

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT - 16 JOHNSTON CRESENT, HORSLEY PARK

1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Urbis has been engaged by NEXTDC to prepare this Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) to assess the potential impacts of the proposed development at 16 Johnston Crescent, Horsley Park (hereafter referred to as 'the site' or 'the subject site').

This HIS has been prepared to support a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) (SSD-63741210) on heritage grounds, which seeks approval for the redevelopment of the subject area to provide a new data centre. The works proposed include preparatory earthworks, including excavation and construction of retaining walls, and the construction of the data centre development, comprising five data centre buildings, a substation, additional earthworks, vehicle access via Johnston Crescent, on-site car parking and loading within at-grade hardstand area, landscaping and ancillary works.

Ongoing site investigations have been undertaken by NEXTDC to identify an appropriate location for their S4 data centre. These investigations have involved a review of multiple potential sites across Sydney, with the CSR lands on the corner of Burley Road and Johnston Crescent, Horsley Park being selected as the most appropriate option. It is understood that the client is submitting a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) for subdivision works at the site.

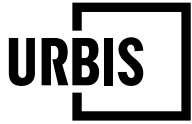
The subject site does not have any items which are listed on any statutory heritage instrument. This HIS is required under item 20 of the Industry Specific SEARs. The HIS includes a desktop review of the history and heritage significance of the place, as required to determine whether any elements of significance which are not listed are present, and to determine whether the subdivision pattern in the subject site is significant.

It is understood the original SSDA has been amended to include refinements to the original data centre proposal to respond to the stakeholder and community submissions, as well as changes sought by NEXTDC to improve the operational aspects of the project. The Amended SSDA also includes a high voltage (HV) connection from the data centre site to the TransGrid Sydney West substation. This ancillary infrastructure would typically be undertaken separately via Part 5. However, NEXTDC was advised during the assessment of the SSDA that the HV connection would need to be included within the SSDA.

The installation of the HV connection does not have any implications from a heritage perspective, noting the works are proposed are underground and with the existing road reserves of Johnstone Crescent and Old Wallgrove Road. As such, the HIS does not include further assessment of this component of the revised project, focussing solely on the data centre site and the potential impacts of the updated proposal.

2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The subject site is located at 16 Johnston Crescent, Horsley Park. The site is legally described as Lot 305 in Deposited Plan 1275011 (Figure 1 and Figure 2). It is located approximately 35 km west of the Sydney CBD within the Fairfield City Council Local Government Area ('Fairfield LGA') and the boundaries of Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council ('Deerubbin LALC'). It is currently zoned IN1 General Industrial.



The site is located within the City of Fairfield Local Government Area (LGA) and encompasses approximately 82,060 m² and has frontages to an as unnamed extension of Old Wallgrove Road to the west and Burley Road to the north (Figure 2). It is bounded to the east by RU4 Primary Production Small Lots zoned land and to the south-east by a C2 Environmental Conservation zone. The remainder of the subject area is bounded by IN2 General Industrial zoned land.

The subject site is currently comprised of mudflats surrounded by low masonry walls. The general character of the site is barren and sits within the immediate vicinity of an industrial setting of empty lots similar in character and large scale warehouses for industrial use and development construction sites. The location of the subject site is shown below.

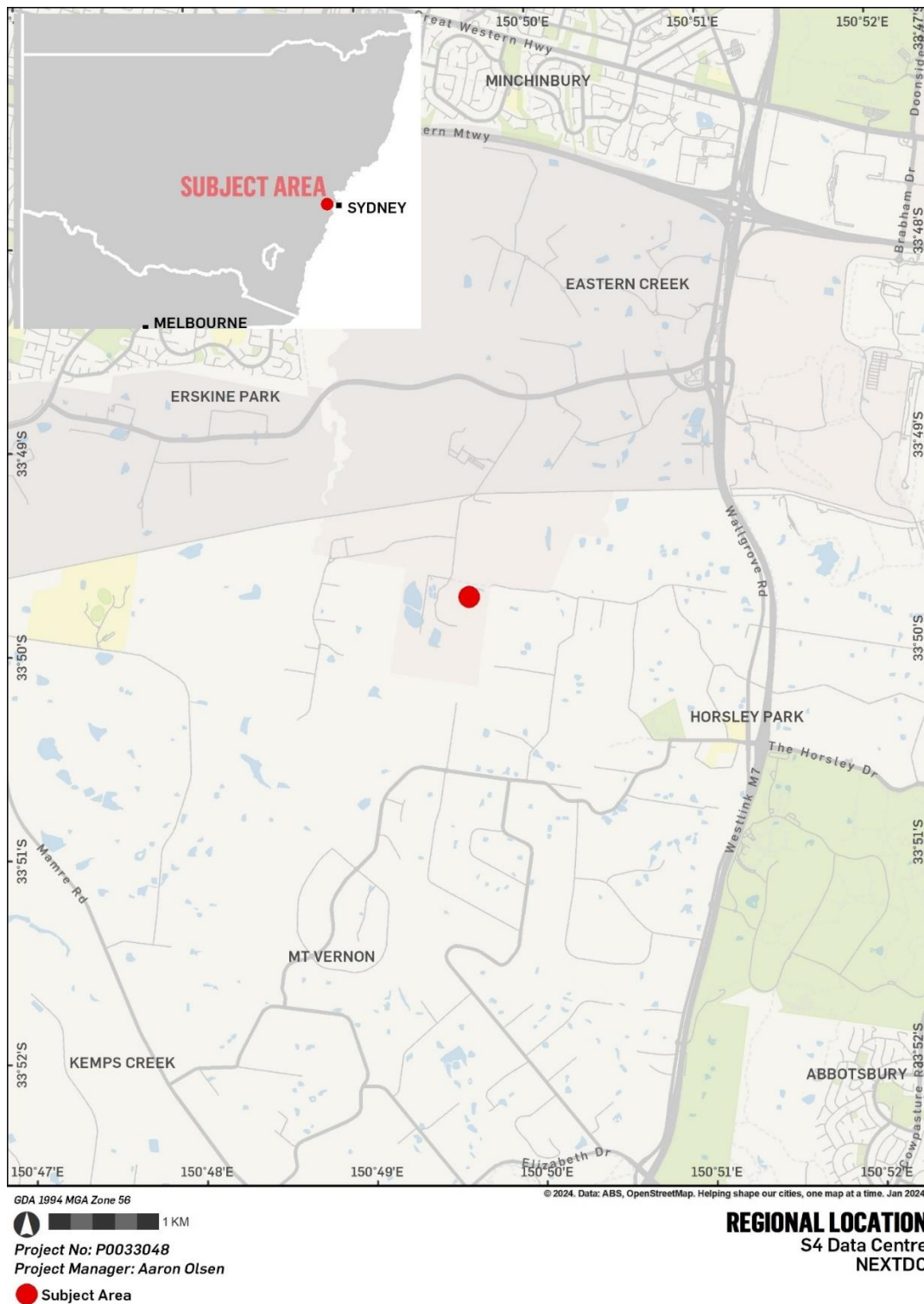


Figure 1 – Regional location of subject area



GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56

50 M

Project No: P0033048

Project Manager: Aaron Olsen

Subject Area — Contours

© 2024. Data: ABS, OpenStreetMap, Nearmap. Helping shape our cities, one map at a time. Jan 2024

LOCATION OF THE SUBJECT AREA

S4 Data Centre

NEXTDC

Figure 2 – Subject area



Figure 3 – Views north towards the subject site from the immediate surrounding streetscape.

Source: Urbis



Figure 4 – Views south towards the subject site from the immediate surrounding streetscape.

Source: Urbis



Figure 5 – Views north from within the subject site.

Source: Urbis



Figure 6 – Views west from within the subject site.

Source: Urbis



Figure 7 – Views west from within the subject site,

Source: Urbis



Figure 8 – Views southwest from within the subject site.

Source: Urbis

3. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

3.1. AREA HISTORY (POST EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT)

The area which now comprises Horsley Park was originally home to the Cabrogal tribe, an Aboriginal sub-group of the Gandangara tribe, who lived within the Fairfield area for over thirty thousand years.¹ In the 19th century European settlement begun with Colonel George Johnstons acquisition of two thousand acres, transferred by Governor King as a gift for his participation in the battle to dismantle the Irish Rebellion in Castle Hill otherwise known as Vinger Hill on the 4th of March 1804.²

After the passing of Johnston the land was transferred to his daughter Blanche. Blanche went on to marry the Major, George Nicholas Weston in 1829 whom built an Indian colonial style homestead at the property, which was named after Weston's hometown Horsley in Surry, England. The Horsley Homestead has since become recognised under The Australian Heritage National Trust and remains a distinct and rare example of an early colonial building within the Fairfield area.³

By 1959 the rural area began to urbanise with the construction of Horsley Drive a continuous route from Lansvale, however the area remains semi-rural.

¹ https://dictionaryofsydney.org/place/fairfield_local_government_area

² <https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/castle-hill-rebellion#:~:text=The%20Castle%20Hill%20Rebellion%20or,return%20willing%20convicts%20to%20Ireland.>

³ Horsley Homestead, Horsley Park NSW, Historical Photographs Henry Kind, Horsley Photo Album, c.1900, Fairfield City Heritage Collection, accessed: <https://heritagecollection.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au/nodes/view/1416>



Figure 9 – Horsley Homestead c.1900, with Blanche Weston and children seen at the front verandah and steps.

Source: *Horsley Homestead, Horsley Park NSW, Historical Photographs Henry Kind, Horsley Photo Album, c.1900, Fairfield City Heritage Collection*, accessed: <https://heritagecollection.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au/nodes/view/1416>

3.2. SUBJECT SITE HISTORY

An aerial image of the subject area from the late 1940s shows that it has been extensively cleared of vegetation by this time, although no structures are present (Figure 10). The presence of a dam just outside the western boundary and an absence of structures suggests that the subject area was used for grazing.

The 1947 aerial (Figure 10) shows desolate farming land with no distinct subdivision curtilage lot boundaries. By 1965 the site remained landscaped with sparse trees and empty, with the addition of development of roads and minor earthworks.

A significant change in the appearance of the subject area is observed in aerial photograph from 1975 (Figure 12). The 1975 aerial shows further development to the subject site with extensive earthworks and a warehouse structure to the west of the subject site, illustrating the ongoing industrialisation of the landscape and overall Horsley park area. A large part of the subject area had been quarried as part of the brickworks that operated within the subject area from the early 1970s. A portion on the western boundary not quarried but was instead impacted by the construction and subsequent use of that area as a brickworks associated with the quarry. A strip of land along the northern and eastern boundaries was unaffected by either the quarry or brickworks by this time.

The continuation of development on the subject site and within the immediate area was highly developed by 1991 (Figure 14) with a continued growth of dwellings to the east and further construction of warehouse structures, roadways and dirt paths, and earthworks. The subject site which remains an empty lot is contextually situated within a similarly characterised locality to its 1991 aerial.

By 2020, the impacts of the quarry had extended to encompass the entire eastern boundary and most of the northern boundary, leaving only a small area that had not been affected by either the quarry or brickworks.



Figure 10 – c.1947 aerial image of the subject site within the context of its immediate locality.

Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer



Figure 11 – c.1965 aerial image of the subject site within the context of its immediate locality.

Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer



Figure 12 – c.1975 aerial image of the subject site within the context of its immediate locality.

Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer



Figure 13 – c.1986 aerial image of the subject site within the context of its immediate locality.

Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer



Figure 14 – c.1991 aerial image of the subject site within the context of its immediate locality.

Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer

4. HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

4.1. WHAT IS HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE?

Before undertaking change a listed heritage item, a property within a heritage conservation area, or a property located in proximity to a listed heritage item, it is important to understand the heritage values of the place and its broader heritage context. This understanding will underpin the approach to any proposed changes and identify what is important and why, and how these values can be protected. Statements of heritage significance summarise the heritage values of a listed heritage item – why it is important and why a statutory listing was made to protect these values.

4.2. HERITAGE LISTINGS

4.2.1. Subject Site Heritage Listings

The subject site is not listed as a heritage item under Schedule 5 of the *Fairfield LEP 2013* nor comprises any statutory heritage listings as identified in the heritage map below (Figure 15). The site does not lie within the vicinity of any heritage items nor identified heritage conservation areas.

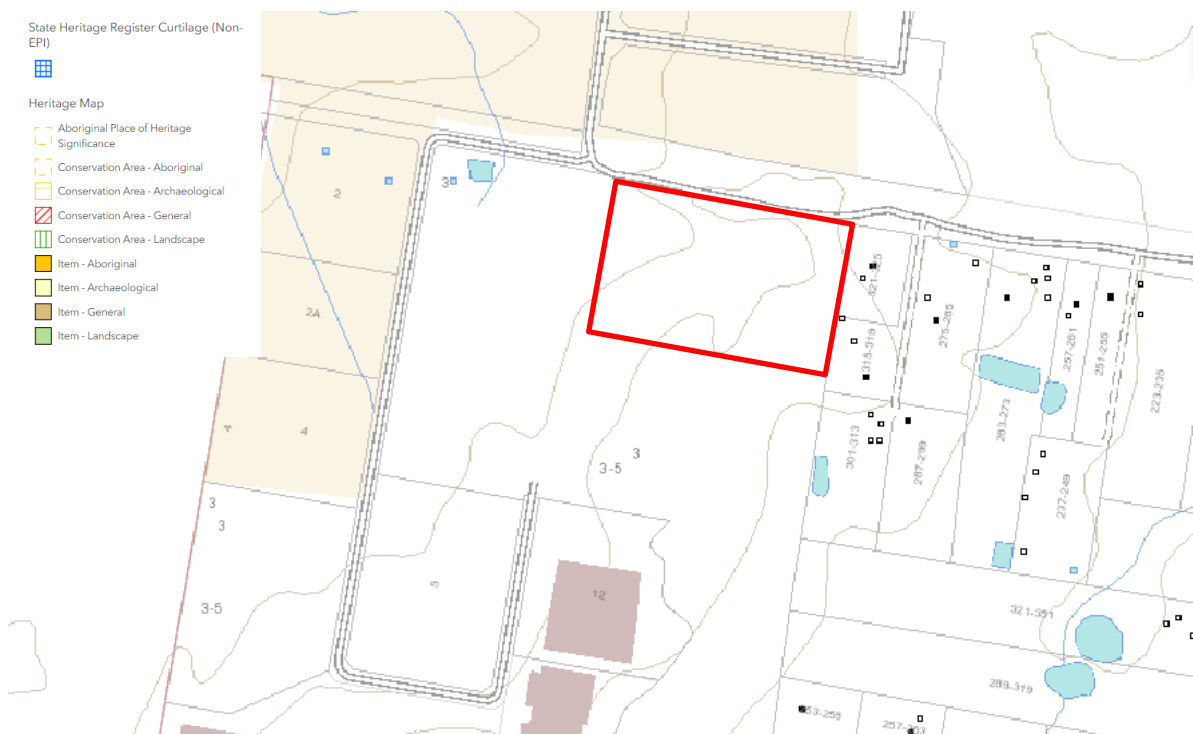


Figure 16 – Heritage map showing the subject site outlined in red.

Source: NSW Planning Portal ePlanning Spatial Viewer

4.3. SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

The subject site has been briefly assessed against the Heritage Council of NSW's seven criteria for assessing heritage significance. The subject site has been assessed to not meet the requisite threshold for heritage listing as a vacant industrial site within similarly characterised contextual setting. There is nothing on the site which indicates an earlier subdivision pattern.

5. THE PROPOSAL

The proponent (NEXTDC) is proposing to redevelop the subject area to provide a new data centre. The works proposed include:

- Site preparation works including bulk earthworks including tree removal.
- Staged construction and operation of two data centre buildings comprising a total gross floor area (GFA) of 61,695m² including 56,464m² of technical data hall floor space and 5,231m² of ancillary office floor space, including 'front of house' meeting and administrative spaces.
- Ancillary development including a centralised security office building at the main vehicle entrance, on-site parking for 200 cars, business identification signage (pylon and elevation signage), civil and stormwater works and 12,769m² of deep soil landscaping.
- Provision of a high-voltage (HV) power connection delivering 294 megawatts of power, including a 330kV substation and a 33kV switching station, plus above ground diesel storage tanks and above ground water tanks for industrial water and fire water.
- The project will be delivered in four construction stages as follows:
 - Stage 1 = Building C, HV switching building, 330kV substation, HV external cabling route, entrance to site, centralised security office, and water tanks.
 - Stage 2 = Building D
 - Stage 3 = Building A
 - Stage 4 = Building B

Urbis has been provided with drawing documentation prepared by HDR Architects. This HIS has relied on these plans for the impact assessment include in Section 6. Full size plans should be referred to for detail.

6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The potential impact of the proposed development has been considered against the relevant provisions and controls of the Council's statutory and non-statutory planning controls as well as the Heritage NSW 'Statement of Heritage Impact' assessment guideline.

The site is not listed on any statutory heritage list, and it is not located in the vicinity of any heritage listed item. Further, this report finds that it does not comprise any significant heritage values. There is therefore no potential for the proposed works to have any detrimental heritage impacts.

7. HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

The following assessment of historical archaeology has been prepared to comply with Item 20 of the SEARs for SSD-63741210, issued on 27 October 2023. That item reads as follows:

20. Environmental Heritage

Where there is potential for direct or indirect impacts on the heritage significance of environmental heritage, provide a Statement of Heritage Impact and Archaeological Assessment (if potential impacts to archaeological resources are identified), prepared in accordance with the relevant guidelines, which assesses any impacts and outlines measures to ensure they are minimised and mitigated.

In the context of historical archaeology, relevant (i.e. significant) archaeological resources are termed 'relics'. Section 4 of the *Heritage Act 1977* defines a 'relic' as:

Any deposit, object or material evidence

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

(b) is of State or local heritage significance.

The heritage significance of potential historical archaeological resources is assessed against the Heritage Council of NSW's seven criteria.

7.1. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Different phases of historical use and development of a subject area are likely to be associated with different archaeological resources, to have different degrees of integrity and to have different degrees of heritage significance. It is therefore useful to consider different historical phases separately when assessing archaeological potential and significance.

Based on the history provided in Section 3 above, the historical development and use of the present subject area is broadly categorised according to the following phases:

- Phase 1: Small-Scale Agriculture (1805 – c. 1970s)
- Phase 2: Quarry and Brickworks (c. 1970s – 2021)
- Phase 3: Site Preparation for Redevelopment (2021 – Present)

The archaeological resources likely to be associated with each of the above phases and the likely integrity of those archaeological resources are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Assessment of Archaeological Potential

Phase	Associated Materials	Integrity
1. Small-Scale Agriculture (1804 – c. 1970's)	Postholes associated with fence lines and small structures, artificial drainage lines, remnants of water storage equipment, casual finds associated use of the subject area for grazing.	Successive phases of human activity associated with resource extraction, the construction and demolition of buildings and bulk earthworks are likely to have removed all physical evidence of this historical phase.
2. Quarry and Brickworks (c. 1970s – 2021)	Foundations of demolished buildings and discarded industrial equipment associated with resource extraction and brick manufacture.	Subsequent demolition of structures and bulk earthworks are likely to have removed all physical evidence of this historical phase.
3. Site Preparation (2021 – Present)	Levelled imported fill and/or redeposited local soils, earthworks and landscaping, retaining walls, dam and drainage channels, underground services.	These resources remain extant.

7.2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

The *Archaeological Assessment Guidelines* (Heritage Office and Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, 1996) defines historical archaeological potential as:

The degree of physical evidence present on an archaeological site, usually assessed on the basis of physical evaluation and historical research. Common units for describing archaeological potential are: known archaeological features/sites (high archaeological potential); potential archaeological features/sites (medium archaeological potential); no archaeological features/sites (low archaeological potential).

The term 'archaeological feature', as used in the above definition, is defined as:

Any physical evidence of past human activity.

However, in practice 'archaeological potential' is typically limited to assessing the likelihood of evidence of past human activity being present that meets the requirements of a 'relic'.

Recent activity associated with Phase 3 does not have any local or state heritage significance.

Archaeological material associated with Phase 1 may have local heritage significance under criterion (e) at least. Such materials have the potential to yield information about the earliest historical use of Horsley Park, particularly as part of Lt Colonel George Johnston's 2000-acre grant ('King's Gift') and the development of early agriculture in the area. However, the likelihood of the subject area retaining any such materials is low due to subsequent phases of human activity, including resource extraction,

construction and demolition of buildings and bulk earthworks. So, while archaeological materials from Phase 1 may meet the threshold requirements to be considered relics, they are unlikely to be retained within the subject area.

By contrast, archaeological materials relating to Phases 2 and 3 are unlikely to meet any of the criteria for either local or State heritage significance. The late 20th industrial use of the subject area and more recent earthworks are unremarkable from a historical archaeological perspective. Any archaeological materials present from these phases are unlikely to meet the threshold requirements to be considered relics. Furthermore, archaeological materials from Phase 2 are unlikely to have survived the earthworks undertaken in Phase 3.

The archaeological potential of the subject area is therefore assessed to be low. It is unlikely to retain any historical archaeological materials that meet the threshold requirements for relics.

7.3. MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Although the likelihood of the subject area retaining any historical relics is low, it is recommended that unexpected finds and human remains procedures be implemented as harm mitigation measures.

If any archaeological deposits or features are unexpectedly discovered during any site works, the following steps must be carried out:

1. All works within the vicinity of the find must immediately stop. The find must not be moved 'out of the way' without assessment. The find must be cordoned-off and signage installed to avoid accidental impact.
2. The site supervisor or another nominated site representative must contact either the project archaeologist (if relevant) or Heritage NSW (Enviroline 131 555) to contact a suitably qualified archaeologist.
3. The nominated archaeologist must examine the find, provide a preliminary assessment of significance, record the item and decide on appropriate management measures. Such management may require further consultation with Heritage NSW, preparation of a research design and archaeological investigation/salvage methodology and notification of the discovery of a relic to Heritage NSW in accordance with S.146 of the Heritage Act 1977.
4. Depending on the significance of the find, reassessment of the archaeological potential of the subject area may be required and further archaeological investigation undertaken.
5. Reporting may need to be prepared regarding the find and approved management strategies.
6. Works in the vicinity of the find would only recommence upon receipt of approval from Heritage NSW.

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

1. All works within the vicinity of the find must immediately stop. The find must be cordoned-off and signage installed to avoid accidental impact.
2. The site supervisor or other nominated manager must notify the NSW Police and Heritage NSW (Enviroline 131 555).

3. The find must be assessed by the NSW Police, which may include the assistance of a qualified forensic anthropologist.
4. Management recommendations are to be formulated by the NSW Police, Heritage NSW and site representatives.
5. Works are not to recommence until the find has been appropriately managed.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. BUILT HERITAGE

This HIS has assessed examined and addressed the potential impacts of the proposed development at 16 Johnston Crescent, Horsley Park, in order to support a SSDA (SSD-63741210) on heritage grounds, which seeks approval for a proposal relating to development works prepared by HDR Architects.

It has been found that there is no potential for works to have any detrimental heritage impacts. Therefore, the proposed works are recommended for approval from a built heritage perspective.

8.2. HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

The historical archaeological assessment determined that the subject area has low potential for retaining historical relics. No further historical archaeological assessment is therefore recommended prior to commencement of works.

It is recommended that the present assessment be submitted with the SSDA and that the archaeological chance finds and human remains procedures outlined in Section 7.3 be implemented as harm mitigation measures.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Allie Cornish". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "A" and "C".

Allie Cornish
Associate Director
+61 2 8233 7624
acornish@urbis.com.au