



24/11/2025

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Historical Archaeological Advice Letter – 28 Norbrik Dr, Bella Vista

We refer to the proposed redevelopment of 28 Norbrik Dr, Bella Vista, for which approval is sought under State Significant Development Application SSD-53300464.

1 Introduction

Opal HealthCare ('the Proponent') is proposing the redevelopment of 28 Norbrik Dr, Bella Vista, legally described as Lot 1 DP 1217654 ('the subject area') (Figure 1), for development of a Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF).

The subject area is located approximately 28 km northwest of the Sydney CBD, within the Hills Shire Local Government Area.

Approval for the proposed development is being sought via State Significant Development Application SSD-53300464 under Division 4.7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW) (*EP&A Act*). Please note that per Section 4.41 (formerly s 89J) of the *EP&A Act*, the approval pathways provided by the *Heritage Act 1977* (*Heritage Act*) are silenced, however the remainder of the *Heritage Act* applies as with the guidelines for its implementation.

The Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) were issued for SSD-53300464 on 20/01/2025. Item 22 of the SEARs specifies the following requirement in relation to historical heritage:

Where there is potential for direct or indirect impacts on environmental heritage, provide a Statement of Heritage Impact and Archaeological Assessment (where required), in accordance with the relevant guidelines (emphasis added)

This Historical Archaeological Advice Letter has been prepared to provide a preliminary overview of the subject area's statutory context, collate visual evidence of the site's historic development sequence, and identify the likelihood of historical archaeological resources being present on the subject area that may be impacted by the proposed development.

The proposal involves the construction and operation of a Residential Aged Care Facility at 28 Norbrik Drive, Bella Vista, including:

- Site preparation works;
- Construction of a 5-storey Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF), comprising of:



- 135 one-bed units, including 15 bed high care and memory care wing at ground floor level;
- Back of house, including commercial kitchens and laundry facilities at basement level
- Staff administration area;
- Resident amenities including central social hub, café, function room, shared resident spaces, gym and wellness rooms;
- Outdoor courtyard, activity space, shared garden areas, and children's play area
- Augmentation and extension of existing services including electrical supply, hydraulic services, and fire services;
- Construction of basement car parking for 35 spaces;
- Construction of 9 on grade parking spaces, drop off bay, and ambulance bay; and
- Provision of associated landscaping.

Authorship

This advice letter has been prepared by Emma Williams (Consultant, Urbis) with review and quality control undertaken by Ali Byrne (Associate Director, Urbis).



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Project No: P0063579
Project Manager: Ali Byrne

■ Subject Area — Contours ■ Hydrology - - Ephemeral

LOCATION OF THE SUBJECT AREA

Opal Bella Vista
Opal HealthCare

Figure 1 Site location

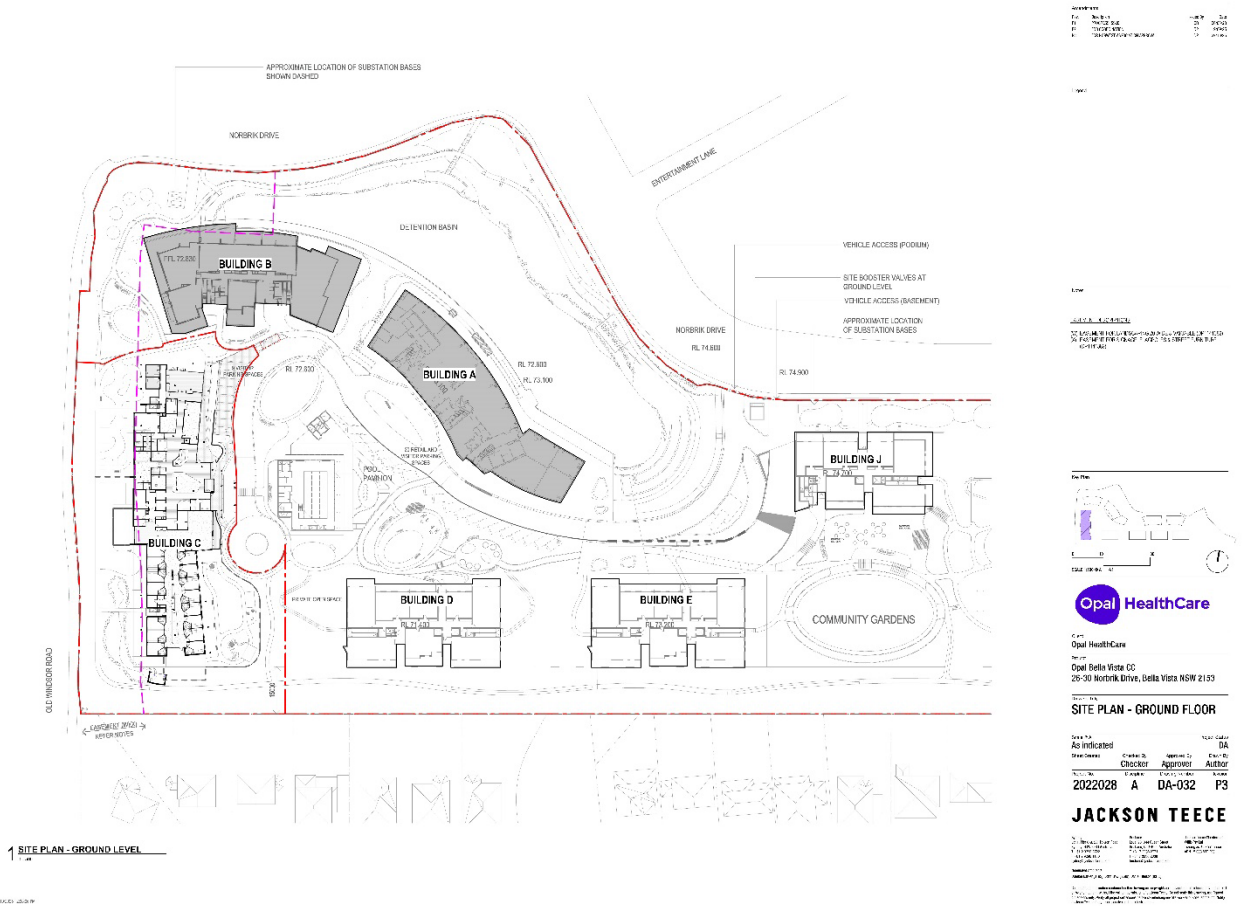


Figure 2 Proposed ground floor development plan

Source: Jackson Teece

2 Summary of Statutory Context

National Legislation

In 2004, a new Commonwealth heritage management system was introduced under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). The National Heritage List (NHL) was established to protect places that have outstanding value to the nation. The Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL) was established to protect items and places owned or managed by Commonwealth agencies. The Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) is responsible for the implementation of national policy, programs and legislation to protect and conserve Australia's environment and heritage and to promote Australian arts and culture. Approval from the Minister is required for controlled actions which will have a significant impact on items and places included on the NHL or CHL.

National Legislation	Item Description	Item Number/Reference
Commonwealth Heritage List	Not listed.	
National Heritage List	Not listed.	

State Legislation

The *NSW Heritage Act 1977* (the *Heritage Act*) provides protection to items of environmental heritage in NSW. Heritage items protected under the *Heritage Act* include places, buildings, works, relics, moveable objects and precincts identified as significant based on historical, social, aesthetic, scientific, archaeological, architectural, cultural or natural values.

State significant items are listed on the NSW State Heritage Register (SHR) and are given automatic protection under the *Heritage Act* against any activities that may damage an item or affect its heritage significance.

Section 4(1) of the *Heritage Act* defines a 'relic' as:

Any deposit, object or material evidence

(a) which relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being an Aboriginal settlement, and;

(b) is of State or local heritage significance.

Therefore, any physical evidence of past human activity can be considered an archaeological resource, even very recent structures and objects. However, not all archaeological resources reach the threshold for local or State significance under the *Heritage Act* and are thus considered a 'relic.'

The NSW SHR is an official list of places and objects with heritage significance to NSW. Managed under the *Heritage Act*, it protects historic buildings, archaeological sites, landscapes and relics to ensure they are

legally protected and appropriately managed for future generations. Items of significance to the State of NSW are listed on the NSW SHR under Section 60 of the *Heritage Act*.

Unlisted or unexpected historical 'relics' are protected under Part 6, Division 9 of the *Heritage Act*.

The *Heritage Act* requires government agencies to identify and manage heritage assets in their ownership and control. Under Section 170 of the *Heritage Act*, Government agencies must keep a register which includes all local and State listed items or items which may be subject to an interim heritage order that are owned, occupied or managed by that Government body.

Local Environmental Plans (LEPs)/ State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) are developed under the *EP&A Act* and can contain individual heritage items, heritage conservation areas and known archaeological items.

The subject area is east of archaeological item and local heritage item Windsor and Old Windsor Road (LHR I53). The original curtilage of the road is within the current eight lane roadway. It does not extend to within the boundary of the subject area. Archaeological evidence of the original road is not expected within the subject area. See Figure 3 for location of subject area in relation to nearby heritage items.

State Legislation	Item Name/Description	Item Number/Reference
State Heritage Register	Bella Vista Farm Park and surrounds	SHR 00754
	Bella Vista Homestead Complex Conservation Area (not within the subject area)	C2
State Heritage Inventory	Windsor and Old Windsor Road	LHR I53
Blacktown Local Environment Plan 2015	Windsor and Old Windsor Road	LHR I53
The Hills Local Environment Plan 2019	Original section of road and culvert (Old Windsor Road between Seven Hills Road and Windsor Road)	A2



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1 KM

Project No: P0063579
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- Subject Area
- Permanent
- Conservation Area - General
- Item - General
- State Heritage Register
- Hydrology
- Ephemeral
- Item - Archaeological

HISTORICAL HERITAGE ITEMS

Opal Bella Vista
Opal HealthCare

Figure 3 Nearby heritage items

3 Summary of Historic Development

The first settler in the area was Matthew Pearce, his property was known as 'King's Langley'. Other early grants included Joseph Foveaux's 'Stock Farm'. The subject area is over two original grants. The first was given to William Goodhall in October 1799 and the second to James Robertson in 1801 (see Figure 4). 'Stock Farm' was purchased by John and Elizabeth Macarthur in 1801 and they began breeding merino sheep. In the early 19th century, the Bella Vista area was primarily used for grazing cattle and sheep and growing citrus orchards. 160 acres was granted to Richard Richardson, and this became the 'Bella Vista' farm complex to the northeast of the subject area.¹ The homestead at 'Bella Vista' was constructed in 1865 by descendants of Matthew Pearce.² Citrus orchards became the dominant agricultural pursuit in the area throughout the 19th century. No evidence has been found to suggest that the subject area was developed during the 19th century, it was likely only used for broader agricultural purposes during this time.

In the early 20th century sheep grazing was reintroduced. In the 1920s and 1930s 'Bella Vista' was converted into a dairy and remained in the Pearce family. Aerial photographs from 1930 and 1947 show the subject area as vacant farmland with some evidence of cultivation in the form of harvesting lines (Figure 5 and Figure 6).

In 1949 'Bella Vista' was sold to the North Sydney Brick and Tile Company (later known as Norbrick).³ The company started making bricks in 1956 and expanded their operations in the 60s and 70s to include the subject area and its surrounds. The 1965 aerial photograph shows several large buildings occupying the site and some associated quarrying activity (Figure 7). The subject area continued to be occupied by several industrial buildings through the later part of the 20th century (Figure 8). From 1998 onwards the buildings within the subject area were gradually demolished and land that had been quarried was infilled (Figure 9). By 2013 the site had been cleared of buildings (Figure 10).

¹ Worley Parsons, 14.

² Worley Parsons, 15.

³ Worley Parsons, 16.



Figure 4 Parish map of Castle Hill, showing the original grants covered by the subject area (outlined in red)

Source: HLRV.



Figure 5 1930 aerial

Source: NSW Historic Imagery

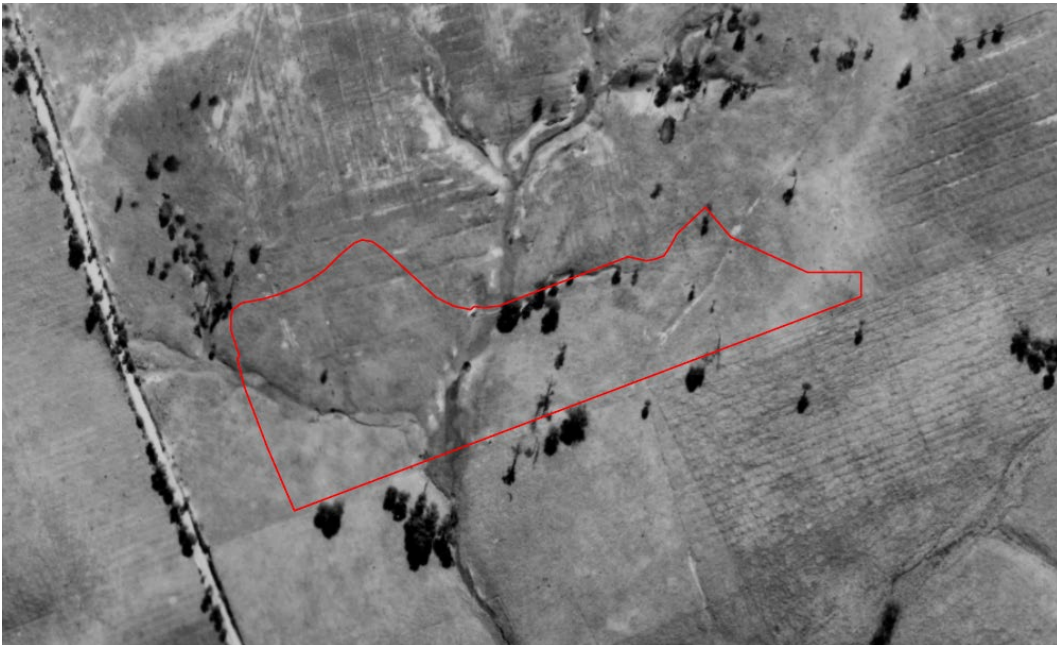


Figure 6 1947 aerial, note evidence of cultivation.

Source: NSW Historic Imagery



Figure 7 1965 aerial, note construction of large industrial buildings and associated quarrying activity.

Source: NSW Historic Imagery



Figure 8 1978 aerial, note expansion of industrial development.

Source: NSW Historic Imagery



Figure 9 2004 aerial, note removal of buildings and infill.

Source: NSW Historic Imagery



Figure 10 2013 aerial

Source: NSW Historic Imagery

4 Potential for Archaeological Resources

The above historical sources indicate that the subject site was subject to minimal development throughout the 19th century. The wider area of Bella Vista was largely used for various agricultural purposes during this time, and it is likely that the subject area was also only used agriculturally. The first evidence of structural development within the subject area comes from the 1965 aerial which shows large industrial buildings and quarrying activities occurring, associated with the North Sydney Brick and Tile Company. These activities continued into the 1990s before the site was cleared and the ground infilled.

The subject area may once have held some ephemeral evidence of its 19th century agricultural use. However, given the extensive groundworks that occurred during the 20th century, any surviving evidence would have been wholesale removed. Thus, the subject area holds nil archaeological potential.

5 Conclusions

The above findings are summarised as follows:

- No listed archaeological items have been identified within the subject area that are protected under the *EPBC Act 1974* or *Heritage Act 1977*.
- Historic plans indicate that the subject area was used for agricultural purposes until the 1960s when it was developed as part of the North Sydney Brick and Tile Company
- Potential historical archaeological resources associated with the agricultural use of the site in the 19th century are unlikely to survive due to the high levels of subsequent disturbance.
- Consequently, the works proposed under SSD-53300464 are unlikely to impact any relevant historical archaeological resources.
- A Historical Archaeological Assessment is therefore considered unnecessary for SSD-53300464, subject to the unexpected finds and human remains procedures outlined below being implemented during the proposed works.

6 Mitigation Measures

In view of the foregoing, it is recommended the following procedures be implemented to mitigate impacts to archaeological resources in the unlikely event that any such resources are encountered during the works proposed under SSD-53300464.

Unexpected Archaeological Find Procedure

In the unlikely event that any potential archaeological resources are uncovered during any site works, the following must be undertaken:

1. All works within the vicinity of the find must immediately stop. The find location and minimum 2m buffer should be cordoned off with signage identifying the area as a 'no-go zone' to prevent accidental impact. The find must not be moved 'out of the way' without assessment.
2. The site supervisor or another nominated site representative must contact either the project archaeologist (if relevant) or Heritage NSW (Enviroline 131 555) to contact a suitably qualified archaeologist.
3. The nominated archaeologist must examine the find, provide a preliminary assessment of significance, record the item and decide on appropriate management measures. Heritage NSW should be notified of the find through a Section 146 notification. Such management may require further consultation with the approval authority, preparation of a research design and archaeological investigation/salvage methodology.
4. Depending on the significance of the find, reassessment of the archaeological potential of the subject site may be required and further archaeological investigation undertaken.
5. Reporting may need to be prepared regarding the find and approved management strategies.
6. Works in the vicinity of the find can only recommence upon receipt of approval from Heritage NSW.

Human Remains Procedure

In the unlikely event that human remains are uncovered during any site works, the following must be undertaken:

1. All works within the vicinity of the find must immediately stop and the location cordoned off with signage installed to stop any accidental impact to the finds.
2. The site supervisor or other nominated manager must notify the NSW Police and Heritage NSW (Enviroline 131 555).
3. The find must be assessed by the NSW Police, which may include the assistance of a qualified forensic anthropologist.
4. Management recommendations are to be formulated by the NSW Police and Heritage NSW.
5. Works are not to recommence until the find has been appropriately managed.

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7 References

Worley Parsons. 2013. Heritage Impact Assessment: Norwest Private Hospital Expansion, 11 Norbrik Drive, Bella Vista. Prepared for Healthscope Limited.