



## I2: Aboriginal Heritage Report

Prepared by Comber Consultants Pty. Ltd

# Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consideration of Potential Impact

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## The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Camperdown

Report to  
Conybeare Morrison  
on behalf of  
Rice Daubney

by

Jillian Comber

June 2010



# Executive Summary

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It is proposed to construct a new facility, *The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse*, as part of the Chris O'Brien Cancer Centre Project on the site of the former Page Chest Clinic at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital on Missenden Road. Construction of this new facility will be assessed under Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act*. In accordance with the Director-General's Requirements, Comber Consultants were engaged to "consider any potential impacts on Aboriginal Heritage".

The site proposed for the Chris O'Brien Lifehouse was once part of the land occupied by the Gadigal. This site once contained Colonial residential and industrial development and has since the 1930s being part of The Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Complex. The General Outpatients Building and the Page Chest Clinic were constructed on the site. Both of these buildings have since been demolished. The impact of the construction of the Colonial residential buildings and the hospital buildings would have destroyed any evidence of Aboriginal occupation that may once have existed.

Therefore, it is not considered necessary that a detailed survey and assessment of the site should be undertaken in respect of Aboriginal cultural heritage. However, consultation should be undertaken with the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to ensure that the Aboriginal community's views and concerns are taken into consideration

# Table of Contents

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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Background .....	1
1.2	Location.....	1
<b>2.0</b>	<b>History.....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1	Preamble .....	3
2.2	Aboriginal History .....	3
2.3	Non-Aboriginal History .....	3
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Proposed Development &amp; Impact.....</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1	Proposal .....	5
3.2	Impact .....	5
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Summary .....</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>References.....</b>	<b>7</b>

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

It is proposed to construct a new facility, *The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse*, as part of the Chris O'Brien Cancer Centre Project on the site of the former Page Chest Clinic at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital on Missenden Road. Construction of this new facility will be assessed under Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act*. The Director-General's Requirements dated 8 April 2010 require that the following be addressed:

"Key Issue No. 11: Heritage, including:

- consideration of any potential impacts on:
  - Aboriginal Heritage; and
  - heritage items listed in State and/or local legislation".

Comber Consultants have been engaged by Conybeare Morrison International on behalf of Rice Daubney to consider the impact of the proposal on Aboriginal Heritage on the site in accordance with the Director-General's Key Issue No. 11.

The consultant has been advised that only a brief desktop study is required to consider the impact on Aboriginal Heritage. The consultant has specifically been advised that a site inspection and consultation with the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council is not required. Therefore this report does not conform to the Department of Environment, Climate Change & Water's (DECCW) "Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Standards & Guidelines Kit" or DECCW's "Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents 2010".

This report has been informed by background research, as detailed in this report, and a search of DECCW's Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS).

## 1.2 Location

The Lifehouse site is located at 119-143 Missenden Road, Camperdown on the corner of Missenden Road and Susan Street. It is known as Lot 1 DP 133045, Lot 1 DP 721834, Lot 1 DP 116729, Lot 1 DP 79785, Lot 1 DP 74291, Lot 1 DP 66645, Lot 1 DP 79561 and part Lot 79 DP 866035. Figure 1 shows the location.



Figure 1: The subject site “Lifehouse Site” is shown shaded in red



## **2.0 History**

### **2.1 Preamble**

To assist in determining the likelihood of Aboriginal sites or places existing on the subject site and the impact of the proposal on such sites it is important to understand both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal history of the site.

### **2.2 Aboriginal History**

The subject site is within an area formerly known as “Gadi” from which the Aboriginal people took their name. The men were the Gadigal (“gal” meaning “men”) and the women were Gadigalleon (“galleon” meaning women”) (Attenbrow 2002:22-23). Evidence of Gadi occupation has been found within the Sydney area in the form of stone artefacts, rock art and rock shelters with archaeological deposits. In the vicinity of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital several archaeological assessments have been undertaken, as detailed below.

In 2004 Jo McDonald undertook an archaeological survey at the University of Sydney (USYD) of the Geology Lawn, Maze Green and USYD Central site (about 800m to the east of the subject site) in respect of a proposed redevelopment of the University of Sydney. Although the assessment did not identify areas of high potential for intact archaeological deposits it did recommend sub-surface excavation to determine whether sub-surface deposits did exist. As a result of that assessment archaeological testing was undertaken in 2005 and 2006 (JMCD CHM) at three separate sites, Geology Lawn, Maze Green and USYD Central Site. Maze Green and The USYD Central Site are located at the Darlington Campus. No archaeological sub-surface deposits were uncovered at Maze Green and only one tuff distal flake was retrieved from the USYD Central site. The Geology Lawn is located near the corner of City Road and Eastern Avenue and no archaeological deposits were encountered during excavation. It was considered that the level of post-contact disturbance had resulted in most of the area being extensively disturbed, thus preventing the preservation of Aboriginal archaeological deposits. Other assessments undertaken near Royal Prince Alfred Hospital include a site known as the Quadrant Site (Steele 1997) and another at 589-593 George Street, Sydney (Steele 2002). The test excavations undertaken at the Quadrant site which was located at Broadway and Mountain Streets yielded approximately 20 flaked stone artefacts (Steele 1997). Excavations at 589-593 George Street at a site bound by George, Goulburn, Liverpool and Sussex Streets did not reveal any archaeological deposits (Steele 2002).

A search of DECCW’s AHIMS Register indicated that there are no known Aboriginal sites within the grounds of Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, including the subject site.

### **2.3 Non-Aboriginal History**

A detailed history of the site is contained in the Conservation Management Plan prepared in 1997 (State Projects Heritage Group) and the Statement of Heritage Impact prepared by Conybeare Morrison International (2010). The following is a brief précis of the information taken from both of those reports that is relevant to this Aboriginal assessment. In particular, the nature and type of disturbance that has occurred to the site that may have impacted upon evidence of Aboriginal occupation, is detailed and considered below.

The site of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital was initially part of a lease given to Captain James Foveaux in 1794 and a lease to Governor Grose. The land was used for agricultural

purposes. The western boundaries of the two leases followed the alignment of an existing track which later became Missenden Road. This track which followed a ridgeline existed prior to the granting of the leases (State Projects:1997:26). It was probably a track used and kept open by the Gadi.

In 1806, 500 acres of land were granted to William Bligh by Governor King. It appears that this land included the former leases to Captain Foveaux and Governor Grose. This land was known as the Camperdown Estate and by 1841 the area was subdivided and sold. Industries and residential development began slowly. The industries would have employed local people and Camperdown developed as a working class area with predominantly Irish residents (State Projects 1997:28).

The Royal Prince Alfred Hospital opened in 1882 (Conybeare Morrison 2010:5) and in the mid 1930s began to expand into the residential area including onto the western side of Missenden Road which includes the subject site (State Projects 1997:28; Conybeare Morrison 2010:5). The existing commercial and residential buildings which existed on the subject site at that time were acquired and demolished. In 1936 the first building constructed on the western side of Missenden Road was The General Outpatients building, which included a basement. This building was constructed on the southern side of the subject site. Construction continued with the Boiler House in 1937 and The King George V Memorial Hospital for Mothers and Babies (KGV) in 1941. In 1957 the Page Chest Pavilion was constructed (Conybeare Morrison 2010:5-6) on the northern side of the subject site and this building was demolished in 2010. An underground hospital tunnel system was constructed to connect the buildings on both sides of Missenden Road (Conybeare Morrison 2010:16).



## **3.0 Proposed Development & Impact**

### **3.1 Proposal**

The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse is to be constructed on the site of the former Page Chest Clinic and associated buildings. It will include ten above ground storeys and three below ground storeys facing Missenden Road. Full details of the building design are contained in the Conybeare Morrison Statement of Heritage Impact (2010).

### **3.2 Impact**

There is no documented evidence detailing the Gadigal occupation and use of the land which now contains the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital site. Archaeological assessments and excavations undertaken as part of recent development proposals within the vicinity of the Hospital have provided evidence of occupation in the form of stone artefacts. However, it is considered that the impact of post contact development would have destroyed any evidence which may once have existed on the subject site. The first Colonial use of the area was agricultural, with industrial and residential buildings being constructed soon after in 1841. Hospital use of the land commenced in 1882 with the western side of Missenden Road acquired for hospital construction and the then existing residential buildings demolished. The General Outpatients building was constructed on the southern side of the subject site and the Page Chest Pavilion on the northern side of the subject site. Both buildings, which have since been demolished, contained basements.

The impact of the construction of residential buildings and then hospital buildings with basements and underground tunnels would have destroyed any evidence of Aboriginal occupation that may once have existed on the site. It is therefore considered that the construction of the Chris O'Brien Lifehouse will not impact a negative impact upon the physical evidence of Aboriginal occupation. However, it is important that liaison be undertaken with the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to ensure that the Aboriginal community do not have any concerns or issues in respect of Aboriginal heritage on this site.

## 4.0 Summary

The site proposed for the Chris O'Brien Lifehouse once contained The General Outpatients Building and the Page Chest Clinic. Both of these buildings have since been demolished. Prior to construction of these buildings colonial residential and industrial development occurred. The impact of the construction of these buildings would have destroyed any evidence of Aboriginal occupation that may once have existed.

Therefore, it is not considered necessary that a detailed survey and assessment of the site be undertaken in respect of Aboriginal cultural heritage. Nor is it considered necessary that sub-surface testing or any further assessment be undertaken. However, consultation should be undertaken with the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to ensure that the Aboriginal community's views and concerns are taken into consideration

# References

Conybeare Morrison International , 2010. The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Camperdown, Statement of Heritage Impact.

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