



Figure 1.1 View of the Royal Oak Inn (Mean Fiddler) from the subject site

806-812 Windsor Road, Rouse Hill

Statement of Heritage Impact

HDA Submission

December 2025

806-812 Windsor Road, Rouse Hill

Statement of Heritage Impact

HDA Submission

Prepared by
Umwelt (Australia) Pty Limited

On behalf of
MDS Commercial Developments PTY LTD

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Report No.: V.01
Date: December 2025



11.01, 213 Miller Street, North Sydney



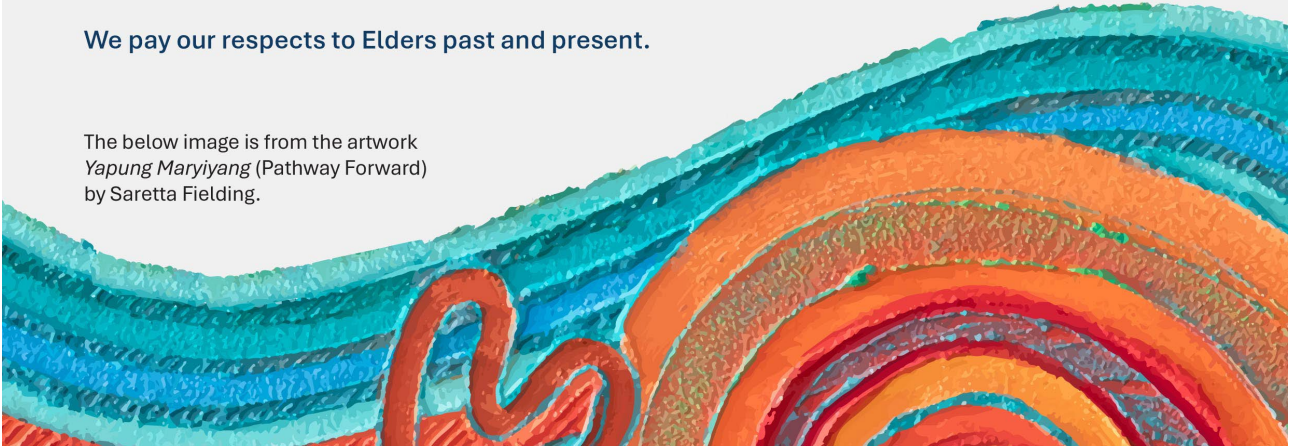
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Acknowledgement of Country

Umwelt acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing values, culture and connection to the land, waters and sky.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

The below image is from the artwork *Yapung Maryiyang* (Pathway Forward) by Saretta Fielding.



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Document Status

Rev No.	Reviewer Name	Date	Approved for Issue Name	Date
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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
BCA	Building Code of Australia (part of the NCC)
CMP	Conservation Management Plan
DCP	Development Control Plan
HCCDC	Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation
ICOMOS	International Committee on Monuments and Sites
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
MHR	Member of the House of Representatives
NCC	National Construction Code
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NSWSA	New South Wales State Archives OEH Office of Environment and Heritage
OEH	Office of Environment and Heritage
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy
SHR	State Heritage Register
SLNSW	State Library of NSW

Contents

Abbreviations	i
1.0 Introduction	5
1.1 Background	5
1.2 Methodology	5
1.3 Site Location	6
1.4 Authorship	7
1.5 Disclaimer	7
2.0 Documentary Evidence	8
2.1 Pre-European History	8
2.2 Development of Rouse Hill and The Royal Oak Inn	8
2.3 History of the Subject Site	10
3.0 Physical Evidence	13
3.1 Setting, Views and Vistas	13
3.2 Landscape	15
3.3 Description of the Buildings on the Subject Site	15
3.4 Description of the Royal Oak Inn (former)	19
4.0 Statutory Heritage Status	20
4.1 Heritage Status	20
4.2 Significance of the Subject Site	21
4.3 Archaeological Potential of the Subject Site	21
4.4 Significance of Items in the Vicinity	22
4.4.1 The Royal Oak Inn	22
4.4.2 The alignment of Windsor Road	22
4.4.3 Queens Arms Inn Archaeological Site	23
4.4.4 The Battle of Vinegar Hill Monument	23
5.0 The Proposal	25
5.1 Documentation Evaluated	27
6.0 Assessment of Heritage Impact	28
6.1 Introduction	28

6.2	Evaluation of the Guidelines of the NSW Heritage Division	28
6.2.1	Matters for Consideration	28
6.2.2	Demolition of a Building or Structure	29
6.2.3	Tree Removal or Replacement	30
6.2.4	Response to Climate Change	30
6.2.5	Works Adjacent to a Heritage Item or within the Heritage Conservation Area (Listed on an LEP)	30
6.3	Heritage Objectives of the Blacktown LEP 2015	32
6.3.1	Heritage Conservation	32
7.0	Recommendations and Conclusion	33
7.1	Recommendations	33
7.2	Conclusion	33
8.0	References	34

Figures

Figure 1.1	View of the Royal Oak Inn (Mean Fiddler) from the subject site	0
Figure 1.1	Location map showing the subject site outlined in red by Umwelt	6
Figure 1.2	Aerial photograph showing the subject site outlined in red by Umwelt	7
Figure 2.1	Plan of part of the Windsor District contained between the Old Richmond Road and the Road from Windsor / J. Musgrave Surveyor 1842.	11
Figure 2.2	1925 plan.	11
Figure 2.3	1955 aerial photograph with the approximate subject site outlined in red	12
Figure 2.4	1970 aerial photograph with the approximate subject site outlined in red	12
Figure 4.1	Extract from Heritage Map - Sheet HER_012.	20
Figure 4.2	Extract from The Hills Heritage Map - Sheet HER_007 showing nearby heritage items	21
Figure 5.1	Ground floor all-stages development plan	25
Figure 5.2	East elevation facing Windsor Road and The Royal Oak	26
Figure 5.3	Proposed Achilles Avenue Elevation	26
Figure 5.4	Rendering of the northerly view to the development from New Road	27

Tables

Table 7.1	Matters for Consideration	28
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Photos

Photo 3-1	North-easterly view from the subject site towards the Royal Oak Inn	13
Photo 3-2	Northerly view from the subject to new apartments at 5 Adonis Avenue	14
Photo 3-3	Northward view from the subject site towards new apartments	14
Photo 3-4	Southerly view from the subject site towards open land and the Metro line	15
Photo 3-5	The front of the house at 812 Windsor Road	16
Photo 3-6	Mid-twentieth century vehicle shed north-west of the house	16
Photo 3-7	A late twentieth-century steel shed south-west of the house at No 812	17
Photo 3-8	A post-war steel-framed shed west of the dam at No. 812	17
Photo 3-9	Interior of the steel-framed shed, west of the dam at No. 812	18
Photo 3-10	A small timber-framed shed west of the larger steel-framed shed	18
Photo 3-11	The front façade of the Royal Oak Inn	19
Photo 4-1	The Royal Oak Inn, Windsor Road, in 2025	22
Photo 4-2	North-west view along Windsor Road	23
Photo 7-1	View from the Royal Oak Inn across Windsor Road to the subject site	31

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

This Statement of Heritage Impact has been prepared for MDS Commercial Developments PTY LTD to accompany State Significant Development Application number SSD-82943710 for a mixed-use residential development with infill affordable housing at 806-812 Windsor Road, Rouse Hill (subject site). The subject site is 4 hectares covering the remains of two hobby farm allotments. The land is largely cleared, grassed and is now overgrown. Site improvements include 1960s house and various sheds that were built in the post-war decades.

The application seeks consent for the demolition of the existing structures on the site, construction and dedication of roads and infrastructure works, and subdivision creating five lots and the development of three residential apartment buildings (including affordable housing) of up to eight habitable storeys with servicing areas and parking contained within the building's basement across three of the proposed new lots. A publicly accessible landscaped link is also proposed for the frontage along Windsor Road. Details of the development proposal have been prepared by FUSE Architects.

The subject site is not listed as an item of local heritage significance, however it is across Windsor Road from the Royal Oak Inn (now called the Mean Fiddler), which is a State heritage item.

This Statement of Heritage Impact assesses the impact of the development on the Royal Oak Inn. The subject site is in the Blacktown City Council area and considers the proposal in terms of the relevant heritage provisions of the *Blacktown Local Environmental Plan 2015* (LEP) as part of this application to the Housing Delivery Authority.

1.2 Methodology

This Statement of Heritage Impact has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines set out in the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013*, known as The Burra Charter, and the New South Wales Heritage Office (now Heritage NSW) publication, NSW Heritage Manual.

The Burra Charter provides definitions for terms used in heritage conservation and proposes conservation processes and principles for the conservation of an item. The terminology used, particularly the words *place*, *cultural significance*, *fabric*, and *conservation*, is as defined in Article 1 of The Burra Charter. The NSW Heritage Manual explains and promotes the standardisation of heritage investigation, assessment and management practices in NSW.

The statement was prepared in accord with the *Guidelines for preparing a statement of heritage impact* prepared for the Department of Planning and Environment in 2023.

This report will call the nearby State heritage item, the 'Royal Oak Inn' to facilitate heritage assessment, while recognising that this significant property has been called the Mean Fiddler for many years.

1.3 Site Location

The subject site at 806-812 Windsor Road, Rouse Hill is located on the western side of Windsor Road, between Schofields Road and Rouse Road. The development site covers two allotments. The southern allotment is No. 806 (identified as Lot 1 in Deposited Plan 1333570 by the NSW Land Registry Services), and the northern allotment is No. 812 (Lot 5 in Deposited Plan 135883).

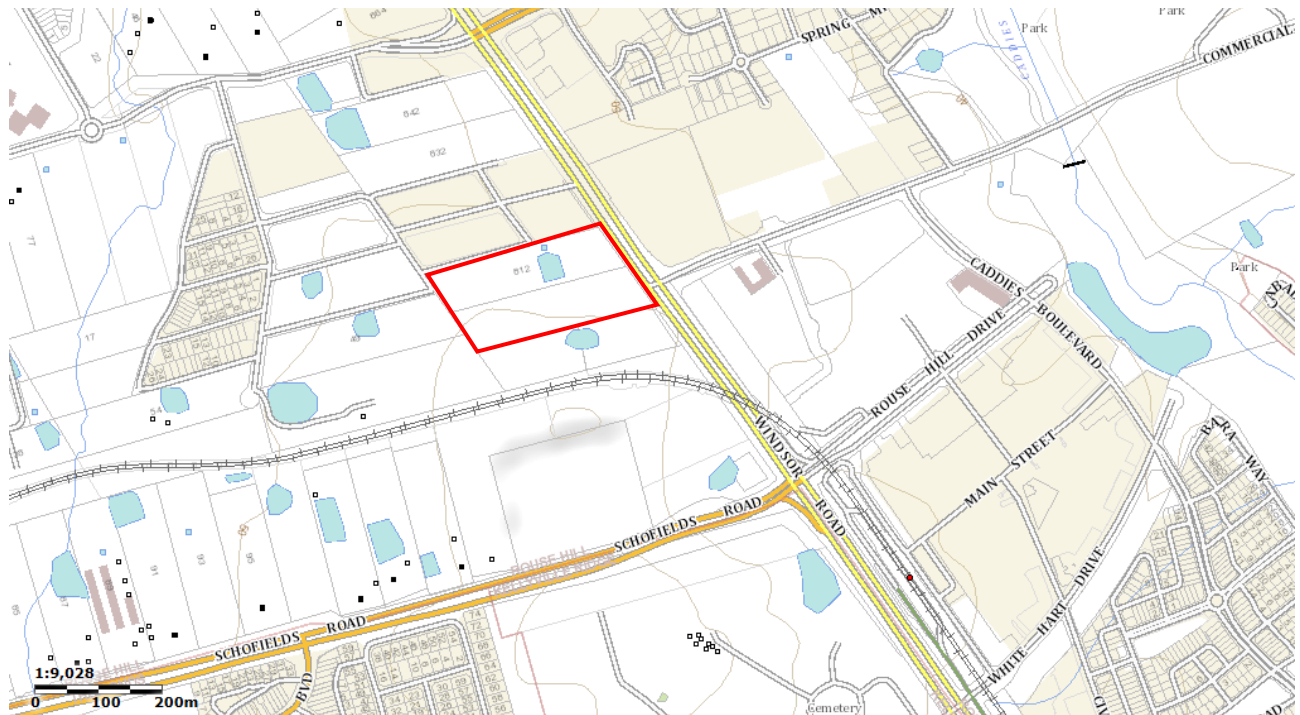


Figure 1.1 Location map showing the subject site outlined in red by Umwelt

Source: NSW Spatial Information Exchange (SIX Maps).



Figure 1.2 Aerial photograph showing the subject site outlined in red by Umwelt

Source: NSW Spatial Information Exchange (SIX Maps).

1.4 Authorship

This report was prepared by Brad Vale, (Principal Heritage Consultant) using research and a history written and archaeological analysis by Talei Holm, Heritage Consultant (Archaeologist).

1.5 Disclaimer

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Statement of Heritage Impact assesses impacts to build heritage only and does not assess impacts to potential Aboriginal cultural heritage, which is managed under standalone legislation.

2.0 Documentary Evidence

2.1 Pre-European History

Rouse Hill lies within Dharug Country, the lands of Dharug people. Dharug are the custodians of this landscape, holding deep cultural, spiritual and historical connections to its land, waterways and skies. Their enduring relationship with Country reflects thousands of years of knowledge, care and responsibility.

The lands of Dharug people encompass the Cumberland Plain in Western Sydney, extending from Wisemans Ferry in the north to Camden in the south. Their Country also reaches westward into the foothills of the Blue Mountains and eastward into what is now known as the Hills District.

Dharug Nation comprises of numerous clans, each associated with and caring for specific areas within this broader territory. These clans maintain strong cultural and familial ties to Country, forming a network of interconnected communities across the region.

Dharug people on the Cumberland Plain relied less on saltwater fish and shellfish than coastal communities, instead consuming small animals, plants and seasonal freshwater fish like mullet and eels (Kohen 1986:77). Tench (1793:230) noted that inland groups depended primarily on small animals and roots, particularly wild yams, which grew abundantly along the Nepean and Hawkesbury Rivers. Other recorded plant foods included berries, Banksia flowers and wild honey.

European invasion brought drastic changes to the life of Dharug people. Early interactions between the colonisers and Dharug people changed from peaceful to violent. Given their proximity to Port Jackson and the expansive land deemed suitable for agriculture, colonisation quickly took root in the region forcing Traditional Owners off Country and disrupting their lifeways.

2.2 Development of Rouse Hill and The Royal Oak Inn

The following section is taken from the State Heritage Register.

Rouse Hill was first referred to be Governor King in relation to the clearing of land at Castle Hill in March 1802. Originally the locality was known as part of Mulgrave Place. It was changed to Upper Nelson when the original Hawkesbury Road was constructed. The convict uprising at the Government Farm at Castle Hill and subsequent events in 1804 and known as the Battle of Vinegar Hill saw the locality become known as Vinegar Hill for a time before being changed to Rouse Hill following a request by local landowner Richard Rouse. Rouse had occupied his grant from 1813, although the official grant was not made until sometime later.

The site containing the former Royal Oak Inn was originally part of a 36 acre grant to Charles Davis on 13 January 1818. (Portion 80 in the Shire of Baulkham Hills, Parish of Castle Hill). It was bounded by Thomas Kelly' s land to the north west, Windsor Road to the south west, Lucy Mileham's land to the south east and the Chain of Ponds (Caddies Creek) on to the north east. Davis arrived as a convict in the colony on the Hillsborough in 1799 and was granted a conditional pardon in 1812.

By 1818, Windsor Road was still a track and Davis held a total of 82 acres of which 46 were cleared and 15 under cultivation. he had 2 horses, 18 head of cattle and employed labourer John Dunn. A house was

located on the property by 1823 at the intersection of Windsor Road and later Commercial Road, since demolished. In 1829 he leased part of his land to William Cross who constructed the White Hart Inn, one of the earliest licensed premises in the colony. A publican's license, the first for the site, was issued to Cross for the inn in 1830. Davis was farming elsewhere on the site (Kelly, 2005).

Convicted London joiner and carpenter James Gough (1790-1876) who arrived on the Earl Spencer in 1813 and got a conditional pardon in 1821 won a private commission for the White Hart Inn between Parramatta and Windsor (Dalkin, 2014, 31).

By 1839 John Booth was the licensee for the White Hart and on 3 March 1841 Davis leased the in site to Booth, a former convict who married Sarah Tighe in 1839, and the licensee for the inn between 1832 and 1834. The inn license changed hands several times before returning to Booth. John Booth bought the Davis land and Inn during 1841 and changed the name to the Queens Arms. He renamed the inn the Royal Oak in 1845. Davis continued to own and farm the surrounding land.

During the 1840s depression Booth found himself in financial trouble and his creditors foreclosed on his property, selling it to George A Sheffield in 1852. Booth died in 1866 and was credited as being the first person to carry mail from Sydney on the Bathurst and Windsor Roads. In 1853 Davis leased an adjoining 110 acres which he worked as Vinegar Hill Farm.

John Seath purchased the Inn in 1858 and had changed the name back to the White Hart Inn by 1865. He had arrived as a convict on the *Minstrel* in 1825 and was assigned as a carpenter to William Cox. He married in 1839 and was included as a member of the Hawkesbury Agricultural Society when it was formed in 1850. He also purchased the license and additional lots adjoining Davis' original holding to the north and east of the property. He ran the inn until his death in 1876. It was during this period that there was an expansion in railways and rail transport which saw a decline in the role of roadside inns for transport and travelling purposes. For example, the rail connection to Windsor was completed in 1864.

Following Seath's death, the property passed to his wife Ann and son John Seath Junior, and the inn license lapsed. It does not appear to have been reactivated in the district for a significant period. By 1900 the inn property appears to have been subdivided and part of it, including the weatherboard house sold to a Mrs E Miles and later Mrs E Verdon remained in the house until her death in 1936. The inn site remained in the property of Ann Seath until her death in 1916 when ownership passed to her sons John Junior and Charles Seath. They transferred the property to Thomas Alfred Paterson of Rouse Hill who consolidated this parcel with his other holdings to the east to create a 98 acre property. Peterson, a contractor and poultry farmer, undertook many changes including upgrading the former inn to become a residence between 1916 and 1925. Work included replacement of the original shingle roof with tiles and repairs to the brickwork.

In 1962 Windsor Road was realigned, widened, straightened and sealed, and appears to have been the impetus for Binns to subdivide the inn site into at least 5 allotments under deposited plan 30916. Lot 4 contained the former inn. All the other allotments had been sold by 1964. In 1966 Emanuel Schembri, a sign writer from Prospect, his wife Catherine and Dominic Schembri purchased the inn site. He leased it to Graham Bridgewater and Kieran Warner who renovated the inn and operated it as the licensed restaurant "The Royal Oak Inn". It was during this period that the first car park was constructed. It was later used as an antique store before being returned to use as a restaurant again. In the late 1970s the property was advertised as the Windsor Wayhouse offering hayrides followed by a meal by the fire.

From 1977 a series of reconfigurations of the former allotments comprising Lots A & B created by Petersen in 1941 have taken place. This has allowed the construction of the rear machinery shed to form the

Vinegar Hill Woolshed in 1985 and a Wedding reception hall to the northeast of the old inn in 1986-87. Some land was lost to road widening in 1977 and there has been further lot reconfiguration since the 1980s. (Kelly:2005).

(Old) Windsor Road had a major upgrade in 2006 when significant works were undertaken along its length (City Plan Heritage, 2013, 20).

2.3 History of the Subject Site

In 1818 the subject site was granted to John Faultless as part of a 600 acre estate. Faultless arrived as a free settler in 1814, received cattle from the Government herd at various times in the 1810s and was recorded as living in Vinegar Hill, now known as Rouse Hill (SRNSW Index to Colonial Secretary's Papers 1788-1825).

While it is suggested that Faultless lived on the property, it is unclear where the original house was located.

To be sold by Private Contract, a Farm containing 600 Acres, situate on the Windsor Road, a considerable part of which have been cleared and is now under cultivation, with suitable Erections thereon. Also, a Herd of Cattle, in good condition. Application to be made to Mr. C. Walker, Parramatta; or, to the proprietor, Mr. John Faultness, on the Premises.

Source: *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 8 February 1822, P.2

The above suggests there was an early dwelling on the property granted to Faultless, however maps from the 1842 and 1925 do not illustrate where this dwelling was located (**Figure 2.1** and **Figure 2.2**) and the property owned by Faultless extended beyond the subject site. By 1955, the site had been cleared of forest vegetation for 200 to 400m of the Windsor Road alignment. Aerial photographs suggest that the property was used for small scale agricultural activities through the twentieth century with the current residential building not being constructed until the 1960s. By 1970 the subject site had been mostly cleared of remnant vegetation (**Figure 2.3** and **Figure 2.4**), leaving forest only in the south-western corner.

The subject site was identified as part of a growth centre release area and was rezoned in 2011 by the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure for urban development. The development precinct has been referred to as 'Area 20' and more recently 'Cudgegong Road Station'. This development precinct was ear marked to deliver approximately 2,500 new dwellings to accommodate 6,400 new residents, and is undergoing rapid transformation with the former rural residential and agricultural activities being replaced by high density residential development. The document identified the subject site as 'Medium Density Residential'.



Figure 2.1 Plan of part of the Windsor District contained between the Old Richmond Road and the Road from Windsor / J. Musgrave Surveyor 1842. Red square indicates approximate location subject site. North is to the left

Source: State Library NSW 2025



Figure 2.2 1925 plan with the approximate boundary of the subject site in red. Map no. 416 zone 8 prepared by Australian Section Imperial General Staff.

Source: State Library of NSW 2025



Figure 2.3 1955 aerial photograph with the approximate subject site outlined in red

Source: Spatial Services, Department of Customer Services



Figure 2.4 1970 aerial photograph with the approximate subject site outlined in red

Source: Spatial Services, Department of Customer Services

3.0 Physical Evidence

3.1 Setting, Views and Vistas

The subject site is 4 ha containing two former hobby farms on land that is close to level, with a gentle rise from south to north. The land is largely open, with exposure to all boundaries, including a very public exposure to Windsor Road along the north-eastern boundary. The site contains a thin distribution of trees, so public views extend far into the site.

Windsor Road runs along the north-east of the subject site. This road has an alignment that is more than two centuries old, and it has been upgraded in many stages so that it is a main road with at least two lanes of traffic in each direction nearby. The road has been landscaped as a boulevard. There is a median strip several hundred metres long in this precinct that has been planted with spotted gums. These gumtrees have grown into their mature form with high crowns of leaves, so the tree trunks provide a filigree sense of screening in views across Windsor Road, but the trees do not entirely block views across the road. The subject site has a view across Windsor Road, through the spotted gums, to the Royal Oak Inn.



Photo 3-1 North-easterly view from the subject site towards the Royal Oak Inn (centre)

The subject site has northerly views towards the two blocks of four-storey apartments at 5 Adonis Avenue, and also towards the four blocks of apartments on the northern side of Vangelis Street, Rouse Hill. These apartments have a lower scale than the seven-to-eight storeys of the proposed apartments.

Views to the west reach the apartment buildings under construction within the vicinity of Tallawong Metro Station.



Photo 3-2 Northerly view from the subject to new apartments at 5 Adonis Avenue



Photo 3-3 Northward view from near the midpoint of the subject site towards new apartments

Views to the south extend into the neighbouring site that is also cleared land. The Metro crosses past the south side of this land between rising over Windsor Road, and terminating at Tallawong.



Photo 3-4 Southerly view from the subject site towards open land and the Metro line

3.2 Landscape

The landform of the subject site has been changed by a small dam excavated near the centre of 812 Windsor Road, and excavation for a level site near the centre of No. 806. This latter site has blue metal covering the flat section, so it may have been the site of a shed that has since been removed.

The subject site is predominantly cleared, leaving several clumps of Cumberland Woodland Forest scattered thinly over the site, but more so in the western half of the site. There are several radiata pines growing near the north-western corner of the site. This species (*Pinus radiata*) was frequently used as a windbreak tree by orchardists since the Federation period. There are several exotic trees growing in the yards around the house at No.812, including several cherry trees, privets and oleanders planted in the late twentieth century.

3.3 Description of the Buildings on the Subject Site

The allotment at 806 Windsor Road contains no structures other than its front boundary fence, which consists of a textured concrete block plinth supporting a fence of steel palisade panels.

The northern allotment at No. 812 contains a house, some gravel drives and many sheds, all built in the late twentieth century. The house is a two-storey project home built around 1965 in a Late Twentieth-Century American Colonial Style. It has red texture brick cladding, timber framed windows with many panes to each sash at the front, in an interpretation of Georgian style, and a roof of several gables clad in red glazed terral cotta tiles. The gable ends are clad in a material resembling weatherboard. See Photo 3-5.



Photo 3-5 The front of the house at 812 Windsor Road



Photo 3-6 Early post-war vehicle shed north-west of the house

There are a couple of sheds for vehicles and hobby farm equipment built north-west of the house. These sheds have a timber frame and are clad with fibre-cement on the walls and corrugated steel on the roofs. The windows are small and timber framed, and with detail typical of the mid twentieth century. See Photo 3-6.



Photo 3-7 A late twentieth-century steel shed south-west of the house at No. 812



Photo 3-8 A post-war steel-framed shed west of the dam at No. 812

The steel-framed shed west of the dam has a light-weight steel frame, including welded trusses of steel rods using a technology that was common around the 1970s. This shed is clad with corrugated steel sheets on the walls and majority of the roof, with bands of alsynite sheeting also on the roof to provide day lighting. The floor is a concrete slab. The nearby steel feed silo suggests that this shed was used for poultry. See Photos 3-8 and 3-9.

Further west there is a small timber framed shed that is clad in plywood. It was likely used for storage. This shed is now derelict. See Photo 3-10.



Photo 3-9 Interior of the steel-framed shed, west of the dam at No. 812



Photo 3-10 A small timber-framed shed west of the larger steel-framed shed

3.4 Description of the Royal Oak Inn (former)

This description section is taken from the State Heritage Register, and used with minor editing to make full sentences.

The Royal Oak Inn is a single storey Georgian period sandstone building, with front verandah and a single pitch tiled hip roof over the whole. The street front verandah has doubled timber Doric columns and a simple scalloped valance. The front six-panel door has glazing in the upper four panels, flanked by side lights and surmounted by a large fanlight. French doors open onto the verandah either side of the central front door with shutters. Four panelled doors sit on the outer side of the French doors. All doors have sandstone headers and thresholds. The front elevation is of dressed sandstone, the side and rear walls are random-coursed stone.

The building has stone cellars below, and sandstock brick extensions to the rear (south-eastern end of inn building) on a lower ground level (originally a kitchen, possible smoke house/ meat preserving room, high roofed open sided area possibly for carriage storage, and large room with a baker's oven, then an attached blacksmith's shop built of timber slab.

Part of the original kitchen wing is incorporated into later additions. The rear verandah is detached from the main roof.

In addition to the former inn, there has been a substantial amount of redevelopment on the subject site, to the back of the building. In summary, works have included a motel development adjacent to the former inn, alterations and additions in 1996, an acoustic wall in 2001 with an addition in 2003, a courtyard bar in 2002 and additions to the Royal Oak Restaurant in 2003.



Photo 3-11 The front façade of the Royal Oak Inn

4.0 Statutory Heritage Status

4.1 Heritage Status

The site at 806-812 Windsor Road is not a heritage item and is not in a conservation area. However, the subject site is in the vicinity of the following heritage items. Of these, the former Royal Oak Inn (now the Mean Fiddler) is the most significant site relationship in heritage terms.

- The Royal Oak Inn is listed on the State Heritage Register (SHR 00698), and on Schedule 5 of *The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2019* (LEP).
- The alignment of Windsor Road from Baulkham Hills to Box Hill is listed on the Hills LEP as heritage item I28. This heritage item borders the subject site.
- The nearest archaeological item of environmental heritage is the site of the former Queens Arms Inn at 1 Resolution Place, listed on The Hills LEP as heritage item A24.
- The subject site is about 600m from the nearest heritage item listed on the Blacktown LEP, namely the modern monument marking the Battle of Vinegar Hill, heritage item I32.

Other heritage items are so distant that the proposed development will not have a bearing on them.



Figure 4.1 Extract from Heritage Map - Sheet HER_012.

Source: Blacktown Local Environmental Plan 2015 The subject site is outlined in blue by Umwelt

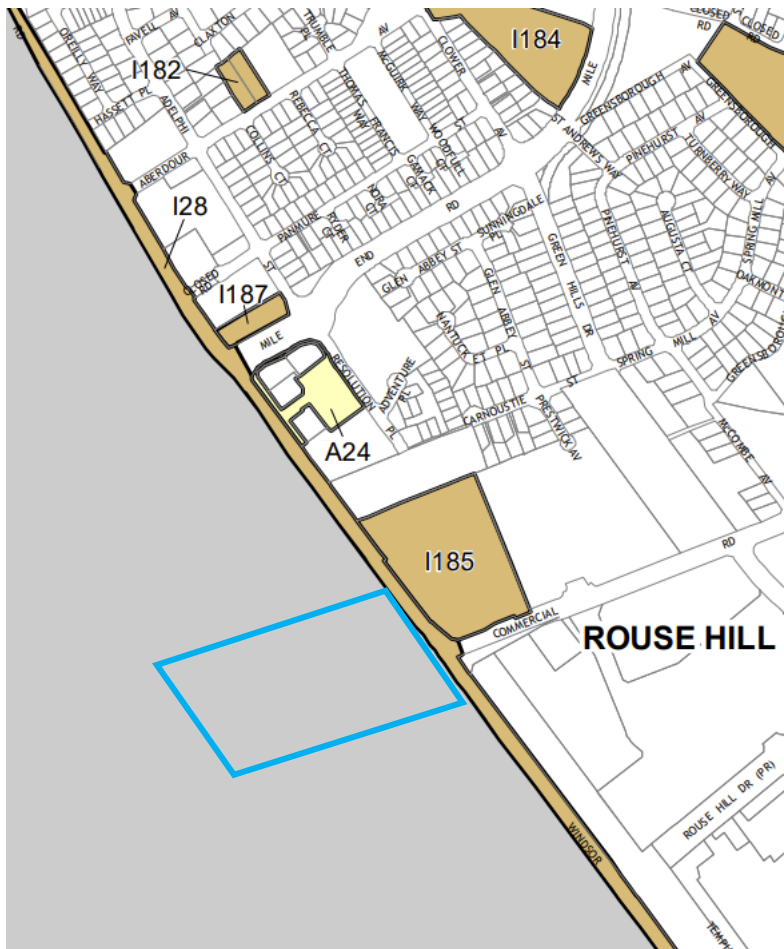


Figure 4.2 Extract from The Hills Heritage Map - Sheet HER_007 showing nearby heritage items

Source: The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2019. The subject site is outlined in blue by Umwelt.

4.2 Significance of the Subject Site

The subject site contains no structures or landscape that would meet the threshold for listing as a local heritage item.

4.3 Archaeological Potential of the Subject Site

The subject site retains low archaeological potential for evidence of early 19th-century occupation and farm structures associated with John Faultless, with the location of any features being unknown. Any surviving subsurface deposits are likely to relate to early rural land use, such as building remnants, refuse pits, or artefacts from agricultural activities prior to modern development.

4.4 Significance of Items in the Vicinity

4.4.1 The Royal Oak Inn

The following Statement of Significance for the Royal Oak Inn (now the Mean Fiddler) is sourced from the State Heritage Register, Heritage Item ID: 5045488.

The former Royal Oak Inn (now the Mean Fiddler Inn) has State significance as an important survivor of an early colonial coaching inn of the 1820-40 period with the main part of the original complex of buildings remaining intact. It is believed to be the site of one of the first inns on the Parramatta to Windsor/Richmond route and one of the earliest licensed premises in the colony, dating to 1830.

It is rare on Windsor Road between Parramatta and Windsor as an inn which remains in use as a "watering hole" or "stop over" for the general public and travellers along the Windsor Road. Its Georgian sandstone frontage and elegant verandah facing Windsor Road is a vivid reminder of the inns once were plentiful along Windsor and Old Windsor Roads.

The heritage impact of the redevelopment is further discussed in section 6.2.5.



Photo 4-1 The Royal Oak Inn, Windsor Road, in 2025

4.4.2 The alignment of Windsor Road

The alignment of Windsor Road from Baulkham Hills to Box Hill is listed on the Hills LEP as heritage item I28. This road has been used for more than two centuries in the historical period. The State Heritage Inventory does not have a statement of significance for this heritage item.

The redevelopment would not affect the original alignment of Windsor Road, and would be set back 10m from the existing alignment of the road.



Photo 4-2 North-west view along Windsor Road. The subject site is on the left

4.4.3 Queens Arms Inn Archaeological Site

The former Queens Arms Inn is an archaeological item of environmental heritage at 1 Resolution Place, Rouse Hill, which is more than 200m away from the subject site. The site is now occupied by a fast food restaurant.

The redevelopment would have no impact on this archaeological item.

4.4.4 The Battle of Vinegar Hill Monument

The modern monument marking the Battle of Vinegar Hill site does not have a listing in the State Heritage Inventory. The monument is made of concrete with bronze plaques. It is located about 600m south of the subject site and is surrounded by a cemetery. The monument is a historical marker and being able to see the gently rolling topography around the monument gives visitors an idea of the topography faced by the rebels and soldiers in the battle.

The redevelopment would have negligible impact on this heritage item because the distant development would allow a continuing appreciation of the local land form seen from Vinegar Hill.



Photo 4-3 View from Vinegar Hill looking over the subject site (centre, in the distance)

5.0 The Proposal

The proposed SSD development, designed by FUSE Architects seeks approval to increase the stock of housing, including affordable house, near a metro station. Includes the following:

- Demolition of the house, sheds and other site improvements across the site.
- Excavation of the site for the basement carparking of up to three levels
- Construction of three building ranging in height from 7 to 8 storeys comprising residential uses.

The development of 700 apartments (with in-fill affordable housing units) with residential amenities and services.

The development is under the 30.2m height plane.



Figure 5.1 Ground floor all-stages development plan

Source: FUSE Architects



Figure 5.2 East elevation facing Windsor Road and The Royal Oak

Source: FUSE Architects. Not to scale



Figure 5.3 Proposed Achilles Avenue Elevation

Source: FUSE Architects



Figure 5.4 Rendering of the northerly view to the development from New Road

Source: FUSE Architects

5.1 Documentation Evaluated

The following drawings, prepared by FUSE Architects, were reviewed as part of the preparation of this report:

- Drawings HAD 001 to HAD 903 Revision P6 by FUSE Architecture dated 21 October 2025 by FUSE Architecture
- 806 - 812 Windsor Road, Rouse Hill Visual Impact Analysis, dated October 2025 by FUSE Architecture
- 806 - 812 Windsor Road, Rouse Hill Design Verification Report, dated October 2025 by FUSE Architecture.

6.0 Assessment of Heritage Impact

6.1 Introduction

This Statement of Heritage Impact has been prepared in response to the impact assessment criteria in the following documents: the *Blacktown Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2015* and the quoted questions are taken from the NSW Department of Planning and Environment, *Guidelines for preparing a statement of heritage impact, 2023*. The standard format has been adapted to suit the circumstances of this application.

6.2 Evaluation of the Guidelines of the NSW Heritage Division

6.2.1 Matters for Consideration

The following heritage aspects are listed from *Guidelines for preparing a statement of heritage impact* to enable an assessment of the impacts of the proposed work on the heritage significance of the heritage item.

Table 7.1 Matters for Consideration

Heritage Matter	Heritage Impact of the Activity
Fabric and spatial arrangements	Not applicable. The subject site contains no buildings, other structures or landscape with heritage significance.
Setting, views and vistas	The development would change the setting of, and views from the Royal Oak Inn by replacing an agricultural and very low-density dwelling land use with apartments of seven-to-eight storeys. This development would be screened as best can be done by having a 10m setback with deep soil planting for trees along Windsor Road. The median strip of this stretch of Windsor Road would continue to be planted with mature spotted gums.
Landscape	Not applicable. The subject site contains no landscape with heritage significance. The subject site would be planted with many more trees than grow on it at present, but the apartments proposed would still present a contrast in scale with the Royal Oak Inn, rising above the nearby landscape for many years to come.
Use	The existing use of the subject site presents a potential interpretation of an early agricultural use for the land surrounding the Royal Oak Inn. The change from this low-density living / agricultural use to high density dwellings will have some adverse impact on the setting of the Royal Oak Inn, but ultimately would have little adverse impact on the heritage significance of the Royal Oak Inn.
Demolition	No adverse heritage impact. The structures to be demolished have no heritage significance.

Heritage Matter	Heritage Impact of the Activity
Curtilage	Not applicable. No change is proposed to the defined curtilage of the Royal Oak Inn, nor would there be change within the curtilage.
Aboriginal cultural heritage	Not assessed within this report.
Moveable heritage	Not applicable.
Historical archaeology	The subject site retains low archaeological potential for evidence of early 19th-century occupation and farm structures associated with John Faultless. Any surviving subsurface deposits are likely to relate to early rural land use, including agriculture.
Natural heritage	Natural heritage is not assessed in this report, but it is clear that the subject site has been extensively cleared, leaving only a tiny minority of remnant forest trees.
Conservation areas	Not applicable.
Cumulative impacts	The SSD application is part of the transformation of the precincts around Tallawong and Rouse Hill Metro Stations for medium to high density housing. The subject development follows the precedent of complying development at many nearby sites.
The conservation management plan	Not applicable. A CMP is not required or appropriate for the subject site.

6.2.2 Demolition of a Building or Structure

- *If demolition is proposed, why is it necessary?*
- *Have options for retention and adaptive re-use been explored? If yes, set out why these options have been discarded?*
- *Has technical advice for demolition been obtained?*
- *Identify and include advice about how significant elements, if removed by the proposal, will be salvaged and reused.*

Comment:

Demolition is limited to the subject site, which contains a house and several sheds from the late twentieth century that have no heritage significance. The removal of these structures will have no heritage impact on the Royal Oak Inn.

6.2.3 Tree Removal or Replacement

- *Does the tree contribute to the heritage significance of the item or landscape?*
- *Why is the tree being removed?*
- *Has the advice of a qualified arborist, tree surgeon or horticultural specialist been sought and implemented?*
- *Is the methodology for tree removal adequately understood? Will the proposed works impact on the significance of the heritage item?*
- *Is the tree being replaced? Where will it be replaced and with what species? Why?*

Comment:

The trees on the site do not form part of a significant landscape. The removal of these trees will not have an adverse impact on the heritage resource of Blacktown LGA. There are three trees growing by the front boundary of the subject site, close to the Royal Oak Inn. While these trees might be removed during the works, they would be replaced by a great many more trees in the same location and many other places across the subject site.

6.2.4 Response to Climate Change

- *Are the proposed works in response to a threat posed to the heritage item from a changing climate? Will the proposed works impact on the significance of the heritage item?*
- *Are the proposed works intended to improve the energy efficiency of the heritage item? If yes, will the proposed works impact the way in which the heritage item was designed to function climatically?*
- *Will the proposed energy efficiency upgrade work impact on the significance of the heritage item? If yes, how have the impacts of the proposed works been minimised?*

Comment

The proposed development is a response to the construction of the Sydney Metro, which aims to provide affordable housing for many people in which low carbon transport is readily available. In this way, the development is connected to concern about climate change.

6.2.5 Works Adjacent to a Heritage Item or within the Heritage Conservation Area (Listed on an LEP)

- *Will the proposed works affect the heritage significance of the adjacent heritage item or the heritage conservation area?*
- *Will the proposed works affect views to, and from, the heritage item? If yes, how will the impact be mitigated?*
- *Will the proposed works impact on the integrity or the streetscape of the heritage conservation area?*

Comment

The proposed redevelopment of the subject site would change a landscape that is across Windsor Road from the Royal Oak Inn. This landscape currently offers an approximation of the early setting of the inn with land that was cleared for grazing. The current land use allows for expansive views from the Royal Oak Inn heading across Windsor Road to the west. This view is filtered through the mature spotted gums growing in the median strip of the road.

The proposed apartments would rise to eight storeys and be located about 50m south-west of the Royal Oak Inn. The apartments would be several times taller than the Royal Oak Inn, but they would be set further back from the road than the inn, and would be screened by a 10m wide landscape buffer, unlike the inn's exposed relationship to Windsor Road. The proposed apartments would be close to twice the height of the adjacent block of apartments to the north.

The apartment buildings have been designed to use muted colours, such as off-white, grey and dark brown, so that the apartment buildings will not assert themselves unduly in views from the Royal Oak Inn. The facades of the apartment buildings have been articulated with a visually divisible massing of recessed voids, groups of projecting balconies and concentrations of differing colours. These design decisions help to break up the sense of scale and to minimise the sense of scale of the development.



Photo 6-1 View from the Royal Oak Inn across Windsor Road to the subject site

6.3 Heritage Objectives of the Blacktown LEP 2015

The proposed development is acceptable, from a heritage perspective, for the following reasons:

- Retains all heritage items.
- Views towards the Royal Oak Inn will be unaffected. Views from the Royal Oak Inn will change with the construction of the apartments, but the impact of this change of setting can be sustained in the heritage significance of the heritage item.
- The Royal Oak Inn will continue to be appreciated as a Georgian period hotel.

The proposal is largely consistent with the relevant heritage objectives of the *Blacktown LEP 2015*, which are:

6.3.1 Heritage Conservation

(1) Objectives

The objectives of this clause are as follows:

(a) to conserve the environmental heritage of Blacktown,

(b) to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views,

7.0 Recommendations and Conclusion

7.1 Recommendations

R1 - In the unlikely event that unexpected historical (non-Aboriginal) archaeological remains are discovered during works, works must cease in the vicinity of the remains and be managed in accordance with Section 146 of the *Heritage Act 1977*.

7.2 Conclusion

The subject site at 806-812 Windsor Road, Rouse Hill has low archaeological potential, no structures with heritage significance, and has no statutory heritage controls. However, the subject site is across Windsor Road from the State listed Royal Oak Inn, which is in The Hills LGA.

The proposed redevelopment of the subject site for apartment buildings in three stages, will change the setting of the Royal Oak Inn. This change to the setting of the heritage item will have a minor and sustainable impact on its heritage significance.

The design of the redevelopment is considered and uses colour and articulation in the facades to produce a design that minimises its visual assertiveness, and in doing so makes the most appropriate detail that a building of the required mass can project in the setting of the nearby heritage item.

The proposed redevelopment is largely consistent with the heritage objectives of the *Blacktown LEP 2015*. The redevelopment presents an appropriate design in heritage terms responding to the planning controls of the Cudgegong Road Station Area.

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8.0 References

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