

9.3.5 Cowra Section

Survey in the Cowra section was carried out over ten days [1-10 March]. Two vehicles were used to facilitate movement during survey. One open site, five scarred trees, and two trees of cultural significance were recorded in the Cowra section of the field survey. These are described below.

Back Mogong CMT 1 [44-4-0363]

The tree is located on open plains. It is in a small enclosed area that was fenced some time ago. The tree is in good condition, although it had been damaged at some time in the past, probably from ring-barking. The scar is not well formed, and the bottom of the scar appears to be ripped, but this is mainly a result of uneven regrowth. Wayne Williams noted that the proposed alignment should not impact on the tree given that it was in a small fenced off paddock.

Figure 48 Location of site [centre], Shawn, Neville and Wayne Williams, Daniel Ingram and EJ McGrath; scar [lower left], Wayne Williams; detail of scar [lower right].



Belabula Palaeochannel open site [44-4-0364]

Belabula Palaeochannel open site is defined by a concentration of lithic items on the eastern side of the Belabula River floodplain. Just to the west of the site is a Palaeochannel of the River. There has been considerable disturbance in the area of the site, with a dam dug nearby, grading of the land on the floodplain to the west, re-routing of the old river channel, and ploughing.

The general region of the Belabula River floodplain has been disturbed by ploughing. In discussion with two of the property owners farming the area, we were told that significant ground levelling [laser levelling] had been carried out several decades ago, perhaps in the 1960s or 1970s. Aerial photography kindly provided by Cowra Shire Council offices [Shire Engineer Mike Reed] show that the original river channel has been altered, and that older channels have been re-dug or obscured. Comparison of a recent aerial photo with the 1954 run (figures 49 and 50) shows the differences.

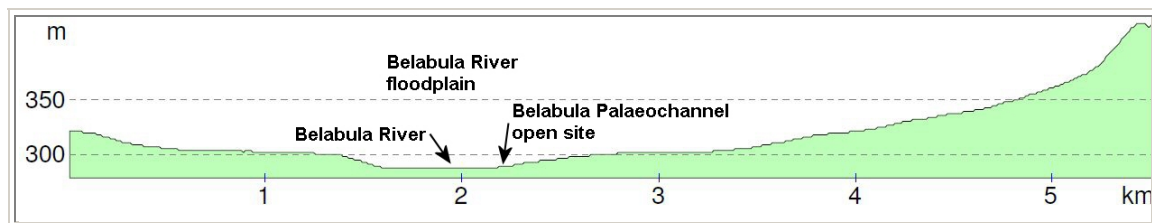
Figure 49 Aerial photo showing location of Belabula Palaeochannel site.



Figure 50 Aerial photo from 1954 run showing Belabula floodplain.



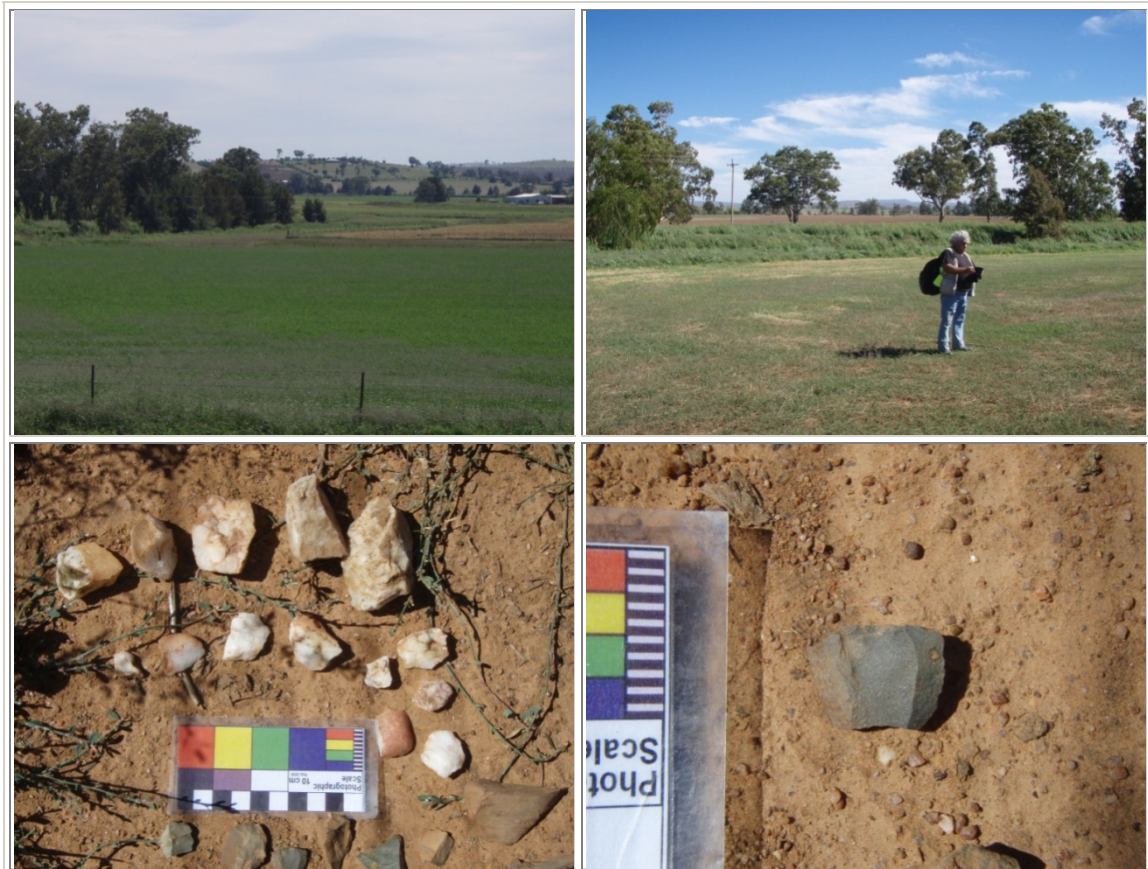
Figure 51 East-West profile through site. The site is on the east side of Belabula River.



Belabula Palaeochannel site consists of stone items, mainly quartz. There is a small snapped flaked from a blade core (figure 52).

This site was considered to be of high significance based on its location and contents. Neville Williams was particularly keen to note that the site was on the edge of a Palaeochannel (hence the name given to the site). Even though the variety of stone materials was not as great as at other sites, it was considered that there was enough to warrant further research in the future.

Figure 52 Belabula Palaeochannel open site is located to the east of an old channel of the river [upper left]. Neville Williams inspects the site [upper right]. There are several pieces of quartz that cannot be classed as artefacts, although it is likely that these pieces are debitage, or the by-products of manufacture [lower left]. A small snapped flake from a blade core [lower right].



North Logan CMT 1 [44-4-0365]

The North Logan scarred tree is situated on rolling plains. The tree is near a dam and gate, raising the possibility that the scar is a result of stock rubbing on the trunk. Other features of the scar indicate that it is of human manufacture. These include the shape, height, aspect, amount of regrowth. This tree was not considered to be of the highest significance, given the above, but it was noted that being on Crown Land this tree had special import.

Figure 53 Shawn Williams, EJ McGrath and Wayne Williams at the scarred tree
[left]; detail of the scar.



Garallan CMT 1 [44-4-0366]

Garallan CMT is in the middle of a ploughed paddock. It is a well-formed scar on a mature Eucalyptus tree. The tree is avoided by the plough and is in good health. The proposed alignment comes close to the tree, but the inspected corridor is wide enough to move the alignment a small distance to ensure that construction will not impact on the tree.

Figure 54 Garallan scarred tree [upper left]; close-up of scar [upper right]; detail of upper part of scar [lower left]; detail of lower part of scar [lower right].



Bendick Murrell CMT 1 [50-3-0022]

This tree had been cut down, and the trunk with scar left on the ground beside the stump. The scar is in reasonable condition, but the trunk is rotting and the scar will be lost in coming years without attention. The scar is symmetrical. The ends are somewhat pointed, but do not indicate tearing from a broken limb, or dieback from fungal or other damage to the living tree.

E.J McGrath, a Cowra LALC member, suggested that the trunk should be collected. Tim and Allan Hampton, WWPG members, were of the same view and feared for the safety of the trunk in coming years. There appeared to be consensus on this, but the relevant groups will need to consider the implications of collection, conservation and curation. This matter is considered further in Recommendations (Section 10).

Figure 55 The tree is located on the edge of a slope leading down to the village of Bendick Murrell [upper left], Norman Freeman, EJ McGrath, Alan Hampton, Tim Hampton; close-up of scar [upper right]; detail of lower part of scar [lower left]; detail of upper part of scar [lower right].



Isolated objects

A number of isolated objects were recorded during the course of survey. Most of these were small pieces of debitage [the by-products of manufacture]. The most common material was quartz. These are distributed across the country as the background distribution. In most cases it is recommended that these stay with the soil. They are not likely to be damaged by construction and most of them have been moved by the plough, so that their original position is not known, although they would have been left within several tens of meters of their present location.

Axe blank [E650942 N6280655]

An axe blank was found (figure 56), which was of great interest to all representatives. It is notable because it has been flaked, but not ground. This might indicate that it was lost or left before it could be completed.

There was discussion over whether this object should be collected in advance of construction, or moved to one side. No consensus was reached, although it should be noted that there is not, at the moment, a suitable place for curation of such objects in the Cowra LALC region.

Figure 56 Isolated object. Axe blank



Hammer [E645466 N6262060]

This hammer was found under a tree at some distance from the proposed alignment [> 100m]. There are no management considerations as it will not be impacted in any way by the proposed development.

The hammer is a typical flat quartzite cobble with hammer damage at both ends, and some evidence of grinding facets on both faces.

Figure 57 Isolated object. hammer



Grinding mortar [no location]

At one of the properties near Belabula Palaeochannel site, the owners showed us a grinding mortar that had been in the building when they took possession. They are of the opinion that this object came from the property.

The mortar is a flattened river cobble with evidence of a grinding facet on both faces.

Figure 58 Isolated object. Grinding mortar



Tree of personal significance 1

A tree was noted by Eva Coe and Rebecca Ingram close to a dam and the proposed alignment, which they found to be interesting and significant. The tree is located between KP 81 and 82 [E650447 N6278426]. Although the tree is not a culturally modified tree, they were keen to have the location documented, pictures taken, and recommendations made to ensure that it was not damaged or defaced during construction.

Eva Coe noted that the hill behind (figure 59) would almost certainly have had a natural spring.

Figure 59 Tree of personal significance 1. [Rebecca Ingram and Eva Coe]



Tree of personal significance 2

Rebecca Ingram felt that she was guided to this tree. It is not a culturally modified tree. The scar is of natural origin. The tree is located between KP 67 and 68 [E648210 N6265501]. It is outside the alignment corridor and will not be impacted.

Figure 60 Tree of personal significance [Daniel Ingram, Rebecca Ingram].



9.3.6 Significance assessment in the Cowra region

All representatives valued the sites and features recorded during the course of fieldwork. Many commented that they had not been through this part of country before and found the sites to be important markers of their ancestors' lives.

All sites were considered to be of high significance by representatives of all organisations.