



APPENDIX I

HISTORIC HERITAGE  
ASSESSMENT REPORT



# Garoo Solar Farm and BESS

Historic Heritage Assessment

**PREPARED FOR**

The Trustee for GreenPulse Solar  
Farm and BESS Unit Trust  
(GreenPulse)

**DATE**

5 November 2025

**REFERENCE**

0751705



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# Garoo Solar Farm and BESS

## Historic Heritage Assessment

0751705



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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| Acronyms     | Description  |
|--------------|--|
| AC           | Alternating Current  |
| BESS         | Battery Energy Storage System  |
| CH           | Commonwealth Heritage  |
| CHL          | Commonwealth Heritage List   |
| EIS          | Environmental Impact Statement                                       |
| EP&A Act     | <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>                |
| EPBC Act     | <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> |
| EPI          | Environmental Planning Instrument                                    |
| ERM          | Environmental Resources Management Australia Pty Ltd                 |
| DC           | Direct Current   |
| FTE          | Full Time Equivalent   |
| GWh          | Gigawatt hours   |
| ha           | Hectares   |
| Heritage Act | <i>Heritage Act 1977</i>   |
| HHA          | Historic Heritage Assessment   |
| ICOMOS       | International Council on Monuments and Sites                         |
| IHO          | Interim Heritage Order   |
| km           | Kilometres   |
| kV           | Kilovolt   |
| LEP          | Local Environmental Plan   |
| LGA          | Local Government Area  |
| m            | Metres   |
| MW           | Megawatt   |
| NHL          | National Heritage List   |
| NSW          | New South Wales  |

| Acronyms          | Description  |
|-------------------|--|
| PCU               | Power conversion unit  |
| RAP               | Registered Aboriginal Party  |
| REZ               | Renewable Energy Zone  |
| RNE               | Register of National Estate  |
| SEARs             | Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements  |
| SHR               | State Heritage Register  |
| SLNSW             | State Library of New South Wales   |
| SSD               | State Significant Development  |
| The Burra Charter | The Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites, Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (2013) |
| UNESCO            | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation   |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Environmental Resources Management Australia Pty Ltd was engaged by the Trustee for GreenPulse Solar Farm and BESS Unit Trust to conduct a Historic Heritage Assessment for the proposed Garoo Solar Farm & Battery Energy Storage System.

The Project involves the construction, operation and decommissioning of an alternating current solar farm, Battery Energy Storage System and associated supporting and ancillary infrastructure with a targeted electricity generation capacity of 360 megawatts. The Project Area covers approximately 368 hectares. It is located approximately 40 kilometres (by road) south of Tamworth, NSW, and is within the Tamworth Local Government Area.

This report supports a State Significant Development application under Part 4, Division 4.7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (SSD-79747209), as an appendix to the Environmental Impact Statement for the Project.

The historical assessment has determined that there are no known built heritage items or significant view lines within or adjacent to the Project Area. The archaeological potential of the Project Area has been assessed as Low. This report has concluded that should any archaeological remains be present; these would be unlikely to provide substantive contribution to research questions relevant to the early history of the site or local area, that is not available from other sources. As such, the Project Area has low archaeological research potential and as such, low archaeological heritage significance.

There are no historical built or archaeological constraints for the proposed Project. Therefore, works may proceed with no further historic heritage assessments.

The following are key recommendations that aims to mitigate the impact of the proposed works on the identified heritage values of the Project Area:

### ***Recommendation 1 – Heritage Induction***

Prior to the commencement of works, all staff and contractors should be briefed on the requirements of the *Heritage Act 1977* and the project-specific Unexpected Finds Protocol.

### ***Recommendation 2 - Unexpected Finds Protocol***

In the event that relics are unexpectedly exposed, works should cease immediately. The management of relics should be in accordance with NSW Heritage guidelines and policies, as outlined in the Unexpected Finds Protocol.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Environmental Resources Management Australia Pty Ltd (ERM) was engaged by The Trustee for the GreenPulse Solar Farm and BESS Unit Trust (GreenPulse, The Applicant) to conduct a Historic Heritage Assessment (HHA) for the proposed Garoo Solar Farm and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (the Project), to support a State Significant Development (SSD) application under Part 4, Division 4.7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (SSD-78247462).

The Applicant proposes to construct, operate, maintain and decommission the Garoo Solar Farm and BESS, an alternating current (AC) solar farm, BESS and associated supporting and ancillary infrastructure with a targeted electricity generation capacity of 360 megawatts (MW), to be located at 291 Garoo Road, Garoo, New South Wales (NSW), 2340. The Project is in the rural locality of Garoo, approximately 40 kilometres (km) (by road) south of Tamworth and 370 km northwest of Sydney. The Project Area covers approximately 368 hectares (ha). The Project development footprint represents the expected impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Project and spans an area of approximately 319.5 hectares (ha).

The Project will connect to the existing Transgrid 330 kV Liddell-Tamworth transmission line via an underground 33kV cable. The Project is located entirely within the Tamworth Local Government Area (LGA).

## 1.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The Project Area comprises several allotments on the eastern side of the New England Highway, at 291 Garoo Road, Garoo, NSW, with an area of approximately 368 hectares (ha). The Project involves the construction, operation and decommissioning of an alternating current (AC) solar farm, BESS and associated supporting and ancillary infrastructure, including 234,000 Solar PV Modules and up to 38 Power Conversion Units. The Project has a development footprint of approximately 319.5 ha. **Table 1-1** summarises the key indicative Project components and specifications. The allotments contained within the Project Area are outlined in **Table 1-2**.

**TABLE 1-1 INDICATIVE PROJECT DESIGN - COMPONENTS AND SPECIFICATION**

| Component                       | Feature   | Specification   |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Energy generation               | Solar Arrays  | 153.76 megawatt (MW) alternating current (AC) solar farm. Single axis tracking system with maximum panel height of up to 2.9 metres (m) when fully tilted.  |
| Electrical Reticulation Network | On-site substation  | New Customer and TransGrid high voltage interconnection facilities will be developed in the northeast section of the Project Area, linking into the existing 330 kilovolt (kV) Liddell-Tamworth transmission line.  |
|                                 | Internal electrical reticulation network (Medium Voltage) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Electrical reticulation will generally follow rows of panels and internal access routes to reach the step-up substation (33 / 330 kV) for the Project.</li> <li>▪ The Project will connect into the substation (33/330 kV) on-site directly via underground cables (33 kV, internal reticulation voltage).</li> <li>▪ The Project will be connected to the Grid by Switching Station (330 kV) located on-site boundary.</li> </ul> |

| Component                        | Feature                                | Specification   |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
|                                  | Switchyard / BESS                      | BESS with a capacity of 360 MW / 1,440 megawatt hour (MWh) storage capacity.<br><br>Switch and other electrical equipment providing connection to the existing 330 kV transmission network.   |
| Access Roads                     | Access to site                         | Access to the Project Area will be via the existing Garoo Road, located on Crown land and road reserve. Approximately 330 m of a currently unsealed road, that runs from Garoo road into the northeast section of the Project Area, will be required to be upgraded. This will be subject to assessment in the EIS phase.   |
| On-site Temporary Infrastructure | Temporary Workforce Accommodation Camp | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Temporary construction compounds with offices, car parking and amenities;</li> <li>▪ Temporary workers accommodation camp (capacity 250 FTE), which will be operational for 15 months;</li> <li>▪ On-site borrow pits, laydown and storage areas, fencing, and access; and</li> <li>▪ Utilities, including water sourcing, power supply, and communications</li> </ul> |

TABLE 1-2 LAND CADASTRES

| Lot                              | DP      | Title      |
|----------------------------------|---------|------------|
| 1, 2, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22 | 755341  | Freehold   |
| 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7                 | 1108524 | Freehold   |
| 3, 4                             | 114643  | Freehold   |
| 1                                | 250846  | Crown land |

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES

This report aims to:

- Identify historic heritage resources within the Project Area, including archaeological potential and built heritage values;
- Present historical contextual data to aid in the development of an archaeological predictive model;
- Evaluate the impact of the proposed works on any identified historic heritage resources; and
- Provide recommendations for the mitigation of impacts and management of identified historic heritage resources.

## 1.3 METHODOLOGY

This HHA examines non-Aboriginal heritage values within the Project Area. This report has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines listed in **Section 1**.

Preparation of this report includes:

- Heritage register and database searches;
- Desktop research, including publicly available libraries and archives;
- Field survey of the Project Area;

- Assessment of the potential for impact to potential historic heritage values;
- Assessment of heritage significance; and
- Preparation of management and mitigation recommendations.

#### 1.4 SECRETARY'S ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENT

The SEARs (SSD-79747209) for the Project were issued on 4 March 2025. The requirements for historic heritage assessment and where they have been addressed are summarised in **Table 1-3**.

**TABLE 1-3 SUMMARY OF SEARS REQUIREMENTS FOR HISTORIC HERITAGE AND WHERE ADDRESSED IN THE CURRENT REPORT**

| SEAR   | Section addressed in this report                              |
|--|---|
| Assess the impact to historic heritage having regard to the <i>Guidelines for Preparing a Statement of Heritage Impact</i> , in consultation with Council. | Whole report. See <b>Section 8</b> for the impact assessment. |

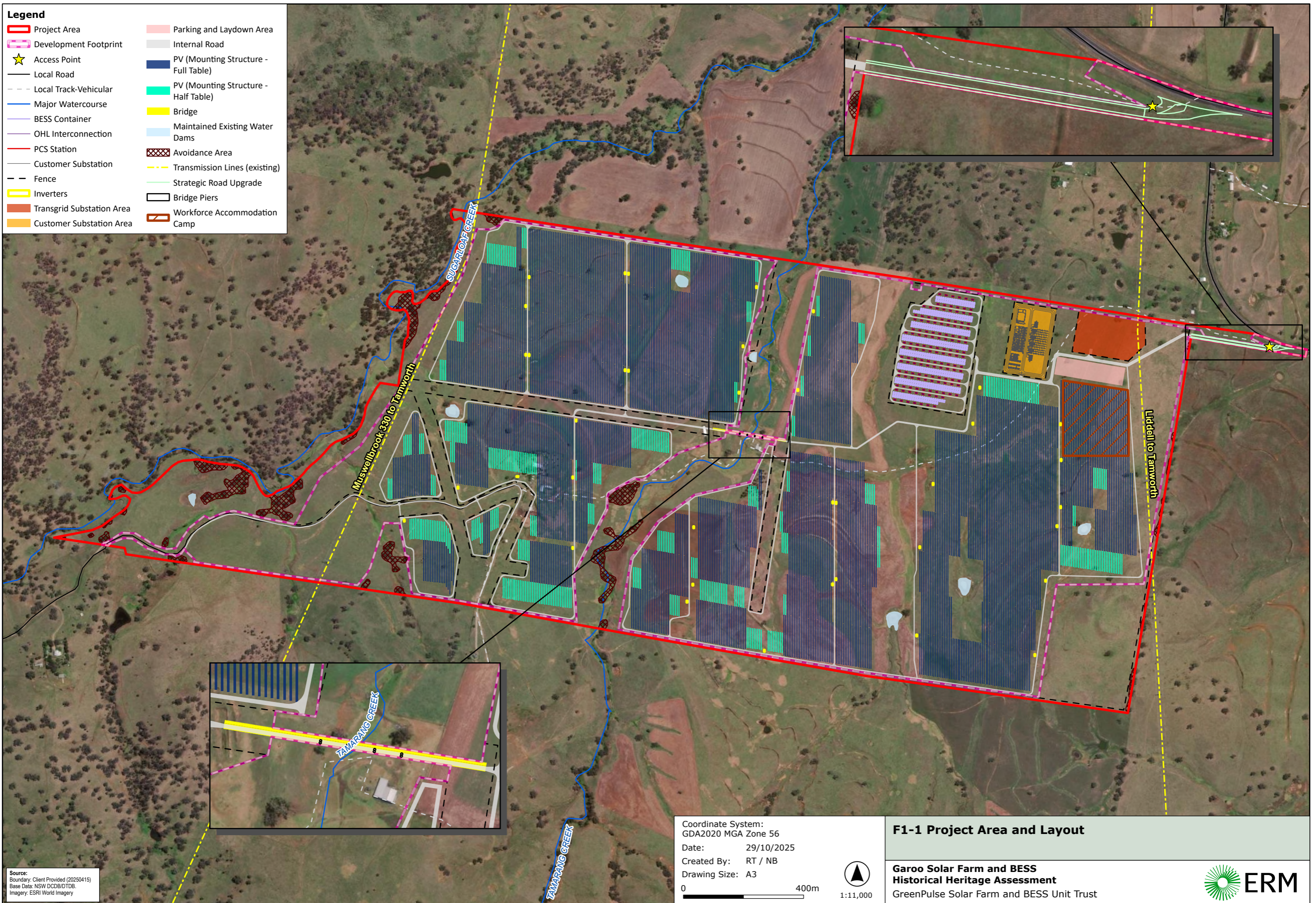
It is noted that consultation was not undertaken with Council as no historic heritage item was identified to be impacted, as the results of the impact assessment in **Section 8** demonstrate.

#### 1.5 AUTHORSHIP

ERM Senior Consultant, Charles Barnett, and ERM Managing Consultant, Victoria Gleeson prepared this report. ERM Managing Consultant– Heritage, Lorien Perchard completed technical review. ERM Partner, Lucy Baker completed a quality assurance review.

**Legend**

|                           |                                      |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Project Area              | Parking and Laydown Area             |
| Development Footprint     | Internal Road                        |
| Access Point              | PV (Mounting Structure - Full Table) |
| Local Road                | PV (Mounting Structure - Half Table) |
| Local Track-Vehicular     | Bridge                               |
| Major Watercourse         | Maintained Existing Water Dams       |
| BESS Container            | Avoidance Area                       |
| OHL Interconnection       | Transmission Lines (existing)        |
| PCS Station               | Strategic Road Upgrade               |
| Customer Substation       | Bridge Piers                         |
| Fence                     | Workforce Accommodation Camp         |
| Inverters                 |                                      |
| Transgrid Substation Area |                                      |
| Customer Substation Area  |                                      |



Source:  
 Boundary: Client Provided (20250415)  
 Base Data: NSW DCDB/DTDB  
 Imagery: ESRI World Imagery

Coordinate System:  
 GDA2020 MGA Zone 56  
 Date: 29/10/2025  
 Created By: RT / NB  
 Drawing Size: A3

0 400m  
 1:11,000

**F1-1 Project Area and Layout**

**Garoo Solar Farm and BESS  
 Historical Heritage Assessment**  
 GreenPulse Solar Farm and BESS Unit Trust


- Legend**
- Project Area
  - Development Footprint
  - Fence
  - Waste Area
  - Admin & First Aid
  - Verandah
  - Fire Hydrant
  - Loading Area
  - Fire Suppression
  - Gas hazard area
  - Generators and fuel store
  - Maintenance containers
  - Accommodation Area
  - Amenities & Services
  - Smoking Area
  - Potable Water
  - WWTP
  - Car Parking
  - Internal Road



Source:  
 Boundary: Client Provided (20250415)  
 Base Data: NSW DCDB/DTDB  
 Imagery: ESRI World Imagery

Coordinate System:  
 GDA2020 MGA Zone 56  
 Date: 03/11/2025  
 Created By: NB  
 Drawing Size: A3

0  50m

  
 1:1,500

**F1-2 Workforce Accommodation Camp**

**Garoo SF and BESS Workforce Accommodation Camp  
 Historical Heritage Assessment**

Greenpulse Solar Farm and BESS Pty Ltd



## 2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDELINES

Several pieces of Commonwealth and State legislation guide the assessment and management of historic heritage in NSW. This legislation also provides the framework for the establishment of heritage registers under their respective legislative purview. A summary of relevant legislation is provided below. A search of the heritage registers associated with the below legislation is provided in **Section 4.1.1** and **Table 4-1**.

The following guidelines have been considered in this assessment:

- *Assessing Heritage Significance* (NSW Heritage Office 2001);
- *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and 'Relics'* (Heritage Branch, Department of Planning 2009);
- *Guidelines for Preparing a Statement of Heritage Impact* (NSW Environment and Heritage, Department of Planning and Environment 2023);
- *NSW Heritage Manual* (Heritage Office 1996); and
- *The Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites, Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* (also known as the Burra Charter, Australia ICOMOS 2013) and relevant Practice Notes.

### 2.1 COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATION

#### 2.1.1 ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act; as amended 2022) provides the framework for the Commonwealth Government's environmental legislation. The EPBC Act outlines a legal framework for the protection and management of nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities, and heritage places. Several heritage listings were established under the EPBC Act including the Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL), National Heritage List (NHL), and Register of National Estate (RNE) (now repealed).

The CHL includes natural, Indigenous, and historical heritage places owned or controlled by the Australian Government. Items on the list have satisfied the Minister as having one or more Commonwealth Heritage values.

The Australian NHL contains natural, historic, and Indigenous places deemed to be of outstanding heritage significance to Australia. Before a site is placed on the list a nominated place is assessed against nine criteria by the Australia Heritage Council.

### 2.2 NSW LEGISLATION

#### 2.2.1 NSW HERITAGE ACT 1977

*The Heritage Act 1977* (Heritage Act) protects the cultural and natural history of NSW with emphasis on historic (non-Aboriginal) heritage items, including places, buildings, works, relics, moveable objects, precincts, historic shipwrecks, and archaeological sites of State or local significance. Protection is provided through protection provisions and the establishment of a Heritage Council and State Heritage Register (SHR). Nominated items are considered by the NSW Heritage Council, which then makes a recommendation to the Minister for Environment and Heritage. The Heritage Council is empowered to place Interim Heritage Orders (IHO) on an item of potential state significance.

Section 136 of the Heritage Act allows for the Minister or Chair of the Heritage Council to place a 'Stop Work' Order on a building, work, relic, or place, that is not subject to an IHO or listed on the SHR and that is being or about to be harmed. Work can be stopped for 40 days, whilst the imposition of an IHO is considered.

Sections 139 to 146, Divisions 8 and 9 of Part 6 of the Act refer to the requirement that excavation or disturbance of land that is likely to contain, or is believed may contain, archaeological relics is undertaken in accordance with an excavation permit issued by the Heritage Council (or in accordance with a gazetted exception under Section 139(4) of the Act).

An archaeological relic is defined as meaning *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, and*
- (b) is of State or local heritage significance.*

In particular Section 139 refers to the need for a permit in certain circumstances:

- (1) A person must not disturb or excavate any land knowing or having reasonable cause to suspect that the disturbance or excavation will or is likely to result in a relic being discovered, exposed, moved, damaged or destroyed unless the disturbance or excavation is carried out in accordance with an excavation permit.*
- (2) A person must not disturb or excavate any land on which the person has discovered or exposed a relic except in accordance with an excavation permit.*

The potential for archaeological 'relics' to be present within the Project Area is considered in **Section 6**.

## STATE HERITAGE REGISTER

The SHR was established under Section 22 of the Heritage Act and is a list of places and objects of particular importance to the people of NSW, including archaeological sites. The SHR is maintained by Heritage NSW and includes a diverse range of over 1500 items, in both private and public ownership. To be listed, an item must be deemed to be of heritage significance for the whole of NSW.

Listing on the SHR controls activities such as alteration, damage, demolition, and development. When a place is listed on the SHR, the approval of the Heritage Council of NSW is required or any major work.

## SECTION 170 HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION REGISTER (S170 REGISTER)

### **Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register (S170 Register)**

Under Section 170 of the Heritage Act, NSW government agencies are required to maintain a register of the heritage assets it owns or controls. Under S170A of the Heritage Act, government agencies are required to notify the Heritage Council about decisions affecting assets on the S170 register including removing the item from the register, transferring ownership of a listed item, or vacating and/or demolishing part or all of the item.

Government agencies are also required to maintain properties on the S170 and SHR with due diligence in accordance with State Owned Heritage Management Principles approved by the Minister on the advice of the Heritage Council.

## 2.2.2 NSW ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) is the main law regulating land use planning and development in NSW and requires that environmental impacts are considered in land use planning, including impacts on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage. The EP&A Act controls the making of environmental planning instruments (EPIs) that identify permissible land use and development constraints. Two types of EPIs can be made: Local Environmental Plans (LEPs) and State Environmental Planning Policies.

### LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS

The EP&A Act allows for the preparation of planning instruments to direct development within NSW. This includes LEPs, which are administered by local government, and principally determine land use and the process for development applications. LEPs commonly identify, and have provisions for, the protection of local heritage items and heritage conservation areas; they usually include a schedule of identified heritage items.

## 2.3 NON-STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

### 2.3.1 NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (NSW)

The National Trust is a community-based, non-government organisation. The National Trust has a database of important heritage sites across the State. There are no listed places within the Project Area or its immediate surrounds.

### 2.3.2 REGISTER OF THE NATIONAL ESTATE

The RNE is now an archive of information about more than 13,000 places throughout Australia including many places of local or state significance. The RNE was closed in 2007 and is no longer a statutory list. The closure of the RNE does not diminish protection of Commonwealth Heritage places.

The RNE is maintained on a non-statutory basis as a publicly available archive and educational resource. RNE places can be protected under the EPBC Act if they are also included in another Commonwealth statutory heritage list or are owned or leased by the Commonwealth.

In addition, places in the RNE may be protected under appropriate state, territory, or local government heritage legislation.

There are no RNE listed places within the Project Area, adjacent to or its immediate surrounds.

### 2.3.3 THE BURRA CHARTER

*The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* (Adopted 31 October 2013) (the Burra Charter) sets a standard of practice for those who provide advice, make decisions about, or undertake works to places of cultural significance including owners, managers, and custodians. The Charter provides specific guidance for physical and procedural actions that should occur in relation to significant places. A copy of the 2013 charter can also be accessed at: <http://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Burra-Charter-2013-Adopted-31.10.2013.pdf>.

This HHA has been prepared in accordance with this document and to the standards it describes.

### 3. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

John Oxley explored the Nandewar Bioregion in 1818, and by the 1830s, colonial settlers began occupying the land for cattle grazing. The 1850s gold rush led to the growth of towns like Barraba and Bingara, with gold and asbestos mining supporting their economies (Sahukar, Gallery, Smart, & Mitchell, 2003). Tamworth, established by the Australian Agricultural Company in 1832, grew rapidly with urban development, becoming Australia's first town to use electric lighting in 1888. Railways further boosted towns like Quirindi, turning them into wheat production hubs. By 1990, many softwood forests in the region were designated as state forests (Sahukar, Gallery, Smart, & Mitchell, 2003).

The New England Highway adjacent to the Project Area was surveyed in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, constructed to reach the prime wool growing areas of the New England region. It was originally known as the Great Northern Road until 1928, and is a main thoroughfare from north Newcastle, NSW, to Yarraman, Queensland (Department of Transport, Roads & Maritime Services, 2016).

Farming in the Tamworth area only developed significantly from the late 1850s, with greater increases in numbers of farmers in the area from the 1870s. By 1894, agriculture in the Tamworth area was flourishing, with over 17,000 acres under cultivation. Wheat was the primary crop, with maize, barley, potatoes, oats and wine also produced (Liston, 1986: 8-9).

On an 1879 map of Tamarang Parish, the Project Area makes up Portion 66 and is encompassed in "Special Area' 25273 which borders Sugarloaf Creek to the west and is 265 acres worth of land. A road passes through the property from north-east to south-west near the creek. The property is bordered by various other parcels owned by M. McMahon, J. M. McDonald and James Hoddle (**Figure 3-1**). Another Parish Map, originally published in 1898, indicates that the Special Area was proclaimed on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1896 and the property was acquired by August Erland Mattsson under a Conditional Purchase on 25<sup>th</sup> July 1901.

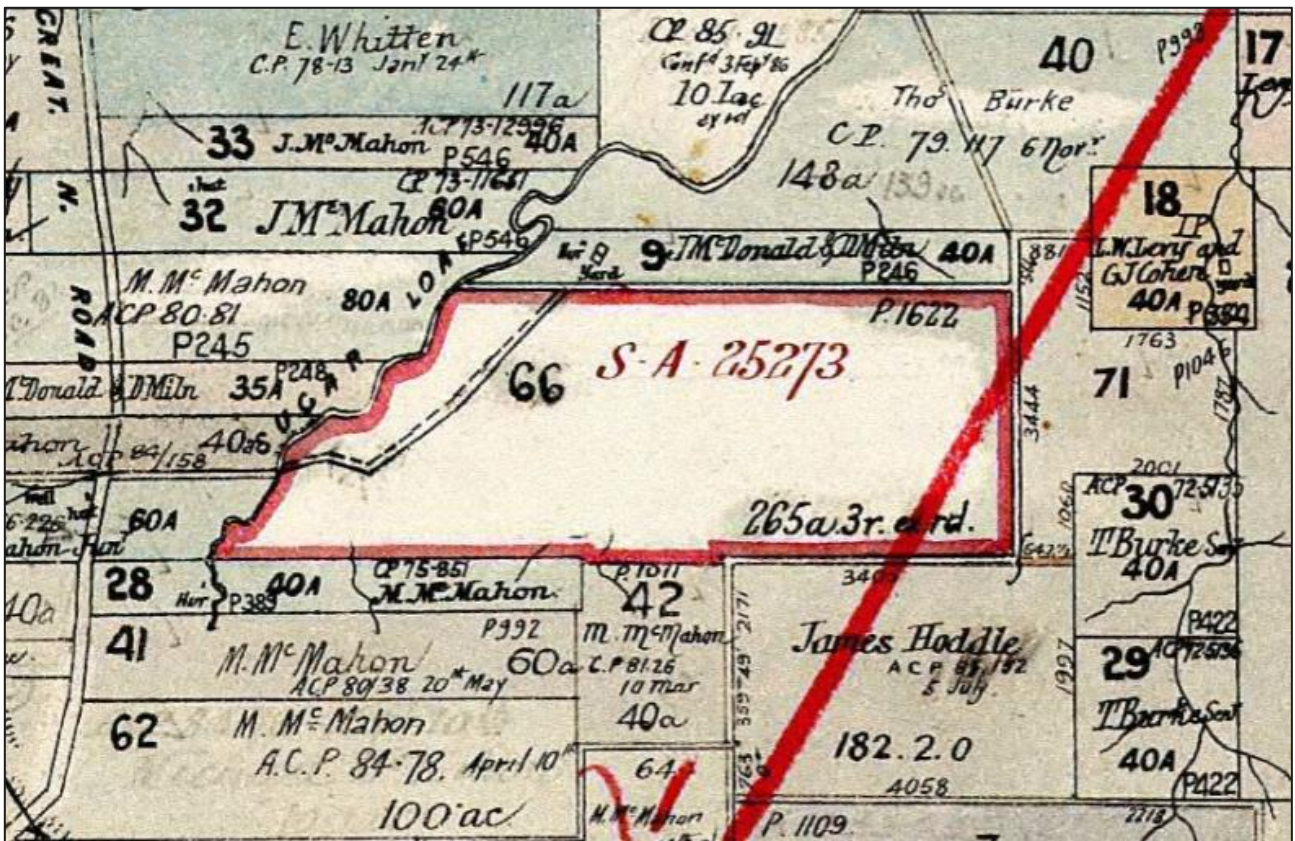


FIGURE 3-1 DETAIL OF 1879 MAP OF TAMARANG PARISH, SHOWING PORTION 66 (NSW HISTORICAL LAND RECORDS VIEWER: [HTTPS://HLRV.NSWLRS.COM.AU](https://HLRV.NSWLRS.COM.AU))

By 1928 the property encompassing the Project Area had been acquired by the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney (CBC). The CBC opened a branch in nearby Barraba in 1876 and Manilla in 1890, though the latter branch was closed in 1894 following the banking crash of 1893. However, a new branch opened four years later and in 1922 new building was constructed for the bank (Boileau 2007: 109). On 22 June 1928, the CBC applied to have Portion 66 subdivided into two portions (see **Figure 3-2** and **Figure 3-3**). The property was divided into a western (66) and eastern portion (56), with the latter being sold to Alister Bowman of Singleton and Gordon Blaxland of Sydney. The Bowman family had settled in the Manilla area and owned a number of properties in the region (Boileau 2007). On 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1937 Portion 56 was transferred to Walter Bull of Neutral Bay, a grazier (Vol-Fol. 4260-47). In August 1940, Portion 66 was transferred in quick succession to Robert Bruce McDonald Doyle and then to Blythswood Pty Limited (Vol.-Fol. 5151-71). An easement for a planned transmission line is visible across Portion 56 on an 1964 Parish Map (**Figure 3-4**).

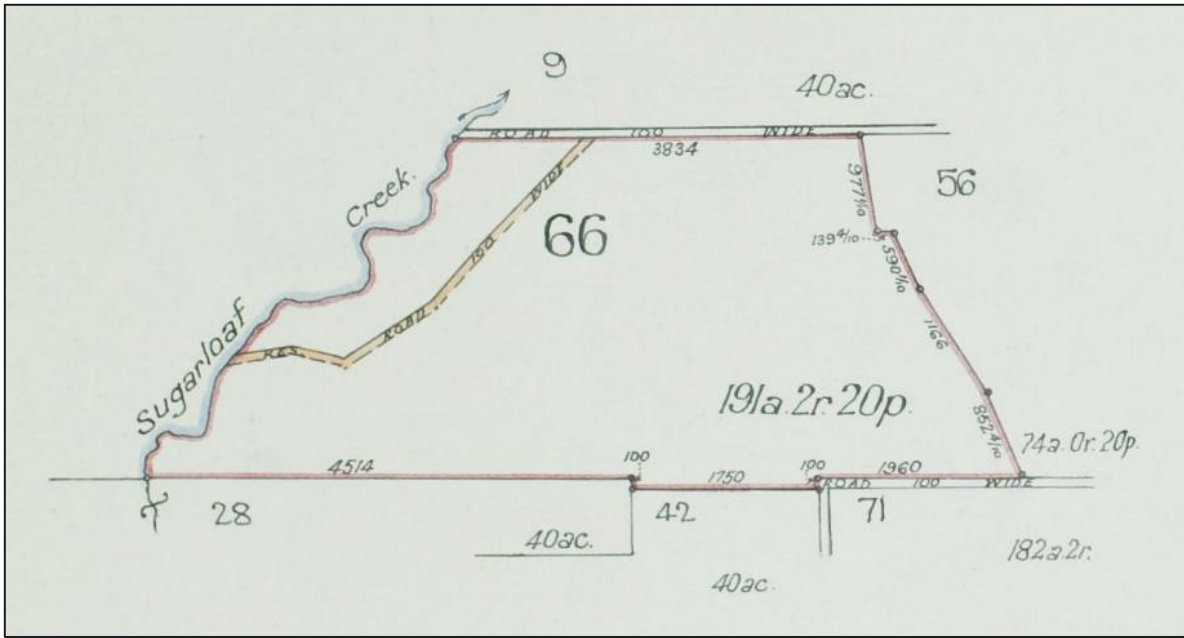


FIGURE 3-2 DETAIL OF PLAN FROM VOL.-FOL. 5151-71 ([HTTPS://HLRV.NSWLRS.COM.AU/](https://HLRV.NSWLRS.COM.AU/))

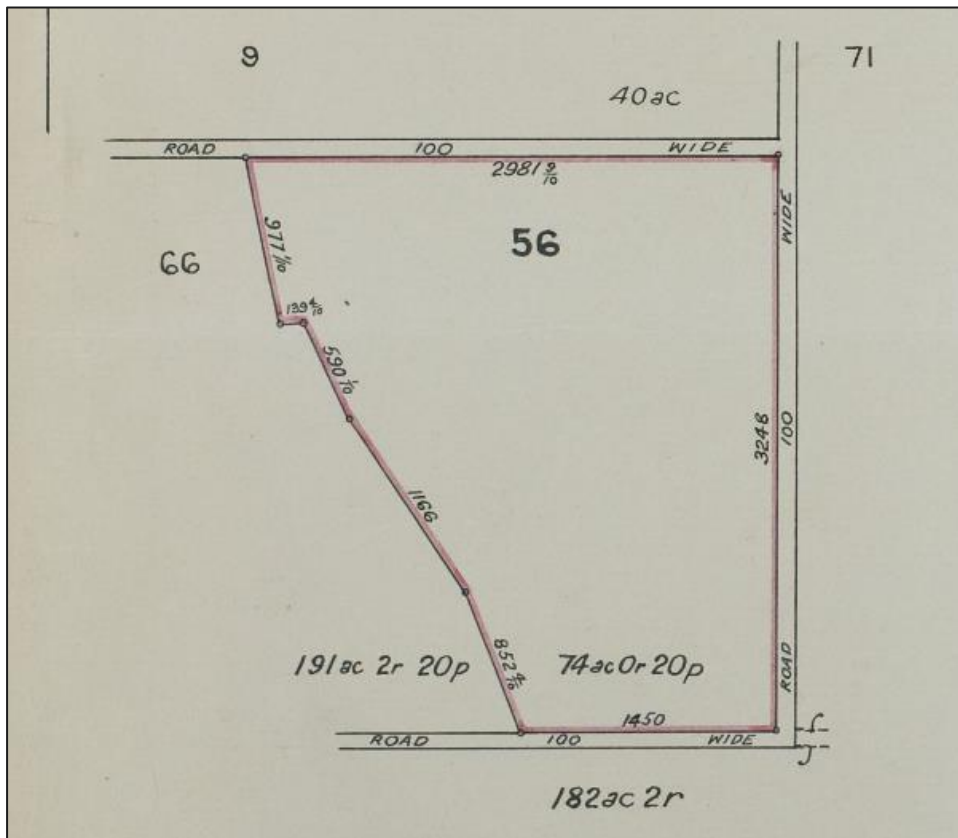


FIGURE 3-3 DETAIL OF PLAN FROM VOL.-FOL. 4260-47 ([HTTPS://HLRV.NSWLRS.COM.AU/](https://HLRV.NSWLRS.COM.AU/))

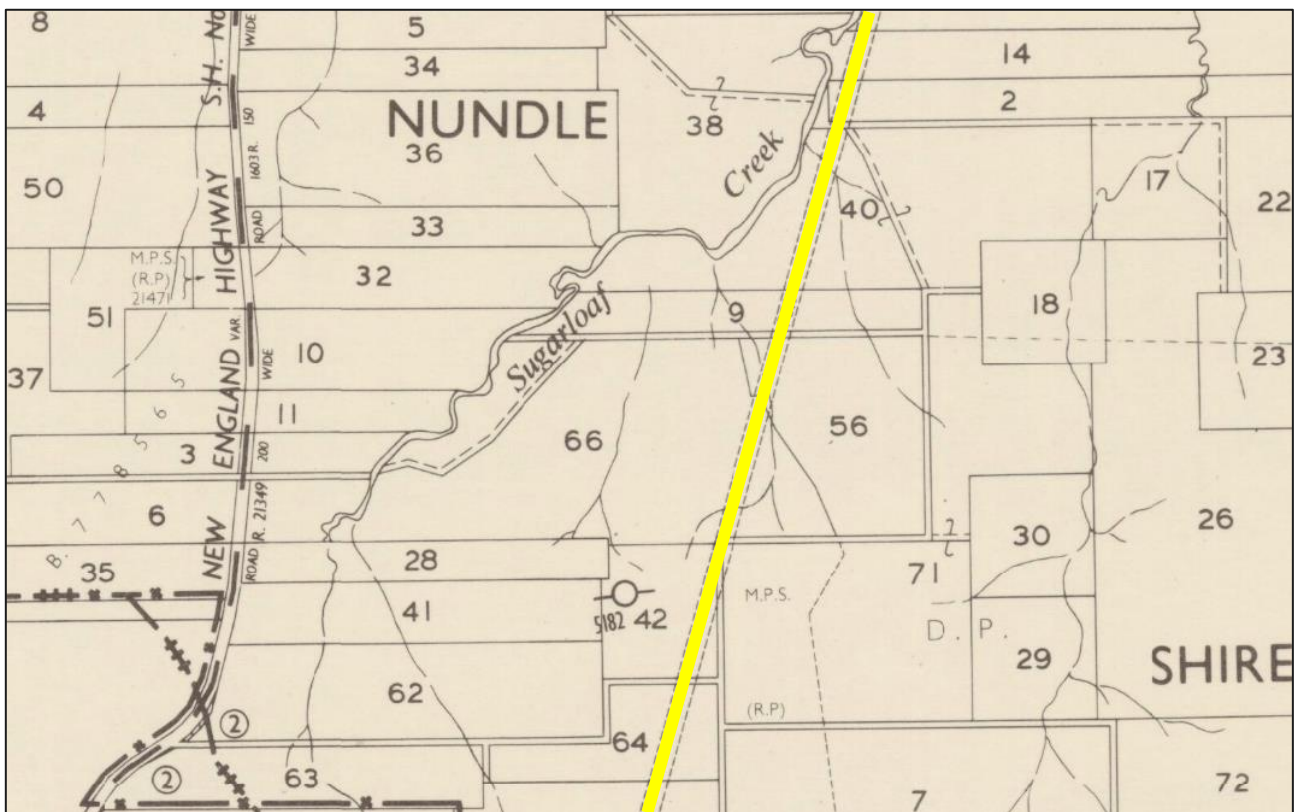


FIGURE 3-4 DETAIL OF 1964 MAP OF TAMARANG PARISH, EASEMENT LINE IN YELLOW (TROVE.COM.AU)

Historical aerial photography shows that the Tamarang homestead, its associated structures and dam in the centre of Lot 2 DP1108524 were present on the property by 1976. Another building in the centre of the Project Area, a hay shed, was constructed more recently, post 1998, as evidenced through aerial images. During the heritage survey associated with this Project, the current owners of the property stated that there had been an older hut on the land when it was purchased by their family in the 1920s. This was located on the eastern side of the property in what is currently a heavily ploughed field. Sherds of pottery and glass were identified in this area during the survey, including more than 15 pieces of knapped glass. The area continues to be used for agricultural purposes, and imagery shows a number of small creeks and tracks running through the property.



FIGURE 3-5 1976 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH, PROJECT AREA OUTLINED YELLOW (NSW SPATIAL SERVICES)

## 4. HISTORIC HERITAGE CONTEXT

### 4.1 HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT

#### 4.1.1 HERITAGE REGISTER AND DATABASE SEARCH RESULTS

A search of the relevant statutory heritage register searches was conducted on 3 February 2025 as part of the desktop assessment.

- Australian Heritage Database, which includes World Heritage List (WHL), NHL, CHL, RNE;
- SHR; and
- Tamworth LEP 2010.

The search area encompassed the Project Area with a 2 km buffer surrounding. A summary of the search results is provided in **Table 4-1** below.

**TABLE 4-1 STATUTORY HERITAGE REGISTER SEARCH SUMMARY**

| Register Name           | Description  | Findings  |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| WHL                     | The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) WHL includes properties in Australia that are matters of national environmental significance and are protected and managed under the EPBC Act.   | There are no WHL places within, or in close proximity to, the Project Area.   |
| CHL                     | The CHL includes natural, Indigenous, and historical heritage places owned or controlled by the Australian Government. Items on the list have satisfied the minister as having one or more Commonwealth Heritage (CH) values.  | There are no CHL places within or in close proximity to the Project Area.   |
| NHL                     | The NHL contains natural, historic, and Indigenous places deemed to be of outstanding heritage significance to Australia. Before a site is placed on the list a nominated place is assessed against nine criteria by the Australia Heritage Council.   | There are no NHL places within or in close proximity to the Project Area.   |
| SHR                     | The SHR is a list of places and objects of particular importance to the people of NSW. The register lists a diverse range of over 1,650 items, in both private and public ownership. To be listed, an item must be significant for the whole of NSW.   | There are no SHR listed items within the Project Area.  |
| S170 Heritage Registers | S170 of the Heritage Act requires all NSW state agencies to identify, conserve and manage the heritage assets owned, managed, and occupied by that agency. In order to facilitate this, S170 heritage registers were established for all NSW government agencies. These registers are held and maintained by each state agency and updated as assets are acquired, altered, or decommissioned. | As the Project Area does not coincide with any NSW government property, S170 register searches were not required for this assessment. |
| Tamworth LEP 2010       | LEPs contain a register of environmental heritage items important to the locality. These registers are included as Schedule 5 of all NSW LEPs, and include built items, archaeological sites, and conservation areas.  | There are no locally listed heritage sites within the Project Area.   |

## 4.2 PREVIOUS REPORTING

The Project Area has not been previously assessed for historic heritage values. A summary of a report from a nearby site is provided below to give regional context to a historical archaeological assessment of the current Project Area.

**Goonoo Goonoo Station New England Highway, Tamworth, Heritage Appraisal. A report prepared for Greg and Anna Goodman, May 2007. Tanner Architects (2010).**

Goonoo Goonoo Station is a 766.1 ha property listed on the Tamworth Regional LEP and Register of the National Estate and located approximately 15 km north of the Project Area. The site contains over 30 buildings, including a homestead and associated outbuildings, numerous sheds and workshops, a Schoolhouse, Inn and Store along a town "street". The Goonoo Goonoo holding, making up 121,500 ha, was purchased by the Australian Agricultural Company in 1834.

This appraisal included a survey of the Goonoo Goonoo property and analysis of its built heritage items. The authors provided a statement of significance as well as significance rating for each individual heritage item. The Goonoo Goonoo station was assessed as having considerable historic significance, with its homestead and woolshed in particular demonstrating evidence of the early European settlement in the Peel Valley region. The homestead is of interest for its two-storey Palladian form, while the complex of outbuildings are evidence of various rural activities practiced during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Stone Store, Farrier's Shed and Stables in particular are noteworthy for their illustration of vernacular building construction techniques and materials.

## 5. PHYSICAL ANALYSIS

### 5.1 SURVEY AIMS AND PERSONNEL

A field survey of the Project Area was undertaken on 26 to 28 February 2025 by ERM Managing Consultant Lorien Perchard and ERM Consulting Associated Jess Hatfield Dodds, as well as Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) representatives<sup>1</sup>.

The methodology of the site visit included pedestrian survey of the Project Area and visual inspection of potential view lines to potential surrounding heritage items. The aims of the historical heritage survey were to:

- Cover a representative sample of the Project Area that will potentially be impacted by the proposed works. Areas identified through desktop research as having historic development were targeted during survey;
- Identify any previously unidentified built heritage items or areas of historic archaeological potential that may be impacted by the Project; and
- Gather sufficient information to provide an assessment of the historic heritage significance of the Project Area.

### 5.2 SURVEY RESULTS AND DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AREA

The Project Area was split into two Survey Units, with SU1 including all areas east of Tamarang Creek and SU2 all areas west of Tamarang Creek. SU1 is an undulating sloped landscape (**Photograph 5-1**), with its highest section being its eastern side that slopes towards the north-east. In the south-west there is a rise with large cobbles and small boulders (up to 40-50cm). The property owner stated the ridgeline had never been ploughed. Flat to moderate rises with granitic outcrops and high grasses characterize much of the landscape. The northwestern extent of SU1 was heavily ploughed with clay soil and crop stubble. The property owner stated that most of the land had been ploughed, and there were visible swales to funnel runoff into dams. The location where glass and ceramics were found, and the property owner noted a hut had existed in the 1920s was heavily ploughed with the landscape also terraced (**Photograph 5-2**).



PHOTOGRAPH 5-1 SU1 UNDULATING GRASSY LANDSCAPE



PHOTOGRAPH 5-2 SECTION WHERE GLASS, CERAMIC AND POTENTIAL 1920S HUT WERE LOCATED (ERM 2025)

<sup>1</sup> RAPs were in attendance as the survey for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report was undertaken in concurrence with historic heritage survey.

SU2 is bounded by Sugarloaf Creek to the west, with the southern side the higher elevation. The north-eastern field of SU2 is an eastern facing slope that drops away to Tamarang Creek. It was a heavily ploughed, uneven clay surface, with crop stubble (50% vis). The next paddock west was a gently sloping field (high in the south-west, dropping to the north-east) with a similar level of disturbance from ploughing and a recent grain crop. Ground visibility here was lower (10-15%) due to denser crop remains. The western portion of this field's elevation dropped to the north, where it flowed into sugarloaf creek on the neighbours property. There were several low swales to direct runoff across this field. The two fields in the Northwest were grassed (pastoral use, horses and cattle), with less intensive/resent ploughing, and sloped north-west into Sugarloaf Creek. The homestead sits in the centre of SU2, situated on the flat just before the lands drops away. The central field to its north and east has the same heavy ploughing and cropped stubble, with two radial swales to slow runoff. To the west of the homestead along the northern side of Bulls Road, the land falls to the west and north, and has the same grass as the adjacent pastoral paddocks.



PHOTOGRAPH 5-3 SU2 VIEW TO WEST  
TOWARDS SUGAR LOAF CREEK (ERM 2025)



PHOTOGRAPH 5-4 SU2 VIEW TOWARDS  
HOMESTEAD (ERM 2025)

## 6. ASSESSMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

Review of the potential for historical archaeological resources to be present within the Project Area is based on a consideration of current ground conditions and analysis of historic development within the Project Area.

Grading of archaeological potential used for this assessment is detailed in **Table 6-1**.

**TABLE 6-1 GRADING OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL**

| Grading  | Justification   |
|----------|---|
| Nil      | No evidence of historical development or use, or where previous impacts would have removed all archaeological potential.  |
| Low      | Research indicates little or low intensity historical development, or substantial previous impacts. Expected that deep subsurface archaeological features may survive.                    |
| Moderate | Known historical development with some evidence of previous impact. Likely that archaeological remains survive with some localised truncation and disturbance.                            |
| High     | Evidence of multiple phases of historical development and structures with minimal or localised twentieth century development impacts. Archaeological remains likely to be largely intact. |

### 6.1 SUMMARY OF HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

The historic research undertaken for this assessment has identified that the Project Area has been characterised by agricultural pursuits since the nineteenth century.

By the 1920s a hut had been constructed within the Project Area (exact construction date is unknown). This area was explored during the site survey, with some ceramic and glass sherds discovered in the location. The property owner suggested a hut once existed. The nature of the hut, its construction and the materials used to build it are unknown, as is its exact location. Given the extensive heavy ploughing and terracing of the landscape in this area, it is unlikely that significant subsurface remains of the hut are preserved here. No ground surface expression of the former hut was noted during the survey, though it is possible the glass and ceramic sherds discovered relate to its use.

It is also possible that other discrete or ephemeral features could be located within the Project Area. These may include rubbish pits, associated with early rubbish disposal prior to the introduction of Council rubbish removal, as well as postholes associated with light structures or demarcating former fence lines.

The Project Area remained largely undeveloped into the 1970s except for the homestead and shed still present, as well as powerlines constructed near the western edge of the property.

Most of the Project Area has remained largely undisturbed from substantial impacts; however, it is unlikely that evidence of the evolving agricultural landscape (insubstantial remains such as post holes) would be present with good integrity.

As such, there is Low potential for historical archaeological resources to be present within the Project Area.

## 7. SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

### 7.1 HISTORIC HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

The NSW Heritage Management System sets out a detailed process for conducting assessments of heritage significance. The guideline *Assessing Heritage Significance* (NSW Heritage Office, 2001), part of the Heritage Manual, provides a set of specific criteria for assessing the significance of an item, including guidelines for inclusion and exclusion (which reflect four categories of significance and whether a place is rare or representative) under which a place can be evaluated in the context of State or local historical themes.

An item will be considered to be of state or local heritage significance if, in the opinion of the Heritage Council, it meets one or more of the following criteria outlined in **Table 7-1**.

**TABLE 7-1 NSW HERITAGE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

| Criteria  | Description   |
|---|---|
| <i>Criterion (a) – Historical significance</i>  | <i>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);</i><br><br>Note: The site must show evidence of significant human activity or maintains or shows the continuity of historical process or activity. An item is excluded if it has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of association.                                       |
| <i>Criterion (b) – Associative significance</i> | <i>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);</i><br><br>Note: The site must show evidence of significant human occupation. An item is excluded if it has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of association.   |
| <i>Criterion (c) – Aesthetic significance</i>   | <i>an item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area);</i><br><br>Note: An item can be excluded on the grounds that it has lost its design or technical integrity or its landmark qualities have been more than temporarily degraded.   |
| <i>Criterion (d) – Social significance</i>      | <i>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;</i><br><br>Note: This criterion does not cover importance for reasons of amenity or retention in preference to proposed alternative.   |
| <i>Criterion (e) – Research potential</i>       | <i>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);</i><br><br>Note: Under the guideline, an item can be excluded if the information would be irrelevant or only contains information available in other sources.   |
| <i>Criterion (f) – Rarity</i>                   | <i>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);</i><br><br>Note: An item is excluded if it is not rare or if it is numerous, but under threat. The item must demonstrate a process, custom or other human activity that is in danger of being lost, is the only example of its type or demonstrates designs or techniques of interest. |
| <i>Criterion (g) – Representative</i>           | <i>an item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW’s cultural or natural places, or cultural or natural environments;</i><br><br>Note: An item is excluded under this criterion if it is a poor example or has lost the range of characteristics of a type.   |

The Heritage Council requires the summation of the significance assessment into a succinct paragraph, known as a Statement of Significance. The Statement of Significance is the foundation for future management and impact assessment. The following assessment has been prepared in accordance with these guidelines.

### 7.1.1 ASSESSMENT OF HISTORIC HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

No listed or potential built heritage items are located within the Project Area or its immediate vicinity. Consequently, no assessment of significance associated with built heritage items has been completed for this assessment.

The potential for historic archaeological remains to be present within the Project Area has been assessed as Low. An assessment of the significance of a potential archaeological resource in accordance with the guiding document *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and 'Relics'* (Heritage Council of NSW 2009) has been completed below.

#### ***Can the site contribute knowledge that no other resource can?***

The potential archaeological resource within the Project Area would most likely comprise remains of the former hut, though its exact location is unknown and there has been heavy ground disturbance in the general area it is presumed to have been located. It is also possible that other discrete or insubstantial agricultural features could be located within the Project Area. These may include rubbish pits, associated with early rubbish disposal prior to the introduction of Council rubbish removal, as well as postholes associated with light structures or demarcating former fence lines.

The nature of the potential archaeological resource within the Project Area is not rare or unique. As such, the archaeological resource has limited potential to provide a new understanding of the history of the local area that is not available from other sources.

#### ***Can the site contribute knowledge that no other site can?***

The nature of the potential archaeological resource within the Project Area is not rare or unique; the surrounding area was also largely focused on agricultural pursuits throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century. As such, the archaeological resource within the Project Area is unlikely to provide information that is not already available from other sites.

#### ***Is this knowledge relevant to general questions about human history or other substantive questions relating to Australian history, or does it contribute to other major research questions?***

As detailed above, the potential archaeological resource within the Project Area is unlikely to contribute knowledge that is not already available from other sites. As such, this criterion is not applicable.

### 7.1.1.1 SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

No built heritage items are located within the Project Area or its immediate vicinity.

If archaeological resources are present within the Project Area, they would most likely comprise remains of the former hut, though its exact location is unknown and there has been heavy ground disturbance in the general area it is presumed to have been located. It is also possible that other discrete or insubstantial agricultural features could be located within the Project Area. These may include rubbish pits, associated with early rubbish disposal prior to the introduction of Council rubbish removal, as well as postholes associated with light structures or demarcating former fence lines. These resources are unlikely to provide a new understanding of the history of the local area that is not available from other sources.

Therefore, any extant archaeological resources in the Project Area would have low archaeological research potential and as such, have low archaeological heritage significance.

## 8. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### 8.1 PROPOSED WORKS

**Section 1.1** provides a detailed description of the proposed Project. Activities with the potential to impact archaeological resources would include earthworks, electrical service excavation and foundation construction. A summary of potential impacts to historic heritage values is provided below.

### 8.2 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The current assessment has identified that there are no known or potential historic heritage sites within the Project Area or within its immediate vicinity. Additionally, no direct or indirect impacts to built heritage items (including significant view lines) associated with the proposed works have been identified.

The Project Area has remained largely undisturbed from substantial impacts and has been characterised by agricultural pursuits since the nineteenth century. It is also possible that clearing activities related to the gold rush took place on the site during this period, though no known mining sites are located in the Project Area. The archaeological potential of the Project Area has been assessed as Low. However, this report has concluded that should any archaeological remains be present; these would be unlikely to provide substantive contribution to research questions relevant to the early history of the site or local area, that is not available from other sources. As such, the proposed works will result in little to no archaeological impact.

#### 8.2.1 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Continued development within the Tamworth area has the potential to result in a cumulative impact on the cultural values of the local area when impacts overlap with impacts from other projects, which can result in a greater overall effect. This effect is dependent on the scale and timing of the impacts and generally occurs when projects are constructed concurrently or consecutively and are based on their location.

There are several existing or proposed renewable energy projects located in close proximity to the Project Area. These are detailed in **Table 8-1**.

**TABLE 8-1 NEARBY RENEWABLE ENERGY AND RELATED PROJECTS**

| <b>Project</b>                     | <b>Developer/<br/>Operator</b>        | <b>Energy</b>      | <b>Indicative Scale</b>  | <b>Proximity<br/>to Project*</b> | <b>Status</b>   |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--|----------------------------------|---|
| <i>Solar Energy Developments</i>   |                                       |                    |  |                                  |   |
| Middlebrook Solar Farm and BESS    | Total Eren                            | Solar              | 320 MW of solar capacity with a 300 MW / 600 MWh BESS                  | 25 km                            | Recommendation with Independent Planning Commission (IPC) |
| Lambruk Solar Farm                 | Venn Energy                           | Solar              | 500 (DC) / 300 (AC) MW of solar capacity with a 300 MW / 1200 MWh BESS | 37.6 km                          | Prepare EIS   |
| Nottingham Park Solar Farm         | Nottingham Park Solar Farm Renewables | Solar              | 250 MW of solar capacity with a 400 MWh BESS                           | 62.5 km                          | Prepare EIS   |
| <i>Wind Energy Developments</i>    |                                       |                    |  |                                  |   |
| Hills of Gold Wind Farm            | Wind Energy Partners                  | Wind               | 420 MW of wind capacity  | 48.8 km                          | Approved  |
| <i>Energy Storage &amp; Supply</i> |                                       |                    |  |                                  |   |
| Kingswood BESS                     | Iberdrola Australia Development       | Electricity supply | 500MW / 1000 MWh BESS  | 41.4 km                          | Response to Submissions                                   |
| Calala BESS                        | Equis Energy                          | Electricity supply | 300 MW / 600 MWh BESS  | 45.6 km                          | Approved  |
| Tamworth BESS                      | Maoneng                               | Electricity supply | 200 MW BESS  | 42.6 km                          | Response to Submissions                                   |

\*Estimated distance by road

The current Project has been identified as having low historic heritage value. As such, it has been assessed that cumulative impacts as a result of this Project are low.

## 9. CONCLUSIONS

The historical assessment has determined that there are no known or potential built heritage items (or significant view lines) within the Project Area.

It has been determined that there is Low potential for archaeological resources to be present within the Project Area. This report has concluded that should any archaeological remains be present; these would be unlikely to provide substantive contribution to research questions relevant to the early history of the site or local area, that is not available from other sources. As such, the Project Area has low archaeological research potential and as such, low archaeological heritage significance.

There are no historical built or archaeological constraints for the proposed Project. Therefore, works may proceed with no further historic heritage assessments.

### 9.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are key recommendations that aims to mitigate the impact of the proposed works on potential and as yet unidentified heritage values of the Project Area :

#### 9.1.1 RECOMMENDATION 1 – HERITAGE INDUCTION

Prior to the commencement of works, all staff and contractors should be briefed on the requirements of the Heritage Act and the Unexpected Finds Protocol (outlined in **Section 9.1.2.1**).

#### 9.1.2 RECOMMENDATION 2 – UNEXPECTED FINDS PROTOCOL

In the event that relics are unexpectedly exposed, works should cease immediately. The management of relics should be in accordance with NSW Heritage guidelines and policies, as outlined in the Unexpected Finds Protocol (**Section 9.1.2.1**).

##### 9.1.2.1 UNEXPECTED FINDS PROTOCOL

This HHA has identified that the archaeological potential of the Project Area is Low. However, in the event that relics are unexpectedly recovered during the proposed works, all works should cease immediately, and the Unexpected Finds Protocol should be followed. The following steps are provided below in the event that unexpected heritage items are identified during the proposed works:

- Where a potential historic heritage item is found during works, all works within the vicinity of the item, or with the potential to impact the item should cease and a temporary exclusion zone established;
- An appropriately qualified heritage consultant should examine the item to assess its significance and further archaeological potential;
- Where a relic is found, the NSW Heritage Council should be notified (in accordance with Section 146 of the Heritage Act) and approval will likely be required prior to the continuation of works. Other archaeological deposits should be recorded and assessed for significance and potential salvage by an appropriately qualified heritage consultant; and
- Depending on the nature of the discovery, additional assessment and approval under the Heritage Act may be required prior to the recommencement of works in the affected area.

## 10. REFERENCES

- Australia ICOMOS (2013) The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 2013. Australia ICOMOS Incorporated. Burwood, Victoria.
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- Sahukar, R., Gallery, C., Smart, J., & Mitchell, P. (2003). Chapter 12: Nandewar Bioregion. In The Bioregions of New South Wales (pp. 145 - 150). Hurtsville: National Parks and Wildlife Services NSW.

## 11. STATEMENT OF LIMITATIONS

This report is based solely on the scope of work described in **Section 1** (Scope of Work) and performed by Environmental Resources Management Australia Pty Ltd (ERM) as commissioned by The Trustee for GreenPulse Solar Farm and BESS Unit Trust (GreenPulse) (the Client). The Scope of Work was governed by a contract between ERM and the Client (Contract).

No limitation, qualification or caveat set out below is intended to derogate from the rights and obligations of ERM and the Client under the Contract.

The findings of this report are solely based on, and the information provided in this report is strictly limited to that required by the Scope of Work. Except to the extent stated otherwise, in preparing this report ERM has not considered any question, nor provides any information beyond that required by the Scope of Work.

This report was prepared in February 2025 and is based on conditions encountered and information reviewed at the time of preparation. The report does not, and cannot, take into account changes in law, factual circumstances, applicable regulatory instruments or any other future matter. ERM does not, and will not, provide any on-going advice on the impact of any future matters unless it has agreed with the Client to amend the Scope of Work or has entered into a new engagement to provide a further report.

Unless this report expressly states to the contrary, ERM's Scope of Work was limited strictly to identifying typical environmental conditions associated with the subject site(s) and does not evaluate the condition of any structure on the subject site nor any other issues. Although normal standards of professional practice have been applied, the absence of any identified hazardous or toxic materials or any identified impacted soil or groundwater on the site(s) should not be interpreted as a guarantee that such materials or impacts do not exist.

This report is based on information provided by the Client or third parties (including regulatory agencies). All conclusions and recommendations made in the report are the professional opinions of the ERM personnel involved. Whilst normal checking of data accuracy was undertaken, except to the extent expressly set out in this report, ERM:

- Did not, nor was able to, make further enquiries to assess the reliability of the information or independently verify information provided by; and
- Assumes no responsibility or liability for errors in data obtained from the Client, any third parties or external sources (including regulatory agencies).

Although the data that has been used in compiling this report is generally based on actual circumstances, if the report refers to hypothetical examples those examples may, or may not, represent actual existing circumstances.

Only the environmental conditions and or potential contaminants specifically referred to in this report have been considered. To the extent permitted by law and except as is specifically stated in this report, ERM makes no warranty or representation about:

- The suitability of the site(s) for any purpose or the permissibility of any use;
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- The presence, absence or otherwise of asbestos, asbestos containing materials or any hazardous materials on the site(s).

- Use of the site for any purpose may require planning and other approvals and, in some cases, environmental regulator and accredited site auditor approvals. ERM offers no opinion as to the likelihood of obtaining any such approvals, or the conditions and obligations which such approvals may impose, which may include the requirement for additional environment works.

The ongoing use of the site or use of the site for a different purpose may require the management of or remediation of site conditions, such as contamination and other conditions, including but not limited to conditions referred to in this report.

This report should be read in full and no excerpts are to be taken as representative of the whole report. No responsibility or liability is accepted by ERM for use of any part of this report in any other context.

Except to the extent that ERM has agreed otherwise with the Client in the Scope of Work or the Contract, this report:

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- Does not purport to recommend or induce a decision to make (or not make) any purchase, disposal, investment, divestment, financial commitment or otherwise in or in relation to the site(s); and
- Does not purport to provide, nor should be construed as, legal advice.



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