

11 November 2020

Our ref: SYD20 16809

Heritage NSW
Department of Premier and Cabinet

Dear Felicity,

Regatta Park Archaeological Testing, (permit 2020/s140/015) - Summary Report

Historical test excavations of Regatta Park, Emu Plains commenced on Monday 19 October and were completed on Wednesday 4 November. Approved fieldwork has been completed as per the Research Design (Biosis July 2020) and the Test Excavation Addendum (ELA September 2020) as well as conditions of approval 1-13. This letter provides a summary of the results of the testing as per condition 15 of the approval.

The study area was assessed as having the potential to contain relics associated with the construction and occupation of the Punt House (1823), the Victoria Bridge Inn (1856) and the cottage/Police Station (1860?). The focus of the investigation was to determine the survival, extent, location, and significance of key archaeological or sub-surface features and deposits associated with former buildings and activity areas without removing them.

Five 1m x 1m test trenches were located in the north eastern portion of the study area to test for the Punt House. The location of trenches was based on historical overlays and landform. Four trenches were manually excavated to 1 m in depth and one trench was terminated at natural deposits under clean sandstone rubble fill at a depth of 40 cm. Three trenches contained alluvial silts with the top 40 cm containing sparse and highly fragmented archaeological material including glass and ceramics. Two trenches contained no archaeological material and only natural silt alluvium. No evidence of the Punt House, the Office or Punt Road was located, no evidence of demolition material, pits, features or artefacts dating to the Punt House phase of occupation was present in any of the trenches. The landform was observed to be highly modified in this location with at least 2 m in depth cut away from the original landform suggesting that all evidence of the Punt House has been previously removed.

Contamination testing of seven locations in the presumed vicinity of the Punt House was monitored by the Excavation Director (Figure 1). The results of the contamination testing confirmed the results of the archaeological testing and no evidence of the Punt House was located. The sandstone rubble fill was determined to be a base for the site sheds associated with the construction of the nearby Yandhai Bridge.



Figure 1 Location of test trenches (yellow) and contamination testing pits (red) associated with the location of the Punt House

Five 1m x 1m test trenches were located in the location of the former cottage/Police Station on the eastern corner of River Road. The building burnt down in 1996 but its exact location is known from modern plans and aerial imagery. Two test trenches were located outside the building and contained pits of rubbish mostly dating to the 20th Century (including plastic, glass and ceramics). Two trenches contained timber beams, burnt deposits and artefacts dating from the mid 19th century to recent. One trench contained the brick foundations of a 20th century addition. All structural material has been left *in situ*. The archaeological material is located under approximately 30 cm of hard packed mixed deposits, including clay, that has been introduced as a cap over the building remains. It is likely that most of the archaeological resource is still present and recommendations have been made to Council to relocate proposed parking from this area.

Contamination testing of five locations in the vicinity of the former cottage was monitored by the Excavation Director (Figure 2). The results of the contamination testing confirmed the results of the archaeological testing and no evidence of burning or structural elements were located outside the known location of the former building.

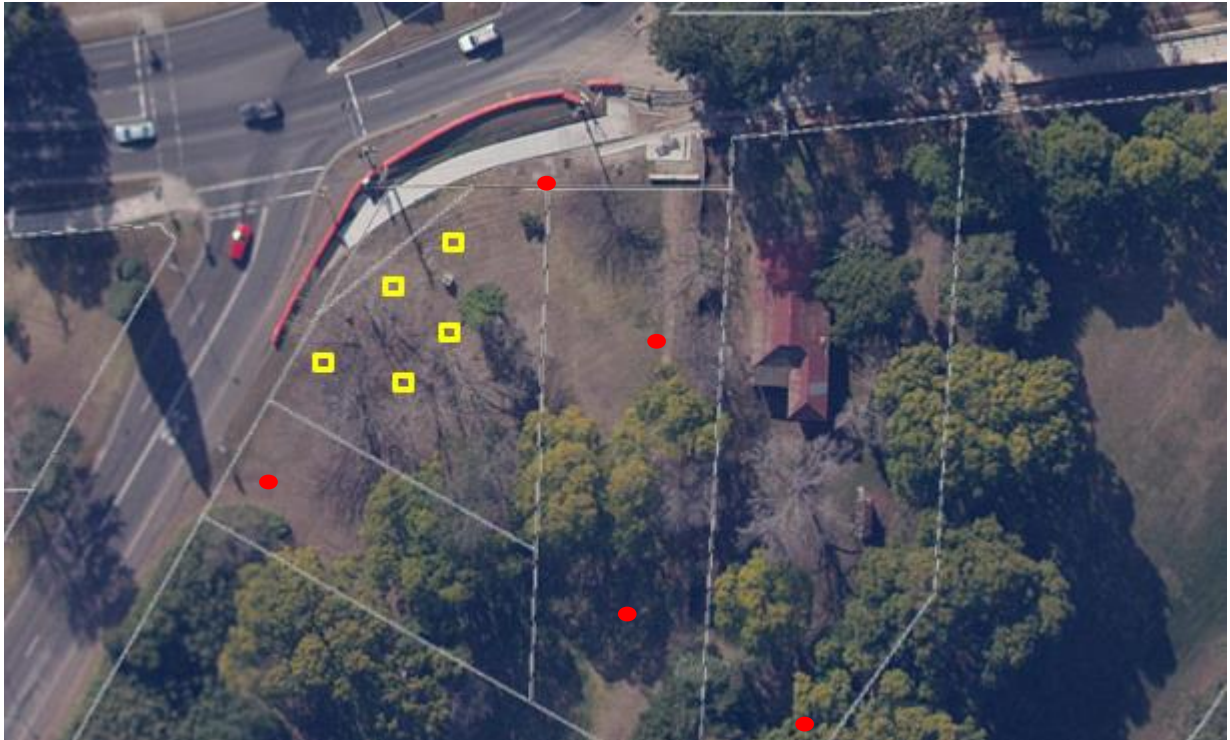


Figure 2 Location of test trenches (yellow) and contamination testing pits (red) in the vicinity of the cottage and former Police Station



Figure 3 Location of test trenches (yellow) in the vicinity of the former Victoria Bridge Inn

Five 1m x 1m test trenches were located in the presumed location of the former Victoria Park Inn. The location of trenches was determined by the limited area available to excavate south of the existing footpath. Historical overlays indicate that the building was likely to have been located in the footpath or road to the north. Three of the trenches contained concrete slabs and/or service trenches as well as numerous layers of imported fill. The most easterly and westerly trenches contained disturbed alluvial silts. All trenches contained highly fragmented archaeological material including glass, ceramics and bone, however the deposits were mixed and/or imported and clearly not *in situ*. No evidence of the former Inn foundations, yard deposits, rubbish pits, demolition material or any other features or deposits dating to the mid-19th century phase of occupation was present in any of the trenches.

Contamination testing had not been undertaken at this stage and we are waiting on the results.

Historical and Aboriginal testing was undertaken concurrently across Regatta Park. Interestingly, very few Aboriginal objects were recovered from the site with only four of the 27 trenches excavated containing minimal numbers of artefacts.

A final excavation report detailing the results of the testing, artefact analysis, reassessment of the sites significance and recommendations for the future management of the site will be submitted to Heritage NSW within a year in accordance with condition 16 of the permit.



Figure 4: Typical alluvial silts



Figure 5: Range of artefacts from a test trench associated with the cottage/Police Station

Regards,



Karyn McLeod
Principal Archaeologist/Heritage Consultant

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