

# EXTENT



# ROUSE HILL HOSPITAL BASELINE HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Prepared for Health Infrastructure NSW

August 2025



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## Document information

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Project initiation

This Baseline Archaeological Assessment (BHAA) has been prepared by Extent Heritage to support a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) for the construction and operation of a new hospital campus at the Corner of Commercial Road and Windsor Road, Rouse Hill (SSD-96248991).

The proposed development comprises:

- Site preparation including earthworks and tree removal;
- Construction of internal roads with connection to Commercial Road;
- Incoming electrical and communications services
- Construction of hospital buildings up to eleven storeys;
- Construction of a ten storey above-ground car park;
- Pedestrian and cycle pathway connections;
- Landscaping; and
- Ancillary works to Commercial Road, comprising:
  - minor works (including realignment of existing median strip, kerb and gutter, footpath and lane marking) to provide access from Commercial Road into Hospital Road; and
  - associated tree removal along Commercial Road.

The scope of the proposed works includes:

- An emergency department and primary access clinic
- Comprehensive birthing services including birthing rooms and a maternity inpatient unit
- Inpatient beds and day surgery services
- Short stay medical assessment services
- Pathology, pharmacy, and medical imaging services
- Outpatient and ambulatory care services including paediatrics and renal dialysis and antenatal and postnatal services
- Virtual care and hospital in the home services
- Prehabilitation, rehabilitation and lifestyle medicine.
- Administration, staff support, loading dock and back-of-house services; and
- Ancillary commercial uses to support the hospital, including retail.

This report has addressed the following matters within the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued for the SSDA on 16 October 2025 (see table below).

Item	SEARs Requirement	Response
20	Where there is potential for direct or indirect impacts on the heritage significance 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.	<p>A SOHI has been prepared by Extent Heritage under a separate cover.</p> <p>This report has been prepared to address archaeological impacts.</p>

Rouse Hill is part of the North West Growth Area within the Greater Sydney Region and has been identified as a strategic centre for ongoing rapid population growth. In 2015 the NSW Government announced a new health service at Rouse Hill to be delivered to support the rapid population growth identified for the area.



Master Planning for the proposed RHH was based on a funding commitment of \$300 million and completed in May 2022. Since lodging a SSDA in 2022, the existing SSDA was withdrawn. A SOHI was prepared by Urbis to accompany the previous SSDA. In April 2025, the Federal Government made a commitment for an additional \$120M to deliver maternity and birthing services at Rouse Hill Hospital, followed by an additional \$90M additional funding commitment by the NSW Government announced in May 2025.

The current Project consists of two stages, with Early Works undertaken as Development Without Consent. Early Works will be completed prior to the commencement of the works sought for approval under the SSDA.

## 1.2. Study area location and identification

The study area is located at the corner of Commercial and Windsor Roads, Rouse Hill (Figure 1). The site is within the Hills Shire Council local government area (LGA). The proposed hospital site comprises approximately 2.35 hectares of greenfield land. The hospital site is legally defined as Lot 311 and 312 of DP 1274392. The study area comprises works including the hospital site, footpath connection (Part Lot 229), construction compounds (Part Lot 229) and works to Commercial Rd (Lot 2011, DP 1131519 and Lot 101, DP1060353).

**Rouse Hill Hospital**

-  Study area - SSDA area
-  Study area - Hospital site

**Drawn by:** Richard Tuffin  
**Checked by:** Emma Whitworth  
**Date:** 13 August 2025  
**Projection:** GDA2020 MGA Zone 56  
**Data sources:** Extent, Nearmap, NSW Spatial Services, ABS, Geoscience Au

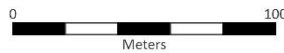


Figure 1. Location of the study area. *Source:* Nearmap 2024.

### 1.3. Development description

The proposed development comprises:

- Site preparation including earthworks and tree removal;
- Construction of internal roads with connection to Commercial Road;
- Incoming electrical and communications services
- Construction of hospital buildings up to eleven storeys;
- Construction of a ten storey above-ground car park;
- Pedestrian and cycle pathway connections;
- Landscaping; and
- Ancillary works to Commercial Road, comprising:
  - minor works (including realignment of existing median strip, kerb and gutter, footpath and lane marking) to provide access from Commercial Road into Hospital Road; and
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The scope of the proposed works includes:

- An emergency department and primary access clinic
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- Outpatient and ambulatory care services including paediatrics and renal dialysis and antenatal and postnatal services
- Virtual care and hospital in the home services
- Prehabilitation, rehabilitation and lifestyle medicine.
- Administration, staff support, loading dock and back-of-house services; and
- Ancillary commercial uses to support the hospital, including retail.

### 1.4. Statutory context

Historical archaeological relics in NSW are protected by state legislation and environmental planning instruments provided by local government. Specific legislation relevant to this project includes:

- *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW) (the Heritage Act)
- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW) (EPA Act)
- *The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2019* (The Hills LEP 2019)

### 1.4.1. NSW Heritage Act 1977

The Heritage Act is designed to conserve the environmental heritage of New South Wales (NSW) and regulate development impacts on the state's heritage assets. Significant historical archaeological features are afforded automatic statutory protection by the 'relics' provisions of the Act. A 'relic' is defined in the Act 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.

In accordance with section 139(1) of the Heritage Act, it is an offence to disturb or excavate land, where this may affect a relic, without an approval or excavation permit issued by the Heritage Council of NSW, or an endorsed 'exemption' or 'exception' to disturb or expose and destroy a relic. Sites that may contain archaeological relics are usually managed under sections 140 (application) and 141 (approval) of the Heritage Act. Sites with potential archaeology, listed on the State Heritage Register (SHR), are managed under sections 60 (application) and 63 (approval) of the Heritage Act.

### 1.4.2. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Environmental planning instruments made under the EPA Act include SEPPs, that deal with matters of state or regional environmental planning significance, and Local Environmental Plans (LEPs), that guide planning decisions for local government areas. The study area falls within the The Hills Shire Council LGA. Currently, the relevant environmental planning instrument is The Hills LEP 2019.

#### 1.4.2.1. The Hills LEP 2019

The objectives of The Hills LEP 2019 with respect to environment and heritage are provided in the following clauses:

##### 5.10 Heritage conservation

**(1) Objectives** The objectives of this clause are as follows—

- (a) to conserve the environmental heritage of The Hills,
- (b) to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views,
- (c) to conserve archaeological sites,
- (d) to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.

**(2) Requirement for consent** Development consent is required for any of the following—

(a) demolishing or moving any of the following or altering the exterior of any of the following (including, in the case of a building, making changes to its detail, fabric, finish or appearance)—

(i) a heritage item,

(ii) an Aboriginal object,

(iii) a building, work, relic or tree within a heritage conservation area,

(b) altering a heritage item that is a building by making structural changes to its interior or by making changes to anything inside the item that is specified in Schedule 5 in relation to the item,

(c) disturbing or excavating an archaeological site while knowing, or having reasonable cause to suspect, that the disturbance or excavation will or is likely to result in a relic being discovered, exposed, moved, damaged or destroyed,

(d) disturbing or excavating an Aboriginal place of heritage significance,

(e) erecting a building on land—

(i) on which a heritage item is located or that is within a heritage conservation area, or

(ii) on which an Aboriginal object is located or that is within an Aboriginal place of heritage significance,

(f) subdividing land—

(i) on which a heritage item is located or that is within a heritage conservation area, or

(ii) on which an Aboriginal object is located or that is within an Aboriginal place of heritage significance.

**(7) Archaeological sites** The consent authority must, before granting consent under this clause to the carrying out of development on an archaeological site (other than land listed on the State Heritage Register or to which an interim heritage order under the Heritage Act 1977 applies)—

(a) notify the Heritage Council of its intention to grant consent, and

(b) take into consideration any response received from the Heritage Council within 28 days after the notice is sent.

### 1.4.3. Listings

Extent Heritage undertook a review of all available heritage databases including the NSW State Heritage Register (SHR), NSW State Heritage Inventory (SHI), The Hills LEP 2019, Section 170 Register (S170), National Heritage List, Commonwealth Heritage List, and National Trust Heritage List (NT). The review showed no heritage items, heritage conservation areas or archaeological sites within the study area.

### 1.4.4. Heritage items in the vicinity

Heritage items in the vicinity of the study area are listed below in Table 1.

Table 1. Heritage items located within the vicinity of the study area.

Item name	Listing	Address	Significance	Item number
Royal Oak Inn	NSW SHR	2 Commercial Road, Rouse Hill	State	00698
Royal Oak Inn	The Hills LEP, 2019	2 Commercial Road, Rouse Hill	Local	1185
Windsor Road from Baulkham Hills to Box Hill	The Hills LEP, 2019	Windsor Road	Local	128

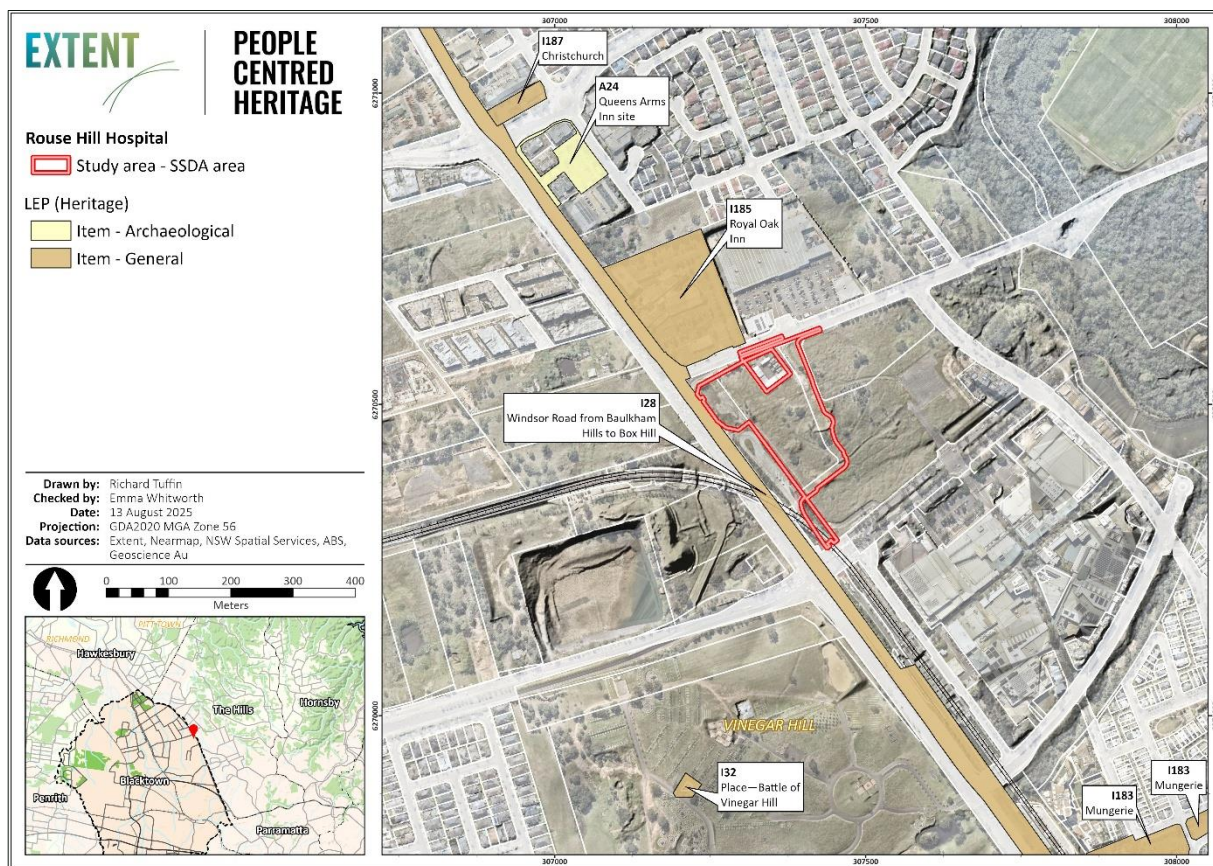


Figure 2. Heritage items shown in relation to the study area. *Source:* NSW Planning Portal.

## 1.5. Previous reports and investigations

The study area has been previously assessed as part of the 2022 SSSA. The *Heritage Impact Statement: Rouse Hill Hospital* (Urbis 2022) (HIS) included an archaeological assessment of the site. This report builds on the information and recommendations in that document.

## 1.6. Objectives

This report aims to present an overview of the potential historical archaeological resource located within the study area and provide an assessment of its significance. The archaeological potential was assessed on the basis of comparative mapping and review of relevant historical materials. This document is a baseline archaeological assessment only, and aims to:

- Review historical research from the HIS
- Assess the likely potential for archaeological relics of State or local significance
- Make recommendations as to whether a full Archaeological Assessment is required

## 1.7. Approach and methodology

This report was developed in accordance with the principles and procedures established by the following heritage guidelines:

- *The Australian ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013* (The Burra Charter) (Australia ICOMOS 2013)
- *Archaeological Assessment Guidelines* (Heritage Office and Department of Urban Affairs and Planning 1996)
- *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and 'Relics'* (Heritage Branch, Department of Planning 2009)
- *Historical Archaeology Code of Practice* (Heritage Office and Department of Planning 2006)

## 1.8. Limitations

This report uses both primary and secondary historical documentation and previously established significance assessments prepared by third party heritage consultants. This report does not review the built heritage or Aboriginal cultural heritage values of the study area.

## 1.9. Authorship

This report was prepared by Mike Hincks (Principal Heritage Advisor) with mapping prepared by Richard Tuffin (Senior GIS Specialist). The historical overview for the site was prepared by Kate Long (Senior Heritage Advisor), Mike Hincks and Emma Whitworth (Heritage Advisor). Quality assurance review was undertaken by Dr MacLaren North (Director).

## **2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

### **2.1. Introduction**

The study area has been previously assessed as part of the 2022 SSDA. The following historical overview has been prepared to provide context to the archaeological significance of the study area, however, it is not intended as an exhaustive history of the site. It provides as rationale for historical developments in the area and assists in identifying archaeological potential within the study area.

### **2.2. Dharug Country**

The Dharug are the traditional owners of the land on which the study area is located. Archaeological evidence has demonstrated continuous use of the varying landforms throughout Rouse Hill and its surrounds in the pre-colonial period. Interpretation of the archaeology has established that Aboriginal use of the area did not conform to traditional European models of sedentary or semi-sedentary settlement patterns. Rather, there were whole-of-landscape activities that were evident in the artefact distributions across the area. In a landscape-scale analysis, White and McDonald concluded that:

the entire [Rouse Hill area] was a cultural landscape... Short-term models of settlement organisation that incorporated terms such as 'residential base' or 'transitory camp' were not sufficient to account for these artefact distributions. (2010, 37)

It was a cultural landscape that was integrated with the low relief landforms interspersed with well-developed drainage networks. Water sources were relatively common, with both ephemeral and permanent streams and ponds forming significant features in the landscape (White and McDonald 2010, 30). This area was once covered in Cumberland Plain Woodland, with taller forest in the vicinity of larger streams. Varying densities of artefacts have been found across all landforms, indicating an extensive cultural landscape (White and McDonald 2010, 36). However, several trends were identified, showing that people preferred slightly elevated, well-drained locations in the lower parts of the valleys.

### **2.3. Windsor Road and the Castle Hill rebellion**

At the end of the eighteenth century, all the land in NSW was claimed by the British Crown. The commander of a Royal Navy fleet that landed at Warrane in 1788 began granting Aboriginal land to British soldiers and citizens on the basis of this claim. Townships were set up at Sydney, Parramatta, and Windsor, seeking access to agricultural and pastoral ground. The land was forcibly taken, alienated and cleared, in a push to both feed the colony and establish legitimacy in a context where ownership was inextricably linked with European notions of development.

Establishing road connections between the river valley townships was a priority for the British, and in 1794, Windsor Road was established as a cart track connecting the towns at Parramatta and Windsor. It travelled through the open Cumberland forest of Rouse Hill, between Second Ponds Creek and Caddies Creek. Although the landscape was nominally claimed by the Crown, huge swathes of it remained materially and culturally uncolonised.

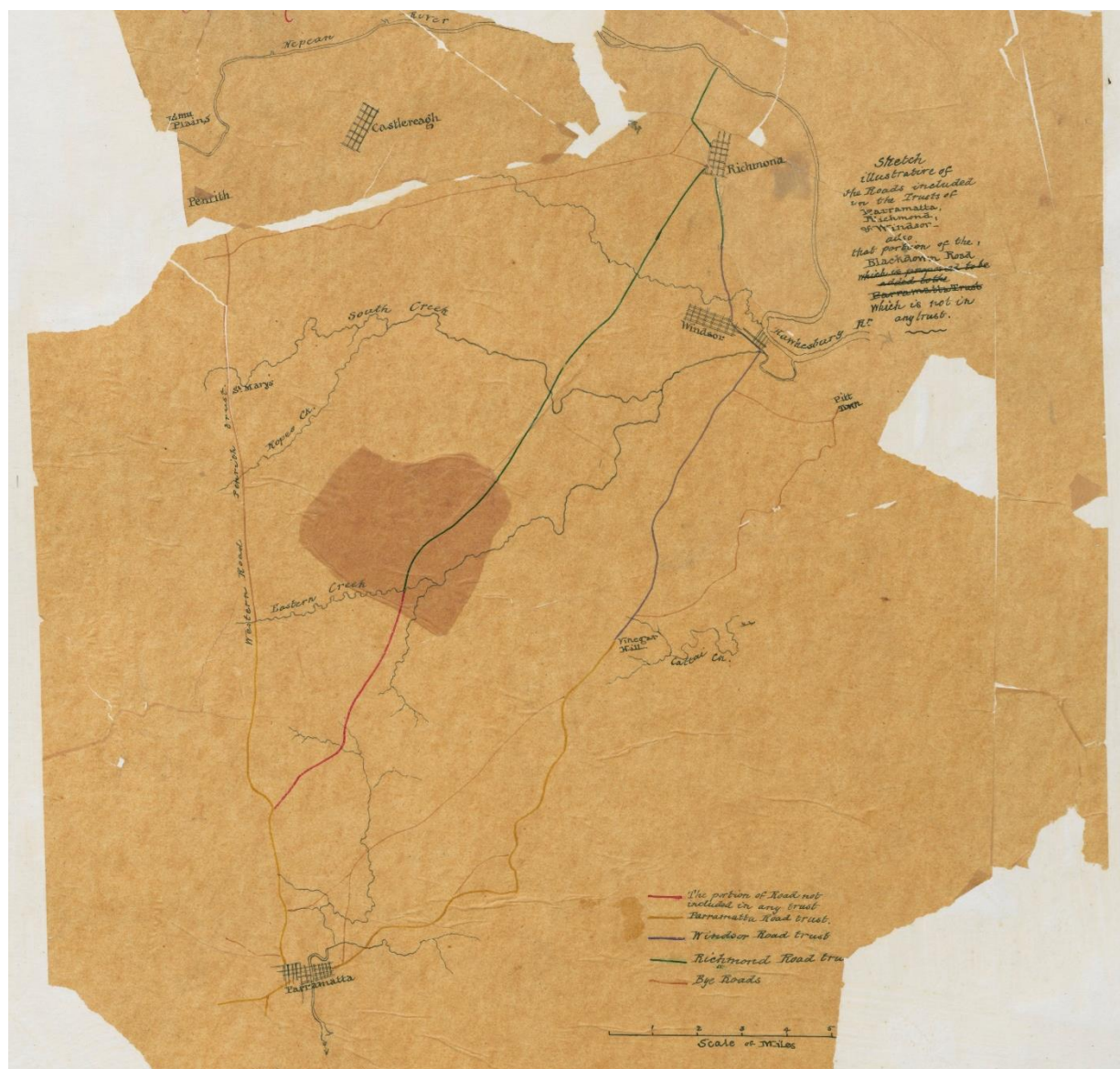


Figure 3. Detail of an undated sketch (1854-1857) showing the roads connecting Parramatta and Windsor and Parramatta and Richmond (SRNSW NRS-13886-1-[X768]-Volume 7 Part 3-79, SB7 F151).

The study area was adjacent to Windsor Road and remained forested until at least 1809. During the Castle Hill rebellion of 1804, rebel convicts had pushed west into the area after limited skirmishes and successful raids around the Seven Hills/Pennant Hills district (Moore 2009). There were no military posts or stations in this part of the country, and so a small army of soldiers and citizens had undertaken a forced march from Parramatta in pursuit. The Government's victorious account of the

encounter barely hides the panic and difficulty of hunting down the rebels in country that was essentially uncontrolled by the British. The party was ordered to:

...march immediately in pursuit of the Insurgents; their active perseverance and zeal notwithstanding the fatigue they had undergone in running after a body of 266 Armed Rebels upwards of 7 miles from the place where certain Information was received of them; the Gallantry of Major Johnston's conduct with only one Trooper, in detaining that Body till his small Force of 25 Soldiers, with Quartermaster Laycock, and several of the Volunteer Inhabitants of Parramatta could overtake him. (N 'General Orders' 1804)

The battle was short lived, and when the British officer failed to honour the terms of the subsequent negotiation and fired on the rebels, the outgunned convicts scattered. Many remained on the run after the battle, and the difficulty of tracking them down was reflected in the martial law that was proclaimed on 11 March 1804. It stated that the districts of Parramatta, Castle Hill, Toongabbie, Prospect, Seven Hills, Baulkham Hills, Hawkesbury and Nepean were in a 'state of rebellion' (N 'Proclamation' 1804). The rebels were unable to regroup and many were eventually captured or surrendered.

As the scale of the battle and its exact location is unclear, it is possible that some action could have occurred within the study area.

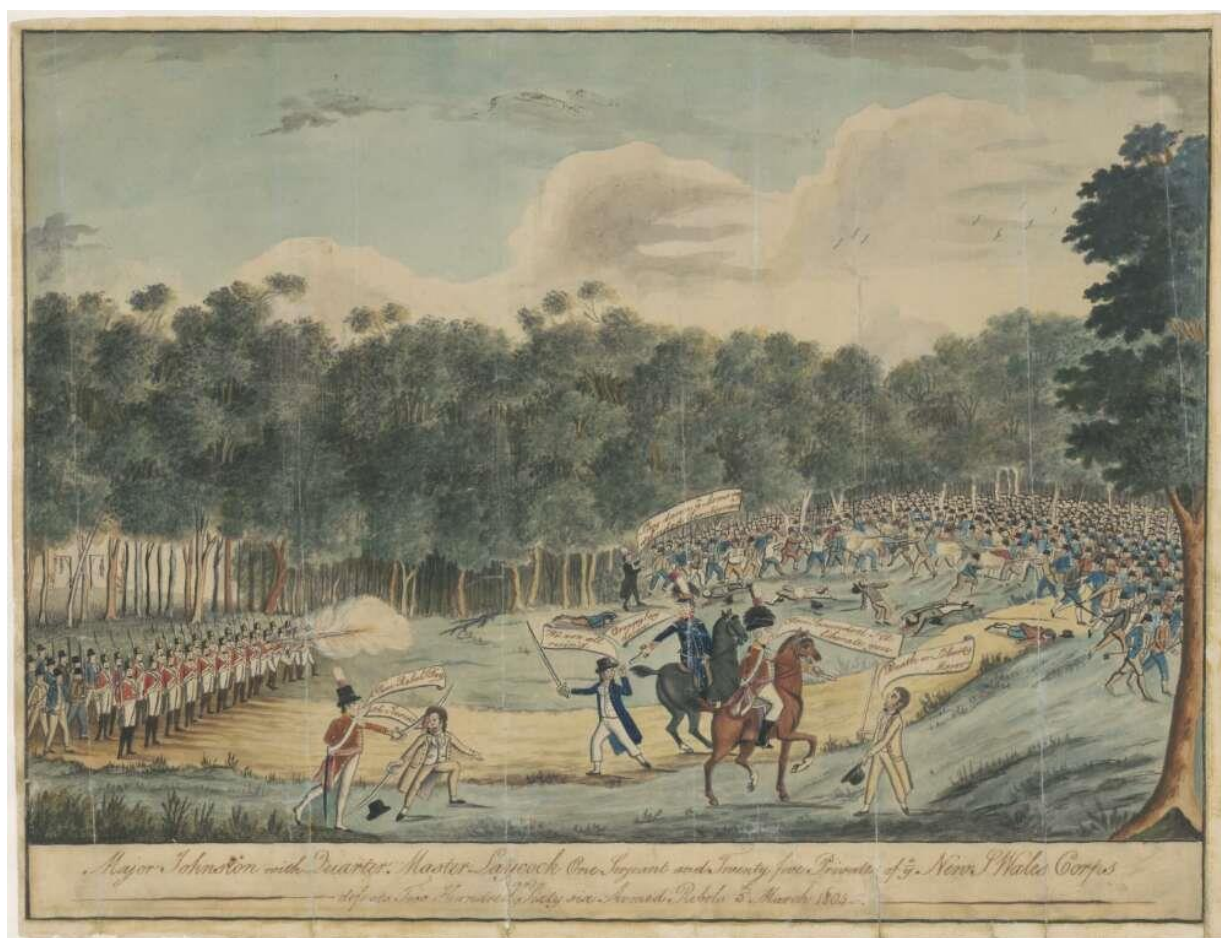


Figure 4. Depiction of the battle between the rebels and the British ('Convict uprising at Castle Hill, 1804.' n.d.)

## 2.4. Early land use

In 1809, several parcels of land were granted on the eastern side of Windsor Road, including the ground within the study area.

The study area is within 100 acres of land that was granted to Lucy Mileham in 1809 (portion 82, Figure 5). It was an elongated parcel of land that was bounded by present-day Commercial Road in the north, Windsor Road in the west and Withers Road in the east. Caddies Creek ran through the land flowing from south to north. The study area was located near the northwest corner of the property, on the western side of Caddies Creek. It was around 50m from the street frontage to Windsor Road, and occupied some of the highest ground within the grant. It was a likely place to locate a homestead.

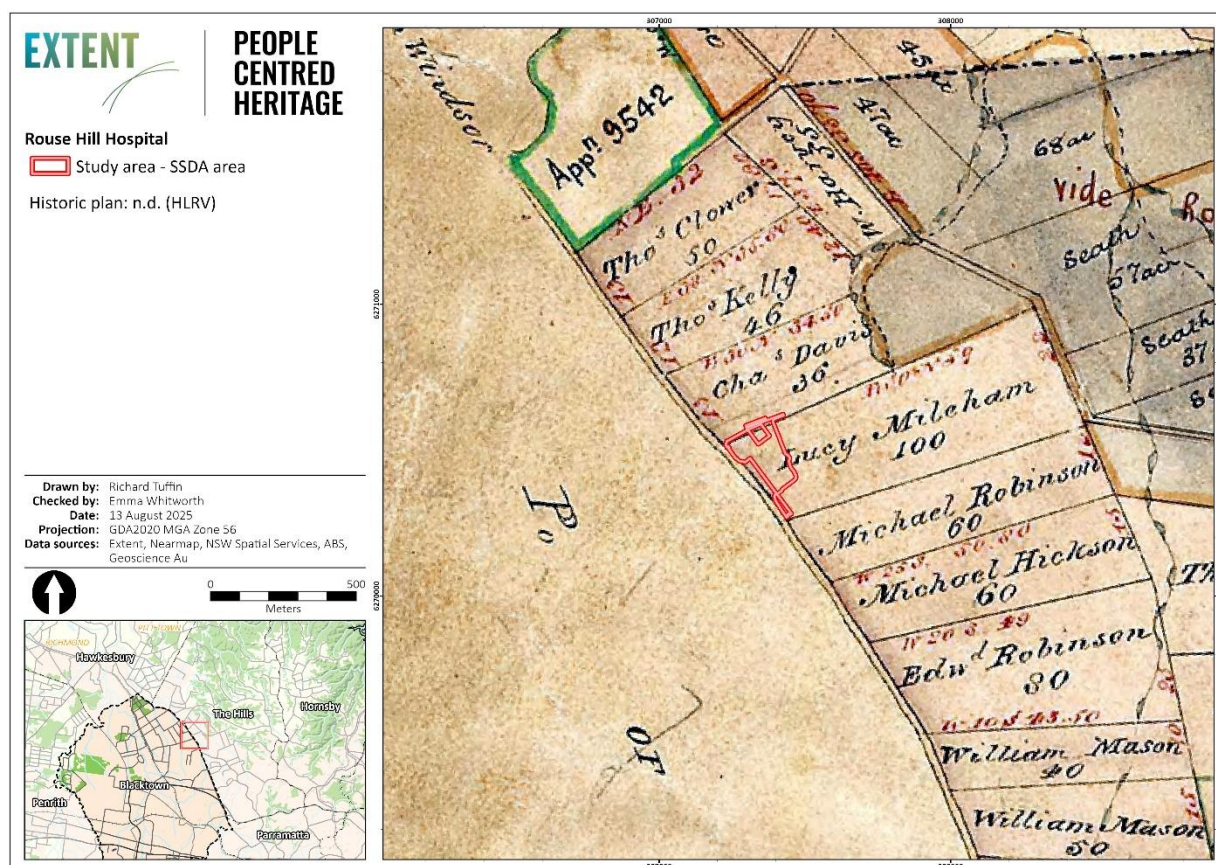


Figure 5: An early (undated) parish map showing the grants on the eastern side of Windsor Road including Lucy Mileham's 100 acres (NSW LRS HLRV).

Lucy was the daughter of James Mileham, a well-known surgeon. Lucy's 100 acres had been in addition to a grant of 500 acres to James at Upper Nelson in April 1809. Governor Lachlan Macquarie regranted these in October 1811, and later granted him a further 700 acres at Illawarra with indulgences of convict labour and stock, but Mileham was forced to sell these shortly after due to financial troubles (Parsons 2006).

Lucy's 100 acres was therefore part of a considerable amount of family land, but most of it did not stay in the family for long. The financial troubles may have also meant that her land was never built on or invested in considerably. However, if it was a working property, huts, sheds and other basic infrastructure would have been located somewhere on the land, if only for caretakers or seasonal workers. It was a condition of Lucy's grant that she cultivate twenty acres in the first five years of possession (NSW LRS Serial 5, Page 86, Figure 6). No information could be found regarding historical structures on the property from this period.

Upon marrying Samuel Hassell in 1819, Lucy's tenuous connections with the land became even more distant when she moved to the Hassall family home, *Macquarie Grove*, near Cobbitty (Ramsden 1934).

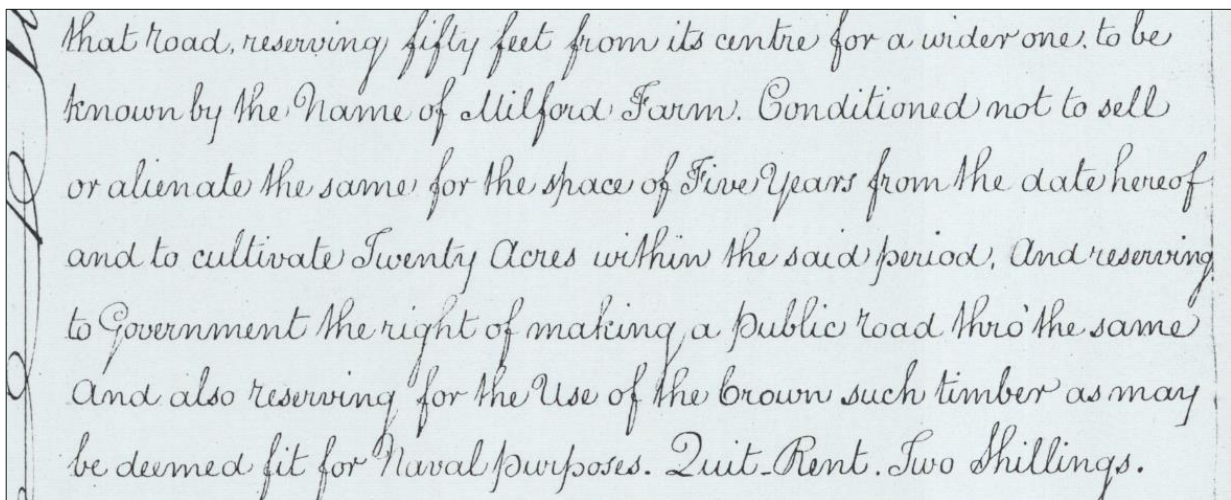


Figure 6. Detail of Lucy Mileham's 100 acre grant showing the condition to clear and cultivate (NSW LRS Serial 5 p86).

## 2.5. The Bradley estate and the Pearces

By 1828, Jonas Bradley had purchased the three neighbouring lots to the south (portions 83, 84 and 85), and sometime prior to 1852 he also purchased Mileham's land. The combined estate stretched from present day Sanctuary Drive in the south to Commercial Road in the north, creating a parcel of 338 acres with 1200m of Windsor Road frontage. The large estate was then sold to Elias Laycock in 1852, and then to Robert Pearce in 1866. Pearce was a prominent orchardist and grazier (NSW DPIE 1999). There was no record of building within the study area during this period.

Pearce owned land on the western side of Windsor Road, on which the house *Maryville* (now known as *Merriville*) stood. As Pearce did not live on the land containing the study area, it can be assumed that it was primarily used for orchards, and later grazing. In 1894 Pearce's son bought the 338 acre parcel from his father and built a house near present day Sanctuary Drive at the southern end of the property (*Mungerie House*) (NSW DPIE 1999). The study area was located in a peripheral part of the estate, some 800m northwest of *Mungerie House*. In 1885 and 1894, the land was marked as 'cleared paddocks' on crown plans.



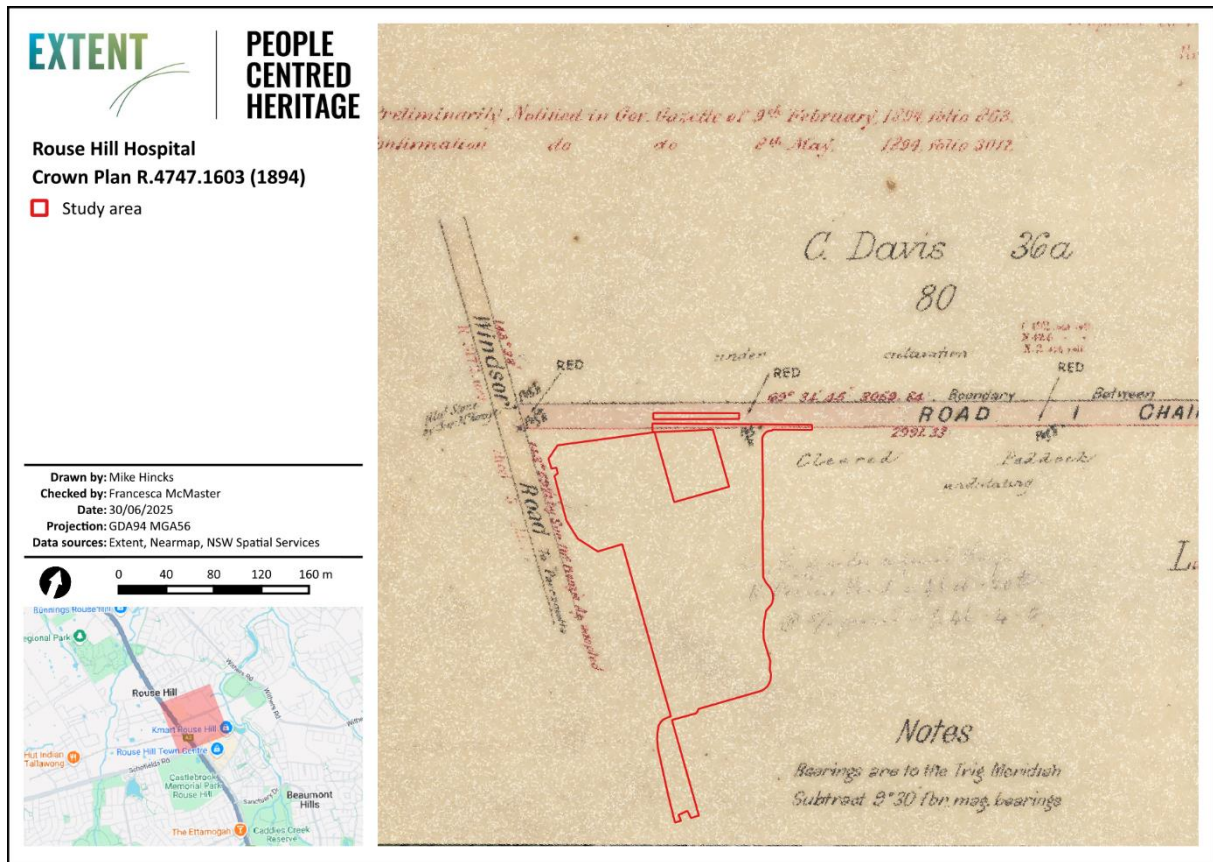


Figure 9. Detail of Crown Plan R.4747.1603 annotated 'Cleared Paddock, Undulating' near the study area.

## 2.6. Mungerie Park Golf Course and Kellyville Country Club

Mungerie House and the associated land was purchased in 1914 by Charles Baker, a grazier, who used the land for farming. The subject site continued to be used for farming until 1963, at which point a golf course, initially called the *Mungerie Park Golf Course* and later the *Kellyville Country Club* was constructed (Samuel 2010). It is unlikely that the land was heavily altered during this process, with the extent of the alterations being the removal of trees, the addition of topsoil, and the excavation of bunkers (AMBS 1998). The land remained in use as a golf course until 2008, at which point the Mungerie Park Zone Substation was constructed between 2008 to 2009 (Samuel 2010). The land was also used as a materials and soil store for the construction of both the substation and the Rouse Hill Town Centre between 2005 to 2008 (City Plan 2013). Since then, the land has remained unused.

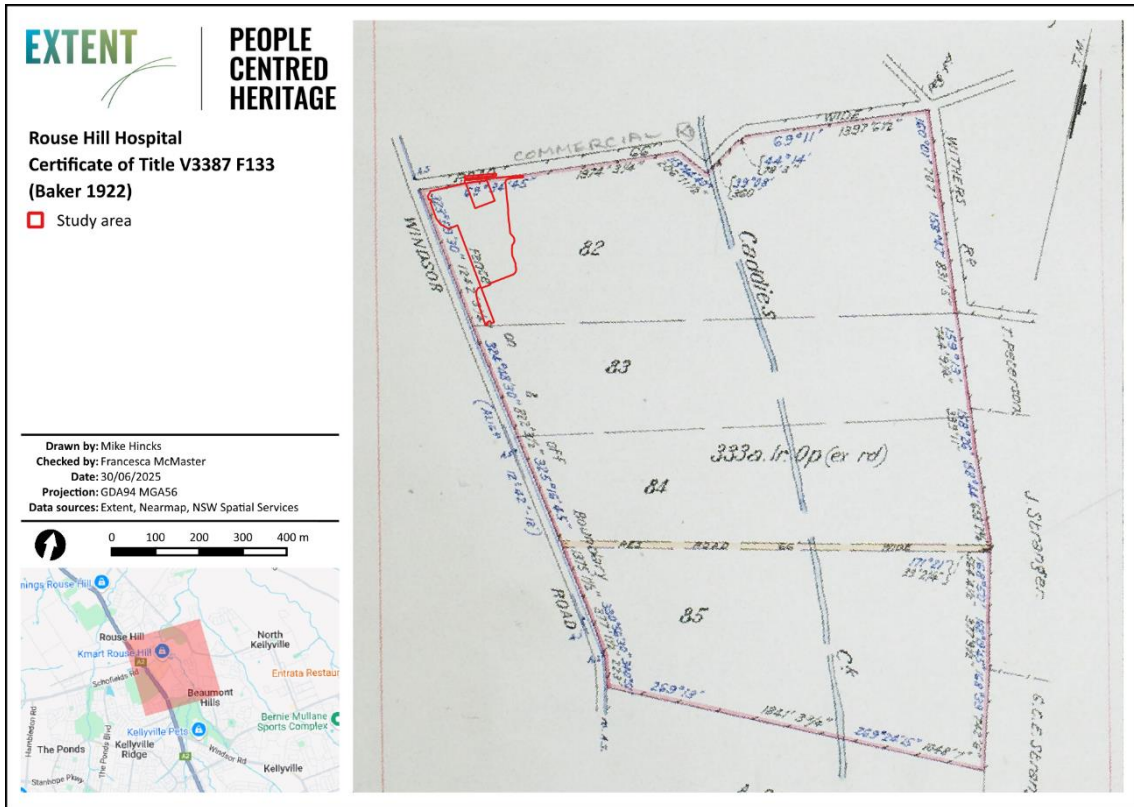


Figure 10. Plan of Baker's land in 1922 from his Certificate of Title (Vol. 3387 Fol. 133).



Figure 11. 1930 aerial photo of the study area showing plough marks (NSW Historical Imagery).

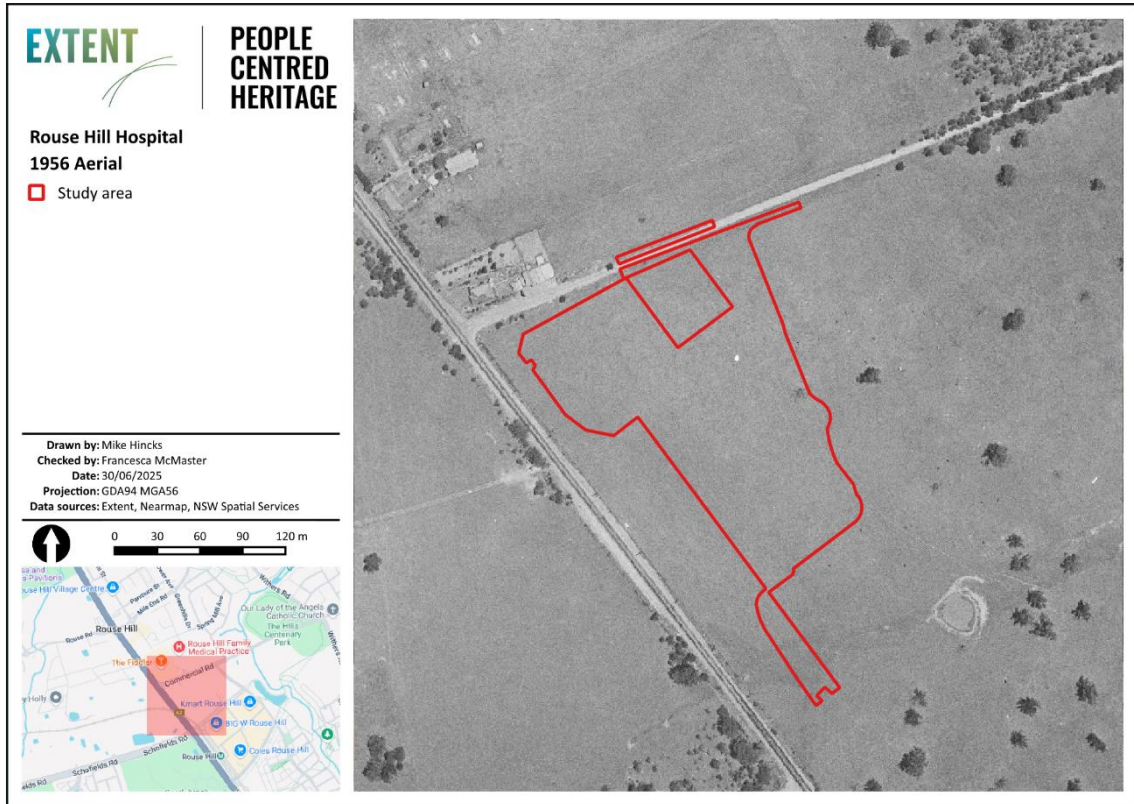


Figure 12. 1956 aerial imagery showing vacant grazing land within the study area (NSW Historical Imagery).



Figure 13. 1970 aerial imagery showing the golf course landscaping (NSW Historical Imagery).

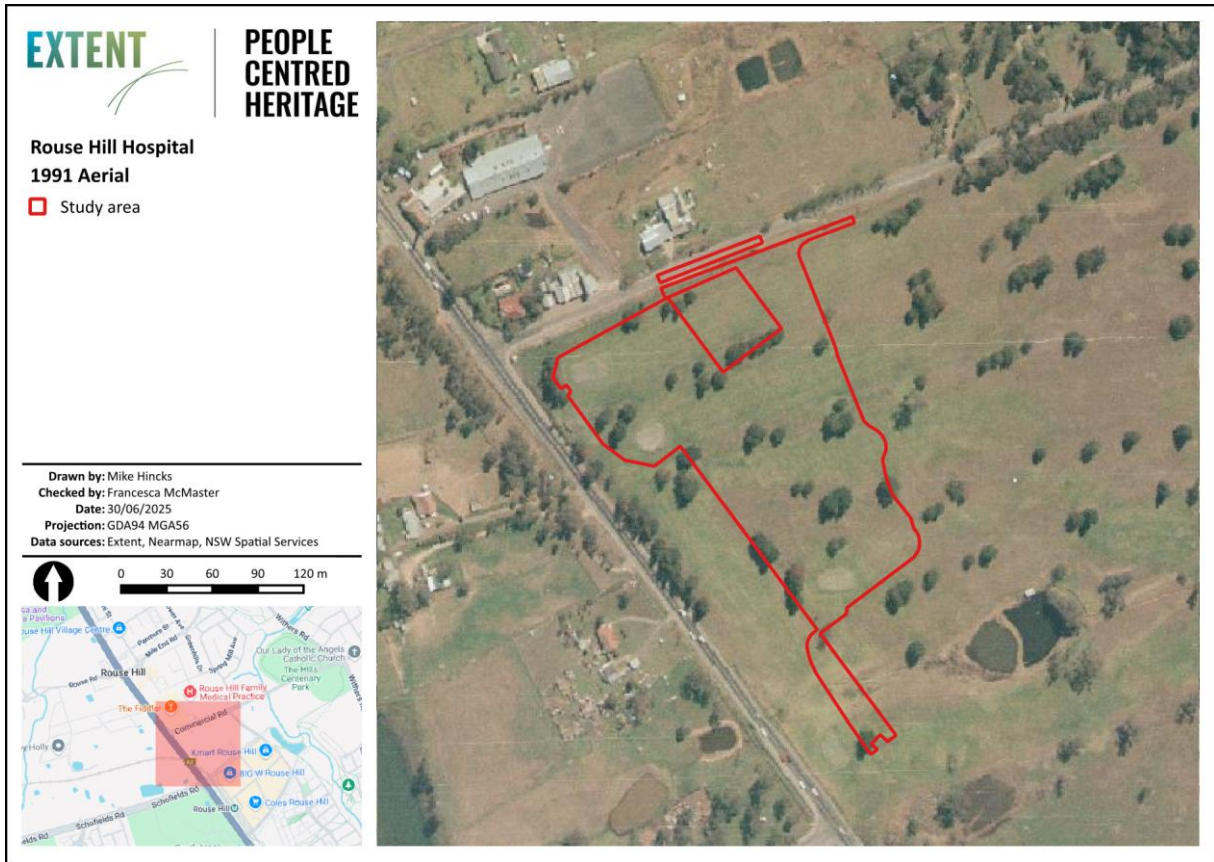


Figure 14. 1991 aerial imagery showing tree plantings and vacant ground within the study area (NSW Historical Imagery).

### 3. SITE INSPECTION

A site inspection of the study area was undertaken on 9 May 2024 by Mike Hincks (Principal Heritage Advisor). Full access to the site was provided.

The study area is currently an open space with grass cover throughout and sparsely planted mature trees at the western and southern periphery. There is a notable slope to the south and the ground is shallowly undulating. The soil beneath the grass is littered with imported gravels in many places, in particular at the northwest corner, and the pronounced rise at this location is probably exaggerated by a layer of mixed fill that has come from outside the site. Water drains poorly across the site, which may be a result of compaction of the ground or the clayey nature of the fill where it exists. Where visible, the soils in the centre and south of the site appear to be more characteristic of the natural soil profile in the area, and the overall shape and slope of the landform is consistent with the surrounding topography and drainage lines.

Disturbance appears to be for the most part near-surface in nature, with no sign of deep or large-scale excavation.

There were no signs of previous building phases within the study area.



Figure 15. Taken from near the northeastern corner of the site looking west (L) and southwest (R).



Figure 16. The southern part of the site showing the slope to the south. Looking south from the eastern boundary (L) and from the centre of the study area (R).



Figure 17. At the western boundary looking southeast (L) and northwest (R).

## 4. HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

### 4.1. Historical archaeological potential

Archaeological potential refers to the likelihood of a site to contain evidence of previous phases of historical occupation. Archaeological features and deposits in the form of structural remains and artefact-bearing deposits are tangible evidence of previous occupation and human activities. In NSW, these are called 'relics' and, depending on their significance, they are protected by the Heritage Act 1977.

Section 4 of the Heritage Act defines 'relic' broadly to mean:

any deposit, object or material evidence which relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement, and which is of State or local heritage significance.

An area's archaeological potential is assessed having regard to 'site formation processes' (or 'taphonomy'); that is, those past activities and land uses that may have disturbed or destroyed relics in the area. Factors that are relevant to such an assessment include:

- the types of potential relics that may be present – some relics are ephemeral and vulnerable to destruction (e.g. garden beds) and others are more robust (e.g. deep brick wall footings);
- the age of the potential relics (where more time has elapsed, this will commonly mean that the less robust relics will be less likely to have survived);
- the kinds of previous activities in the study area – some kinds of activities (e.g., deep excavation for basement carparks) will destroy all evidence of relics in an area while other activities (e.g. grazing) will have little impact on the potential for relics to survive).

These matters also have a bearing on the likely 'integrity' of surviving relics, i.e., how much of an archaeological site has survived to yield data of value to addressing substantive research questions.

The archaeological potential of the study area is expressed below in accordance with the following rankings:

- **Extant:** archaeological relics associated with a particular historical phase are known to survive intact and in situ.
- **High:** it is likely that archaeological relics associated with a particular historical phase or features survive intact.
- **Moderate:** it is possible that some archaeological relics associated with a particular historical phase or features survive, but they may have been subject to some disturbance.
- **Low:** it is unlikely that archaeological relics associated with a particular historical phase or features survive.
- **Nil:** the degree of ground disturbance indicates that there is no potential for any significant archaeological relics to be preserved.

This subsection provides a preliminary evaluation of the archaeological potential within the study area. The preliminary evaluation is based on an analysis of historical records, maps, and aerial photographs as well as the results of previous archaeological and geotechnical investigations within the vicinity of the study area.

### 4.1.1. Phases of development

Based on the historical research undertaken as part of the baseline archaeological assessment, the following broad historical phases of development in the study area were identified:

**This area is Dharug Country. Aboriginal archaeological and cultural heritage values are not assessed in this report. An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) Report is included within the SSDA submission (under a separate cover) assessing aboriginal archaeological and cultural heritage values**

Table 2. Phases of development at the site.

Phase	Summary
<b>Phase 1: 1794-1809</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Windsor Road is constructed as a cart track between Parramatta and Windsor. The study area remains forested, with little or no change from the pre-colonial period.</li> <li>The 'Battle of Vinegar Hill' associated with the Castle Hill Rebellion is fought in the area between rebel convicts and British troops. The exact location of the battle is not known. Many convicts retreated into the nearby forest to escape capture.</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 2: 1809-1852</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lucy Mileham is granted 100ac, including the land within the study area. A condition of her grant is that she clear and cultivate at least 20ac.</li> <li>There is no record of building on the land.</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 3: 1852-1914</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study area becomes part of a 338ac estate belonging to Bradley which is sold to Laycock in 1852 and Pearce in 1866. Pearce does not live on the land.</li> <li>In 1885 and 1894 the land is annotated as 'cleared paddock' and 'undulating'.</li> <li>In 1894 a homestead is built at the southern end of the property near present day Sanctuary Road.</li> <li>There is no record of building within the study area</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 4: 1914-1963</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land purchased by Baker, a grazier. Aerial photos show cleared land in the study area throughout this period.</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 5: 1963-2008</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land used as a golf course</li> </ul>

## 4.1.2. Archaeological context

The scope of this baseline assessment is limited to desktop searches for readily available excavation reports. Accessible reports were for the most part limited to assessment reports, and properties at considerable distance. Only one relevant excavation report was available for the nearby area.

### White Hart Inn and Stranger's Cottage Test Excavation

The White Hart Inn and Stranger's Cottage Test Excavation was undertaken by EMM as part of the Sydney Metro Northwest project in 2015. The site was located approximately 1500m south of the study area, on Windsor Road. The excavation encountered substantial remains of the 1827 inn and outbuildings, including a cellar infilled with rubbish at the time of demolition, and a cistern.

The archaeological excavation has revealed substantial footings of a building approximately 20 m wide (along the length of Windsor Road) and 15 m deep. Both sandstone and brick have been used in the construction of the building with sandstone footings cut and set into remnant but truncated topsoil and intact clay to a depth of up to 80 cm. This surviving architecture confirms a building that is configured as a typical colonial inn: long veranda or front room with smaller rooms, or wings, to the side and rooms to the rear. The building is orientated to face the road to the west. A large room with fireplace is directly behind the long veranda. Small rooms, defined by brick footings, emerged along the southern side of the complex and possibly along the back of the building to the east. A sub-surface room was partially excavated and is likely to be a cellar or cool room. This space is approximately 1 m x 1.3 m and has been excavated to approximately 1 m in depth to a mixed, redeposited layer. The deposit that was removed from the cellar was a loose fill comprising brick and sandstone fragments, fragments of iron banding such as that used to hoop barrels, bottles and other ceramic refuse. The most likely scenario is that when the site was levelled, voids were filled in with demolition debris before the site was grassed over. What has been interpreted to be the footings of a kitchen were uncovered to the east of the main inn building. The kitchen was flanked by two large fireplaces on its eastern and western elevations and entered by a door in the southern elevation. Also directly behind the main inn building is a brick cistern. No evidence of the top of the cistern was noted but as every element of the site was razed to ground level and the likelihood of the cistern lid being brick, it is very possible that the lid was smashed and re-deposited across the site. (2016, 15)

Notably, the archaeology was encountered just below the surface, and demolition had been comprehensive, reducing the building to ground level. The lack of build-up and levelling fills that is common on urban sites means that the potential for survival or identification of early material is lowered in such an environment, where stratigraphy and temporal separations are conflated and mixed.

## 4.1.3. Preliminary evaluation of archaeological potential

The archaeological potential for eighteenth and nineteenth century archaeology is Nil-Low.

Table 3. Archaeological potential by phase.

Phase	Potential	Comments
<b>Phase 1: 1794-1809</b>	Nil	Events are ephemeral and only loosely associated with the study area. No identifiable remains are expected to survive.
<b>Phase 2: 1809-1852</b>	Low	There are no known activities other than land clearing in the area at this time. While unknown structures may leave traces, the conflation of events that occurs in the shallow, poorly stratified deposits of the area may make any unknown structures difficult to identify temporally, and difficult to interpret contextually.
<b>Phase 3: 1852-1914</b>	Low	Although evidence of ploughing or orchards may survive, these phases are likely to be indistinguishable archaeologically.
<b>Phase 4: 1914-1963</b>		
<b>Phase 5: 1963-2008</b>	High	Golf course features are likely to be easily identified in the landscape.



Figure 18. Visual depiction of historical archaeological potential within the study area.

## 4.2. Historical archaeological significance

Archaeological significance refers to the heritage significance of known or potential archaeological remains. While they remain an integral component of the overall significance of a place, it is necessary to assess the archaeological resources of a site independently from aboveground and other heritage elements. Assessment of archaeological significance is more challenging as the extent and nature of the archaeological features is often unknown and judgment is usually formulated on the basis of expected or potential attributes.

### 4.2.1. Existing statement of significance

Urbis prepared the following statement of significance for archaeology at the site in 2022 (Urbis 2022, 15–16)

While a full assessment of significance has not been undertaken to inform this input in accordance with the Guideline Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and ‘Relics’, it is unlikely that such resources would be considered of significance on a Local or State level. In the surrounding area, the Rouse Hill Farm Estate have revealed evidence of agricultural life in the 19<sup>th</sup> century comparable to that which could be identified at the site, as have other excavations in the region. Archaeological resources which could occur in the site are unlikely to be considered rare, and unlikely to be identified with a high degree of integrity due to subsequent disturbance, the nature of the type of resources which could occur and the long history of agricultural use of the site. There is limited research potential associated with these resources as a result.

### 4.2.2. NSW Heritage Criteria

The following significance assessment of the subject area’s archaeological resource is carried out by following guidelines expressed in Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and ‘Relics’ (Heritage Branch, Department of Planning, December 2009, now Heritage NSW, Cabinet of Premier and Cabinet).

Archaeological relics are typically assessed for their scientific significance i.e. their ability to yield data that can be used to address substantive research questions (criterion [e]).

The NSW Heritage Criteria is grouped into the following four groups:

- Archaeological research potential (NSW Heritage Criterion E)
- Association with individuals, events, or groups of historical importance (NSW Heritage Criteria A, B & D)
- Aesthetic or technical significance (NSW Heritage Criterion C)
- Ability to demonstrate the past through archaeological remains (NSW Heritage Criteria A, C, F & G)

To assist in that regard, archaeologists Anne Bickford and Sharon Sullivan (1984) proposed three fundamental questions that should be used to assess the research potential of an archaeological site. These questions are as follows:

- Can the site contribute knowledge that no other resource can?
- Can the site contribute knowledge that no other site can?
- Is this knowledge relevant to general questions about human history or other substantive questions relating to Australian history, or does it contribute to other major research questions?

As part of this baseline assessment, a synthesised evaluation of significance is expressed in the statement below.

### **4.2.3. Preliminary statement of significance**

The history of the site is one that represents the underlying currents of Sydney's development. In the first decades after colonisation the site was a frontier location, representing the boundaries between colonial and Aboriginal cultures, and a space in which anti-British agitation and rebellion could operate.

The first grants along Windsor Road, like those elsewhere on the peripheries of settlement, were in part a response to the lack of control over the cultural landscape. British priorities were to clear and cultivate, and to re-order the space along European lines. Land around supply routes and waterways was granted in large parcels, forming a buffer around valuable assets.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the area witnessed the formation of large agricultural and pastoral estates which supplied the emerging city, along with the pastures of the Nepean and Hawkesbury valleys.

With the increasing sprawl of post-war suburban communities, the expansion of lot sizes that had taken place a century before was reversed, and subdivision rapidly carved up the large Victorian estates. Food production shifted further beyond the city limits, and pursuits that required space and filled the increasing amount of leisure time for working class families found a home on isolated parcels of the divided estates.

The land within the study area represents these large-scale processes, but only as a decontextualised fragment. Although subsequent development has been minimal, the archaeological potential at the site remains Nil to Low based on the type of archaeological features that are likely to survive. The archaeological remains of agricultural or pastoral activity may include tools or other objects that have been lost or discarded, or the remains of unknown structures that are likely to be lightweight and temporary. Such objects or features may contribute to a representative assemblage across the area but would be unable to meaningfully represent the large-scale social and historical structures in operation throughout the history of the site. In addition, the constant reworking of the soil, particularly twentieth century ploughing which is evident in the pre-1950s aerials, and the landscaping for the golf club, is likely to have



decontextualised these types of remains which may be difficult to interpret if they exist at all. While such evidence of ploughing, grazing, and leisure is in itself representative of the bulk of non-Indigenous activity in the area since colonisation, the overall lack of research potential, the conflation of 150 years of agricultural activity into one stratigraphic horizon, and the lack of inherent readability in individual features means that such remains are unlikely to meet the threshold for local or state significance.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1. Key findings and conclusions

This baseline assessment has found the study area to have Nil to Low archaeological potential for eighteenth and nineteenth century archaeology. There is no evidence for occupation or use of the site beyond land clearance, agriculture, and grazing. The archaeological remains that may be present would be unlikely to meet the threshold for local or state significance under the *NSW Heritage Act 1977*.

### 5.2. Recommendations

The desktop analysis in this report has found sufficient evidence to support the above conclusions. A full HAA is not recommended for the study area based on these results.

Despite the above assessment and conclusions, unexpected heritage items of significance may still be discovered during works. An Unexpected Heritage Finds Procedure for the site should be prepared and implemented prior to construction works being undertaken.

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