

## APPENDIX 9

### Historic Heritage Assessment



**AUSTRAL**  
ARCHAEOLOGY

**WATTLE CREEK BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE  
SYSTEM - SSD-63345458**

**ARTHURSLEIGH FARM, 1001 CANYONLEIGH ROAD, BRAYTON  
NEW SOUTH WALES**

**STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT**

Prepared for Umwelt Pty Ltd on behalf of Spark Renewables Pty Ltd

13 March 2025

Final

## DOCUMENT INFORMATION

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### PROJECT DETAILS

**Project:** Wattle Creek Battery Energy Storage System - SSD-63345458

**Heritage item name:** Not Applicable

**Project address:** 1001 Canyonleigh Road, Brayton, New South Wales

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**Prepared for:** Umwelt Pty Ltd on behalf of Spark Renewables

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**Project number:** 22070

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

We respect and acknowledge the First Nations Peoples of the lands and waterways on which we live and work, their rich cultural heritage, and their deep connection to Country, and we acknowledge their Elders past and present.

## **CULTURAL WARNING**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this report may contain images or names of First Nations people who have passed away.



**AUSTRAL**  
ARCHAEOLOGY

## INTRODUCTION

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Umwelt Pty Ltd has commissioned Austral Archaeology Pty Ltd (Austral) on behalf of Spark Renewables Pty Ltd (the proponent) to prepare a Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI) for the Wattle Creek Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) located at Arthursleigh Farm, 1001 Canyonleigh Road, Brayton, New South Wales (NSW) [the Project Area]. The development includes the installation of an energy hub.

The Project is being assessed under Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EPA Act) and this report is required to inform an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) being prepared to meet the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the Project. (The Project Area consists of the entirety of Lot 3, DP1120270 and Lot 1, DP819778, and is within the Brayton locality, approximately 22 kilometres from the Brayton township within the Upper Lachlan Shire Council area.

The purpose of this SoHI is to assess the potential impact from the Project on the significance of any historic built values or historical archaeological remains that may be present within the Project Area that could be affected by the Project. The report will provide suitable management recommendations should impacts to heritage values be anticipated.

### IDENTIFIED HERITAGE VALUES

The Project Area is not currently listed on any heritage database; however, 'Arthursleigh', of which the Project Area was originally the central component of, has been recommended for inclusion on the *Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan 2010* as an item of local significance following a heritage study for the Upper Lachlan Shire Council and Heritage NSW (Tracey 2008). This recommendation was further bolstered through a review of the heritage study conducted by Dr Jennifer Tracey between 2019 to 2022 (Tracey 2022). This review was heard at an ordinary meeting at Upper Lachlan Shire Council on 18 August 2022 with the recommendation to advertise the draft review for feedback.

Arthursleigh has a significant connection to early European settlement and was established by Hannibal Macarthur when he was granted 1,000 acres (404 hectares) in 1819. During Macarthur's ownership, aided by his brother Charles, the property reached 19,780 acres (8,004 hectares) and included several buildings such as the homestead, woolshed and shearer's quarters, making them some of the earliest structures in the region. In 1878, under the ownership of Thomas Holt, the Uniting Church and adjacent cemetery were constructed and added to the list of structures within the Arthursleigh estate.

### PROPOSED IMPACTS

The Project includes the construction and operation of a standalone 350 megawatt (MW) BESS and project-related infrastructure and is located entirely within the Project Area. While the Project Area includes the core portion of Arthursleigh, the development footprint associated with the Project is located a considerable distance from the identified built heritage from this period of occupation. As discussed in Section 4 of this report, a visual assessment has been completed and the location of the development footprint was selected to minimise impact on view lines to and from the heritage items.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded that the Project is acceptable from a heritage standpoint.

- 1) To mitigate the potential harm documented in this assessment, it is recommended that: The Project can proceed, and no further investigations or assessments are required in terms of heritage.
- 2) If historical archaeological relics not assessed or anticipated by this report are found during the undertaking of the works, all works in the immediate vicinity are to cease immediately and Heritage NSW be notified. A qualified archaeologist is to be contacted to assess the situation and consult with Heritage NSW regarding the most appropriate course of action.
- 3) If Aboriginal archaeological material or deposits are encountered during earthworks, all works affecting that material or deposits must cease immediately to allow an archaeologist to make an assessment of the find. The archaeologist may need to consult Heritage NSW and the relevant Aboriginal stakeholders regarding the find. Section 89A of the National Parks & Wildlife Act 1974 requires that Heritage NSW must be notified of any Aboriginal objects discovered within a reasonable time.
- 4) Should the actual development be altered significantly from the proposed design, then a reassessment of the heritage impact will be required. This includes any impacts not explicitly stated in Section 4 and the installation of any subsurface services.
- 5) A copy of this assessment should be lodged by the proponent in the local history section of the local library, and in the library maintained by Heritage NSW.

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# 1 THE HERITAGE ITEM

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Austral Archaeology Pty Ltd (Austral) has been commissioned by Umwelt Pty Ltd on behalf of Spark Renewables (the Proponent) to undertake a Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI) for the proposed Wattle Creek Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Project (the Project) on part of the Arthursleigh property located at 1001 Canyonleigh Road, Brayton, New South Wales (NSW) [the Project Area]. The project is being assessed under Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EPA Act) and this report is required to inform an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) being prepared to meet the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the Project.

The Project Area consists of the entirety of Lot 3, DP1120270 and Lot 1, DP819778, and is within the Upper Lachlan Shire Council Local Government Area (LGA). The Project Area is bound by a mixture of farming land and vegetation on all sides.

The location of the Project Area is shown in Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2.

## CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The *Assessing Heritage Significance* (Department of Planning and Environment [DPE] 2023a) guidelines require that targeted stakeholder consultation occur with relevant knowledge holders. As part of this assessment, Austral has identified and contacted the following stakeholders to obtain information pertinent to the preparation of this SoHI:

- The National Trust
- The Berrima District Historical & Family Society Inc

The Berrima District Historical & Family Society Inc. advised that while Arthursleigh is just outside their area, they do have some of the research material that Chrissy Fletcher used for her book *Arthursleigh: A History of the Property 1819-1879* (Fletcher 2002) in their archives. These documents included many land titles. They were not able to provide any further information for this SoHI.

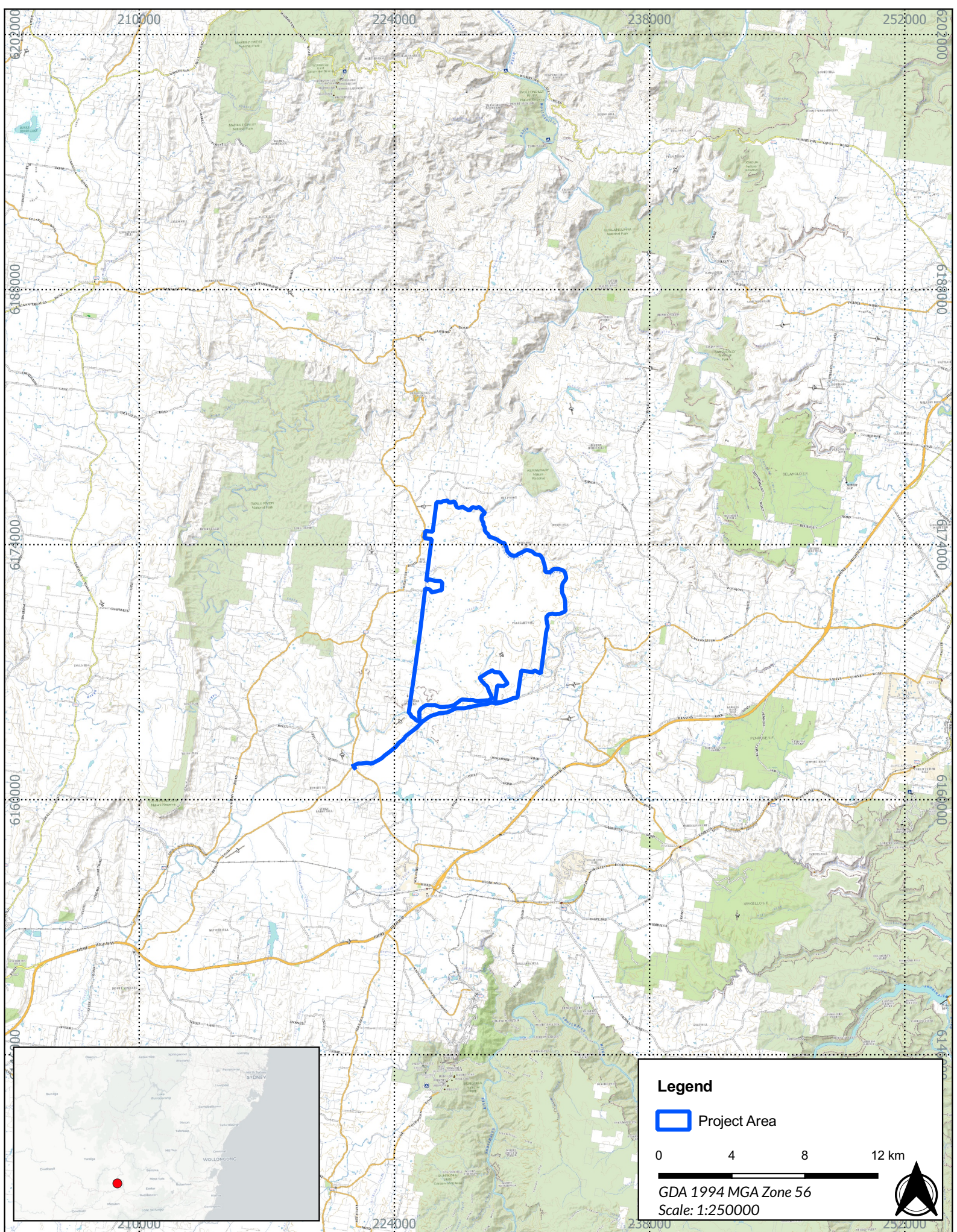
The National Trust provided a copy of their listing card for the Arthursleigh Group which includes the Woolshed, Shearers Quarters, Homestead and former staff quarters as buildings of significance. The listing card provides a description of the buildings and their history as well as that of the property and provides the only Statement of Significance for the site which was utilised in Section 2.1.

## PROJECT TEAM AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The project team has been led by Dr Amanda Markham (Principal Archaeologist, Austral) who has managed the project and provided input into the assessment approach and management recommendations. Dr Amanda Markham completed the initial site survey with Alexander Beben (Director, Austral) and Nicci Foster (Project Manager – Heritage, Austral) completing a more detailed survey. Felicity Smolenaers (Graduate Archaeologist, Austral) authored this report with Nicci Foster's assistance. David Marcus (Director, Austral) reviewed the draft report for quality assurance and technical adequacy. Finn Otley (GIS Operator, Austral) prepared all the mapping presented in this report.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE REPORT

This assessment includes an assessment of archaeological values to support the EIS being prepared by the Proponent. The report must be read in conjunction with the EIS as it refers to supporting documentation not included within this report. It does not include an assessment of Aboriginal cultural heritage that may be present within the Project Area, which is detailed in the standalone Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment also being prepared by Austral for the project. The results, assessments and judgements contained in this report are constrained by the standard limitations of historical research and by the unpredictability inherent in archaeological zoning from the desktop. Whilst every effort has been made to gain insight into the historical values of the Project Area, Austral cannot be held accountable for errors or omissions arising from such constraining factors.



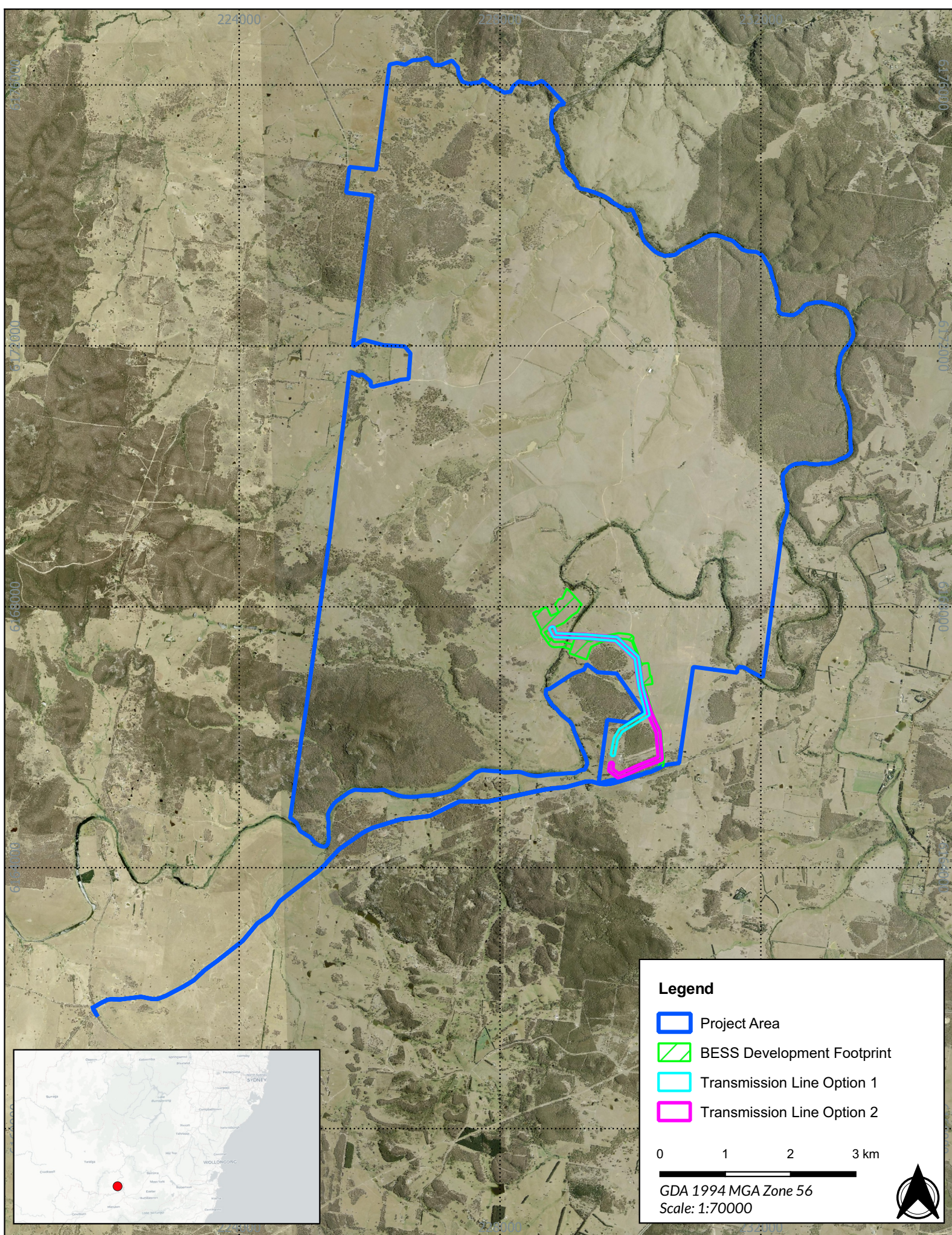
**Figure 1.1 - Location of the Project Area**

22070 - Wattle Creek BESS - SoHI

Source: NSW LPI Basemap, CartoDB Positron

Drawn by: FOT Date: 2025-02-26





**Figure 1.2 - Current aerial of the Project Area**

22070 - Wattle Creek BESS - SoHI

Source: NSW LPI Aerial, CartoDB Positron

Drawn by: FOT Date: 2025-03-11



## ABBREVIATIONS

The following are common abbreviations that are used within this report:

Austral	Austral Archaeology Pty Ltd
ACHA	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
Burra Charter	<i>Burra Charter: Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 2013</i>
CHL	Commonwealth Heritage List
CMP	Conservation Management Plan
DCP	Development Control Plan
DPE	Department of Planning and Environment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA Act	<i>NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
EPBC Act	<i>Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999</i>
EPI	Environmental Planning Instrument
HAA	Historical Archaeological Assessment
Heritage Act	<i>NSW Heritage Act 1977</i>
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
IHO	Interim Heritage Order
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
MW	Megawatt
NSW	New South Wales
NHL	National Heritage List
NPW Act	<i>NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i>
RNE	Register of the National Estate
S170 Register	Heritage and Conservation Register
S140 Permit	An application under Section 140 of the <i>NSW Heritage Act 1977</i>
S60 Permit	An application under Section 60 of the <i>NSW Heritage Act 1977</i>
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SHI	State Heritage Inventory
SHR	State Heritage Register
SoHI	Statement of Heritage Impact
Project Area	1001 Canyonleigh Road, Brayton, New South Wales
The Proponent	Spark Renewables Pty Ltd
Upper Lachlan DCP	<i>Upper Lachlan Development Control Plan 2010</i>

Austral	Austral Archaeology Pty Ltd
Upper Lachlan LEP	Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan 2010

## 1.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 1.1.1 THE HERITAGE ITEM

The Project Area is not currently listed on any heritage database; however, Arthursleigh has been recommended for inclusion within the *Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan 2010* (Upper Lachlan LEP) as an item of local significance following a heritage study (Tracey 2008). This recommendation was further bolstered through a review of the heritage study conducted by Dr Jennifer Tracey between 2019 to 2022 (Tracey 2022). This review was moved to be advertised for feedback in the community at an ordinary meeting at the Upper Lachlan Shire Council on 18 August 2022.

Arthursleigh has a significant connection to early European settlement and was established by Hannibal Macarthur when he was granted 1,000 acres (404 hectares) in 1819. During Macarthur's ownership, aided by his brother Charles, the property reached 19,780 acres (8,004 hectares) and included several buildings such as the homestead, woolshed and shearer's quarters, making them some of the earliest structures in the region. In 1878, under the ownership of Thomas Holt, the Uniting Church and adjacent cemetery were constructed and added to the list of structures within the Arthursleigh estate.

### 1.1.2 HERITAGE LISTINGS

The following section summarises the relevant statutory context, including heritage listings, acts and environmental planning instruments that are relevant to the Project Area and its cultural heritage.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999**

The *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) established the Australian Heritage Council (formerly the Australian Heritage Commission) and provides for the protection of cultural heritage at a national level and items owned or managed by the Commonwealth. The EPBC Act has established 2 heritage registers:

- Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL): for significant items owned or managed by Commonwealth Government agencies.
- National Heritage List (NHL): for items assessed as being of national cultural significance.

A referral under the EPBC Act that is approved by the Australian Heritage Council is required for works to an item registered on either of these lists to ensure that the item's significance is not impacted upon.

**No part of the site appears on either the CHL or the NHL.**

The Australian Heritage Council is also responsible for keeping the Register of the National Estate (RNE). In 2007, the RNE was frozen, and no further sites were added to it. Although considered defunct, the RNE exists as a non-statutory database detailing information about more than 13,000 places throughout Australia. For Commonwealth properties, the RNE was superseded by the CHL and NHL lists.

**No part of the site appears on the RNE.**

## NEW SOUTH WALES HERITAGE ACT 1977

The *NSW Heritage Act 1977* (Heritage Act) is a set of legal requirements and pathways established with the goal of conserving the environmental heritage of NSW, that is:

*...those places, buildings, works, relics, moveable objects, and precincts, of State or local heritage significance...*

In accordance with this, a list of heritage significant sites is kept under Part 3A of the Heritage Act which is known as the State Heritage Register (SHR).

The Heritage Council is the approval authority under the Heritage Act for works to an item on the SHR. Section 57(1) of the Heritage Act identifies the need for Heritage Council approval if the work involves the following tasks:

- Demolishing the building or work.
- Damaging or despoiling the place, precinct or land, or any part of the place, precinct or land.
- Moving, damaging or destroying the relic or moveable object.
- Excavating any land for the purpose of exposing or moving the relic.
- Carrying out any development in relation to the land on which the building, work or relic is situated, the land that comprises the place, or land within the precinct.
- Altering the building, work, relic or moveable object.
- Displaying any notice or advertisement on the place, building, work, relic, moveable object or land, or in the precinct; and
- Damaging or destroy any tree or other vegetation on or remove any tree or other vegetation from the place, precinct or land.

Demolition of an SHR item (in whole) is prohibited under the Heritage Act, unless the item constitutes a danger to its occupants or the public. A component of an SHR item may only be demolished if it does not contribute to the significance of the item. Section 57(1) of the Heritage Act also applies to archaeological remains (such as relics) within an SHR site, and excavation can only proceed subject to approval of a permit application under Section 60 of the Heritage Act (S60 Permit) by Heritage NSW.

Heritage NSW has issued a set of Standard Exemptions to subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act that allow for certain activities and works to occur to SHR items without the need for an approval under Section 60. General Condition 6 of these exemptions does not permit the removal of relics (*NSW Government Gazette [GG], No. 318, 13 November 2020*). Therefore, any work or activity that may result in the removal of relics from an SHR site would need to proceed with an approval under Section 60 of the Heritage Act.

**No part of the site is listed on the SHR.**

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCEPTIONS

A schedule of exceptions pursuant to subsection 139(4) of the Heritage Act were introduced on 1 March 2022. These exceptions allow for the disturbance or excavation of land without an excavation permit under subsections 139(1) or 139(2) of the Heritage Act (*Government Gazette of the State of New South Wales 1983*) provided that the works fall under one or more of the exceptions described in Clause 2 and which are summarised below in Table 1.1. A schedule of exceptions pursuant to subsection 139(4) of the Heritage Act were introduced on 1 March 2022.

These exceptions allow for the disturbance or excavation of land without an excavation permit under subsections 139(1) or 139(2) of the Heritage Act (Government Gazette of the State of New South Wales 1983) provided that the works fall under one or more of the exceptions described in Clause 2 and which are summarised below in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1 Summary of archaeological exceptions under Section 139(4) of the Heritage Act.**

Exception	Requirement
A	<i>Any disturbance or excavation of land that has limited archaeological research potential, as demonstrated by a heritage management document, such as an Archaeological Assessment, completed within the last 5 years.</i>
B	<i>Any disturbance or excavation of land that constitutes minor works involving limited impact to relics of local heritage significance, in accordance with Relics of local heritage significance: a guide for minor works with limited impact (Heritage NSW 2022a).</i>
C	<i>Any disturbance or excavation of land that constitutes minor works involving limited impact to relics of local heritage significance, in accordance with Relics of local heritage significance: a guide for minor works with limited impact (Heritage NSW 2022a).</i>
D	<i>Any disturbance or excavation of land for archaeological test excavation of relics of local heritage significance completed in accordance with the guideline Relics of local heritage significance: a guide for archaeological test excavation (Heritage NSW 2022b).</i>
E	<i>Any disturbance or excavation of land for archaeological monitoring of relics of local heritage significance completed in accordance with the guideline Relics of local heritage significance: a guide for archaeological monitoring (Heritage NSW 2022c).</i>
F	<p><i>Any disturbance or excavation of land:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>i. for the purpose of exposing underground utility services infrastructure which occurs within an existing service trench and will not affect any other relics.</i></li> <li><i>ii. to carry out inspections or emergency maintenance or repair on underground utility services with due care taken to avoid effects on any other relics.</i></li> <li><i>iii. to maintain, repair, or replace underground utility services to buildings which will not affect any other relics.</i></li> <li><i>iv. to maintain or repair the foundations of an existing building which will not affect any associated relics.</i></li> <li><i>v. to expose survey marks for use in conducting a land survey.</i></li> </ul>

In addition to the exceptions listed in clauses 2(a) to 2(f), the works must also be undertaken in compliance with the General Conditions proscribed under Clause 3. The General Conditions state that the exceptions detailed above do not apply to Aboriginal objects that are protected under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, relics of State heritage significance or that are subject to an IHO. The General Conditions also state that the exceptions are self-assessed and therefore it is the responsibility of the Oproponent to ensure that the proposed activities and works fall under the proscribed activities.

Adequate records of activities must be kept for auditing purposes and the activities that are completed must be undertaken by people with knowledge, skills and experience appropriate to the work, certain activities such as archaeological testing and monitoring are subject to certain levels of proscribed experience as set out in the guidelines (Heritage NSW 2022b).

Any activities or works that do not fit strictly within the exceptions outlined in the schedule of exemptions will need to be completed in accordance with an approval under Section 140 of the Heritage Act.

### **HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION REGISTERS**

Under Section 170 of the Heritage Act, Government instrumentalities must keep a Heritage and Conservation Register (a Section 170 Register) of items under the control or ownership of the agency which are, or could, be listed as heritage items (of State or local significance). Heritage Council approval is required for sites to be removed from their respective Section 170 registers, for ownership of the property to be transferred, and for the agency in question to vacate or demolish any listed place, building, or work.

**No part of the Project Area is listed under any identified Section 170 register.**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING INSTRUMENTS**

An Environmental Planning Instrument (EPI) is made under the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). An EPI can be a Development Control Plan (DCP), a Local Environmental Plan (LEP) or a State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP).

#### **UPPER LACHLAN LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2010**

The current LEP for the heritage item is the Upper Lachlan LEP. Part 5.10 of the Upper Lachlan LEP deals with heritage conservation, and subsections (2) and (3) determine whether development consent needs to be granted by the Upper Lachlan Council before any activities occur that may impact cultural heritage. Heritage items are listed under Schedule 5, Part 1 of the Upper Lachlan LEP.

**No part of the Project Area is listed on Schedule 5 of the Upper Lachlan LEP.**

#### **UPPER LACHLAN DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN 2010**

Section 3.9 and 4.4 of the Upper Lachlan DCP relate to proposals impacting heritage items only. While the Project Area is not currently listed as locally significant, the general guidelines in Section 4.4 of the Upper Lachlan DCP should be viewed and the compatibility of the proposal to it should be reviewed.

### **NATIONAL TRUST AUSTRALIA**

Several of the historic buildings that are located within the Project Area, appear on the non-statutory National Trust Register encompassing sites of historic, landscape and demonstrative significance. This group of buildings referred to as the Arthursleigh Group (#R3967) includes the:

- Homestead
- Woolshed
- Shearers Quarters
- Former Staff Quarters

The National Trust has the Arthursleigh Group listed with the following statement of significance;

1. *Historic: the property is one of the oldest and largest in the district. It was settled in about 1820, only shortly after the opening of the area to white settlement in May 1819. It was taken up by Hannibal MacArthur, brother of John MacArthur, and was devoted to fine wool production from its earliest days. The woolshed and part of the homestead survive from this period.*
2. *Demonstrative: the homestead, woolshed, shearers quarters and former staff quarters as a group illustrate the functions of a large rural property. This significance is enhanced by the great historic significance of the property as a whole.*
3. *Landscape: Arthursleigh as a whole.*

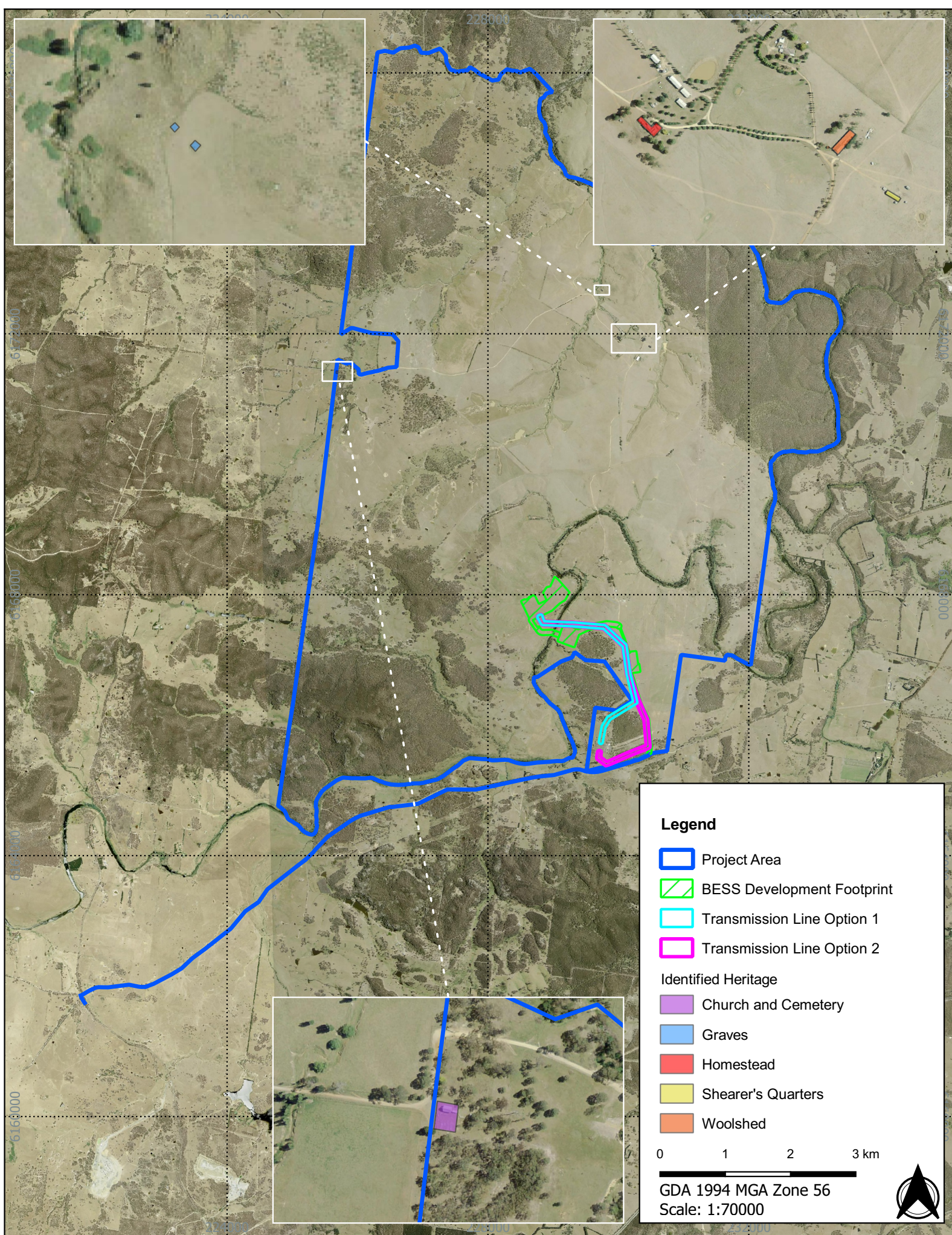
### **1.1.3 SITE AND ITS CONTEXT**

The Project Area is located within the Brayton locality and is situated between the Wollondilly River, Canyonleigh Road and vegetated land. The Project Area is a farming property of predominately grazing land, with a mixture of light mature vegetation, waterways and existing farming and energy infrastructure. The property is an undulating landscape with attractive views and vistas across the site and to neighbouring properties.

The identified heritage items within the site comprise a homestead, shearers' quarters, convict-built woolshed, a cemetery, and the uniting church. The homestead was built in the 1820s followed by the granite woolshed in the 1830s, with the uniting church having been constructed in 1879. All the heritage items are still extant within the parts of the Project Area where they were originally constructed. Minor upgrades to the woolshed, shearer's quarters and uniting church have been completed over time, and the homestead has seen extensions added to expand it to its current state and is still being used for housing. Despite these upgrades and extensions, the buildings are still representative of their time adding to the historical significance of this site. The location of the heritage items is shown in Figure 1.3.

### **1.1.4 THE DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT**

The development footprint is located entirely in the southern portion of the Project Area, as identified in Figure 1.3. The area contains no structures or identified heritage and is a mixture of grazing land, light vegetation and waterways.



**Figure 1.3 - Identified heritage within the development footprint**  
 22070 - Wattle Creek BESS - SoHI

## 1.2 SITE SUMMARY HISTORY

The following has been compiled through historical research, physical site inspections and previous reporting completed for this site.

### 1.2.1 DOCUMENTED HISTORY

The following historical background is designed to contextualise a site-specific history which will aid in understanding the heritage values of the Project Area. This work will provide a useful and concise summary of the history of the Project Area.

#### HISTORY OF THE GOULBURN AREA

The establishment of the colony of NSW quickly saw the surrounding agricultural land exhausted, forcing settlement into new areas and as a result, a series of tracks began to form from Sydney into the outer regions (Schofield 2000, p.2). The Goulburn and Marulan region was first explored by Europeans in 1798, when John Wilson, a former convict, and 2 other men were sent by Governor John Hunter on an expedition to the Southern Highlands of NSW, with the group coming within 6 miles (9.7 kilometres) of the current location of Goulburn (Chisholm 1967, Leever 2006, Australian Museum Business Services 2012, 13). A second expedition took place, but it was ultimately decided by Governor Phillip King that exploration should cease due to concerns about uncontrolled settlement expansion and cattle security in the region (Jervis 1973, 1–2, Mount Gibraltar Landcare and Bushcare 2007, p.39). It was not until 1818 that Deputy Surveyor-General Meehan and Hamilton Hume fully surveyed the region surrounding Goulburn during their exploration of the area known as the County of Argyle (Wyatt 1941, 25, Leever 2006).

As noted above, the lack of development in the area early on was prevented by a ban on access to the Government cow pastures from Governor King. This was due to a large herd of wild cattle being present which were the likely offspring of 5 cows and 1 bull that escaped from Port Jackson in 1788, escaping in the area and the Governor wanted to allow them space for breeding (Bladen et al. 1895:203). However, this ban was later extended to ensure all attempts to recover the cattle had been performed, to prevent the theft and exploitation of the animals, (Edward Higgenbotham & Associates Pty Ltd 2009:26–27; Leever 2006:19) The ban lasted until 1821, which had the basic effect of stopping any widespread development or exploration of the area. Grants began to be distributed in the 1820s after the ban was lifted, when pastoral stations were established and run by convict labour; a few landowners settled on their land, but others chose to run the property as an absentee owner while living closer to Sydney (Edward Higgenbotham & Associates Pty Ltd, n.d., p.27).

Goulburn itself was originally intended to settle discharged soldiers from the NSW Royal Veteran Companies. Its location was decided in 1828, approximately 4 kilometres to the north-east of the current town at the confluence of the Wollondilly and Mulwaree. However, the location was not approved by Governor Richard Bourke and he sought to have the township moved to the current location of the town centre in 1832 (Selkirk and Walker 1919). Buildings had been constructed in the old town such as a courthouse and lockup, so this came to be known as Old Goulburn or North Goulburn.

At the time there was still no road to Sydney, and the settlers in Goulburn and surrounds were growing weary of the difficulty in travelling through the area. This also prevented much interest in settling in Goulburn and by 1834 the town contained only a few buildings (Wyatt 1941, p.39).

It appears that interest in the town was quickly piqued after the Great Southern Road was completed and by 1837 there were 300 inhabitants in Goulburn and many brick houses were being constructed. Farms growing tobacco and cereals became common in the area, with most of the plots being small holds run by freemen (Wyatt 1941, p.41).

## HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE PROJECT AREA

The following section seeks to document the known development history of the site.

### PHASE 0 – PRE- 1819

The Southern Highlands region is part of the land traditionally occupied by the Gundungurra people, whose land encompasses most of the land surrounding the Cox, Nattai, Nepean, Wingecarribee and Wollondilly rivers (Organ 1990). The name Wingecarribee itself is derived from the name “Wundjigaribay”, meaning “white waratah” (Northern Illawarra Aboriginal Collective Inc. 2008, p.2). The people occupying the Wingecarribee region were a sub-tribe of the Gundungurra, speaking Midthung and creating distinctive tree carvings to commemorate the deceased (Northern Illawarra Aboriginal Collective Inc. 2008, p.2). Before the arrival of European explorers, the Gundungurra also inhabited the Blue Mountains region along with the Burra and Darug tribes (Gundungurra Tribal Council n.d.). The region has rich volcanic soils supporting a large variety of plants and animal species, such as kangaroos, wild ducks and lyre-birds (Jervis 1973, p.1), allowing the Gundungurra people to move around the area, including the Burratorang Valley and Mount Gibraltar, following the seasonal availability of different food resources (Flood 1973, p.11, Mount Gibraltar Landcare and Bushcare 2007, p.30). They would move in small groups and meet with members of other groups through social arrangements (Mount Gibraltar Landcare and Bushcare 2007, p.30).

Rich (1988) collected ethnographic accounts that suggest that Bowral, within the lands of the Gundungurra people, was also used by the Wodi Wodi people as a route across the Illawarra escarpment. The Gundungurra people are said to have fought with the Hartley, Illawarra, and Shoalhaven tribes, although they also had friendly relationships with these groups (Bower 2018:61). Given the complexity of Aboriginal tribal relationships and the season-based mobility of the Gundungurra, it is likely that this land was used by other groups such as the Wodi Wodi and Tharawal people from the east coast as well as the other previously mentioned tribes (Gundungurra Tribal Council n.d.).

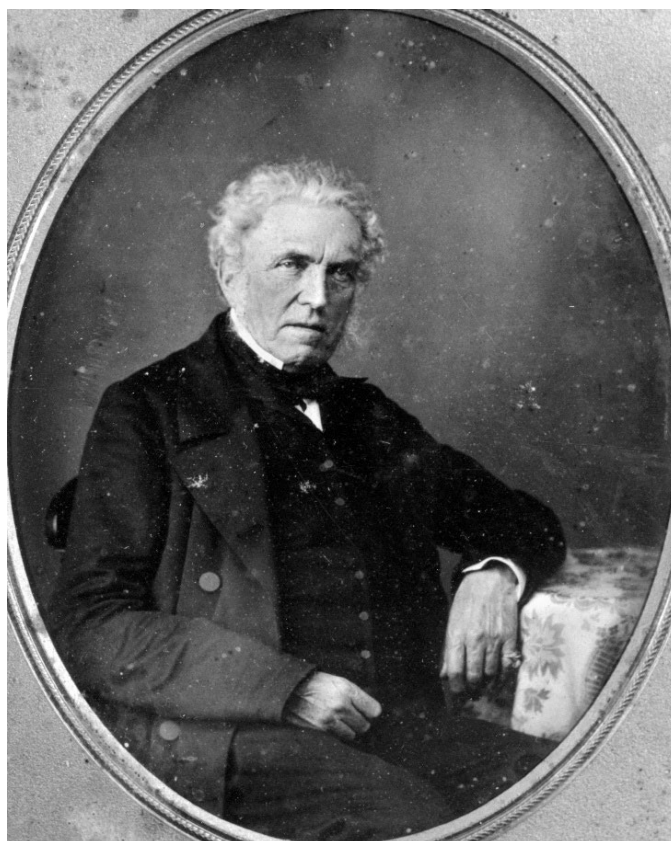
The earliest known account of contact between the Aboriginal people of the Southern Highlands is recorded in the journal of Wilson (1798) and relayed by Jervis (1973). It refers to the Aboriginal people wearing ankle-length animal skins and Wilson capturing an Aboriginal girl with the intent to “learn something” from her (Jervis 1973, pp.1-2). While the arrival of European settlers into the Southern Highlands devastated the Aboriginal population of the region due to starvation, conflict and disease, many artefacts and sites have been located which reflect the activities of the Gundungurra people from both before and after this time. Paintings, drawings, stencils, axe-grinding grooves, rock shelters, open campsites, scar trees, flakes and tooled items have been identified in the Southern Highlands, which depict how Aboriginal people were using the land before settlement by Europeans. Some of the stone artefacts found in the region have been determined to consist of raw materials not found in the local area, suggesting migration and possible trade relationships (Mount Gibraltar Landcare and Bushcare 2007, pp.30-31).

NIAC (2008) provides ethnographic information for the Bong Bong region. The region is referred to as “Bayoong Bayoong” meaning “frogs” due to the presence of the Wingecarribee Swamp, which has become the name “Bong Bong”. The Bong Bong region was commonly travelled through by the Gundungurra people as they moved between Woronora Plateau and Cow Pastures through Appin and Kangaroo Valley into the Shoalhaven (Northern Illawarra Aboriginal Collective Inc. 2008, p.2). The report by NIAC (2008, p.3) also describes Major Mitchell’s 1828 observations of the Bong Bong tribe constructing bark shelters as their residences and large groups of Aboriginal people being observed moving through the Throsby Park estate in the early 1830s.

**PHASE 1 – 1819 TO 1853**

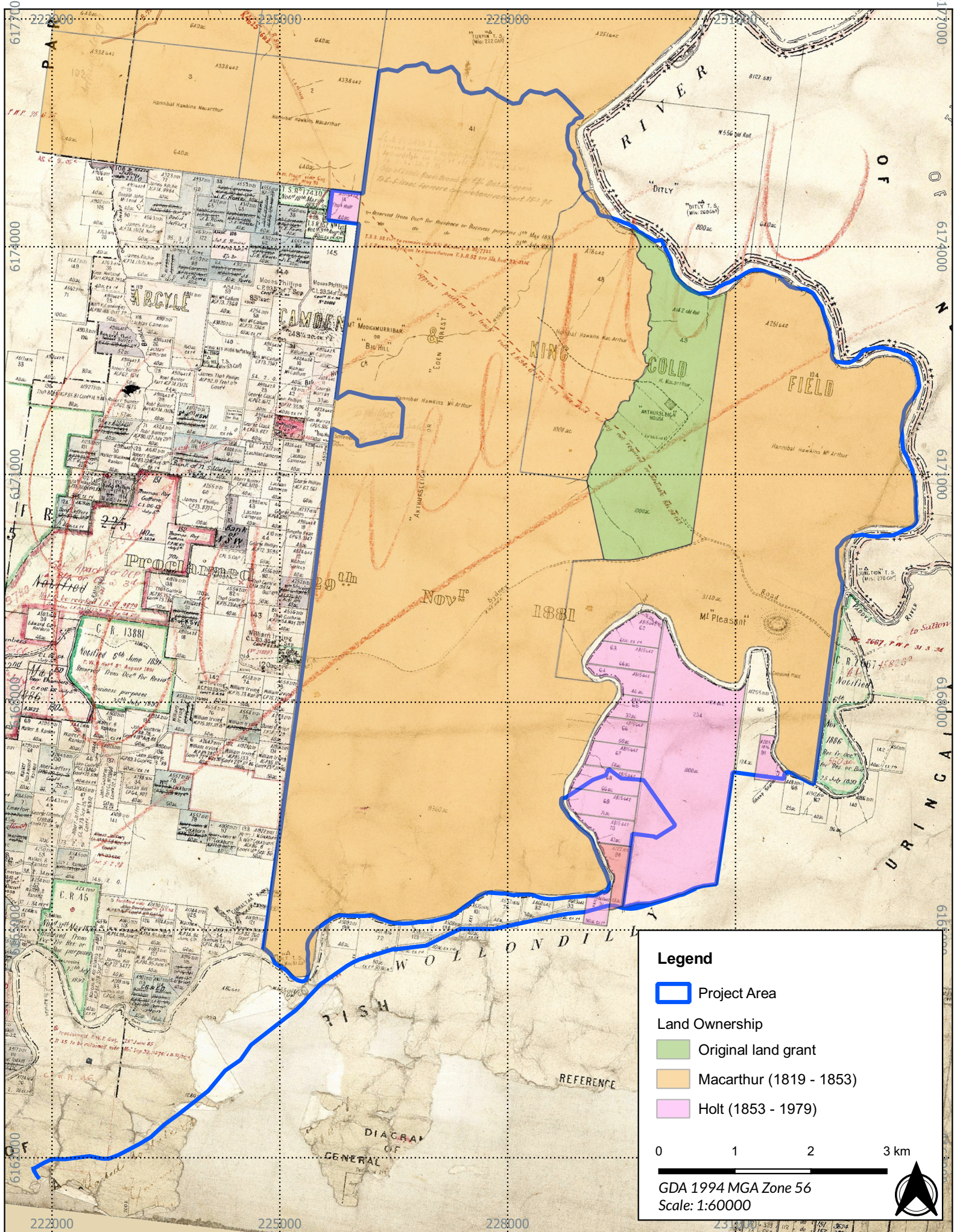
Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur (Figure 1.4) received a 1,000-acre (404 hectares) grant promise for land in the Parish of Eden Forest (Portion 49) from Governor Lachlan Macquarie in 1819 which would be the foundation of Arthursleigh (Figure 1.15); this promise was formalised in 1822 (Fletcher 2002, 148, Hodek Jnr 2004). This original grant was considered a prime location due to it being bounded by the Wollondilly River and Argyle Road, providing both access to water and transportation (Fletcher 2002). Over the following years, Macarthur continued to acquire land in the area amassing a total of 19,780 acres (8,005 hectares), of which 12,160 (4,921 hectares) acres were free grant land (*New South Wales Government Gazette*, 14 February 1838, p. 129). By 1848 he owned one of the 'largest private establishments in NSW, so distant from any township' (Nairn 2006). Listed below are the portions granted to Macarthur:

- Portion 49 – original land grant 1819
- Portion 48 – granted in 1825
- Portion 41 – granted in 1827
- Portion 104 - purchased in 1838
- Portions 1-4 and 101-102 – granted in 1838
- Portion 98 – purchased in 1839
- Portion 97 – purchased in 1847



**Figure 1.4** Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur.

*Note - Source: Australian Royalty: Genealogy of the Colony of NSW n.d Australian Royalty.*



**Figure 1.5 - Historical parish map of Eden Forest**

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Source: HLRV NSW

Drawn by: FOT Date: 2025-02-26



Macarthur utilised the accumulated land for sheep farming, grazing and the production of wool. While the exact date of construction is unknown, in the late 1820s to early 1830s, Macarthur built a small cottage and outbuildings for the overseers of his livestock (Figure 1.6), while he and his family continued to live at his “Vineyard” estate in Parramatta (Fletcher 2002, Nairn 2006). The homestead has been described as ‘early colonial style with Georgian symmetry and a hipped roof and was constructed out of granite that was locally sourced, with timber roof shingles (Fletcher 2002, p.69). This building still stands, although it has been modified, and elements of the original homestead built by Macarthur can be seen from outside the building alongside later extensions. The homestead Macarthur built can be seen in the Conrad Martens painting from 1839 that showcases Arthursleigh (Figure 1.7.)



**Figure 1.6** Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur's Homestead (image taken in 1893).

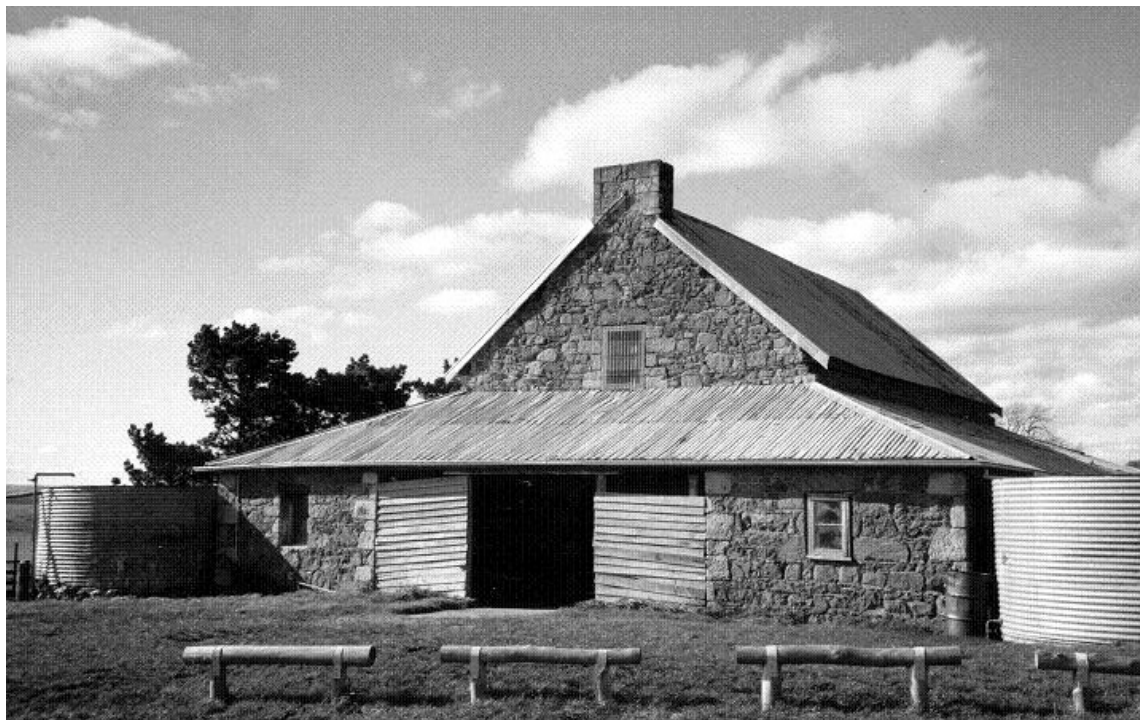
*Note - Source: Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc.*



**Figure 1.7** View of Arthursleigh by Conrad Martens, 1839.

*Note - Source: NSW State Library, Call Number ML 105.*

During the 1830s, Macarthur also commissioned the building of a fine rubble granite woolshed with a shingled roof that would be big enough to shear large numbers of sheep and then store the wool from this process (*The Goulburn Herald and Chronicle*, 16 December 1871, p. 4) [Figure 1.8]. The woolshed was built by convicts who already resided on the property as part of their assignments for free labour (Fletcher 2002:72). The original building still stands with only a minor alteration made to the exterior of the building following the removal of the loading ramp.



**Figure 1.8** Convict built woolshed c.1830s (Source: Chrissy Fletcher).

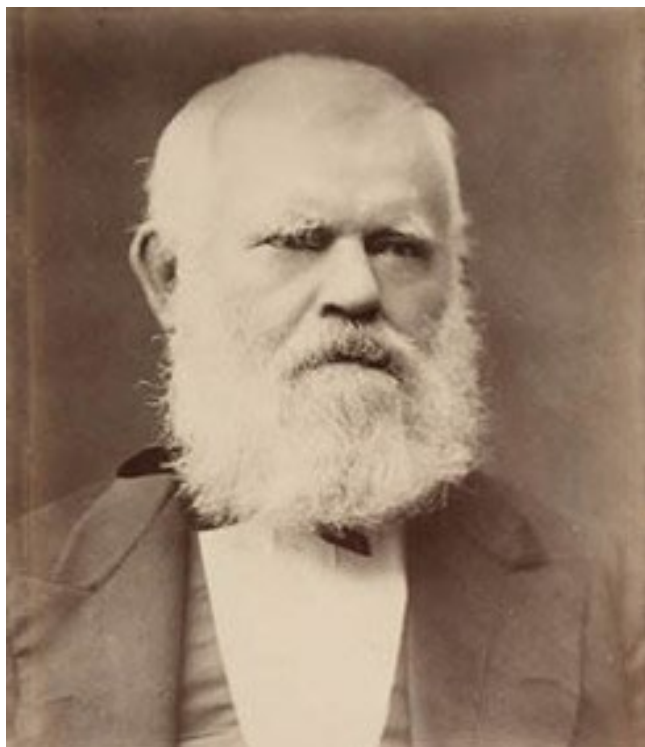
The 1840s saw the Great Depression affecting many, including Hannibal, who mortgaged Arthursleigh in 1843. In 1848, bankruptcy Hannibal was declared bankrupt and Arthursleigh became the property of the Australian Trust Company (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 August 1948, p.4), which ran it until its sale in 1853 to Thomas Holt (Fletcher 2002, Hodek Jnr 2004, Nairn 2006).

#### **PHASE 2 – 1853 TO 1979**

In September 1853, Thomas Holt a businessman and entrepreneur, purchased the 19,700 acres (7,972 hectares) that was the entirety of Arthursleigh for a total of 11,764 pounds, 19 shillings and 9 pence from the Australian Trust Company (Fletcher 2002; Salt 2008, Besmaw Pty Ltd n.d.) [Figure 1.9]. He then went on to purchase more land surrounding the existing titles to expand the Arthursleigh estate as follows (Figure 1.5):

- Portion 14 – purchased in 1866
- Portion 96 – purchased in 1869
- Portions 62 and 64 – purchased in 1871
- Portions 86 and 90 – purchased in 1871
- Portions 65-70 – purchased in 1871
- Portion 98 – purchased in 1872
- Portion 63 – purchased in 1872

- Portions 31 and 234 – purchased in 1871
- Portion 97 – purchased in 1873
- Portion 91 – purchased in 1875



**Figure 1.9** Thomas Holt (Source: Australian Dictionary of Biography).

Holt advertised 4,000 acres (1,618 hectares) of the estate for sale in 1855, in an effort to subdivide the estate, which later led him to advertise “farmlets” for lease in 1859 (Fletcher 2002, p.143). Despite the sales and leasing of portions of the Arthurlesigh estate, Holt retained 20,124 acres (8,144 hectares) by 1871 (Fletcher 2002, p.143).

In August 1878, Holt leased 2 acres (0.80 hectares) of his estate (located just inside the western boundary of the Project Area) to the Trustees of the Primitive Methodist Church Goulburn to build a church that would allow multiple denominations to congregate (Fletcher 2002, Eddy 2003, Churches Australia 2001). The term of the lease was for 999 years and, if demanded, an annual payable rent of one peppercorn (Eddy 2003, p.6, Churches Australia 2001). The Victorian Gothic-style church (Figure 1.10) designed by HO Bell of Goulburn, was constructed with rubble stone walls, a shingled roof lined internally with stained and varnished pine, and windows of opaque glass in lead quarries. It opened and held its first service in 1879 (Fletcher 2002, p.103, Eddy 2003, p.7). A cemetery adjoins the church (Figure 1.11) with the first recorded burial occurring in 1878, and it is still used today.

A private cemetery for the homestead, located in the paddock approximately 750 metres from the homestead, presently contains 2 marked graves. The known burials were for Donald Bain, who died at the property at 47 years of age in 1871, and John Morison who drowned in Island Creek at age 40 in 1880 (Fletcher 2002:96–97). While these are the only known and marked graves on the site, it is thought that there are more unmarked graves on the property and have the potential to be located in the vicinity of the marked graves (Fletcher 2002:96).

While there are no clear construction dates within the historical record, it is believed that during Holt's ownership of the property, the shearer's quarters and staff quarters were built on the property within the vicinity of the homestead and woolshed. The shearer's quarters are still on site today; however, the staff quarters have been demolished. According to the National Trust's listing, the shearer's quarters comprise 12 rooms, with a dining room and kitchen and was constructed using corrugated iron for the roof, and feathered weatherboard cladding for the main building (Dawson 1987:4). There was also a wash house, meat house and a small 2-bed hut that made up the shearers' quarters buildings (Dawson 1987:4; Fletcher 2002:73).

On his death in 1888, Thomas Holts's estate was to be passed to the eldest son of each generation, as stipulated in his will (Thomson and Burke 2008, p.32). Alfred William Holt inherited the estate upon Thomas's death in 1888 and then left it to Claude Alfred Wallis Holt. Claude's eldest son, Eric Thomas Wallis Holt, inherited the Arthursleigh estate in 1930 which by then comprised 16,284 acres (6,589 hectares) [Fletcher 2002, p.147; Thomson and Burke 2008, p.32]. On Eric's passing in 1979, the Arthursleigh estate was bequeathed to the University of Sydney. By the time the university owned the estate, it totalled 17,720 acres (7,171 hectares), or approximately 1,700 acres (689 hectares) more than originally surveyed by William Ellis when working for Thomas Holt (Fletcher 2002, p.147).



Figure 1.10 Big Hill Uniting Church, date unknown (Source: Chrissy Fletcher).



**Figure 1.11** Big Hill Cemetery showing the church in the background.

*Note - Source: Hawkesbury on the net – Southern Highlands.*

**PHASE 3 – 1979 TO PRESENT (SYDNEY UNIVERSITY)**

Following its acquisition by the university, the property was and still is operated as a working farm and research station, with the university utilising it for teaching and research in pasture agronomy and animal science from a range of faculties within the university (Fletcher 2002, p.147, Salt 2008, p.43, The University of Sydney 2024).

The woolshed remains on the property and has changed little during this time, only seeing the demolition of the loading ramp in the 1970s (Figure 1.12 and Figure 1.13) [Fletcher 2002, p.72]. Additionally, the Big Hill Uniting Church still stands in its original place and is used by the congregation, with the building itself having only undergone alterations and repairs to preserve it (Figure 1.14) [Eddy 2003].

Aerial images from 1963, 1989 and 1997 (Figure 1.15, Figure 1.16 and Figure 1.17) also demonstrate that the property and historic buildings have undergone little change over time.



**Figure 1.12** 1830s convict-built woolshed exterior in 1988.

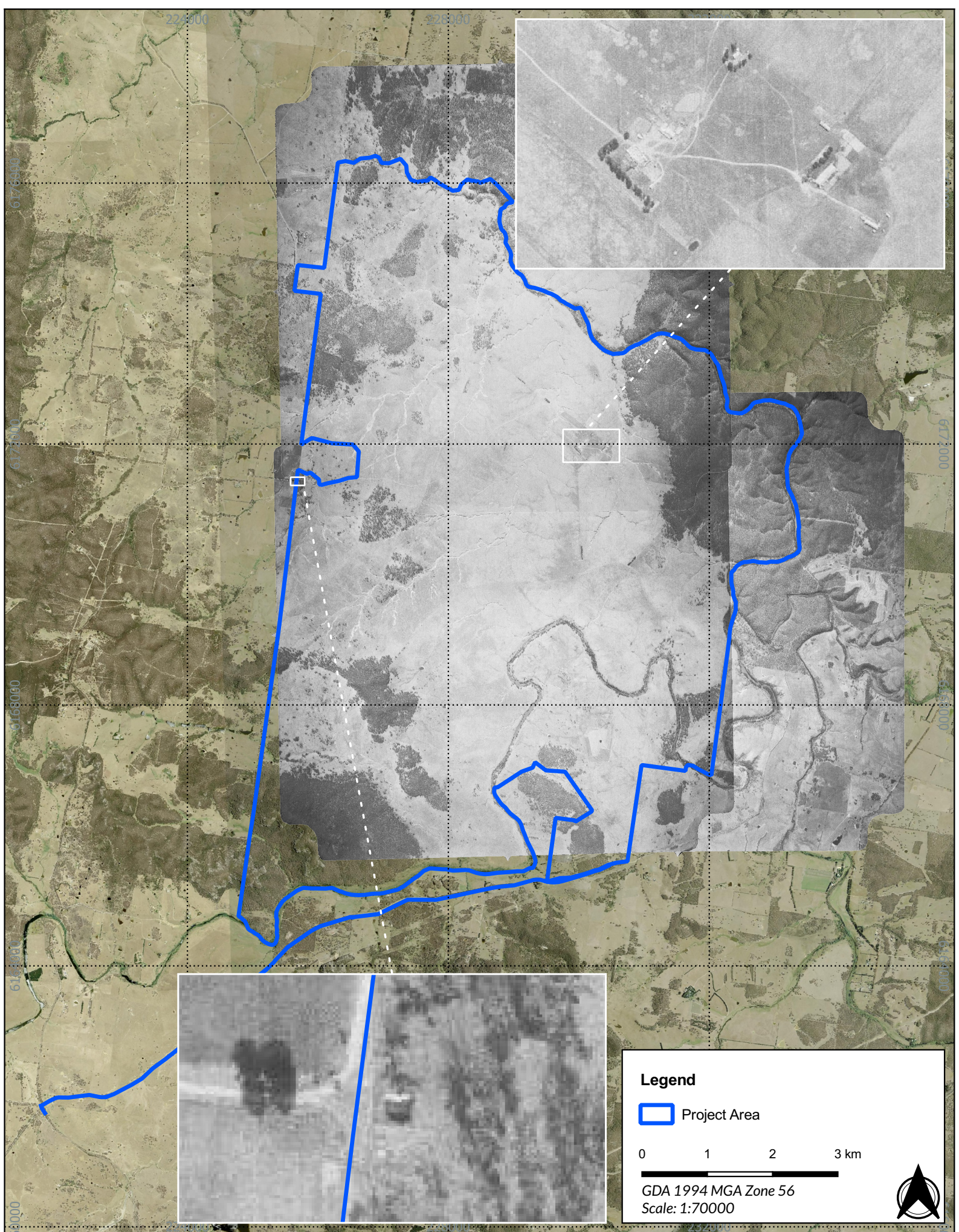
*Note - Source: National Library of Australia.*



Figure 1.13 Interior of woolshed in 1988 (Source: National Library of Australia).



Figure 1.14 Big Hill Uniting Church, present-day (Source: Churches Australia).



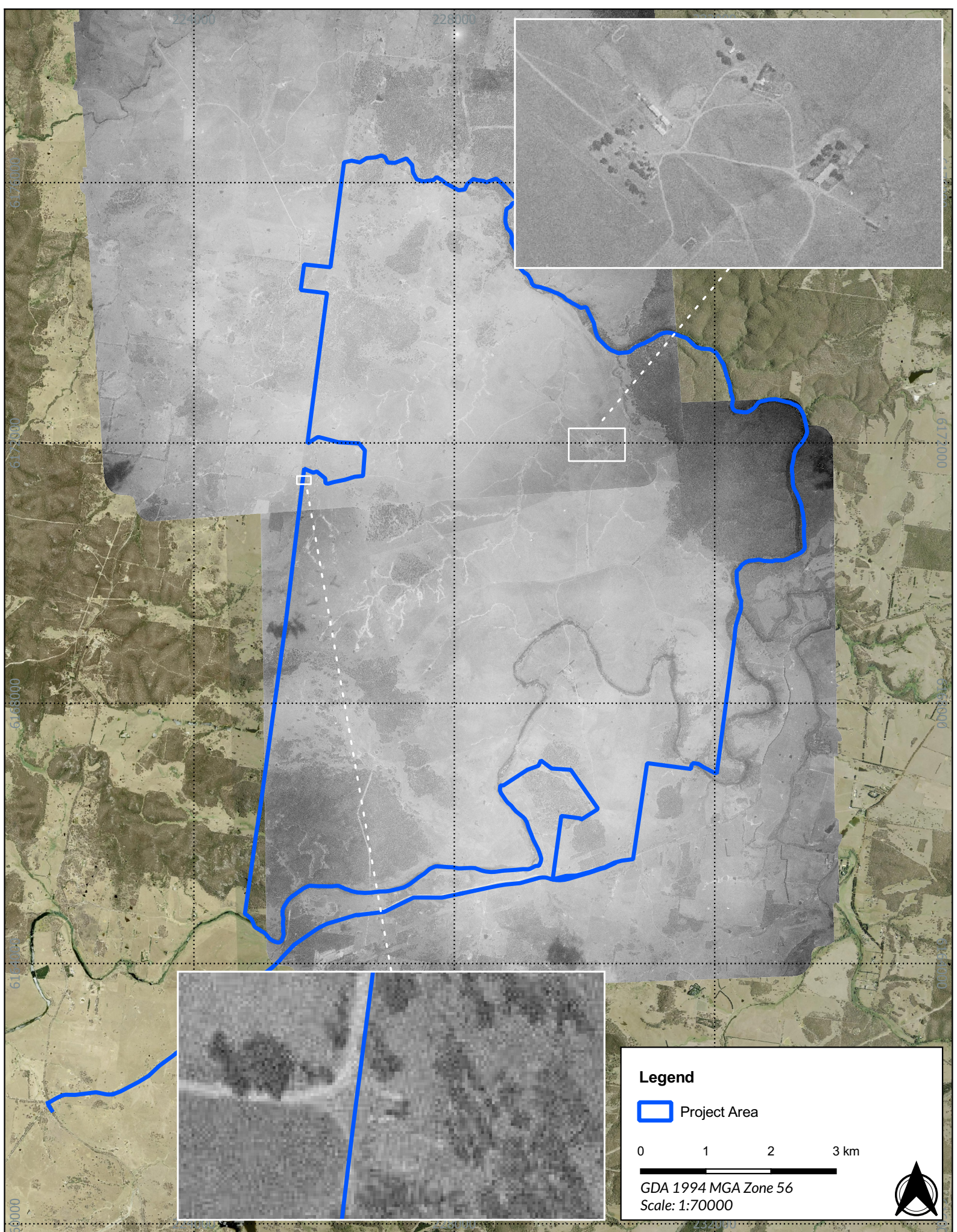
**Figure 1.15 - 1963 Historical aerial image of the Project Area and built heritage**

22070 - Wattle Creek BESS - SoHI

Source: NSW LPI Aerial, NSW Spatial Services

Drawn by: FOT Date: 2025-02-26





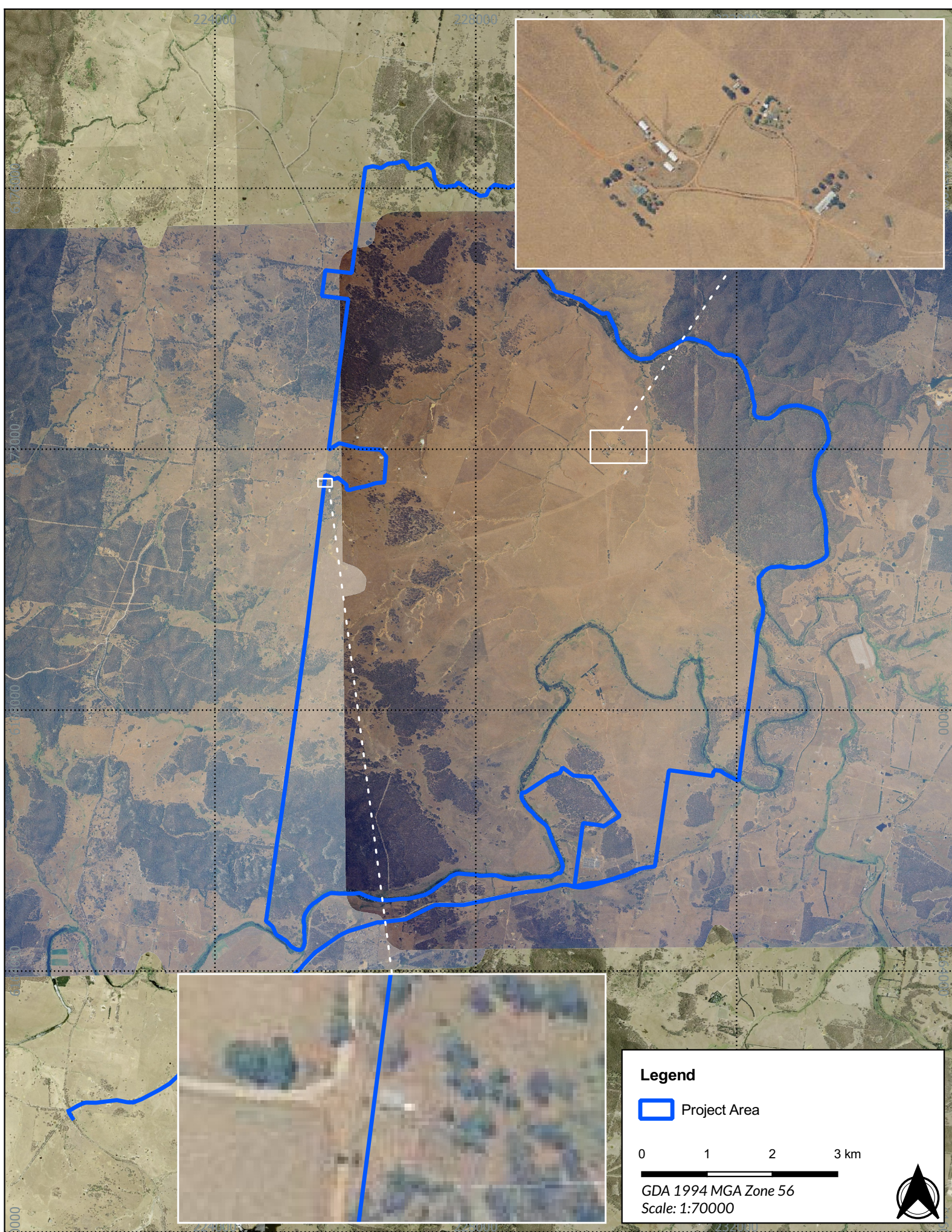
**Figure 1.16 - 1989 Historical aerial image of the Project Area and built heritage**

22070 - Wattle Creek BESS - SoHI

Source: NSW LPI Aerial, NSW Spatial Services

Drawn by: FOT Date: 2025-02-26





**Figure 1.17 - 1997 Historical aerial image of the Project Area and built heritage**

22070 - Wattle Creek BESS - SoHI

Source: NSW LPI Aerial, NSW Spatial Services

Drawn by: FOT Date: 2025-02-26



### 1.2.2 PREVIOUS PHYSICAL CHANGES

While no heritage item is listed within the Project Area, there are buildings of heritage significance that have undergone several changes during the period from being built to the present day. These changes are listed in Table 1.2 with the chronological events of the Project Area listed in Table 1.3.

**Table 1.2 Physical changes to heritage buildings**

Site	Year	Description
Homestead	1860s (?)	Weatherboard cladding was installed and re-roofed with corrugated iron (Fletcher 2002, p.70).
Homestead	1949(?)	Extensions to the house and upgrades including pressed metal walls and ceilings, rooms divided and a bathroom added (Fletcher 2002, pp.70–71).
Shearers Quarters	1950s	Steps were added to the building and the corrugated iron internal walls were replaced with Masonite (Fletcher 2002, p.73).
Woolshed	1970s	Demolition of the original loading ramp (Fletcher 2002, p.72).

**Table 1.3 Summary of chronological events relating to the Project Area.**

Phase	Summary	Date Range
0	Aboriginal occupation of the region	Pre-1819
1	Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur was granted 1,000 acres of land that would become Arthursleigh. His land holdings grew to amount to a total of 19,780 acres at the time he went bankrupt. During this time several buildings were constructed, including the Woolshed and Homestead.	1819 - 1853
2	Thomas Holt purchased the Arthursleigh estate in 1853, with it remaining in the Holt family until 1979. Holt amassed further land with the estate at the time of his death being 20,124 acres. The Big Hill Uniting Church was built in 1879 and is still standing to the present day.	1853 - 1979
3	The University of Sydney acquired 17,720 acres of the Arthursleigh estate at the bequest of Eric Holt on his death in 1979. The estate is currently used as a working farm and research facility by the university.	1979 - Present

## 1.3 PHYSICAL ANALYSIS

The following section details the condition of the heritage item, in particular the areas impacted by the proposal.

The development footprint is located within an area at least 1.8 kilometres from the heritage items (homestead, woolshed, shearers' quarters, private cemetery, Big Hill Uniting Church and attached cemetery) and is isolated wholly to a largely disturbed landscape previously utilised for farming, and in particular, grazing. The development footprint is located in a large undulating section of the property, which also assists in a lack of impact to, or view lines to and from, the heritage items.

In summary, the location of the development footprint is predominately cleared grazing land with natural landforms that have been impacted by the long history of farming at the Project Area.

## SITE SURVEY

There were 2 site inspections conducted for the Project: first by Dr Amanda Markham (Principal Archaeologist, Austral), on 6 May 2024 and a second by Alexander Beben (Director, Austral) and Nicci Foster (Project Manager – Heritage, Austral) on 4 June 2024. The surveys included inspecting the identified heritage items, recording view lines to and from the development footprint to the heritage items and seeking to locate the private “convict” cemetery behind the complex of heritage components (homestead, woolshed and shearer’s quarters).

The landscape between the homestead, woolshed, shearer’s quarters and private cemetery is largely open, cleared and undulating farming land. The view line to the development footprint is partially obscured due to the natural topography of the site. Moir Landscape Architects completed a Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment in May 2024 and determined a maximum of 25-50% visibility from the heritage items to the development footprint (Moir Landscape Architects 2025). This is explored further in Section 4.

The homestead, woolshed and shearer’s quarters are located short distances from each other in a defined agricultural complex and share view lines across the landscape (Figure 1.30 and Figure 1.31). They are located on relatively flat terrain near the top of the ridgeline and connected via an all-weather road. All 3 items are largely intact and in excellent condition with the woolshed showing the least number of changes since construction. The homestead is a weatherboard-clad dwelling with a corrugated iron roof and has clear modifications, such as an extension dated from the 1940s. There is a central, original portion and to the south, the extension that was designed to integrate with the design of the original cottage (Figure 1.25).

The woolshed is constructed from stone within the front facades, with a corrugated iron form for approximately 3 quarters of the full length of the large structure (50 metres in length) [Figure 1.18, Figure 1.19, Figure 1.20 and Figure 1.24]. It has a corrugated iron roof and internally, it is timber with exposed beams and timber flooring, timber and corrugate iron pens and timber processing benches (Figure 1.21). There is a large press, likely 19<sup>th</sup> century, within the woolshed (Figure 1.22). The woolshed has minor structural issues within the animal pen areas and on the flooring and is no longer in commercial use (Figure 1.23).

The shearer’s quarters is a long rectangular building with rooms accessible from the north-east and south-west sides, providing a number of individual rooms that appear to be shared due to the bunkbeds observed within some rooms (Figure 1.27 and Figure 1.28). It is however noted that access was limited to a few rooms and the exterior during the surveys. The exterior of the building is weatherboard, and the roofing is corrugated iron. There is a red brick chimney towards the north-east corner of the building, likely representing a communal area for workers (Figure 1.26). Due to its size, it also was likely part of a workers’ kitchen.

The private cemetery contains two confirmed grave sites for John Morrison and Donald Bain. It is located on the northern side of Island Creek approximately 750 metres north of the homestead, woolshed and shearer’s quarters complex. The oral history of the site is that this area contains unmarked graves, including those of convicts, however these were not observed during the survey.

Big Hill Uniting Church is located on the far west boundary of the property, accessible from Arthursleigh Road. The church is largely intact with a small cemetery to the south of the building (Figure 1.32 and Figure 1.33). The church is constructed from stone and has a corrugated iron roof.



**Figure 1.18** North-east facing view of the Arthursleigh woolshed front façade.



**Figure 1.19** North-west facing view of the Arthursleigh woolshed.

*Note – the image shows the side window of the front portion of the woolshed.*



**Figure 1.20** North-west facing detail close-up of the Arthursleigh woolshed stone façade.



**Figure 1.21** Interior detail of Arthursleigh woolshed.

*Note - the image shows the exposed beams and timber structural components of the woolshed.*



Figure 1.22 Press within Arthursleigh woolshed.



Figure 1.23 Interior of sheep pens within Arthursleigh woolshed.



**Figure 1.24** North-facing view of Arthursleigh woolshed.



**Figure 1.25** South-west facing view of Arthursleigh homestead.

*Note - the image shows the intersection of the original homestead with the extension.*



Figure 1.26 South facing view of the Arthursleigh shearer's quarters.



Figure 1.27 North-east facing view of the Arthursleigh shearer's quarters.



**Figure 1.28** South-west view of Arthursleigh shearer's quarters.



**Figure 1.29** North-east view of the 2 identified grave sites at Arthursleigh.

*Note – the image shows Island Creek in the foreground.*



**Figure 1.30** Viewline to the south of the shearer's quarters.

*Note – the image faces towards the development footprint, showing undulation of the site.*



**Figure 1.31** Viewline to the south of the woolshed.

*Note – the image shows the undulation of the site and faces the development footprint.*



**Figure 1.32** East facing view of the Big Hill Uniting Church.



**Figure 1.33** Big Hill Uniting Church cemetery, facing south.

## 2 SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

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### 2.1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

As identified in Section 1 of this report, the Project Area contains a homestead, woolshed and private cemetery from the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as well as a church and cemetery from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Along with the age of the items, the property Arthursleigh has links to a significant individual, Hannibal MacArthur and the wider MacArthur family, Thomas Holt and his descendants, and farming in general in NSW. Due to its age, intactness and links to prominent pioneers, Arthursleigh is considered to have heritage significance. At present, and largely due to the site not being listed on any heritage register, there is only one Statement of Significance for the Project Area which this was completed in 1987 by the National Trust of NSW. However, this assessment excludes the church and 2 cemeteries. The Statement of Significance for the “Arthursleigh Group including; the Homestead, Woolshed, Shearer’s Quarters, Former Staff Quarters” is:

1. *Historic: the property is one of the oldest and largest in the district. It was settled in about 1820, only shortly after the opening of the area to white settlement in May 1819. It was taken up by Hannibal MacArthur, brother of John MacArthur, and was devoted to fine wool production from its earliest days. The woolshed and part of the homestead survive from this period.*
2. *Demonstrative: the homestead, woolshed, shearers quarters and former staff quarters as a group illustrate the functions of a large rural property. This significance is enhanced by the great historic significance of the property as a whole.*
3. *Landscape: Arthursleigh as a whole forms a very significant man-modified landscape.*

In addition to the overall Statement of Significance, the following statements were provided for each of the individual components of the site.

Homestead:

1. *Historic: The homestead is the centre of an extremely historic property which is one of the oldest and largest in the district, having been taken up in about 1820, and part of the building dates from the earliest days of the property.*
2. *Architectural: The 1820s? portion, although it has been completely altered in detail, retains its early colonial vernacular form clearly visible on the most important elevation (facing the front garden). At least two stages of later additions are clearly recognisable both by their discrete positioning and by their differences of detail. The homestead is thus a good example of the incremental development of the building from its earliest stage as a part-time manager's cottage. Some of the additions have good quality decorative detail (i.e., pressed metal).*
3. *Landscape: The homestead, being marked by its mature garden and large windbreak pines, is visible for several kilometres over gently rolling country. It is thus a key element of a very historic man-made landscape.*

#### Woolshed:

1. *Historic: the woolshed is the most prominent building of an extremely historic property which is one of the oldest and largest in the district. Arthursleigh was the property of Hannibal MacArthur, brother of John MacArthur, and was devoted to wool production from its earliest days. The size and solidity of the woolshed when compared with the early part of the homestead shows the importance that was given to its function.*
2. *Technical: The woolshed is a rare example of such a large and early rural building. It displays features of typical vernacular construction as well as some unusual features (e.g., asymmetrical windows, false chimney).*
3. *Landscape: The woolshed is sited on a crest and its location is marked by nearby pine trees, visible from several kilometres over gently rolling country. It is thus a key element of a very historic man-made landscape.*

#### Shearer's Quarters:

*As a group they have some interest as an example of the spatial distribution of the functions of a shearers quarters (e.g., general site in the lee of the hill; cook's house and meathouse near kitchen). Their main significance as a group is historical, as they illustrate one of the functions of the homestead group and hint at the past lifestyle of shearers. This significance is enhanced by the fact that the property as a whole has great historic importance.*

#### Former Staff Quarters:

*The building has minimal architectural or technical significance. It has minor significance as illustrating one of the functions of the homestead group. This significance is enhanced by the fact that the property as a whole has great historic importance. The building has a compact gable-roofed form, and is marked by several large pine trees, and is thus a harmonious element in a very historic man-made landscape (Dawson 1987).*

Due to the age of the above Statement of Significance and the exclusion of the private cemetery, church and cemetery, as well as the lack of assessment against current criteria (Department of Planning and Environment 2023), the authors of this report have determined that a revised Statement of Significance is required. This has been provided below.

### **2.1.1 ARTHURSLEIGH – HISTORY AND CONTEXT**

As discussed in Section 1 of this report, the Project Area contains several heritage items and these have been defined as: Homestead (c1820s), Woolshed (c1830s), Shearer's Quarters (late 1800s to early 1900s) and a private "convict" cemetery (late 1800s) as well as the Big Hill Uniting Church (1879) and cemetery. The association with Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur (the nephew of John Macarthur) and later Thomas Holt adds additional significance to the site and its place in the cultural history of NSW. Furthermore, the property has considerable association with convict labour through their involvement in the construction of the woolshed and a private cemetery that may contain convict burials. The description of the site is covered in Section 1 of this report as well as its historical and physical context. Maps, plans and photographs of the items and their history are also shown in Section 1.

The following themes outlined in Table 2.1 are relevant to the heritage item.

**Table 2.1 NSW Historical themes (NSW Heritage Council 2001) applicable to Arthursleigh.**

Australian theme	NSW theme	Description
2. Peopling Australia	Convict	Activities relating to incarceration, transport, reform, accommodation and working during the convict period in NSW (1788-1850).
3. Developing local, regional and national economies	Agriculture	Activities relating to the cultivation and rearing of plant and animal species, usually for commercial purposes, can include aquaculture.
3. Developing local, regional and national economies	Pastoralism	Activities associated with the breeding, raising, processing and distribution of livestock for human use.
5. Working	Labour	Activities associated with work practises and organised and unorganised labour.
8. Developing Australia's cultural life	Religion	Activities associated with particular systems of faith and worship
9. Marking the phases of life	Birth and Death	Activities associated with the initial stages of human life and the bearing of children, and with the final stages of human life and disposal of the dead.
9. Marking the phases of life	People	Activities of, and associations with, identifiable individuals, families and communal groups

Arthursleigh contains early and mid-19<sup>th</sup> century structures that are exceptional examples of housing, farming infrastructure, and a religious building from this era, and are all largely intact. The items are associated with the emergence of the wool industry within NSW, as well as having a strong association with early pioneers including Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur and Thomas Holt. The site also represents continuous use for farming for over 200 years and since the 1970s has been an important research facility for the University of Sydney. Finally, it has provided the Uniting Church with a regional place of worship and a place of burial for the local community.

### 2.1.2 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The following are examples that have comparative elements either through type of structure, location or ownership. These items represent proven historical significance and how they relate to the Project Area and the comparative significance it contains.

**BANNABY WOOLSHED AND RIX GRAVE SITE – UPPER LACHLAN LEP 2010 ITEM #3**

The Bannaby Woolshed is an icon of the Bannaby area and is a heritage woolshed, constructed in 1886 and stands largely intact. Bannaby Woolshed and Rix Grave Site is located within the Upper Lachlan Shire Council area and is approximately 20 kilometres from the Project Area at Arthursleigh. Due to the proximity and relationship to the wool industry, as well as the identified grave site, Bannaby Woolshed is considered comparable to Arthursleigh. The woolshed is constructed from tin and timber with a traditional timber interior.

The Statement of Significance attached to the LEP listing for Bannaby Woolshed and Rix Grave Site notes:

*Bannaby Woolshed, established c.1886, is a highly significant example of the rural qualities of the Bannaby area and significant to the local community. Bannaby Woolshed is considered of local heritage significance and representative of early wool growing and sheep shearing methods. The site of the Banabas Rix burial is an integral part of the history of "Bannaby" and adds to the cohesive history and heritage of the area (SHI ID#1480221).*

The following images are part of the SHR record for Bannaby Woolshed and Rix Grave Site.



**Figure 2.1** Bannaby Woolshed (Source: SHI ID #1480221).



Figure 2.2 Rix Grave site plaque (Source: SHI ID #1480221).



Figure 2.3 Bannaby Woolshed interior (Source: SHI ID #1480221).

**VINEYARD COTTAGE (SUBIACO/PARRAMATTA ARCHAEOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT UNIT 2994) – PARRAMATTA LEP 2023 ITEM #071**

Vineyard Cottage, located near Parramatta, NSW, was the original residence of Hannibal Macarthur and his family, and their primary place of residence until 1848. Due to this association at a time when Arthursleigh was being developed into a significant holding, it is considered comparable.

The Statement of Significance attached to the LEP listing for Vineyard Cottage notes:

*This AMU has high archaeological research potential.*

*This area was the site of a grand house (Subiaco, 1833-1961) within a major early land grant, that was adapted for reuse as a religious and educational institution.*

*The physical archaeological evidence within this area may include structural features, subsurface deposits, ecological samples and individual artefacts which have potential to yield information relating to major historic themes including Religion, Land Tenure, Townships and Housing.*

*Archaeological evidence at this site is likely to be intact.*

*This AMU is of State significance (SHI ID# 2242994).*

The area known as The Ponds was settled by a number of First Fleet emancipists who received 30 acre (12 hectares) grants of land, with additional land granted to their dependents. These settlers were required to build their own houses and were offered favourable terms for eventual ownership if they cultivated their allotments for 5 years or more. Governor Phillip provided the inexperienced settlers with farming necessities and provisions. The official title for the land for "Vineyard" was granted on February 22, 1792 (SHI ID# 2242994).

Originally named Vineyard Cottage but later known as Subiaco, it was the home of Hannibal Macarthur and his family until 1848. Macarthur commissioned John Verge to design his new house, described as the "finest neo-classical house built in Australia" (Kass et al. 1996). The house was probably built by James Houison. After the Macarthur commissioned John Verge to design his new house, described as the "finest neo-classical house built in Australia" (Kass et al. 1996). The house was probably built by James Houison. In After the 1848 bankruptcy, the property was sold to the Catholic Church. It was subsequently used as a convent school, then sold to Rheem and demolished in 1961 to make way for a factory car park (SHI ID# 2242994).

The demolition of Vineyard Cottage/Subiaco and the associated farm buildings in 1961 evoked the first collaborative heritage protection movement in NSW (Lech 2020). The site is an industrial estate with only archaeological remnants remaining (SHI ID #2242994). The demolition of Vineyard Cottage/Subiaco and the associated farm buildings in 1961 evoked the first collaborative heritage protection movement in NSW (Lech 2020). The site is an industrial estate with only archaeological remnants remaining (SHI ID #2242994).



**Figure 2.4** Vineyard Cottage showing the addition of the first floor balcony, 1961.

*Note - Source: Museums of History NSW.*



**Figure 2.5** "The House at Vineyard" by Conrad Martens, 1856.

*Note - Source: Museums of History NSW.*



**Figure 2.6** Farm buildings at Vineyard Cottage/Subiaco, 1961.

*Note - Source: Museums of History NSW.*

## ELIZABETH FARM

Elizabeth Farm was a significant farming property and was key to the development of the wool industry in NSW. It was the main residence of Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur's uncle John Hawkins and his wife Elizabeth. Due to the family and industry association, the property is considered comparable to Arthursleigh. The Statement of Significance attached to the SHR listing for Elizabeth Farm is:

*Elizabeth Farm is associated with major figures who were prominent in the 19th century development of the colony, including John and Elizabeth Macarthur, and the Swann family in the 20th century. There is a large surviving collection of documentary evidence connected to the house, which contains part of the oldest surviving European construction in Australia. The garden contains some of the earliest European plantings in Australia including a Chinese elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*), 1805-planted olive (*Olea europaea*), kurrajong (*Brachychiton populneus*), Bunya pine (*Araucaria bidwillii*) and hoop pine (*A.cunninghamii*). It is an example of early colonial architecture and early agricultural experiments (Bravery 1997:13-14, 24, modified Read, S., 11/2006).*

*The property forms the core of a major historic farm estate which was highly influential in the development of the wool industry in Australia, the introduction and acclimatisation of plants and economic crops such as olives and vines. By its size, location and history of subdivision the property was influential on the development of the town of Parramatta.*

*The property is also significant in the history of conservation in NSW, being the first to be preserved by direct acquisition by the State Government, and the second property to have a permanent conservation order placed over it under the Heritage Act 1977. (Read, S., pers. comm. 2003) [SHI ID# 5051394].*

In 1790, Elizabeth and John Macarthur arrived with the Second Fleet. In 1793, Governor Grose gave Macarthur 100 acres (40 hectares) near Parramatta. By 1818, the area had increased to 925 acres (375 hectares) through grants and purchases, and by 1881, it was almost 1100 acres (445 hectares) [SHI ID# 5051394].

The construction of the Elizabeth Farm house began in 1793, and the Macarthurs had modern ideas that influenced the design of their house and garden. It was a one-storey brick building with 4 rooms. As their family grew to 9 children and their financial position improved, the house and grant were expanded. Elizabeth Farm was soon cultivated, with vegetables, a vineyard, and an orchard surrounding the house. The Macarthur family lived there until Elizabeth's passing in 1850 (SHI ID# 5051394).

From 1794, Macarthur started breeding sheep at Elizabeth Farm. The house was the centre of political and social activities and hosted visits from governors and their wives. Elizabeth managed the farm and other properties while John was in England. Around 1816, John and Elizabeth Macarthur planted a vineyard at Elizabeth Farm. John Macarthur brought olive trees to Sydney in 1805 and 1817 (SHI ID# 5051394).

In the 1820s, changes were made to the house, including adding a 2-storey section at the back and building stables. The house had open planning with French doors leading to the verandahs and gardens. Additional changes were made in 1826 and 1827, and a Doric columned north verandah was added. The servants' quarters were re-faced around 1833, possibly by John Verge (SHI ID# 5051394).

When John Macarthur died in 1834, his estate was divided among his surviving sons. Edward, the oldest son, became Victoria's Administrator and retired in 1860. The house was repaired and leased out in 1865 at his direction. The Macarthur family sold Elizabeth Farm Estate in 1881. The new owner subdivided the land and auctioned the house block. It was used as a boarding house and glue factory (SHI ID# 5051394).

In 1904, the Swann family bought the house and 6 acres (2.4 hectares) for the land only. The house was in bad condition, so they cleaned, disinfected, and repaired it. The Swanns became well-known in Parramatta, offering music tuition, education, a secretarial school and running a dental surgery (SHI ID# 5051394).

Not much is known about the period of Elizabeth Farm's ownership from 1904 to 1968, but the Swann family played a significant role in maintaining the historic home, with the women of the family taking control of their own lives and building independent careers, contributing to the community (SHI ID# 5051394).

In 1973, the State Planning Authority took over Elizabeth Farm. Between 1978 and 1983, the Public Works Department and the Heritage Council of NSW restored the buildings, based on their importance as the oldest surviving examples of colonial construction techniques in Australia. The site was transferred to the Historic Houses Trust of NSW in 1983 and opened to the public as a house museum in 1984. The garden at Elizabeth Farm has been restored to its 1830 appearance, based on watercolours by colonial painters and earlier letters from Elizabeth to friends and family in England (SHI ID# 5051394).



Figure 2.7 Elizabeth Farm, 1910 (Source: Camden History Notes).



Figure 2.8 Elizabeth Farm, 2010 (Source: Camden History Notes).

## ANALYSIS

During the background research for this comparative analysis, it was noted that Arthursleigh contains the oldest known intact woolshed in the surrounding regions, and possibly one of the oldest in Australia. In addition, the homestead's construction in 1820 makes it one of the oldest examples of farm dwellings in the region. Arthursleigh therefore represents a number of significant rarities in the region, and even from across NSW with examples of early 19<sup>th</sup> century farming infrastructure, including evidence of convict construction, an identified private cemetery with graves from at least 1830 and an intact agricultural layout that is easy to interpret.

As demonstrated above, intact agricultural properties that contain the original homestead (although modified), woolshed, shearer's quarters and private cemetery, as well as a church and cemetery are rare and no identical site was located during research, especially given the ties to prominent NSW pioneer names.

There are no properties able to be found in the entire region that match the main features of Arthursleigh, being an intact early 19<sup>th</sup> century agricultural complex consisting of residence, woolshed, shearer's quarters and private cemetery, as well as an association with an intact church with cemetery. Therefore, this analysis has identified 3 sites that reflect different aspects of the significance of the Project Area, namely a 19<sup>th</sup> century woolshed and grave site in the same general region as Arthursleigh, a comparable early 19<sup>th</sup> century farm owned by relatives of Hannibal Macarthur, and finally Macarthur's own former residence in Parramatta.

While the core buildings of Elizabeth Farm are largely representative of how it would have appeared in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it no longer operates as a commercial farm and has therefore lost the continuous use aspect of the site and has also lost the wool industry infrastructure that was symbolic of its significance to the industry. It is also surrounded on several sides by 20<sup>th</sup> century residential development. Vineyard Cottage was associated with Hannibal himself, although on a grander scale, but was demolished in 1961 to make way for industrial development, and while studied and recorded in depth prior to its destruction, it is no longer represented physically outside architectural artefacts that were salvaged post-demolition. Bannaby Woolshed and the Rix Grave Site are contextually relevant to Arthursleigh, being located in a similar area with similar landscaping and also associated with a grave site. Bannaby Woolshed is, however, a much younger construction, being over 50 years earlier than the woolshed at Arthursleigh. It is also constructed predominantly from tin and timber and does not have the aesthetic significance of the stone woolshed at Arthursleigh.

This comparative analysis has shown that Arthursleigh is a rare example of an intact agricultural layout that is easy to interpret and has an intact dwelling (with modifications), woolshed, shearer's quarters and private cemetery. The existence of an intact and well managed Uniting Church and graveyard extends the rareness of the site considerably. In addition, the public significance of 2 of the owners, Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur and Thomas Holt, as well as the construction of the woolshed being convict-led creates an even higher rarity for the site especially given the aforementioned intactness.

### **2.1.3 ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT AREA AGAINST SHR CRITERIA**

The following assessment of significance is divided into 2 separate parts. The first considers the significance of the Project Area as a whole, which includes all the elements of the Arthursleigh farm, the private cemetery and the uniting church. Once the significance of the entirety of the Project Area is determined, it will then determine how the parts of the Project Area where works are proposed contribute to the overall significance of the Project Area as a whole. This will allow for a more detailed consideration of the effect of the Project on the significance of Arthursleigh as a whole.

Table 2.2 details the consideration of heritage significance against the NSW SHR criteria and how the Project Area is important under each for the Arthursleigh complex, while that of the uniting church is detailed in Table 2.3.

Table 2.2 NSW SHR assessment of criteria (DPE) for Arthursleigh complex.

Criteria	Criteria definition	Assessment
Criterion (a) Historic significance	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).	Arthursleigh represents an early land grant, and one which played a significant role in the development of pastoral activities within the Southern Tablelands region and beyond. In addition, the site is directly associated with convict labour and the construction of structures on site. Both of these elements of the site had a significant contribution to the cultural history of NSW.  As such, <b><u>the Arthursleigh complex meets Criterion (a) at the state Level.</u></b>
Criterion (b) Historical association	An item has 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).	Arthursleigh was on 2 occasions owned by prominent NSW pioneers, first by Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur and then by Thomas Holt. Both men had prominent careers including being members of the NSW Legislative Council. However, while the property was owned by Macarthur, his main residence was at Vineyard House, and he only likely spent limited time at the property. Where the Arthursleigh is more significant is in its association with convicts, whose labour was used to construct several of the buildings and whose toil on the land made it profitable.  As such, <b><u>the Arthursleigh complex meets Criterion (b) at the state level.</u></b>
Criterion (c) Aesthetic/creative/technical achievement	An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/ or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).	The woolshed at Arthursleigh shows significant aesthetic characters as shown in Section 1.3 of this report. The high construction values within the stonework, the intactness of the structure and the interior quality as well as the size of the shed all contribute to the overall significance of the place. During the research phase of this assessment, the author was unable to identify an older intact woolshed within NSW.  As such, <b><u>the Arthursleigh complex meets Criterion (c) at the local level.</u></b>
Criterion (d) Social, cultural and spiritual	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.	<b><u>The Arthursleigh complex does not meet Criterion (c) at the local or state level.</u></b>

Criteria	Criteria definition	Assessment
<p>Criterion (e) Research potential</p>	<p>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).</p>	<p>Arthursleigh demonstrates an intact agricultural complex with original homestead (with modifications), woolshed, shearer's quarters and private cemetery. This intact agricultural precinct with continuous use for over 200 years provides significant research opportunities historically and archaeologically. This research could provide insight into the day-to-day farming activities from the 19<sup>th</sup> century as well the additional research potential associated with identifying names and numbers for those convicts who may be buried in unmarked graves.</p> <p>As such, <b><u>the Arthursleigh complex meets the definition for Criterion (e) at the state level.</u></b></p>
<p>Criterion (f) Rare</p>	<p>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).</p>	<p>Arthursleigh represents a rare example of an intact agricultural layout including original homestead (with modifications), woolshed, shearer's quarters and cemetery. The intactness of the agricultural elements as well as the association with 2 significant NSW pioneers and the involvement of convict labour at the site makes it a rare and exceptional example of early 19<sup>th</sup> century farming.</p> <p>As such, <b><u>the Arthursleigh complex meets Criterion (f) at the state level.</u></b></p>
<p>Criterion (g) Representative</p>	<p>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).</p>	<p><b><u>The Arthursleigh complex does not meet Criterion (f) at the local or state level.</u></b></p>

As demonstrated in the above assessment, Arthursleigh meets the definition for 5 of the 7 SHR Criterion and demonstrates heritage significance at a state level.

Table 2.3 NSW SHR assessment of criteria (DPE) for Big Hill Uniting Church.

Criteria	Criteria definition	Assessment
Criterion (a) Historic significance	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).	<u>The Big Hill Uniting Church does not meet Criterion (a) at the local or state level.</u>
Criterion (b) Historical association	An item has 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).	<u>The Big Hill Uniting Church does not meet Criterion (b) at the local or state level.</u>
Criterion (c) Aesthetic/creative/technical achievement	An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/ or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).	<u>The Big Hill Uniting Church does not meet Criterion (c) at the local or state level.</u>
Criterion (d) Social, cultural and spiritual	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.	The Big Hill Uniting Church has been a consistent part of the community since 1879 and therefore the Big Hill Uniting Church <u>does meet Criterion (d) at the local level.</u>
Criterion (e) Research potential	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).	<u>The Big Hill Uniting Church does not meet Criterion (e) at the local or state level.</u>
Criterion (f) Rare	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).	<u>The Big Hill Uniting Church does not meet Criterion (f) at the local or state level.</u>

Criteria	Criteria definition	Assessment
Criterion (g) Representative	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).	The Big Hill Uniting Church, which provided a place of worship to the community, creating a place of cultural importance. <b><u>Therefore, the Big Hill Uniting Church does meet Criterion (g) at the local level.</u></b>

As demonstrated in the above assessment, Arthursleigh meets the definition for 2 of the 7 SHR Criterion and demonstrates heritage significance at a local level.

On the basis of the above discussion, the Project Area therefore meets the threshold for heritage significance against the following criteria: Arthursleigh complex meets criteria (a), (b), (e) and (f) at a state level, and criteria (c) at a local level; and the Big Hill Uniting Church meets criteria (d) and (g) at a local level.

#### 2.1.4 CONDITION OF THE ITEM

The Project Area contains 5 components that embody heritage significance, as discussed throughout this assessment. These components are largely intact, with only the homestead showing significant modifications since the original construction in the 1820s. The following is a summary of the current condition of each component and any modifications completed (as recorded).

##### HOMESTEAD

The homestead was constructed in c.1820 and was originally a simple rectangular building in a simple Victorian-era style with verandah and on a single level. The dwelling has had the following changes over time:

- 1860s (?)** Weatherboard cladding was installed and re-roofed with corrugated iron (Fletcher 2002). **1860s (?)** Weatherboard cladding was installed and re-roofed with corrugated iron (Fletcher 2002).
- 1949(?)** Extensions to the house and upgrades, including pressed metal walls and ceilings, rooms divided and a bathroom added (Fletcher 2002).

The additions to the original homestead have not had a detrimental effect on the heritage significance of the structure and are in keeping with the character of the 1820 construction. The changes show phases of development and the differing needs of new generations of farmers to the site and therefore contribute to the story of the item.



**Figure 2.9** Image of Arthursleigh homestead showing the 1940s extension to the left.

### **WOOLSHED**

The Arthursleigh woolshed was constructed in c1830. The only change since construction to the woolshed that has been documented is the demolition of the original loading ramp and this occurred in the 1970s (Fletcher 2002). The woolshed is not only almost entirely intact from its initial construction but remained in-use late into recent times. The woolshed also contains 19<sup>th</sup> century processing components as well as interior features such as fireplaces, pens, dropped floors and shearing equipment. The woolshed features intricate stonework construction to a very high standard to the front facades and a tin and timber construction to the rear. The interior features an impressive ceiling with exposed beams as well as a timber floor, pens and wool processing benches. The high intactness and quality of design and construction makes the woolshed an outstanding example of early 19<sup>th</sup> century farming infrastructure.



**Figure 2.10** Stonework detail on Arthursleigh woolshed.

### **SHEARER'S QUARTERS**

The shearer's quarters were built approximately between the late 1800s and early 1900s from research conducted, and remodelled in the 1950s to add concrete steps and change the interior walls from tin to Masonite (Fletcher 2002, p 73). While the shearer's quarters are not architecturally significant and the design and construction basic and regular for this type of worker's accommodation, the intactness of the quarters as well as their proximity and association to the woolshed make them an integral component of the heritage item. The structure represents typical worker accommodation at a site where, during shearing season, temporary workers lived on the property for a short period to maximise productivity and processing times. The condition of the shearer's quarters is very good and clearly shows the purpose of the accommodation.



**Figure 2.11** Arthursleigh shearer's quarters.

#### **PRIVATE CEMETERY**

The cemetery is located on the high side to the north-east of Island Creek, and approximately 750 metres from the homestead. At present the site only contains 2 marked graves and these were inaccessible during the site visits. The known burials were for Donald Bain, who died at the property at 47 years of age in 1871, and John Morrison who drowned in Island Creek at age 40 in 1880. There is, unfortunately, no complete record of burials within Arthursleigh, nor how many lives were lost at the site. More research is needed to understand the number of buried, as the oral history has stated there are likely many burials with their location unknown, and these burials may include convicts.



**Figure 2.12** Landscape context showing 2 fenced burials near Island Creek.

### **BIG HILL UNITING CHURCH AND CEMETERY**

The Big Hill Uniting Church is in remarkable condition and the only noticeable significant change within the fabric of the building has been the replacement of the shingled roof for a corrugated iron/Colourbond roof. The church was constructed from rubble stone in a Victorian-gothic style and is similar in design to many rural and regional church buildings. The cemetery to the south of the church building contains gravestones and cremation storage and is in very good condition. It contains burials from 1870 through 2020.



**Figure 2.13** Big Hill Uniting Church.



**Figure 2.14** Big Hill Uniting Church cemetery.

### 2.1.5 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE AND GRADING OF COMPONENTS

As demonstrated throughout this significance assessment, Arthursleigh is a rare and historically important site containing 5 separate components that contribute to the significance. The assessment against the standard heritage criteria, as well as the comparative analysis, has determined that the Arthursleigh complex meets state significance as an item while the uniting church meets the threshold for local significance, and the following assessment has graded each item within the site for its significance as an individual component of that item.

**Table 2.4** Gradings of significance - terminology

Grading	Justification
Exceptional	Rare or outstanding element directly contributing to a place or object's significance.
High	A high degree of original fabric. Demonstrates a key element of the place or object's significance. Alterations do not detract from its significance.
Moderate	Altered or modified elements. Elements with little heritage value, but which contribute to the overall significance of the place or object.
Little	Alterations detract from its significance. Difficult to interpret.
Intrusive	Damaging to the place or object's significance.

**Table 2.5 Grading of significance of components within Arthursleigh**

Heritage component	Grading	Justification
Homestead	Exceptional	While the homestead at Arthursleigh has had modifications from its original design, these additions are in keeping with the original style and show the changing needs of farming families from 1820 through to the middle of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century. The homestead directly relates to the agricultural elements of the site and is a key component to the operation and overseeing of the property. As it was originally constructed in 1820 by convict labour and served as the residence of both Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur and Thomas Holt when they attended the property, the homestead is a significant item within the cultural history of NSW.
Woolshed	Exceptional	The woolshed at Arthursleigh is dated at c1830 which may make it the oldest intact woolshed in NSW, and certainly one of the oldest in the nation. The intricate stonework in the front portion of the building as well as the roof structure adds to the aesthetic significance of the item. In addition, the woolshed was constructed using convict labour which contributes greatly to its significance as an example of the contributions made through the convict assignment programs.
Shearer's Quarters	Moderate	There is no construction date for the shearer's quarters within the historic record; however, due to the style of the building it is considered to be from the early 20 <sup>th</sup> century. Worker's accommodations are not rare, and the style of the structure is common for the type of on-farm accommodation. The significance of this component is that it completes the agricultural precinct and would have been an integral part of wool production at the site.
Private cemetery	Exceptional	Currently, there are only 2 known grave sites at Arthursleigh, those of Donald Bain and John Morrison. The oral history suggesting there are "many" unmarked graves, of which it is believed were mostly convict, makes this component exceptionally significant, especially given the research potential to locate unmarked graves.
Big Hill Uniting Church and cemetery	High	Local churches in the Victorian Gothic style from the late 1800s are not unique in rural areas, however the association with Thomas Holt and the 999 year lease of the land from such a significant farm as Arthursleigh as well as the intactness of the church makes the significance grading high.

### 2.1.6 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Arthursleigh contains a number of very early components of exceptional heritage significance including a homestead (c1820), woolshed (c1830) and private cemetery (c1830) as well as Big Hill Uniting Church and cemetery (c1879) and shearer's quarters (estimated to be late 1800s to early 20<sup>th</sup> century) within a large farming site associated with 2 high profile pioneers in NSW: Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur (nephew of John Macarthur) and Thomas Holt (Fletcher 2002). The construction of the homestead and woolshed was completed using convict labour, with 28 convicts residing at Arthursleigh during the 1828 NSW census (Fletcher n.d.).

Arthursleigh is a rare example of a largely intact early 19<sup>th</sup> century agricultural complex with an easily interpreted layout. Arthursleigh is recognised as containing one of the oldest woolsheds in Australia and one of the oldest homesteads in the area.

## 2.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT

The development footprint is located a minimum of 1.8 kilometres from the closest component of the heritage item (the homestead). The natural undulation of the Project Area as well as the distance reduces the impacts on views between the heritage items from the development footprint. The development footprint is a mixture of predominately cleared farming land, light mature vegetation and waterways. The area contains no observed or identified heritage.

While the development footprint is associated historically with the known heritage items, being located within the original land grant and Project Area, it is located in an area with no historical evidence of structures or built heritage. This area of the site was likely used for the grazing of sheep; however, it represents only a portion of the larger agricultural holding under the original Arthursleigh farmland. Therefore, the significance of the development footprint is extremely low, and the Project will have no impact on the heritage items.



**Figure 2.15** West facing view of light mature vegetation & transmission lines.

*Note: this is within the development footprint.*



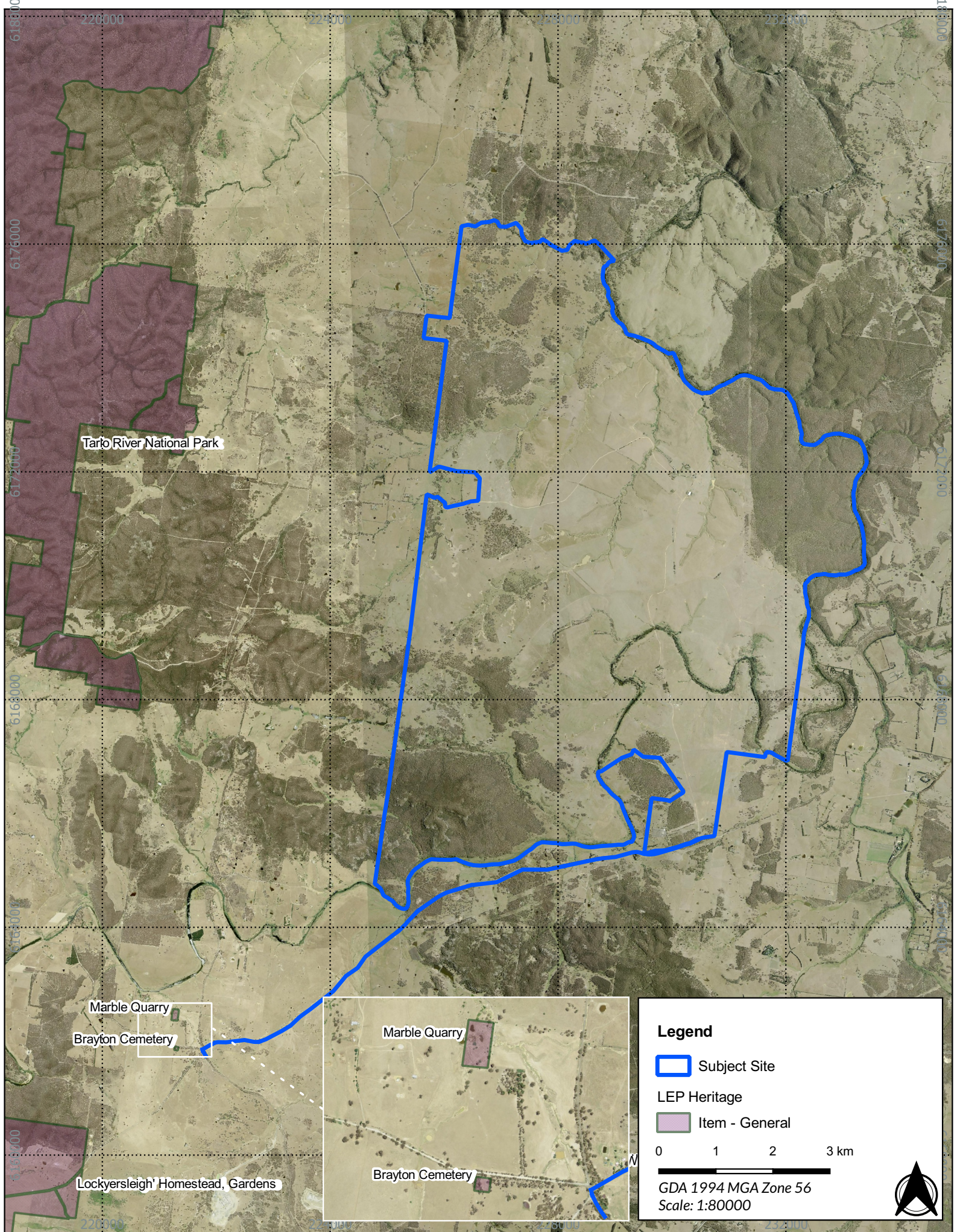
**Figure 2.16** North-east view of grazing land within the development footprint.



**Figure 2.17** Mature vegetation within the development footprint.



**Figure 2.18** North facing view of the development footprint.



**Figure 2.19 - LEP heritage items in close proximity to the Project Area**

22070 - Wattle Creek BESS - SoHI

Source: NSW LPI Aerial, NSW LEP Heritage

Drawn by: FOT Date: 2025-02-26



## 3 THE PROJECT

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### 3.1 THE PROPOSAL

According to the client brief, the Project proposes the construction and operation of a 350 MW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) that will connect to the existing Transgrid Marulan Substation.

The Project will include, but not limited to:

- Batteries – most likely a lithium-ion technology.
- Inverters – bi-directional inverters to convert DC current to AC current (when exporting electricity) and vice versa (when importing electricity).
- Transformers – skid-mounted transformers will be installed adjacent to each inverter to step up the voltage to the internal reticulation voltage of the plant.
- Substation and transmission connection – on-site collector substation and overhead powerlines to connect the BESS to the electricity transmission network via Marulan Substation.
- A substation communication mast of up to 80 m in height is also included at the substation location.
- A research Test-Bed Facility – comprising of a 2-ha stand area, demountable buildings, security fencing, parking, 200 kVa power supply and 100 kVA dummy load (simulated electrical load for testing purposes).
- Electrical connections – a combination of underground cables and overhead powerlines connecting BESS facility to the on-site collector substation.
- Operations and maintenance (O&M) facility – including control rooms, O&M buildings, amenities, equipment sheds, storage, a hardstand and bench, and parking areas.
- Minor upgrades to the existing site access point from Canyonleigh Road and internal access roads.
- Temporary construction infrastructure – to facilitate construction and likely to include laydown and storage areas and site offices.
- Security fencing – to prevent unauthorised access to the Project infrastructure and guard high voltage or dangerous equipment.
- Two transmission line options are being investigated, to allow for optionality during the assessment process and greater flexibility in the connection design.

The Conceptual Project layout represents a development footprint of approximately 75 hectares, including associated ancillary infrastructure (i.e. BESS, substations, the operations and maintenance facility, and test bed).

The conceptual layout is shown in Figure 3.1.

## 3.2 BACKGROUND OF THE PROPOSAL

### 3.2.1 PRE-LODGEMENT CONSULTATION

On 16 October 2023, an email was received from Tim Smith (Director of Assessments, Heritage NSW) regarding their input for the SEARs for the project. It was advised that:

*The Project Area is not listed on the State Heritage Register (SHR), nor is it in the immediate vicinity of any SHR items. Further, the site does not contain any known historical archaeological relics. Therefore, no heritage comments are required.*

However, the research undertaken to support this SoHI has shown that the Project Area does contain heritage values.

Karinne Granger (Development Control Officer – Environment and Planning, Upper Lachlan Shire Council) also provided feedback regarding heritage for the SEARs.

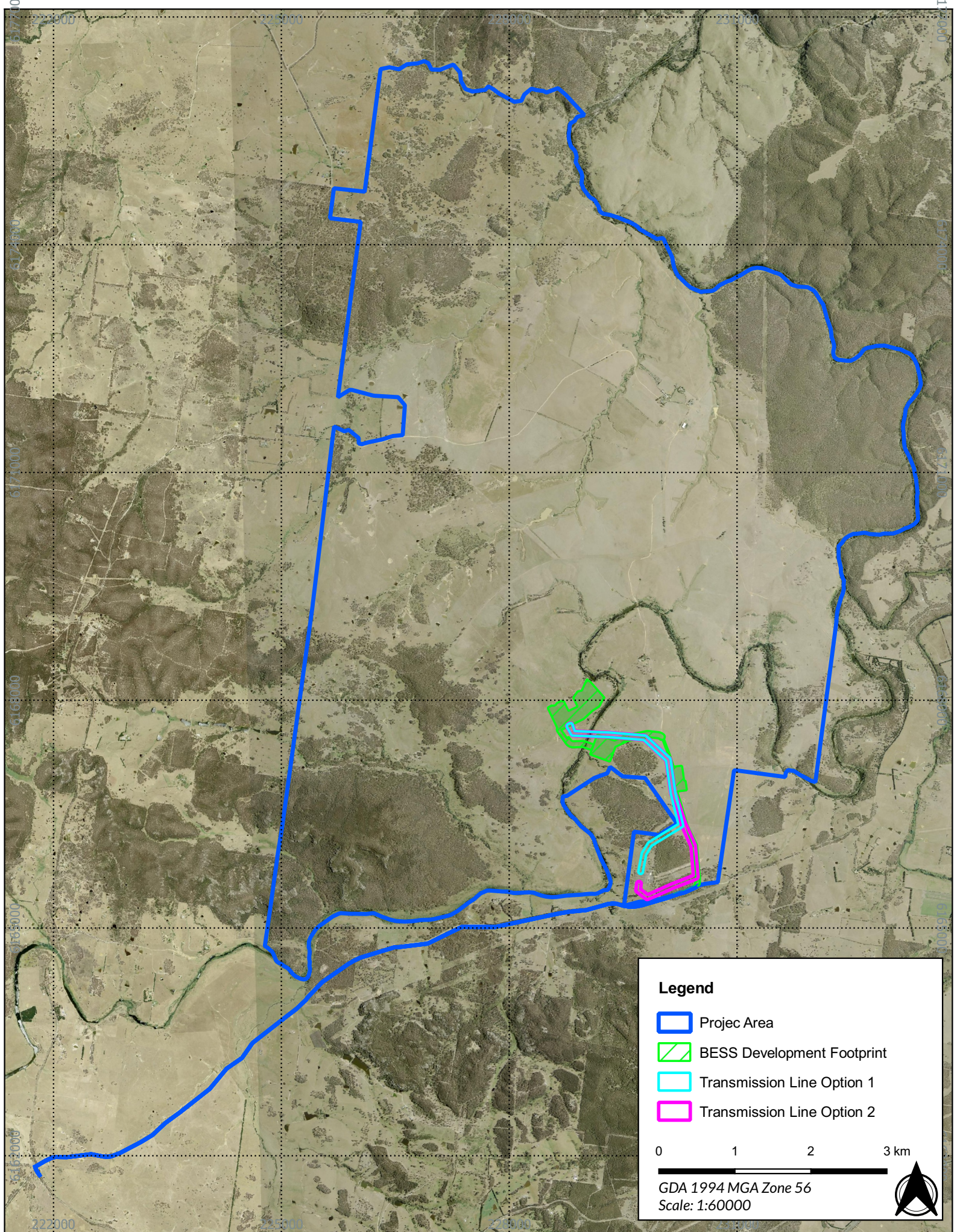
*A Heritage Study and Assessment of Significance shall be provided given that Arthursleigh is;*

- recommended to be included on Council's list of heritage items. I have provided some evidence below for justification of the request;*
- Referenced in the Upper Lachlan Shire Community Heritage Study, 2007-8 under Taralga;*
- Included in the Register of the National Trust;*
- Subject to a book "Arthursleigh" written by Chrissy Fletcher;*
- Painted from 1839 and held in the State Library;*
- Linked to Wingello Park TALLONG – which was recently placed on the State Heritage Register;*
- The property is included as 114 in NSWs Oldest Houses list SR8a "Southern Tablelands, east of Taralga, Arthursleigh, c1824+ (JT)".*

This assessment meets the requirements of Council in this regard.

### **3.2.2 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES**

Due to the location of the development footprint being a significant distance from the heritage items identified earlier in this report and largely hidden from view due to the topography of the site, an alternative was not required. In addition, comments received from Heritage NSW and the Upper Lachlan Shire Council did not request any alternative locations be considered due to the suitability of the development footprint. Project alternatives are discussed in the EIS.



**Figure 3.1 - Development Footprint**  
 22070 - Wattle Creek BESS - SoHI

Source: NSW LPI Aerial

Drawn by: FOT Date: 2025-03-11



## 4 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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The purpose of this section is to present a comprehensive assessment of the impacts to the identified heritage values associated with Arthursleigh, 1001 Canyonleigh Road from the Project.

### 4.1 MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

The following sections cover the matters for consideration as to their impact on the heritage values of the item from the Project.

#### FABRIC AND SPATIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Due to the location of proposed works being identified as a minimum of 1.8 kilometres from the heritage items, there is no expected impact on the fabric or spatial arrangements of the heritage items.

#### SETTING, VIEWS AND VISTAS

Viewlines were considered during the site survey, with images from the heritage items to the development footprint being captured. In addition, a Visual Impact Assessment was completed in May 2024 by Moir Landscape Architects demonstrating the maximum visibility to the development footprint was expected to be between 25-50% (Moir Landscape Architects 2025). The Visual Impact Assessment is presented within the Appendix of the EIS.

The viewlines from the homestead, woolshed and shearer's quarters are large and encompass approximately 270 degrees due to vegetation and topography. The distance to the development footprint and the small portion of the vista it represents also reduces the impact of the development on the viewlines and vistas to and from the heritage items. It is not expected that the Project will have a detrimental impact on the setting, views and vistas of the heritage items.

#### LANDSCAPE WORKS

There is no landscaping works associated with the Project.

#### USE

There is no change of use proposed for the Project.

#### DEMOLITION

There is no demolition of heritage items associated with the Project.

#### CURTILAGE

The identified heritage is not listed on any heritage register, and therefore there is also no determined curtilage for the heritage items. Due to the distance of the development footprint from the heritage items, it is not expected that the Project will impact the expected curtilage of the heritage items.

#### MOVEABLE HERITAGE

There is no moveable heritage as part of the Project.

#### ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

A separate Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) has been prepared concurrently by Austral for the Project. The ACHA should be read in conjunction with this report.

However, if Aboriginal archaeological material or deposits are encountered during earthworks, all works affecting that material or deposits must cease immediately to allow an archaeologist to assess the find.

The archaeologist may need to consult Heritage NSW and the relevant Aboriginal stakeholders regarding the find. Section 89A of the *National Parks & Wildlife Act 1974* requires that Heritage NSW must be notified of any Aboriginal objects discovered within a reasonable time.

### **HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY**

There is no evidence within the historical record to state that any built heritage was ever located within the development footprint, and no physical remnants were observed during the site visit. There is a low archaeological potential in the development footprint.

If historical archaeological objects not assessed or anticipated by this report are found during the development stage, all works in the immediate vicinity are to cease immediately and Heritage NSW is to be notified. A qualified archaeologist will be contacted to assess the situation and consult with Heritage NSW regarding the course of action.

### **NATURAL HERITAGE**

There is no natural heritage identified within the Project Area.

### **CONSERVATION AREA**

The Project Area and development footprint is not within any boundaries of the listed heritage conservation area.

### **CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

The proposed works are additions to the existing energy infrastructure within the Project Area. The Project is one of many similar projects, including the Wattle Creek Solar Farm and the Marulan Gas Fired Power Station that are large scale and focused on energy resources. While there is a degree of cumulative impact on the overall vistas of the farm landscape from these projects, these cumulative impacts are isolated to the southern portion of the site and do not directly impact the identified heritage items.

### **CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN (CMP)**

There is no conservation management plan for this site. Ideally, a CMP should be developed for the Arthursleigh complex of buildings but that is a separate matter for consideration outside of the scope of the Project.

### **OTHER HERITAGE ITEMS IN THE VICINITY**

There are no heritage items within 2 kilometres of the Project Area, with the closest heritage item being Tarlo River National Park. Due to the distance from the development footprint, it is not expected to have any impact on the item.

### **COMMONWEALTH/NATIONAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The site is not listed on the Commonwealth/National Heritage Register.

### **WORLD HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The site is not listed on any World Heritage registers.

## 5 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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### 5.1 SUMMARY

It has been established through this report that Arthursleigh contains several heritage items that likely meet the threshold for state significance, and each has been graded from moderate to exceptional in heritage significance. As the Project Area is not currently listed on any heritage register, the significance assessment within this report should be relied on to set the standards for the means by which the identified heritage is understood and interpreted, as well as the importance of avoiding any impact on it. It is also suggested that a heritage listing be considered for this site to avoid any potential future loss of such rare and significant heritage.

While the Project Area contains items of heritage significance, the development footprint and the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the identified heritage. The works are located at a minimum of 1.8 kilometres and wholly within an area with restricted visibility to and from the heritage items. Due to this, the Project is acceptable from a heritage impact viewpoint and can proceed.

### 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

To mitigate the harm documented in this assessment, it is recommended that:

- 1) The Project can proceed, and no further investigations or assessments are required in terms of heritage.
- 2) If historical archaeological relics not assessed or anticipated by this report are found during the undertaking of the works, all works in the immediate vicinity are to cease immediately and Heritage NSW be notified. A qualified archaeologist is to be contacted to assess the situation and consult with Heritage NSW regarding the most appropriate course of action.
- 3) If Aboriginal archaeological material or deposits are encountered during earthworks, all works affecting that material or deposits must cease immediately to allow an archaeologist to make an assessment of the find. The archaeologist may need to consult Heritage NSW and the relevant Aboriginal stakeholders regarding the find. Section 89A of the National Parks & Wildlife Act 1974 requires that Heritage NSW must be notified of any Aboriginal objects discovered within a reasonable time.
- 4) Should the actual development be altered significantly from the proposed design, then a reassessment of the heritage impact will be required. This includes any impacts not explicitly stated in Section 4 and the installation of any subsurface services.
- 5) A copy of this assessment should be lodged by the proponent in the local history section of the local library, and in the library maintained by Heritage NSW.

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