

Leichhardt Oval Refurbishment

Statement of Heritage Impact

Report to Inner West Council

November 2025



 artefact

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Document history and status

Revision	Date issued	Reviewed by	Approved by	Date approved	Revision type
1	12/11/2025	Josh Symons	Scott MacArthur	12/11/2025	Draft
2	14/11/2025	Josh Symons	Scott MacArthur	14/11/2025	Final (Submission for SSDA Test of Adequacy)
3					
4					

Project name:	Leichhardt Oval Refurbishment
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Project number:	250282
Name of organisation:	Artefact Heritage and Environment
Document version:	Final

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview of findings

The study area is located within the boundaries of Leichhardt Oval, at Leichhardt Park in the suburb of Lilyfield. There are **two** heritage items listed on the *Inner West Local Environment Plan 2022* within the boundaries of the study:

- 'Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Oval and Aquatic Centre, including interiors', Glover St, Lilyfield, LEP no I1197
- '4 fig trees', Mary St (Entrance to Leichhardt Park), LEP no. I1201

The study area is located in proximity to two heritage items listed on the State Heritage Register.

- 'Callan Park Conservation Area & Buildings', Lilyfield, SHR no. 00818
- 'Rozelle Hospital – Broughton Hall', Lilyfield, SHR no. 00831

It is located in proximity to two heritage items listed on the *Inner West Local Environmental Plan 2022*.

- 'Campbell Estate Heritage Conservation Area', Lilyfield, LEP no. C64
- 'Street trees – avenue of Brush Box', Campbell Ave, Lilyfield, LEP no. I1193

Built Heritage

Based on the drawings for Leichhardt Oval Refurbishments which were issued on 28 October 2025, the proposed works would result in the following heritage impacts:

- The proposed upgrades to Leichhardt Oval, including the new Northern Grandstand, upgrades to the Lower Seating Bowl, and refurbishment of the Western Grandstand, will result in only **minor** adverse physical impacts and **little to no** visual heritage impacts to the Leichhardt Oval and broader heritage item. Works largely affect low-significance fabric, with new structures designed to be sympathetic to existing forms.
- It is possible that some potential impacts could occur due to construction vibration. It is expected that the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures outlined in this report, such as vibration monitoring, would help to minimise any potential indirect heritage impacts. Therefore, it is expected that the proposal would cause **little to no** potential indirect heritage impacts. The works have been assessed as having **little to no** physical or visual impacts to nearby heritage items.

Historical archaeology

Historical archaeological assessment of the study area (included below as Appendix A in Section 10 of this report) has determined:

- The archaeological potential of a study area is presented in terms of the likelihood of the presence of archaeological resources, considering the land use history and previous impacts at the site. The study area has been assessed as having the following archaeological potential, arranged by historical phases of occupation and development:
 - Phase 1 (1819-1887): The study area has **nil** potential to contain archaeological remains associated with Phase 1, including early plantings and evidence of recreational use of the initial John Austen estate
 - Phase 2 (1887-1934): The study area has **low** potential to contain archaeological remains associated with Phase 2, which would include evidence of early park amenities, and the initial stages of construction of Leichhardt Oval and its associated grandstand and band rotunda. Evidence of the former timber post and rail fencing may be present in the form of post holes. There is **nil-low** potential for relics associated with Phase 2 to be present in the study area.
 - Phase 3 (1934-1970): The study area has **low** potential to contain archaeological remains associated with the further development of Leichhardt Oval over the course of Phase 3. Such remains would include evidence of ongoing construction activities and demolished early buildings including footings and foundations. There is **nil-low** potential for relics associated with Phase 3 to be present in the study area
 - Phase 4 (1970-Present): Phase 4 represents the last stage of development in Leichhardt Oval; the major redevelopment of the park in the 1970s and 1980s resulted in the present configuration of the park. Objects and features associated with this last phase are assessed as extant and non-archaeological.
- If considerably intact and *in situ* archaeological resources associated with Phases 2-3 are identified, they **may** reach the threshold for significance at a **Local** level. However, due to 20th century developments, it is unlikely archaeological resources from these phases remain wholly intact.
- Due to the **Low** potential for substantial and intact archaeological resources within the study area, it is assessed that the proposal would result in **minor adverse** impacts to significant historical archaeological resources.

Approval pathway

This SoHI has been prepared by Artefact on behalf of IWC in preparation for a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) for the development. The project application number is SSD-85149458, and the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) were issued on 23 June 2025.

The Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) outline that a SoHI with an Archaeological Assessment would be required to inform the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the oval refurbishment works. This report meets the requirements of Condition 19 of the SEARS.

Declaration		
Name	Chamathya Gunawardena	
Professional Qualifications	Master of Urban Cultural Heritage, University of Melbourne 2022 Graduate Diploma of Arts (majoring in History), University of Melbourne 2021 Bachelor of Design (majoring in Construction), University of Melbourne 2020	
The undersigned declares that this SoHI has been prepared in response to the following SEARs requirements issued for the project on 23 June 2025 for SSD-85149458:		
SEARs item	SEARs Issue and Assessment Requirement	Relevant Section of this Report that addresses SEARs Requirement
19. Environmental Heritage	19. Environmental Heritage • Where there is potential for direct or indirect impacts on the heritage significance of items of environmental heritage, provide a Statement of Heritage Impact and Archaeological Assessment (if potential impacts to archaeological resources are identified), prepared in accordance with the relevant guidelines, which assesses any impacts and outlines measures to ensure they are minimised and mitigated.	Section 7.0
Signed		
Dated	12.11.2025	

Recommendations and mitigation measures

Consideration should be given to the following recommendations.

Built

- Potential indirect heritage impacts during construction works could occur due to vibrations on the built structures within the study area. The following mitigation measures should be undertaken to minimise these potential impacts.
 - Where vibration intensive plant or tools are used, vibration monitoring should be implemented to ensure that construction-related vibrations do not exceed the

identified vibration damage screening levels. Assessment and monitoring of vibration impacts within the safe working limits near heritage fabric should adhere to:

- British Standard BS 7385: Part 2: Evaluation and Measurement for Vibrations in Buildings – Part 2 Guide to Damage Levels from Ground-Borne Vibration
 - German Standard DIN 4150, Part 3: Structural Vibration in Buildings: Effects on Structure.
- If works other than those discussed in this report are proposed, then additional assessment would be required to assess the potential impact

Archaeology

It is recommended that the following mitigation measures are implemented prior to and during the proposal which requires limited ground penetration including excavation works:

ID	Mitigation Measure
Heritage Management	
	Unexpected Finds Procedure
	As the study area has been assessed as having low potential to contain archaeological resources (i.e., 'works') that may reach the threshold for local significance, it is recommended that potential archaeological resources be managed through an Unexpected Finds Procedure (UFP) that is developed for the proposal. Example UFP content is outlined below for consideration during preparation of the UFP:
<i>Mitigation measure 1</i>	• If archaeological resources are identified during any stage of the project that do not match the definition of 'works' (as outlined in Section 2.5.2 of this report), works in the area must cease, the area adequately protected, and a suitably qualified archaeologist notified so as to carry out more detailed investigation and assessment • If the archaeological assessment determines that the remains are 'relics' in the meaning of the Heritage Act, the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water must be notified about the discovery of relics in accordance with Section 146 of the Heritage Act. Further approval/s may be required to allow the works to proceed.
	Heritage induction
<i>Mitigation Measure 2</i>	• All staff involved in the proposed works, including design professionals and tradespeople, must receive a heritage induction prior to the commencement of works. The heritage induction should cover the historical values of the site and the potential for the project to encounter significant archaeological resources • The induction should make contractors aware of the recommendations and mitigation methods included in this report, including the procedure to follow in the event that an unexpected archaeological find is encountered. Clear lines of communication must be established for the reporting of any such finds and for procedures to be rapidly implemented.

ID	Mitigation Measure
	General
<i>Mitigation Measure 3</i>	- Any additions or design modifications to the proposal, outside the scope of this assessment, would require additional heritage assessment to ensure consistency with this assessment - A copy of this report should be provided to the Inner West Council and Heritage NSW to inform them of the proposal and the potential impacts to the study area.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

Artefact understands that Inner West Council (IWC) is undertaking the Leichhardt Oval Refurbishment project, for which State Significant Development (SSD) status has been applied. The project involves refurbishment of the existing Leichhardt Oval at 68 Mary Street, Lilyfield to provide new and upgraded spectator and player amenities, broadcasting facilities, improved accessibility and increased number of fixed seating (no change to overall spectator capacity), including:

- Upgrades to the existing Western Grandstand, including:
 - Demolition of the existing spectator and player amenities located on the ground floor, existing seating, broadcast areas, hospitality and coaching facilities on level 2, existing stairs at the front of the grandstand and some facade elements.
 - Upgrades to the existing ground floor to provide new player change rooms and facilities, medical facilities, facilities for match officials and coaching staff, spectator amenities, utilities and other 'match day' related facilities,
 - Upgrades to and expansion of the mezzanine level within the grandstand to provide a new 'Grandstand Bar', gym, spectator amenities, stairs and storage, as well as the relocation of the existing telecommunications server,
 - Upgrades to the existing level 2 to deliver new spectator seating, corporate suites, television and radio broadcasting facilities, spectator amenities and the upgrading of the existing Centurions Lounge corporate area,
 - Improved spectator circulation and egress arrangements to meet standards and general upgrades and maintenance to the existing building.
- The construction of a new 'Northern Grandstand', including:
 - Earthworks and modification of existing retaining wall and embankment,
 - A new concourse to provide spectator amenities and food and beverage offerings,
 - New spectator seating to level 1 of the grandstand above the concourse,
 - The removal of 13 trees to facilitate the new grandstand,
- The replacement of existing seating to the lower seating bowl surrounding the playing field to provide an overall increased patron capacity, greater amenity and improved wheelchair accessibility.

This SoHI has been prepared by Artefact on behalf of IWC in preparation for a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) for the development. The project application number is SSD-85149458, and the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) were issued on 23 June 2025.

The Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) outline that a SoHI with an Archaeological Assessment would be required to inform the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the oval refurbishment works. This report meets the requirements of Condition 19 of the SEARS as declared below.

Declaration		
Name	Chamathya Gunawardena	
Professional Qualifications	Master of Urban Cultural Heritage, University of Melbourne 2022 Graduate Diploma of Arts (majoring in History), University of Melbourne 2021 Bachelor of Design (majoring in Construction), University of Melbourne 2020	
The undersigned declares that this SoHI has been prepared in response to the following SEARs requirements issued for the project on 23 June 2025 for SSD-85149458:		
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Signed		
Dated	12.11.2025	

1.2 Study area

The study area is located within the boundaries of Leichhardt Oval, at Leichhardt Park in the suburb of Lilyfield. The park consists of Leichhardt Oval, supporting stands, car parking, an Aquatic Centre and additional sports field. The park is bound by Glover Street to the east, by mixed developments on Morton, Chapel, and Frazer Streets in the south, and by the foreshore of Iron Cove to the north and west. The park is adjacent to the Le Montage Sydney event venue, the Bay Run and Leichhardt Rowing Club sheds.

The study area is within the Leichhardt Oval itself which is bounded by Mary Street and Glover Street. It is within Lot 120 of DP1279860 and is located in the Parish of Petersham in the County of Cumberland. The location of the study area is illustrated in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1: Location of study area (Source: Artefact, 2025).

1.3 Authorship

This report has been prepared by Daniel Dompierre-Outridge (Heritage Consultant), Chamathya Gunawardena (Heritage Consultant) with input and review provided by Josh Symons (Principal), all from Artefact Heritage.

1.4 Limitations

This report provides an assessment of built and historical (non-Aboriginal) heritage and their values only and does not assess Aboriginal cultural heritage. This report uses historical documentation prepared by third party heritage professionals. Desktop historical research has been undertaken to supplement this existing information.

This report only assesses impact to listed heritage items located within a 200 metre (m) buffer zone of the study area (illustrated below in Figure 2).

2.0 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

2.1 Overview

This section discusses the heritage management framework, notably legislative and policy context, applicable to the proposed development and study area.

2.2 Identification of heritage listed items

Heritage listed items were identified through a search of relevant state and federal statutory and non-statutory heritage registers:

- World Heritage List (WHL)
- Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL)
- National Heritage List (NHL)
- State Heritage Register (SHR)
- Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Registers
- NSW State Heritage Inventory database
- *Inner West Local Environmental Plan (LEP) (2022)*
- Register of the National Estate (RNE)
- National Trust of Australia (NSW) register.

Items listed on these registers have previously been assessed against the heritage assessment guidelines relevant to their peak governing body. Items that are of Commonwealth, National and World heritage significance have been assessed in accordance with the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act). Items of state or local significance have been assessed against the NSW Heritage Assessment guidelines. Assessments of heritage significance as they appear in relevant heritage inventory sheets and documents, are provided in this assessment.

There are several items of legislation that are relevant to the current study area. A summary of the relevant Acts and the potential legislative implications are provided below. Section 2.8 below includes a tabulated summary of register searches for heritage curtilages both in the study area, and in its vicinity. For the purposes of this report, 'in the vicinity' indicates a radius of 200 metres around the study area which captures heritage items that may experience visual impacts as a result of the proposed works.

It should be noted that legislation, regulations and guidelines change over time and users of this report should satisfy themselves that the statutory requirements have not changed since the report was written.

2.3 The World Heritage Convention

The Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and National Heritage (the World Heritage Convention) was adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) on 16 November 1972, and came into force on 17 December 1975. The World Heritage Convention aims to promote international cooperation to protect heritage that is of such outstanding universal value that its conservation is important for current and future generations. It sets out the criteria that a site must meet to be inscribed on the

World Heritage List (WHL) and the role of State Parties in the protection and preservation of world and their own national heritage.

There are **no** items listed on the World Heritage List within the study area or its vicinity.

2.4 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) provides a legislative framework for the protection and management of matters of national environmental significance, that is, flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places of national and international importance. Heritage items are protected through their inscription on the World Heritage List, Commonwealth Heritage List, or the National Heritage List. The EPBC Act stipulates that a person who has proposed an action that will, or is likely to, have a significant impact on a World, National or Commonwealth Heritage site must refer the action to the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (hereafter Minister). The Minister will then determine if the action requires approval under the EPBC Act. If approval is required, an environmental assessment would need to be prepared. The Minister would approve or decline the action based on this assessment. A significant impact is defined as “an impact which is important, notable, or of consequence, having regard to its context or intensity.” The significance of the action is based on the sensitivity, value and quality of the environment that is to be impacted, and the duration, magnitude and geographic extent of the impact. If the action is to be undertaken in accordance with an accredited management plan, approval is not needed and the matter does not need to be referred to the Minister.

2.4.1 Commonwealth Heritage List

The Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL) has been established to list places of outstanding heritage significance to Australia. Established under the EPBC Act, the CHL comprises natural, Indigenous and historic heritage places on Commonwealth lands and waters or under Australian Government control.

There are **no** items listed on the Commonwealth Heritage List within the study area or its vicinity.

2.4.2 National Heritage List

The National Heritage List (NHL) has been established to list places of outstanding heritage significance to Australia, including places overseas. There are nine matters of national environmental significance, these include Australia’s world heritage properties (as listed on the World Heritage List [WHL]), national heritage places, wetlands of international importance (listed under the Ramsar Convention), migratory species, listed threatened and ecological communities, Commonwealth marine areas, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, nuclear actions including uranium mining, and water resources in relation to coal seam gas developments and large coal mining developments.

There are **no** items listed on the National Heritage List within the study area or its vicinity.

2.5 Heritage Act 1977

The NSW *Heritage Act 1977* (Heritage Act) provides protection for items of ‘environmental heritage’ in NSW. ‘Environmental heritage’ includes places, buildings, works, relics, movable objects or precincts considered significant based on historical, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic values. Items considered to be significant to the State are listed on the SHR and

cannot be demolished, altered, moved or damaged, or their significance altered without approval from the Heritage Council of NSW.

2.5.1 State Heritage Register

The SHR was established under Section 22 of the Heritage Act and is a list of places and objects of particular importance to the people of NSW, including archaeological sites. The SHR is administered by Heritage NSW, and includes a diverse range of over 1,500 items, in both private and public ownership. To be listed, an item must be deemed to be of heritage significance for the whole of NSW. For works to an SHR item, a Section 60 application must be prepared for works that are not exempt under Section 57(2) of the Heritage Act.

There are **no** heritage items listed on the State Heritage Register within the study area.

There are **two** heritage items listed on the SHR in the vicinity of the study area

- 'Callan Park Conservation Area & Buildings', Balmain Road, Lilyfield, SHR no. 00818
- 'Rozelle Hospital – Broughton Hall', Balmain Road, Lilyfield, SHR no. 00831

2.5.2 Archaeological relics and works

The Heritage Act also provides protection for 'relics', which includes archaeological material or deposits. Section 4 (1) of the Heritage Act (as amended in 2009) defines a relic as:

"...any deposit, artefact, object or material evidence that:

- (a) relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement, and*
- (b) is of State or local heritage significance"*

Sections 139 to 146 of the Heritage Act prevent the excavation or disturbance of land known or likely to contain relics, unless under an excavation permit or exception.

2.5.3 Conservation Management Plans

Under Section 38A of the Heritage Act, if a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) is prepared for an item listed on the SHR, the Heritage Council of NSW may endorse the plan, and use the CMP to make regulations or provisions in relation to the SHR item. A CMP is not required under the Heritage Act, however the Heritage Council of NSW continues to recommend the preparation of CMPs as best practice heritage management documents for places of State Heritage significance and to consider suitable site-specific exemptions.

There are **no** CMPs that have been prepared pertaining to Leichhardt Park or the Leichhardt Oval.

2.5.4 Section 170 registers

Under the Heritage Act all government agencies are required to identify, conserve and manage heritage items in their ownership or control. Section 170 (s170) requires all government agencies to maintain a Heritage and Conservation Register that lists all heritage assets and an assessment of the significance of each asset. They must also ensure that all items inscribed on its list are maintained with due diligence in accordance with State Owned Heritage Management Principles approved by the Government on advice of the NSW Heritage Council. These principles serve to protect and conserve the heritage significance of items and are based on NSW heritage legislation and guidelines.

There are **no** heritage items listed on a s170 register in the study area or its vicinity.

2.6 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) establishes the framework for cultural heritage values to be formally assessed in the land use planning and development consent process. The EP&A Act requires that environmental impacts are considered prior to land development; this includes impacts on cultural heritage items and places as well as archaeological sites and deposits.

The EP&A Act also requires that local governments prepare planning instruments (such as Local Environmental Plans and Development Control Plans [DCPs]) in accordance with the EP&A Act to provide guidance on the level of environmental assessment required. The study area falls within the boundaries of the Inner West Council local government areas. Schedule 5 of the *Inner West Council Local Environmental Plan 2022* (LEP) includes a list of items/sites of heritage significance within this LGA.

2.6.1 Inner West Local Environmental Plan 2022

Heritage items listed on the Inner West LEP 2022 are managed in accordance with the provisions of Section 5.10 Heritage Conservation of this LEP. Under Clause 5 of this section of the LEP:

The consent authority may, before granting consent to any development:

(a) on land on which a heritage item is located, or

(b) on land that is within a heritage conservation area, or

I on land that is within the vicinity of land referred to in paragraph (a) or (b),

require a heritage management document to be prepared that assesses the extent to which the carrying out of the proposed development would affect the heritage significance of the heritage item or heritage conservation area concerned.

The study area includes the following heritage curtilages listed on Schedule 5 of the Inner West LEP:

- 'Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Ovals and Aquatic Centre, including interiors' Glover St, Lilyfield, LEP no. I1197
- '4 fig trees', Mary St (Entrance to Leichhardt Park), Lilyfield, LEP no. I1201

The following items in the vicinity of the study area are listed on Schedule 5 of the LEP:

- 'Campbell Estate Heritage Conservation Area', Lilyfield, LEP no. C64
- 'Street trees – avenue of Brush Box', Campbell Ave, Lilyfield, LEP no. I1193

2.6.2 Leichhardt Development Control Plan 2013

The Leichhardt DCP 2013 is a supporting document that compliments the provisions contained within the Inner West Council LEP 2022 and provides specific design detail in regard to sympathetic development on, or in the vicinity of, items listed on Schedule 5 of the LEP.

Part C Section 1: *General Provisions* of the DCP provides sympathetic considerations for development that is in the vicinity of a heritage listed item. These considerations include ensuring that the character, bulk, scale and height of new development does not unreasonably overshadow a nearby heritage item, that colouring and texture of new materials of a new development is sympathetic to a heritage item, and that views of a heritage item should not be obscured from the point of view of areas of public domain.

2.6.3 State Significant Development

As noted above, when a project is approved as a SSDA under Division 4.7 of the EP&A Act, the conditions and provisions of most other State and local instruments are turned off and approved works are undertaken in accordance with relevant Instruments of Approval. However, the reporting and notification provisions of the Heritage Act (Section 146) are still switched on.

2.7 Non-Statutory Considerations

2.7.1 Register of the National Estate

The Register of the National Estate (RNE) is no longer a statutory list; however, it remains available as an archive.

There are **no** non-statutory heritage items listed on the RNE in the study area.

The following RNE items have been identified in the vicinity of the study area:

- 'Callan Park Conservation Area', Lilyfield, RNE no. 1674

2.7.2 National Trust of Australia (NSW)

Listing on the National Trust Heritage Register (NTHR) does not impose statutory obligations and is more an indication of the heritage esteem held by the community.

There are **no** non-statutory heritage items listed on the NTHR in the study area.

The following NTHR items have been identified in the vicinity of the study area:

- 'Callan Park Conservation Area', Lilyfield, NTHR no. 6912

2.8 Summary of heritage listings

2.8.1 Leichhardt Park Study Area

The study area comprises Leichhardt Park, which is listed on multiple heritage registers as outlined in Table 1. The study area is also located in the vicinity of heritage items listed on multiple registers. The curtilages of these items are illustrated in Figure 2.

Table 1: Results of register searches for the study area and heritage items in the vicinity

Register	Study Area/Item	Other items
World Heritage List	None	None
National Heritage List	None	None

Register	Study Area/Item	Other items
Commonwealth Heritage List	None	None
State Heritage Register	None	• 'Callan Park Conservation Area & Buildings', Lilyfield, SHR no. 00818 • 'Rozelle Hospital – Broughton Hall', Lilyfield, SHR no. 00831
Section 170 Registers	None	None
Inner West Council LEP 2022	• 'Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Oval and Aquatic Centre, including interiors', Glover St, Lilyfield, LEP no I1197 • '4 fig trees', Mary St (Entrance to Leichhardt Park), LEP no. I1201	• 'Campbell Estate Heritage Conservation Area', Lilyfield, LEP no. C64 • 'Street trees – avenue of Brush Box', Campbell Ave, Lilyfield, LEP no. I1193
Register of the National Estate (RNE) (Non-Statutory)	None	• 'Callan Park Conservation Area', Lilyfield, RNE no. 1674
National Trust of Australia (NTHR) NSW Register (Non-Statutory)	None	• 'Callan Park Conservation Area', Lilyfield, NTHR no. 6912



Figure 2: Heritage curtilages at study area (Source: Artefact, 2025)

3.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Aboriginal history

3.1.1 Wangal people

The traditional landowners of the study area are the clan or group known as the Wangal (Wann-gal, Wanngal). They were one of around 30 clan groups across the Sydney region. The lands of the Wangal stretch along the southern shore of the Parramatta River between Gadigal land at Gomora (Darling Harbour), the Wategora at Duck River, and Burramattagal land centred on modern day Parramatta. To the north, across the Parramatta River, was Wallumedegal Country. The Wangal people have cared for the land and waters of this area for tens of thousands of years.

The mudflats, mangroves and saltmarshes here once teemed with plants, shellfish, fish, and wetland birds. The estuaries were surrounded by ancient, open forests of tall turpentine and ironbark trees that gave life to a rich diversity of animals and plants. Wangal men and women fished in the waters, hunted in the forests and collected resources sustainably for tens of thousands of years. They travelled the waters of Homebush Bay and the Parramatta River in nawi or tied-bark canoes that were made from bark gathered in the surrounding forests.

Wangal women, like the rest of the coastal or saltwater groups in the Sydney region, were important food providers for their families. One of the staple food sources was fish. While men speared fish from the shoreline with multi-pronged spears or *mooting*, the women fished from their nawi with lines and hooks. They made their fishing lines or carr-e-jun by twisting together strands of fibre from kurrajong trees, cabbage trees or flax plants. Animal fur and grass 'nearly as fine as raw silk' were also used to make lines. One colonist described them as 'nicely shredded and twisted very close and neatly'. The distinctively crescent-shaped fishhooks or burra were crafted from the turban shell.¹

As the seasons changed, the Wangal people moved throughout their Country to access resources, set up camps and hold ceremonies. Songlines passed down through the generations guided the Wangal on their travels. They navigated the woodlands using a network of trackways that crisscrossed through Country. These tracks wove through kurrajong trees, Port Jackson fig trees and paperbarks. Many of these tree species can still be seen today in the bushland nearby.

Wangal women had extraordinary skills in fishing, swimming, diving and using watercraft. They sang as they fished and were seen fishing for long periods during the day, in all weathers, and often at night with small fires on board.

As one of the early colonists Lieutenant William Bradley observed in 1788;

'The Natives strike fish with their barbed Spears from the rocks & sometimes from the Canoe in with they stand up: in general we observe the Canoe occupied by the Women who fish with hook & line, which I never noticed any of the Men to use or that the women use the Spear. The line appears to be made from the inside / bark of the Cabbage tree, it is laid of two strands well twisted & strong. Their hooks seem to be made both from the claws of Birds & the inside of a shell resembling the pearl Oyster Shell, from the latter I have seen a hook made, they rub it down on the rocks until fit for their purpose & then shape the hook in a curve with a sharp

¹ Bradley, 'A Voyage to New South Wales, Dec 1786–May 1792', (1802) SLNSW, Safe 1/14, p. 133; Tench in *Sydney's First Four Years*, p. 284

*shell or stone; we found vast quantities of Oysters & other shell fish in the Harbour & Oysters of an amazing size in the uppermost Coves.'*²

Although the resource rich foreshores of the harbour were the focus for Wangal, the areas inland around what is today's Drummoyne and surrounding suburbs were used as well. Here there were fruits, seeds, nuts and grains. Nectars, rhizomes and tubers were also harvested. Some parts of plants would have required special preparation to remove any poisons, but the seeds of all native grasses are edible. David Collins noted the difference between the inland areas and the foreshores, although did not observe the use of plants as closely as he might have;

*'The woods, exclusive of the animals which they occasionally find in their neighbourhood, afford them but little sustenance; a few berries, the yam and fern-root, the flowers of different banksia, and at times some honey, make up the whole vegetable catalogue'*³

Men used wooden spears and women wooden digging sticks - two of the most important possessions of Aboriginal people in the pre-colonial past. The Melaleuca tree's paper-like bark was used as shelter, wrapping, containers and for fire lighting. In 1791 John Hunter described how Aboriginal burning of grasslands was a practice 'constantly' done when the weather was dry. 'Firestick farming' was the practice of burning land to create new green shoots and thereby attract kangaroos and other animals for hunting, but fire was also used to control undergrowth and prevent larger bushfires.⁴

Due to the predominance of relatively soft sandstone around Sydney Harbour, hard stone used for axes and scrapers in particular, was traded from areas such as the basalt gravel beds along the Nepean River. Trading was extensive and far-reaching. Silcrete from an outcrop near present day Plumpton Ridge on the Cumberland Plain in Sydney's west and mudstone from the Hunter Valley or near Warragamba dam have been found around Sydney Harbour.⁵



Figure 3: Parramatta River, Slade, George Penkivill, 1867 (Source: National Library Australia)

² Bradley, W., 'A Voyage to New South Wales', p. 133

³ Collins, *An Account*, 1789

⁴ Hunter, *An Historical Transaction*, 1793, p. 361; Tench, *An Account*, 1789, p. 284

⁵ Currie *Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go*, 2008, pp. 10-15

3.2 Post-contact history

3.2.1 Early land grants and settlement in Lilyfield

Lilyfield developed from five original land grants made between 1819 and 1841. It comprised 330 acres which became a semi-rural resort in the 1840s for Ryan Brennan, Samuel Perry, CJ Rogers and other wealthy people.⁶ Majority of the area now known as Leichhardt Park (study area) was part of a 100-acre land initially granted to John Austen, an engraver, on the 31st July 1819.⁷ He named the land Spring Cove, although it later became known as Austenham. These allotments are visible on a c.1800s parish plan of Petersham (Figure 4) and no structures were evident within the study area during this time. An early undated plan of Petersham shows that the land to the east and south of the study area were later subdivided into four allotments (Figure 5).

⁶ Godden Mackay Logan, *Leichhardt Heritage Review: Stage 2*, Report prepared for Leichhardt Municipal Council, January 2004, Appendices, p33

⁷ John Austen Land Grant, Serial and Page Number: 12-43, Historical Land Records Viewer



Figure 4: c.1800s Parish of Petersham with study area indicated (Source: HLRV)



In 1873, the Callan Park Estate, located west of the study area, was purchased for use as a mental asylum—later known as Gladesville Hospital. This acquisition may have slowed residential development in Lilyfield compared to neighbouring suburbs, although it did provide accommodation for hospital staff. The sale was met with opposition from local residents, particularly those in the rapidly growing suburb of Balmain.⁸

Compared to nearby suburbs, Lilyfield's growth was relatively slow, with more substantial settlement only occurring in the 1880s. In response to public health and social concerns, the local Council began establishing parks, purchasing land within the study area for Leichhardt Park in 1882. This was part of a broader vision to create green spaces or "lungs for the city" to serve the expanding suburbs of Sydney and Leichhardt, which included working-class areas like Balmain and Annandale.⁹ The park was initially managed by a trust, with many of the trustees being involved in local government; significantly, the then Mayor of Leichhardt, J T Fraser, who was involved in the original purchase of Leichhardt Park in the late 1870s.¹⁰

Reports from the 1870s describe the area as largely barren, though some Indigenous plant species—such as Samphire (*Sarcocornia quinquefolia*), Maidenhair Fern (*Adiantum aethiopicum*), and Scurvy Weed (*Commelina cyanea*)—still remain. During this period, the Sydney Botanic Gardens played a major role in municipal landscape design, and it's likely that the fig trees near the Mary Street entrance, a favourite of Gardens Director Charles Moore, were planted at that time.¹¹

An 1882 subdivision plan of Leichhardt shows that the subject allotment was further subdivided with the designated area for Leichhardt Park located to the south of the foreshore (Figure 6).

Initially, Leichhardt Park consisted of 24 acres (9.7 hectares) of elevated foreshore land. It was officially reserved in 1887, and by reclaiming land in Long (now Iron) Cove, an additional 7.5 acres (3 hectares) were added.

⁸ Inner West Council, *Leichhardt Development Control Plan*, 2013, p125

⁹ Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Ovals and Aquatic Centre, including interiors, State Heritage Inventory, HMS Item ID: 1940746

¹⁰ Inner West Council, *Leichhardt Development Control Plan*, p305

¹¹ Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Ovals and Aquatic Centre, including interiors



Figure 6: 1882 Parish of Petersham subdivision plan with study area indicated. The designated park area is indicated to the south of the shore (Source: HLRV)

3.2.2 Early Twentieth Century Development of Leichhardt Park

Between 1887 and 1921, Leichhardt Park was further developed with key recreational facilities. In 1905, the Leichhardt Municipal Baths were constructed along the shoreline in response to the popularity of swimming and bathing. Within the study area, the Leichhardt Oval was constructed along with a grandstand, and a band rotunda.¹²

A 1916 plan of Petersham (Figure 7) shows Leichhardt Park with a designated total area of 31 acres, after the addition of 7 acres. Two public bath locations are depicted to the north and south-east of the allotment along with a number of Jetty structures along the southwestern end of the shoreline between Morton and Perry Streets. The Leichhardt Rowing Club is depicted to the northwest boundary of the allotment. The Leichhardt Oval is not yet depicted in the plan.

The Leichhardt Jubilee carnival was held in 1921 at the Leichhardt Park. An image of the event (Figure 8) shows school children entering the Leichhardt Park at the Mary Street entrance (southwest of the oval) with the Chapel and Morton Street intersection located to the foreground. Another image of the Jubilee carnival (Figure 9) shows the study area with the Oval ground including a timber grandstand and band rotunda in the foreground.

The study area which included the oval, grandstand and public baths are visible in the 1930 aerial (Figure 10) along with the gable roofed caretaker's residence and row of fig trees at the Mary street entrance (no. 66 Mary Street). A 1934 photograph (Figure 11) of Leichhardt Oval (possibly looking towards Chapel Street) shows the area bounded by a timber post and rail fences with metal mesh.

¹² Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Ovals and Aquatic Centre, including interiors

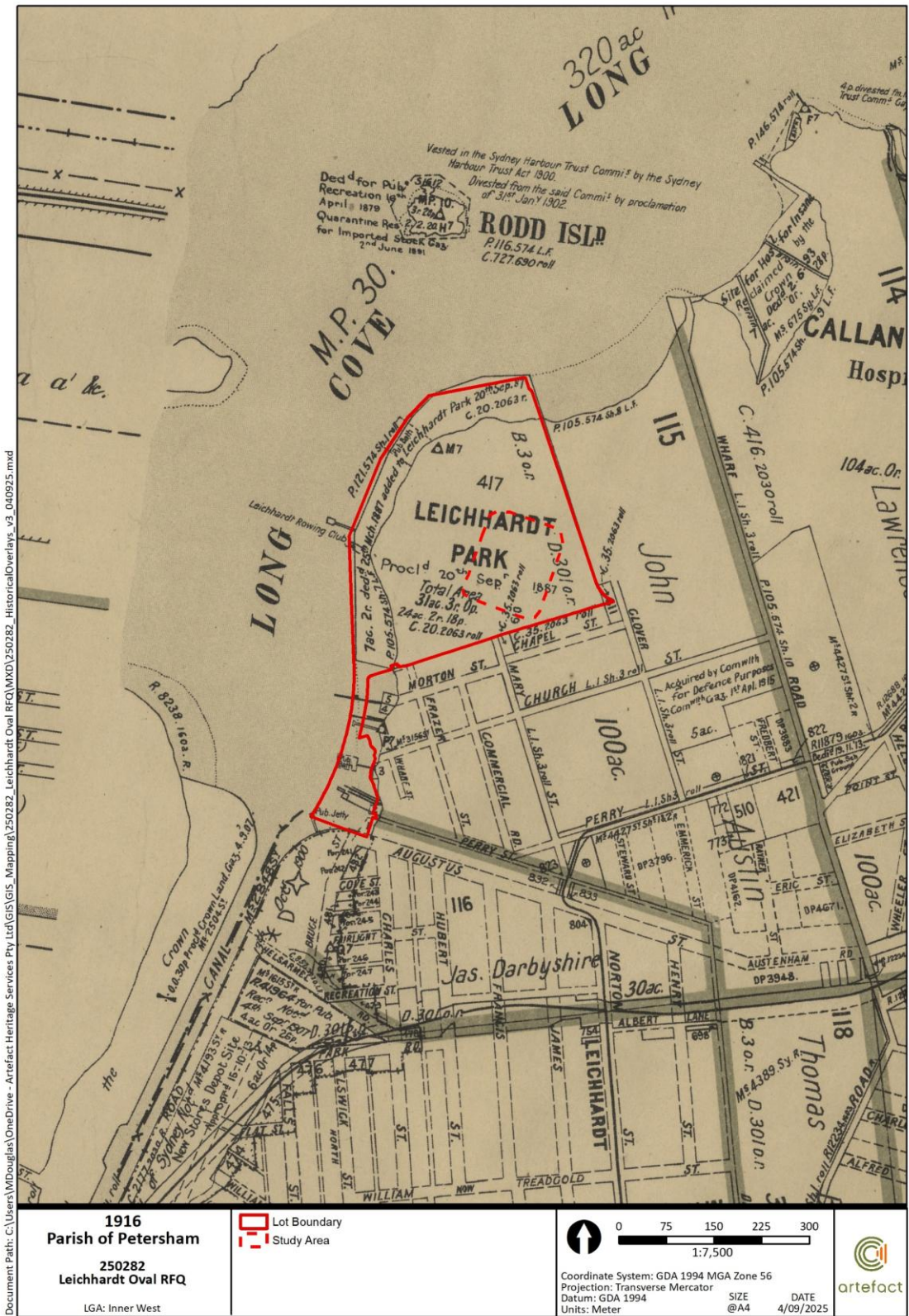


Figure 7: 1916 Parish of Petersham subdivision plan with study area indicated.(Source: HLRV)



Figure 8: 1921, School Children entering Leichhardt Park at Mary Street. Chapel and Morton Street intersection located to the foreground (Source: BRN 184831, Inner West Council Libraries)



Figure 9: 1921, School Jubilee Sports at Leichhardt Park Oval. Timber Grandstand (right) and rotunda (left) in the background (Source: BRN 200457, Inner West Council Libraries)



Figure 10: 1930 aerial image of study area, showing the oval, grandstand, public baths and the caretaker’s residence (Source: NSW Spatial Viewer)



Figure 11: 1934 image of Leichhardt Oval, looking towards Chapel Street (FL2659560, State Archives NSW)

3.2.3 Mid-Twentieth Century Development

A 1940 aerial photograph shows that an additional pavilion/grandstand had been constructed on the southern side of the study area between 1930-1940. It is likely that this structure is the existing 1934 timber and brick pavilion, which may have since been extended or modified through the addition of brickwork over time. The footprints of the existing Leichhardt Oval 2 is visible to the northeast of the study area.

Due to the advent of WWII, the northeastern portion of Leichhardt park (outside of the study area) was occupied by a U.S. Army depot and structures were constructed in proximity to the baths along the northwestern boundary of the park.¹³ The construction of these structures is visible in the 1943 aerial (Figure 13).

In 1943, the Balmain Tigers Rugby League Club relocated from Birchgrove Oval to Leichhardt Oval.¹⁴ By 1951, the timber pavilion appears to have been extended, possibly with the addition of the existing brick section.

¹³ Urbis, Aboriginal and Historical Archaeology Opportunities & Constraints, Leichhardt Pool and Aquatic Centre, Prepared for Co-Op Studio, December 2023

¹⁴ Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Ovals and Aquatic Centre, including interiors



Figure 12: 1940 image of the study area showing the addition of the existing timber and brick pavilion (Source: NSW Spatial Viewer)

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Figure 13: 1943 image of the study area showing the construction of the army depot structures along the northwestern shoreline (Source: NSW Spatial Viewer)



Figure 14: 1951 image of the study area (Source: NSW Spatial Viewer)]

3.2.4 Late Twentieth Century Development

The Leichhardt Park Aquatic Centre opened in 1960 and a historical aerial from 1961 (Figure 15) shows the pool structures located to the northwest of the park outside the study area. There were four additional small buildings added to the study area along the oval boundary, however these were demolished between the 1970s and 80s with park developments.

By 1971 the army depot structures had been removed from the park (Figure 16). Leichhardt Oval was upgraded in 1972, and changes in league administration in 1995 saw the Balmain Tigers team move to Parramatta Stadium and rebrand as the Sydney Tigers. In 1999, a merger with the Western Suburbs Magpies created the Wests Tigers, who now use Leichhardt Oval No. 1 and Campbelltown Stadium as their home grounds.¹⁵

The Oval underwent major developments between the 1970s and 1980s, during which the ground's configuration was altered (Figure 19). A large concrete and steel western grandstand and a rectangular seating bowl were added to the venue sometime during the 1970s. The extant carpark located to the west of the oval had also been constructed by this time. Additional ancillary structures including the existing brick scoreboard had been constructed to the east of the oval. An undated photograph of the Oval (Figure 17), likely taken some time between the 1970s and 1980s, shows the southern end of the ground featuring a portion of the seating bowl and the two grandstand structures near the entrance.

¹⁵ Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Ovals and Aquatic Centre, including interiors



Figure 15: 1961 image of the study area showing the addition of the Leichhardt Aquatic Centre to the north of the oval (Source: NSW Spatial Viewer)]



Figure 16: 1971 image of the study area showing the removal of the army depot buildings (Source: NSW Spatial Viewer).

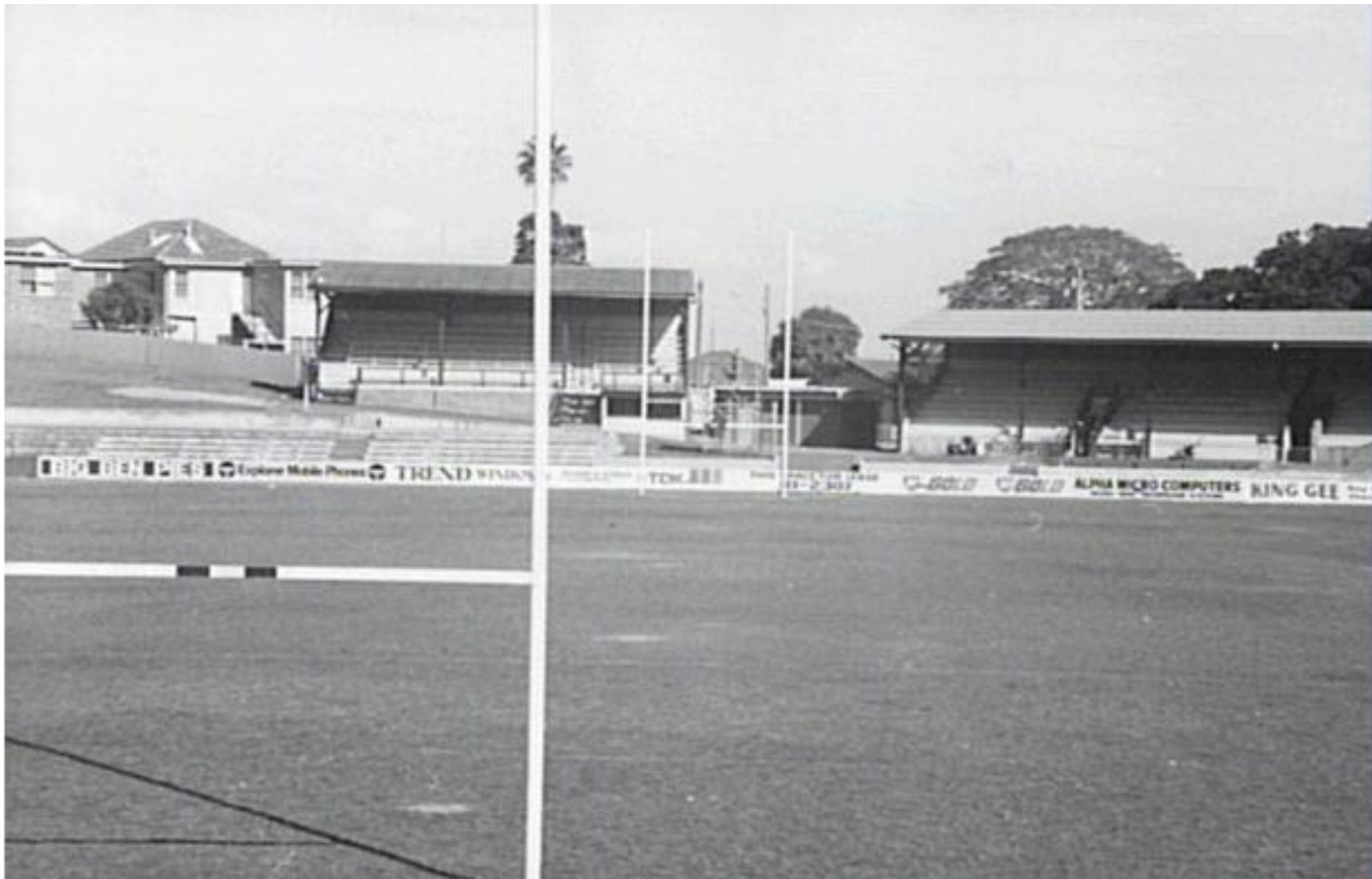


Figure 17: Undated (c.1970-1980) image of the oval showing the grandstands and a portion of the seating bowl



Figure 18: Undated (c.1970-1980) image of seating bowl after its construction



Figure 19: 1986 image of the study area after the construction of the west grandstand, lower seating bowl and car park (Source: NSW Spatial Viewer)



Figure 20: 1994 image of the study area (Source: NSW Spatial Viewer)

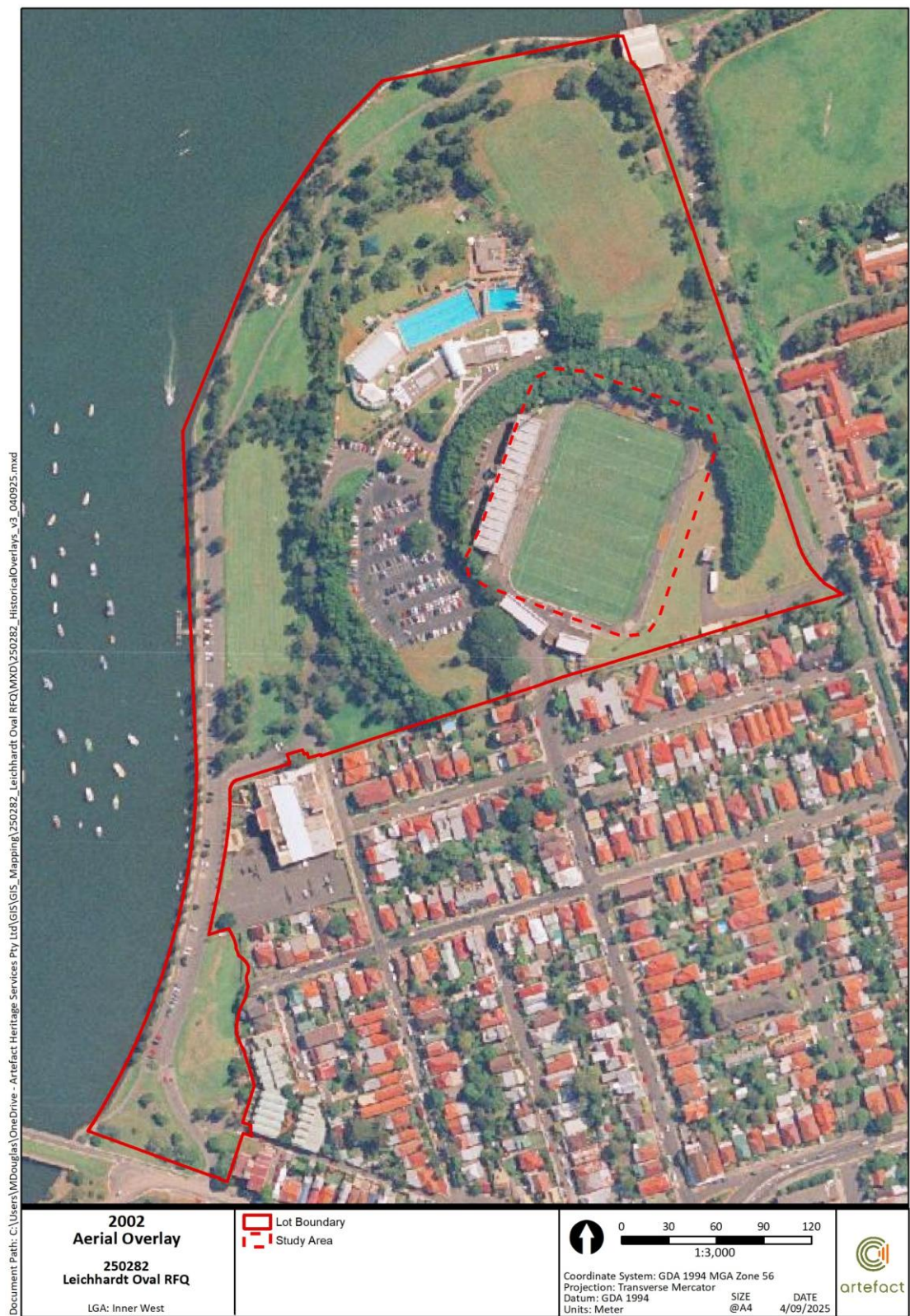


Figure 21: 2002 image of the study area (Source: NSW Spatial Viewer)

3.2.5 Twenty first century developments and current study area

The smaller southern grandstand located next to the timber and brick pavilion (referred to as the 'eastern grandstand' in the modifications section of the SHI inventory) was demolished in 2005. A major development was the addition of a northern extension (centurions lounge) to the Western Grandstand in c.2009.¹⁶ A series of restoration works and developments have taken place within the study area in the late twentieth and twenty first century, as documented in the SHI inventory for Leichhardt Park. The modifications specific to the Oval and their respective dates are reproduced below.¹⁷

Table 2: Twentieth – Early Twenty first century developments at Leichhardt Oval

Date	Modification
1985:	<i>Construct additions amenities in grandstand (DA/9/1985).</i>
1985	<i>Seven VIP Boxes (85/21).</i>
1986	<i>Alterations to Grandstand (DA/48/1986).</i>
1986	<i>Alter bar area club room etc (85/67).</i>
1989	<i>Erection of three (3) additional food kiosks (DA/189/1989).</i>
1990	<i>Alterations to Leichhardt Oval Latchem Robinson G Stand (90/123). Alterations to southern side grandstand (90/208).</i>
1992	<i>Fuel storage shed and fencing (92/859).</i>
2005	<i>Demolition of eastern grandstand, two free standing toilet blocks, scoreboard, kiosk, and Mary Sreet ticket/entry structure and restoration of western grandstand including new toilets, new fencing and paving, entry, entry/engress stairway, new eastern grandstand and associated works (D/2005/468). 2005: Replacement of two (2) existing floodlight poles and lights at Leichhardt Oval No. 3 (D/2005/487, CC/2006/9).</i>
2006	<i>Demolition of eastern grandstand, two free standing toilet blocks, scoreboard, kiosk, and Mary Street ticket/entry structure and restoration of western grandstand including new toilets, new fencing and paving, entry, entry/engress stairway, new eastern grandstand and associated works (CC/2006/6).</i>
2006	<i>Proposed upgrade of lighting and associated works (D/2006/101).</i>
2007	<i>Feature wall has been reduced in length to avoid conflict of feature wall substructure with existing / proposed hydraulic service pipes; Relocation of new ticket entry pavilion to avoid obstruction of essential hydraulic and fire safety services housed in feature wall; Reduction of female toilets to allow creation of a first aid room; Installation of smoke detectors within all sub floor areas; Removal of timber/perspex screen separating eastern and western seating bays; Handrail length adjusted to allow 1m circulation zone around existing timber column; and new concrete stairs poured over existing stairs (CCMOD/2007/5).</i>
2007	<i>New awning and window to western grandstand and shed in the maintenance area (CCMOD/2007/6). 2008: Install 3 x 150,000 litre underground water tanks near Leichhardt Oval to store harvested stormwater to irrigate the ovals playing surface (D/2008/326, CC/2009/27).</i>

¹⁶ Habitation, Leichhardt Oval Stage 3, Survey Plan, 2009

¹⁷ Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Ovals and Aquatic Centre, including interiors

Date	Modification
2007	<i>Alterations and additions to Leichhardt Oval. Works to include: Demolish existing underground toilets at northern end of field and replace with concourse seating. Refurbishment to ground floor, level 1 and 2 of Latcham Robinson stand. Installation of concrete stair risers (D/2007/466).¹⁸</i>

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4.0 PHYSICAL CONTEXT

4.1 Site Inspection

A site inspection was conducted on 03 September 2025 by Chamathya Gunawardena (Heritage Consultant). The area proposed for redevelopment was inspected to inform the assessment of archaeological potential, identify heritage items and potential heritage fabric that may be affected by the project. The inspection was undertaken on foot and a photographic record was made.

4.1.1 Context

The study area consists of Leichhardt Oval itself, the grandstands and seating bowl. The oval is bounded by Mary Street to the south and Glover Street to the east. Leichhardt Oval is located within a large sports-focused precinct that consists of an Aquatic Centre and additional sports fields to the north of the oval. To the west is landscaped park areas and vegetation. To the south along Chapel Street are mainly detached residential dwellings. To the east are brick administrative buildings along Glover Street. The Le Montage Sydney event venue, the Bay Run and Leichhardt Rowing Club sheds are located further west of the study area.

Vehicular access to the Oval is primarily for service and operational vehicles and is via Mary Street and Glover Street, with a loop road connecting both streets and encircling the Oval. Public entry is available through two gates on the southern side, while limited parking is located to the west of the Oval. Four Moreton Bay fig trees are located along the carpark near the Mary Street entrance that are identified to hold heritage significance, with multiple rows of trees located around the northern boundary of the oval.

Spectator circulation is facilitated by an internal concourse above the seating bowl, accessible from both Mary Street and Glover Street gates. The eastern side features a gently sloped hill (Wayne Peace Hill) for elevated viewing.

Service and emergency vehicle access is provided adjacent to the Keith Barnes Stand, with accredited and service vehicle parking located behind the grandstand and along Lauries Lane. An egress staircase behind the grandstand connects back-of-house staff and players to the Mary Street car park. The Oval features a sunken, flat rectangular field of play, surrounded by seating and natural topography.

The existing built structures within the study area include :

- Western Grandstand (Latchem Robinson Stand)
- 1934 timber and brick pavilion (Keith Barnes Stand)
- General seating bowl



Figure 22: Mary Street Entrance to Oval, looking southeast



Figure 23: Mary Street, looking south



Figure 24: Mary Street Car Park



Figure 25: Mary Street car park, looking northwest



Figure 26: Heritage listed fig tree on Mary Street



Figure 27: Leichhardt Oval ground, looking east



Figure 28: View of Leichhardt Oval showing seating bowl, grandstand and surrounding

4.1.2 Western Grandstand (Latchem Robinson Stand)

The Western Grandstand was constructed in the late 1970s, following the reorientation of the oval. The stand is a concrete and steel structure with two levels of seating terraces containing plastic individual seats. A cantilevered roof extends well beyond the seating area. There is a metal fence separating the grandstand from the oval.

There are multiple concrete stairways with metal balustrading providing access from the ground to upper levels. To the west of the ground level are essential functional spaces such as change rooms and amenities. The centre of the lower seating bowl contains a player's tunnel providing access to the ground level amenities of the structure.

The upper level contains general seating areas with tennis boxes and premium seating. To the rear or west of this level are corporate boxes, media offices, circulation spaces and an amenities area. At the northern end of this upper level is the northern extension to the grandstand containing the centurions lounge which was constructed c.2009.

To the west/rear of the grandstand are car spaces and egress staircases which connects to the upper floor areas.



Figure 29: View of Western Grandstand, looking west



Figure 30: View of lower seating bowl on Western Grandstand



Figure 31: View of seats in the Western Grandstand



Figure 32: Access stairs to seats in Western Grandstand



Figure 33: Northern façade and stairway to mezzanine level



Figure 34: Western façade and stairway to mezzanine level



Figure 35: Southern façade



Figure 36: Eastern Façade, looking north

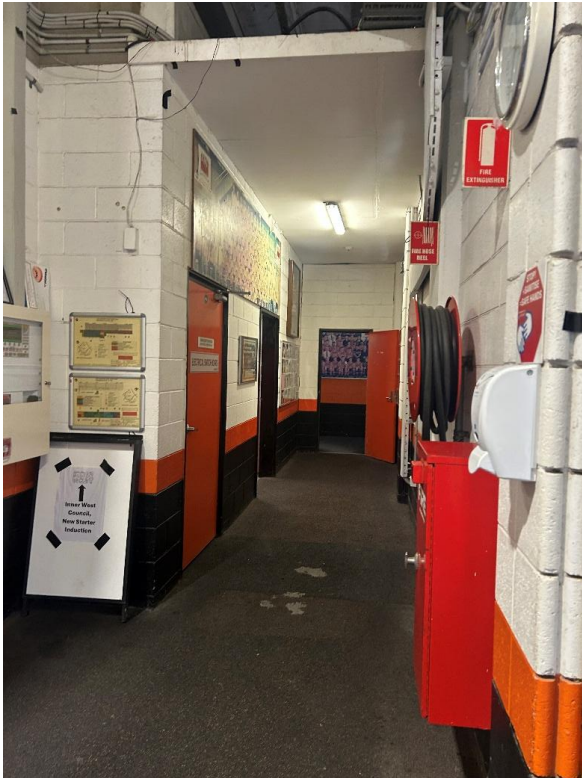


Figure 37: Ground level interior hallway

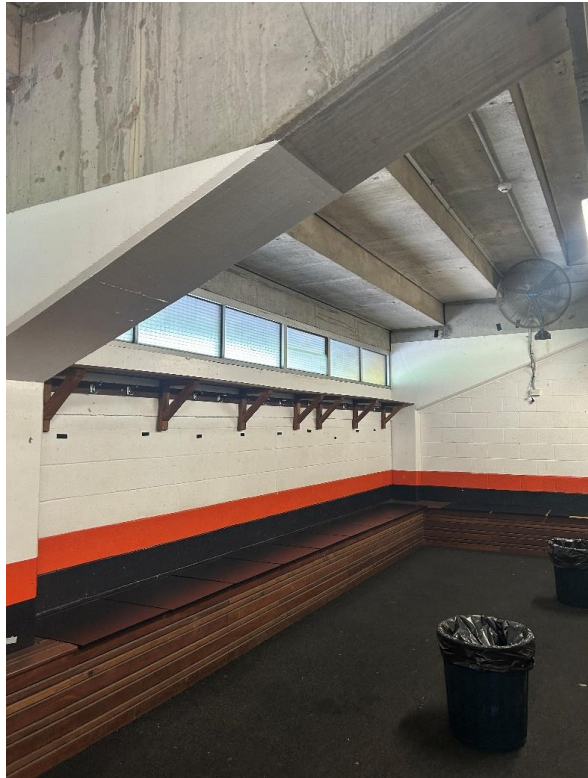


Figure 38: Ground level interior changerooms

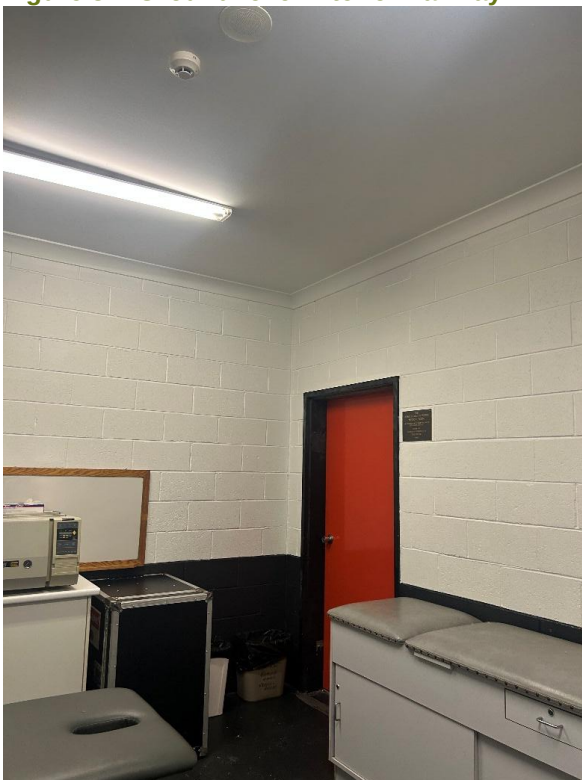


Figure 39: Ground level interior changerooms

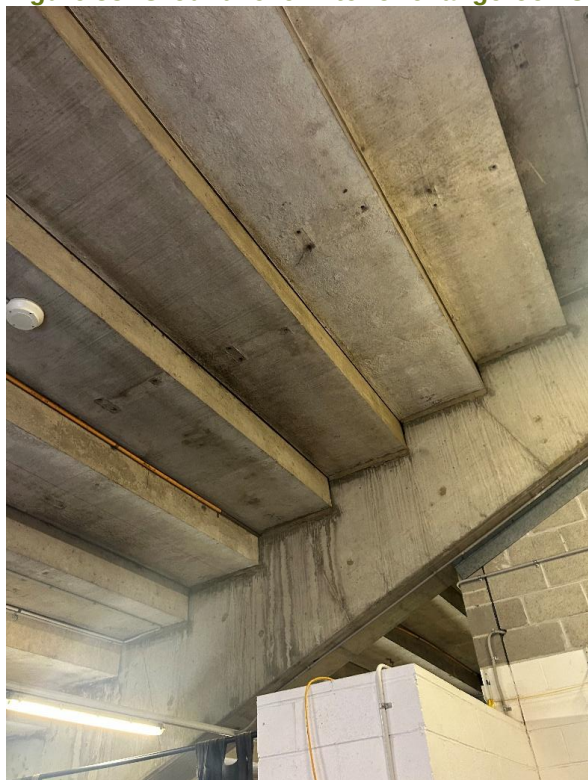


Figure 40: Ground level interior ceiling

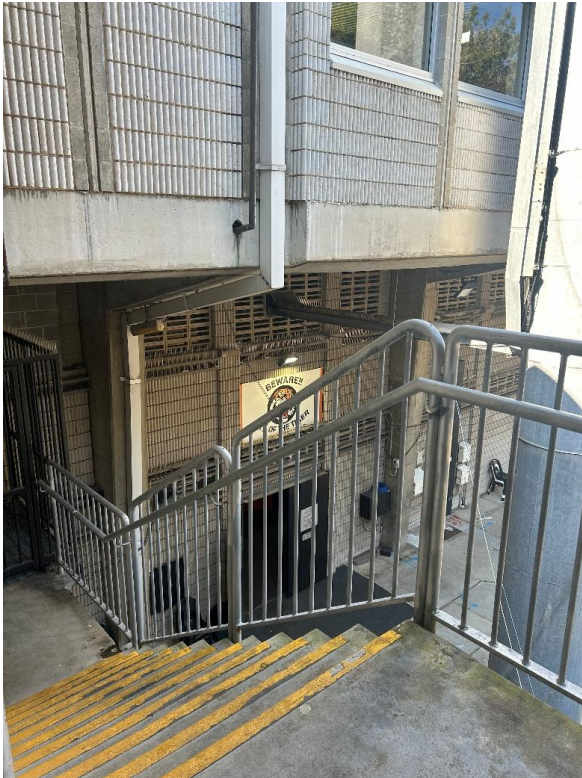


Figure 41: Western stairway to interior level



Figure 42: Interior upper level boxes



Figure 43: Upper Level southern end



Figure 44: Upper level box



Figure 45: Upper level radio rooms



Figure 46: Upper level viewing box

4.1.3 1934 grandstand (Keith Barnes Stand)

The 1937 grandstand is located on the Mary Street side of Leichhardt Oval. The grandstand is a single tiered structure, constructed of timber and brick. The western brick extension to the original timber grandstand. It features a pitched metal roof supported by exposed timber and some modern metal trusses and columns.

The structure is elevated with access via concrete staircases with brick balustrades at either end. The southern façade is partially clad in timber and brick with the upper section clad in vertical timber. There are rectangular timber windows to the façade and ticket windows, or concession stands with metal awnings for weather protection, now boarded up.



Figure 47: Keith Barnes Stand

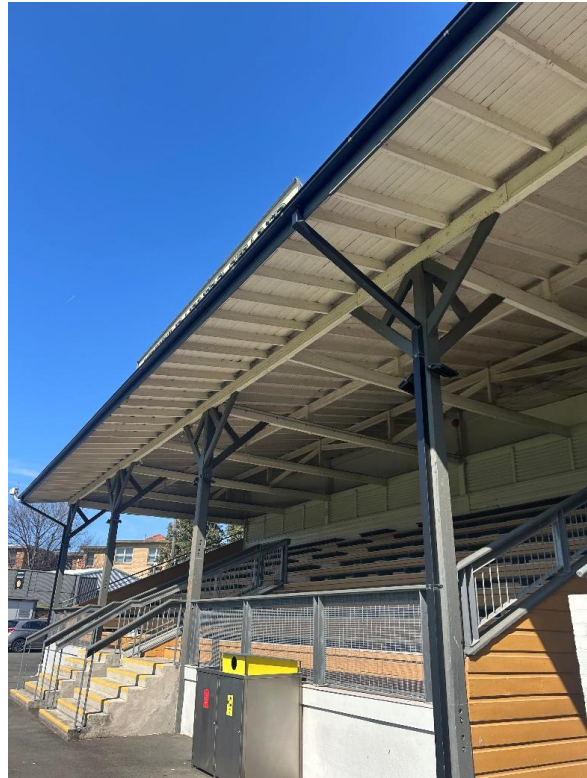


Figure 48: Keith Barnes Stand, looking south



Figure 49: Keith Barnes Stand, looking north

4.1.4 Seating Bowl

The northern seating bowl area contains concrete tiers with timber bench seating, individual plastic seating and modern steel balustrades (Figure 50). To the centre of the northern seating bowl is a concrete male toilet (Figure 51). The western side of the lower seating bowl contains concrete terraces with standing boxes. The eastern side contains concrete terraces with individual plastic seating (Figure 53).



Figure 50: Northern end of Lower Seating Bowl, looking west



Figure 51: Male toilet to northern seating bowl



Figure 52: Northern end of Lower Seating Bowl and northern boundary of study area



Figure 53: Eastern and southern end of Lower Seating Bowl

5.0 SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

5.1 Methodology

Determining the significance of heritage items or a potential archaeological resource is undertaken by utilising a system of assessment centred on the *Burra Charter* (Australia ICOMOS 2013). The principles of the charter are relevant to the assessment, conservation and management of sites and relics. The assessment of heritage significance is outlined through legislation in the *Heritage Act* and implemented through the *NSW Heritage Manual*, the *Archaeological Assessment Guidelines*¹⁹ and the document *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and 'Relics'*.²⁰

If an item meets one of the seven heritage criteria and retains the integrity of its key attributes, it can be considered to have heritage significance (see Table 3). The significance of an item or potential archaeological site can then be assessed as being of local or State significance. If a potential archaeological resource does not reach the local or state significance threshold, then it is not classified as a relic under the *Heritage Act*.

'*State heritage significance*', 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.

'*Local heritage significance*', in relation to a place, building, work, relic, moveable object or precinct, means significance to an area in relation to the historical, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic value of the item.²¹

Table 3. NSW heritage assessment criteria

Criteria	Description
A – Historical Significance	An item is important in the course or pattern of the local area's cultural or natural history.
B – Associative Significance	An item has strong or special associations with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the local area's cultural or natural history.
C – Aesthetic or Technical Significance	An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in the local area.
D – Social Significance	An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in the local area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
E – Research Potential	An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the local area's cultural or natural history.
F – Rarity	An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the local area's cultural or natural history.
G - Representativeness	An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places of cultural or natural environments (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

¹⁹ NSW Heritage Office 1996, 25-27.

²⁰ NSW Heritage Branch 2009.

²¹ This section is an extract based on the Heritage Office Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and Relics 2009:6.

Integrity

Integrity relates to whether all the attributes that convey heritage significance are extant within the subject site and not eroded or under threat²². Integrity is a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the place and its attributes. Examining the conditions of integrity, therefore requires assessing the extent to which the subject site or element:

- a) includes all elements necessary to express its heritage significance;
- b) is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the property's heritage significance;
- c) suffers from adverse effects of development and/or neglect.

Table 4: Levels of Integrity

Level	Definition
High	The physical fabric of the property and/or its significant features is in good condition, and the impact of deterioration processes controlled. A significant proportion of the elements necessary to convey the totality of the heritage significance conveyed by the property is included ²³ .
Moderate	The physical fabric of the property and/or its significant features have undergone some modifications. The changes may be reversible.
Low	The physical fabric of the property and/or its significant features have undergone substantial modifications and the original is irretrievable
N/A	Modern and / or intrusive fabric
Unknown	Elements that cannot be evaluated (ie. natural ventilation systems where their continued operation cannot be determined, fabric that cannot be inspected)

5.2 Existing heritage assessments within the study area

The following sections assess the heritage significance values within the study area. There are **two** heritage items listed on the Inner West LEP within the boundaries of the study are:

- 'Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Oval and Aquatic Centre, including interiors', Glover St, Lilyfield, LEP no I1197
- '4 fig trees', Mary St (Entrance to Leichhardt Park), LEP no. I1201

²² Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties, ICOMOS 2011, p10.

²³ Sheridan Burke, The long and winding road: a challenge to ICOMOS members, in *Changing World, Changing Views of Heritage: heritage and social change* ICOMOS, 2010

5.2.1 Statement of Significance

Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Oval and Aquatic Centre, including interiors (Inner West Council LEP 2022 no I1197)

The SHI entry for the LEP listing of the 'Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Oval and Aquatic Centre, including interiors'²⁴ provides the following statement of significance:

Leichhardt Park is of high local historic, aesthetic and social significance as part of the late 19th century development of the local area and largest open space recreation reserve in Leichhardt Municipality associated with a number of user groups. The establishment of the park in the 1880s recognised the need for open public space and parkland in the rapidly expanding suburbs of Leichhardt which were developing as principally workers suburbs. It significantly continues to cater for passive recreation and sporting activities for the local and wider community. The various elements including three Ovals and Aquatic Centre are enhanced by the Parks planting including mature Fig trees and Giovinazzo Grove, overall visual character, views and vistas and waterfront setting which make a positive contribution to the local and wider area.

The heritage item has heritage significance at the local level for its historical, associative, aesthetic, social, rarity and representative values.

4 fig trees', Mary St (Entrance to Leichhardt Park) (Inner West Council LEP 2022 no. I1201)

The SHI entry for the LEP listing of the '4 fig trees' contains no information on the significance, historical background of the item. Typically, listed trees possess heritage significance due to their historical and aesthetic heritage values, as well as their rarity.

The SHI entry for Leichhardt Park suggests that the fig trees were likely planted during the 1870s. The row of fig trees first appears in a 1930 aerial photograph and have remained on site since that time.

5.2.2 Assessment of Significance

Table 5. Heritage significance assessment for the Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Oval and Aquatic Centre, including interiors'

Criteria	Discussion
A) Historical Significance	<i>Leichhardt Park is of historic significance as part of the late 19th century development of the area. The establishment of the park recognises the need for open public space and parkland for the rapidly expanding suburbs of Leichhardt which were developing as principally workers suburbs. The early planting was probably sourced from the Royal Botanic Gardens and demonstrates the late 19th century landscaping practices and treatment of park areas. The development of the park and its facilities represents the changing needs and requirements of the local community.</i>

²⁴ Heritage NSW (SHI), *Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Ovals and Aquatic Centre, including interiors*, accessed 8 August 2025 <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=1940746>

Criteria	Discussion
B) Associative Significance	<i>The park is associated with Leichhardt Council and a number of sporting groups including the Balmain Tigers and West Tigers Rugby Leagues Clubs also Leichhardt Tigers Soccer Club and Leichhardt Swimming Club. The park is also associated with the Italian community. The Le Montage Function Centre, although considerably altered from its days as the APIA Club, and the wharf are reminders of the Italian community's history and associations within Leichhardt. Giovinazzo Grove, built in 1992, is also a tangible commemoration of this association. The park plantings are also associated with the Royal Botanic Gardens.</i>
C) Aesthetic Significance	<i>The Park is of high local aesthetic significance as an open foreshore recreational and passive park area. The high visual qualities of the park contribute to its significance. The park is a highly visible natural area with a visual catchment that includes Haberfield, Lilyfield, Chiswick and Drummoyne. It is also visible to many recreational users of the Harbour. The scenic quality of the park for these receivers is of high significance, as it forms a green belt of foreshore that extends from Haberfield to Callan Park. The scenic quality is enhanced by the screening vegetation that obscures many of the developments in the park from view. From the park there are a number of important vistas. From the foreshore areas, uninterrupted views across the water can be enjoyed. Views across to settings like Rodd Island, adjoining parks and landmarks such as Iron Cove Bridge are also important aspects of the visual quality.</i>
D) Social Significance	<i>The park is of high social significance to the local and wider community due to its use as a venue for passive recreation and sport and associated water front activities and use by the local, particularly Italian community.</i>
E) Research Potential	<i>Does not meet the threshold to fulfill this criterion</i>
F) Rarity	<i>Leichhardt Park is the largest open space recreation reserve in Leichhardt Municipality.</i>
G) Representativeness	<i>Does not meet the threshold to fulfill this criterion</i>

5.2.3 Grading of Significant Elements of the Leichhardt Oval

Individual areas and elements of Leichhardt Oval have been assessed and a level of significance has been applied. This detailed assessment is provided to enable decisions on the future conservation and development of the place. This assessment is specifically limited to the Leichhardt Oval which is affected by the proposed works.

Five levels of cultural significance have been used in the assessment of the Leichhardt oval. These categories have been developed based on *Assessing Heritage Significance*,²⁵ prepared by the NSW Heritage Office, and the categories provide a framework for conservation policies, interpretation and recommended treatment of the fabric (Table 6)

²⁵ NSW Heritage Office, *Assessing Heritage Significance*, 2001

Table 6: Standard grades of cultural significance

Id.	Level	Justification	Status
E	Exceptional	Where an individual space, element, tree or shrub is assessed as making a rare or outstanding contribution to the overall significance of the place. Spaces, elements or fabric exhibit a high degree of intactness and quality. Minor alterations or degradation may be evident, but does not detract from the overall significance of the place. Demolition/removal of the element would diminish the heritage significance of the place.	Fulfil criteria for local or state listings.
H	High	Where an individual space, element, tree or shrub is assessed as making considerable contribution to the overall significance of the place. Spaces, elements or fabric exhibit a considerable degree of intactness and were originally of substantial quality. Considerable alteration may have been undertaken, which may alter the presentation and completeness, but does not detract substantially from the overall significance of the place. Demolition/removal of the element would diminish the heritage significance of the place.	Fulfil criteria for local or state listings.
M	Moderate	Where an individual space, element, tree or shrub is assessed as making a moderate contribution to the overall significance of the place. Original spaces, elements or fabric may exhibit considerable alteration and/or degradation which detracts from the overall significance of the place. Original space, elements or fabric which were of some intrinsic quality, but are relatively intact may be included. Elements with little heritage value but contribute to the overall cumulative significance of the place may also be included. New elements of high-quality design and aesthetic value may be considered to contribute to the significance of the place. Demolition/removal of the element may diminish the heritage significance of the place. Elements or spaces can be altered or adaptively reused.	Fulfil criteria for local or state listings.

Id.	Level	Justification	Status
L	Little	Where an individual space, element, tree or shrub is assessed as making a minor contribution to the overall significance of the place, particularly compared with other elements. Original elements may exhibit extensive alterations or degradations which impact their significance and ability to interpret. New elements of little intrinsic quality or aesthetic value may be considered in this category. Demolition/removal of the element would not diminish the heritage significance of the place. Elements or spaces can be altered or adaptively reused.	Does not fulfil criteria for local or state listings.
I	Intrusive	Where an individual space, element, tree or shrub is assessed as detracting from the appreciation and overall significance of a place. The element may be adversely affecting or obscuring other significant areas, elements or items. Demolition/removal of the element is recommended.	Does not fulfil criteria for local or state listings.

Table 7 below lists the different elements of the Leichhardt Oval and provides a significance grading for each, as well as detailed gradings of the fabric of each structure. The heritage assessments for the elements have been guided by information in relevant heritage conservation strategies where available. Where no existing grading exists for a component, or where the existing grading is inaccurate or insufficient for the purposes of this SoHI, Artefact Heritage has prepared a brief assessment.

Table 7: Grading of Significance for Leichhardt Oval

Component	Assessment	Grading
The Oval (Playing Field and Surrounds)	The oval is a large, grassed playing field forming the central open space within Leichhardt Park. Established in the late 19th century, the oval's open grassed form, and landscaped surrounds contribute to the visual and spatial character of Leichhardt Park. It has retained a high level of integrity. Its form, while modified through reorientation, retains the characteristic open expanse and landscape setting.	<i>High: Grassed playing field and surrounds</i> <i>Little: Boundary fencing, lighting</i>

Component	Assessment	Grading
1934 Timber/ Brick Stand (Keith Barnes Stand)	The 1937 grandstand is a single tiered structure, constructed of timber and brick. It is one of the earliest built structures of the oval grounds. There is a c.1940s-50s western brick extension to the original timber grandstand. The building has retained a high level of integrity, retaining the majority of its original features, form and fabric. Alterations include boarding up of the original timber framed windows and the addition of modern metal braces and concrete stairs.	<i>High: Timber structure, metal roof, timber trusses, timber framed windows</i> <i>Moderate: Brick extension</i> <i>Little: Modern Metal braces, window awnings and concrete stairs</i>
c.1970s-80s Western Grand Stand	The grandstand is a typical late 20th-century utilitarian sporting structure. It was constructed as a late addition to the park following the oval's reorientation. The seating bowl was constructed alongside the grandstand and contains a variety of seating types including concrete tiers with timber bench seating, individual plastic seating and modern steel balustrades and standing boxes. The structure itself has moderate heritage value but supports the park's overall heritage significance through its continued social function and association with community sporting activities. The building has retained a moderate level of integrity and has undergone various refurbishments and renovations during the late twentieth and early twenty first century. A major development was the addition of a northern extension (centurions lounge) to the Western Grandstand in c.2009.	<i>Moderate: Concrete and steel structure, cantilevered roof, concrete stairways, seating bowl concrete structure</i> <i>Little: Northern Extension, Interior spaces, Metal fencing and balustrading, seating, northern toilet to seating bowl</i>
c.1970s-80s Brick Scoreboard	Brick scoreboard located to the east of the oval. The building has retained a high level of integrity, retaining the majority of its original features, form and fabric.	<i>Moderate: Overall brick structure and form</i>
Four Fig trees	A collection of four Moreton Bay fig trees is located at the Mary Street entrance that are identified to hold heritage significance. The SHI entry for Leichhardt Park suggests that the fig trees were likely planted during the 1870s. The row of fig trees first appears in a 1930 aerial photograph and have remained on site since that time.	<i>High : Four fig trees</i>

5.2.4 Significant views and vistas

Several vantage points surrounding Leichhardt Oval offer views of the stadium and its surrounding landscape:

- **Mary Street & Glover Street Entrances**

These streets provide direct views of the stadium's façade and entrance gates.

- **Wayne Pearce Hill (Within Stadium Grounds)**

Located on the eastern side, this elevated hill offers panoramic internal views of the field and has historically been used for standing room spectators on game days

5.2.5 Summary statement of archaeological significance

The study area comprises a sports oval and associated buildings and infrastructure. The archaeological potential of the area overall has been assessed as **nil-to-low** and **low** as a consequence of considerable ground disturbing activities over the course of the 20th century, and the absence of construction activities within the oval ground. There is some potential for archaeological remains ('works') associated with demolished early- and mid-20th century buildings on the periphery of the oval to provide research opportunities, and they furthermore would be able to demonstrate the past use of Leichhardt Oval. If considerably intact, these remains would likely reach the threshold for **local** significance under Criterion E (Section 10.3.1.1) as well as A, C, F, and G (Section 10.3.1.4).

However, as the historical use and development of Leichhardt Oval is well understood via the documentary record, these potential remains would be unlikely to provide meaningful insights into the history of the site.

5.3 Heritage assessments in the vicinity of the study area

5.3.1 Statement of Significance for Callan Park Conservation Area and Buildings (SHR no. 00818)

Rozelle Hospital site, created as one unit in 1976, comprises two major mental health facilities, each of which was developed using an existing mansion house set within expansive landscaping. As a whole, and as two component parts, Rozelle Hospital can demonstrate it has heritage significance to the people of NSW.

The Rozelle Hospital site contains the fabric of two grand Victorian gentlemen's estates, and is able to demonstrate the pastoral character of the period. The original relationship between Callan Park Conservation Area and Buildings' Garry Owen House (later Callan Park) and Broughton Hall has been retained and their grounds are still interpretable and intact. These grounds became the sites of the mental health institutions that adopted their respective names.

Rozelle Hospital demonstrates two major changes in mental health in NSW. It contains original architecture and landscaping of both hospitals. The buildings associated with the former Callan Park mental hospital are of exceptional significance, in particular the Kirkbride Block.

Its landscaped spaces and landmark buildings have contributed visually and socially to the local area for over 100 years. The foreshore areas of the site are significant as rare open space elements. Callan Point is considered to be the most

important Aboriginal archaeological site remaining on the southern shores of Sydney Harbour. Callan Point also contains rare examples of pre-European vegetation and unique European rock carvings.

The site as a whole has very high levels of social significance and has special associations for the local and broader community both as an open space resource and for its cultural and aesthetic value. (Tanner & Associates, 2002)

Kirkbride Block is significant as the collaborative work of three prominent figures in the late 19th century, James Barnet, Charles Moore and Frederick Norton Manning, as the largest remaining mental institution in NSW and as the first to be designed as a curative and therapeutic environment. The landscape design and setting of Kirkbride is vital and paramount to the design and philosophy of 'moral therapy' treatment evidenced in the intimate design of courtyards through to the long vistas over the hospital grounds and surrounding country. The landscape cannot be separated from the buildings and performs an equal and active function in the creation of the therapeutic environment. It is highly significant that much of the original fabric, character and setting for this major Victorian period design remain intact within a highly developed inner city locality

Callan Park House (former Garry Owen House), as an impressive early and mid-Victorian residence is one of the oldest remaining houses in the district. It has strong associations with the early history of the Rozelle area. It is an important visual landmark element within the hospital. (State Heritage Inventory)

Rozelle Hospital grounds are of historic and social significance at a state level in their association with the establishment of two hospitals, Callan Park and Broughton Hall, demonstrating two major changes in mental health in NSW. These changes, and changing ideas in garden design, are reflected in the grounds. The grounds are of historic and social significance in their evidence of patient involvement.

The grounds of the former Callan Park area of Rozelle Hospital are of historic significance on a national level as an integral element of the first hospital for the insane which was designed based on moral therapy principles and built in the one campaign. They are a direct application of the moral therapy principles of psychiatric care in the landscape. They are associated with: Dr Frederick Norton Manning, Inspector General for the Insane; James Barnet, Colonial Architect; and Charles Moore, Director of the then Botanic Gardens, Sydney. (now the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney)(Read, S., pers.comm., 2004)

Broughton Hall Psychiatric Clinic gardens are of historic significance on a regional level in their demonstration of the views of Dr Sydney Evan Jones on the value of gardens in the care of the mentally ill. The form and character of the original garden setting for Broughton Hall, noted in its time, is still evident.

Rozelle Hospital is of historic significance on a regional level in that it contains rare surviving 19th century gentlemen's estates, associated with the development of the area. Garryowen House and surrounds demonstrate, in part, the pastoral character of the estate period.

Rozelle Hospital grounds are of aesthetic significance on a regional level in that they demonstrate a high level of creative achievement. The former Callan Park

Mental Hospital is an accomplished work of architecture and landscape design. Broughton Hall grounds exhibit a combination of structures of oriental inspiration with horticultural richness, and some rare plant species such as rose apple, durobby or watermelon tree, Syzygium moorei

Rozelle Hospital grounds are of aesthetic significance in that they reflect the natural landform which was the setting for the original development of the site and surrounding suburbs and contain rare examples on a local level of remnant natural areas and Aboriginal cultural sites. It is of both aesthetic and social significance because it contributes visually and socially to the local identity and sense of place.

Rozelle Hospital grounds are of social significance on a regional level in that they provide public recreational and open space within an intensively developed urban environment.

Rozelle Hospital grounds are of scientific significance on a regional level for their horticultural significance. They are of scientific significance for their archaeological value of their rock engravings and Aboriginal middens. (National Trust, 1994)

5.3.2 Statement of Significance for Rozelle Hospital – Broughton Hall', Lilyfield, SHR no. 00831

The house is one of the oldest remaining in the district and has strong associations with the early development and history of the Rozelle area. It is an impressive early Victorian Georgian residence.

The house is set in extensive grounds, which retain much of their original layout, features and plantings, including a dense planting of NSW and other rainforest tree species, some sent and recommended by Charles Moore, then curator of the Botanic Gardens, Sydney. These are planted along a creekline running north-east of the house, and include the rare rose apple, (Syzygium moorei), named after Moore, many species of palms, Bunya pines (Araucaria bidwillii), hoop pines, (A.cunninghamii), and kauri pines, (Agathis spp., most likely A.robusta, Qld. kauri).

Landscape elements include path systems, decorative gateways, greenhouses etc.

Another garden area north of Broughton Hall is a Japanese garden planted c1930s, including a red arched bridge and watercourse, Port Jackson pines/ cypress pines, (Callitris columellaris) and smooth-barked apple trees or Sydney red gums, (Angophora costata) of considerable maturity and beauty.

5.3.3 Statement of Significance for 'Campbell Estate Heritage Conservation Area', Lilyfield, LEP no. C64

The SHI entry for the LEP listing of the 'Campbell Estate Heritage Conservation Area' contains no information on the significance and historical background of the item.

5.3.4 Statement of Significance for 'Street trees – avenue of Brush Box Campbell Ave',
Lilyfield, LEP no. I1193

The Campbell Avenue Street Trees are of local historic and aesthetic significance as a good and reasonably intact group of mature Brush Box specimen trees. Despite the removal and replacement of some trees, the group make a positive contribution to the streetscape character and enhance the early 20th century built context.

6.0 THE PROPOSED WORKS

6.1 The proposed works

The project involves refurbishment of the existing Leichhardt Oval at 68 Mary Street, Lilyfield to provide new and upgraded spectator and player amenities, broadcasting facilities, improved accessibility and increased number of fixed seating (no change to overall spectator capacity), including:

- Upgrades to the existing Western Grandstand, including:
 - Demolition of the existing spectator and player amenities located on the ground floor, existing seating, broadcast areas, hospitality and coaching facilities on level 2, existing stairs at the front of the grandstand and some facade elements.
 - Upgrades to the existing ground floor to provide new player change rooms and facilities, medical facilities, facilities for match officials and coaching staff, spectator amenities, utilities and other 'match day' related facilities,
 - Upgrades to and expansion of the mezzanine level within the grandstand to provide a new 'Grandstand Bar', gym, spectator amenities, stairs and storage, as well as the relocation of the existing telecommunications server,
 - Upgrades to the existing level 2 to deliver new spectator seating, corporate suites, television and radio broadcasting facilities, spectator amenities and the upgrading of the existing Centurions Lounge corporate area,
 - Improved spectator circulation and egress arrangements to meet standards and general upgrades and maintenance to the existing building.
- The construction of a new 'Northern Grandstand', including:
 - Earthworks and modification of existing retaining wall and embankment,
 - A new concourse to provide spectator amenities and food and beverage offerings,
 - New spectator seating to level 1 of the grandstand above the concourse,
 - The removal of 13 trees to facilitate the new grandstand,
 - The replacement of existing seating to the lower seating bowl surrounding the playing field to provide greater amenity and improved wheelchair accessibility.

Relevant design drawings for the proposal prepared by COX Architecture and issued on 28 October 2025 are provided below (Figure 54 through Figure 61)



Figure 54: Proposed site demolition plan (Source: COX Architecture, 2025)

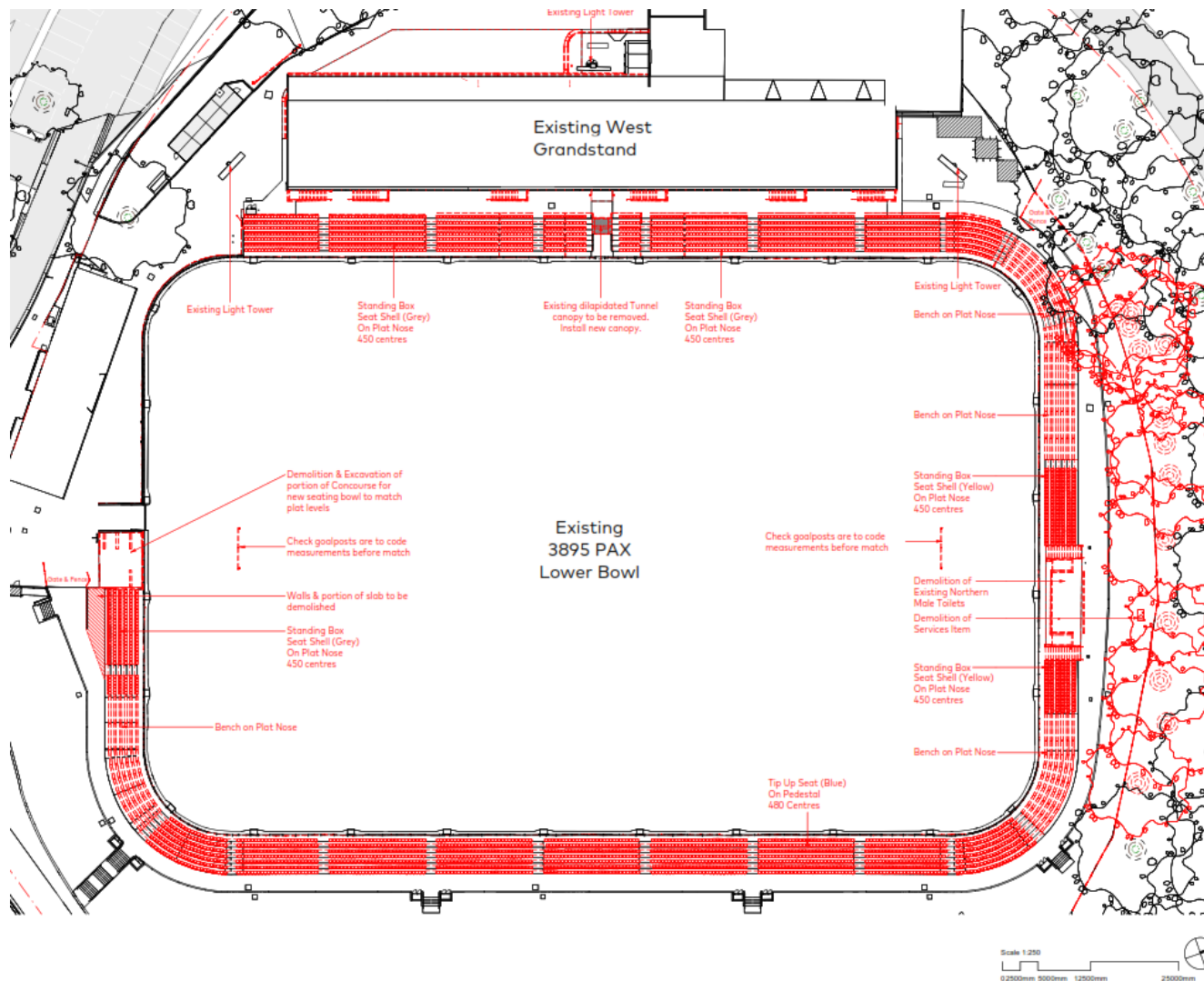


Figure 55: Proposed lower seating bowl demolition plan (Source: COX Architecture, 2025)

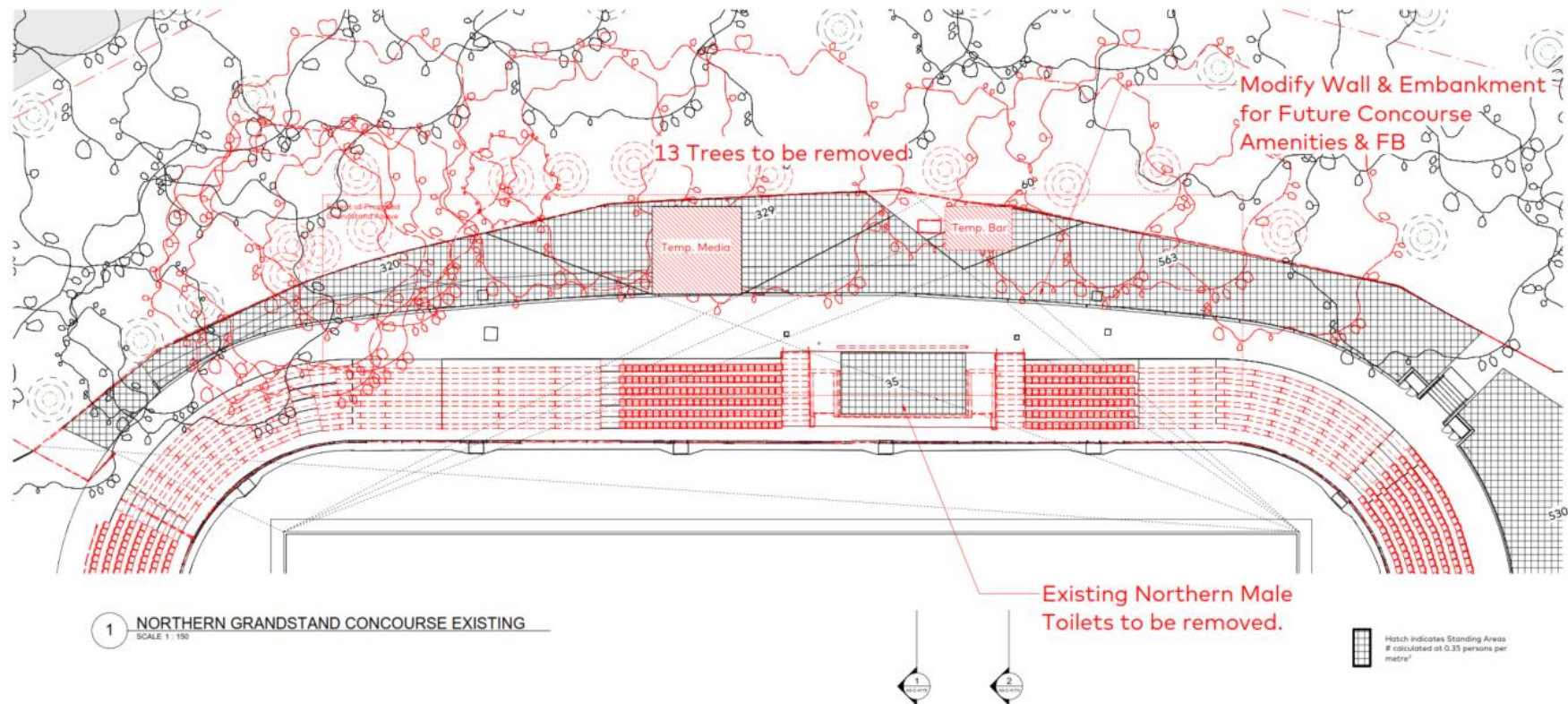
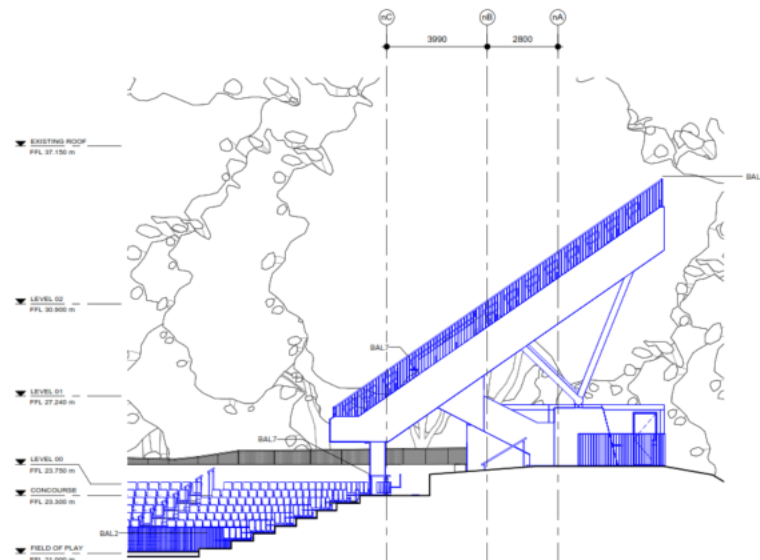


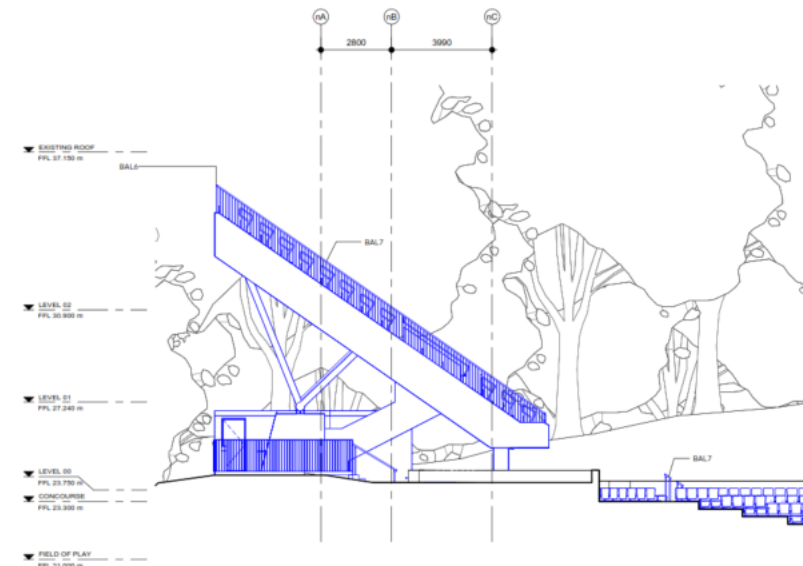
Figure 56: Proposed northern concourse demolition plan (Source: COX Architecture, 2025)



BAL.2	BALUSTRADE TYPE 2
BAL.6	BALUSTRADE TYPE 6
BAL.7	BALUSTRADE TYPE 7



1 NORTHERN GRANDSTAND ELEVATION EAST
SCALE 1:100



2 NORTHERN GRANDSTAND ELEVATION WEST
SCALE 1:100

Figure 58: Proposed Northern Grandstand (Source: COX Architecture, 2025)

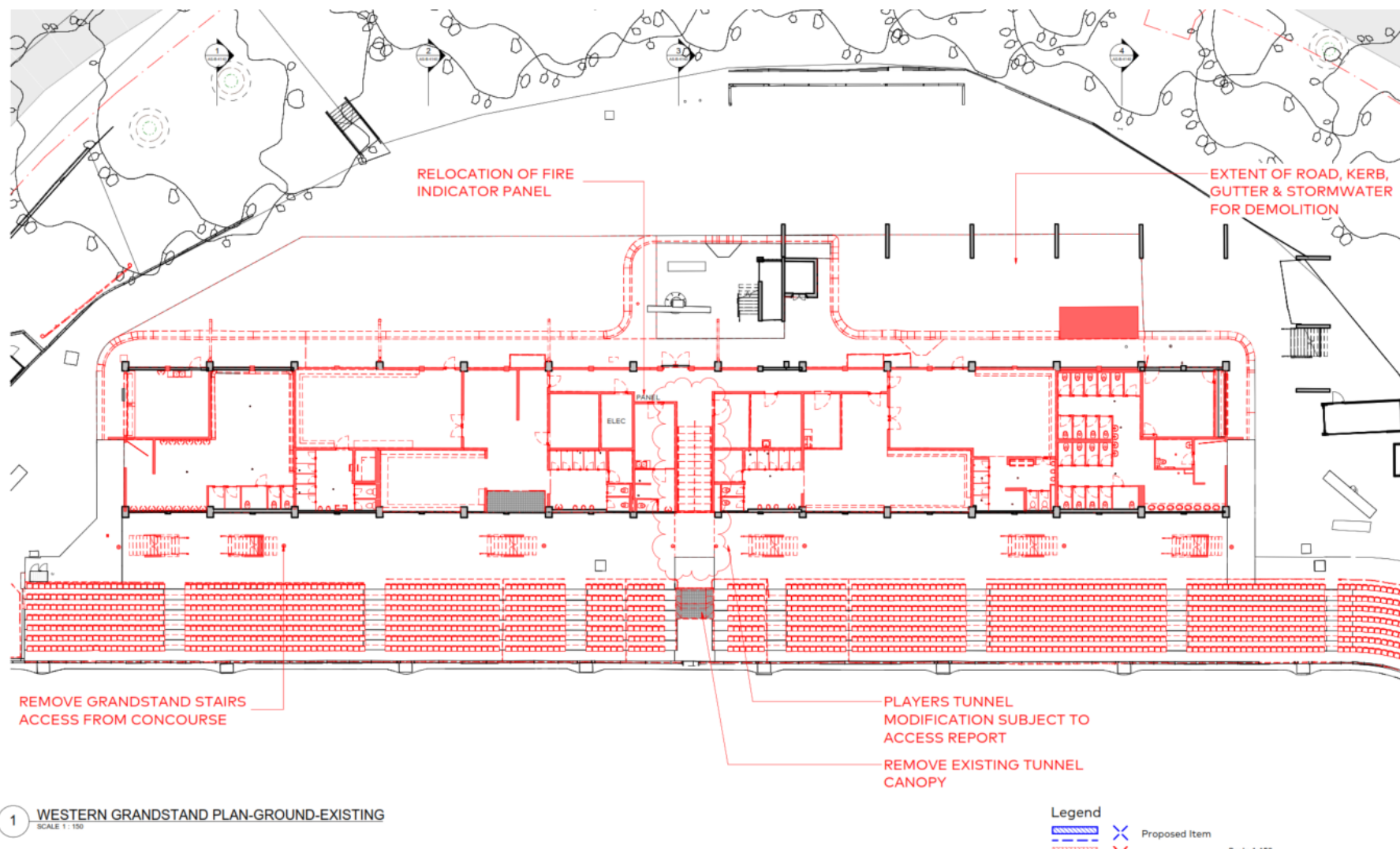


Figure 59: Proposed Western Grandstand ground floor demolition plan (Source: COX Architecture, 2025)

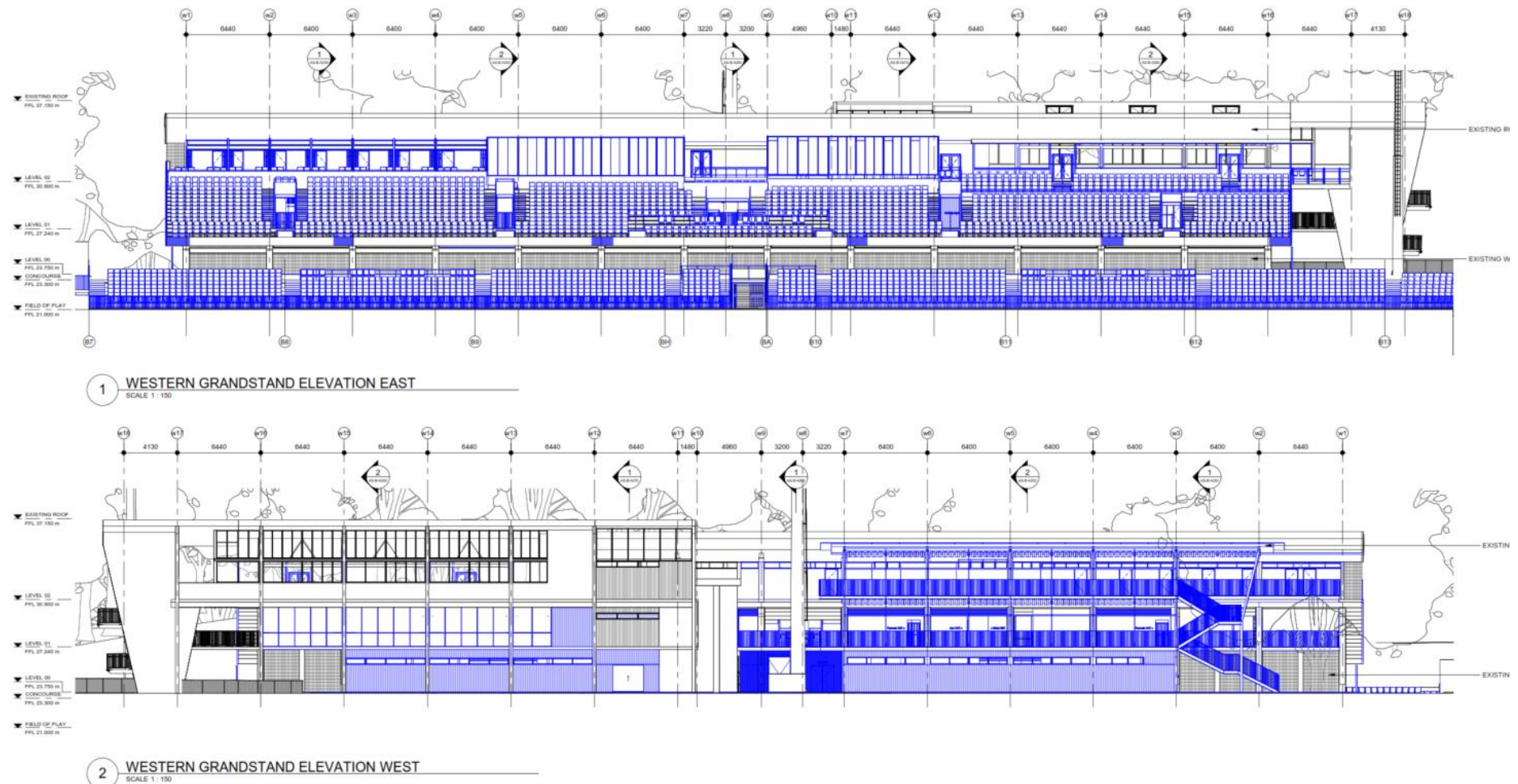


Figure 60: Proposed Western Grandstand elevations (Source: COX Architecture, 2025)

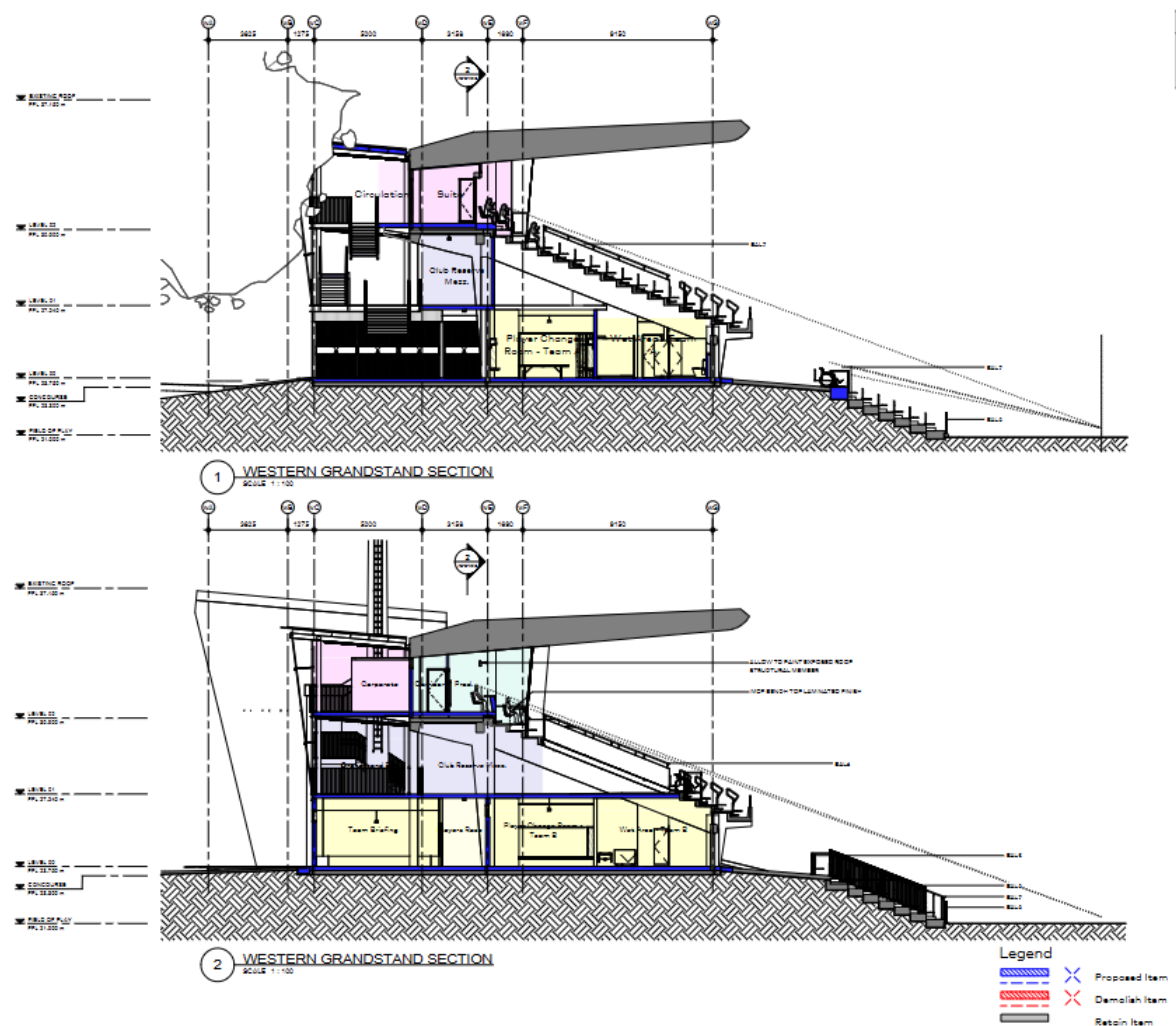


Figure 61: Proposed Western Grandstand sections (Source: COX Architecture, 2025)

7.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Overview

This section assesses the heritage impact of the proposed works at the study area on heritage values within the study area. Justifications are also provided for the proposed works.

Within this approach, the objective of a heritage impact assessment is to evaluate and explain how the proposed works will affect the heritage value of the study area and/or place. A heritage impact assessment should also address how the heritage value of the site/place can be conserved or maintained, or preferably enhanced by the proposed works.

In order to consistently identify the impact of the proposed works, the terminology contained in the following table has been references throughout this document. The terminology and definitions are based on those contained in guidelines produced by Heritage NSW²⁶ and are shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Terminology for assessing the magnitude of heritage impact.

Grading	Definition
Total loss of significance	Major adverse impacts to the extent where the place would no longer meet the criteria for listing on the SHR.
Adverse impact	Major (that is, more than minor or moderate) adverse impacts to State heritage significance, defined as removing significant features, obscuring key views, or removing evidence of significant historical associations, which require substantial changes to the scope of works or design to sufficiently reduce those impacts. The material threshold applies when substantial changes to the application are required to reduce the adverse impacts to a moderate or minor level. Moderate adverse impacts to State heritage significance. Actions in this category would include removal of an important part of a heritage item's setting or temporary removal of significant elements or fabric. The impact of these actions could be reduced through appropriate mitigation measures. Minor adverse impacts to State heritage significance, defined as impacts to State heritage significance that are minor enough that they are outweighed by other benefits of the application, for example sympathetic alterations to an original non-compliant balustrade to enable continued public use.
Little to no impact*	An alteration to State heritage significance that is so minor that it is considered negligible. * Little to no impact (as opposed to no impact) acknowledges that any change will result in some level of impact/alteration to State heritage significance.
Positive impact	Alterations that enhance the ability to demonstrate the State heritage significance of an SHR listed place.

²⁶ Heritage NSW, *Material Threshold Policy*, 2020

Table 9: Terminology for heritage impact types

Impact	Definition
Physical	Impacts resulting from works located within or outside the curtilage boundaries of the heritage item, caused by removing or altering the item or fabric of heritage significance
Visual	Impact to views, vistas and setting of the heritage item resulting from proposed works within or outside the curtilage boundaries of the heritage item.
Potential	Impacts resulting from increased noise, vibrations and construction works located within or outside the curtilage boundaries of the heritage item.
Archaeological	Impacts to potential archaeological remains located within the curtilage boundaries of the heritage item.

7.1.1 Physical heritage impacts

Northern grandstand

A new Northern Grandstand is proposed along the northern boundary of the study area. The works would involve the demolition of the existing seating and northern male toilets, to be replaced with spectator amenities at concourse level.

Associated works include excavations and modifications to the existing embankment and retaining wall, as well as the removal of stair railings, and site fencing. New toilet facilities provided at ground (concourse) level within the new grandstand.

The elements proposed for demolition—namely the northern seating and toilet structures—are of little heritage significance, primarily consisting of late twentieth-century fabric introduced during a previous redevelopment of the oval. Their removal would not adversely impact the heritage significance of the site.

Lower Seating Bowl

The proposal includes the replacement of the existing Lower Seating Bowl surrounding the playing field. The existing seating along the bowl would be upgraded to improve accessibility with additional wheelchair seating spaces and other enhanced seating upgrades. This also involves the demolition and excavation of an existing area to the south of the Lower Seating Bowl (currently used as an accessible seating area) to improve accessibility and enable unobstructed sightlines and ensure equitable access to viewing experiences.

The elements proposed for demolition—the seating and portions of seating concourse—are of limited heritage significance, primarily consisting of late twentieth-century fabric introduced during a previous redevelopment of the oval. Their removal would not adversely impact the heritage significance of the site. The works are necessary to improve the overall amenity and accessibility, particularly for users with mobility needs.

Western Grandstand

The proposal would involve demolishing existing amenities and facilities within the grandstand and undertaking major upgrades across all levels. Works include new player, spectator, and match-day facilities on the ground floor, creation of a new mezzanine level with vomitories access to the Western Grandstand seats, as well as spaces for new f&b offerings, gym, and amenities; and refurbishment of level 2 to provide new seating, corporate suites, and broadcast areas. The works would include improved spectator circulation, compliance upgrades, general maintenance, and the removal of the existing concrete stairs on the ground level.

The proposed works to the Western Grandstand involve partial demolition and reconstruction of existing façade elements, internal spaces, and circulation areas while retaining the primary structural form and overall massing of the building. As the grandstand external and internal fabric dates from the late twentieth century and is of moderate heritage significance, these works would result in limited physical heritage impact and do not involve the loss of any original or highly significant elements.

The grandstand structure has been subject to a series of refurbishments and renovations since the early twenty-first century, including the c.2003 addition of the northern section containing the Centurions Lounge. This pattern of ongoing modification reflects the evolving functional requirements of the facility. Accordingly, the proposed works are consistent with the established pattern of change and would not diminish the overall heritage value or character of the grandstand.

The Western Grandstand structure itself has not been identified as having aesthetic significance within the broader heritage item of Leichhardt Park, but the broader oval has been recognised for its historical and social significance to the wider community as a valued place for recreation and sport. The proposed works would therefore maintain the ongoing recreational and community use of the site while having minimal impact on the heritage significance of Leichhardt Park.

As such the proposed works would have only **minor** adverse physical impacts to the Leichhardt Oval and broader heritage item.

7.1.2 Visual heritage impacts

Northern Grandstand

Approximately thirteen trees along the northern boundary are proposed for removal to accommodate the new grandstand. The removal of these trees would not have an adverse effect on the overall landscape character of the study area due to the presence of additional rows of trees which would help limit the overall visual and landscape impact.

Although the new Northern Grandstand would introduce a new structure into the study area, its height, massing, and overall scale are consistent with the existing spectator facilities. The proposed design maintains a comparable roofline and footprint, ensuring it does not appear visually dominant or out of scale with adjacent built forms. The open configuration of the grandstand would reduce its apparent visual weight, maintaining a sense of openness along the northern boundary.

The proposed grandstand would not obstruct any significant views into or across the site. The replacement structure has been designed to be sympathetic to the existing built forms and character within the study area and would not visually detract from the existing landscape.

Lower Seating Bowl

The upgrades to the seating would be similar in form, mass, and visibility to the existing elements and would therefore have minimal impact on surrounding views or visual amenity.

Western Grandstand

Visually, the proposed upgrades to the Western Grandstand would not substantially alter the external form, bulk, or character of the grandstand. The replacement seating and refurbished façade elements would maintain the current scale, appearance, and relationship of the structure within the oval setting. As a result, the visual impact would be minor, with no significant change to views, vistas, or the overall heritage character of the site.

The reconstruction of façade and circulation elements focuses on improving the building envelope and spectator amenities without altering the original height datum or the key architectural proportions

that define the grandstand's visual character. The proposed works reinstates these areas with contemporary materials and detailing that are sympathetic to the existing architectural rhythm and scale. The replacement façade maintains the established horizontal emphasis and seating configuration, ensuring visual continuity with the retained elements.

As such the proposed works would have only **little to no** adverse visual impacts to the Leichhardt Oval and broader heritage item.

7.1.3 Potential heritage impacts

Potential impacts in the context of this project refer to impacts caused by construction-related vibrations. The minimum distance for cosmetic damage from construction related vibration has been established to be items located less than 25 m away from the construction work as outlined in *BS7385-2:1993 and DIN4150-3:2016*.

The works would occur within the Western Grandstand and Lower Seating Bowl built structures. It is possible that potential impacts could occur due to construction vibration. It is expected that the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures outlined in this report, such as vibration monitoring, would help to minimise any potential indirect heritage impacts. Therefore, it is expected that the proposal would cause **little to no** potential indirect heritage impacts.

As the study area is located over 100 m from the nearest listed heritage item, it is considered that there would be **little to no** potential/vibrational impacts to heritage curtilages in the vicinity as a result of the proposed work.

7.1.4 Impacts to Heritage Items in Vicinity

The study area is located in proximity to several heritage items, the nearest being the four fig trees (LEP No. I1201), whose curtilages partially extend into the study area. These trees will be retained and protected, with **little to no** direct physical impact resulting from the proposed works to the western grandstand.

All other identified heritage items are located between 50 and 100 metres from the study area boundary. As the proposed works are contained entirely within the existing oval boundary, there will be no physical impacts to any surrounding heritage items.

Works are limited to the internal structure and façade upgrades of the western grandstand and the seating bowl, maintaining the existing building form and scale. The only new built form—the northern grandstand—will be screened by the existing row of trees along the northern boundary, significantly reducing its visual prominence. The development will not obstruct or diminish key views to or from nearby heritage items. Given the established tree canopy surrounding the oval, particularly to the north, there would be **little to no** visual impact.

The heritage impacts of the proposed works on items in the vicinity are outlined in Table 10.

Table 10: Assessment of heritage impact.

Item Name	Item/Listing Number	Potential physical impacts	Potential visual impacts
Callan Park Conservation Area & Buildings', Lilyfield	SHR no. 00818	The works have been assessed as having little to no physical impacts to the item.	The works have been assessed as having little to no visual impacts to the item.
'Rozelle Hospital – Broughton Hall', Lilyfield	SHR no. 00831	The works have been assessed as having little to no physical impacts to the item.	The works have been assessed as having little to no visual impacts to the item.

Item Name	Item/Listing Number	Potential physical impacts	Potential visual impacts
		no physical impacts to the item.	
'4 fig trees', Mary St (Entrance to Leichhardt Park),	LEP no. I1201	The works have been assessed as having little to no physical impacts to the item.	The works have been assessed as having little to no visual impacts to the item.
Campbell Estate Heritage Conservation Area', Lilyfield,	LEP no. C64	The works have been assessed as having little to no physical impacts to the item.	The works have been assessed as having little to no visual impacts to the item.
Street trees – avenue of Brush Box', Campbell Ave, Lilyfield,	LEP no. I1193	The works have been assessed as having little to no physical impacts to the item.	The works have been assessed as having little to no visual impacts to the item.

7.1.5 Impacts to archaeological resources

The Historical Archaeological Assessment (HAA) prepared by Artefact (attached as Appendix A to this HIS) has identified **low** potential for historical archaeological remains of local significance to be present within the study area. These remains, if present, would most likely be located on the periphery of the oval; the oval itself has been levelled, landscaped, and reconfigured over time, however it has historically featured no built structures.

As the proposed works would involve considerable ground penetration and landscaping on the periphery of the oval in areas of **low** archaeological potential, the proposed works would likely have **minor adverse** impacts to archaeological remains of local significance.

7.1.6 Cumulative impacts

Cumulative impacts refer to the combined or overlaid or added actions and interactions within a particular place associated with the past, present and the reasonably foreseeable future.

The proposed works, including upgrades to the western grandstand, construction of the new northern grandstand, and improvements to the seating bowl and amenities, are all contained within the existing developed footprint of the oval.

From a physical standpoint, the cumulative works do not extend beyond established built areas or involve alteration to significant landscape or heritage fabric within Leichhardt Park. The open space layout, circulation routes, and mature plantings that contribute to the park's historic and aesthetic character will be retained.

The proposed upgrades will modernise facilities while maintaining the existing scale and function of the oval as a key recreational element within the park. While a northern row of trees would be demolished, the remaining mature trees and established landscape buffer along the park's boundary will continue to screen the grandstands, ensuring that the visual character of the park as a green, open public space is preserved. The works do not introduce built forms that would dominate or detract from the park's setting or its visual relationship with surrounding heritage elements.

Overall, the cumulative renovation works will enhance the functionality and longevity of the oval without adversely affecting the heritage significance, setting, or character of Leichhardt Park. There would be **little to no** cumulative impact caused by the proposed oval renovation works on the heritage significance of Leichhardt Park.

7.2 Questions to be considered in a statement of heritage impact

Heritage guidelines²⁷ prepared by Heritage NSW outline design considerations for projects that involve [project type].

Design considerations are discussed in Table 11.

Table 11: Heritage considerations for the study area (Source: NSW DPE, 2023).

Heritage Consideration	Discussion
General considerations for the proposal	
<i>Do the proposed works include removal of unsympathetic alterations and additions? How does this benefit or impact the heritage item and its significance?</i>	The proposed works would involve alterations to fabric of little to moderate heritage significance and would not detrimentally impact the overall heritage significance of Leichhardt Park.
<i>Do the proposed works affect the setting of the heritage item, including views and vistas to and from the heritage item and/or a cultural landscape in which it is sited? Can the impacts be avoided and/or mitigated?</i>	The park and ovals open landscape, mature trees and key viewpoints would be retained. The works do not introduce built forms that would dominate or detract from the park's setting or its visual relationship with surrounding heritage elements. Visual impacts are limited and would be mitigated through landscape retention and sensitive design.
<i>Are the proposed works part of a broader scope of works?</i>	The proposed development is a standalone project. It is not directly related to a broader scope of work.
<i>Does this proposal relate to any previous or future works? If so, what cumulative impact (positive and/or adverse) will these works have on the heritage significance of the item?</i>	Cumulatively, these works will have a positive impact on the heritage significance of the oval by enhancing its usability, condition, and long-term viability as a community recreation space. The upgrades are sympathetic to the overall park's historic and visual character, and no adverse cumulative heritage impacts are anticipated.
<i>Are the proposed works to a heritage item that is also significant for its Aboriginal cultural heritage values? If so, have experts in Aboriginal cultural heritage been consulted?</i>	This report does not include an assessment of Aboriginal cultural heritage values.
<i>Has the applicant checked if any other approvals or a separate process to evaluate the potential for impacts is required?</i>	This report includes advice concerning the appropriate approvals process in Section 8.2 below
<i>Do the proposed works trigger a change of use classification under the National construction code that may result in prescriptive building requirements? If so, have options that avoid impact on the heritage values been investigated?</i>	The proposed works do not trigger a change of use classification.
<i>If the proposed works are to a local heritage item, are the requirements of the development control plans or any local design guidelines that may apply to the site considered?</i>	The proposed works would involve works to a locally listed heritage item. The appropriate Development Control Plan guidelines have been assessed in Section 7.3.1.
<i>Will the proposed works result in adverse heritage impact? If so, how will this be avoided, minimised or mitigated?</i>	No significant adverse heritage impacts are anticipated. The works are confined within the existing oval footprint and are designed to respect the scale, form, and landscape character of the oval and its existing built fabric. Any potential impacts

²⁷ 'Guidelines for preparing a statement of heritage impact', Department of Planning and Environment, 2023

Heritage Consideration	Discussion
General considerations for the proposal	

during construction would be minimised through the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in Section 8.3.

A statement of heritage impact has been prepared according to Heritage NSW guidelines for assessing specific types of works in Table 12 below.

Table 12. Considerations for specific types of works

Development	Discussion
Alterations and Additions	
<i>Do the proposed works comply with Article 22 of The Burra Charter, specifically Practice note article 22 — new work (Australia ICOMOS 2013b)?</i>	The proposed works comply with Article 22 and its Practice Note, as new work is proposed to items of little to moderate level of significance. Any built structures would be clearly distinguishable and does not dominate or detract from the heritage significance of Leichhardt Park and the oval.
<i>Are the proposed alterations/additions sympathetic to the heritage item? In what way (e.g. form, proportion, scale, design, materials)?</i>	The upgrades to the seating would be similar in form, mass, and visibility to the existing elements and would therefore have minimal impact on surrounding views or visual amenity. The proposed Northern Grandstand would not obstruct any significant views into or across the site. The replacement structure has been designed to be sympathetic to the existing built forms and character within the study area and would not visually detract from the existing landscape. The proposed upgrades to the Western Grandstand are sympathetic in form, proportion, scale, design, and materials, maintaining the character and visual rhythm of the existing structure.
<i>Will the proposed works impact on the significant fabric, design or layout, significant garden setting, landscape and trees or on the heritage item's setting or any significant views?</i>	The works are confined to the oval and fabric which are considered little - moderate heritage significance. The layout of the Oval's built structures and seating bowl would be retained. Key views to the oval would also be retained, ensuring the park's heritage values and setting are preserved. Approximately thirteen trees along the northern boundary are proposed for removal to accommodate the new Northern Grandstand. The removal of these trees would not have an adverse impact on the overall landscape character of the study area due to the presence of additional rows of trees behind those affected which would help limit the overall visual and landscape impact.
<i>How have the impact of the alterations/additions on the heritage item been minimised?</i>	Impacts have been minimised through retention of significant structures, screening of new elements, use of compatible materials, and limiting works to previously developed areas or structures of limited heritage significance.
<i>Are the additions sited on any known or potentially significant archaeological relics? If yes, has specialist advice from archaeologists been sought? How will the impact be avoided or mitigated?</i>	The Historical Archaeological Assessment (HAA) prepared by Artefact (attached as Appendix A to this HIS) has identified low potential for historical archaeological remains of local significance to be present within the study area

7.3 Assessment against relevant policies

7.3.1 Leichhardt DCP 2013

The following table records the DCP policies that are assessed as being directly relevant to the proposed works.

Table 13: Assessment of proposal against Leichhardt DCP 2013 policies

Policy #	Overarching policy	Comments
Objective	a. does not represent an unsympathetic alteration or addition to a building;	The proposed works would involve alterations to fabric of little to moderate heritage significance and would not detrimentally impact the overall heritage significance of Leichhardt Park.
Objective	b. encourages the protection, restoration, continued use and viability of buildings for their original purpose;	The renovation maintains the oval's original function, improves amenity, and ensures long-term use of the oval.
Objective	e. conserves and enhances the fabric and detail of a building that contributes to the cultural significance of the building in its setting;	The upgrades to the seating would be similar in form, mass, and visibility to the existing elements and would therefore have minimal impact on surrounding views or visual amenity. The proposed Northern Grandstand would not obstruct any significant views into or across the site. The replacement structure has been designed to be sympathetic to the existing built forms and character within the study area and would not visually detract from the existing landscape. The proposed upgrades to the Western Grandstand are sympathetic in form, proportion, scale, design, and materials, maintaining the character and visual rhythm of the existing structure.
Objective	g. makes an appropriate visual and physical distinction between the existing building and new parts of the building;	New additions, including Western Grandstand upgrades and the Northern Grandstand, are legible as contemporary work while remaining sympathetic to the original.
Objective	h. protects and enhances views of the existing building from the public domain; and	The works retain key sightlines and views of the grandstand and oval from surrounding areas, with minimal visual intrusion.
Objective	i. new buildings are sympathetic in scale, form, architectural detail, fenestration and siting to the Heritage Conservation Area or Heritage Item and conforms with the Burra Charter.	New additions, including Western Grandstand upgrades and the Northern Grandstand, are legible as contemporary work while remaining sympathetic to the original. The works are proportionate, appropriately detailed, and sited to complement the broader heritage item and comply with Burra Charter principles.

Policy #	Overarching policy	Comments
Controls	C2 The fabric of an existing building is to be the subject of appropriate conservation practices including: a. retention of original detail and finishes such as: i. original face brick which should not be painted over or rendered; ii. original decorative joinery and iron work which is not to be removed; b. conservation of original elements; c. reconstruction or restoration of original elements where deemed appropriate; d. retention of the original cladding material of original roofs where viable; e. consideration of suitable replacement materials should be based on original material, and where a property is part of a group or row, replacement materials should have regard to the integrity of the group.	The upgrades to the seating would be similar in form, mass, and visibility to the existing elements and would therefore have minimal impact on surrounding views or visual amenity. The proposed Northern Grandstand has been designed to be sympathetic to the existing built forms and character within the study area and would not visually detract from the existing landscape. The proposed upgrades to the Western Grandstand are sympathetic in form, proportion, scale, design, and materials, maintaining the character and visual rhythm of the existing structure. The existing roof form is retained.
Controls	C5 Consideration of roofing materials for additions should have regard for compatibility with the original roof, as well as for the context of the setting (such as if a dwelling is part of a group of similar dwellings).	The new Northern Grandstand is proportioned and designed to complement existing buildings and match the overall form of the existing grandstands.
Controls	C8 New development need not seek to replicate period details of original buildings in proximity to the site, but rather, demonstrate respect for the form, scale and setting of the immediate area.	New additions, including Western Grandstand upgrades and the Northern Grandstand, are legible as contemporary work while remaining sympathetic to the original.

8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 Conclusion

The study area is located within the boundaries of Leichhardt Oval, at Leichhardt Park in the suburb of Lilyfield. There are **two** heritage items listed on the Inner West LEP within the boundaries of the study:

- 'Leichhardt Park includes Leichhardt Oval and Aquatic Centre, including interiors', Glover St, Lilyfield, LEP no I1197
- '4 fig trees', Mary St (Entrance to Leichhardt Park), LEP no. I1201

The study area is located in proximity to two heritage items listed on the State Heritage Register.

- 'Callan Park Conservation Area & Buildings', Lilyfield, SHR no. 00818
- 'Rozelle Hospital – Broughton Hall', Lilyfield, SHR no. 00831

It is located in proximity to two heritage items listed on the Inner West Local Environmental Plan 2022.

- 'Campbell Estate Heritage Conservation Area', Lilyfield, LEP no. C64
- 'Street trees – avenue of Brush Box', Campbell Ave, Lilyfield, LEP no. I1193

No significant non-Aboriginal archaeological remains have been identified in the study area for the project.

8.1.1 Built Heritage

Based on the drawings for Leichhardt Oval Refurbishments which were issued on 28 October 2025, the proposed works would result in the following heritage impacts:

- The proposed Northern Grandstand involves demolition of low-significance late 20th-century seating and toilet structures, replaced with a new concourse providing modern amenities. Approximately thirteen trees along the northern boundary would be removed, though additional tree rows behind mitigate visual and landscape impacts. The new structure's height, massing, and roofline are sympathetic to existing forms, do not dominate the site, and maintain key views, resulting in minimal physical and visual heritage impacts.
- The Lower Seating Bowl will be upgraded to improve accessibility and provide unobstructed sightlines, including additional wheelchair spaces. Demolished elements are primarily late 20th-century fabric of limited heritage significance. The new seating retains the form, scale, and visibility of existing elements, ensuring minimal impact on heritage fabric, visual character, or views across the site.
- The Western Grandstand works involve internal and partial façade upgrades, expansion of amenities, and refurbishment of seating while retaining the primary structure and massing. The existing fabric is of moderate heritage significance, and the proposed works are consistent with previous refurbishments, resulting in only minor physical heritage impacts.

Visually, the upgrades maintain the grandstand's scale, proportions, and architectural rhythm, preserving the character of the building and the broader heritage setting.

- As such the proposed works would have only **minor** adverse physical impacts and **little to no** visual impacts to the Leichhardt Oval and broader heritage item. The works have been assessed as having **little to no** physical or visual impacts to nearby heritage items. It is possible that potential impacts could occur due to construction vibration. It is expected that the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures outlined in this report, such as vibration monitoring, would help to minimise any potential indirect heritage impacts. Therefore, it is expected that the proposal would cause **little to no** potential indirect heritage impacts.

8.1.2 Historical archaeology

Historical archaeological assessment of the study area (included below as Appendix A in Section 10 of this report) has determined:

- The archaeological potential of a study area is presented in terms of the likelihood of the presence of archaeological resources, considering the land use history and previous impacts at the site. The study area has been assessed as having the following archaeological potential, arranged by historical phases of occupation and development:
 - Phase 1 (1819-1887): The study area has **nil** potential to contain archaeological remains associated with Phase 1, including early plantings and evidence of recreational use of the initial John Austen estate
 - Phase 2 (1887-1934): The study area has **low** potential to contain archaeological remains associated with Phase 2, which would include evidence of early park amenities, and the initial stages of construction of Leichhardt Oval and its associated grandstand and band rotunda. Evidence of the former timber post and rail fencing may be present in the form of post holes. There is **nil-low** potential for relics associated with Phase 2 to be present in the study area.
 - Phase 3 (1934-1970): The study area has **low** potential to contain archaeological remains associated with the further development of Leichhardt Oval over the course of Phase 3. Such remains would include evidence of ongoing construction activities and demolished early buildings including footings and foundations. There is **nil-low** potential for relics associated with Phase 3 to be present in the study area
 - Phase 4 (1970-Present): Phase 4 represents the last stage of development in Leichhardt Oval; the major redevelopment of the park in the 1970s and 1980s resulted in the present configuration of the park. Objects and features associated with this last phase are assessed as extant and non-archaeological.
- If considerably intact and *in situ* archaeological resources associated with Phases 2-3 are identified, they **may** reach the threshold for significance at a **Local** level. However, due to 20th century developments, it is unlikely archaeological resources from these phases remain wholly intact.

- Due to the **Low** potential for substantial and intact archaeological resources within the study area, it is assessed that the proposal would result in **minor adverse** impacts to significant historical archaeological resources.

8.2 Approval pathway

This SoHI has been prepared by Artefact on behalf of IWC in preparation for a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) for the development. The project application number is SSD-85149458, and the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) were issued on 23 June 2025.

The Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) outline that a SoHI with an Archaeological Assessment would be required to inform the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the oval refurbishment works. This report meets the requirements of Condition 19 of the SEARS.

8.3 Recommendations and mitigation measures

Consideration should be given to the following recommendations.

8.3.1 Built

- Potential indirect heritage impacts during construction works could occur due to vibrations on the built structures within the study area. The following mitigation measures should be undertaken to minimise these potential impacts.
 - Where vibration intensive plant or tools are used, vibration monitoring should be implemented to ensure that construction-related vibrations do not exceed the identified vibration damage screening levels. Assessment and monitoring of vibration impacts within the safe working limits near heritage fabric should adhere to:
 - British Standard BS 7385: Part 2: Evaluation and Measurement for Vibrations in Buildings – Part 2 Guide to Damage Levels from Ground-Borne Vibration
 - German Standard DIN 4150, Part 3: Structural Vibration in Buildings: Effects on Structure.
- If works other than those discussed in this report are proposed, then additional assessment would be required to assess the potential impact

8.3.2 Archaeology

It is recommended that the following mitigation measures are implemented prior to and during the proposal which requires limited ground penetration including excavation works:

Table 14: Recommended mitigation measures for the project

ID	Mitigation Measure
Heritage Management	
	Unexpected Finds Procedure
	As the study area has been assessed as having low potential to contain archaeological resources (i.e., 'works') that may reach the threshold for local significance, it is recommended that potential archaeological resources be managed through an Unexpected Finds Procedure (UFP) that is developed for the proposal. Example UFP content is outlined below for consideration during preparation of the UFP:
<i>Mitigation measure 1</i>	• If archaeological resources are identified during any stage of the project that do not match the definition of 'works' (as outlined in Section 2.5.2 of this report), works in the area must cease, the area adequately protected, and a suitably qualified archaeologist notified so as to carry out more detailed investigation and assessment • If the archaeological assessment determines that the remains are 'relics' in the meaning of the Heritage Act, the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water must be notified about the discovery of relics in accordance with Section 146 of the Heritage Act. Further approval/s may be required to allow the works to proceed.
	Heritage induction
<i>Mitigation Measure 2</i>	• All staff involved in the proposed works, including design professionals and tradespeople, must receive a heritage induction prior to the commencement of works. The heritage induction should cover the historical values of the site and the potential for the project to encounter significant archaeological resources • The induction should make contractors aware of the recommendations and mitigation methods included in this report, including the procedure to follow in the event that an unexpected archaeological find is encountered. Clear lines of communication must be established for the reporting of any such finds and for procedures to be rapidly implemented.
	General
<i>Mitigation Measure 3</i>	• Any additions or design modifications to the proposal, outside the scope of this assessment, would require additional heritage assessment to ensure consistency with this assessment • A copy of this report should be provided to the Inner West Council and Heritage NSW to inform them of the proposal and the potential impacts to the study area.

9.0 REFERENCES

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10.0 APPENDIX A: ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

10.1 Introduction

This section discusses the study area's potential to contain historical archaeological resources. The potential for the survival of archaeological remains is significantly affected by activities which may have caused ground disturbance. This assessment is therefore based on consideration of current ground conditions, and analysis of the historical development of the study area.

'Archaeological potential' refers to the likelihood that an area contains physical remains associated with an earlier phase of occupation, activity or development of that area. This is distinct from 'archaeological significance' and 'archaeological research potential'. These designations refer to the cultural value of potential archaeological remains and are the primary basis of the recommended management actions included in this document.

10.2 Archaeological potential

The archaeological potential of each site is presented in terms of the likelihood of the presence of archaeological remains, considering the land use history and previous impacts at the site. This evaluation is presented using the following grades of archaeological potential:

Table 15: Grading of archaeological potential

Grading	Rationale
Nil	No evidence of historical development or use, or where previous impacts would have removed all archaeological potential
Low	Research indicates little historical development, or where there have been substantial previous impacts, disturbance and truncation in locations where some archaeological remains such as deep subsurface features may survive
Moderate	Analysis demonstrates known historical development and some previous impacts, but it is likely that archaeological remains survive with some localised truncation and disturbance
High	Evidence of multiple phases of historical development and structures with minimal or localised twentieth century development impacts, and it is likely the archaeological resource would be largely intact

10.2.1 Land use summary

The European occupation of the study area has been divided into 4 general phases of historical activity, which are outlined in Table 16 below:

Table 16: Land use summary

Phase	Discussion
Phase 1: Initial land grants (1819-1887)	Historical activities 100 acre allotment including study area created as part of subdivision of Lilyfield, granted to John Austen 31 July 1819 - Austen names land "Spring Cove", later known as "Austenham" - No structures evident in study area or wider allotment - Land described as "barren" c. 1870s, though some native plants present - Fig trees on Mary St ('4 fig trees' heritage item, LEP no. I1201) likely planted at this time - Council purchased land for Leichhardt Park (including study area) in 1882 24 acres of land officially reserved as part of Leichhardt Park in 1887
	Potential archaeological resources - Evidence of recreational use of estate - Evidence of early plantings Development associated with Phases 2, 3, and 4 (i.e., landscaping, construction) would have highly disturbed or completely removed any potential archaeological resources from this phase
Phase 2: Initial construction of recreational facilities (1887-1934)	Historical activities - Construction of Leichhardt Oval with associated grandstand and band rotunda in study area c. 1905 - Timber post and rail fencing installed along boundary of Oval by 1934
	Potential archaeological resources - Evidence of initial stages of construction - Evidence of early park amenities including fencing postholes Development associated with Phases 3 and 4 (i.e., landscaping, construction) would have highly disturbed or completely removed any potential archaeological resources from this phase
Phase 3: Further development of Leichhardt Oval (1934-1970)	Historical activities - Additional timber pavilion and grandstand constructed on southern side of the study area c. 1934 - Brick extension of pavilion added c. 1951 4 additional small structures built on perimeter of study area by 1961 (possibly including two toilet blocks), but were demolished in the 1970s or 80s
	Potential archaeological resources - Evidence of ongoing construction activities - Evidence of demolished buildings inc. footings and foundations Development associated with Phase 4 (i.e., landscaping, construction) would have highly disturbed or completely removed potential archaeological resources from this phase

Phase	Discussion
Phase 4: Recent alterations and additions to Leichhardt oval (1970-present)	• Historical activities • Major redevelopment of Oval, reconfiguration of ground c. 1970s-80s • Large concrete and steel grandstand constructed on west side of oval c. 1970s • Rectangular seating bowl constructed c. 1970s • Extant carpark on west side of study area constructed c. 1970s • Ancillary structures incl. brick scoreboard constructed on east side of oval c. 1970s • Demolition of 1934 southern grandstand, two 1961 free-standing toilet blocks, and brick scoreboard • Construction of new toilet blocks, new eastern grandstand, new paving and ancillary works c. 2005-2006 • Demolition of underground toilets at northern end of Oval, replaced with concourse seating in 2007; • Installation of 3x 150,000 litre underground stormwater storage tanks near Oval in 2008 • Addition of northern extension (player amenities) to western grandstand 2009 Potential archaeological resources • Buildings associated with this phase are extant (not archaeological) Development associated with this phase (i.e., landscaping, construction) would have highly disturbed or completely removed any potential archaeological resources from previous phases

10.2.2 Relevant archaeological investigations

No previous archaeological assessments have been undertaken for the land contained within the study area, however archaeological assessments have been undertaken in nearby areas of Leichhardt Park and the surrounding suburb.

Urbis (2023), *Aboriginal and Historical Archaeological Opportunities and Constraints*

Urbis in 2023 prepared a preliminary constraints assessment of Leichhardt Pool and Aquatic Centre, which is adjacent to the study area. Their assessment concluded that there is generally low potential for relics, evidence of structures, and artefactual deposits resulting from discards in the area of the centre due to a high degree of demolition, construction, and earthwork activities over the course of the 20th century. They recommended that no further historical archaeological assessment was needed beyond the preliminary assessment.²⁸

GML (2020), *Kirkbride Block and Convalescent Cottages, Callan Park – Conservation Management Plan*

In 2020 GML prepared a CMP for the Kirkbride Block and Convalescent Cottages, Callan Park, which is a SHR-listed heritage item (SHR no. 00818) in the vicinity of the study area, and adjacent to Leichhardt Park. GML concluded that the CMP's subject investigation area contained moderate to high potential to contain state-significant archaeological remains dating to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It should be noted, however, that though the SHR curtilage is in close proximity to the study area, the areas of high archaeological potential assessed by GML are located at a considerable distance to the east, as illustrated in Figure 62 below. Furthermore, the study area and GML's

²⁸ Urbis, *Leichhardt Pool and Aquatic Centre Aboriginal and Historical Archaeology Opportunities & Constraints*, 2023

investigation area were the sites of thoroughly different historical development patterns. In spite of their proximity and development in similar eras, the findings of archaeological potential for state-significant remains in Callan Park overall are unlikely to apply to the study area.²⁹



Figure 62. Figure 1.2 in Volume 1 of the CMP, showing the location of GML's subject investigation area, with the indicative location of the study area outlined in blue (Source: GML, 2020)

²⁹ GML, *Kirkbride Block and Convalescent Cottages, Callan Park – Conservation Management Plan*, 2020

10.2.3 Summary of historical archaeological potential

Based on the review of the information obtained from historical sources including Paris Maps, aerial photos, and the current condition of the site, it is considered that parts of the study area on the periphery of the oval have **low** potential to contain significant historical archaeological remains including:

- Evidence of previous and demolished early- and mid-20th century buildings on periphery of Leichhardt Oval, including foundations and footings
- Such demolished buildings include the 1934 southern grandstand, two 1961 free-standing toilet blocks, and brick scoreboard

Artefactual objects or deposits related to the use of the area for outdoor recreation and sports may also be present, however the ephemeral and incidental nature of such objects makes it difficult to predict their presence or absence with certainty. Overall, due to ground disturbance (from landscaping and construction activities) in the oval and the wider study area in the late 20th century, it is assessed that there is **nil-low** potential for such artefactual remains to be present.

The assessment of **low** potential of the study area to contain significant historical archaeological remains ('works') is due to a high degree of ground disturbance across the footprint of the study area, particularly on the periphery of the study area. This ground disturbance is a result of considerable demolition, construction, and landscaping activities around the oval sports ground over the course of the 20th century. The potential for archaeological resources associated with early phases of historical development and early buildings is therefore limited as a result of later land modification, remediation, and development. Surviving archaeological remains would most likely be located on the northern, western, and southern periphery of the study area. There are unlikely to be considerable or significant archaeological remains in the centre of the study area, as there is no historical evidence of construction development within the sports ground of the oval itself.

There is no identified potential for archaeological 'relics' as defined and protected by the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* to be present within the proposal footprint.



Figure 63. Map of areas of archaeological potential in the study area

10.3 Archaeological significance

The significance assessment of historical archaeological sites and items requires a specialised framework in order to consider the range of values associated with each site/item. This because of the challenges associated with the often-unknown nature and extent of buried archaeological remains, and judgment is usually based on anticipated attributes. To facilitate assessment of archaeological significance, the NSW Heritage Branch (now Heritage NSW) arranged the seven heritage criteria into four groups (see below). The value of archaeological sources primarily lies in their research potential or the ability to provide additional information about site/item that is not contained in historical records. The following significance assessment of the study area's potential archaeological remains has been carried out by using these criteria as outlined in the *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and 'Relics'*.

10.3.1 NSW Heritage criteria for assessing significance related to archaeological sites and relics

10.3.1.1 Archaeological research potential (NSW Criterion E)

As most of the archaeological remains that are potentially contained within the study area generally comprise the remains of demolished early- and mid-20th century buildings on the periphery of the study area, they are considered to have some potential to provide detailed or meaningful insights into the historical use of the site. The research potential would be vested in the ability of the structural remains and artefactual deposits to supplement the documentary record with information about the size, construction methods, and exact locations of former buildings in study area. If substantially intact, these potential remains would likely reach the threshold of local significance under this criterion.

10.3.1.2 Association with individuals, events or groups of historical importance (Criteria A, B & D)

Archaeological remains of demolished early- and mid-20th century buildings are unlikely to satisfy the criterion of associative significance.

10.3.1.3 Aesthetic of technical significance (Criterion C)

Archaeological remains of demolished early- and mid-20th century buildings are unlikely to satisfy the criterion of technical significance. However, well preserved and legible artefacts could have some aesthetic value.

10.3.1.4 Ability to demonstrate the past through archaeological remains (Criteria A, C, F & G)

Articulated and interpretable remains of former demolished buildings in the study area would have the ability to demonstrate the past use of Leichhardt Oval.

10.3.2 Summary statement of archaeological significance

The study area comprises a sports oval and associated buildings and infrastructure. The archaeological potential of the area overall has been assessed as **nil to low** as a consequence of considerable ground disturbing activities over the course of the 20th century, and the absence of built structures within the oval ground. There is some potential for archaeological remains associated with demolished early- and mid-20th century buildings to provide research opportunities, and they furthermore would be able to demonstrate the past use of Leichhardt Oval. If considerably intact, these remains would likely reach the threshold for **local** significance under Criterion E (Section 10.3.1.1) as well as A, C, F, and G (Section 10.3.1.4).

However, as the historical use and development of Leichhardt Oval is well understood via the documentary record, these potential remains would be unlikely to provide meaningful insights into the history of the site.

10.4 Summary of historical archaeological potential and significance

This archaeological assessment has identified **nil** to **low** potential for historical archaeological remains of local significance, including evidence of former demolished buildings. These remains are summarised in Table 17 below.

Table 17: Historical archaeological potential and significance

Phase	Anticipated remains	Potential for survival	Significance
Phase 1 (1819-1887)	Potential remains of early plantings, evidence of recreational use of the estate	Nil	Nil
Phase 2 (1887-1934)	Potential remains of early- and mid-20 th century demolished buildings, or associated with development of park amenities	Low	Local
Phase 3 (1934-1970)	Potential remains of mid-late-20 th century demolished buildings, including footings and foundations	Low	Local
Phase 4 (1970-Present)	The development of structures associated with this phase is extant (not archaeological)	Extant (not archaeological)	No significance



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