

Minoshi Weerasinghe
Planning Officer
Key Sites Assessments
Department of Planning, Industry & Environment

By email: Minoshi.Weerasinghe@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Weerasinghe

**HERITAGE NSW – ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE REGULATION
STATE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT (SSD)
EXHIBITION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Proposal: Taronga Zoo – Upper Australia Precinct
SSD application no: SSD-10456, received 25 August 2020

Thank you for referring the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the above State Significant Development (SSD) to Heritage NSW for comment. We understand this SSD relates to the redevelopment of an animal exhibit known as the 'Upper Australia Precinct.' The proposed works will completely refurbish the existing Upper Australia Precinct, including a new exhibit design and layouts.

We have prepared the following advice in relation to the Aboriginal cultural heritage component of the EIS.

Note: An Interim Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR), prepared by Urbis, dated 23 July 2020, that forms part of the EIS (Appendix I) has been provided. Although this version of the ACHAR is in draft, we have reviewed it and considered how the assessment has addressed the SEARs and the relevant Aboriginal heritage management considerations.

The SEARs required the Aboriginal cultural heritage impacts of the proposal to be addressed

We consider that the ACHAR and EIS have not satisfactorily addressed the SEARs in the following ways:

- The ACHAR is interim only and consultation with the registered Aboriginal parties (RAPs) on the draft ACHAR and recommendations has not been completed. This also means that the impact of the proposed works on Aboriginal cultural heritage values has not been completely considered. There may be Aboriginal cultural values that will be harmed that have not yet been identified. All consultation must be completed, collated, and any responses from RAPs, as well as any comments/variations on those responses, documented in the ACHAR.
- Appendix C (Consultation Documents) and Appendix D (Consultation Log) have not been included in the ACHAR. There is insufficient evidence of the consultation process in the ACHAR for us to determine whether the consultation process has been undertaken and documented in accordance with the *Aboriginal cultural heritage consultation requirements for proponents 2010* (DECCW 2010).

- Insufficient evidence has been presented in the ACHAR to justify the findings of low archaeological potential and low scientific (archaeological) significance for the subject land. The assessment appears to be primarily a desktop review, with no specific information on the methodology and results of the site inspection conducted on 8 July 2020 presented or discussed. As required by the SEARS, the identification of cultural heritage values must be conducted in accordance with the *Code of Practice for Archaeological Investigation of Aboriginal Objects in NSW* (OEH 2010) and guided by the *Guide to investigating, assessing and reporting on Aboriginal cultural heritage in NSW* (OEH 2011).

Aboriginal cultural heritage regulation advice for EIS

Before providing final advice on the EIS, Heritage NSW requires all consultation with the RAPs to be completed and documented in the ACHAR, including all consultation documents and a consultation log. This is so we can consider whether the Aboriginal cultural heritage impacts of the proposal have been adequately addressed.

Heritage NSW also recommends that additional information on the methodology and results of the site inspection conducted on 8 July 2020 is presented in the ACHAR. This information is required to further justify the assessment that the subject land holds low archaeological potential and is of low scientific significance, and to adequately address the SEARS.

Please note: the above comments relate only to Aboriginal cultural heritage regulation matters. You may wish to seek separate advice from Heritage NSW in relation to matters under the *Heritage Act 1977*.

If you have any questions regarding the above advice, please contact Sam Gibbins at Heritage NSW on 9895 6586 or via email at samantha.gibbins@environment.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Dr Samantha Higgs
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Heritage NSW

2 September 2020