

INSITE HERITAGE  
295 DOBELL DRIVE  
WANGI WANGI NSW 2267

EXCAVATION REPORT  
FOR PART LOT 358  
DP755242 PART LOT 359  
DP244002 MORISSET  
PARK

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Section 87 Test Probe Permit #2115

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PREPARED FOR

DE WITT CONSULTING PTY LTD

PO BOX 850 CHARLESTOWN 2290

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Date

2 November 2005

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**SUMMARY**

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This report documents the test excavations carried out on Lot 9 DP 244002 and Lot 358 DP 755242 Morisset Park Road Morisset Park, located in Lake Macquarie City Council area (Figure 1). The permit under which the test probes were carried out is # 2115 issued from the Coffs Harbour office of Department of Environment and Conservation.

No artifacts were found. The archaeologist, Angela Besant, and Koombahtoo Local Aboriginal Land Council concur that there is no archaeological constraint to development. The Koombahtoo report can be seen in Appendix A.

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**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

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The subject property is Lot 9 DP 244002 and Lot 358 DP 755242 Morisset Park Road Morisset Park, located in Lake Macquarie City Council area (Figure 1).

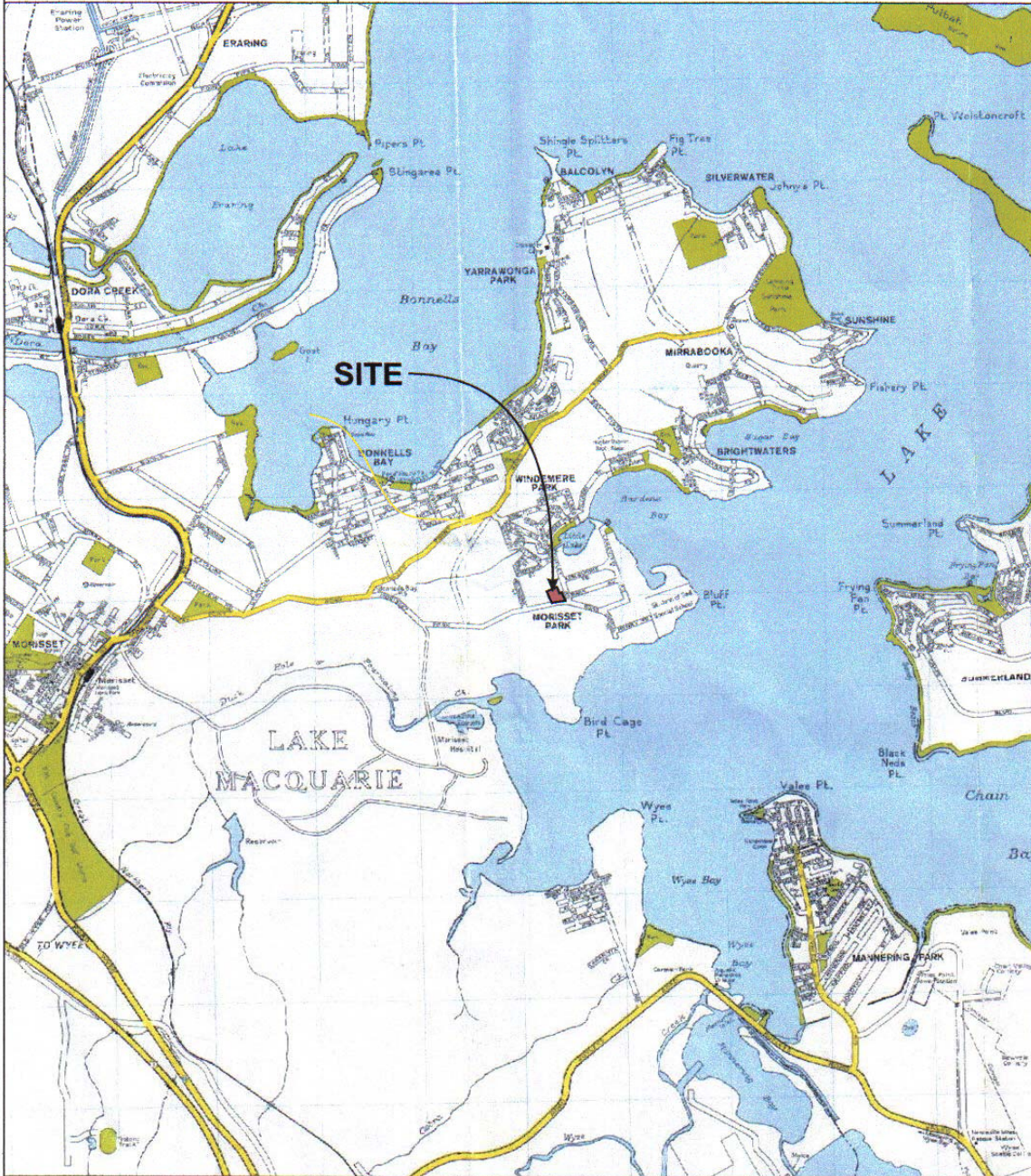
The property is currently zoned urban / conservation zone 10 under Lake Macquarie City Council LEP 2004 (Figure 2). The proponent, Postfox Pty Ltd, are seeking to have the land rezoned to allow urban development. Part of the land is currently zoned conservation corridor for flora and fauna values.

A concept subdivision plan can be seen in Figure 3. The proposal could involve a total of 72 allotments including area for a detention basin. The impacts of development will include roads, services, construction and drainage excavations. Figure 1 overleaf shows the location of the study area



**PROPERTY REFERENCE**

**Lot 9 DP 244002 and Lot 358 DP 755242**



**CLIENT:**  
**POSTFOX PTY. LTD.**

**PROJECT:**  
**REZONING OF LAND**  
**MORISSET PARK RD. AND**  
**CHIFLEY ST., MORISSET PARK**

**DRAWING TITLE:**  
**LOCATION PLAN**

<b>JOB NO:</b>	<b>SCALE:</b>	<b>DATE:</b>
13	1:50 000	MARCH 2004

**DRAWING NO.:**

**1**

Bernie de Witt Consulting Pty Ltd, PO Box 5134, Kahibah 2290  
Phone: (02) 4942 5441 Fax: (02) 4942 5301

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## ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

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Morisset Peninsula runs east- west extending some 5 kilometres into the western side of Lake Macquarie. The central ridgeline is approximately 30m in elevation, and drained by many ephemeral first and second order creek lines that are generally not incised. The study area comprises northern side slope of 2 to 5 degrees. The site drains to an unnamed second order creek line to Lake Petite, a small estuarine lake formed between the central ridgeline and a second smaller ridgeline that extends to Bluff Point. The western allotment is crossed by an ephemeral gully in the south-east corner

The soils on the site are Silty and Clayey Sands (Coffey, 2003) in the Doyalson soil landscape (Murphy 1993). The soils are duplex, Yellow Podzolic soils, with brown loose sand to loamy sand of coarse grained texture and single-grained structure. The surface condition of the soil is loose or gravelly. Soil depths over the site range to 350mm (Coffey 2003).

The land has been cleared over the south-west portion of the site and two houses and associated out buildings. The eastern portion of the property has been cleared for grazing with scattered mature eucalypts remaining. An area of bushland remains on the north western portion of the property comprising Open Eucalypt Forest, of Scribbly Gum *Eucalyptus haemastoma*, and smooth barked apple *Angophora costata*, and Red Bloodwood *Corymbia gummifera*.

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## EXCAVATION CONTEXT

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An archaeological assessment conducted by Insite Heritage (Angela Besant) in Sept 2004 has identified low to moderate potential for items of indigenous

heritage to occur on the above land particularly on the toeslope landform unit forming the northern boundary.

### **I. The basis on which PAD was assessed**

A. The study area lies on the Morisset Peninsula on the western shore of Lake Macquarie, an area which has received little attention in terms of assessment particularly sub-surface deposits.

B. Whilst the exposure in the mid slope area was reasonable for the detection of material, colluvium at the base of slope limited the opportunity to locate material. The exposure in the mid / base slope comprised 4 exposures in the order of 10 sqm ea where sheet erosion has removed the A1 horizon exposing a hard setting A2 gravely sandy loam and lag gravel deposits. No areas of PAD were identified on the small portions of ridge in the study area as these were highly disturbed and built over.

C. The degree of information relating to the general area in terms of subsurface potential does not provide a basis for dismissal of potential.

D. The study area is located about 100 to 200m from a first order stream and 300 m from Lake Petite a small estuarine lake connected to Lake Macquarie. (See figure 1). It is probable that the drainage lines shown on the topographic map have altered over time due to the draining of main road that follows the ridgeline and forms the southern boundary of the site.

E. The geomorphology of the site is similar to the southern and western portions of the St John of God site located 1 km east. Test probes in this soil landscape on similar slopes (<5 deg) have found an average of 10 artifacts per sq m (Besant in prep).

## II. The model to be tested.

A. The Lake Macquarie City Council Aboriginal Heritage Study Stage 1B, states that lack of freshwater confines the primary areas of site potential to be middens within 50m of the foreshore and potential small artefact scatters on the central ridgeline. The model has not been tested by subsurface means.

B. The results at St John of God site, where subsurface deposits have revealed a variety of activities including knapping, open camp sites and redeposited artifacts in beach deposits, were not included in the study (probably due to timing). The St John site appeared distant to fresh water sources (approx 2 km) on the topographic map, however oral history has revealed a possible water hole no longer evident (investigation continues), located within a couple of hundred metres of the St John of God site.

C. Considering Foley's home range model, it is possible that Lake Petite could have acted as a secondary home range foci. Freshwater would have been abundant after rain, the area is well protected from the south, and the Lake Petite is likely to have differed in salinity from the Lake therefore supported variations of flora and fauna in comparison to the main Lake.

D. It is anticipated that the test probes will intercept low density artifacts relating to the outskirts of secondary home range camps (ie. discard not involving habitation). Such activities could include knapping, hunting and gathering.

It is predicted that the main area of occupation would have continued north to the creek line draining into Lake Petite that is now under housing. The aim of the probes is to intercept outlying activities related to camp sites focussed on the main creeks feeding Lake Petite.

It is anticipated that the evidence of outskirt activities would include low density flakes (<5 per sq m on the basis of St John).

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## METHODOLOGY

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The sampling strategy was a repeat of that used at St John of God to produce comparative data. Six probes were carefully excavated by machine. Each probe was 2m long and 0.5 m wide, spaced at two metre intervals. The probes will be excavated in 100mm spits. Where soil changes occur the spit will be adapted within a 100mm context (eg. Spit 2a + spit 2b = spit 2 total 100mm deep).

The deposit was sieved through 5mm mesh sieves measuring 800mm x 800mm. The machine removes the main body of the spit and the bucket is placed beside the excavation whilst the walls and floor are squared by hand. The deposit is then transferred straight to the sieve.

The deposit will be dried sieved and then washed to allow sorting of artifacts from the anticipated high levels of background gravel. At St John lower level spits produced in the order of 12 litres of gravel per 100mm spit and similar levels were found at the current site.

The excavation was carried out by Angela Besant. Field assistants will be drawn from suitably qualified people. Koopahtoo LALC have performed an independent assessment of the site which is attached. A field officer of the KLALC will be invited to attend the works and consultation is continuing with Lois Towney (co-ordinator) as to using the work as a training method for the assessment of subsurface deposits.

The testing was not anticipated to reveal large numbers of artifacts, rather it aims to identify potential artefact distribution in the environmental context of Morisset Peninsula and provide information for further refinement of the model presented in the Lake Macquarie Aboriginal Heritage study.

The work is justified because so little testing has been carried out in this area. Although an erosional landscape the role of colluvium as a mask in the

opportunity to identify artefact presence and thus comply with the relevant legislation needs to be addressed.

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## RESULTS

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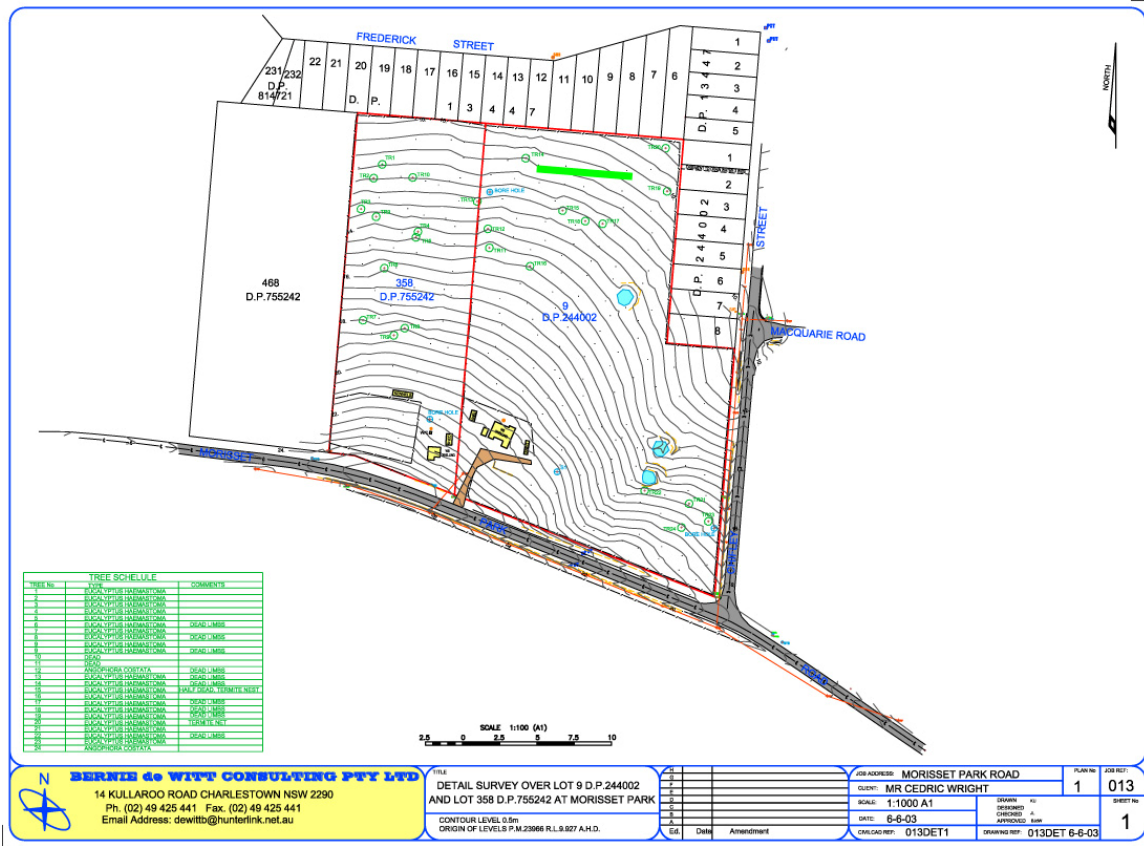
The excavation did not locate any items of Aboriginal heritage. All the gravel contents of the sieves were carefully inspected on site however no artifacts were found.

The results of the excavation indicate that if camp sites focused on Lake Petite are in the area, they were not of sufficient lateral extent to extend from the Lake margins to the footslope of the ridge.

Photograph 1: the landscape context of the probes



Figure 2: The green area marks the location of the test probes



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## RELEVANT LEGISLATION

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The legislation relevant to the assessment of cultural heritage is outlined below.

### The National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974

The NPW Act (section 90) provides statutory protection for all material evidence of Aboriginal occupation of NSW. Aboriginal places which are areas of cultural significance to the Aboriginal community, are also protected by the 1974 Act (section 84) that states:

the Minister may declare lands to be 'protected archaeological areas' to preserve Aboriginal places and relics; and

it is an offence to disturb or destroy an Aboriginal place or relic without first obtaining written consent from the Director of National Parks and Wildlife Service NSW.

### The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979)

The EP&A Act states that environmental impacts are to be considered in land use planning. The term 'environmental impacts' specifically relates to Aboriginal heritage in three parts.

Part III covers planning instruments such as State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP), Regional Environmental Plans (REP) and Local Environmental Plans (LEP).

The guidelines on the preparation of planning instruments specifically state that Aboriginal heritage should be assessed as an integral part of these studies.

Part IV of the Act determines the way in which consent authorities make decisions regarding development applications. Section 79C (b) states that;

the impact of development on the natural or built environment should be considered before consent is granted; and

Part V of the EP&A Act points out that State government agencies which act as determining authorities must also conduct reviews of their own or other agencies activities in terms of impact on the environment. Where these impacts are deemed to be minimal a Review of Environmental Factors is required, although where impacts are greater an EIS would be generated. This part of the Act requires that;

'any impacts on a locality having aesthetic, anthropological, architectural, cultural, historic, scientific, recreational, scenic or

social significance or other special value for present or future generations' (DUAP 1995) be accounted for.

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#### **MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

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Due to the absence of any evidence of artifacts or potential archaeological deposit no further work is required. There are no archaeological constraints to the proposed development.

Koompahtoo LALC concur with this result and their full report can be seen in Appendix A.

**Appendix A**  
**Koompahtoo LALC report**

**MORISSET PARK TEST PROBES  
Post Fox Pty Ltd**

**DeWitt Consulting  
P O Box 850 Charlestown**

**Cedric Wright – David Humphries  
Telephone Number 49425441**

**Re: Survey Excavation Morisset Park**

**Archaeologist: Angela Besant**

**Koompahtoo Local Aboriginal Land Council Sites Officer  
– Ken McBride Snr**

**Insite Heritage  
P O Box 98  
Wangi Wangi NSW 2267  
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Mobile 0412 836 031  
ABN 70110716089**

**Results of Survey - 8-9 February 2005**

Two days of excavation careful inspections - no artifactual evidence was identified that had anything of Aboriginal Significance.

Previous inspection by Koopahtoo Local Aboriginal Land Council confirmed no evidence identified. In view of this inspection there is no further action required by Koopahtoo LALC.

Archaeological report - Insite Heritage Archeologist - Angela Besant

This Report was prepared by

Elder, Mr Ken McBride Snr Aboriginal Sites Officer  
Koopahtoo LALC

**Ken McBride Snr  
Aboriginal Sites Inspector  
Koopahtoo LALC**

**16 February 2005**