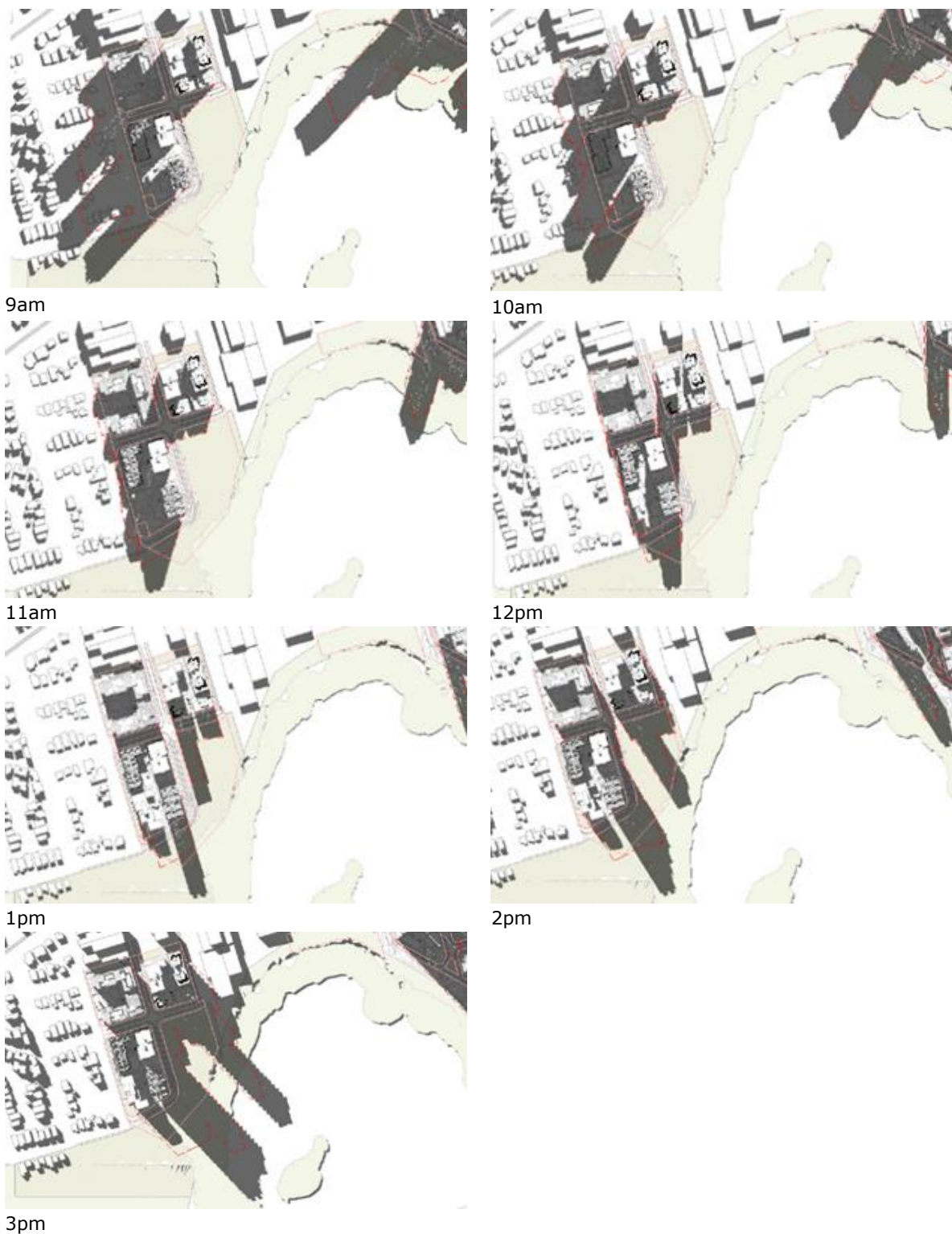


Figure 4.6 An overshadowing study of the Melrose Park South – West project during the winter solstice. (Source: FK Australia 2025)

4.2 Documentation

This report has assessed the impact of the proposed works on the wetlands heritage item and on items in the vicinity of the site based on the following documentation (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Relevant planning proposal documents.

Document name	Issue date	Issued by
Melrose Park South—West, 82 Hughes Avenue, Ermington—Block 1	07/3/2025	FK Australia
Melrose Park West—Block 2	13/3/2025	SJB
Melrose Park West—Block 3	13/3/2025	SJB
Melrose Park South, Landscape Masterplan	20/3/2025	Arcadia

4.3 Background

4.3.1 Previous advice by GML

GML provided Wharf and Hughes Developments Pty Ltd with preliminary advice regarding the key heritage considerations during the design development process.

Owing to the relatively few heritage constraints for the development, GML's advice mainly concerned ensuring an appropriate buffer to the wetlands, including a sensitive design that would ensure adequate sunlight and avoid indirect impacts.

GML's recommendation included seeking ecological advice regarding overshadowing to the wetlands, which has been sought for the development and integrated into this SOHI.

4.3.2 Considerations of alternatives

The Melrose Park South – West project has gone through an iterative design process with the NSW State Design Review Panel to ensure it meets high standards of architectural design, landscaping and amenity.

Refer to the architectural design report for details of the alternatives considered.

4.4 Endnotes

¹ Eco Logical Australia Pty Ltd 2025, *Melrose Park South – West, Biodiversity Development Assessment Report*, prepared for Wharf and Hughes Developments Pty Ltd, pp81-82.

5 Heritage impact assessment

5.1 Introduction

Table 5.1 defines the terminology used in this report when assessing the heritage impacts of the proposed design.

Table 5.1 Heritage impact rating definitions.

Rating	Definition
Major adverse	Actions that would have a severe, long-term and possibly irreversible impact on the heritage item. Actions in this category would include partial or complete demolition of a heritage item or addition of a new structure in its vicinity that destroys the visual setting of the item. These actions cannot be fully mitigated.
Moderate adverse	Actions that would have an adverse impact on a heritage item. Actions in this category would include removal of an important aspect of a heritage item's setting or temporary removal of significant elements or fabric. The impact of these actions could be reduced through appropriate mitigation measures.
Minor adverse	Actions that would have a minor adverse impact on a heritage item. This may be the result of the action affecting only a distant/small part of the setting of a heritage place. The action may also be temporary and/or reversible.
Neutral	Actions that would have no heritage impact.
Minor positive	Actions that would bring a minor benefit to a heritage item, such as an improvement in the item's visual setting.
Moderate positive	Actions that would bring a moderate benefit to a heritage item, such as removal of intrusive elements or fabric, or a substantial improvement to the item's visual setting.
Major positive	Actions that would bring a major benefit to a heritage item, such as reconstruction of significant fabric, removal of substantial intrusive elements/fabric or reinstatement of an item's visual setting or curtilage.

5.2 Matters for consideration

The *Guidelines for Preparing a Statement of Heritage Impact* (former Department of Planning and Environment, 2023) list matters for consideration in assessing heritage impacts. These are summarised in Table 5.2, and a more detailed discussion of matters for consideration that are relevant to the proposal is provided in the subsections that follow.

Those matters that are not discussed in more detail are not relevant, not proposed, or have impacts that are assessed to be neutral or non-existent.

Table 5.2 Relevant matter for consideration for the Melrose Park South – West proposal.

Matters for consideration	Heritage impact summary
Fabric and spatial arrangements	N/A
Setting, views and vistas	See discussion in Section 5.2.1
Landscape	See discussion in Section 5.2.2
Use	N/A
Demolition	N/A—demolition is being undertaken under DA/75/2024, not this SSDA
Curtilage	N/A
Movable heritage	N/A
Aboriginal cultural heritage	N/A
Historical archaeology	See discussion in Section 5.2.3
Natural heritage	See discussion in Section 5.2.4
Conservation areas	N/A
Cumulative impacts	N/A
The conservation management plan	N/A
Other heritage items in the vicinity	See discussion in Section 5.2.5
Commonwealth/National Heritage significance	N/A
World Heritage significance	N/A

5.2.1 Setting, views and vistas

Construction of the proposed buildings in B2, B3 and, to a lesser extent, B1 would alter the setting of the heritage listed wetlands. New high-density residential towers would alter views of the wetlands from the south and east, with the buildings creating a backdrop where this did not exist previously. Filtered views of the building would also be possible within the wetlands when looking north and west.

The development has been softened by the introduction of landscape and open space in OS4, which would create a buffer between the wetlands and the buildings.

Although this is a change, the wetlands exist in a highly urbanised environment already and the juxtaposition between naturally regenerated wetland vegetation and dense urban development is a common occurrence. The change in setting would largely not impact the heritage values of the wetlands, whose significance derives from the fact they are a remnant of the wetlands that once dominated Parramatta River. It is, however, acknowledged that the change will somewhat detract from the views to the wetlands.

In sum, there would be a **minor adverse impact** on the setting, views and vistas of the wetlands.

5.2.2 Landscape

Proposed works to create OS4 would mainly affect the landscape area south of the existing warehouse building, but not the heritage listed wetlands. However, a potential linkage between the new open space and the Ermington Bay nature trail could require minor clearing and landscaping works to allow for the connection to be built. The details of this connection have not yet been resolved.

Clearing to create the linkage would have the potential to have a **minor adverse impact** on the wetlands, which could be mitigated if significant trees and vegetation are protected during works. This impact would not arise if the linkage is not constructed.

Care needs to be taken to ensure that maintenance practices for the new open space do not result in indirect impacts to the wetlands, as a result of runoff or weed growth/management measures.

5.2.3 Historical archaeology

GML has prepared a separate HAA to accompany the SSDA for Melrose Park South – West.

The assessment identified a low to moderate potential for a pre-1820s structure of local significance associated with early land grants in the northern part of the site, which will be impacted by the development. The HAA includes recommendations for management and mitigation measures to be implemented post-approval and should be referred to for further information.

5.2.4 Natural heritage

The *Biodiversity Development Assessment Report* (Eco Logical Australia, 2025) prepared for the project has assessed the impact of overshadowing on the Samphire Saltmarsh and Mangrove Forest of the heritage listed wetlands.

This report identified that, in the worst-case scenario, there would be 5 hours of overshadowing of the saltmarsh and 7 hours of overshadowing of the mangroves during the winter solstice because of the development.

Eco Logical has assessed that the development is not likely to have a significant impact on the saltmarsh, though a small area (0.01 hectares) could be modified through shading. Existing impacts including weed growth, mangrove encroachment and shading from existing vegetation are likely greater risks to the local occurrence of the saltmarsh.¹

Similarly, Eco Logical has assessed that the development is unlikely to have a significant impact on the mangroves of the heritage listed Wetlands. This is due to a range of factors:

- that whilst the development may indirectly cause reduction of solar access at a worse case over 7 hours on winter solstice over 42% of the mapped community within the Ermington Bay wetland. However, there will be only 2% of this area affected for 4 hours during summer solstice, given there is solar access available at other times of the day and season throughout the year, the affect is unlikely to cause adverse effect such that it would place the local occurrence of this PCT [mangroves] at risk of extinction.
- the PCT [mangroves] is unlikely to be fragmented or isolated from the development
- there is a large occurrence of this PCT [mangroves] in the wider locality
- The community is in good condition, and whilst the reduction of solar access could over the long-term flow the growth of Mangroves, it is unlikely to remove the ecological integrity or function of the community.²

Eco Logical's assessment includes recommendations for long-term monitoring to ensure the biodiversity values of the study area are not affected by the development, with recommendations for offsets if a threshold of impact is reached.³

Based on Eco Logical's assessment, GML concludes that the development would likely have a **neutral impact** on the natural values of the Wetlands if the recommendations for monitoring and offsetting are implemented.

5.2.5 Other heritage items in the vicinity

The direct and indirect impacts of the proposal on heritage items in the vicinity of the site are discussed in Table 5.3 below.

Table 5.3 Impacts on heritage items in the vicinity of the site.

Item name	Heritage impact assessment
'Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve' State Heritage Register (01850)	The Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve is approximately 400 metres south of the site.

Item name	Heritage impact assessment
	No direct impacts to the depot or nature reserve would arise from the proposed works due to its distance to the site. This includes overshadowing. Minor visual impacts to the depot and nature reserve would arise as the proposed works would introduce new buildings into their setting. The new buildings would be visible above the tree line of the heritage listed wetlands on the north side of Parramatta River. Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2 shows the effects of the proposed development on views to the site from the depot and nature reserve. These are drawn from the <i>Visual Impact Assessment Report</i> (Urbaine Design Group, April 2025 and updated November 2025) prepared for the proposed works. In terms of heritage impacts, the heritage listed wetlands on the north side of the Parramatta River have previously obscured views to buildings in Melrose Park and Ermington, more so as the mangroves have regenerated. This contributes to the natural wetland setting of the Newington Nature Reserve, providing a buffer to this significant ecological area to the north. The lack of visible buildings has also contributed to the setting of the armament depot, supporting the sense of isolation which made the site suitable for explosives storage when it was established. However, this is a small part of the wider setting of the depot and nature reserve, which includes other areas of urban development visible to the north and east. The visibility of the proposed new buildings would result in some loss of the sense of isolation and natural setting of the depot and nature reserve. However, Eco Logical's BDAR has identified that the proposed works is unlikely to threaten the integrity or function of the mangroves, which will be retained for wildlife. As such, its role as a buffer to the Newington Nature Reserve would be unaffected. The overall amount of setting affected is also small, and the historical sense of isolation would be maintained within the site, with the buildings only visible from the northernmost edges. The Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve would continue to embody its values as a state significant cultural and natural landscape which supports a rare estuarine wetland even after the proposed works. As such, the proposed works would have a minor adverse impact to the setting of Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve. Proposed works are generally consistent with the conservation management plan for the Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve (Tanner Architects 2013). This does not include specific policies regarding development in the wider setting of the place.
'Bulla Cream Dairy' Parramatta LEP (I151)	The Bulla Cream Dairy is approximately 110 metres north of the site. No overshadowing would occur due to its position to the north. The proposed works would have a neutral impact on the Bulla Cream Dairy.

Item name	Heritage impact assessment
	The significant values of the item, its garden and structures would not be affected by the proposed works. Retention of the mature trees at the northwest of the site would assist in softening the impact of development to this heritage item.
'Well in George Kendall Reserve' Parramatta LEP (I160)	The well in George Kendall Reserve is approximately 260 metres west of the site. The well's heritage significance is primarily derived from its research value. As no works are proposed to the well, there is no potential for it to be impacted as part of the project. The project would therefore have a neutral impact on this item.

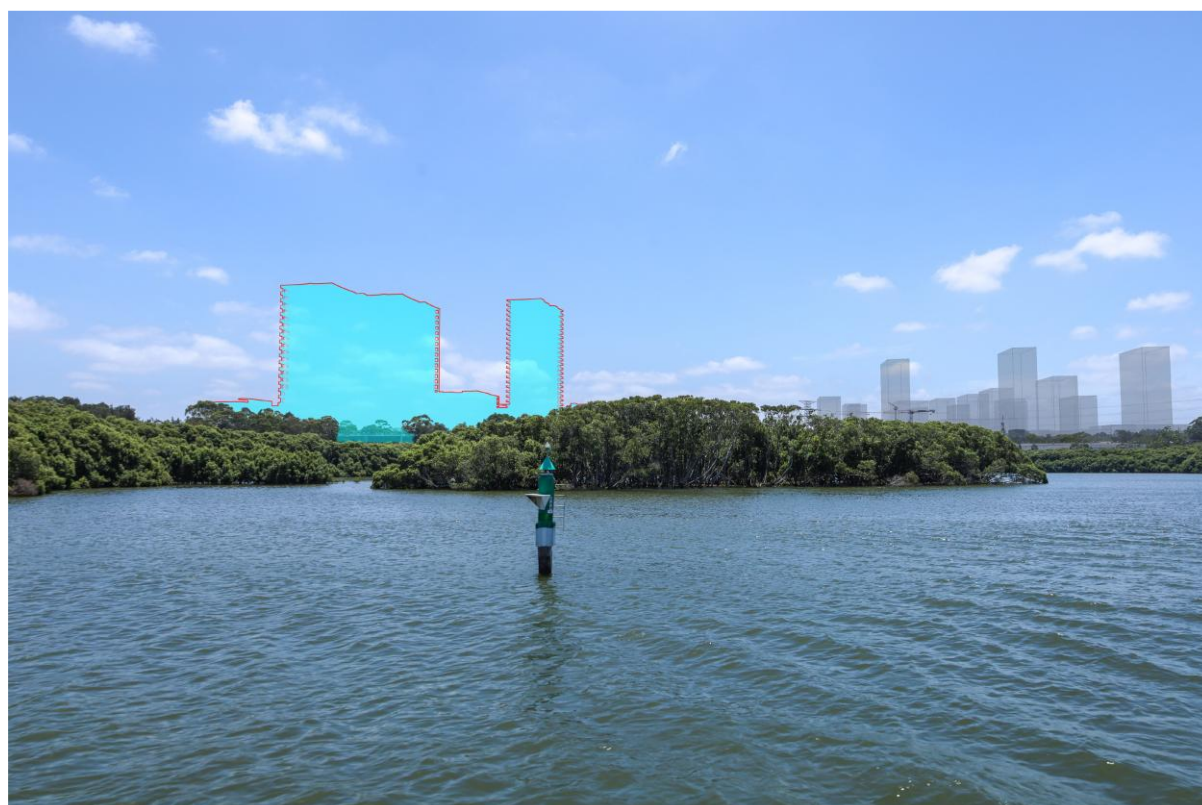


Figure 5.1 Viewpoint 25 from the Visual Impact Assessment prepared by Urbaine Design Group, showing the outline of the proposed development. This view approximates the view from the Newington Nature Reserve. (Source: Urbaine Design Group, 2025)



Figure 5.2 Viewpoint 2 from the updated Visual Impact Assessment prepared by Urbaine Design Group, showing the outline of the proposed development from Newington Armament Depot wharf. (Source: Urbaine Design Group, 2025)

5.3 Endnotes

- ¹ Eco Logical Australia Pty Ltd 2025, *Melrose Park South – West, Biodiversity Development Assessment Report*, prepared for Wharf and Hughes Developments Pty Ltd, p99.
- ² Eco Logical Australia Pty Ltd 2025, *Melrose Park South – West, Biodiversity Development Assessment Report*, prepared for Wharf and Hughes Developments Pty Ltd, p99.
- ³ Eco Logical Australia Pty Ltd 2025, *Melrose Park South – West, Biodiversity Development Assessment Report*, prepared for Wharf and Hughes Developments Pty Ltd, pp99-100.

6 Summary and recommendations

This report has identified the impacts of the proposal on items of environmental significance within the site and in the vicinity. Based on the findings of this report, the following conclusions are made:

- The Melrose Park South – West site contains a small part of the mapped heritage curtilage of the wetlands (Parramatta LEP, I151) and is in the vicinity of three more heritage items, the Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve, the Bulla Cream Dairy, and the well in George Kendall Reserve.
- The remainder of the site is not of heritage significance nor listed on a statutory heritage register. It contains a heavily altered 1959 brick warehouse building.
- The proposed works would result in the construction of several mixed-use buildings between 6 and 29 levels in height and a new open space on the site.
- Construction of the proposed buildings would have a minor adverse impact on the setting, views and vistas of the wetlands, which is partially mitigated using open space and landscaping to create a buffer to soften the boundaries and effects of the development.
- Proposed landscaping works may have a minor adverse impact on the wetlands if a proposed linkage to the Ermington Bay nature trail walkway is constructed, which would require clearing of some vegetation. However, if a linkage is not built there would be a neutral impact.
- Overshadowing of the Wetlands because of the development would have a neutral impact on their natural heritage values based on the ecological assessment by Eco Logical Australia, provided their recommendations for monitoring and offsetting are implemented in the project.
- The proposed works would have a minor adverse impact on the Newington Armament Depot and Nature Reserve, contributing to a minor loss of its isolated and natural setting. However, the heritage values of this place would be unaffected.
- The proposed works would have a neutral impact on the Bulla Cream Dairy and the well in George Kendall Reserve.
- GML considers the impact of the proposal to be acceptable from a heritage perspective, as it would have only minor heritage impacts.
- Works should proceed based on the recommendations in the following section.

6.1 Recommendations

To help minimise or mitigate the identified heritage impacts of the proposal, GML provides the following recommendations:

1. Detailed design of OS4 should have regard to the vegetation of the heritage listed wetlands and ensure impacts on significant vegetation are minimised and opportunities that allow for mangrove regrowth are included in the design.
2. If the linkage to the Ermington Bay nature trail is implemented in the works, the design should minimise impacts on the heritage listed wetlands.
3. Trees and vegetation of the heritage listed wetlands should be protected during construction works, with appropriate barriers and buffers implemented to ensure the extant mangroves and their root zones are unaffected.
4. A suitably qualified and experienced ecologist should provide ongoing advice during design development and construction phases to ensure impacts on the wetlands are avoided or minimised (NB an arborist may be required for advice regarding trees). This should include implementation of the recommendations for overshadowing in section 7.3.1 of the *Biodiversity Development Assessment Report* (Eco Logical Australia 2025, pp99–100).
5. Detailed design documentation should address how future maintenance practices for the open spaces may impact the wetlands and how this would be mitigated and managed.
6. A heritage induction should be provided to all workers that identifies the heritage and archaeological values of the site and makes workers aware of their responsibilities regarding heritage management including unexpected heritage finds.