

Lot 34 DP2359  
Yarrunga Street, Prestons, NSW  
(Site of the former Benera Homestead)  
**Preliminary Historical Archaeological Appraisal**



*Historic Photograph of Benera Homestead (View NNW)*

**30 April 2015**

*Report prepared by MDCA  
for DBL Property Pty Ltd  
& Logos Australian Logistics Venture Trust*

 **MARY DALLAS  
CONSULTING  
ARCHAEOLOGISTS**

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CULTURAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT, PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

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## Report Details

This report (dated 30 April 2015) was prepared by Dan Tuck of Mary Dallas Consulting Archaeologists (MDCA) for DBL Property Pty Ltd and Logos Australian Logistics Venture Trust.

MDCA details are as follows:

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## Introduction

DBL Property Pty Ltd (development managers and property advisors) on behalf Logos Australian Logistics Venture Trust, are investigating an option for the redevelopment of land for industrial purposes at Prestons in Western Sydney. Tentative planning proposals suggest that under the option, the site would be landscaped and supplied with warehousing and associated access, parking and service areas.

The central part of the site is an elevated knoll that was the former site of historic Benera (also Bernera) Homestead, which was destroyed by fire in the 1980s. The Benera homestead site (in its entirety) is listed within the heritage schedule of the Liverpool LEP and the NSW State Heritage Inventory.

As part of planning due process, the client has engaged Mary Dallas Consulting Archaeologists (MDCA) to prepare an historic heritage appraisal for the site that addresses the implications of the site's heritage listing on future development.

## Development Area

The proposed redevelopment area comprises 5 combined lots (accounting for some 21 hectares) at Prestons within Liverpool LGA. The lots are: Lots 33, 34, 35 & 43 (DP2359) and Lot 20 (DP1173483). The proposed development area is bordered to the north by Yarrunga Street, the east by Bernera Road and the south by Kurrajong Road. Neighbouring properties mark the western boundary approaching Kookaburra Road North.

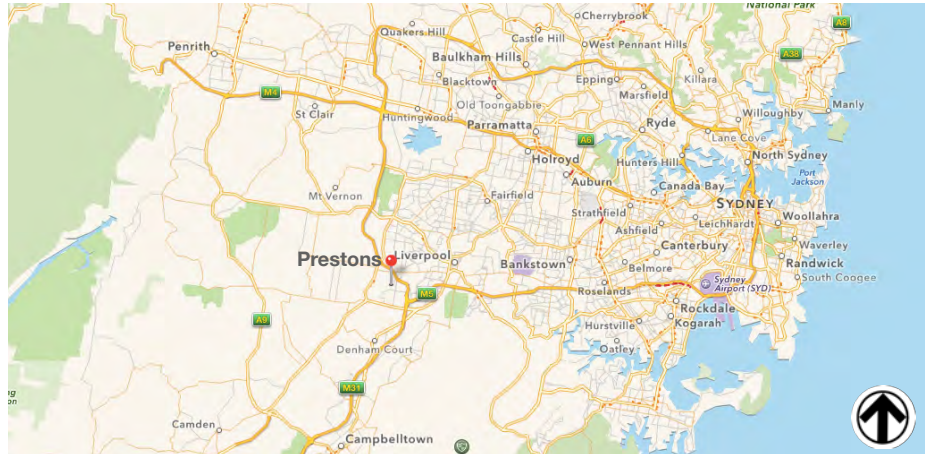
For the most part, the study area presents as mostly vacant rural residential farmland. It is grassed up and retains the vestiges of 1980s development and use as a residential grazing property, including two modern brick homes, horse and cattle yards, services and allied infrastructure. The most notable landscape feature is the elevated knoll, largely set within Lot 34, which is a district highpoint. The land falls in all directions around this feature.

For the purposes of this report, the **study area** is the site of the former historic homestead (Lot 34).

## This Report

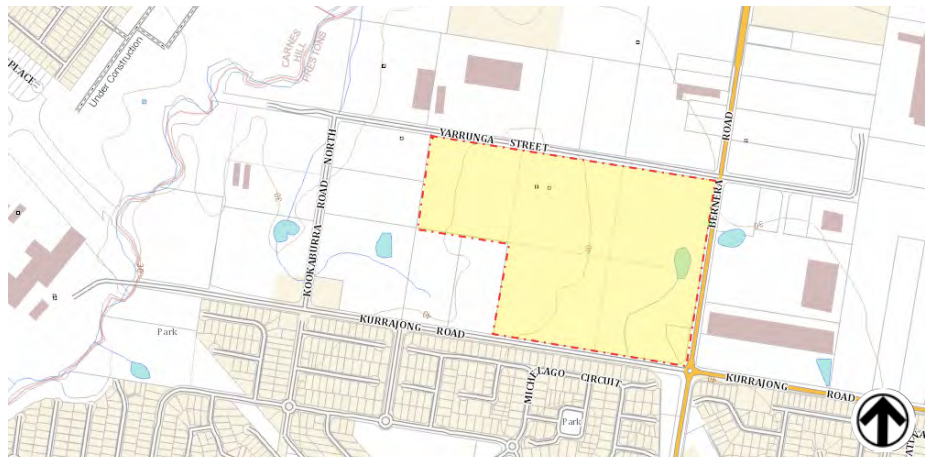
This report was prepared to inform development planning and was written by Dan Tuck (MDCA historical archaeologist). It should be read in conjunction with recent Aboriginal heritage advice (MDCA 23 April 2015). The author would like to thank Sam Camilleri (property owner) for kindly providing site access.

**Figures 1 - 4** show the study area in map and plan. **Figures 5 - 7** show select landscape characteristics and features of the study area.



**Figure 1: Sydney Region**

*Maps 2015*



**Figure 2: Prestons & Proposed Redevelopment Area (Map)**

*LPI SIX Viewer 2015*



**Figure 3: Prestons & Proposed Redevelopment Area (Satellite)**

*LPI SIX Viewer 2015*





Figure 4: Study Area (Lot 34) showing approximate location of Benera

SIX Maps 2015



**Figure 5:**  
**General view across the**  
**northern frontage of Lot**  
**34 showing modern**  
**brick residences**  
View SSW - D. Tuck 2015



**Figure 6:**  
**View across study area**  
**towards site of former**  
**Benera Homestead**  
View WSW - D. Tuck 2015



**Figure 7: Site of the former Benera Homestead**  
View WSW - D. Tuck 2015

## History

The study area (lot 34) was originally part of an early 19th century land grant to a Dr Donald Macleod (staff surgeon to Governor Brisbane). Macleod called his extensive holding of some 1000-acres 'Benera' after his family home in the Hebrides (an archipelago of islands off the West Coast of Scotland).

Later, the property was purchased by Alan McPherson (the son of William McPherson, the colony's first collector of internal revenue) and it was he who had the Benera Homestead constructed in c.1856-7.

### **Benera**

Benera was a mid-19th century timber homestead set on the crest of a knoll with views to both Sydney Town and the Blue Mountains. It was effectively U-shaped (a central residence framed by kitchen and nursery wings), strongly vernacular in character and constructed of pit-sawn ironbark reputed to have been felled on the property. Benera was built on wooden stumps and log footings and featured weatherboard exterior walls; timber interior walls (covered with canvas and paper); canvas ceilings framed with wooden slats and a roof of Manchester iron.

External to the building were a forecourt, cistern(s), access track, gardens and some large ornamental trees including two Bunya pines, a Moreton Bay fig and a row of crepe myrtle.

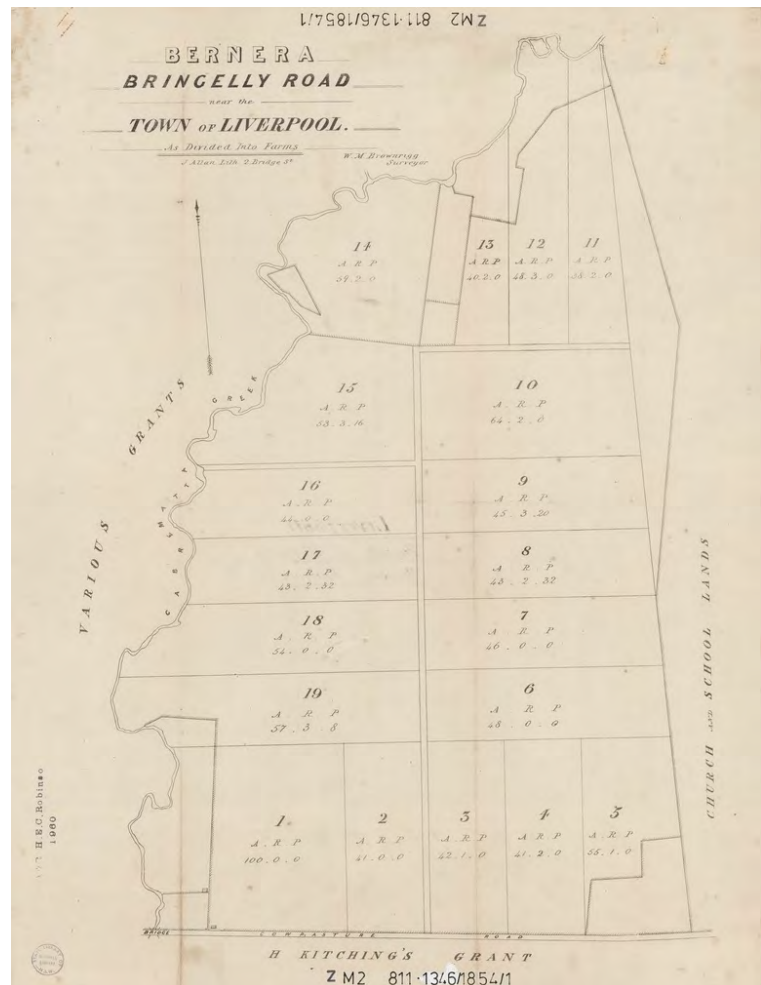
In 1889, the Benera Estate was subdivided and the 52-acre house block bearing the Benera Homestead purchased by William Retallack. In 1924 it was sold to the Harvard family who retained ownership until 1985 when the property was purchased by the Camilleri family. In the same year, the homestead was surveyed as part of the Macarthur Region Heritage Study.

In 1986, the homestead (and much of the vegetation immediately surrounding) was destroyed by fire. When the site was again surveyed in 1992 as part of the Liverpool Heritage Study (Neustein & Associates) the homestead was evident as fire ruined surface remains including burnt timbers, roof iron and stone chimney bases and thresholds. These were however later removed, and in 2004 when a heritage study review of the site was undertaken (FORM architects), it was noted that the homestead site was largely indiscernible and that most of the remnant vegetation had gone.

At present, the homestead site presents as a grassed up knoll-top. While there are occasional surface undulations, the setting and arrangement of the home is not distinguishable and the only item marking the locale is the burnt out and termite afflicted remnants of the Moreton Bay Fig that once stood to the immediate NE of the homestead.

Refer **figures 8 - 24**.





**Figure 8: Benera Estate (1854)**  
State Library of NSW - zM2 811.1346/1854/1



**Figure 9: Benera Cottage (c.1856/57)**  
From Mrs Allan Macpherson's 'Scenes in NSW 1856-57' SLNSW



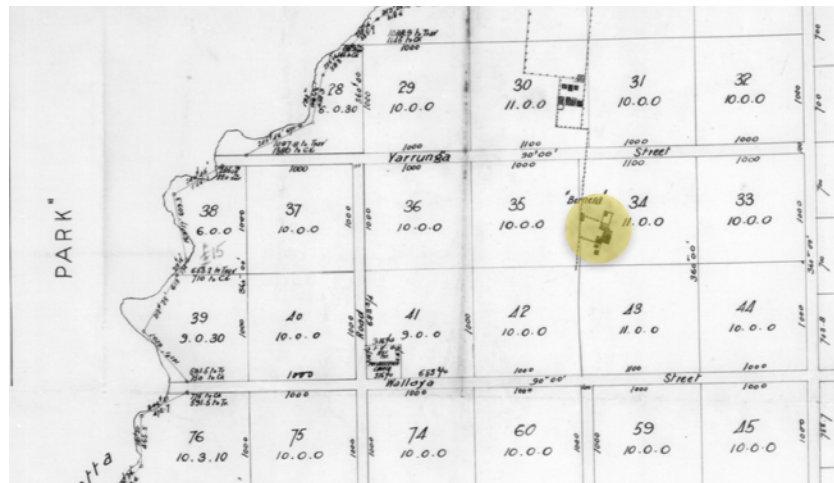


Figure 10: Benera Estate Subdivision Plan (Nd)  
Hoxton Park/Benera Subdivision Plans SLNSW

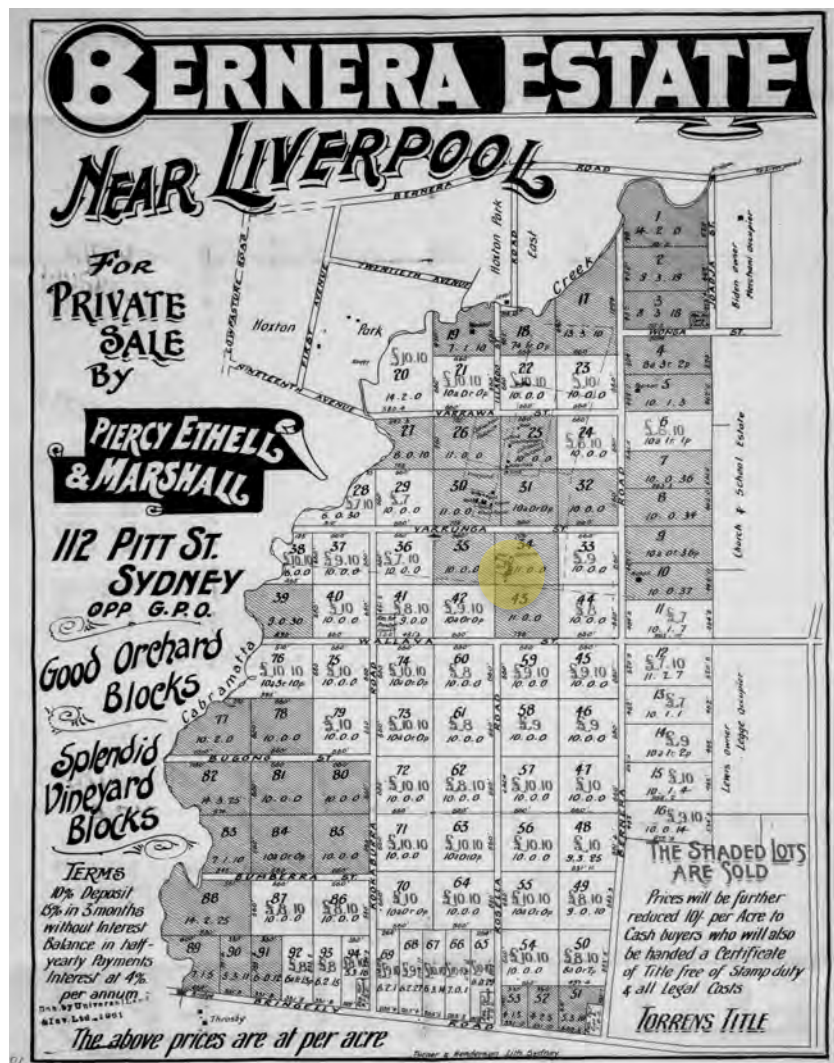


Figure 11: Benera Estate Subdivision Plan (Nd)  
Hoxton Park/Benera Subdivision Plans SLNSW



**Figure 12: Benera (Nd)**

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/version/209234576>



**Figure 13: Benera (1941)**

*Trove HL2878*



**Figure 14: Benera - Western Verandah (c.1962)**

*Trove HL1653-2*



**Figure 15: Benera - Western Verandah (c.1962)**

*Trove HL1653-1*





**Figure 16: Benera - Western Verandah (c.1972)**

*Demolished House in Liverpool* <http://trove.nla.gov.au/version/209234896>



**Figure 17: Benera (1947)**

*Lands Department Air Photo, Liverpool Run, 24 January 1947*



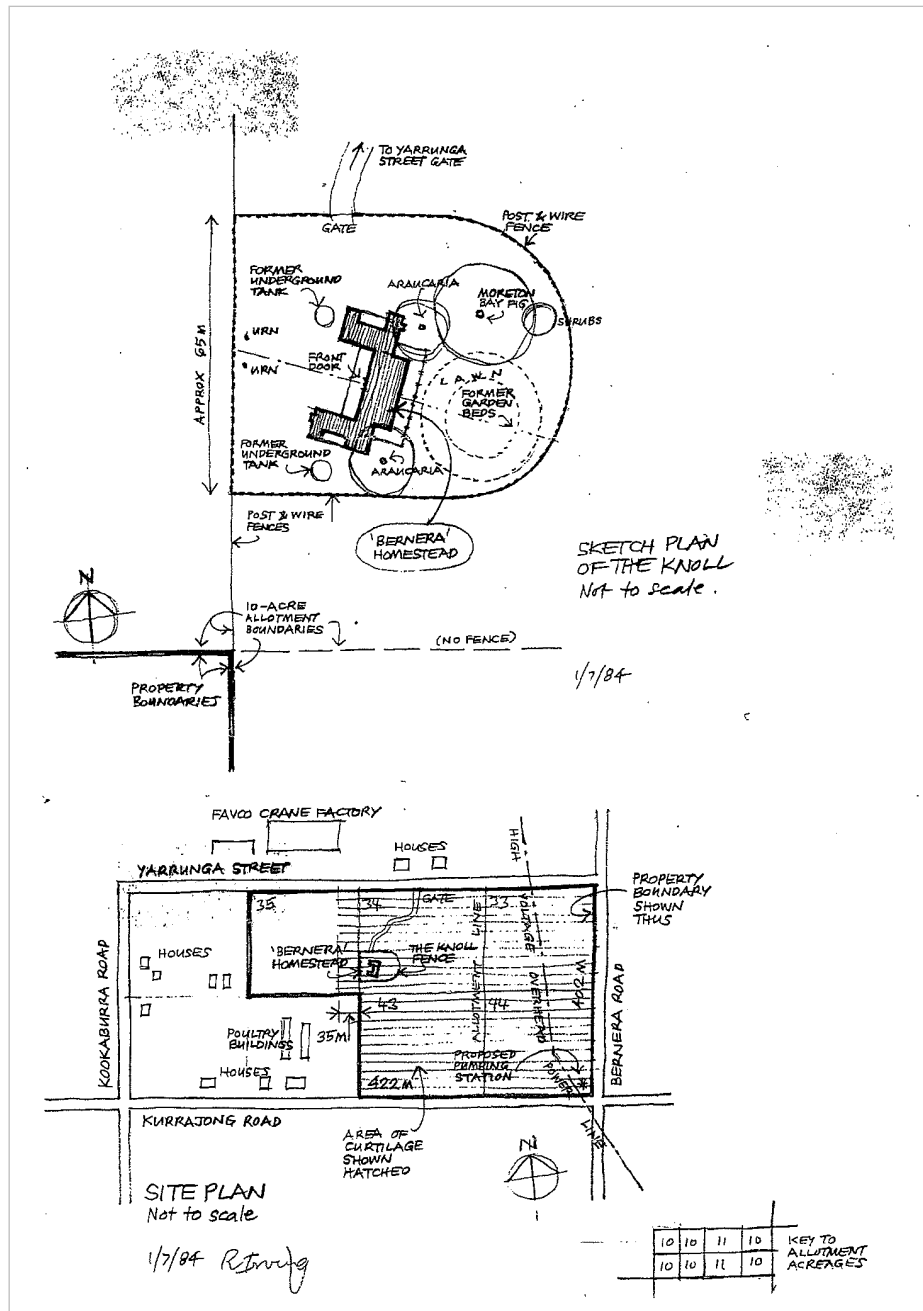


Figure 18: Indicative Benera Site Plan (1984)

Macarthur Region Heritage Study



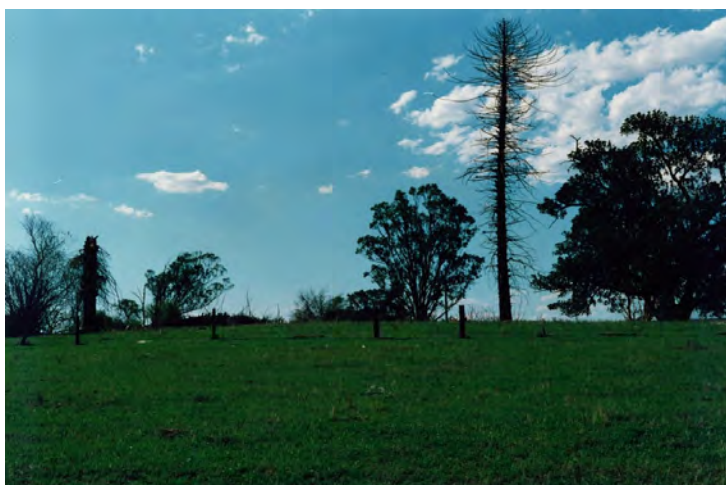
**Figure 19: Benera (1992)**

*Liverpool Heritage Study <http://trove.nla.gov.au/version/209235104>*



**Figure 20: Benera (1992)**

*Liverpool Heritage Study <http://trove.nla.gov.au/version/209235104> Figure 20: Benera (Nd)*



**Figure 21: Benera (1992)**

*Liverpool Heritage Study <http://trove.nla.gov.au/version/209235104>*



**Figure 22: Study Area (2005)**  
*Google Earth Historical Imagery*



**Figure 23: Study Area (2009)**  
*Google Earth Historical Imagery*



**Figure 24: Study Area (2014)**  
*Google Earth*

## Heritage

### Survey

The Lot 34/Benera study area was subject to site inspection on Wednesday 8 April 2015. Property owner Sam Camilleri kindly provided site access and information about the history of the locale and its more recent development.

The homestead site presents as a grassed up knoll top. While there are some surface undulations, and the remains of some of the vegetation that formerly dotted the site, there is no clear surface evidence of the homestead *per se*. Consequently, its location can only be inferred by the location of the remains of a termite infested Morton Bay Fig trunk (which was situated to the immediate northeast of the homestead) and an infilled depression that marks the location of a former concrete lined cistern that stood just off the end of the northern (east-west) wing of the homestead.

Other site features include a wooden telegraph pole and a small section of white painted aluminium fencing supported by star pickets (part of a late-20th century calf feeding apparatus and unrelated to Benera). There is also a collapsed shed to the northwest of the homestead site. This is a mid to late-20th century construction: timber framed; corrugated iron roofed; set on a medium-coarse, blue metal aggregate, concrete slab.

### Significance

#### Summary Statement of Significance

The Benera Homestead site was identified as an item of historical importance and cultural heritage significance when it was first assessed as part of the Macarthur Region Heritage Study in 1985. Destroyed by fire in 1986, much of the significance of the place now relates to the historical archaeological potential of the site. The NSW State Heritage Inventory Sheet for 'Benera, Site of' states that the site is significant under assessment Criterion (e) 'Research Potential' and that '... there is the potential to gain more information on the site from further architectural, archaeological and documentary research'.<sup>1</sup> It further notes that '... the site is no longer intact, but archaeological remains may exist'.

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<sup>1</sup> NSW State Heritage Inventory (DB Nos 1970064) - accessed 3 April 2015



## Legislative Issues

### NSW Heritage Act 1977

The NSW Heritage Act 1977 is the principle document governing the management of heritage items (relics and places containing relics) in NSW.

The Act defines a relic as:

*any deposit, artefact, object or material evidence that:*

*(a) relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement, &*

*(b) is of State or local heritage significance.*

All relics are afforded automatic statutory protection by the relic's provisions of the Act. Sections 139 to 145 of the Act prevent the excavation or disturbance of land for the purpose of discovering, exposing or moving a relic, except by a qualified archaeologist to whom an excavation permit from the Heritage Council of NSW has been issued.

#### Heritage Council of NSW

The Heritage Council of NSW is tasked with identifying and protecting heritage in NSW. It is supported by the Heritage Division of the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) under the umbrella of the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet.

## Listings

### Liverpool LEP 2008 (as amended)

The Liverpool Local Environmental Plan (LEP) is the primary local government planning instrument. Clause 5.10 *Heritage Conservation* provides objectives for heritage conservation and identifies when development consent is required (or not required) for heritage items, archaeological sites and Aboriginal places - or locations in the vicinity thereof.

Schedule 5 list items of *Environmental Heritage* consecutively under Heritage Items (part 1); Heritage Conservation Areas (part 2) and Archaeological Sites (part 3).

*The site of Benera is listed within Schedule 5 (part 1) of the LEP as follows:*

Suburb	Item	Address	Property	Significance	Item Number
Prestons	Remnants of former sandstone cottage ("Benera")	Yarrunga Road	Lot 34, DP 2359	Local	59

*Note that the listing description is not entirely accurate. There is no indication in the historical record (or anecdotally) that Benera was a sandstone cottage. While it is known to have had some minor stonework and masonry (most notably chimney bases and entrance thresholds) it was a timber dwelling.*

### **State Heritage Register & Inventory**

The **State Heritage Register** (SHR) is a list of heritage items that have been assessed and acknowledged as having state heritage significance. The NSW Office of Environment and Heritage's Heritage Council maintains the register, and any development proposal that is likely to affect items on the register generally requires NSW Heritage Council approval (s.60).

The **State Heritage Inventory** (SHI) lists items of both state and local heritage significance. Generally the listing of items on the SHI results from their inclusion in local and regional planning instruments or heritage studies. Any development proposal that is likely to affect items on the inventory may require NSW Heritage Council approval (s.140).

*As a consequence of its listed within the Liverpool LEP, Benera is listed as an item of local heritage significance within the NSW SHI (DB nos.1970064).*

*Refer also Liverpool LEP Heritage Map - Sheet HER-008:*

[http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/mapindex?  
type=epi&year=2008&no=403#HER](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/mapindex?type=epi&year=2008&no=403#HER)

*Refer **figures 25 - 28** and **attachment A1**.*



**Figure 25: Site of the former Benera Homestead site (general)**

View WSW - D. Tuck 2015



**Figure 26: Former Benera Homestead site (infilled cistern)**

View ENE - D. Tuck 2015



**Figure 27: Collapsed 20th century shed (NW of homestead site)**

View W - D. Tuck 2015



**Figure 28: View north towards Yarrunga Road from Benera Homestead site**

View N - D. Tuck 2015



## Appraisal

### History

- Benera Homestead was constructed in the c.1950s by Alan McPherson, son of William McPherson - the colony's first collector of internal revenue.
- The homestead comprised a U-shaped timber residence featuring a central core building with kitchen and nursery wings. Other features of the locale included in-ground tanks/cisterns, gardens and an access track.
- The house was vacant by the 1980s and was destroyed by fire in 1986. Thereafter, all material traces of the homestead that remained on the surface were systematically cleared away.
- Two rural brick residences were constructed within the lot to the north of the homestead site in the 1980s (fronting Yarrunga Street). All fence lines were renewed at this time (post and wire) and the property used for grazing cattle.

### Heritage

- The site is listed within the heritage schedule of the Liverpool LEP and on the NSW State Heritage Inventory (SHI).
- The site has previously been assessed as possessing archaeological significance and potential and this is reflected in the significance assessment in the SHI listing.
- Recent site inspection has determined that there are few surface manifestations of the homestead site.
- In-ground remains associated with the homestead are likely to be limited. Structural remains *may* include the remains of footings, stumps and post holes. Ancillary features may include rubbish pits, cisterns and pit toilets.

### Considerations

- The study area is zoned industrial land.
- Advance planning for the future development of the site centres on the provision of warehousing as part of an industrial estate that will provide significant local work opportunities into the future
- Warehouse construction will require bulk earthworks to create flat building platforms. It is likely that the site of Benera Homestead will need to be reduced/cut down as part of the earthworks to accommodate warehousing.
- Archaeological investigation will be required as part of a strategy to mediate development impact related to proposed development works.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations acknowledge the history and heritage of the study area; NSW Heritage Council guidelines and local planning controls and the nature of the proposed development at the site.

1. In advance of development, the Benera House site should be subject to a historical archaeological investigation (testing/salvage excavation). This will require:
  - Application to the NSW Heritage Division of the OEH for a s140 excavation permit. Application will involve preparation of an excavation permit application proforma and its submission (along with a supporting document that includes a Statement of Heritage Impact, a Research Design and an Excavation Methodology).

**Note** that NSW Heritage Division permit processing can take up to eight (8) weeks and that archaeological work must only be undertaken on receipt of the permit. Excavation must be directed and undertaken by a suitably qualified archaeologist in accordance with the approved research design and excavation methodology and any other conditions of approval.

2. A Heritage Interpretation Plan (IP) should be prepared in advance of development and its recommendations instigated during the development process. The interpretation plan should present a strategy for the effective interpretation of the site's history to the public and industrial estate users.
3. Consideration should be given to remember the history of the site in the naming of the industrial estate and/or its elements (such as access roads).

### Caveat

The study area has recently been subject to a Preliminary Aboriginal Heritage Appraisal (MDCA 23 April 2015). The recommendations of this assessment (which include a testing program on the knoll) will have a bearing on the nature and timing of the historic heritage investigation (and ultimate management) of the site. As the two investigative approaches are allied, though conducted under different legislation and approvals processes, they will need to be approached collaboratively and undertaken concurrently.

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## **Glossary**

### **Archaeology**

The study of material evidence of the human past.

Historical Archaeology is the sub-discipline concerned with studying the past using physical evidence in conjunction with other types of historical sources such as documents, maps, illustrations, photographs and oral history. In Australia, historical archaeology is that branch of archaeology that deals with material culture (relics) relating to the post-contact period - the period commencing with the incursion of non-indigenous fishermen, explorers and European settlers.

### **Archaeological features & deposits**

Archaeological features usually exist at or below ground level and relate to structural evidence of the past - they include such things as footings, in-ground services, wells, and sub-floor deposits. Archaeological deposits are materials (usually soils) containing relics.

### **Archaeological Potential**

A comparative measure of the likelihood of a site (or part of site) to contain relics of significance. The nature of actual or potential relics, and the history of the development and disturbance of a site, all affect the potential of a site to preserve relics.

### **Archaeological Site**

A place that contains evidence of past human activity.

### **Archaeological Significance**

An assessment of the relative importance or value of archaeological features or deposits. Archaeological significance is an aspect of broader cultural heritage significance and is generally assessed under criterion e of the NSW standard assessment criteria:

*Criterion (e) An item as 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).*

### **Burra Charter**

Charter & guidelines adopted by Australian ICOMOS which established the nationally accepted standard for the conservation of places of heritage significance.

### **Context**

The specific character, quality, physical, historical & social characteristics of a building's setting.

The situation in which a relic is located - its 'find place'.

### **Conservation**

All the processes of looking after an item so as to retain its cultural significance. It includes maintenance & may, according to circumstances, include preservation, restoration, reconstruction & adaptation & will be commonly a combination of more than one of these.

### **Cultural Heritage Management**

Generic term applied to the management of cultural heritage places & values. Previously termed Cultural Resource Management (CRM).

### **Cultural Landscape**

Somewhat difficult to adequately define, however for the purposes of heritage management a cultural landscape is an area whose landscape bears witness to past human activity with some level of historical significance.

### **Cultural Significance**

A term frequently used to encompass all aspects of significance, particularly in guideline documents such as the Burra Charter. For historic heritage cultural significance most commonly includes social, spiritual, scientific, historic & aesthetic values.

### **Disturbance**

Disturbance is a general term used to describe activities or processes that may have an impact on archaeological relics including surface level features & buried or subsurface items.

Generally, normal maintenance activities such as mowing & general land-surface maintenance are not considered disturbance as they constitute practices that are unlikely to result in detrimental effects on archaeological relics.

Processes that may impact on relics (in areas of deemed archaeological sensitivity) include works such as trenching, pile driving & any excavation work or landscaping that significantly removes or disturbs subsurface deposit. Note also that compaction of soils containing relics through the use of heavy machinery or semi-permanent features such as cranes or scaffolding, may be considered disturbance.

### **Excavation Permit**

A permit issued by the NSW OEH Heritage Division under section 60 (for items on the State Heritage Register) or section 140 (for items not on the State Heritage Register) of the NSW Heritage Act 1977. These permits allow for the disturbance or excavation of relics subject to the conditions stipulated.

### **Excavation Permit Exception**

A permit issued by the NSW OEH Heritage Division that negates the need for an excavation permit. Exceptions are given in a variety of circumstances - generally where proposed works are minor, of low impact or are occurring in locations where archaeological potential has been previously identified as low.

### **Heritage**

Consists of the intangible & tangible aspects of the whole body of cultural practices, resources & knowledge systems developed & passed on as part of expressing cultural identity.

### **Historical Theme**

Traditionally used to describe a major force or process (activities such as mining, fishing or defence) which has contributed to our history.

### **Historic Heritage**

Comprises sites, places & cultural landscapes that contain physical & non-physical manifestations of cultural heritage values of human occupation & settlement after the arrival of non-indigenous people.

### **In situ**

Means 'in its original place' & is the term used to describe any item that is the same location & position in which it was originally deposited (also referred to as 'primary context'). In situ retention is ensuring that important archaeological items or features are protected undisturbed.

### **Post-contact**

Period in Australia after British colonists arrived in 1788.

### **Prehistory**

Usually defined as the period before written records. In Australia the term is mainly used to refer to the period of Aboriginal occupation of Australia before the arrival of British colonists.

## **Relic**

The NSW Heritage Act 1977 (as amended), defines a relic as:

*any deposit, artefact, object or material evidence that:*

*(a) relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement, &*

*(b) is of State or local heritage significance.*

All relics are afforded automatic statutory protection by the relic's provisions of the Act. Sections 139 to 145 of the Act prevent the excavation or disturbance of land for the purpose of discovering, exposing or moving a relic, except by a qualified archaeologist to whom an excavation permit, issued by the Heritage Council of NSW or delegated authorities, has been issued.

## **Salvage Archaeology**

Salvage archaeology (also referred to variously as rescue or compliance archaeology) is archaeological investigation in advance of development that excavates and records a site in its entirety. While there may be a number of methodological approaches to meeting this end, the aim is data recovery and the result is that ultimately the site is destroyed.

## **Significance**

Of aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, natural or aesthetic value for past, present or future generations. Heritage significance is often used interchangeably with the term 'heritage value'. In NSW levels of significance which further define heritage items are World, National, State & Local.


## **Site**

A site is considered to be a location or area of land that represents a focus of past human activity that contains physical or tangible cultural material remains & some degree of historical/heritage significance.



## **Attachments**

## A1. SHI Listing for Site of Benera


**Environment & Heritage**

[Home](#) > [Heritage sites](#) > [Searches and directories](#) > NSW heritage search

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### ► Benera, Site Of

**Item details**

Name of item: Benera, Site Of  
 Type of item: Archaeological-Terrestrial  
 Group/Collection: Farming and Grazing  
 Category: Homestead Complex  
 Primary address: Yarrunga Road, Hoxton Park, NSW 2171  
 Local govt. area: Liverpool

**Property description**

Lot/Volume Code	Lot/Volume Number	Section Number	Plan/Folio Code	Plan/Folio Number
LOT	34		DP	2359

**All addresses**

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
Yarrunga Road	Hoxton Park	Liverpool			Primary Address

**Statement of significance:**

There is the potential to gain more information on the site from further architectural, archaeological and documentary research.

Date significance updated: 26 May 04

*Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Branch intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.*

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**Description**

Construction years: 1856-1857

Physical description: Extant planting at the rear of the house include hawthorn (*Crataegus* sp.) and oleander (*Nerium oleander*). A large fig tree (*Ficus* sp.) is east of the house site. Plantings destroyed by the 1986 fire include 2 mature Bunya pines (*Araucaria bidwillii*) and a row of crepe myrtles (*Lagerstroemia indica*) on the north side of the house.

House remains include sandstone piers/footings supporting timber log bearers morticed to take floor joists and many burnt structural timbers. The U-shaped plan of the house is clearly evident. Remains of at least 2 stone chimneys and carved stone thresholds at entry points. All internal fittings destroyed although major items such as the sink and fridge are still recognisable. Much burnt corrugated iron roofing is scattered across the house site and the knoll on which the house is situated. The concrete cistern at the rear has been infilled. The fill includes some recent material. On the southern side of the knoll is a shed constructed of corrugated iron and timber posts (not significant). "

More recently the ruins were cleared from the site by the

Physical condition and/or Archaeological potential:	<p>present landowner and very little above ground evidence now remains. (1992).</p> <p>During field inspections for the Heritage Study Review undertaken in 2004 it was recorded that the present landowner has cleared the ruins of the homestead as part of general improvements to his land. This work removed all above ground remains of the site, it did not however involve subsurface disturbance.</p> <p>Similarly, much of the vegetation recorded in 1992 was also removed bar one large dead tree to the north of the approximate location of the site. Other features identified in the 1992 study such as the line of the driveway, the raised lawn and the concrete lined cistern were not discernible during field inspections. Inspections of the approximate location of the site did however record a c.1m in length x 0.20m in width linear sandstone foundation, now overgrown by low vegetation cover. It is most likely associated with the house but further archaeological and architectural investigations would be required to ascertain the nature and extent of the feature. Other sandstone stones, some blackened, were also sporadically recorded in the general vicinity but did not form a distinguishable pattern. The site is now in use as a grazing paddock.</p> <p>The site contains very few remnants of the original garden though the line of the original driveway and a raised lawn area are apparent under the present long grass covering the site (2004).</p> <p>High archaeological potential.</p>
Modifications and dates:	<p>Date condition updated: 26 May 04</p> <p>The cottage was destroyed by a fire in 1986. The above ground ruins and remnant vegetation noted in 1992 have since been cleared from the site (2004).</p> <p>During field inspections for the Heritage Study Review undertaken in 2004 it was recorded that the present landowner has cleared the ruins of the homestead as part of general improvements to his land. This work removed all above ground remains of the site, it did not however involve subsurface disturbance.</p> <p>Similarly, much of the vegetation recorded in 1992 was also removed bar one large dead tree to the north of the approximate location of the site. Other features identified in the 1992 study such as the line of the driveway, the raised lawn and the concrete lined cistern were not discernible during field inspections. Inspections of the approximate location of the site did however record a c.1m in length x 0.20m in width linear sandstone foundation, now overgrown by low vegetation cover. It is most likely associated with the house but further archaeological and architectural investigations would be required to ascertain the nature and extent of the feature. Other sandstone stones, some blackened, were also sporadically recorded in the general vicinity but did not form a distinguishable pattern. The site is now in use as a grazing paddock.</p> <p>The site contains very few remnants of the original garden though the line of the original driveway and a raised lawn area are apparent under the present long grass covering the site (2004).</p> <p>Current use: Cottage destroyed by fire and ruins cleared</p>

Former use: Private Residence

## History

### Historical notes:

The site forms part of a 100 acre property granted to Dr Donald Macleod who arrived to the area in 1821. He served as staff surgeon to Governor Brisbane. Macleod called the property "Benera" after his family home in the Hebrides. The property was purchased by Alan McPherson, the first collector of internal revenue, who had the house constructed in 1856-7. The property was subdivided in 1889, with the 52 acres house block being purchased by William Retallack. In 1924 it was purchased by the Harvard family who retained ownership until 1985. In that year it was surveyed as part of the Macarthur Region Heritage Study and described as "a substantial timber verandah homestead strongly vernacular in character. Built of iron bark felled on the property and pit-sawn.

Weatherboard exterior walls and interior board walls covered with original canvas and paper. Ceilings of canvas with wooden slats. In plan the entrance side balanced by a Kitchen and nursery wings forming a forecourt. Roof of original Manchester iron.

Outline of old garden beds still apparent when grass is mown. The old garden was very large with a gravelled drive and raised lawn in front. Latticed garden house at the corner of the front verandah. Mature trees and an important component of the property with landmark quality."

In 1986 the house was destroyed by fire which also destroyed some of the associated mature plantings/trees. The site of the former homestead was described in the 1992 Liverpool Heritage Study as follows:  
"the site appears to have been little disturbed since destruction of the house by fire in 1986. The site includes the remains of the burnt out homestead (presumably with associated deposits) remnants of the surrounding garden and mature trees. A concrete lined cistern is located at the rear of the house (diameter approx. 3.4m).  
A large, dead Bunya pine and a Duranta mark the area of the original homestead garden on the top of a low knoll and are notable landmark features.

The site contains very few remnants of the original garden though the line of the original driveway and a raised lawn area are apparent under the present long grass covering the site.

Extant planting at the rear of the house include Hawthorn and Oleander. A large Fig tree is east of the house site. Plantings destroyed by the 1986 fire include 2 mature Bunya pines and a row of Crepe Myrtles on the north side of the house.

House remains include sandstone piers/footings supporting timber log bearers morticed to take floor joists and many burnt structural timbers. The U-shaped plan of the house is clearly evident. Remains of at least 2 stone chimneys and carved stone thresholds at entry points. All internal fittings destroyed although major items such as the sink and fridge are still recognisable. Much burnt corrugated iron roofing is scattered across the house site and the knoll on which the house is situated. The concrete cistern at the rear has been infilled. The fill includes some recent material.

On the southern side of the knoll is a shed constructed of corrugated iron and timber posts (not significant). "

More recently the ruins were cleared from the site by the present landowner and very little above ground evidence now remains.

#### Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
4. Settlement-Building settlements, towns and cities	Towns, suburbs and villages-Activities associated with creating, planning and managing urban functions, landscapes and lifestyles in towns, suburbs and villages	Rural/Semi-rural housing-

#### Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria e) [Research potential] There is the potential to gain more information on the site from further architectural, archaeological and documentary research.

Integrity/Intactness: The site is no longer intact, but archaeological remains may exist.

Assessment criteria: Items are assessed against the [State Heritage Register \(SHR\) Criteria](#) to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

#### Recommended management:

Although this property has been severely impacted upon by land management practices which have not taken into account the cultural heritage significance of the site, the site retains archaeological significance. Therefore prior to any further development, subdivision or alteration to the landscape and any remnant structures an archaeological assessment and statement of heritage impact must be undertaken.

#### Recommendations

Management Category	Description	Date Updated
Recommended Management	Develop a Statement of Heritage Impact	21 Jul 05
Recommended Management	Carry out an Archaeological Assessment	05 Mar 05

#### Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Local Environmental Plan		0252	03 Feb 95	011	668
Heritage study					

#### Study details

Title	Year	Number	Author	Inspected by	Guidelines used
Liverpool Heritage Study	1992	LP0116	Neustein & Associates		No
Liverpool Heritage Study Review	2004	1970064	FORM architects aust pty ltd	Helen Davies & Cathy Fisher	Yes
Macarthur Region Heritage Study	1985		Not Known		No

#### References, internet links & images



Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written				
Written				
Written				

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



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