



Our ref: DOC21/713263-13

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Senior Planning Officer  
Infrastructure Assessments  
Department of Planning, Industry & Environment  
Via email: [navdeep.singhshergill@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:navdeep.singhshergill@planning.nsw.gov.au)

Advice provided via the Major Project Portal

Dear Navdeep,

**Notice of Exhibition – Hawkesbury Centre of Excellence (SSD-15001460) (Hawkesbury City)**

Thank you for your referral dated 17 August 2021 inviting comments from Heritage NSW on the exhibited Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the above State Significant Development (SSD) Application. We understand this project is for the construction and operation of the new Hawkesbury Centre of Excellence in agricultural education at Richmond.

Heritage NSW has reviewed the following documents as part of our assessment:

- Issued SEARs for SSD-15001460, issued 19 March 2021;
- *Hawkesbury Centre Of Excellence: Environmental Impact Assessment (SSD 15001460)*, prepared by RPS Group Version 2.0 and dated 5 August 2021;
- *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report: Centre of Excellence (CoE) Agricultural School 2 College Road Richmond NSW 2753 (Hawkesbury LGA) (ACHAR)* prepared by Archaeological Management & Consulting Group & Streat Archaeological Services, version 4.0 dated June 2021; and
- *Appendix A: Aboriginal Archaeological Technical Report: Centre of Excellence (CoE) Agricultural School 2 College Road Richmond NSW 2753 (Hawkesbury LGA) (AR)* prepared by prepared by Archaeological Management & Consulting Group & Streat Archaeological Services, version 4.0 dated June 2021;

We provide the following comments in relation to Aboriginal cultural heritage regulation matters.

**Aboriginal cultural heritage regulation review of EIS and associated reports**

The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) identifies the entire development to be of nil to low archaeological potential to contain Aboriginal cultural heritage. No Aboriginal objects or sites were identified during either the surface or subsurface assessment. Fifty-one 50cm x 50cm test excavation squares were excavated in 2017 as part of the investigation process for a previous SSD application (SSD-8614 Hurlstone Agricultural High School development). Although the project was subsequently withdrawn, the excavations occurred within the same land and were for a similar project type. The excavations identified that the A horizon (the artefact bearing layer) was present, soil profiles were intact and subsurface disturbance was minimal. The sterile soils may be explained by the location of the study area on a floodplain/flats.

Aboriginal consultation has been conducted in line with legislative requirements. Two of the Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) support the ACHAR recommendations. No other comments were received.

The ACHAR provides six recommendations:

1. Consultation with the registered Aboriginal stakeholders should continue.
2. An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (ACHMP) should be developed following approval of SSD-15001460 and prior to the commencement of construction.
3. The development should be permitted to proceed with caution.
4. Prior to ground disturbance, Aboriginal heritage inductions should be delivered to all development staff, contractors and workers.
5. An unexpected finds procedure must be in place throughout the proposed works, with procedures in place for notification of a qualified archaeologist, DPIE and the Registered Aboriginal Parties where unexpected finds are identified.
6. If suspected human remains are located during any stage of the proposed works, work must stop immediately, and the NSW Police and Heritage NSW notified.

#### **Aboriginal cultural heritage advice**

The EIS has fulfilled the SEARs to our satisfaction.

While the proposed development appears to have nil to low potential to impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage, we support the need for appropriate mitigation and management measures to be adopted to accommodate unexpected finds during the site preparation and construction process.

We note the mitigation measures for Aboriginal cultural heritage outlined in section 7.8.3 of the EIS (page 78) only reference recommendations 1 – 4 of the ACHAR. We recommend that the ACHMP outline the unexpected finds procedures for Aboriginal objects and human remains in detail.

If you have any questions regarding the above advice please contact Sarah Robertson on (02) 6229 7088 or via email at [sarah.robertson@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sarah.robertson@environment.nsw.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



**Dr Samantha Higgs**  
**Senior Team Leader, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Regulation - North**  
**Heritage NSW**  
13 September 2021