

The logo for GAL HERITAGE, featuring the letters 'GAL' in a large, bold, white sans-serif font, with 'HERITAGE' in a smaller, white sans-serif font below it, all set against a dark blue background.

Acknowledgement of Country

We respect and acknowledge the First Nations people of the lands and waterways on which we live and work, their rich cultural heritage and their deep connection to Country, and we acknowledge their Elders past and present. We are committed to truth-telling and to engaging with First Nations people to support the protection of their culture and heritage. We strongly advocate social, cultural and political justice and support the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Cultural warning

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

Report register

The following report register documents the development of this report, in accordance with the GML Heritage Pty Ltd (GML) Quality Management System.

Job No.	Issue No.	Notes/description	Issue date
24-0484	1	Draft Report	13 March 2025
24-0484	2	Final Report	22 April 2025

Quality management

The report has been reviewed and approved for issue in accordance with the GML quality assurance policy and procedures.

It aligns with best-practice heritage conservation and management, *The Burra Charter: the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013* and heritage and environmental legislation and guidelines relevant to the subject place.

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Executive summary

Logic Projects Co engaged GML Heritage Pty Ltd (GML) to prepare a historical heritage due diligence report to support the proposed data centre development at 6–8 Julius Avenue, North Ryde (Julius Avenue Data Storage Centre).

The project is designated as state significant development (SSD), under the industry-specific data storage centre Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs). This report seeks to identify whether there are heritage items as defined by the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW) (the Heritage Act) that may be impacted by the development.

This historical heritage due diligence assessment has identified:

- The site is in the vicinity of a local heritage item, 'Cottage' (*Ryde Local Environmental Plan* [LEP] 320), located at 2 Richardson Place. This heritage item directly adjoins the Honeywell building to the east of the study area.
- No buildings are located within the study area.
- A low–nil potential for historical archaeological remains including isolated artefacts or rubbish pits associated with the transient historical use of the site prior to c1940.
- The potential historical archaeological resource is not considered to hold heritage significance or be defined as 'relics' under the Heritage Act.
- No potential for direct or indirect impacts to the heritage listed cottage at 2 Richardson Place (Ryde LEP Item 320) is considered to result from the proposed works. The setting of the heritage item has been irrevocably and completely lost due to previous office development, and the nature of the proposed works is in keeping with the existing commercial office building setting.
- It is considered that a statement of heritage impact is not required for this project per Key Issue 20 of the data storage centre SEARs, as there is no potential for direct or indirect impacts to the listed 'Cottage' heritage item. However, the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) may request a SOHI if it considers otherwise.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Project background

Logic Projects Co engaged GML Heritage Pty Ltd (GML) to prepare a historical heritage due diligence report to support the proposed data centre development at 6–8 Julius Avenue, North Ryde (Julius Avenue Data Storage Centre).

The project is designated as state significant development (SSD) under the industry-specific data storage centre Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs). The SEARs require a historical archaeology assessment if the project would result in direct or indirect impacts to heritage items under the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW) (the Heritage Act). This report seeks to identify whether there is potential for historical archaeological remains to be impacted by the proposed development.

1.2 The site

The site is identified as 6–8 Julius Avenue, North Ryde, legally described as Lot 89 in Deposited Plan 1082131 (the site/study area). The site is irregular in shape and is located on the southeastern side of Julius Avenue, North Ryde.

The site has a primary frontage of approximately 100m to Julius Avenue and has a partial rear frontage to Richardson Place (cul-de-sac) at the northeastern corner. The site has an area of approximately 2.863ha.

The site is currently vacant. The northwestern part of the site was excavated and cleared of vegetation in 2009 as part of Modified Determination No. 1395/1999 previously approved on the site.

The site is zoned E3 Productivity Support pursuant to *Ryde Local Environmental Plan 2014* (Ryde LEP 2014) and is located within the City of Ryde Local Government Area (LGA), which is approximately 15km northwest of the Sydney CBD.

Existing attributes of the site and surrounding context are noted as follows:

- The site is generally surrounded to the northeast, northwest and southwest by commercial uses and E3 Productivity Support zoned land.
- Approximately 150m to the west of the site is MU1 mixed use zoned land, which contemplates residential development to a height of 95m.
- The site directly adjoins the Lane Cove National Park to the east and southeast which contains a walking track known as The Great North Walk and a fire trail.
- The Lane Cove River is located approximately 100m to the east of the site.
- The site directly adjoins the Ryde City Council Administrative Centre to the east.

- Approximately 500m to the west of the site is the North Ryde Metro Station.
- The nearest residential development is located approximately 300m to the southeast of the site on the eastern side of Lane Cove River in Lane Cove North, and 300m to the southwest of the site on the southern side of Epping Road in North Ryde.

An aerial view of the site is provided in Figure 1.1 below.

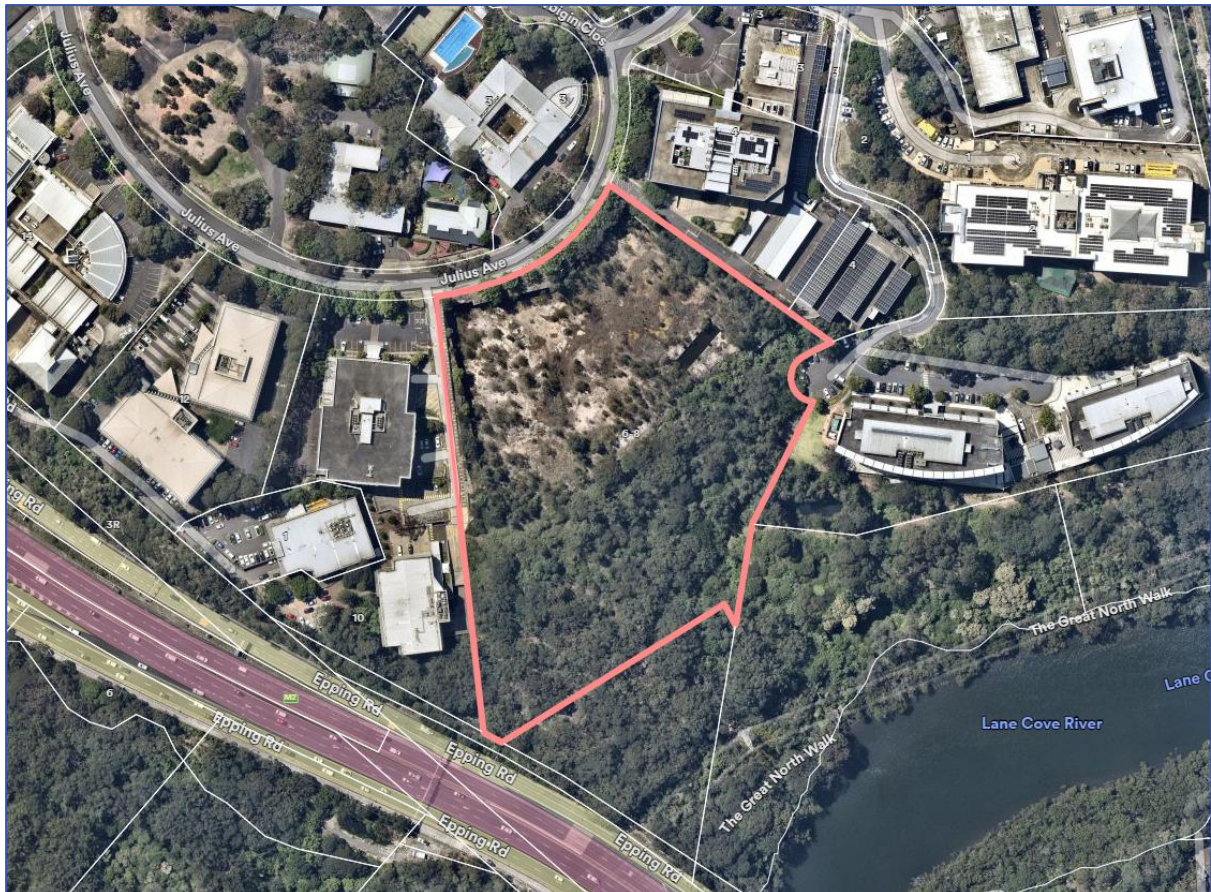


Figure 1.1 Aerial view of the site. (Source: Nearmap 2024)

1.3 Statutory context

In NSW, archaeological remains (referred to as 'relics' or 'objects') are afforded protection under the following statutory controls:

- *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW) (the Heritage Act);
- *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NSW) (the NPW Act); and
- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW) (the EPA Act).

1.3.1 Heritage Act 1977 (NSW)

State Heritage Register

The State Heritage Register (SHR) was established under Section 22 of the Heritage Act. It comprises a list of identified heritage items determined to be of significance to the people of NSW. The SHR includes items and places such as buildings, works, archaeological relics, movable objects or precincts.

The study area is not an item listed on the SHR.

Relics provisions

Archaeological relics, outside SHR curtilages, are protected under the 'relics provisions' (Section 139 to 146) of the Heritage Act.

The Act defines a 'relic' as any deposit, 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.

Sections 139–145 of the Heritage Act prevent the excavation of a relic, except in accordance with an excavation permit (or an exemption from the need for a permit) issued by the Heritage Council of New South Wales.

Section 139 [1] of the Heritage Act states that:

A person must not disturb or excavate 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.

Approval under these provisions is required to impact or harm archaeological relics.

1.3.2 National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (NSW)

All Aboriginal objects and places receive statutory protection under the NPW Act. Aboriginal objects are defined as:

Aboriginal object means any deposit, object or material evidence (not being a handicraft made for sale) relating to the Aboriginal habitation of the area that comprises New South Wales, being habitation before or concurrent with (or both) the occupation of that area by persons of non-Aboriginal extraction, and includes Aboriginal remains.¹

Under the Act, applicants must seek approval prior to disturbance of sites with the potential to contain Aboriginal objects or cultural material. Harming Aboriginal objects and harming or desecrating Aboriginal places is also a liability offence under the Act. 'Harm' includes to destroy, deface, damage or move an Aboriginal object or declared Aboriginal place.

An assessment of the potential for the site to contain Aboriginal objects and places as defined by the NPW Act is not included. An Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment report (ACHAR) has also been prepared by GML as part of this project.

1.3.3 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)

The EPA Act provides a statutory framework for the determination of development proposals. It is administered by the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure and provides for the protection of local heritage items and conservation areas through listings on local environmental plans (LEPs) which guide local councils in making planning decisions. The EPA Act requires that appropriate measures be taken for the management of archaeological resources and meet the requirements of the Heritage Act and NPW Act.

1.3.4 State significant development/state significant infrastructure

Projects declared as a state significant development (SSD) under Part 4 Division 4.7 or state significant infrastructure (SSI) under Part 5 of the EPA Act require heritage and archaeology to be managed in accordance with the project approval documents, including conditions of approval (CoA) and environmental mitigation measures prepared as part of the application process. Archaeological permits under Section 90 of the NPW Act and Section 139 of the Heritage Act are not required once development approval has been given for SSD/SSI projects.

The project is proceeding as an SSD.

1.3.5 Heritage context

The study area has been extensively redeveloped over the course of the twentieth century, first for the CSIRO complex and later for the Riverside Corporate Park in c2000. It is not a heritage item but is in the vicinity of several local heritage items listed on the Ryde LEP, *Lane Cove Local Environmental Plan 2009* (Lane Cove LEP), and *Willoughby Local Environmental Plan 2012* (Willoughby LEP). These items are identified in Table 1.1 and shown in Figure 1.2.

Table 1.1 Heritage items in the vicinity of the study area.

Item name	Address	Listing details	Distance from study area
Cottage	2 Richardson Place, North Ryde	Item 320, Ryde LEP	50m
Northern Suburbs Cemetery	12 Delhi Road, Macquarie Park	Item 44, Ryde LEP	370m
Substation	293 Pittwater Road, North Ryde	Item 97, Ryde LEP	440m
Boobajool Reserve (open space)	263 Pittwater Road, North Ryde	Item 96, Ryde LEP	620m
Northern Suburbs Crematorium	197 Delhi Road, North Ryde	Item 46, Ryde LEP	730m
House (including former dairy and original interiors)	17 Fitzsimmons Avenue, Lane Cove North	Item 150, Willoughby LEP	650m
Chicago Mills	160 Epping Road, Lane Cove West	A6, Lane Cove LEP	540m



Figure 1.2 Heritage listed items within the vicinity of the study area, labelled with the Heritage ID number. (Source: Nearmap with GML overlay, 2024)

1.4 Purpose of this report

The aims of this report are to:

- understand the site history from readily available historical sources;
- understand the current site conditions from review of existing documentation;
- identify if there is potential for historical archaeological remains within the study area;
- identify if the proposed development could impact on heritage items as defined by the Heritage Act; and
- make recommendations regarding the management of heritage and archaeological resources for the proposed development.

1.5 Methodology

This report has been prepared with regard to the following documents and best practice guidelines:

- NSW Heritage Manual, *Archaeological Assessments* (NSW Heritage Office 1996);²
- *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and Relics* (NSW Heritage Branch 2009);³ and
- *The Burra Charter: the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 2013* (the Burra Charter).⁴

1.6 Limitations

- This is a baseline historical heritage due diligence report. A detailed historical archaeological assessment or assessment of significance is not included.
- This report assesses the potential historical resources of the site only. It does not include an assessment of potential Aboriginal heritage sites or values.
- No physical archaeological investigation of the site has been undertaken as part of this study.

1.7 Authorship

This report has been prepared by Cat Munro (Senior Heritage Consultant, Archaeologist) and Patrick Atkinson (Senior Heritage Consultant), with input and review by Dr Nadia Iacono (Principal/Archaeologist).

1.8 Endnotes

- ¹ *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1979 (NSW)*, Part 1, Part 5 'Definitions'.
- ² Heritage Office and Department of Urban Affairs & Planning 1996, *NSW Heritage Manual*, Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, Sydney.
- ³ Heritage Branch, December 2009, *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and 'Relics'*, Heritage Branch of the Department of Planning, Sydney.
- ⁴ Australia ICOMOS Inc, *The Burra Charter: the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 2013*, Australia ICOMOS Inc, Burwood, VIC.

2 Historical background

2.1 Introduction

This section provides an overview of the historical background of the study area. It is based upon secondary sources supplemented with additional primary research from the National Library of Australia (NLA), the State Library of NSW (SLNSW) and NSW Land Registry Services.

The First Nations history is provided in the Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment report (ACHAR) prepared by GML for this project.

2.2 Early land use

The north side of Sydney Harbour, including the Ryde area, was an early focus for colonial expansion following the arrival of the First Fleet. The first land grants in the vicinity of the study area comprised grants given to eight former marines by Governor Phillip in 1792.¹ The area was named the Field of Mars. In 1804, Governor King established the Field of Mars Common, an area 2.2km wide, extending from Boronia Park to North Epping along the Lane Cove River. The common was one of six 'commons' in the colony, for the local community to utilise as a shared resource for grazing livestock; however, the common was also used for illegal squatting, timber-getting and other notorious activities such as gambling or sly grog selling.² The study area is situated within the lands that formed part of the common (Figure 2.2).

[illegible]

Julius Avenue Data Storage Centre—Historical Heritage Due Diligence, April 2025

2.3 Late-nineteenth century subdivision

Following the *Field of Mars Common Resumption Act 1874*, the common, including the study area, was subdivided into a regular grid pattern. The land away from the Lane Cove River was divided into small farms, while the banks were reserved for recreation which saw the formation of several 'pleasure resorts' along Lane Cove River, including the Fairyland Pleasure Grounds (located approximately 500m east of the study area). By this time several wharves were constructed along the Lane Cove River, with the closest being Pages Wharf located less than 500m to the south of the study area.

By the 1880s, most of the land had been sold; however, development was gradual throughout the region as poultry farms, market gardens, and dwellings were established, many of which were formed as part of the Soldier Settlement Scheme following World War I.

The 1887 map indicates that the study area comprised parts of three parcels of land, Portions 380, 381 and 382, which by 1907 were owned by Ernest and James Boyd, W C Adams and D H Macmillan, and M E Glynn respectively (Figure 2.4). The Glynn family occupied the neighbouring lots 382 and 383 to the east and quickly constructed a stone dwelling on the far side of their property, which remains extant today.³ Small, cultivated areas can be seen on the 1930 and 1943 aerials (Figure 2.5 and Figure 2.6).

Despite the parish map depicting a series of well-established roads, including Woronzoff Road, intersecting the north of the study area, and Lucknow Road (now the M2 Motorway /Epping Road), the 1930 and 1943 historical aerials indicate that the roads were not formally established until development intensified in the area in the 1940s and 1950s.

The 1930 and 1943 aerial photographs show the study area as undeveloped vegetated land, accessible via an informal track that intersects the northwestern corner of the study area (Figure 2.5 and Figure 2.6). Tracks extend through the study area by 1943, and may be linked with access to the nearby river, Pages Wharf and Fairyland Pleasure Grounds. Establishment of the Epping Road bridge by 1943 likely facilitated the rapid development in the area in the following decades.



Figure 2.3 Plan of Ryde, Pittwater Road, 1887. The location of nearby Pages Wharf is arrowed. (SLNSW Call Number: SP/R20, Z/SP/R20 with GML overlay, 2025)

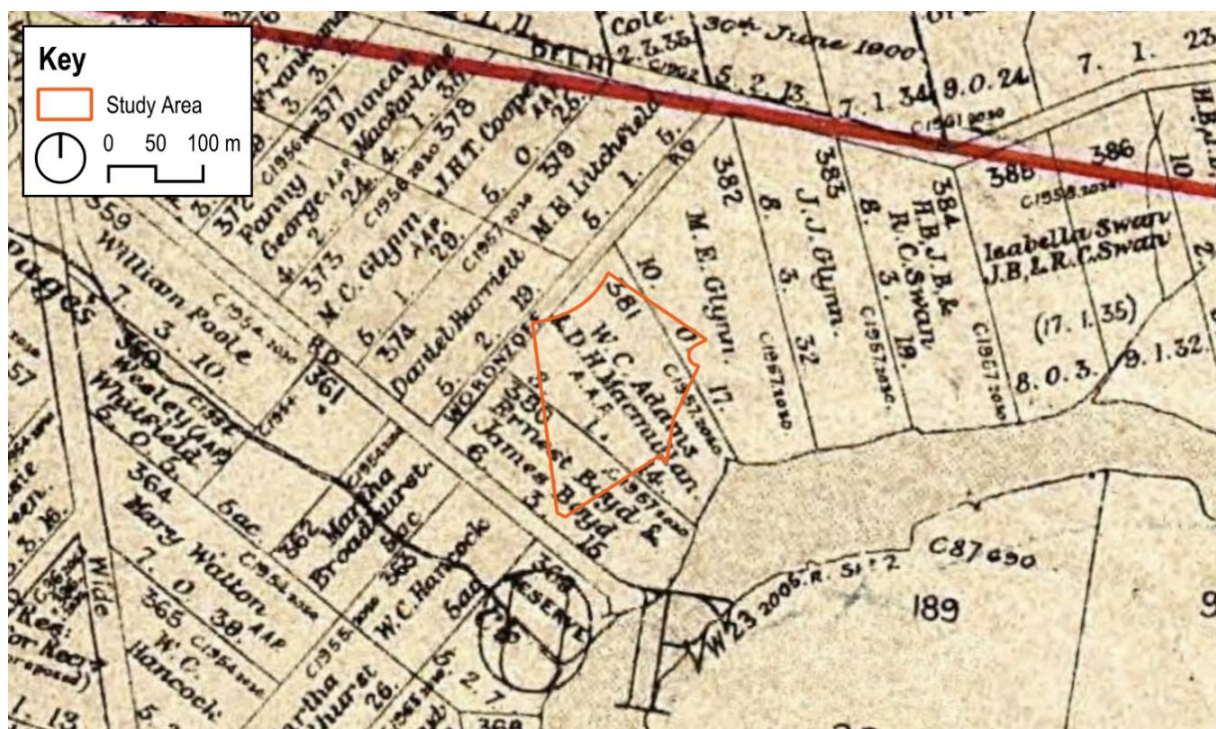


Figure 2.4 1907 parish map, showing the study area as situated across three parcels of land owned by Ernest and James Boyd, W C Adams and D H Macmillan, and M E Glynn. (Source: NSW Land Registry Services with GML overlay, 2025)

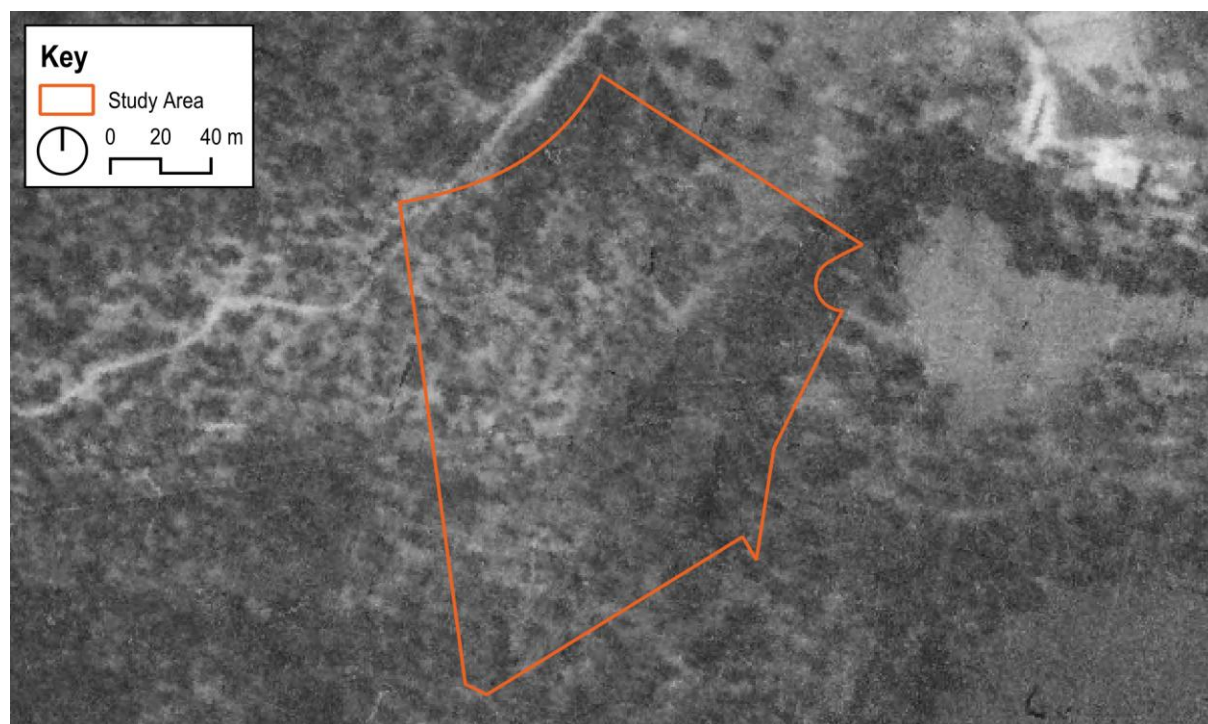


Figure 2.5 1930 historical aerial showing the study area. (Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer with GML overlay, 2025)

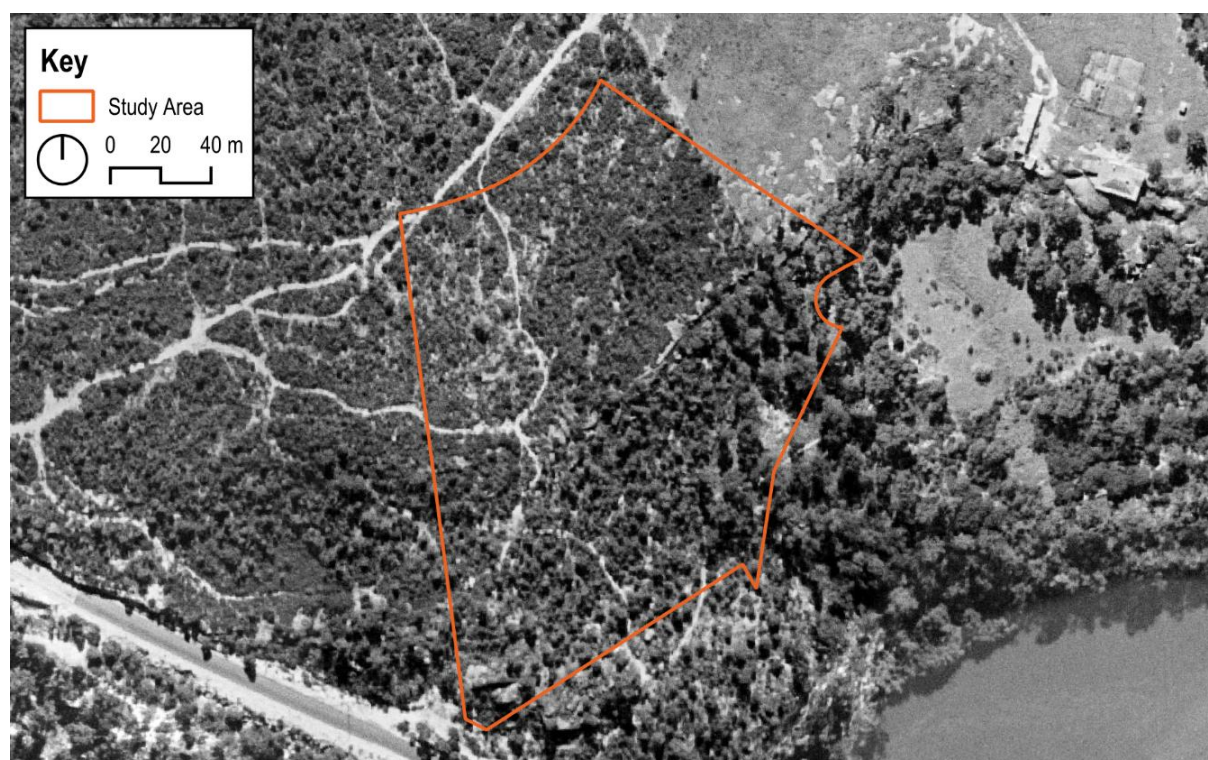


Figure 2.6 1943 historical aerial showing the study area. (Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer with GML overlay, 2025)

2.4 CSIRO and industrial development

A 1961 charting map indicates that the land of the study area had been resumed for Commonwealth purposes in 1944 (Figure 2.8). By this time, Woronzoff Road had been removed from charting and parish maps, replaced with an easement for access and easement for a water main (Figure 2.8).

By 1951, the first buildings within the study area had been constructed within the northwest of the study area, with associated tracks and paths extending through the surrounding vegetated component of the area. During this period, the study area and surrounds formed part of lands utilised by the CSIRO. It is possible that structures on the study area in this period are a component of the wider CSIRO research and development facilities in the area.

Development within the north of the study area continued throughout the following decades, including construction of additional buildings, additional vegetation clearing, and construction of hardstand roads and parking areas (Figure 2.9, Figure 2.10).

By 1998, creation of Riverside Corporate Park, which included the study area, was underway. Existing CSIRO structures were demolished and or redeveloped, with substandard buildings rationalised to facilitate development by compatible private industry.⁴ All existing structures within the study area were demolished, and the north of the study area converted to a hardstand (bitumen or tarmac) parking lot (Figure 2.11). The current road network within the business park, including Julius Avenue, was also constructed in this period.

By 2009, the entire northern portion of the study area had been levelled via deep excavation into the underlying bedrock, and portions of the southern area of the study area cleared for establishment of dirt vehicle tracks (Figure 2.13). Minimal works appear to have occurred since this period (Figure 2.14).



Figure 2.7 1951 historical aerial showing the study area. (Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer with GML overlay, 2025)

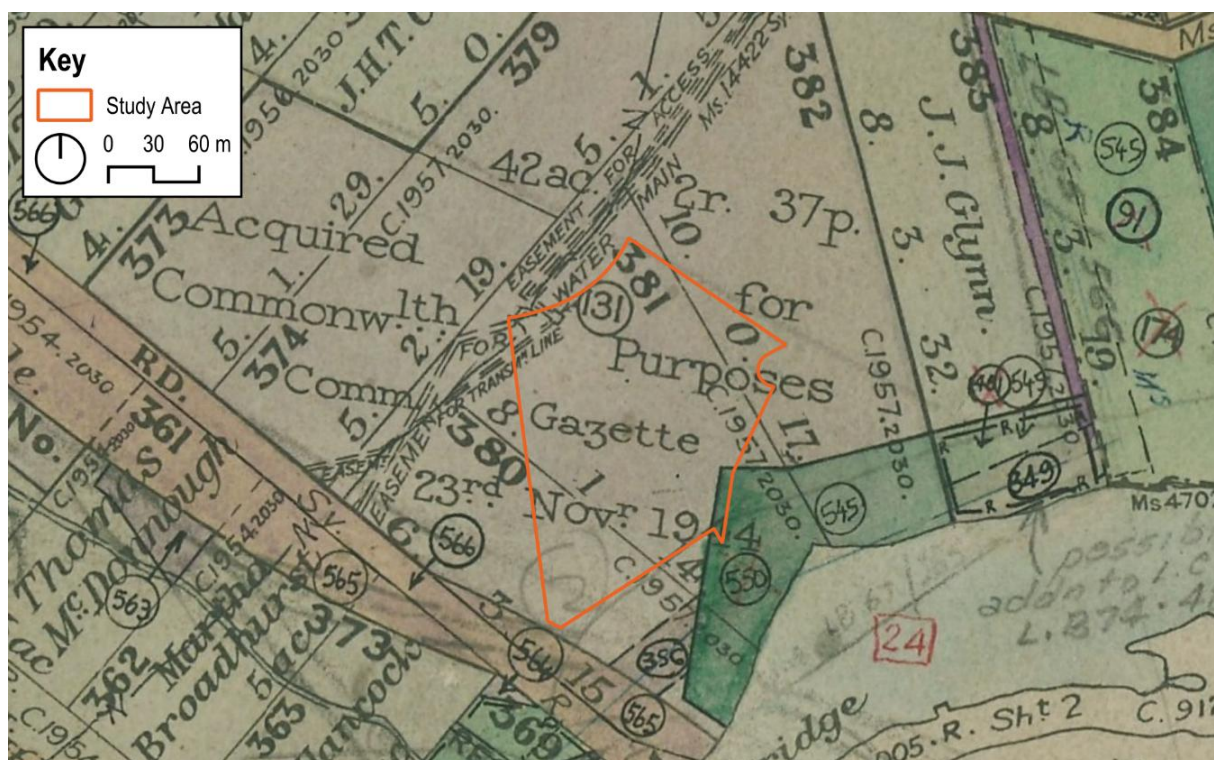


Figure 2.8 1961 charting map, showing the study area as situated on Commonwealth land. (Source: NSW Land Registry Services with GML overlay, 2025)

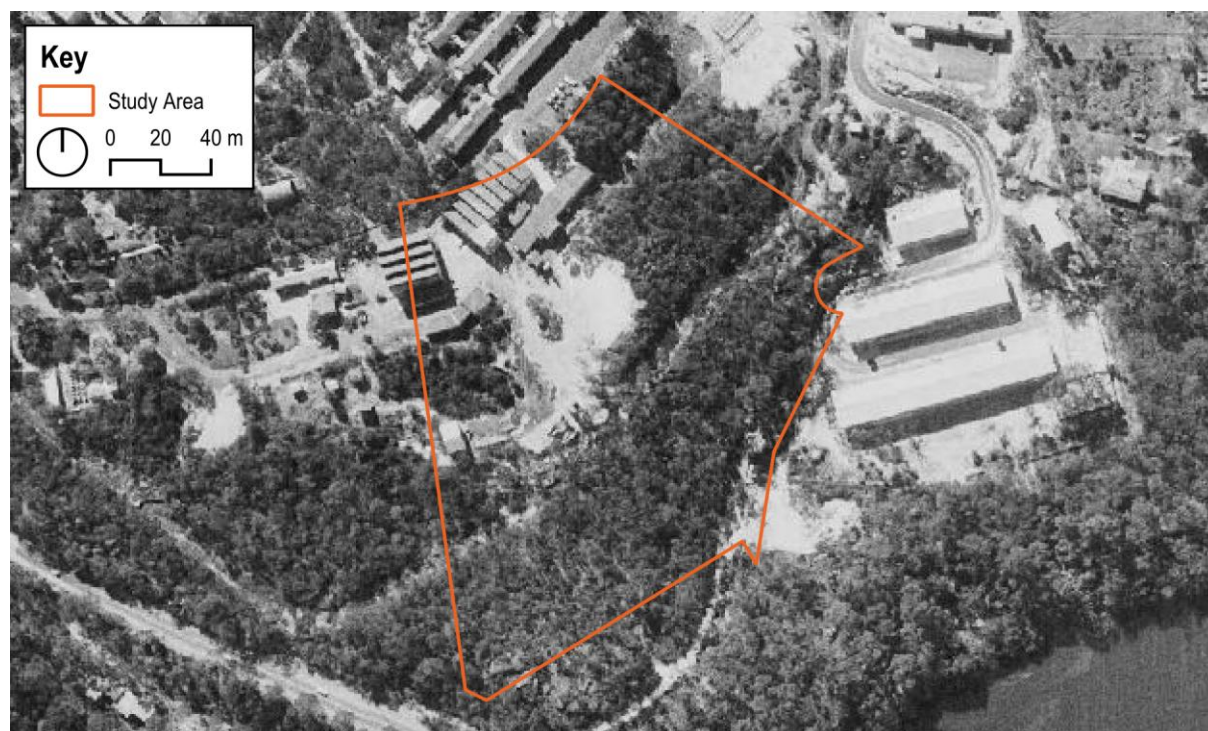


Figure 2.9 1965 historical aerial showing the study area. (Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer with GML overlay, 2025)



Figure 2.10 1986 historical aerial showing the study area. (Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer with GML overlay, 2025)



Figure 2.11 1998 historical aerial showing the study area. (Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer with GML overlay, 2025)



Figure 2.12 2002 historical aerial showing the study area. (Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer with GML overlay, 2025)



Figure 2.13 2009 historical aerial showing the study area. (Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer with GML overlay, 2025)



Figure 2.14 2024 historical aerial showing the study area. (Source: NSW Historical Imagery Viewer with GML overlay, 2025)

2.5 Endnotes

- ¹ NSW Department of Education Field of Mars Environmental Education Centre, *Field of Mars Reserve*, accessed 15 January 2025 <<https://fieldofmar-e.schools.nsw.gov.au/fact-sheets/field-of-mars-reserve.html>>.
- ² Dictionary of Sydney, *Field of Mars*, accessed 15 January 2025 <https://dictionaryofsydney.org/place/field_of_mars_common>. Phippen, A 2008, *Marsfield*, Dictionary of Sydney, accessed 15 January 2025 <<https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/marsfield>>.
- ³ 'Cottage' State Heritage Inventory, accessed 27 February 2025 <<https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=5067740>>.
- ⁴ Commonwealth of Australia, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, *Report relating to the proposed CSIRO Riverside Corporate Park, North Ryde NSW—Joint Research Complex for CSIRO Molecular Science and Food Science Australia*, Eighth Report of 1999, 23 September 1999, Canberra.

3 Historical archaeology assessment

3.1 Overview

The historical archaeological resource of the site relates to material remains, including features, artefact deposits and landscape evidence, that were generated during occupation and use of the site over the past ~230 years. This section considers the site's potential for historical archaeological remains and assesses their significance.

3.1.1 Terminology

The term 'archaeological potential' is the likelihood that a site may contain physical evidence related to an earlier phase of occupation, activity or development. This term is different from 'archaeological significance' and 'archaeological research potential', which are more subjective statements related to the value of the archaeological resource in terms of levels of significance.

Archaeological potential is usually described as low, moderate or high, and is assessed as follows:

- Nil—no known historical activities which would have left an archaeological signature. Previous construction, or other activities, have removed all archaeology.
- Low—unlikely that archaeological evidence associated with this historical phase or feature survives. Archaeological remains are likely to have been subject to a high level of previous disturbance.
- Moderate—it is possible that some archaeological evidence associated with this historical phase or feature survives. Archaeological remains may have been subject to some previous disturbance.
- High—it is likely that archaeological evidence associated with this historical phase or feature survives. Archaeological remains are likely to be intact as the level of site disturbance appears to be minimal.

Archaeological significance and 'relics' in NSW are defined as being either local or state significant in Section 4A of the Heritage Act:

- Local—in relation to a place, building, work, relic, moveable object or precinct, means significance to the area in relation to the historical, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic value of the item.
- State—in relation to a place, building, work, relic, moveable object or precinct, means significance to the State in relation to the historical, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic value of the item.

3.2 Relevant archaeological studies

Findings from previous archaeological investigations in the vicinity of the site have informed this assessment. These are outlined below.

Archaeological Monitoring, William Henry House site, Lane Cove River, 2003

In 2003, HLA-Envirosciences Pty Limited (HLA) undertook archaeological monitoring and test excavation at the eastern bank of the Lane Cove River north of the junction of Blue Gum Creek and between Lady Game Drive and the Lane Cove River (approximately 1.3km from the study area). The purpose of the investigation was to identify if there were archaeological remains of William Henry House and farm from the c1830s onwards.¹ The program of archaeological investigation found no archaeological remains, due to disturbance, and theorised that the house was located outside of the area of investigation and that it has probably been destroyed by the construction of Lady Game Drive.

Archaeological Testing and Monitoring, St Anne's Ryde, 1999

Archaeological Management & Consulting Group Pty Ltd (AMAC) undertook a program of archaeological monitoring and test excavation at St Anne's Churchyard (approximately 3.8km southwest of the study area).² The investigation sought to identify the boundary of the historic churchyard to understand the extent of potential burials in relation to the present-day boundary, which does not align. The boundary was not identified during the testing or monitoring; however, investigation found features of 12 (presumed) burials to have survived, all within the historic boundary.

3.3 Site inspection

Site inspection was undertaken by GML on 3 March 2025 to observe the current site conditions and record any visible activities and development on the site that may have affected the survival of archaeological remains and their integrity.

The northern portion of the study area comprised an artificially levelled landform, cut approximately 15 to 20m into the sandstone bedrock below the level of Julius Avenue along the northern boundary of the study area (Figure 3.1–Figure 3.4). The depth of cut reduced moving south where the natural landform slopes down towards the Lane Cove River.

Ground cover mostly consisted of sparse immature trees growing within a pale sandy anthroposol soil derived from degraded sandstone from both the debris from the excavation and weathering of the exposed bedrock in the approximately 15 years since excavation, during which time the site had been vacant.

Areas that were slightly lower lying were boggy, with deeper soil and dense reeds and bullrushes reducing visibility. Exposures of the sandstone bedrock were frequent, with deep gouge marks from mechanical excavation. No historical archaeological or built heritage features were observed in this portion of the study area.

The southern portion of the study area was heavily vegetated, predominantly with native regrowth vegetation interspersed with some older native trees and frequent invasive weeds, most notably lantana (Figure 3.5–Figure 3.8). As a result, visibility was low and passage through this area was difficult. The natural slope of the landform appears to have been mostly preserved, taking the form of a stepped slope with frequent exposures of the sandstone bedrock. Where visible, soils in this area of the site were sandy, and pale yellowish/greyish-brown in colour. Disturbance from past earthworks in the form of low earth mounds were observed. There was frequent crushed sandstone, interpreted as debris from land clearance works within this area in the mid-2000s and/or debris from upslope works washed or rolled downslope. Semi-formal walking tracks were observed in this portion of the study area, comprising cleared and flattened dirt walking paths and steps cut into sandstone bedrock in areas of steeper slope. These paths were mostly present along the southern boundary of the study area. No historical archaeological or built heritage features were observed in this portion of the study area.

View lines to the heritage cottage at 2 Richardson Place were obscured by the natural slope of the landform, vegetation and the surrounding buildings.



Figure 3.1 The northern portion of the study area, taken from Julius Avenue, facing southeast.



Figure 3.2 The northern portion of the study area, facing northeast. Sandstone bedrock shows deep gouges from machine excavation.



Figure 3.3 The northern portion of the study area, facing northwest, showing the depth of excavation into the bedrock.



Figure 3.4 Deep excavation within the northern portion of the study area, facing east towards the heritage cottage at 2 Richardson Place.



Figure 3.5 Semi-formal dirt walking track and sewer manhole cover within the south of the study area.

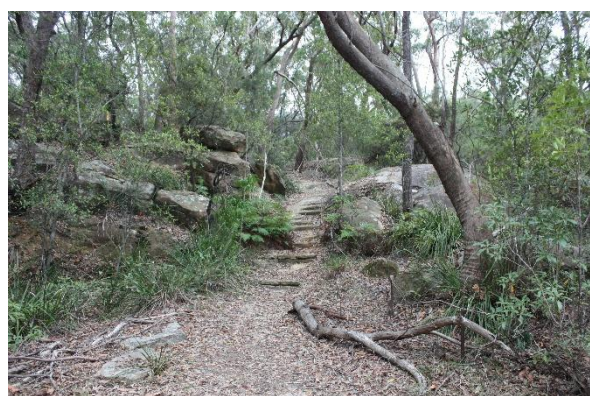


Figure 3.6 Semi-formal dirt walking track with steps cut into the bedrock within the south of the study area.

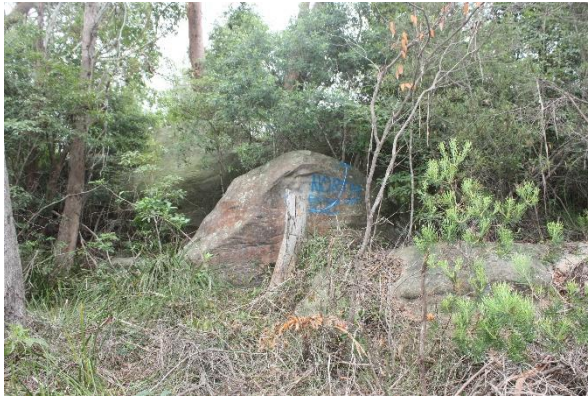


Figure 3.7 Nature of the bushland within the south of the study area, showing the dense vegetation and sandstone bedrock outcrops.



Figure 3.8 Evidence of disturbance in the form of low earth mounds within the south of the study area.

3.4 Previous disturbance

Activities and development on the study area, during the twentieth century and more recently, may have affected the survival and integrity of historical archaeological remains. The degree/extent of disturbance correlates to the potential for historical archaeological remains. The more substantial the ground disturbance, the less likely there is potential for historical archaeological remains to have survived. Analysis of site disturbance is informed by the site inspection, historical overview, and a review of aerial images. Several events of substantial ground disturbance have been identified, which include:

- Construction of buildings within the northwest study area in the 1950s and the southeast study area in the 1960s saw disturbance including land clearance.
- The demolition in 1998 of all structures associated with the CSIRO occupation, additional land clearance and the construction of a hardstand parking area and roads.
- Development in the early 2000s resulted in disturbance along the east and west of boundaries of the study area.
- Deep excavation into the underlying bedrock in 2009 resulted in major disturbance and the complete removal of any potential archaeological remains within most of the study area footprint.

Figure 3.9 provides a representation of areas with substantial ground disturbance.



Figure 3.9 Map of areas of significant disturbance including deep excavation, construction of buildings, driveways or substantial land clearing for vehicle tracks. Note that minor areas of land clearing for pedestrian tracks have not been mapped as disturbance, as these impacts are likely to be more minimal. (Source: Nearmap with GML overlay, 2025)

3.5 Potential archaeological remains

The assessment of archaeological potential is based on examination of historical information related to the site's development and occupation, current site conditions and previous disturbance, and comparable archaeological studies to identify the archaeological potential of the site.

3.5.1 Phases of historical development

The following phases of historical development are relevant in understanding the archaeological potential of the site. Phases are based on the history presented in Section 2.

- Phase 1: 1788–1870s—Early land use.
- Phase 2: 1870s–1940s—Late-nineteenth century subdivision.
- Phase 3: 1940s–present—Post-1940s development.

3.5.2 Assessment of archaeological potential

The following section provides an assessment of archaeological potential of the site by phase. The archaeological potential is illustrated in Figure 3.10.

Phase 1: 1788–1870s—Early land use

The study area falls within a portion of the ‘common’ that was shared community space for grazing livestock though was also reportedly used for illegal activities such as timber getting or squatting. There is no indication that these activities occurred specifically within the study area, or that any land clearance and occupation occurred throughout this phase.

There is a low–nil potential for archaeological remains associated with Phase 1, which would be limited to ephemeral signs of transient land use such as isolated artefacts or rubbish pits. Potential remains would be limited to the areas that have not been subjected to significant disturbance identified above (Figure 3.9). Potential archaeological remains associated with grazing livestock are unlikely to have resulted in any distinguishable archaeological remains.

Phase 2: 1870s–1940s—Late-nineteenth century subdivision

This phase saw the subdivision of land throughout the region. The study area is split across what was three parcels of land, owned by Ernest and James Boyd (Lot 380), W C Adams and D H Macmillan (Lot 381), and M E Glynn. The study area occupies only a very small portion of Glynn’s property (Lot 382), and while his family was known to occupy the land throughout the early twenty-first century, it appears that all structures and farming was located further east (within Lot 383), outside of the study area. There is no indication that any occupation occurred within portions of Lot 320 and Lot 381, beyond use of the site as a throughfare from the informal roadway in the north down to the river in the south. It is unknown whether the land continued to be used for livestock grazing, though this would be unlikely to have resulted in an archaeological signature. Potential archaeological remains associated with Phase 2 would be limited to a low–nil potential for ephemeral signs of transient land use such as isolated artefacts or rubbish pits. Similarly, potential remains would be limited to the areas that have not been subjected to significant disturbance identified above (Figure 3.9).

Phase 3: 1940s–present—Post-1940s development

Several structures and hardstands were constructed and demolished throughout this phase associated with the CSIRO use of the site. All of the structures were located in the north of the study area, which in 2009 was excavated through to bedrock, removing all potential for historical archaeological remains in this area.

Potential evidence for this phase would be limited to construction/demolition discard, rubbish and disturbance in the south of the study area, outside of the extensively excavated areas.

Table 3.1 Assessment of historical archaeological potential.

Phase	Discussion	Potential
Phase 1: 1788–1870s	Types of archaeological features and deposits associated with this phase are limited to: signs of transient land use such as isolated artefacts or rubbish pits	Low–nil
Phase 2: 1870s–1940s	Types of archaeological features and deposits associated with this phase are limited to: signs of transient land use such isolated artefacts or rubbish pits	Low–nil
Phase 3: 1940s–present	Types of archaeological features and deposits associated with this phase are limited to: construction/demolition discard, rubbish and disturbance	Low



Figure 3.10 Historical archaeological potential mapping. (Source: Nearmap with GML overlay, 2025)

3.6 Archaeological significance

Archaeological significance refers to the heritage significance of known or potential archaeological remains. In NSW, archaeological remains are managed in accordance with their assessed levels of significance.

3.6.1 Assessment of archaeological significance

The following significance assessment of the potential historical archaeology is undertaken against the NSW heritage criteria. The 2009 guidelines have been used to inform the assessment.³

Criterion	Possible heritage value
(a) an item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the local area)	The potential archaeological remains are not anticipated to demonstrate the pattern of historical development of the area and are therefore not considered to meet the threshold for significance under this criterion.
(b) an item has a 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 local area)	The potential archaeological remains are not able to be directly associated with the life or works of any significant groups or individuals and are therefore not considered to meet the threshold for significance under this criterion.
(c) An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).	The potential archaeological remains are not anticipated to be of aesthetic or technical achievement and therefore would not meet the threshold for significance under this criterion.
(d) 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.	No community consultation was undertaken for this assessment. However, given the nature of the potential archaeological remains it is unlikely that they would meet the threshold for significance under this criterion.
(e) an item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the area's cultural or natural history	The potential archaeological remains are not considered to hold research potential and therefore would not meet the threshold for significance under this criterion. Isolated artefacts, rubbish pits, or signs of transient land use would not contribute to knowledge beyond what is known from historical research, or to understanding of the area's cultural or natural history.
(f) 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).	The potential archaeological remains are not rare or uncommon and would not meet the threshold for significance under this criterion.

Criterion	Possible heritage value
(g) An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or the local area).	The potential archaeological remains do not meet the threshold for significance under this criterion.

3.6.2 Statement of archaeological significance

The study area has been subject to extensive disturbance across almost two thirds of the site. The archaeological remains across the portion of the study area outside of these areas of extensive disturbance are anticipated to be isolated and evidence only transient land use such as isolated artefacts and rubbish pits, which may have been disturbed by continued development throughout the twenty-first century. The potential archaeological remains are not considered to meet the threshold for significance.

3.7 Endnotes

- ¹ HLA, 2003, Archaeological Monitoring, William Henry House Site, Lane Cove River, for Thiess Hochtief Joint Venture.
- ² AMAC 1999, Archaeological Testing and Monitoring: Portions of the Churchyard and Glebe St Anne's, Ryde, NSW.
- ³ Heritage Branch [now Heritage NSW], December 2009, *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and 'Relics'*, Heritage Branch of the Department of Planning, Sydney.

4 Heritage assessment

The study area is approximately 50m away from the heritage item 'Cottage' at 2 Richardson Place, which is of local significance (Ryde LEP, 320). The actual cottage is approximately 100m away from the study area, though the listing covers the lot boundary.

The next closest heritage item, the Northern Suburbs Cemetery (Ryde LEP 44), is over 350m away from the study area.

The heritage listed cottage at 2 Richardson Place is a rare remnant farmhouse which dates from the early period of subdivision and development in North Ryde following the resumption of the Field of Mars Common. Approval was given to demolish the building during the development of the Riverside Corporate Park in c2000, but the building was instead retained as part of the works.

The cottage now directly adjoins the southern elevation of the Honeywell commercial office building at 2 Richardson Place, which significantly overshadows the building (Figure 4.1). Mature trees now largely screen the site from the surrounding office buildings. The view to the study area from the cottage is obscured by trees and the adjacent car park (Figure 4.2).

The heritage inventory sheet for the cottage acknowledges that construction of the Riverside Corporate Park and the Honeywell building has irreversibly encroached on the original setting of the building. This development has resulted in the complete loss of its original setting.¹



Figure 4.1 The heritage listed cottage at 2 Richardson Place, looking towards the study area. The Honeywell office building is to the right of the image. (Source: GML 2025)



Figure 4.2 Looking towards the study area from the heritage listed cottage at 2 Richardson Place. (Source: GML 2025)

4.1 Endnotes

- ¹ 'Cottage', Heritage NSW, State Heritage Inventory, accessed 22 January 2025, <<https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=5067740>>.

5 Impact assessment

5.1 Proposed works

The proposal involves the construction and operation of a data centre and associated infrastructure and amenities, identified as the Julius Avenue Data Storage Centre, comprising the following scope of works (Figure 5.1):

- site preparation works, including tree removal;
- earthworks and additional site retaining;
- infrastructure comprising civil works and utilities servicing;
- construction of a data centre, with the following:
 - basement carparking for 53 cars, including 2 accessible;
 - 12 data halls across 6 storeys with an IT load of 115.2 MW and a maximum power consumption of 170 MW, with upper-level mechanical equipment and rooftop plant;
 - 6-storey office/front of house building; and
 - 6-storey enclosed generator gantry to rear of data centre;
- new Ausgrid precinct-wide 132 kilovolt (KV) Subtransmission Switching Station (STSS);
- one new public street along the southern part of the site;
- a new pedestrian through-site link from Julius Avenue to Richardson Place; and
- complementary landscaping and offset planting.

The proposal includes works as identified in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1 Development particulars.

Component	Documentation
Study area	28,630sqm
Primary land use	Data centre (25,204sqm GFA)
Ancillary land uses	Office premises (1,278sqm GFA)
Gross floor area	26,185sqm
Floor space ratio	0.91:1
IT load	115.2 MW
Maximum power consumption	169 MW
Building height	Approximately 48m
New streets	One (1) new public street

Component	Documentation
Car parking	54 car parking spaces (including 2 accessible)
Landscaping/trees	Total landscaping and tree removal to be confirmed
Back-up generators	72 x 3MW + 1MW back-up generators
Dangerous goods	1,277kL diesel storage capacity (12 x 100kL tanks + 72 x 1kL day tanks + 5kL tank for office/FOH)
Estimated jobs	Total estimated jobs (construction and operation) to be confirmed

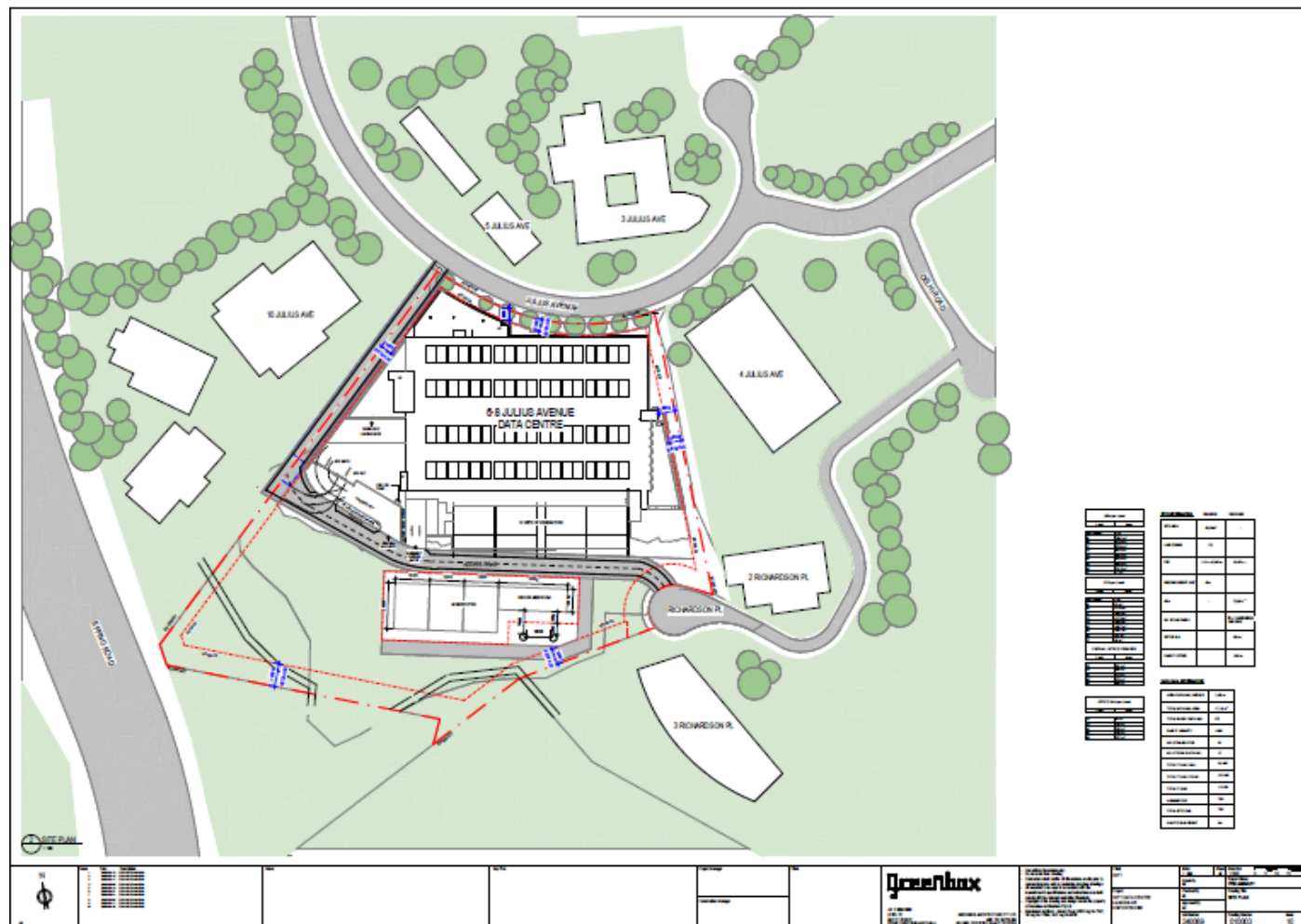


Figure 5.1 Plan of the proposed works. (Source: Greenbox Architecture, 2025)

5.2 Archaeological impacts

The proposed works are located largely in areas of nil potential for historical archaeological remains, though some works do intersect with areas of low-nil and low potential.

Given that the assessment has identified an at most low potential for isolated archaeological remains of unknown location, and they are not considered to hold significance as defined by the Heritage Act, the proposed works are considered unlikely to impact on historical archaeological remains of significance.

5.3 Heritage impacts

The proposed works are in the vicinity of the heritage item 'Cottage' at 2 Richardson Place. Ordinarily, multi-storey development in the vicinity of a single-storey heritage item may have the potential for heritage impacts. However, the setting of the heritage item is acknowledged as completely and irreversibly compromised by the Riverside Corporate Park development and Honeywell commercial office building.

Presently, there is very limited visibility to the study area from the cottage, owing to the Honeywell development, the adjacent car park, and trees which screen the view. When constructed, the data centre building would result in only a minor change to the cottage's setting, one which is in line with its presently compromised, commercial office setting.

As proposed works are in keeping with the present setting of the cottage and would result in only a minor change, GML assesses that the works would not feasibly impact the heritage values of the cottage more than has already occurred. So, while the setting of the cottage would change slightly, this would not have the potential for a heritage impact owing to its already irreversibly compromised setting—the damage having already been done.

The next nearest heritage item to the study area is over 350m away and cannot be expected to be impacted by the works.

A statement of heritage impact (SOHI) would not be required for this project per Key Issue 20 of the data storage centre SEARs, as there is no potential for direct or indirect impacts to the listed 'Cottage' heritage item. However, the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) may request a SOHI if it considers otherwise.

5.4 Mitigation measures

Any proposed development that requires subsurface excavations within areas of low historical archaeological potential should proceed under an Unexpected Heritage Finds Procedure (UHFP). A heritage induction should be provided to all construction personnel. The induction should include information about the archaeology and obligations under the project approvals.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

- The study area is not heritage listed and does not contain any items of environmental heritage listed on a statutory heritage register.
- The site has low–nil potential to contain historical archaeological remains that would not meet the threshold for local significance, limited to isolated artefacts, rubbish pits or ephemeral features associated with transient historic land use.
- Proposed works would therefore not impact on historical archaeological remains or ‘relics’ as defined by the Heritage Act.
- The site is in the vicinity of a local heritage item, ‘Cottage’ (Ryde LEP 320), located at 2 Richardson Place. This heritage item directly adjoins the Honeywell building to the east of the study area.
- The heritage listing of the cottage acknowledges that the setting of the heritage item has been irrevocably and completely lost because of previous office development at the Riverside Corporate Park, mainly from the Honeywell building.
- The nature of the proposed works is in keeping with the present setting of the heritage item and would result in only a minor change to that setting. GML has assessed that there is no potential for direct or indirect impacts to arise to the heritage cottage because of the works.
- GML does not consider that a statement of heritage impact is required for this project as per key issue 20 of the data storage centre SEARs, as there are no potential impacts to the heritage item. However, the DPHI may request one if it considers otherwise.

6.2 Recommendations

1. Given the low–nil potential for historical archaeological remains within the study area, no further investigations are required.
2. An unexpected heritage finds process should be prepared for the project, provided to all project staff and contractors and followed during proposed works located within areas of low historical archaeological potential.
3. A heritage induction should be provided to all construction personnel. The induction should include information about the historical archaeology and obligations under the project approvals.