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# Appendix M

Historical heritage assessment

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View of Birriwa Historic Site-01: Shearer's shed.

## **HISTORIC HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT**

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### **MODIFICATION 1 TO THE BIRRIWA SOLAR AND BATTERY PROJECT (SSD-29508870)**

MID-WESTERN REGIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, NSW

MARCH 2025

Report prepared by  
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for ACEN Australia Pty Ltd.



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## ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY

DCCEEW (Cth)	Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. Department responsible for administering the EPBC Act.
DPHI	NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. DPHI contains the Planning agency.
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement. A required document for major projects documenting all potential impacts to the environment, including heritage, that may arise due to the development.
Heritage Act	<i>Heritage Act 1977</i> . Provides for the protection and conservation of historical places and objects or cultural heritage significance and the registration of such places and objects.
Heritage Council	The Heritage Council makes decisions about the care and protection of heritage places and items that have been identified as being significant to the people of NSW.
Heritage NSW	Government department tasked with ensuring compliance with the NPW Act.
HHAR	Historic Heritage Assessment Report
LEP	Local Environmental Plan. Outlines development controls with an LGA.
SHI	State Heritage Inventory. Includes locally significant items either listed in LEPs or on state agency Heritage and Conservation Registers. Also includes the SHR.
SHR	State Heritage Register. A heritage list of places in NSW that are protected by NSW legislation such as the Heritage Act.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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ACEN Australia (ACEN; the Applicant) has received approval to construct and operate the Birriwa Solar and Battery Project (the Project), located 20 kilometres (km) southeast of Dunedoo in Central Western New South Wales (NSW) in the Mid-Western Regional Local Government Area (LGA). The Project was approved by the Independent Planning Commission of NSW on 16 August 2024 as State Significant Development (SSD) 29508870.

The Applicant is proposing to assess additional land as part of Modification 1 (the Modification) to the Project. The land subject to the Modification includes Lot 11, 34 (part), 40 and 60 / DP750755 and a section of the Birriwa Bus Route South which will require upgrades.

The Applicant will submit a Modification Report to accompany the application for the Modification under Part 4 section 4.55(2) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

OzArk Environment & Heritage (OzArk) has been engaged by the Applicant to assess the historic heritage values of the modification area through the preparation of a *Historic Heritage Assessment Report* (HHAR).

This assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the Heritage Council's Historical Archaeology Code of Practice (Heritage Council 2006).

A search of the national, state and local heritage databases completed in preparation for a field survey showed that no listed historic heritage items were located within or near to the modification area. The closest listed item to the modification area is the 'Birriwa Private Cemetery', which is located approximately 5 kilometres (km) to the northwest and associated with Birriwa Homestead. This is item #11 on the Warrumbungle Local Environmental Plan (LEP) of 2013. It has been assessed that this item will not be impacted by the Modification.

The fieldwork component of this assessment was undertaken from 11 to 12 December 2024.

Three potential historic heritage sites were recorded during the field survey, Birriwa Historic Site-01: Shearer's Shed; Birriwa Historic Site-02: Dilapidated residence and Birriwa Historic Site-03: 20<sup>th</sup> century homestead. These sites were assessed as having no heritage significance under the current Heritage NSW guidelines and the Burra Charter. As such, no management measures are required for the items should they be impacted by the Modification.

A 1963 historic aerial photograph was reviewed, and it indicated that the modification area has been heavily cleared due to grazing and there were no significant structures evident, excluding those assessed in this report. Therefore, no locations within the modification area were assessed as having potential to contain significant historic subsurface archaeological deposits.

Recommendations concerning the historic values within modification area are as follows.

1. Following development consent of the Modification, the proposed work may proceed with caution. If items of historic heritage significance are encountered during the Modification, then the protocols in provided in the *Unanticipated Finds Protocol* (**Appendix 1**) should be enacted.
2. No management measures are required for Birriwa Historic Site 01: Shearers' shed, Birriwa Historic Site 02: Dilapidated house and Birriwa Historic Site 03: 20<sup>th</sup> century homestead as the items have been assessed as having no heritage significance.
3. All land and ground disturbance activities must be confined to within the development footprint should the parameters of the Modification extend beyond the assessed areas, then further assessment may be required.
4. It is assessed that ground disturbing works associated with the Modification will not harm significant historical archaeological deposits and no further archaeological investigation is required.
5. All staff and contractors involved in the proposed work should be made aware of the legislative protection requirements for all historic items.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

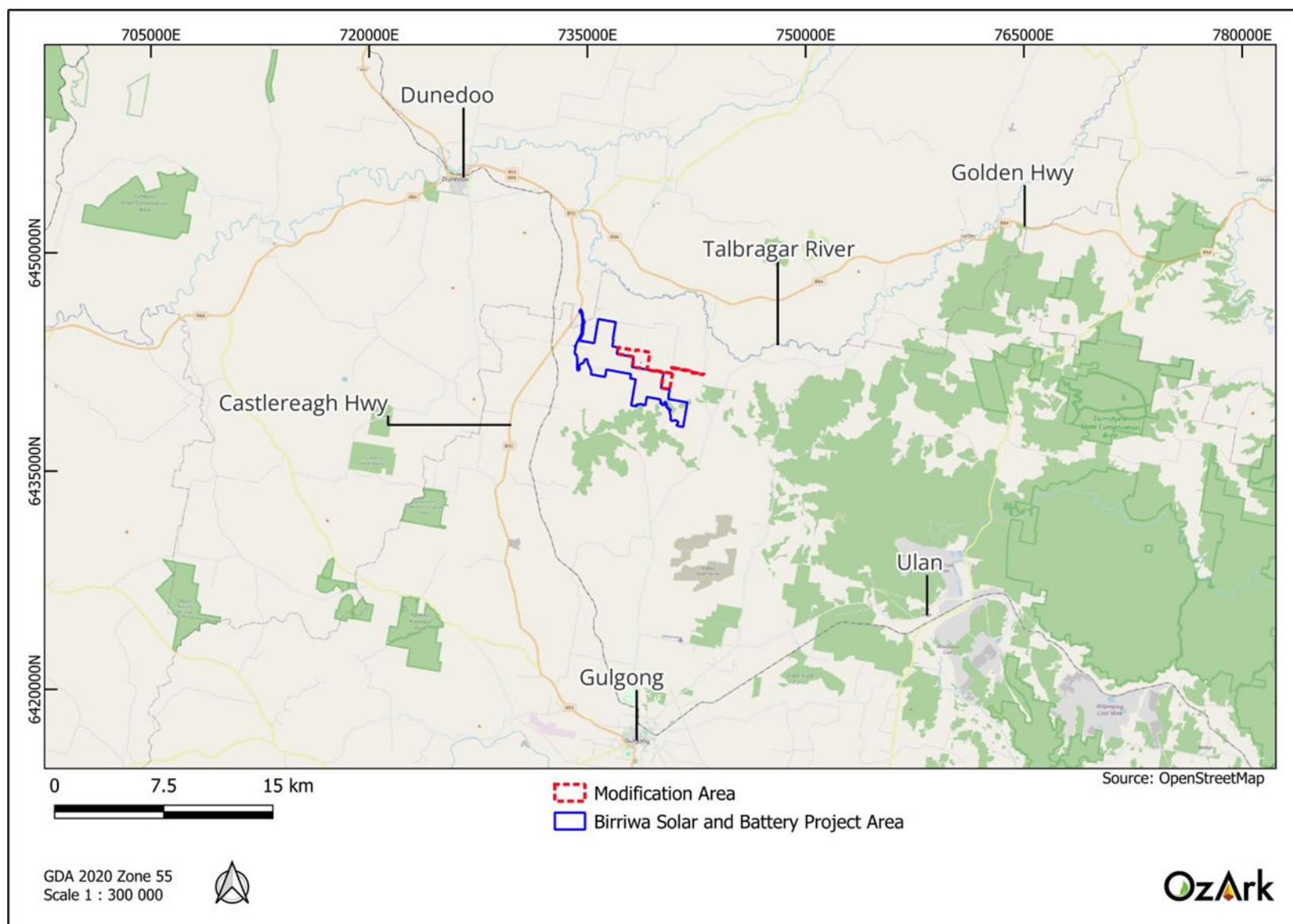
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## 1.1 BACKGROUND

ACEN Australia Pty Ltd (ACEN; the Applicant) has approval to develop the Birriwa Solar and Battery Project, a large scale solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generation facility along with battery storage and associated infrastructure, including the construction of a temporary accommodation facility (the Project). The solar component of the Project will have an indicative capacity of around 600 megawatts (MW) and will include a centralised battery energy storage system (BESS) of up to 600 MW for a two-hour duration (1,200 megawatts per hour [MWh]). The Project (SSD-29508870) was determined and approved on 16 August 2024 by the NSW Independent Planning Commission, with development consent conditions.

The Project is approximately 15 kilometres (km) south-east of Dunedoo, in the Central-West Orana (CWO) region of New South Wales (NSW), in the localities of Birriwa and Merotherie (**Figure 1-1**). It is situated within the Mid-Western Regional Local Government Area (LGA). Part of the transport access route to the project site via the Castlereagh Highway is situated within the Warrumbungle Shire LGA. The Project is within the CWO Renewable Energy Zone (REZ).

ACEN is seeking approval to modify development consent SSD-29508870 to include additional lots, an alternative secondary access route and upgrade to part of the existing Birriwa Bus Route South, and an increase in capacity of the approved temporary accommodation facility.

**Figure 1-1: Map showing the location of the Modification.**

## 1.2 APPROVED PROJECT OVERVIEW

The approved project comprises the following key components:

- Installation of approximately 1 million solar PV panels and associated mounting infrastructure
- A BESS with a capacity of up to 600 MW and a storage duration of up to 2 hours (1,200 MWh)
- An on-site substation with a connection voltage of up to 500 kilovolts (kV)
- Electrical collection and conversion systems, including inverter and transformer units, switchyard, control room and staff car park
- Underground and aboveground cables
- An operational infrastructure area, including demountable and permanent offices, amenities, and equipment sheds
- Internal access roads
- A temporary construction compound (during construction and decommissioning phases)
- An access route upgrade from Castlereagh Highway to the project site via Barneys Reef Road and Birriwa Bus Route South
- A temporary accommodation facility to provide accommodation for up to 500 construction staff during the construction phase of the project
- An emergency access track providing alternative access to the accommodation facility, suitable for emergency vehicles.

## 1.3 MODIFICATION OVERVIEW

The Applicant seeking to modify SSD-29508870 under to Section 4.55(2) of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) to:

- Increase the project area and development footprint to include three additional lots (Lot 11/DP 750755, Lot 40/DP 750755, Lot 60/DP 750755) and the remaining part of Lot 34/DP 750755, allowing for additional land to be used for solar generation, BESS, and associated ancillary infrastructure, as needed.
- Increase the storage capacity and duration of the BESS from up to approximately 600 MW for a two-hour duration up to approximately 900 MW for a four-hour duration. Modifying the project area and development footprint across additional neighbouring lots will enable flexibility in design and construction, optimisation of the solar array layout, and will allow sufficient space for maintenance. The additional capacity will allow the project to increase its energy storage potential, providing additional firming support and greater network system strength.

- Increase the project area and development footprint to allow for an upgrade to part of the existing Birriwa Bus Route South Road from the Golden Highway via Merotherie Road as secondary access route including a public road crossing. This upgrade will enable access to the project for the purpose of constructing and operating the approved temporary accommodation facility, construction, operation and maintenance of the BESS and EnergyCo's infrastructure associated with the project. Note, oversize over-mass vehicles will continue to access the project area, via the primary access point.
- Increase the approved project's accommodation facility capacity from 500 workers to 650 workers, within the approved accommodation footprint (up to an additional 150 workers will reside at the accommodation facility in peak construction periods).
- Amend the schedule of land to include three additional neighbouring lots.

## **1.4 MODIFICATION AREA**

The assessment for the modification area is comprised of approximately 257 ha of land across four land lots (Lot 11, 34 [part] 40 and 60 DP750755) and approximately 4 km of Birriwa Bus Route South extending west from the intersection of Merotherie Road (Figure 1-2).

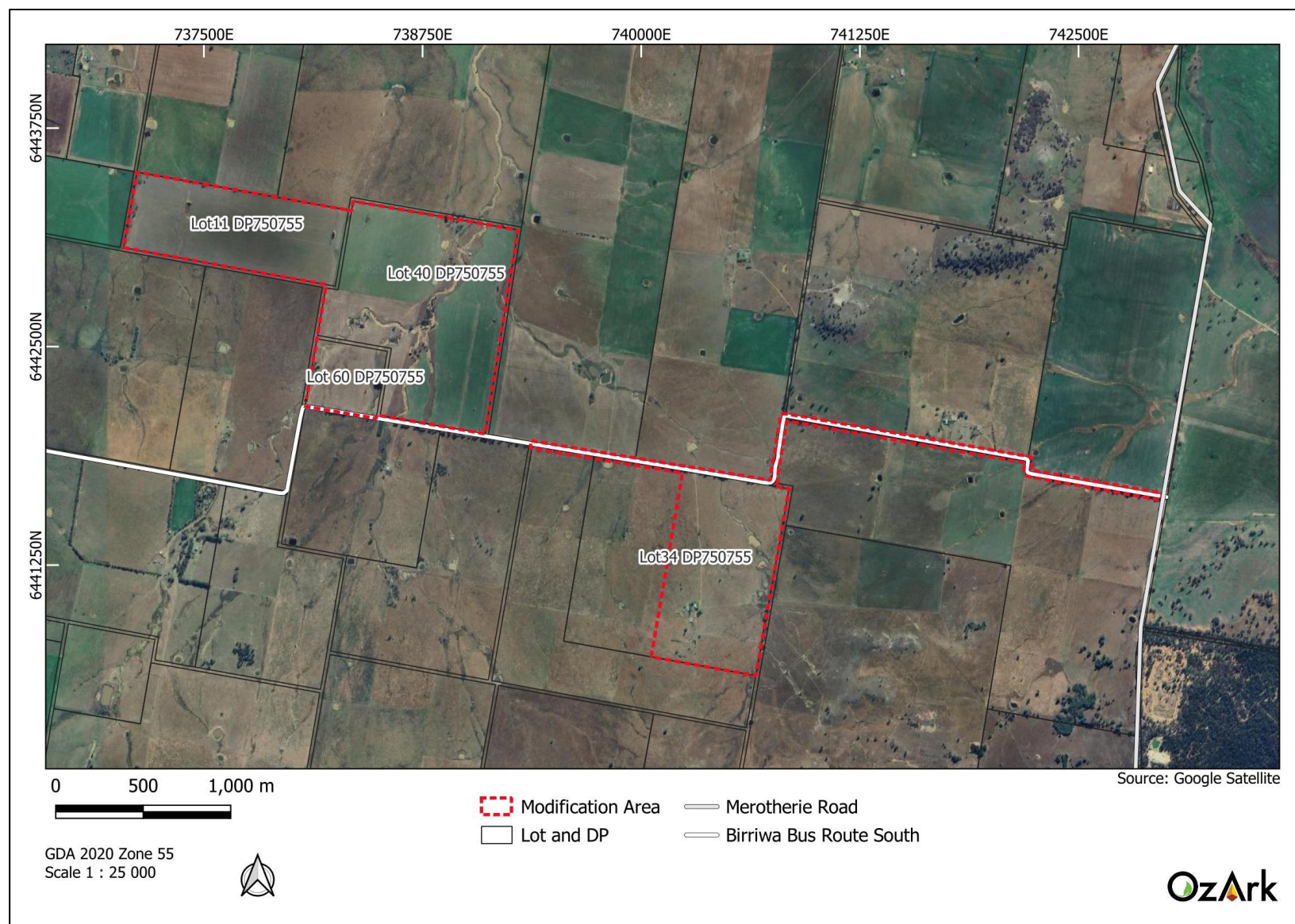
The section of Birriwa Bus Route South which forms part of the modification area has previously been assessed by OzArk (2023b and 2024) as part of the approved Birriwa Solar and Battery Project (SSD-29508870) and the Narragamba Solar Project respectively (both being undertaken by the Applicant) and therefore was not subject to further survey as part of this assessment.

## **1.5 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT**

OzArk Environment & Heritage (OzArk) has been engaged by the Applicant to assess the historic heritage values of the modification area through the preparation of an *Historic Heritage Assessment Report* (HHAR).



**Figure 1-2: Aerial of the modification area and the Birriwa Bus Route South upgrades.**



## 2 HISTORIC HERITAGE ASSESSMENT: INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Cultural heritage is managed by several state and national Acts. Baseline principles for the conservation of heritage places and relics can be found in the *Burra Charter* (Burra Charter). The *Burra Charter* has become the standard of best practice in the conservation of heritage places in Australia, and heritage organisations and local government authorities have incorporated the inherent principles and logic into guidelines and other conservation planning documents. The *Burra Charter* generally advocates for a cautious approach to changing places of heritage significance. This conservative notion embodies the basic premise behind legislation designed to protect our heritage, which operates primarily at a state level.

Several Acts of parliament provide for the protection of heritage at the various levels of government.

#### 2.1.1 Commonwealth legislation

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), administered by the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, provides a framework to protect nationally significant flora, fauna, ecological communities, and heritage places. The EPBC Act establishes both a National Heritage List and Commonwealth Heritage List of protected places. These lists may include Aboriginal cultural sites or sites in which Aboriginal people have interests. The assessment and permitting processes of the EPBC Act are triggered when a proposed activity or development could potentially have an impact on one of the matters of national environment significance listed by the Act. Ministerial approval is required under the EPBC Act for Modifications involving significant impacts to national/commonwealth heritage places.

##### Applicability to the Modification

It is noted there are no Commonwealth or National heritage listed places within the modification area, and as such, the heritage provisions of the EPBC Act and other Commonwealth Acts do not apply.

#### 2.1.2 State legislation

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) establishes requirements relating to land use and planning. The main parts of the EP&A Act that relate to development assessment and approval are Part 4 (development assessment) and Part 5 (environmental assessment). The purpose of the Part 5 assessment system is to ensure public authorities fully consider environmental issues before they undertake or approve activities that do not require



development consent from a council or the Minister. The Minister responsible for the Act is the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces.

The EP&A Act currently provides the primary legislative basis for planning and environmental assessment in NSW. The objects of the EP&A Act include encouragement of:

- The proper management, development, and conservation of natural resources
- The provision and coordination of the orderly and economic use and development of land
- Protection of the environment, including the protection and conservation of native animals and plants, including threatened species, populations and ecological communities, and their habitats
- Ecologically sustainable development.

The objects also provide for increased opportunity for public involvement and participation in environmental planning and assessment.

The EP&A Act includes provisions to ensure that the potential environmental impacts of a development or activity are rigorously assessed and considered in the decision-making process.

The framework governing environmental and heritage assessment in NSW is contained within the following parts of the EP&A Act:

- Part 4: Local government development assessments, including heritage. May include schedules of heritage items
  - Division 4.7: Approvals process for State significant development

#### Applicability to the Modification

The Applicant is seeking to modify SSD-29508870 under Section 4.55(2) of the EP&A Act.

As the Modification is SSD, Section 4.41 of the EP&A Act applies and provides a defence for any investigative or other activities that are required to be carried out for the purpose of complying with any environmental assessment requirements.

#### **2.1.2.1     *Heritage Act 1977***

The *Heritage Act 1977* (Heritage Act) is applicable to the current assessment. This Act established the Heritage Council of NSW. The Heritage Council's role is to advise the government on the protection of heritage assets, make listing recommendations to the Minister in relation to the State Heritage Register (SHR), and assess/approve/decline proposals involving the modification of heritage items or places listed on the SHR. Most proposals involving modification are assessed under Section 60 of the Heritage Act.

Automatic protection is afforded to 'relics', defined as 'any deposit or material evidence relating to the settlement of the area that comprised New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement, and which holds state or local significance' (note: formerly the Act protected any 'relic' that was more than 50 years old. Now the age determination has been dropped from the Act and relics are protected according to their heritage significance assessment rather than purely based on their age). Excavation of land on which it is known or where there is reasonable cause to suspect that 'relics' will be exposed, moved, destroyed, discovered or damaged is prohibited unless ordered under an excavation permit.

#### Applicability to the Modification

There are no SHR listed items or places within or near the modification area. Items of local heritage significance that are normally listed in Local Environmental Plans (LEP) are also protected under the Heritage Act.

### **2.1.3 Local legislation**

#### **2.1.3.1 Local Environmental Plans**

The modification area is administered by the Mid-Western Regional LEP 2012.

The Mid-Western Regional LEP includes a schedule of heritage conservation areas and items that require either development consent or exemptions for projects that may impact conservation outcomes. The objectives set out in Section 5.10 of the LEP states:

- (a) To conserve the environmental heritage of the Mid-Western Regional LGA,
- (b) to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings, and views,
- (c) to conserve archaeological sites,
- (d) to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.

Section 5.10(3)(a) (i) and (ii) set out the circumstances when a Development Application is not required when there is an impact to heritage items. Exemptions to consent are related to works that are of a minor nature or works that will not adversely impact the heritage values of a place.

#### Applicability to the Modification

There are no items listed on the Mid-Western Regional LEP within the modification area (**Table 3-1**). There is one item listed in Schedule 5 of the Warrumbungle LEP 2013, #I1 'Birriwa Private Cemetery' located approximately 5 km northwest of the modification area. This item is discussed in **Section 3.3.1.1**.

## 2.2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the current study is to identify and assess the impact to historic heritage items relevant to the modification area.

### 2.2.1 Historic heritage assessment objectives

The current assessment will apply the Heritage Council's *Historical Archaeology Code of Practice* (Heritage Council 2006) in the completion of a historical heritage assessment, including field investigations, to meet the following objectives:

- Objective One:** To identify whether historical heritage items or areas are, or are likely to be, present within the modification area
- Objective Two:** To assess the significance of any recorded historical heritage items or areas
- Objective Three:** Determine whether the project is likely to cause harm to recorded historical heritage items or areas
- Objective Four:** Provide management recommendations and options for mitigating impacts.

## 2.3 DATE OF HISTORIC HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

The field survey of the modification area was undertaken by OzArk over two days on 11 and 12 December 2024.

### 2.3.1 Field survey

The fieldwork survey was undertaken by:

- OzArk Archaeologist: Imogen Crome (OzArk Archaeologist; BA [Archaeology] and BSc [Biological Anthropology] Australian National University)
- OzArk Archaeologist: Jordan Henshaw (OzArk Archaeologist; BArchHist Macquarie University).

### 2.3.2 Reporting

The reporting component of the historic heritage assessment was undertaken by:

- Report author: Ryan Zanker, OzArk Archaeologist (OzArk Graduate Archaeologist; BArch Flinders University).
- Reviewers: Dr. Bernadette Drabsch, (BA [Hons], PhD, University of Newcastle) and Stephanie Rusden (OzArk Senior Archaeologist, BS University of Wollongong, BA University of New England).

### 3 HISTORIC HERITAGE ASSESSMENT: BACKGROUND

#### 3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

From an environmental perspective, the Central Tablelands where the current Project is located, was historically very attractive to European settlers throughout the 1800s, thanks to its rolling plains, high quality grass and timber, as well as numerous water courses that flowed in many of the valleys.

In 1813, surveyor and explorer, George Evans was the first European to cross the Blue Mountains into the Central Tablelands. Evans commented on the welcoming nature of the landscape, saying: 'I am more pleased with the Country every day. It is a great extent of Grazing land without being divided by barren spaces as on the East side of the Mountains, and well-watered by running streams in almost every Valley' (DCCEEW, 2025). The region was also well timbered, with rolling plains around the Macquarie River, long visibility, and an encouraging quality of grass (DCCEEW, 2025). This welcoming environment made the region well suited for settlement and pastoral ways of life.

With the discovery of gold fields throughout the region by the 1850s, the Central Tablelands would see a dramatic influx of settlers in the region chasing the gold rush. There were several major areas of goldmining within the region that operated with varying success until the around the First World War: the Turon/Macquarie area; the Meroo/Pyramul fields; Gulgong; Lucknow; and Trunkey (DCCEEW, 2025).

The regions abundance of natural resources and hospitable landscape made the Central Tablelands highly desirable for European settlers and pastoralists all throughout the 1800s.

#### 3.2 BRIEF HISTORY OF BIRRIWA AND SURROUNDS

At the time of European settlement, the modification area was situated within the territory of people belonging to the *Wiradjuri* tribal and linguistic group (Tindale 1974). The Wiradjuri tribal area is situated within the Murray Darling Basin and extends across three general physiographic regions: the highlands or central tablelands in the east, the riverine plains in the west, and the transitional western slopes zone in-between (Navin Officer 2005: 48).

Early European exploration of the region occurred in the 1820s. One of the first land holders and cattle runs in the area was owned by the sons and grandsons of William Cox, who had built the road across the Blue Mountains (ABD, 2020). Their cattle run was called 'Guntawang' and was established 1822, 8 km south-west of the present town site of Gulgong. The original run in the Dunedoo area was leased by the Johnstone family from 1874 called the 'Bolaro Run' which included the original homestead located near the current silos in Dunedoo.

The 1898 Parish map (**Figure 3-1**) indicates that Lot 40 DP750755 within the modification area was a designated portion of the Gulgong gold field. Gulgong goldfield was gazetted in 1866, but

initial finds were negligible. Tom Saunders, a shepherd working for local pastoralist and businessman Richard Rouse (ADB, 2025a), uncovered a large find on the future town site (at Red Hill) on April 14, 1870, thereby sparking a major goldrush.

There was spectacular growth in Gulgong during the 1870s, with the mines around the township of Gulgong producing twice as much gold in a single year as the Meroo fields to the south of Mudgee had produced over the previous fifty (DUAP 1996: 92). When the town was gazetted in 1872 there were reputedly 20,000 people in the area, including the family of famous Australian writer and bush poet, Henry Lawson, who would feature on the 10-dollar bill (Gulgong, 2021 and ADB, 2025b).

Gulgong became a municipality in 1876 although the gold had already begun to dwindle. By 1881 the population was 1,212 and the boom years were over. From that point, wheat and wool production, boosted by the arrival of the railway in 1909, sustained the town.

The 1898 parish map of Merotherie (**Figure 3-1**Error! Reference source not found.) shows that Lots 11, 40 and 60 of DP 750755, within the modification area were owned by Ernest Matthew Bowman and Lot 34 of DP750755 was owned by Ernest Philip Weis.

Bowman was born in 1858 in Patricks Plains/Singleton and was the son of wealthy pastoralist, medical practitioner and parliamentarian, George Bowman of Archerfield/Arrowfield, Singleton. In 1917 the property was transferred to B.H.B Adams in 1917 who was a farmer and active member of the local community.

Ernest Weis was a grazier and one of the original pioneers of the district, whose property was known as ‘Roxana’. In 1912 he was registered as having 18 horses and 15 cattle, 1504 sheep (Cudgegong Valley History). In addition to being a grazier, Weis also held the district mail contract for some time (Mudgee Guardian 18, November 1912). After Ernest’s passing in 1947, his small weatherboard cottage and half acre of land were knocked down on account of the executors of the estate. All furniture and tools were sold (Mudgee Guardian 15 May 1947). Following this the land was owned by the Bank of New South Wales and a substantial homestead was constructed on the land, at some point between 1947 and 1963 (see **Figure 3-2** and **Section** Error! Reference source not found.).

Aerial imagery from 1963 indicates that the modification area was cleared grazing land with no evidence of substantial structures, excluding those assessed in this report (**Figure 3-2**).



Figure 3-1: Merotherie Parish Map 1898 overlaid with the modification area.

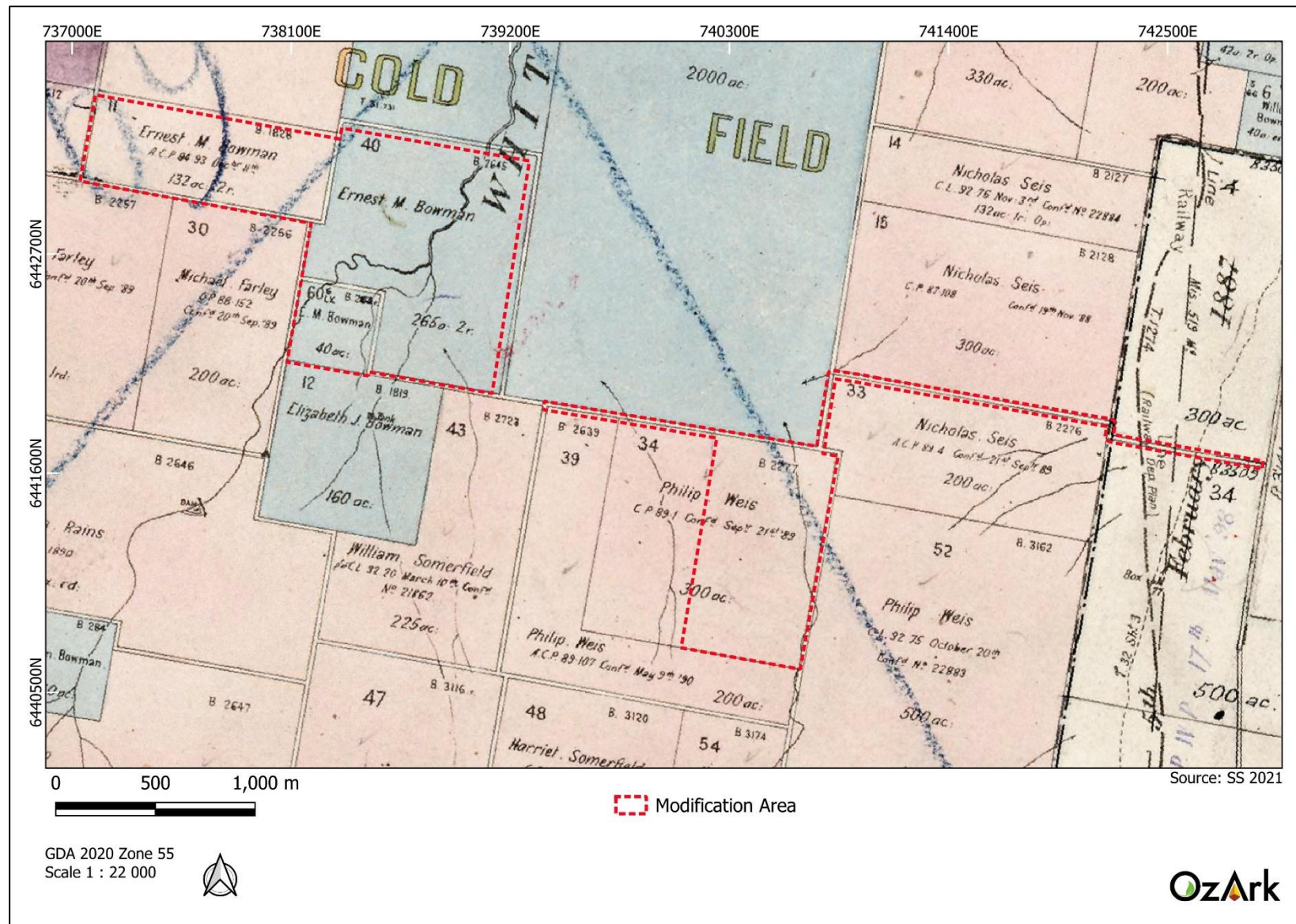
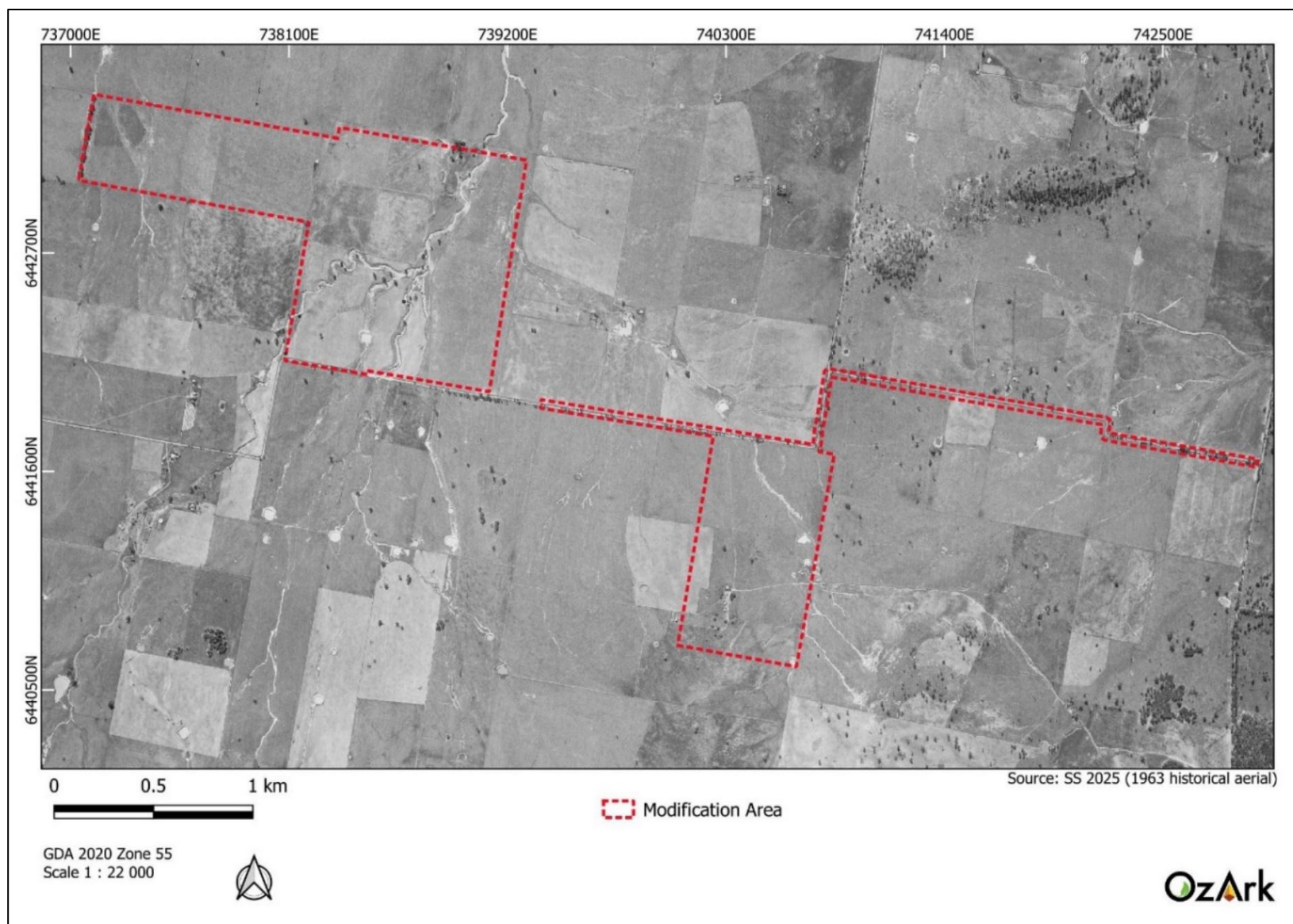


Figure 3-2: 1963 Aerial of the modification area (source: NSW Spatial Services 2025).





### 3.3 LOCAL CONTEXT

#### 3.3.1 Desktop database searches conducted

A desktop search was conducted on the following databases to identify any potential previously recorded heritage within the modification area. The results of this search are summarised in **Table 3-1**.

**Table 3-1: Historic heritage: desktop-database search results.**

Name of database searched	Date of search	Type of search	Comment
National and Commonwealth Heritage Listings	21/10/2024	Mid-Western Regional and Warrumbungle Shire LGA	No items are listed within 5 km of the modification area.
SHR	21/10/2024	NSW	No items are listed within 5 km of the modification area.
LEP	21/10/2024	Mid-Western Regional LEP 2012 and Warrumbungle LEP 2013	One item (#11 'Birriwa Private Cemetery' on the Warrumbungle LEP 2013) is listed within 5 km of the modification area ( <b>Section 3.3.1.1</b> ).

##### 3.3.1.1 LEP listing

The closest locally listed item to the modification area is the 'Birriwa Private Cemetery', Item #11 on the Warrumbungle LEP 2013. 'Birriwa Private Cemetery' is located approximately 5 km northwest of the modification area (**Figure 3-3**).

The statement of significance for the listed item is as follows:

*This place is historically significant locally and to the state because it demonstrates a long history of Pastoralist in the area prior to the establishment of towns and public cemeteries.*

*It is associated with early shepherds and station workers from circa 1860, and possibly earlier, but most significantly with Snr. Constable Ward, shot and killed by Chinese bushranger Sam Poo.*

'Birriwa Private Cemetery' is associated with Birriwa Homestead, which was originally settled by British explorer William Lawson in the 1840s. Lawson is renowned for co-discovering the inland passage through the Blue Mountains alongside Gregory Blaxland and William Charles Wentworth in the early 1800s. Lawson constructed the impressive Birriwa Homestead in 1907, which includes the grand main residence and numerous outbuildings including an 18<sup>th</sup> century weatherboard ballroom and 'strangers' rooms', traditionally used by travellers on Cobb and Co coaches and a five-room stone cottage dating back to the mid-1800s. The private cemetery contains a memorial garden, the grave of Senior Constable Ward, infant graves and other unidentified stones and crosses (Mudgee Guardian 2013).

Given the distance and nature of the project, there will be no impacts to this item.



Figure 3-3: Location of the 'Birriwa Private Cemetery' in relation to modification area.



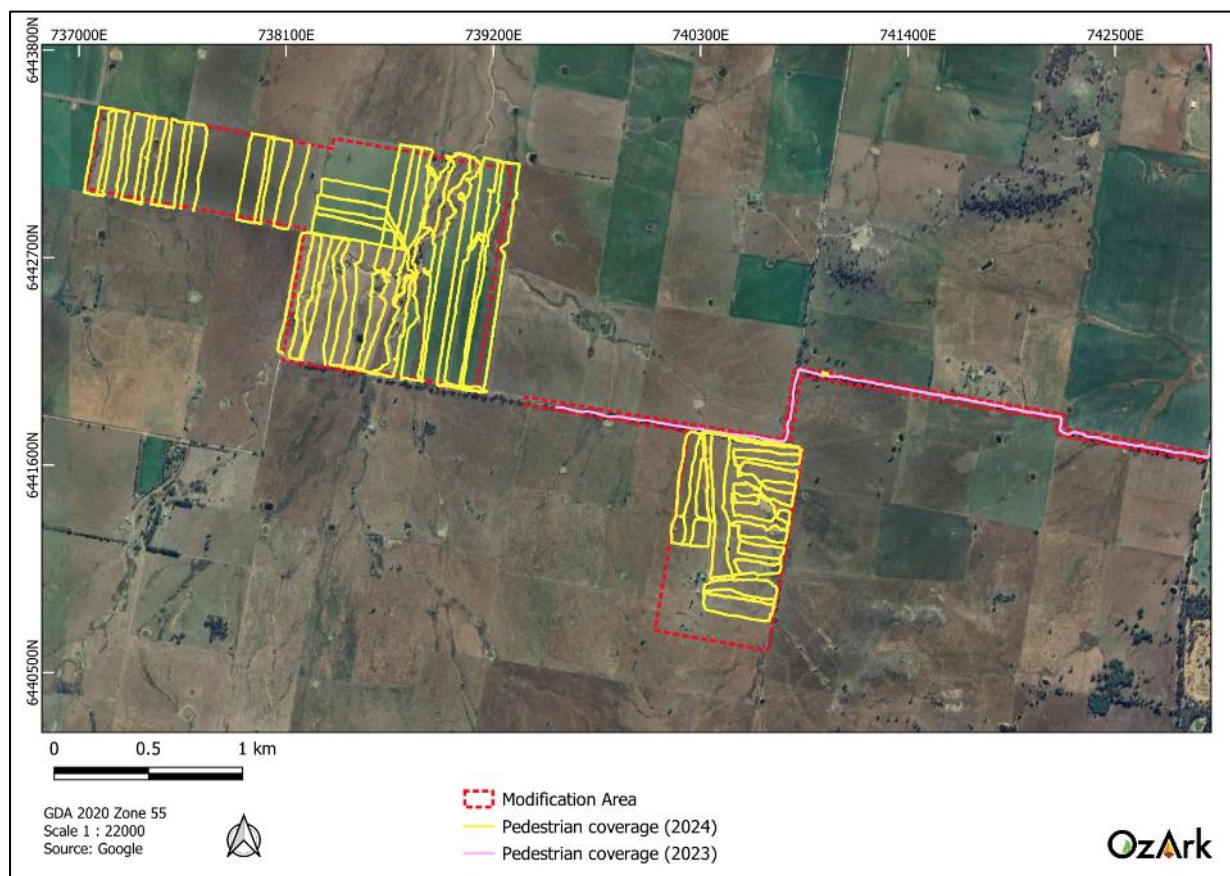
## 4 RESULTS OF HISTORIC HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

### 4.1 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Standard archaeological field survey and recording methods were employed in this study (Burke & Smith 2004).

Pedestrian coverage of the modification area is shown in **Figure 4-1**.

**Figure 4-1: Pedestrian coverage of the modification area.**



### 4.2 SURVEY RESULTS

Three items of potential local heritage significance were identified during the survey (**Table 4-1**). The location of these items are shown on

Item name	GDA Zone 55 coordinates	Type of heritage item	Figure
Dilapidated residence	Easting 738971, Northing 6443225	Complex/Group	<b>Figure 4-5</b>
Shearers shed	Easting 739026, Northing 6443027	Complex/Group	<b>Figure 4-4</b>
20 <sup>th</sup> century homestead	Easting 740312, Northing 6441019	Complex/Group	<b>Figure 4-6</b>

Figure 4-2 and **Figure 4-3**.

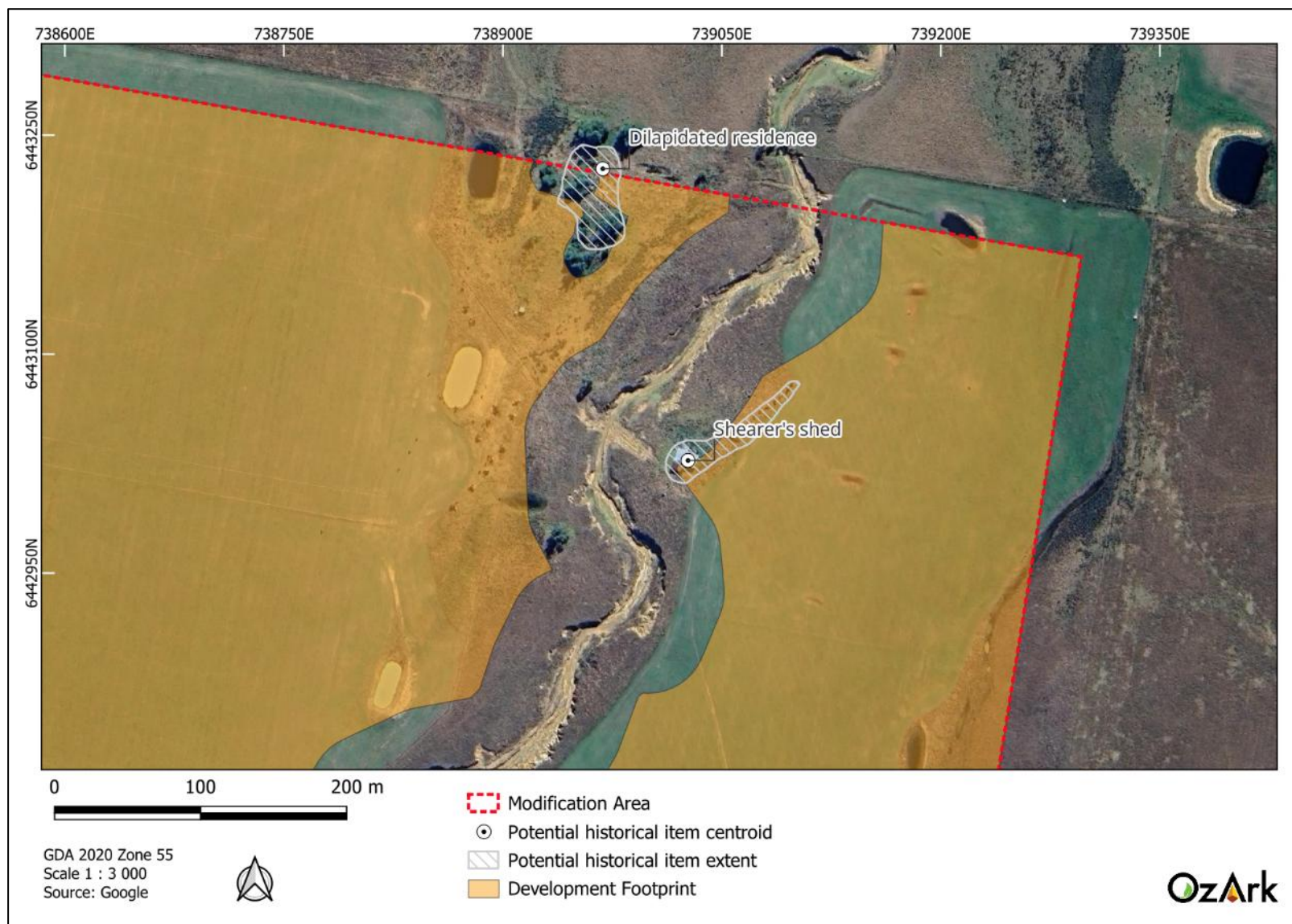
The potential heritage items are outlined below and their significance assessed in **Section 5.2**.

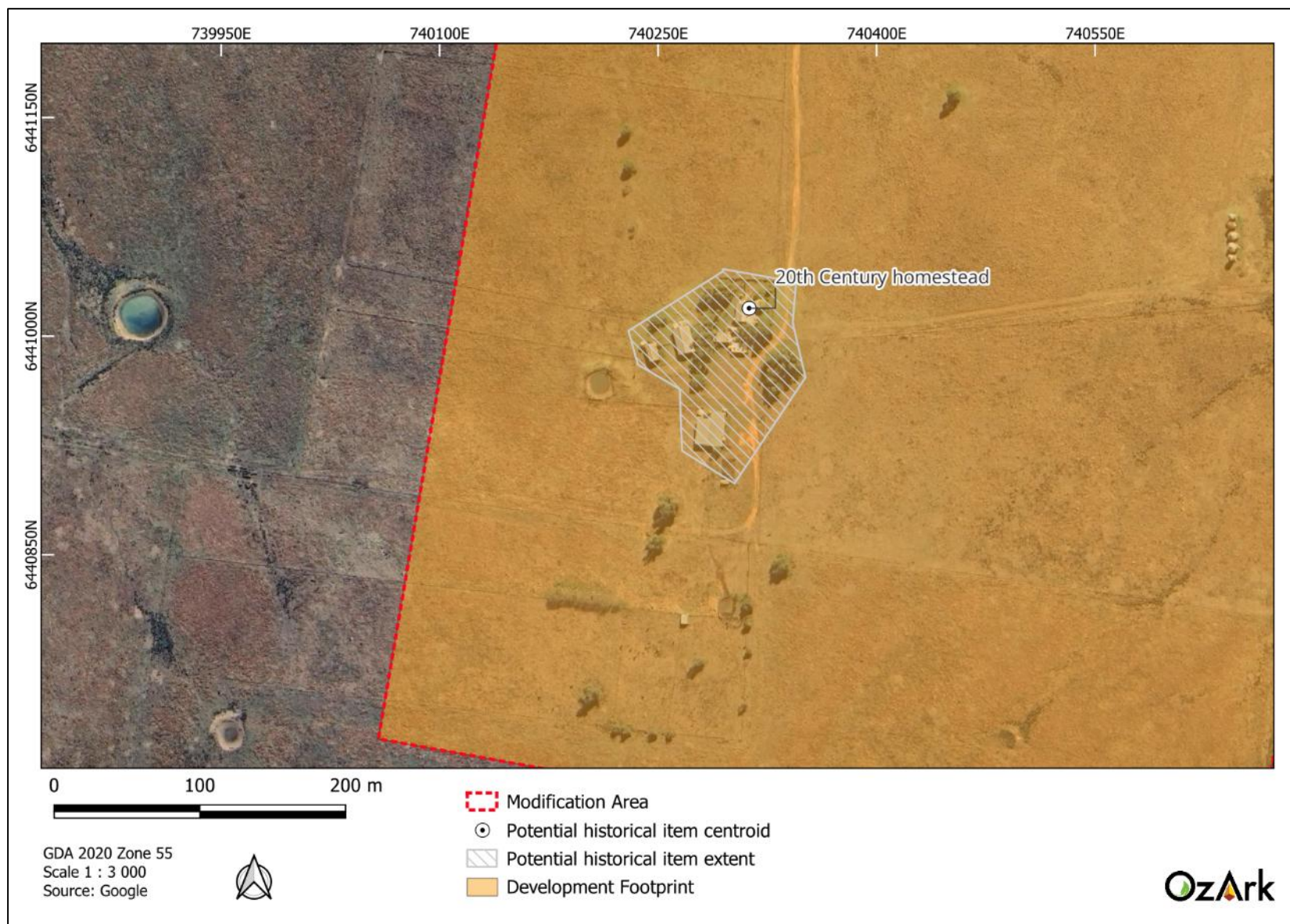
**Table 4-1: Recorded historic heritage items.**

Item name	GDA Zone 55 coordinates	Type of heritage item	Figure
Dilapidated residence	Easting 738971, Northing 6443225	Complex/Group	<b>Figure 4-5</b>
Shearers shed	Easting 739026, Northing 6443027	Complex/Group	<b>Figure 4-4</b>
20 <sup>th</sup> century homestead	Easting 740312, Northing 6441019	Complex/Group	<b>Figure 4-6</b>



**Figure 4-2: Potential historical items in relation to Development Footprint in Lot 40, DP750755.**



**Figure 4-3: Potential historical item in relation to Lot 34 DP 750755.**



## **Birriwa Historic Site-01: Shearers' shed**

**Site type:** Shearers' shed





**GPS coordinates:** GDA 2020 Zone 55, Easting: 739026 Northing: 6443027

**Location of item** Birriwa Historic Site-01: Shearer's shed is in Lot 40 DP750755. The site is in a paddock, approximately 215 metres (m) from the northern boundary of the modification area and approximately 300 m from the eastern boundary. The Shearer's shed is located approximately 45 m from the bed of White Creek, which was possibly utilised for washing the wool. The shed sits on the edge of the Development Footprint.

**Description of item:** The shearers shed and associated tools and machinery are in a state of disrepair, with sections of the shed having collapsed, or missing sections of wall and ceiling (**Figure 4-4**, image 1). Most of the large timber structural components and roof trusses consist of rounds rather than dressed wood, indicating that the shed was built from bush timber, which would have been available on the property. This building technique indicates that the shearing shed was possibly constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century. A timber wool press remains inside the shed and associated farm machinery and tools are situated in and around the structure. Several pieces of machinery are lined up to the east of the shed within the site extent, also in various states of disrepair.

**Figure 4-4: Birriwa HS01: Shearers' shed and associated farm machinery.**



	
<p>3. Inside of shearers shed.</p>	<p>4. Shearers' shed associated machinery lined up east of structure.</p>
	
<p>5. Bush timber structural components and timber wool press.</p>	<p>6. Farm machinery outside the shearers' shed.</p>

## **Birriwa Historic Site-02: Dilapidated residence**

**Site type:** Dilapidated residence

**GPS coordinates:** GDA 2020 Zone 55, Easting: 738968 Northing: 6443227



**Location of item:** Birriwa Historic Site-02: Dilapidated residence is in Lot 40 DP750755, approximately 30 m from the northern boundary of the modification area and approximately 385 m from the eastern boundary. The dilapidated residence is located within a small buffer of the Disturbance Footprint and is surrounded by mature vegetation. The site is approximately 140 m west of White Creek.

**Description of item:** The dilapidated residence is in a state of disrepair. What is left of the residence has collapsed, leaving only a brick chimney with a corbelled chimney stack and corbelled crown (Figure 4-5, image 1), in addition to an adjacent metal chimney which was possibly associated with an external kitchen. The site also contains collapsed corrugated iron and timber structures likely associated with animal enclosures and an array of glass bottles and farm paraphernalia. There are two vintage cars in the yard area, one of which appears to date to the



late 19<sup>th</sup> early 20<sup>th</sup> century, featuring a split-screen windscreen and one possibly dating to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Figure 4-5: Birriwa Historic Site 02: Dilapidated residence.**

	
<p>1. View of dilapidated house site. Note brick chimney in centre.</p>	<p>2. Collapsed corrugated iron walls and water tank possibly associated with animal enclosures.</p>
	
<p>3. Glass bottles of various styles.</p>	<p>4. Old car, possibly dating to the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, and metal drums.</p>
	
<p>5. Farm paraphernalia.</p>	<p>6. Metal chimney possibly belonging to an external kitchen area, in line with the brick internal chimney.</p>





7. Ruin of a vintage car, possibly dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Birriwa Historic Site-03: 20<sup>th</sup> century homestead**

**Site type:** 20<sup>th</sup> century homestead

**GPS coordinates:** GDA 2020 Zone 55, Easting: 740312 Northing: 6441017

**Location of item:** Birriwa Historic Site-03: 20<sup>th</sup> century homestead is situated within Lot 34 DP750755. The site is in a paddock, approximately 648 metres (m) south of the northern boundary of the modification area and approximately 200 m from the western boundary. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century homestead sits within the Development Footprint (**Figure 4-3**).

**Description of item:** Birriwa Historic Site-03: 20<sup>th</sup> century homestead includes a substantial residence constructed out of timber with a tin hipped roof and a deep, enclosed verandah (**Figure 4-6, images 1 and 2**). Historical records indicate that the dwelling was constructed after 1949, when the Weis property was demolished, and before 1963, as the dwelling appears in the aerial photograph (**Section 3.2**). The residence is in good condition and is surrounded by original plantings (**Figure 4-6, image 4**). Adjacent to the residence are large farm sheds and silos constructed out of corrugated iron, also in good condition (**Figure 4-6, images 1 and 3**).

**Figure 4-6: Birriwa Historic Site-03: 20th century homestead.**

	
1. View towards HS03: 20th century homestead and sheds.	2. Residence with deep, enclosed verandah and surrounding house yard.
	
3. A collection of round silos near the homestead.	4. Mature trees comprise part of the original homestead plantings.

## 5 ASSESSMENT OF HISTORIC HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

### 5.1 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE—GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The current assessment will evaluate the heritage significance of the historic heritage sites identified within the study area in accordance with *Assessing heritage significance. Guidelines for assessing places and objects against the Heritage Council of NSW criteria* (DPE 2023). A historic heritage site must satisfy at minimum one of the following criteria to be assessed as having heritage significance:

Criterion (a): *An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)*

Criterion (b): *An item has a strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)*

Criterion (c): *An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area)*

Criterion (d): *An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons*

Criterion (e): *An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)*

Criterion (f): *An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)*

Criterion (g): *An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments).*

Significance assessments are carried out on the basis that decisions about the future of heritage items must be informed by an understanding of these items' heritage values. The *Burra Charter. The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* (the Burra Charter) recognises four categories of heritage value: historic, aesthetic, scientific, and social significance (Article 1.2, Burra Charter).

Items are categorised as having local or state level, or no significance. The level of significance is assessed in accordance with the geographical extent of the item's value. An item of state significance is one that is important to the people of NSW whilst an item of local significance is one that is principally important to the people of a specific LGA.

## 5.2 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF HISTORIC ITEMS

The guidelines for assessing heritage significance described in Section 5.1, will be applied to each of the recorded historic items below.

### 5.2.1 Birriwa Historic Site-01: Shearers' shed

**Table 5-1** assesses Birriwa Historic Site-01: Shearers' shed against the assessment criteria described in **Section 5.1**.

**Table 5-1: Assessment of heritage significance – Birriwa Historic Site-01: Shearers shed**

Criterion	Comments	Significance
a	An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)	No historical significance
b	An item has a strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)	No historical significance
c	An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area)	No historical significance
d	An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons	No historical significance
e	An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)	No historical significance
f	An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)	No historical significance
g	An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments).	No historical significance

### 5.2.2 Birriwa Historic Site-02: Dilapidated residence

**Table 5-2: Assessment of heritage significance – Birriwa Historic Site-02: Dilapidated residence.** assesses Birriwa Historic Site-02: Dilapidated residence against the assessment criteria outlined in **Section 5.1**.

**Table 5-2: Assessment of heritage significance – Birriwa Historic Site-02: Dilapidated residence.**

Criterion	Comments	Significance
a	An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)	No historical significance
b	An item has a strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).	No historical significance
C	An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area)	No historical significance
d	An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons	No historical significance
e	An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)	No historical significance
f	An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)	No historical significance



Criterion	Comments	Significance
g	An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments).	No historical significance

### 5.2.3 Birriwa Historic Site-03: 20<sup>th</sup> century homestead

**Table 5-2: Assessment of heritage significance – Birriwa Historic Site-02:** Dilapidated residence.assesses Birriwa Historic Site-03: 20<sup>th</sup> century homestead against the assessment criteria outlined in **Section 5.1**.

**Table 5-3: Assessment of heritage significance – Birriwa Historic Site-03: 20th century homestead.**

Criterion	Comments	Significance
a	An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)	No historical significance
b	An item has a strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)	No historical significance
c	An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area)	No historical significance
d	An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons	No historical significance
e	An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)	No historical significance
f	An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)	No historical significance
g	An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments).	No historical significance

**Table 5-4** details the assessed significance of recorded historic heritage items in accordance with the NSW Heritage Office guidelines and the Burra Charter.

**Table 5-4: Historic heritage: assessment of significance.**

Site name	Level of significance
Birriwa Historic Site-01: Shearers' shed	Nil
Birriwa Historic Site-02: Dilapidated residence	Nil
Birriwa Historic Site-03: 20th century homestead	Nil

## 5.3 DISCUSSION

Three items of potential historic heritage were identified within the modification area, Birriwa Historic Site-01: Shearer's shed; Birriwa Historic Site-02: Dilapidated residence; and Birriwa Historic Site-03: 20<sup>th</sup> century homestead. All sites have been assessed as having no historic heritage significance under the current Heritage NSW guidelines and the Burra Charter. It is noted that this result reflects the current thresholds and principles of the assessment criteria that rightly emphasise items with collective, aesthetic, technological and/or natural significance.



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## 6 MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION

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### 6.1 LIKELY IMPACTS TO HISTORIC HERITAGE FROM THE MODIFICATION

Birriwa Historic Site 01: Shearers' shed is located on the edge of the development footprint. The site has been assessed as having no heritage values and will be directly impacted by the Modification.

Birriwa Historic Site 02: Dilapidated house is located within a buffer zone applied to White Creek and therefore is outside the development footprint. The site has been assessed as having no heritage values.

Birriwa Historic Site 03: 20<sup>th</sup> century homestead is located within the development footprint. The site has been assessed as having no heritage values and will be directly impacted by the Modification.

### 6.2 GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF HISTORIC SITES

Appropriate management of heritage items is primarily determined based on their assessed significance as well as the likely impacts of the proposed development.

In terms of best practice and desired outcomes, avoiding impact to any historical item is a preferred outcome, however, where a historical site has been assessed as having no heritage value, impacts to these items does not require any legislated mitigation.

### 6.3 MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION OF RECORDED HISTORIC SITES

Birriwa Historic Site 01: Shearers' shed, Birriwa Historic Site 02: Dilapidated house and Birriwa Historic Site 03: 20<sup>th</sup> century homestead has all been assessed as having no heritage significance and are not protected by the Heritage Act. As such, no management measures are required for the items.

Should any items of historic heritage significance be uncovered during the construction of the Modification then the *Historic Heritage Unanticipated Finds Protocol* (**Appendix 1**), will need to be enacted. This protocol stipulates the processes to follow should likely historic objects become uncovered through the activities of the Modification.

## 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made based on the impacts associated with the Modification and regarding:

- Legal requirements under the terms of the Heritage Act
- Guidelines presented in the *Burra Charter*
- The findings of the current assessment
- The interests of the local community.

Recommendations concerning the historic values within modification area are as follows.

1. Following development consent of the Modification, the proposed work may proceed with caution. If items of historic heritage significance are encountered during the Modification, then the protocols in provided in the *Unanticipated Finds Protocol* (**Appendix 1**) should be enacted.
2. No management measures are required for Birriwa Historic Site 01: Shearers' shed, Birriwa Historic Site 02: Dilapidated house and Birriwa Historic Site 03: 20<sup>th</sup> century homestead as the items have been assessed as having no heritage significance.
3. All land and ground disturbance activities must be confined to within the development footprint Should the parameters of the Modification extend beyond the assessed areas, then further assessment may be required.
4. It is assessed that ground disturbing works associated with the Modification will not harm significant historical archaeological deposits and no further archaeological investigation is required.
5. All staff and contractors involved in the proposed work should be made aware of the legislative protection requirements for all historic items.



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## APPENDIX 1: UNANTICIPATED FINDS PROTOCOL

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A historic artefact is anything which is the result of past activity not related to the Aboriginal occupation of the area. This includes pottery, wood, glass and metal objects as well as the built remains of structures, sometimes heavily ruined.

Heritage significance of historic items is assessed by suitably qualified specialists who place the item or site in context and determine its role in aiding the community's understanding of the local area, or their wider role in being an exemplar of state or even national historic themes.

The following protocol should be followed if previously unrecorded or unanticipated historic objects are encountered:

1. All ground surface disturbance in the area of the finds should cease immediately, then:
  - a) The discoverer of the find(s) will notify machinery operators in the immediate vicinity of the find(s) so that work can be halted
  - b) The site supervisor will be informed of the find(s).
2. If finds are suspected to be human skeletal remains, then NSW Police must be contacted as a matter of priority.
3. If there is substantial doubt regarding the historic significance for the finds, then gain a qualified opinion from an archaeologist as soon as possible. This can circumvent proceeding further along the protocol for items which turn out not to be significant. If a quick opinion cannot be gained, or the identification is that the item is likely to be significant, then proceed to the next step.
4. Notify NSW Environment Line (131 555; [info@environment.nsw.com.au](mailto:info@environment.nsw.com.au)) and the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) Compliance ([compliance@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:compliance@planning.nsw.gov.au)) providing any details of the historic find and its location.
5. If in the view of the heritage specialist or Heritage NSW that the finds appear not to be significant, work may recommence without further investigation. Keep a copy of all correspondence for future reference.
6. If in the view of the heritage specialist or Heritage NSW that the finds appear to be significant, facilitate the recording and assessment of the finds by a suitably qualified heritage specialist. Such a study should include the development of appropriate management strategies.
7. If the find(s) are determined to be significant historic items (i.e. of local or state significance), any re-commencement of ground surface disturbance may only resume following

compliance with any legal requirements and gaining written approval from Heritage NSW or DPHI.