

# 3 Additional cultural heritage studies

## 3.1 Introduction

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This chapter provides an update on the fieldwork and additional consultation prescribed in the draft SoCs. This chapter also demonstrates how QHGP has exceeded the DECC Interim Community Consultation Requirements for Applicants 2004, and describes the current nature of the ongoing Aboriginal heritage assessment process. As indicated in Section 6.3.7 of the EA, work on assessing the impacts of the pipeline on Aboriginal heritage will be an ongoing task. QHGP has undertaken additional fieldwork and oral history studies to further catalogue and avoid sites of high cultural significance identified in the preliminary Aboriginal heritage assessment.

It was also recommended in the preliminary Aboriginal heritage assessment to conduct fieldwork on four sites of high cultural significance in the Study Area, as the data relating to these sites was not comprehensive.

Following the completion of this additional Aboriginal heritage fieldwork, it has been confirmed that Revision L of the QHGP Study Area avoids these four previously identified sites of high cultural significance. The results of these additional studies are presented in Section 3.2.

QHGP also committed to completing an oral history study prior to construction in order to identify and avoid high cultural significance sites known only to knowledge holders and not previously documented in written records. Section 3.3 describes the progress to date on the completion of the oral history study.

## 3.2 Additional Aboriginal heritage studies – pipeline route refinements

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AHMS undertook an Aboriginal heritage assessment for the QHGP EA in August 2008. One of the aims of the Aboriginal heritage assessment was to identify known sites within, and in the vicinity of 1.5 kilometres of the QHGP Study Area. An impact evaluation identified four sites where the potential impact of the QHGP Revision H Study Area was classified as high:

- The Wallalong Brush site (AHIMS #38-4-0337).
- The Euraba Mission burial site (AHIMS # 01-6-0007).
- The Euraba Mission Aboriginal ceremony and dreaming site (AHIMS # 01-6-0007).
- The Euraba Whalan Creek modified (scarred or carved) tree site (AHIMS # 01-6-0009).

In accordance with the recommendations of the Aboriginal heritage assessment, avoidance is required for all sites identified as high significance.

It was recommended by AHMS that further work be undertaken to identify the locality, extent and nature of the above-mentioned sites so as to ensure the QHGP Study Area could avoid them. These recommendations were reflected in the draft SoCs as AH1 and AH2 of the EA.

In accordance with the draft SoCs, AHMS conducted further investigations to identify the locality, extent and nature of the sites. AHMS' reports on these investigations are contained in Appendix A and Appendix B. As a result of these investigations Revision L of the pipeline route now avoids both of these sites. This has been reflected in commitment AH1.

Key findings from both heritage assessment reports are outlined below.

### **3.2.1 Wallalong Brush Site**

The report presented the results of desktop research to identify the nature, spatial locality and extent of the Wallalong Brush conflict site. It is acknowledged within the report that site survey and knowledge holder consultation as stated in commitment AH2 of the EA was not required, as the extent and locality of the site had been established by desktop research.

Section 3 of the AHMS report (Appendix A) outlines the results of the impact assessment. It states that the Wallalong Brush site can be described as a massacre, burial and conflict site. There is no doubt that the site has a high level of social, cultural and historical significance. The location of the known Wallalong Brush conflict site can be identified through historical research. It is most likely within portion 57 of the Parish of Butterwick but possibly extending into the western side of Portion 30 of the Parish Seaham. The action described in the original source took place on the northern side of the Paterson River, and there is no indication that any action from this event extended south across the Paterson River.

Conclusions drawn from the report indicate that the QHGP Revision L avoids the Wallalong Brush site.

AHMS has recommended and determined that:

- There is no direct or indirect impact by Revision L 200 metre wide Study Area on the Wallalong Brush site.
- The QHGP Study Area has avoided the potential extent of the Wallalong Brush site.
- The QHGP Study Area should remain south of the Paterson River.

An additional information site recording form has been submitted to DECC AHIMS for site card (#38-4-0337) to reflect the outcomes of the historical research for this report. The additional information is included in Appendix 4 of the AHMS report (Appendix A).

### **3.2.2 Euraba Mission Site and Euraba Whalan Creek modified tree**

Historical research, a site investigation and a review of the DECC records was undertaken for the Euraba Mission burial site, the Euraba Mission Aboriginal ceremony and dreaming site and the Euraba Whalan Creek modified (scarred or carved) tree site to fulfil the QHGP commitment to avoid these sites as stated in commitment AH1 of the EA. Detailed information on these sites is contained in the AHMS report provided in Appendix B.

#### *Euraba Mission Aboriginal Ceremony and Dreaming.*

The Euraba Mission site is currently identified as a burial and Aboriginal ceremony and dreaming site in the AHIMS spatial database. However, there is no reference to Aboriginal ceremony and dreaming sites in the DECC original site card.

The Euraba Mission is known as the Euraba Aboriginal Station in official Government records and operated c.1912-1925. The Euraba Aboriginal Station was within the gazetted area of land known as the Euraba Aboriginal Land use area c.1898. This area was originally Portion 5 of the Parish of Tyrell and was gazetted in 1898 as the Euraba Aboriginal land use area. Status changes from the 1920s onwards have altered property boundaries, so the current boundaries no longer reflect the gazetted historical Aboriginal land use area. The

remains described in the DECC Euraba Mission site card were located within the gazetted Euraba Aboriginal land use area.

The QHGP Revision L avoids the area designated as the Euraba Aboriginal Station (Euraba Mission) land area and the remains described in the Euraba Mission site card.

#### *Euraba Mission Burial*

Due to the cultural sensitivity of Aboriginal burials and ongoing negotiations with local elders regarding oral history, the survey did not extend to the Euraba Mission burial site. However, the position of the Euraba Mission burials can be extrapolated from the site cards and sketch maps and the location of the burials are approximately 500 metres from the Revision L centreline.

As such the QHGP does not impact on the Euraba Mission burial site.

#### *Euraba Whalan Creek (Carved or Scarred) Tree.*

The Euraba Whalan Creek modified tree is documented as one of two trees in the AHIMS site card. The second scarred tree is located some distance from the QHGP Revision L Study Area as indicated in the site card's map. The Euraba Whalan Creek modified tree could not be located at the given point or within several hundred metres. It is speculated that the tree could have been removed or destroyed by flooding. The DECC site card recommended that the tree be removed to Toomelah, NSW. However, it is unknown whether this had already occurred prior to fieldwork.

As such, Revision L does not impact the Euraba Whalan Creek modified tree.

#### *Other identified sites*

During the site inspection, eight previously unrecorded scarred trees were located. These have been surveyed and site cards have been submitted to the DECC for integration into the AHIMS database. Four of the scarred trees are within 100 metres of the QHGP Revision L centreline.

These trees would be managed and protected in accordance with management measures and commitment AH2.

### 3.3 Oral history information gathering

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The information gathered as part of the Aboriginal heritage fieldwork has influenced the route refinements outlined in Chapter 5 of this report. As well, QHGP has committed to completing an oral history assessment prior to the commencement of construction.

The detailed research completed by AHMS identified sites of high cultural significance (referred to as High Impact sites in the EA). The additional oral history research, committed to by QHGP, exceeds standard Aboriginal assessment procedures and aims to identify sites of high cultural significance known only to Aboriginal knowledge holders and not previously documented in written records.

A limitation to the progress of capturing and reporting some of the oral history research was encountered in September 2008 following resistance by Gomerai Nation knowledge holders to meet with QHGP's cultural heritage consultant.

QHGP prepared a research methodology in April 2008 in consultation with seconded DECC researcher and Aboriginal elder Evelyn Crawford. Ms Crawford undertook work over the ensuing months to identify knowledge holders and initiate working relationships with them. Tentative itineraries were being refined in September 2008

when the progress of the oral history work was curtailed at a Gomeri Nation meeting, as described in Section 2.3.4 of this report. QHGP advised Ms Crawford to cease work on the oral history until a way forward could be negotiated with NTSCorp (on behalf of the Gomeri Nation), who had restricted access to elders until issues, not related to environmental assessment, were resolved.

Commitment AH6 in the revised SoCs provides an undertaking to complete the oral history so the pipeline route can be further refined to avoid sites identified in the oral history that have a high level of cultural significance, prior to pipeline construction.

## 3.4 Conclusions

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The additional research undertaken within the Study Area has confirmed that Revision L of the QHGP avoids the four previously identified sites of high Aboriginal cultural significance (referred to as High Impact sites in the EA). As such, the Wallalong Brush, Euraba Mission burial, Aboriginal ceremony and dreaming and Whalan Creek tree sites are not impacted by the QHGP.

As part of the EA, QHGP undertook an extensive Aboriginal community consultation process in accordance with the requirements of the DECC Interim Community Consultation Requirements for Applicants 2004. During this process 53 Aboriginal organisations registered their interest in the project and were consulted about the proposed assessment methodology and provided an opportunity to review and comment on the draft Aboriginal assessment report prepared as part of the overall EA.

In addition to the research and consultation work described above, QHGP has aimed to exceed the DECC consultation requirements process and standard Aboriginal assessment procedures through its commitment to undertake oral history research with key knowledge holders to identify any sites of cultural importance to the Aboriginal community that may not have been previously identified in ethno-historical, historical and AHIMS research. Commitment AH6 in the SoCs provides an undertaking to complete this oral history research prior to the commencement of construction.

This oral history will complement the research, predictive modelling, constraint mapping and consultation already undertaken and will be undertaken in parallel with the mitigation measures described in the EA and form the revised SoCs for the project. In combination, the work undertaken to date and the work that will be undertaken prior to construction will provide an even fuller understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage at a bio-regional scale and will represent a significant research outcome.

The results of the oral history research will be provided to DECC and DoP in order to help further understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage in NSW.