

13 June 2025

Fiona Sweeting
Practice Administrator
PTI Architecture
fiona@ptiarch.com.au

Dear Fiona,

Re: Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment – 16 – 20 Middle Harbour Road, Lindfield

Artefact Heritage and Environment Pty Ltd (Artefact Heritage) have been engaged by PTI Architecture to prepare an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA) under the requirements of a State Significant Development application (SSD-83431958) and Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARS) for residential development with infill affordable housing which were issued on 5 May 2025 for 16-20 Middle Harbour Road, Lindfield.

This report outlines the results of an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment which meets the requirements of the *Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales* (Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water [DECCW] 2010a), hereafter the Due Diligence Code of Practice, and includes recommendations as to whether further archaeological investigation may be required.

This report has been prepared by Katherine Douglas (Graduate Heritage Consultant, Artefact Heritage) and with management input and review provided by Josh Symons (Technical Executive, Artefact Heritage) and Dr Samantha Higgs (Archaeology Team Leader/Principal, Artefact Heritage).

If you have any queries regarding this Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely



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1.0 PROJECT INFORMATION

Artefact Heritage and Environment (Artefact Heritage) have been engaged by PTI Architecture on behalf of Mr Ming Hang yang & Mr John Wu to prepare an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA) for the proposed development at 16-20 Middle Harbour Road, Lindfield.

PTI Architecture (the proponent) has applied for the project to be assessed as State Significant Development (SSD) under Division 4.7 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (SSD83431958). The Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements have been issued for the project and including the following provisions for Aboriginal Heritage

SEAR	Supporting Documentation
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21. Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

- Where there is known, or reasonably likely, to be Aboriginal cultural heritage on or near the site demonstrate that impacts have been adequately investigated and assessed by:
 - Identifying that an appropriate prior planning process has already considered these impacts, e.g. a rezoning or development application, or
 - Providing an initial assessment of the potential impacts.
 - If potential impacts are significant, provide an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) which:
 - Identifies, describes and assesses any impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage sites or values associated with the site.
 - Is prepared in accordance with relevant guidelines.
- If required:
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report

This assessment follows the standards for initial assessment of potential impacts to Aboriginal heritage set out in the *Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales* (Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water [DECCW] 2010; Henceforth the Due Diligence Code of Practice).

Undertaking Due Diligence involves reasonable and practical steps to:

1. Identify whether or not Aboriginal objects are or are likely to be, present in an area
2. Determine whether or not their activities are likely to harm Aboriginal objects (if present)
3. Determine whether further assessment is required

1.1 Description of the study area

The study area (Figure 1) consists of the following properties

- 16-20 Middle Harbour Road, Lindfield (Lot 1 DP569232),
- 18 – 20 Middle Harbour Road, Lindfield Lot 10 DP5374, Lot 1 DP983946, Lot 11 DP5374).

The study area is bounded by residential properties on all fronts. At its closest point Lindfield train station is approximately 270 metres northwest of the study area.

The study area measures 3,811 m² in size and is situated in the Ku-ring-gai Local Government Area (LGA) and within the boundaries of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC), in the Parish of Gordon within the County of Cumberland.

1.2 Proposed works

Works proposed at 16-20 Middle Harbour Road involve the clearance of existing structures and the construction of 8 levels of apartments (totalling 98 apartments) with 3 basement levels and shared communal spaces.

Figure 1: Study area



2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) search

NOTE: The location of Aboriginal sites is considered culturally sensitive information. It is advised that this information, including the AHIMS data appearing on the heritage map for the proposal be removed from this report if it is to enter the public domain.

An extensive search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) was undertaken on 29 May 2025 to determine the location of Aboriginal sites in relation to the current study area. The search area was defined as the study area and the region surrounding it, to inform the characterisation of the local archaeological context 6km x6km. The AHIMS search parameters were as follows:

GDA 1994 MGA 56	
Buffer	0 m
Number of sites	96
Client Service ID	

A total of 93 registered Aboriginal sites are recorded within the search area. There are no AHIMS registered site located within the study area. The AHIMS database records sites using a list of twenty standard site features, of which a combination of 9 were found within the extensive search (OEH, 2012) summarise in Table 1, the location of site features is shown in Figure 2.

The closest AHIMS registered Aboriginal site to the study area is AHIMS ID 45-6-2911, Cocupara shelter 2, which is described as Art (Pigment or Engraved), and is approximately 1.2km west of the study area.

Registered sites on the AHIMS database in the search are concentrated in proximity to and along the waterways of Gordon Creek and Blue Gum Creek off the Lane Cove River, where retained bushland and minimal historical disturbance has occurred, therefore preserving Aboriginal sites. This is also reflective of the Beth White and Jo McDonald Stream order predictive model for the Cumberland Plain (White and McDonald 2010) that predicted artefacts are in higher frequencies within 100m of water. The highest percentage of site types is 'Shell, Artefact' which makes up for 38.5 percent of the AHIMS sites within the search area.

Two of the sites were deemed 'Not a Site' (AHIMS ID 45-5-2584 and AHIMS ID 45-6-2681) which were originally recorded as 'shell; artefact' and 'PAD' respectively. These sites will be included in the following discussion as the original recording as a "Shell, Artefact" midden site informs broader understanding of site patterning and previous predictions of within what landforms sites are likely to be present.

Table 1: Frequency of site features in AHIMS search results

Site Features	Frequency	Percentage
Grinding Groove	4	4.2
Shell, Artefact, Art (Pigment or Engraved)	8	8.3
Shell, Artefact	37	38.5

Site Features	Frequency	Percentage
Shell	2	2.1
Grinding Groove, Art (Pigment or Engraved)	2	2.1
Art (Pigment or Engraved)	18	18.8
Potential Archaeological Deposit (PAD)	12	12.5
Habitation Structure	1	1.0
Artefact	12	12.5
TOTAL	96	100

Figure 2: AHIMS extensive search (yellow arrow points to location of study area)

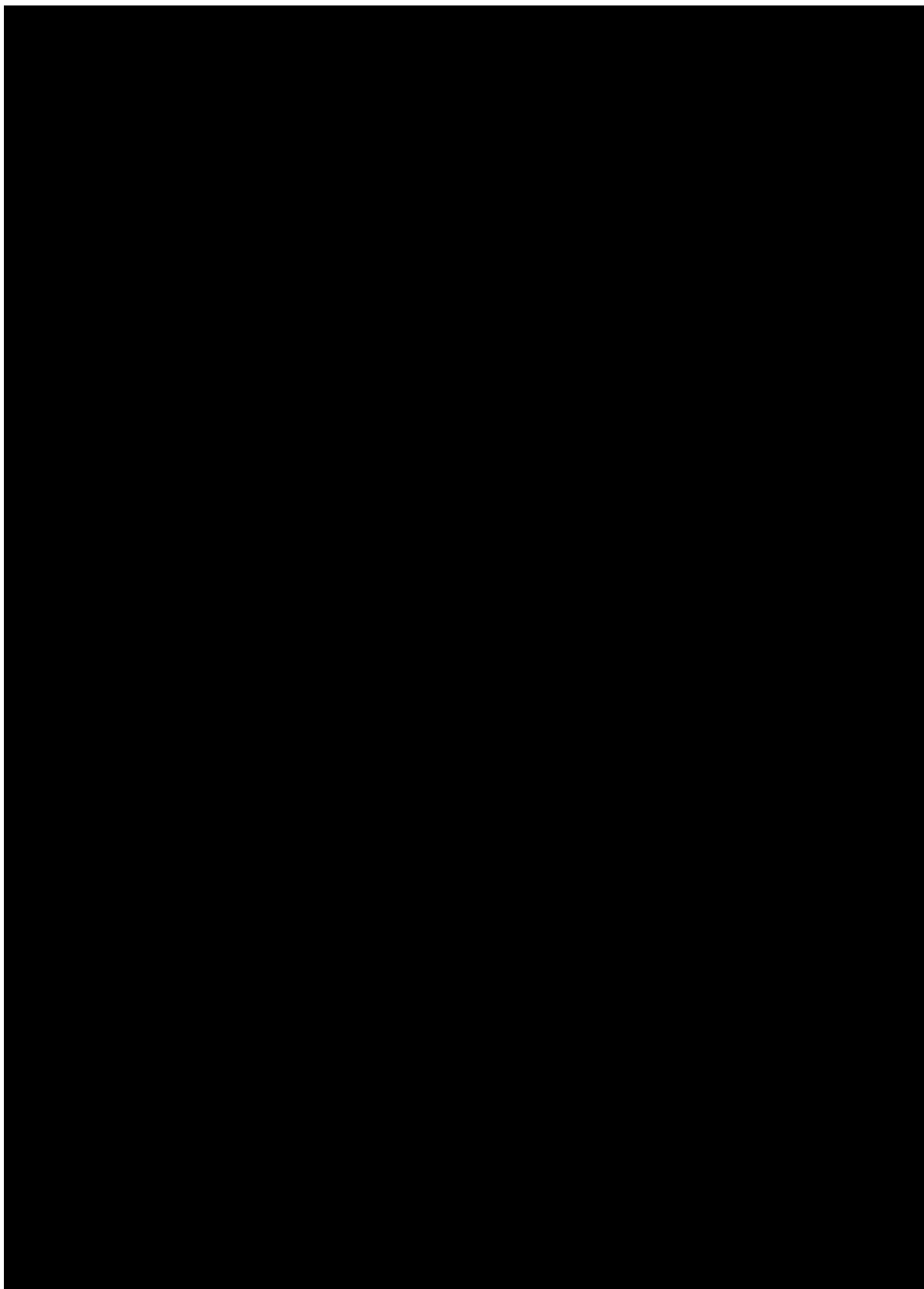
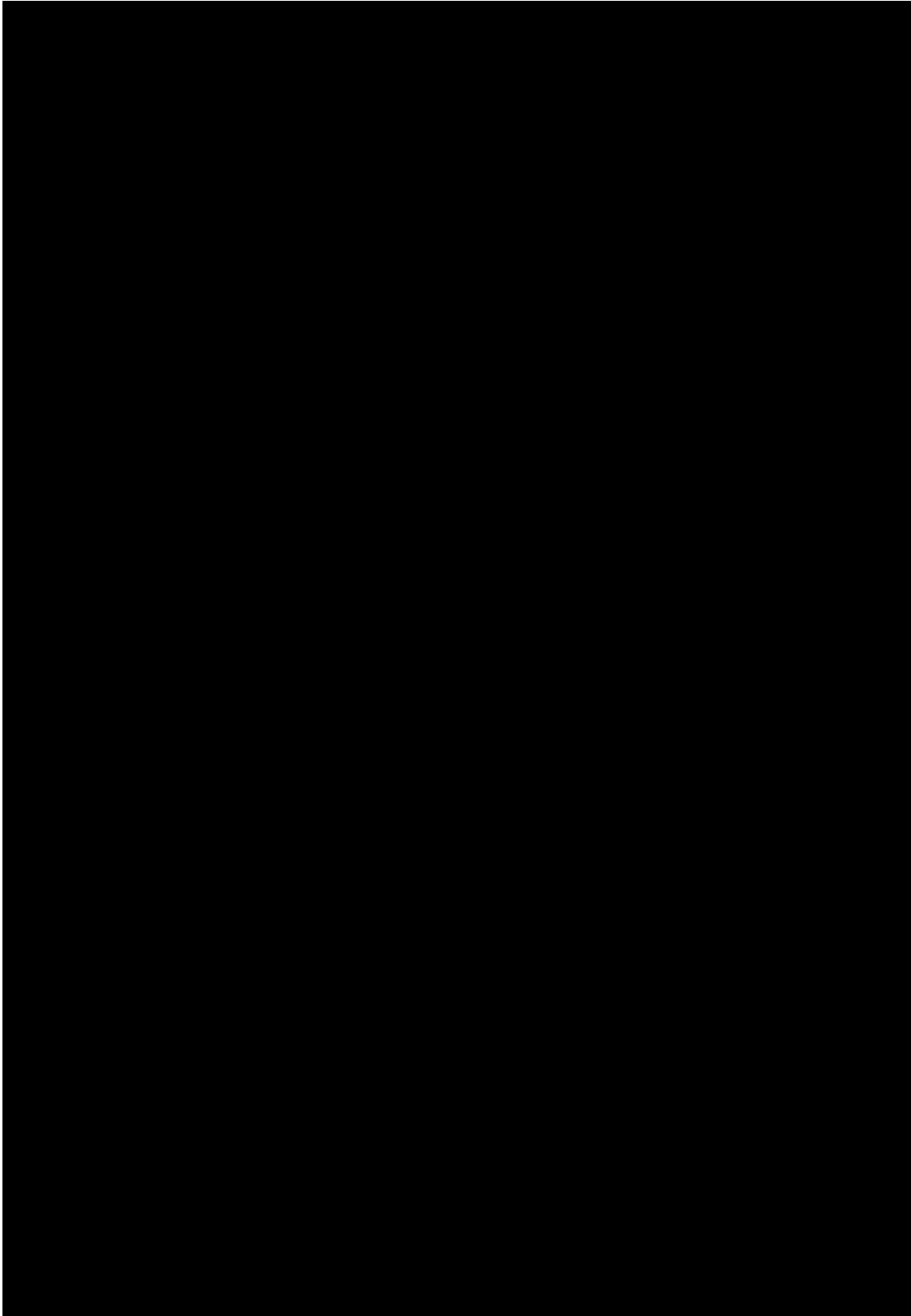


Figure 3: AHIMS detailed search



2.2 Environmental Context

The following summary of the environmental context of the study area provides an overview of resources and landforms relevant to the study area. Environmental information is also useful when assessing whether archaeological remains of Aboriginal activities are likely to be present.

2.2.1 Hydrology and topography

The study area is located on a midslope landform context, decreasing in elevation from southwest to northeast towards Gordon Creek (Figure 5). Gordon Creek is located approximately 260 m northeast of the study area.

2.2.2 Soils and geology

The study area is mapped by the Soil Conservation Service of NSW as located on the Glenorie soil landscape (DCCEE 2024, Figure 4). Glenorie soils are “moderately deep (70-150cm)” on upper slopes and have a “high soil erosion hazard” (Chapman & Murphy 1989). This soil landscape is mapped by the Geological Survey of New South Wales as located on Ashfield shale, part of the Wianamatta Group (Colquhoun et al. 2024). Shale geology is not regularly associated with stone tool manufacture. Underlying shale geology is typically not associated with rock shelters nor pigment or engraved art sites.

2.2.3 Historical land disturbance

Historical aerial imagery indicates that there have been the following prior periods of ground disturbance within the study area:

- 1930-1951: Residential development is apparent on the property prior to 1930 (Figure 6 and Figure 7).
- 1951 – 1961: Structures visible to the north of the major residences on 16 and 18 harbour drive (Figure 7 and Figure 8)
- 1961 – 1978: Tennis courts visible to the north of 16 Harbour drive and various smaller structures present in the backyard (Figure 8 and Figure 9)
- 1978-1998: Additional structures added to both properties including the pool and annex building on 18-20 harbour drive. (Figure 9 and Figure 10)
- 1998 – Present: Additional landscaping across the lots. The major structures have remained the same across the properties.

The historical aerial imagery indicates that land clearing within the study area has been extensive. Ground disturbance through the construction of residential structures, annexes and swimming pools have impacted natural soil profiles and any Aboriginal objects which may have originally been present.

Figure 4: Study area soil landscapes

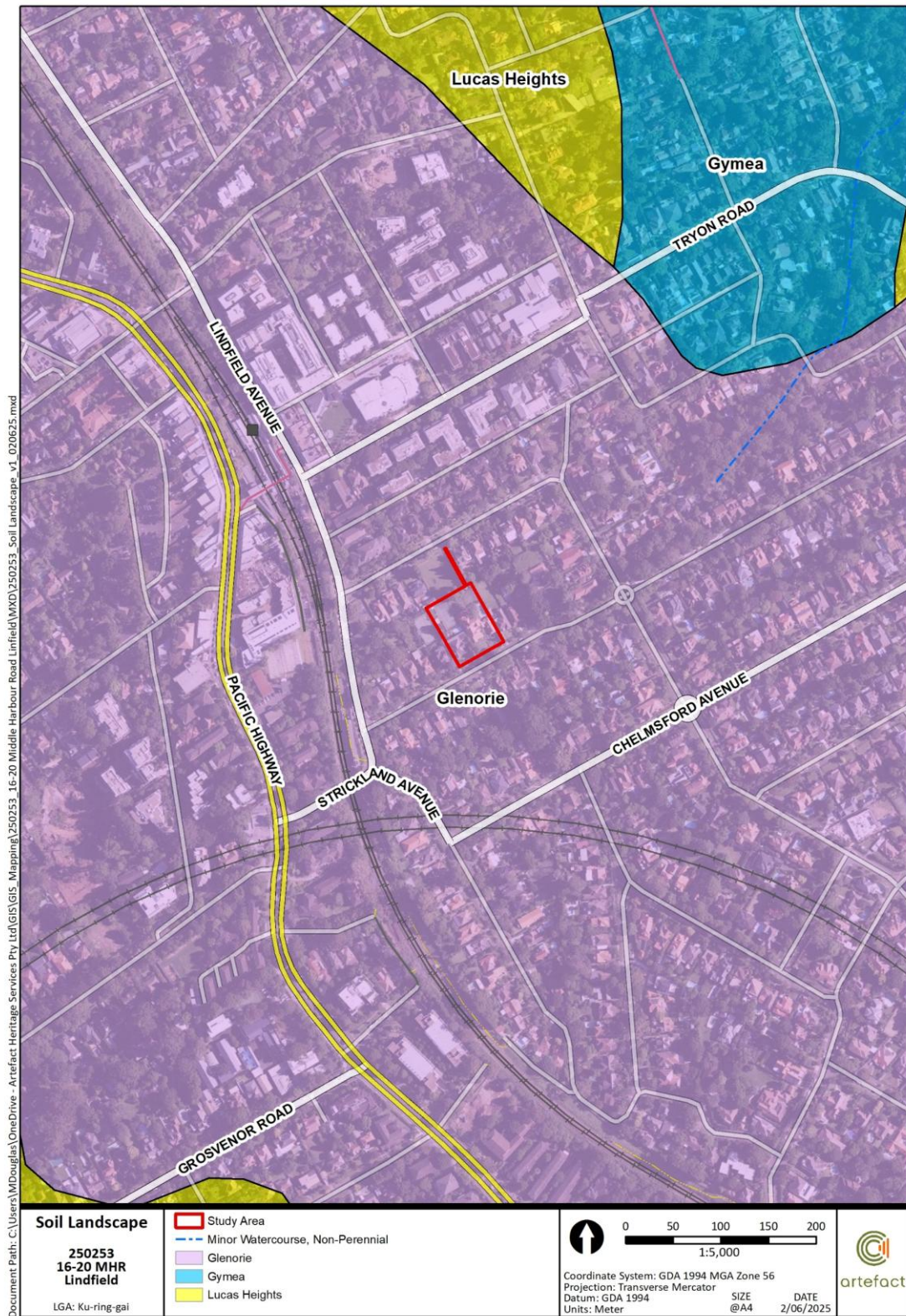


Figure 5: Study area hydrology and topography

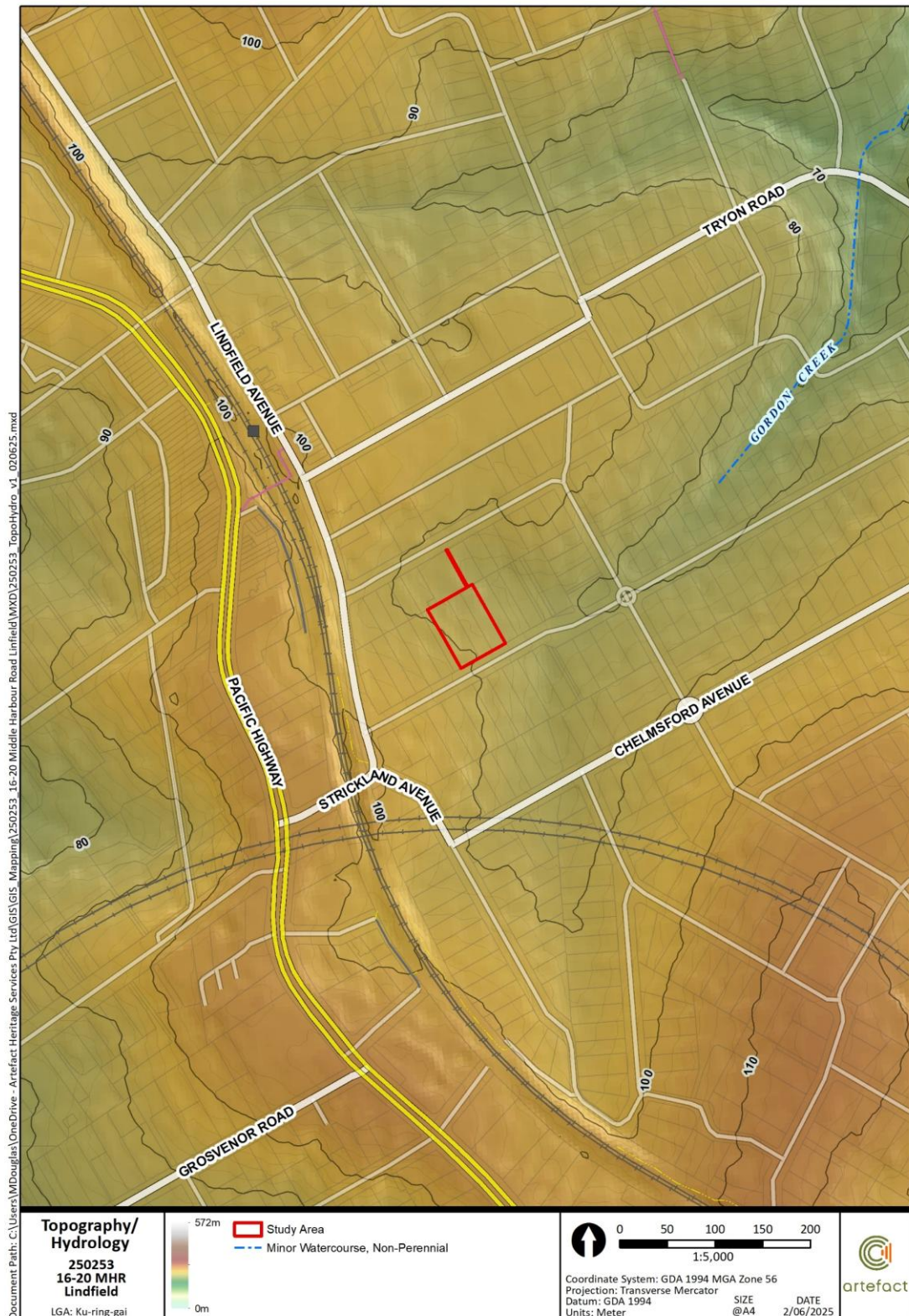


Figure 6: Historic aerial imagery 1930

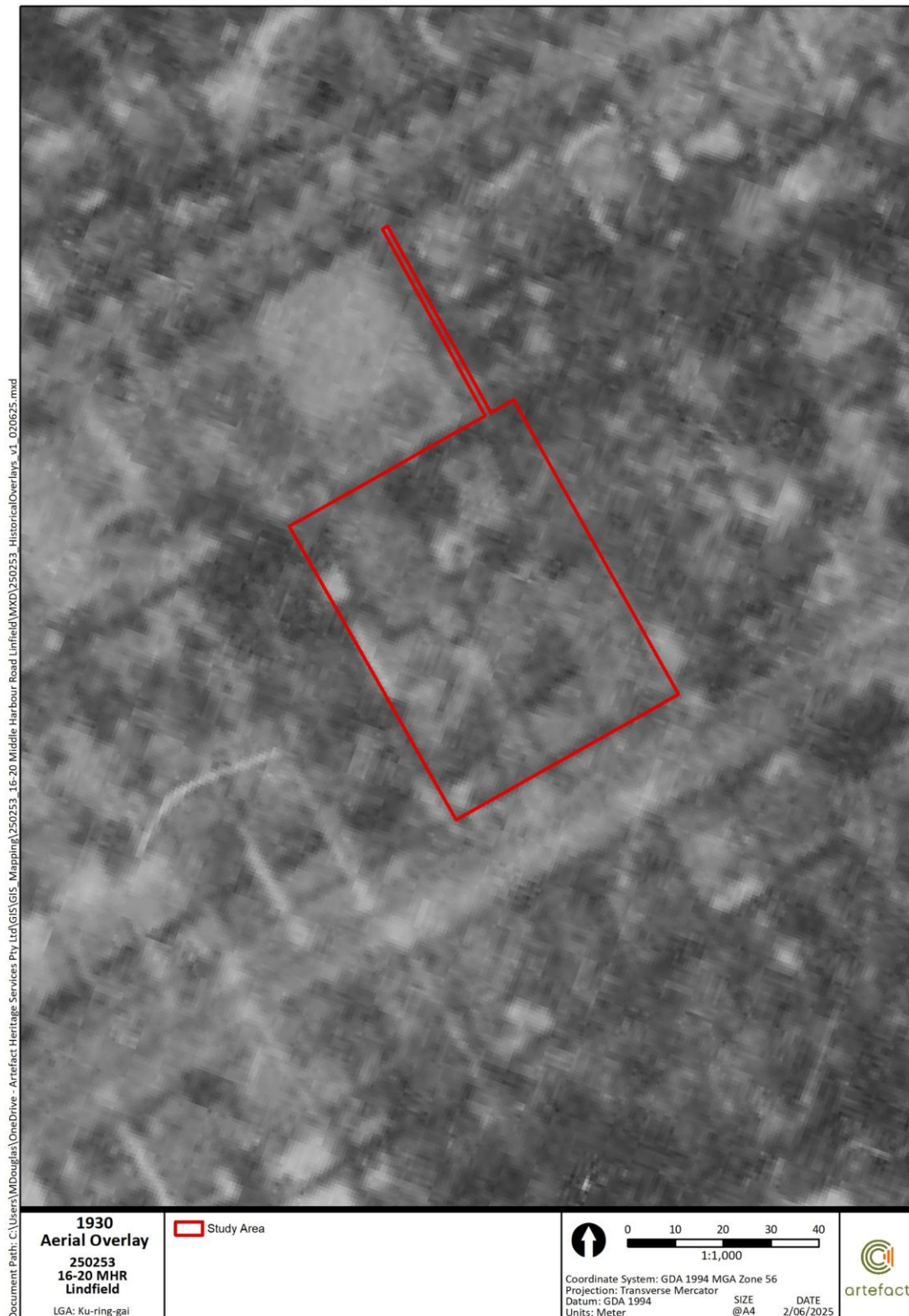


Figure 7: Historic aerial imagery 1951



Figure 8: Historic aerial imagery 1961

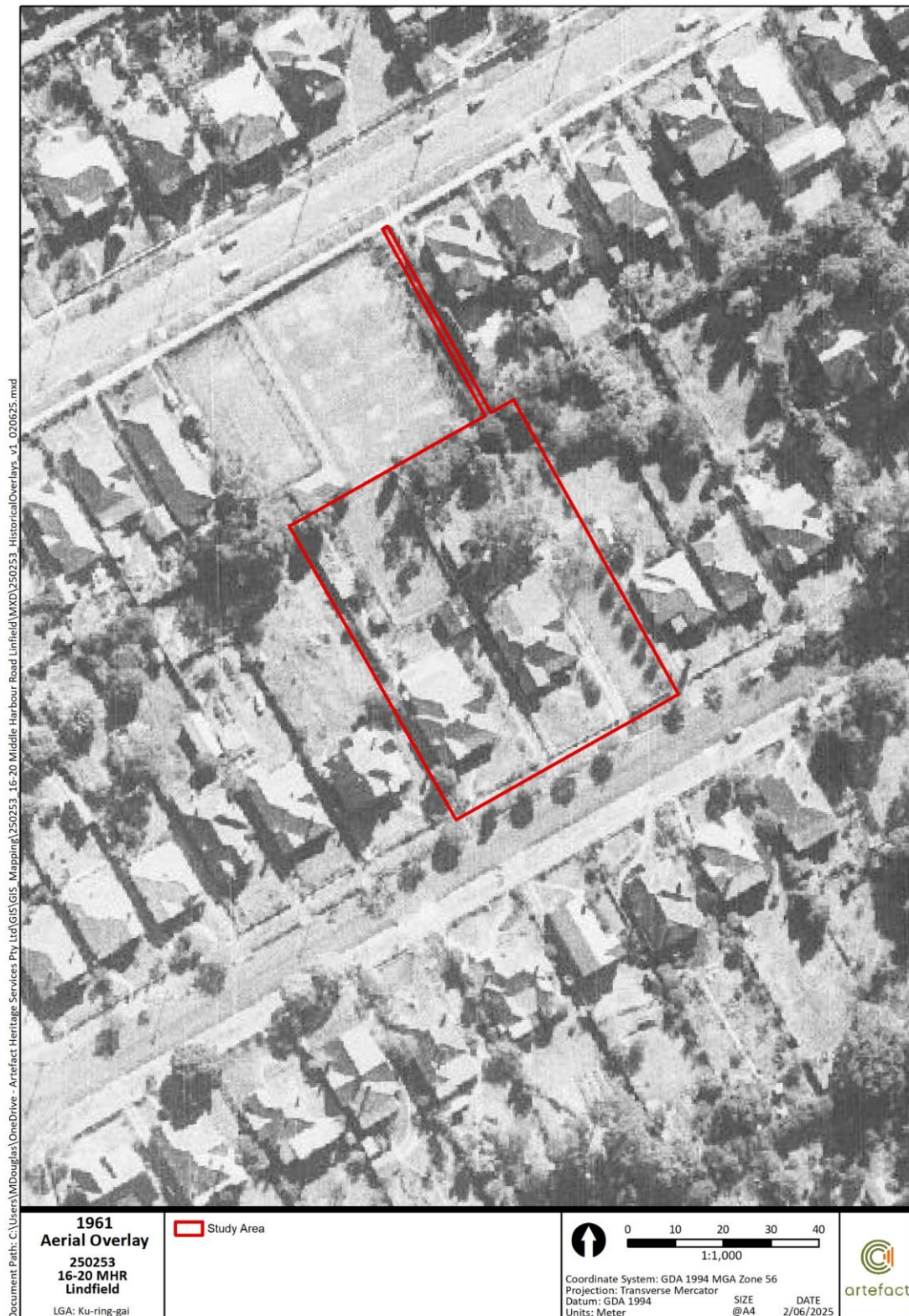


Figure 9: Historic aerial imagery 1978



Figure 10: Historic aerial imagery 1998



2.3 Previous assessments, Approvals and Permits

Several archaeological investigations have previously been conducted near the study area. Investigated areas suggest that there is widespread historical land disturbance in the Lindfield-Chatswood region which greatly reduces the likelihood of Aboriginal objects being present. A summary of relevant archaeological investigations is provided below in Table 2.

Table 2: Previous archaeological studies, approvals and permits

Author, title of study/ Permit ID	Summary
240362 59-63 Trafalgar Avenue and 1a-b Valley Road, Lindfield.	Artefact completed a Due Diligence report for 59-63 Trafalgar Avenue and 1a-b Valley Road Lindfield. The site is approximately 150 metres east of the study area within the same Glenorie soil landscape. Following desktop research and a site visit it was assessed that due to historic land disturbance the area did not contain and was not likely to contain any Aboriginal objects, no further investigation of the study area was recommended
240504 & 240529 Aqualand Prestige ACHAR	Artefact completed an Archaeological Technical Report for two sites in Roseville. Site A was located at 4 Larkin Street, 1, 3 & 5 Pockley Avenue, Roseville. Site B was located at 2-16 Pockley Avenue, Roseville. Both sites are located approximately 1 km southeast of the study area. Following desktop research, and consultation Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council during the site survey, it was assessed that although that study area had rich Aboriginal heritage, historical ground disturbance through residential construction and associated landform modification have affected the preservation of Aboriginal objects. No Aboriginal objects were identified during the survey. The report concluded that study area contained low potential for Aboriginal objects and a low likelihood of impact on Aboriginal objects during construction due to historical disturbance
Total Earth Care, 2007. 126 Greville Street, Chatswood West: Aboriginal Heritage and Archaeological Assessment. Report prepared for EDAW Pty Ltd.	Total Earth Care performed an Aboriginal archaeological assessment of a property located at 126 Greville Street, Chatswood West, which is situated approximately 2.1 kilometres south of the study area. This site was located on the Chatswood Ridge near drainage lines which channel into Lane Cove River. Despite being located next to Blue Gum Creek, a tributary of Lane Cover River, Total Earth Care did not identify any Aboriginal objects or areas of archaeological potential within the site (Total Earth Care 2007). Ultimately, Total Earth Care concluded that Aboriginal activity within this region was more likely concentrated around major, permanent watercourses like the Lane Cove River rather than smaller, ephemeral water sources.
Artefact, 2018. Chatswood Public School: Aboriginal Heritage Due Diligence Assessment. Report prepared for TSA	A Due Diligence Assessment was previously prepared by Artefact ahead of proposed expansions to Chatswood Public School, which is located 2.55 kilometres south of the present study area. A desktop investigation conducted for the assessment found that no AHIMS sites were located within 1km of Chatswood Public School and were largely centred around tributaries of Lane Cover River and rock shelters. An overall low number of artefact scatters and open camp sites was noted

Author, title of study/ Permit ID	Summary
Management on behalf of the NSW Department of Education.	within the search area, which was suggested to be due to the high levels of historical development which have occurred in the Chatswood area. The highly disturbed nature was confirmed during the site inspection carried out for the assessment, which failed to identify an Aboriginal objects or sites within the school area (Artefact Heritage 2018). Ultimately, the site was viewed as unlikely to possess Aboriginal objects or archaeological potential due to this disturbance.
Artefact, 2023, 763-769 Pacific Highway, Chatswood: Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report. Report prepared for Perpetual Corporate Trust Limited as custodian for Novus Trusco 1 as trustee for Albert Avenue Sub Trust.	Artefact completed an Aboriginal Survey Report and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report for 763-769 Pacific Highway, Chatswood, approximately 2.4km south of the study area. The report found that the previous constructions in that study area had created significant historical ground disturbance which have negatively impacted on the preservation of Aboriginal objects. The study additionally found that most Aboriginal sites within the region of that study area occur in proximity to waterways and where sandstone outcrops or overhangs are present. The site survey undertaken for the reports confirmed that the study area had experienced high levels of ground disturbance. The reports concluded that due to the heavy ground disturbance and distance from recorded Aboriginal sites, that study area had low potential for Aboriginal objects

3.0 VISUAL INSPECTION

A visual inspection of the study area was undertaken by Jonny Love (Senior Heritage Consultant, Artefact Heritage) and Katherine Douglas (Graduate Heritage Consultant, Artefact Heritage) on 3 June 2025. Conditions were sunny during inspection and were acceptable for the visual inspection. The visual inspection examined the external areas of all lots comprising the study area. Extensive terracing and landscape modification was observed across the lots. These earthworks have disturbed natural soil profiles and impacted any Aboriginal objects which may have been present.

3.1.1 16 Middle Harbour Road

The study area is significantly disturbed and shows evidence of removal of potential artefact bearing residual buildings. The front of the property (Figure 11 and Figure 12) is at a higher level to the annex garage (Figure 13 and Figure 14), inset tennis court and in ground swimming pool which have been cut into the gentle slope at the back of the site. Overall ground surface visibility was low due to structure and vegetation coverage (Figure 15 and Figure 17). The cuts to the landscape have produced extensive terracing between the front and back yards. No sandstone outcrops or old growth native vegetation was observed on the property. Overall, ground visibility and exposure were very low, being nil in most areas of the yard due to concrete paving, tennis court (Figure 16 and Figure 18), pool (Figure 19 and Figure 20), grass and vegetation cover. Introduced soil fill was present in the garden beds. Service location markings were present in the study area indicating subsurface services that impact the integrity of the soil profiles (Figure 17). Due to the level of disturbance within the study area it is unlikely that Aboriginal objects are present.

Figure 11: Front of house view northwest



Figure 12: landscaped terrace at front of property view east of lawn and tiling



Figure 13: Tiled and cemented driveway to annex garage view northwest



Figure 14: View of terraced yard and built gardens view southwest



**Figure 15: Paved side access to back yard,
view southeast**



**Figure 16: view southeast of backyard
paving, shed structures and inset tennis
court visible**



**Figure 17: view of blue service location
markers indicating sub surface impacts.**



Figure 18: view of instet of tennis court.



**Figure 19: terracing levels indicating distinct
cuts into the landscape and retaining walls to
separate the inground pool and tennis court.**



**Figure 20: view west of inground pool and
associated paving and retaining walls
approximately 1 metre below the level of the
house**



3.1.2 8-20 Middle Harbour Road

The study area is significantly disturbed and shows evidence of removal of potential artefact bearing residual soils. The front of the property (Figure 21 and Figure 22) is at a higher level to the additional building and garage space (Figure 23 and Figure 24) to the south of the property and the in ground swimming pool (Figure 25) and inset tennis court (Figure 26) which have been cut into the gentle slope at the north of the property, in the back yard. No sandstone outcrops were observed but four mature trees were on site (Figure 28 and Figure 29); inspection of the trees indicated no evidence of cultural modification or scarring. Overall ground surface visibility was low due to structure and vegetation coverage (Figure 29).

A swimming pool has been built into this modified sloping platform, causing disturbance to any remaining natural soil profile in this area. The backyard and tennis court areas were observed to be extensively flattened and terraced in comparison to the natural slope observed surrounding the study area. The property is distinctly lower than the property to the west (16 Middle Harbour Road) due to the leveling (Figure 27). Services location markings were observed to the north of the tennis court and the walkway to the north of the property leading to the opposite street Russell Avenue indicating distinct subsurface impacts along either side of the walkway (Figure 31 and Figure 32). Trees lining the walkway are young and a product of recently introduced landscaping (Figure 33).

Due to the level of disturbance within the study area it is unlikely that Aboriginal objects are present.

Figure 21: Front of house view northwest



Figure 22: landscape terracing from paved driveway view southwest with introduced fill for garden beds.



Figure 23: view of paved driveway to additional structure more than 1 metre lower than the house with

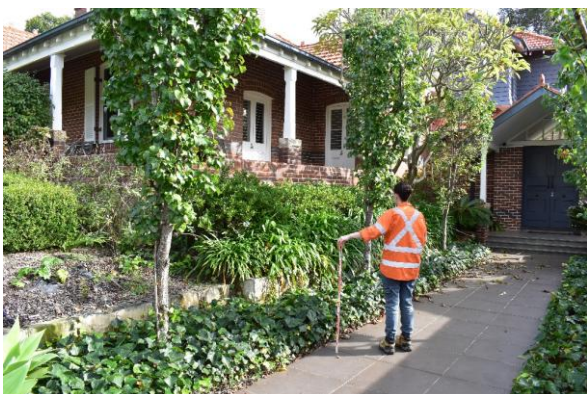


Figure 24: Pebbled and paved side access to backyard view northwest

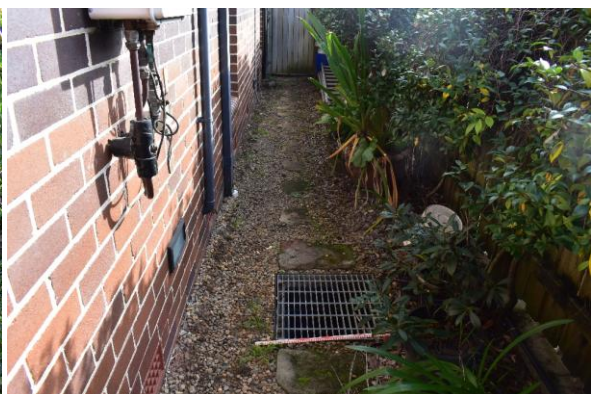


Figure 25: view northwest of in ground pool



Figure 26: view south of inset tennis court and retaining wall.



Figure 27: view of retaining wall separating the properties 16 and 18-20 Middle Harbour Road



Figure 28: View of mature trees without evidence of cultural modification.



Figure 29: View of mature tree and lack of ground exposure



Figure 30: view of ground level basement under terraced house.



Figure 31: view of subsurface water works with subsurface markers indicating impacts through the walkway to the northwest.



Figure 32: view southeast of subsurface water works along the northern boundary of the walkway



Figure 33: view northwest of walkway with modern trees



Conclusion

No Aboriginal objects were identified across the study area. Because of the high disturbance levels and a lack of landscape features that are likely to indicate the presence of Aboriginal objects, no areas of archaeological potential were identified.

4.0 ABORIGINAL POTENTIAL OF THE STUDY AREA

Archaeological potential is closely related to levels of ground disturbance. However, other factors are also taken into account when assessing archaeological potential, such as whether the area is within a landscape feature that is likely to indicate the presence of Aboriginal objects.

4.1 Landscape features that are likely to indicate the presence of Aboriginal objects

Particular landscape features in NSW are known to have been favoured locations for repeated or long-term occupation and, hence, more likely to retain archaeological evidence of past Aboriginal use. The Due Diligence Code of Practice identifies five landscape features that indicate the likely existence of Aboriginal objects, these include:

- *Within 200m of water, or*
- *Located within a sand dune system, or*
- *Located on a ridge top, ridge line, or headland, or*
- *Located within 200m below of a cliff face, or*
- *Within 20m of or in a cave, rock shelter, or cave mouth (Environment 2010)*

Landscape Feature	Presence in study area
Within 200m of water	No. The study area is not within 200 metres of water.
Located within a sand dune system	No. The study area is not located within a sand dune system
Located on a ridge top, ridge line, or headland	No. The study area is not located on a ridge top, ridge line, or headland.
Located within 200m below of a cliff face	No. The study area is not located within 200m below of a cliff face.
Within 20m of or in a cave, rock shelter, or cave mouth (Environment 2010)	No. The study area is not within 20m of or in a cave, rock shelter, or cave mouth.

4.2 Ground disturbance

Archaeological potential is closely related to levels of ground disturbance. However, other factors are also taken into account when assessing archaeological potential, such as whether artefacts were located on the surface, and whether the area is within a landscape feature that is likely to indicate the presence of Aboriginal objects. The Due Diligence Code of Practice defines disturbed land:

Sec 7.5 (4) For the purposes of this clause, land is disturbed if it has been the subject of human activity that has changed the lands surface, being changes that remain clear and observable.

This includes disturbed land via:

-
- (a) soil ploughing*
 - (b) construction of rural infrastructure*
 - (c) clearing of vegetation*
 - (e) construction of buildings and the erection of other structures*
 - (f) construction or installation of utilities and other similar services (such as above or below ground electrical infrastructure, water or sewerage pipelines, stormwater drainage and other similar infrastructure)*
-

Background research indicates extensive historical land disturbance in the form of deforestation, land clearing and the modern construction of residential structures and pathways. Historical aerial imagery demonstrates that residential development of the study area began earlier than 1930. The terracing and installation of subsurface services within the study area have likely involved substantial ground disturbing excavations.

The visual inspection confirmed the study area has been subject to extensive ground disturbance. Soil exposures observed during the inspection observed a large variety of soils, indicating soil import and relocation of original soils. It is likely that the combined impact of land clearing, building construction and soil import has resulted in the removal of Aboriginal object which may have previously been in the study area. No Aboriginal objects were observed during the visual inspection.

5.0 THE DUE DILIGENCE PROCESS

The Due Diligence Code of Practice provides a series of questions that must be answered to determine the outcome of the due diligence process. These questions are addressed in Table 3.

Table 3: Due Diligence questions and responses

Question	Answer	Comment
Will the activity disturb the ground surface or any culturally modified trees	Y	The proposed works will significantly disturb the ground surface via deep excavation. No culturally modified trees are present within the study area.
Are there any: - Confirmed AHIMS records - Other sources of information - Landscape features	N	No AHIMS sites are within or near the study area, no located sources of information suggest the presence of Aboriginal objects within the study area and no landscape features indicate the likely presence of Aboriginal objects within the study area.
Can harm to Aboriginal objects be avoided	Y	No Aboriginal objects were identified during visual inspection, and the study area has been subject to significant levels of disturbance. It is considered unlikely that Aboriginal objects are present within the study area.
Does a desktop assessment and visual inspection confirm the presence of Aboriginal objects, or that they are likely to be there	N	The desktop assessment and visual inspection indicates the study area has been subject to significant levels of disturbance. It is considered unlikely that Aboriginal objects are present within the study area.
Is further assessment required	N	Works may proceed with caution. Aboriginal objects encountered as unexpected finds remain protected under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. Where Aboriginal objects are encountered archaeological assessment will be required.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The following conclusions and recommendations regarding Aboriginal heritage are based on consideration of:

- Statutory requirements under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* as amended
- DECCW Due Diligence Code of Practice
- The results of the AHIMS search, background research and visual inspection
- The likely impacts of the proposed development

It was found that:

- The study area is considered to largely consist of disturbed land:
 - Houses have been cut into the landform context
 - Terracing is evident across the study area to facilitate tennis courts, in ground pools, basements, built garden beds and driveways
 - Landscaping and associated infrastructure which has modified the ground surface works including sub surface water systems
- Observed vegetation consists almost entirely of garden plantings and non-remnant vegetation. Mature trees onsite have no signs of cultural modification
- The study area does not contain any identified Aboriginal objects
- Desktop research and the site inspection indicate that unidentified Aboriginal objects are unlikely to be present in the study area.

Overall, the study area is considered disturbed land, with no Aboriginal objects or area where objects may occur beneath the ground surface.

The following advice and recommendations are therefore made:

- The study area does not contain and is not likely to contain any Aboriginal objects. It is recommended that no further Aboriginal heritage assessment or investigation are recommended, and the proposed works can proceed with caution and subject to approved SSD conditions
- It is advised that this AHIA does not constitute consent to harm Aboriginal objects, nor it is a 'site clearance' mechanism to allow activities to occur in an area where Aboriginal objects are likely or known to be present
- If Aboriginal objects are discovered during the proposed works, works must stop immediately, and an assessment must be undertaken in accordance with Part 6 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. A sufficiently experienced and qualified archaeologist should be engaged immediately to address the unexpected find and advise of further actions.

7.0 References

Artefact Heritage 2018, *Chatswood Public School and Chatswood High School: Aboriginal Due Diligence Assessment prepared for TSA Management on Behalf of the NSW Department of Education*.

Artefact Heritage 2023, *763-769 Pacific Highway, Chatswood, Build to Rent: Aboriginal Survey Report and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report prepared for Perpetual Corporate Trust Ltd as custodian for Novus Trusco 1 Pty Ltd as trustee for Albert Avenue Sub Trust*.

Artefact Heritage 2024a, *57-61 Archer Street, Chatswood: Archaeological Technical Report and Aboriginal Cultural Assessment Report prepared for Chatswood Property Ltd*.

Artefact Heritage 2024b, *691-699 Pacific Highway, Chatswood: Archaeological Technical Report prepared for Develotek Property Group*.

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APPENDIX A: AHIMS EXTENSIVE SEARCH

