

20 December 2018

Root Partnerships
Level 2
14 Martin Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Attention: Mr Onell Hermis

O'Connell Street Public School Shade Sail Installation: Historical Archaeological Impact Statement

Dear Mr Hermis

We understand that the Department of Education is proposing to install a shade sail in the area of the new playground, located north of Building D of the O'Connell Public School complex. The proposal will be assessed as a modification to the existing State Significant Development approval (SSD 15_7372) granted under Part 4 (Division 4.1) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 for the redevelopment of the State Heritage Register listed Old King's School site (SHR #00771 and #00826) into a new school - the O'Connell Street Public School.

This letter provides the assessment of potential archaeological impacts of this proposed activity, and includes recommendations for mitigation of such impacts. It should be considered a supplement to the Statement of Heritage Impact prepared for the project by Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Architects.

1.1 Background

As part of the O'Connell Street Public School Redevelopment Project, Extent Heritage Pty Ltd (Extent) undertook the preparation of various archaeological documentation and physical investigations to manage the site's archaeological resources. They include the preparation of an Archaeological Management Plan (AMP) in 2017 (amongst other documents) and archaeological excavations between 2016 and 2017.

The objectives of physical investigations were to ensure that any archaeological remains exposed during the site redevelopment were fully investigated and development impacts

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appropriately mitigated, so that the site's archaeological research potential could be realised; and significant historical heritage could be appropriately recovered and curated.

The archaeological research and onsite physical works have been guided by the AMP, which was endorsed by the Department of Planning and Environment, in consultation with the NSW Heritage Division, in late March 2017. Being the most relevant report for the archaeological program, the AMP took into consideration the results of previous studies and investigations on the site, and devised actions and procedures to be implemented during the development of the project. The archaeological program required by the AMP resulted in the discovery of a number of historical archaeological relics and Aboriginal objects. In order to reflect these discoveries, the AMP was updated twice and supplemented by three addenda.

The results of the historical archaeological program are presented in O'Connell Street Public School Parramatta – Historical Archaeological Post Excavation Report: Draft (2018).

1.2 Subject area location

The location of the new shade sail is in the area of the newly constructed playground, situated north of Building D, in the northwest corner of the O'Connell Public School complex (Figure1).

1.3 Archaeological Potential and Significance

The initial assessment of historical archaeological resources (known and potential) and their likelihood for survival across the school site was undertaken by Godden Mackay Logan (GML) in 2004, and updated by Extent in 2017 as part of the preparation of the AMP (Section 3, Table 6 in Extent 2017). The site's archaeological potential has been presented in accordance with: the identified phases of the site development; a date indicating the year or date range within which the historical feature was known to have been generated; the types of archaeological remains associated with the feature or activity that may survive at the site; and the predicted level of survival, which indicates the likelihood of the potential (and known) remains to still be present in situ.

The subject area was part of the nursery garden by the Australia's first Agricultural and Horticultural Society, but had remained undeveloped until the construction of extant Building D, when it was subjected to major disturbance. As such it has been assessed of having low-nil archaeological potential.

Should evidence of early agriculture (fruit growing) be present, such evidence would be considered to be significant at a State level.

1.4 Previous Archaeological Investigation

1.4.1 Historical Archaeology

The northwest boundary of the site, near the north end of Building D, was monitored for the installation of cyclone boundary fencing during the 2017 site redevelopment. A sandstock brick footing - likely to be the western footing of the 1886-1895 rectangular structure (possibly the stables), shown as item 21 in Figure 1 - was identified, but no associated cultural deposits (Extent 2018).

To the east of Building D, the site of the former school hospital (1886) was excavated as a salvage site. The results showed a moderate level of preservation and intactness of former soils and building features, including a moderate number of artefacts associated with the Old King's School (Extent 2018).

Based on the subject area's low archaeological potential, the 2017 construction works for the installation of children's playground was managed under the unexpected finds procedure. During the works that involved resurfacing and other minor ground disturbance, no unexpected discoveries were reported.

1.4.2 Aboriginal Archaeology

Archaeological test excavation in advance of the O'Connell Street Public School redevelopment identified the presence of the Parramatta Terrace Sand Sheet (PTSS) - an alluvial sand deposit documented to contain significant cultural materials - in the southern portion of the site, designated for the construction of the new hall. A concentration of 57 artefacts was in one localised area within the sand deposit—Test Pit 5 (TP 5). This small focus of cultural deposit, identified as 'Old Kings School AS1', was assessed as having high scientific and cultural value, and was therefore the subject of archaeological mitigation (salvage excavation). The Aboriginal archaeological salvage program recovered a total of 151 artefacts -inclusive of 57 artefacts from the original test excavation of TP5. The salvage excavation revealed that the cultural assemblage was constrained to a narrow 40cm band between 7.85 and 7.55m AHD, with peak artefact concentrations in the Terminal Pleistocene (~16-11,000 years ago). Overall, the site contained a low density of artefacts (6.04 artefacts/m²), and represented a discrete knapping event, within which artefact manufacture and maintenance were undertaken.

The results of the salvage excavation allowed a re-assessment of the Aboriginal heritage significance of Old Kings School. While additional information has been obtained, especially in relation to the northern banks of the Parramatta River – which have been largely un-investigated to date – the artefact assemblage is relatively small and indicates only ephemeral use of the site (and possibly the region). As such, the site remains of moderate or local scientific and cultural significance.

1.5 Description of development and potential impacts

The proposed shade sail will cover the playground to the north of Building D (Figure 2). The sails are anchored on five pillars, each with a 600mm cylindrical footing. Footing A anchors to the pre-existing slab and there will be no ground impact. Of the remaining four footings, Footing B is 1.8m deep, Footing E is 1.9m deep and Footing C and D are 2.5m deep. The footings will be installed by augering.

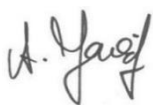
Based on the sites low-nil archaeological potential and the limited area of impact, including four 600mm wide posts, the potential development impacts associated with the construction of the shade sails are considered to be negligible. No archaeological mitigation measures are required to accompany the works.

1.6 Conclusions and Recommendations

The proposed location of the shade sails is in an area previously assessed as having low-nil archaeological potential and no known significance (Extent 2017). Recent archaeological investigations and site works provide no evidence to revise this assessment. No previous buildings are assessed as being in the area immediately north of Building D, nor the existence of the PTSS.

Installation works can proceed with no requirement for additional archaeological mitigation measures.

Yours sincerely,



Anita Yousif

Historical Archaeology Team Leader | Extent Heritage

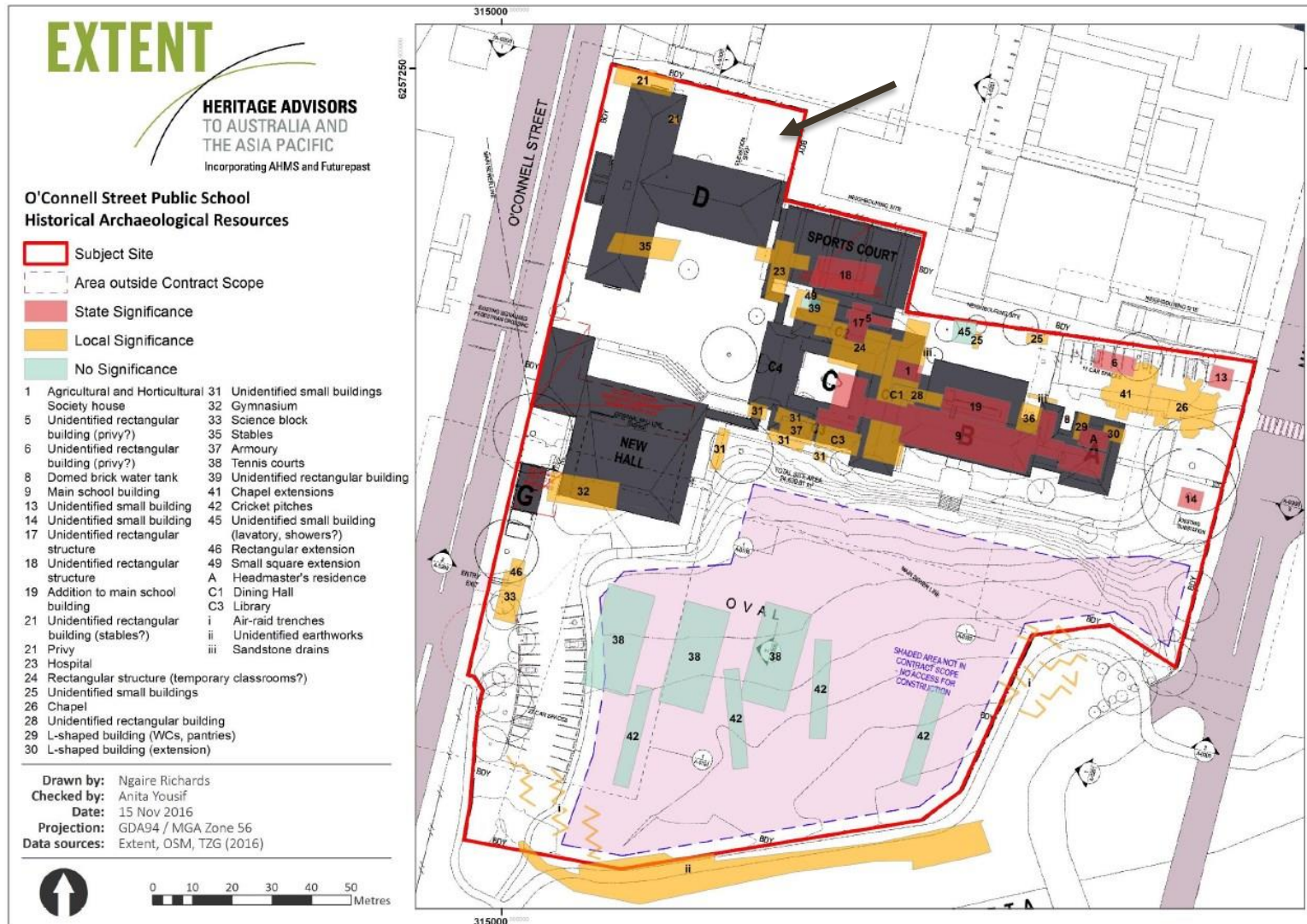


Figure 1 The location of the shade sail installation (arrowed) shown in relation to historical archaeological resources (Source: Extent 2017)

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1.7 References

Extent Heritage Pty Ltd. 2016. Old King's School, Parramatta Statement of Heritage Impact Historical Archaeology. For Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Architects.

Extent Heritage Pty Ltd. 2017. O'Connell Street Public School Archaeological Management Plan (Updated September 2017). For Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Architects.

Extent Heritage Pty Ltd. 2018. O'Connell Street Public School Post Excavation Report (Draft V3). For Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Architects.

Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd. 2004. 'Marsden Rehabilitation Centre Site, Parramatta—Archaeological Assessment. Prepared for State Property.