



European Cultural Heritage Assessment

North Tuncurry Development Project, Great Lakes Local Government Area

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Version / Date: Revised Final / April 2014

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Document Status

Version	Purpose of Document	Orig	Review	Review Date
Draft A	Draft for Client Review	LN	DR	21/04/2011
Rev 1	Final Draft for Client Review	LN	AB	29/04/2011
Final	Final Report	LN	DR	03/05/2011
Revised Final	For Issue	LN	DR	08/04/2014

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Executive Summary

RPS has been engaged by UrbanGrowth NSW to prepare a European Cultural Heritage Assessment for the North Tuncurry Development Project and this report has considered the historical and archaeological context of that study area.

The study area of 615ha is located at Tuncurry in the Great Lakes Local Government Area (LGA) on the NSW mid north coast. The North Tuncurry Development Project is sponsored by UrbanGrowth NSW under a Project Development Agreement with the Crown Lands Branch of NSW Trade and Investment (Lands) who control the land. The project will require the re-zoning and subdivision of 615ha. UrbanGrowth has lodged an application to NSW Planning and Infrastructure requesting that the area, under State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Project) 2005, be declared a State Significance Site to allow re-zoning to progress.

An investigation of the study area was preceded by desk top research and liaison with representatives of the Great Lakes Historical Society. This research found that the area had once been associated with the Tuncurry Afforestation Prison Camp. This camp was significant as the first prison camp of its type in NSW while the plantation it established was the first commercial pine plantation in the State.

The southern study area had been the location of the Tuncurry-Forster Aeroclub established in 1973.

An investigation of the area found that the only remaining items associated with that Camp are to of north and outside the study area and therefore will not be impacted upon. No evidence of the nursery and residence associated with the Afforestation Camp which would have been within the study area were located during an inspection of the area.

The only other feature remaining in the study area is the runway associated with the Tuncurry-Forster Aeroclub which now forms part of the road to the Tuncurry Golf Club. No other item related to the Aeroclub could be found during the field investigation.

In summary no potential historic or archaeological sites were identified during an investigation of the study area however, given the history of the area there is potential for remnants of that heritage to remain.

However, the following recommendation applies to any potential future works.

Recommendation 1

No historic heritage items were uncovered during the area inspection. However if during future works significant historic heritage items are uncovered works should cease in that vicinity immediately. A significance assessment should then be undertaken by a suitably qualified cultural heritage specialist in accordance with NSW Heritage Office requirements to determine future action.

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
DECCW	Department of Environment Climate Change and Water
ECHA	European Cultural Heritage Assessment
EP&A Act	Environmental Planning and Assessment Act
GIS	Geographic Information System
SHR	State Heritage Register

1.0 Introduction

RPS has been engaged by UrbanGrowth NSW to prepare a European Cultural Heritage Assessment (ECHA) for the North Tuncurry Development Project.

This report has considered the historical and archaeological context of the study area. The intention of such a report is to document the results, complete desktop research, conduct an archaeological inspection of the study area and where necessary provide an assessment of archaeological significance for European heritage. A management recommendation is included for potential future works. This report has been prepared in accordance with the relevant legislation and regulations, which are described in Section 1.3 of this document and in more detail in **Appendix 1**.

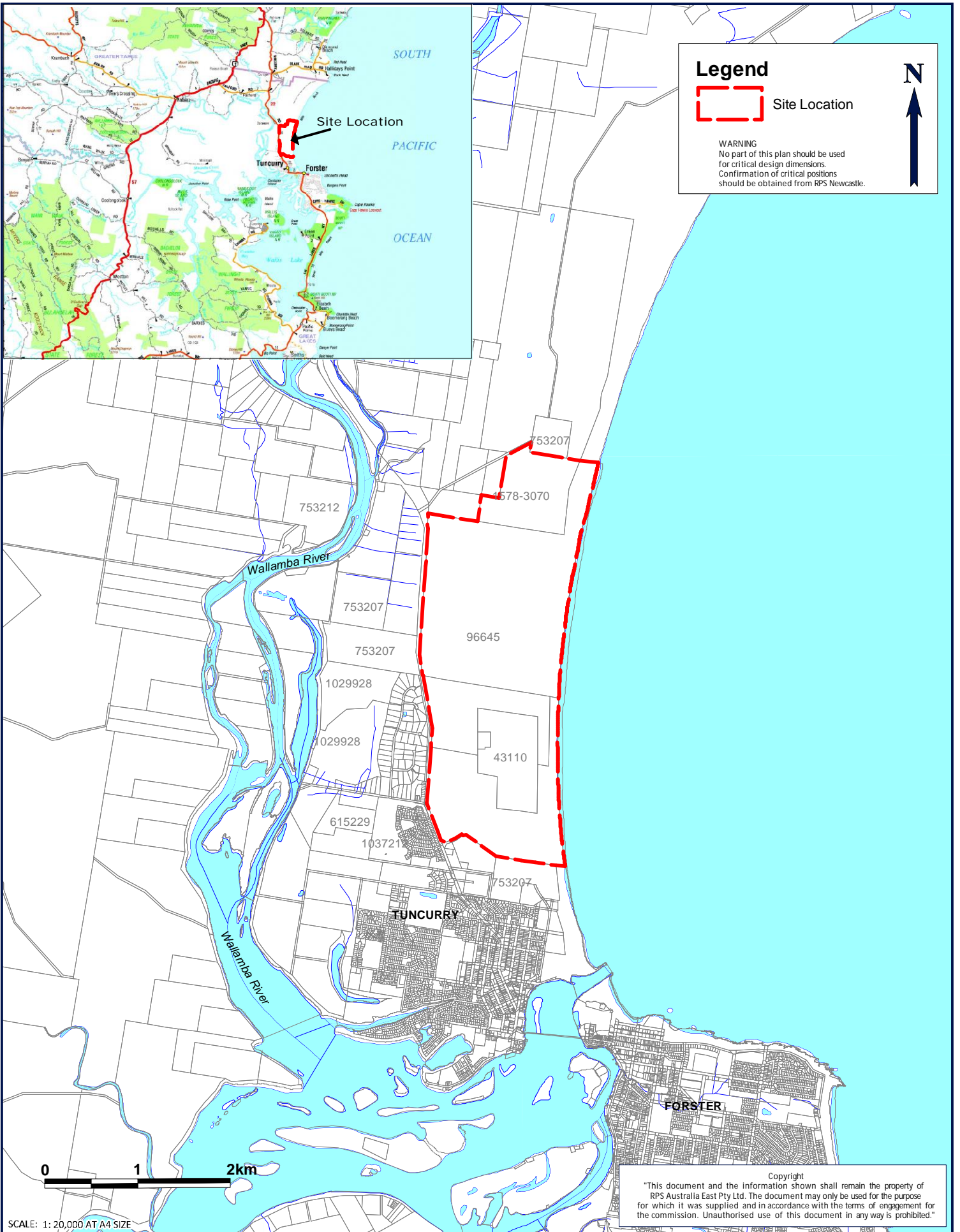
1.1 The Study Area

The study area is located at Tuncurry in the Great Lakes Local Government Area (LGA) (**Figure 1**). The study area comprises 615ha in an area immediately north of the township of Tuncurry on the NSW mid north coast (**Figure 2**).

1.2 Background

The study area of 615ha is located at Tuncurry in the Great Lakes Local Government Area (LGA) on the NSW mid north coast. The North Tuncurry Development Project is sponsored by UrbanGrowth NSW under a Project Development Agreement with the Crown Lands Branch of NSW Trade and Investment (Lands) who control the land. The project will require the re-zoning and subdivision of 615ha. UrbanGrowth NSW has lodged an application to NSW Planning and Infrastructure requesting that the area, under State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Project) 2005, be declared a State Significance Site to allow re-zoning to progress.

This ECHA has been prepared to address potential impacts of the re-zoning of the study area.



TITLE: Figure 1-1 General Location Plan

LOCATION: NORTH TUNCURRY

DATUM: N/A
PROJECTION: MGA ZONE 56 (GDA 94)

DATE: 3/05/2011
PURPOSE: ARCHAEOLOGY

LAYOUT REF: J:\JOBS\107683\107683 North Tuncurry\10 Drafting
VERSION (PLAN BY) B A4 (NW-LN)


CLIENT: LANDCOM
JOB REF: 107683


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WARNING
No part of this plan should be used
for critical design dimensions.
Confirmation of critical positions
should be obtained from RPS Newcastle.

Legend

 Study Area

 N



TITLE: Figure 1-2 Study Area LOCATION: NORTH TUNCURRY DATUM: N/A DATE: 28/04/2011 LAYOUT REF: J:\JOBS\107683\107683 North Tuncurry\10-Drafting
PROJECTION: MGA ZONE 56 (GDA 94) PURPOSE: ARCHAEOLOGY VERSION (PLAN BY) B A4 (NW-LN)

CLIENT: LANDCOM
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1.3 Legislative Context

The following overview of the legal framework is provided solely for information purposes for the client, it should not be interpreted as legal advice. RPS will not be liable for any actions taken by any person, body or group as a result of this general overview, and recommend that specific legal advice be obtained from a qualified legal practitioner prior to any action being taken as a result of the summary below.

1.3.1 Heritage Act 1977

Natural, cultural and built heritage is protected in NSW under the [Heritage Act 1977](#) (as amended 1999). The Act allows for heritage items or places to be listed on the State Heritage Register, and for interim heritage orders to be made to protect heritage items or places. Approval must be obtained from the Heritage Council or local council before work can be done which might damage the item or place.

Protection is afforded by:

- Listing on the State Heritage Register;
- Interim heritage orders; and
- Emergency orders.

A permit is required for archaeological excavations where a person knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that they might discover, expose, move, damage or destroy a relic.

The Heritage Act 1977 is administered by the Heritage Branch, a State government agency within the Department of Planning. The work of the Branch is under the guidance of the Heritage Council which was established under the Heritage Act 1977. It is an advisory body whose members are appointed by the Planning Minister and include representatives from the community; Office of Environment and Heritage; the conservation profession; and the National Trust of Australia (NSW) ([EDO NSW Fact Sheet 7.1](#)).

1.3.2 Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A ACT)

Planning and development in NSW is carried out under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000. The Act and Regulation provide a legal framework to regulate land use and development.

The State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Project) 2005 provides for the Minister to declare an area to be a State significant site. When declaring a site to be of State planning significance, the Minister also establishes the planning regime for that site.

1.4 Authorship and Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by Laraine Nelson, Senior Archaeologist with assistance from Ali Byrne, Graduate Archaeologist and reviewed by Darrell Rigby, Archaeology Manager, RPS.

The study team acknowledges the assistance in preparing this report of various organisations and individuals, including but not limited to:

- Allan Wright, President, Great Lakes Historical Society;
- Great Lakes Historical Society;
- Great Lakes Library Service, Forster;
- Newcastle Regional Library, Local History Collection.

2.0 Brief Historical Overview of the Tuncurry Area

2.1 Pre-European

The Great Lakes district, prior to European occupation, was the home of the Birpai people north of the Wallis Lake and Worimi peoples to the south of the Lake ([Great Lakes Council](#)).

The term “Birpai” appears to relate to both the language and the people although it would appear that the Birpai language was a dialect of the Kattang (Gadhang) language ([Murrumbidgee Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-Operative](#)).

An early explorer commenting on the Birpai people:

“The canoes were merely sheets of bark, with the ends slightly gathered up to form a shallow concavity, in which the natives stood and propelled them by means of poles... The native huts were more substantially built and contained 8 or 10 persons. They were arched over to form a dome with the opening on the land side, enabling them to be screened from the cold sea winds, which were generally accompanied by rain.” (Philip Parker King, 1826).

An ABC Rural radio interview with Birpai Elder William (Uncle Bill) O'Brien provides an insight into the resource use of the Birpai people across the area. Mr O'Brien talked of the nomadic nature of the peoples as they followed the seasonal foods, a process that also ensured that areas were not stripped of available resources. He discusses the use of resources from nuts, berries and honey to bush turkeys, possums and even flying foxes. Plants such as palms were important with fronds used to cook foods and even to divert water while the canopy harboured animals and fruits. The Birpai people also utilised the extensive marine and estuarine resources of fish and shellfish ([ABC Rural, 2008](#)).

Oral accounts of the Birpai nation record that the numbers of people declined very soon after European's arrival in the 1820 and 1830's. Conflict, particularly with cedar getters, led to loss of life. This was compounded by the impact of disease on the Aboriginal communities. As development occurred across the area the Birpai people dispossessed of their lands were moved on to local reserves at Purfleet, Taree and Burnt Bridge, Kempsey under the control of the Aboriginal Protection Board ([Kendall, The Birpai people](#)).

2.2 European Settlement

The Great Lakes area was first investigated by European explorers when Lieutenant John Oxley R.N. together with surveyor George Evans, Dr. John Harris, Charles Fraser (botanist) and party explored from Port Macquarie to Port Stephens ([Great Lakes Historical Society website](#)).

Oxley named Wallis Lake after the commandant of the penal settlement at Newcastle. In 1825 the Great Lakes area was part of the million-acre land grant to the Australian Agricultural Company. The land was considered valueless and the area remained largely the preserve of timber getters. The first European settlers were George Godwin and his family who settled at Cape Hawke. Originally called Minimbah, it was re-named Forster in 1870 after the then NSW Secretary of Land. A school opened in 1870 and a pilot station in 1872. The primary method of transport was waterborne with an early boat building industry established. Timber getting, milling, shipbuilding and fishing were the principal industries in the early days via sailing ships which later were superseded by steamships carrying fortnightly cargoes to Sydney ([SMH 18/11/2008](#)).

The area north of Wallis Lakes now known as Tuncurry, consisting largely of ti-tree swamps and cabbage tree palms, was not considered as suitable for development until 1875 with the arrival of John Wright. Wright saw potential in the area for the extraction and milling of timber. Wright, together with Abraham Mills, Henry Colvin and Joseph Deleur built homes for themselves and a mill. Later a store was built and a timber barge constructed. From 1880 to 1882 three small wooden ships were built by Wright and in 1883 a larger 77ft cutter was constructed for the local trade (Great Lakes Historical Society).

The village's first school was constructed around 1880 and the first hotel 10 years later in 1890. The village appeared to be first identified as Tuncurry in 1891 when an application was made to the Post Master General to have the name changed from North Forster to Tuncurry. It is thought the name Tuncurry was derived from the local Aboriginal people and is most likely related to fish ([Great Lakes Historical Society website](#)). The link between Forster and Tuncurry was by boat, in 1922 a vehicular ferry was in place and in 1959 a bridge was constructed to join the two ([SMH 18/11/2008](#)).

A continuing theme in the early history of Tuncurry is the prevalence of fire and bush fires. [Trove](#), the digital newspaper database, which includes early editions of the Sydney Morning Herald, reports fires in 1905; 1909; 1925; 1928; and 1939.

2.3 North Tuncurry Study Area

The current study area to the immediate north of Tuncurry remained undeveloped and is described in early reports as *'a waste land consisting of sand dunes and useless for other purposes'* with the area *'covered in stunted valueless trees and bracken fern'* (Extracts from Annual Reports of the Comptroller-General of Prisons in Great Lakes Historical Society, Tuncurry Prison Farm 1911 -1938).

This assessment came as a result of the area being assessed for its suitability as a prison farm and associated pine plantation. Both concepts were innovative and when on 28 October 1913 the NSW Governor-General Sir Gerald Strickland under section 35 of the Prisons Act 1899 proclaimed the establishment of a Prisoners Afforestation Camp at Tuncurry, the area became the site of the first prison farm in NSW and also the first pine plantation (**Figure 3**).

2.3.1 Tuncurry Prisoners Afforestation Camp

The establishment of the Prisoners Afforestation Camp was the result of reform in the incarceration of prisoners through the progressive work of Frederick Neitenstein, Comptroller of Prisons 1895-1909 (O'Toole 2006:83). Neitenstein is considered the force behind the modern Australian prison system and instigated reform that was intended to deter people from crime and use prison to reform their character (O'Toole 2006:148). By the early twentieth century the concept of the prison farm gained acceptance, where it was intended prisoners would be rehabilitated and taught useful skills to facilitate their re-entry to the community (O'Toole 2006:83).

It would appear the first of such camps in NSW was the Tuncurry Prisoners Afforestation Camp (O'Toole 2006:83). The establishment of the camp followed a recommendation in 1898 by the NSW Forest Commission that hoop pine plantations be established in coastal areas considered of little value for farming (Great Lakes Historical Society, The Pines).

The combination of reform in the penal system led to the establishment of the Tuncurry Prisoners Afforestation Camp and the planting of the first 'commercial' radiata pine plantation in NSW at Tuncurry ([NSW Department of Primary Industry](#) 2008). An area of 6,000 acres was selected with twenty prisoners, plus four officers, commencing work in November 1913. Preliminary works including fencing; levelling; and grass-planting were undertaken. Tree-planting began in May and in the next few months the number of trees planted by prison labour was 121,896 (Official Yearbook of NSW 1914:488).

The prison camp comprised twenty individual huts for prisoners (measuring 8'6"X7'6"X10); three or four double huts for warders; a recreation hall; dining hall and a kitchen. The buildings laid out in square formation were inward facing with a flag pole to the centre. The surrounding area included a vegetable garden, a fire watch tower, two concrete cricket pitches and entry gates. A quarry was established to the north at Black Head and a gravel road was constructed by prisoners from there to the prison camp (Great Lakes Historical Society, The Pines).

The plantation was not a success and on the 1 April 1938 the Tuncurry Prisoners Afforestation Camp was deproclaimed (Fitzpatrick 1996:App. 9).

The Tuncurry area had been the subject of a number of bush fires and in January 1939, following the closure of the prison 1600 acres with 2,662,000 trees were destroyed ([SMH 17/1/1939:12](#)). A timber mill was established in the area by Smith Bros. of Botany and utilised the burnt and remaining trees to make ammunition boxes to support the war effort (Great Lakes Historical Society, The Pines).

The 1939 fire, despite destroying much of the plantation, left the prison camp intact and in 1939 Mr Bert and Mrs Emily Dent took a lease on the camp.

Figure 3 Proclamation establishing the Prisoners Afforestation Camp. Extract from the NSW Government Gazette No. 170:644

29 Oct., 1918.] NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT GAZETTE, No. 170.

6441

bearing N. 0 degrees 30 minutes W. 25 feet 10 inches thence on the north-east by a line bearing S. 51 degrees 12 minutes E. 12 feet 6½ inches and thence on the east by part of the western side of Dundas-street aforesaid bearing S. 0 degrees 30 minutes E. 25 feet 10 inches to the point of commencement containing about 3 perches and said to be the property of Claude Fowles

Also all that piece of land situate as aforesaid being part of lot 2 of a subdivision of lot 13 section E aforesaid Commencing at a point on the north-eastern side of Railway-terrace distant N. 51 degrees 12 minutes W. 42 feet 6½ inches from the intersection of that side of that terrace with the western side of Dundas-street thence bounded on the south-west by part of that side of that terrace bearing N. 51 degrees 12 minutes W. 41 feet 1¼ inches thence on the west by a line bearing N. 0 degrees 30 minutes W. 25 feet 10 inches thence on the north-east by a line bearing S. 51 degrees 12 minutes E. 41 feet 1¼ inches and thence on the east by a line bearing S. 0 degrees 30 minutes E. 25 feet 10 inches to the point of commencement containing about 3 perches and said to be the property of Jeremiah Gleeson

Also all that piece of land situate as aforesaid being part of Houghton le Springs Estate aforesaid Commencing at a point on the north-eastern side of Railway-terrace distant N. 51 degrees 12 minutes W. 84 feet 6 inches from the intersection of that side of that terrace with the western side of Dundas-street thence bounded on the south-west by part of that side of that terrace bearing N. 51 degrees 12 minutes W. 210 feet 5 inches thence on the west by part of the eastern boundary of lot 2 section E aforesaid bearing N. 0 degrees 30 minutes W. 25 feet 10 inches thence on the north-east by a line bearing S. 51 degrees 12 minutes E. 210 feet 5 inches and thence on the east by a line bearing S. 0 degrees 30 minutes E. 25 feet 10 inches to the point of commencement containing about 164 perches and said to be the property of Michael Roe

Also all that piece of land situate as aforesaid being parts of lots 1 and 2 section E of Houghton le Springs Estate aforesaid Commencing at the south-western corner of last-described land being the south-west corner of lot 2 thence bounded on the south-west by part of the north-eastern side of Railway-terrace aforesaid bearing N. 51 degrees 12 minutes W. 160 feet 3½ inches thence on the west by part of the western boundary of lot 1 aforesaid bearing N. 0 degrees 30 minutes E. 25 feet 10 inches thence on the north-east by a line bearing S. 51 degrees 12 minutes E. 168 feet 9½ inches and thence on the east by part of the eastern boundary of lot 2 aforesaid bearing E. 0 degrees 30 minutes E. 25 feet 10 inches to the point of commencement containing about 12 perches and said to be the property of W. A. Bennett

Also all that piece of land situate as aforesaid being part of portion 254 of 36 acres 0 roods 24 perches dedicated for public recreation on 1st June 1866 and 18th January 1884 Commencing at the intersection of the south-eastern side of Station-street with the south-western boundary of railway land thence bounded on the north-east by part of that south-western railway boundary bearing S. 42 degrees 48 minutes E. 94-1/10 links and S. 64 degrees 47 minutes E. 106-7/10 links and by part of the south-western boundary of land appropriated by the Chief Commissioner by notification in Government Gazette No. 38 of 12th March 1915 bearing E. 6 degrees 0 minutes W. 16-4/10 links and by a curved line of 30 chains radius 873-3/10 links long and whose chord bears S. 48 degrees 18½ minutes E. 873-2/10 links thence generally on the south-west by lines bearing N. 80 degrees 1 minute W. 24-1/10 links N. 51 degrees 35-1/3 minutes W. 488-2/10 links N. 15 degrees 40 minutes E. 44 links N. 50 degrees 64½ minutes W. 436-1/10 links and by a curved line of 68-2/10 links radius 73-4/10 links long and whose chord bears N. 84 degrees 35½ minutes W. 74-3/10 links and thence on the north-west by part of the south-eastern side of Station-street aforesaid bearing N. 62 degrees 24 minutes E. 164-0/10 links to the point of commencement containing about 1 acre 0 roods 262 perches and said to be vested in the Council of the Municipality of Waratah as trustees

Also all that piece of land situate as aforesaid being part of Upfold-street aforesaid Commencing at the intersection of the southern side of Lambton-street with the north-eastern side of Upfold-street thence bounded on the north-east by part of that side of that street bearing S. 51 degrees 43 minutes E. 1135½ links

thence on the south-east by a line bearing S. 40 degrees 8 minutes W. 130 links thence on the south-west by part of the north-eastern boundary of the Great Northern Railway bearing N. 51 degrees 48 minutes W. 1303-1/10 links thence on the north by part of the southern side of Lambton-street aforesaid bearing S. 89 degrees 10 minutes E. 164½ links to the point of commencement and containing about 1 acre 0 roods 31½ perches

Also all that piece of land situate as aforesaid being part of Railway-terrace aforesaid Commencing at the intersection of the north-western side of Hanbury-street aforesaid with the north-eastern boundary of the Great Northern Railway thence bounded on the south-west by part of that north-eastern railway boundary bearing N. 51 degrees 12 minutes W. 898 feet 3½ inches thence on the west by a line bearing N. 0 degrees 23 minutes E. 25 feet 6½ inches thence on the north-east by a line bearing S. 51 degrees 12 minutes E. 872 feet 8½ inches and thence on the south-east by part of the north-western side of Hanbury-street aforesaid bearing S. 54 degrees 44 minutes W. 20 feet ¼ inch to the point of commencement and containing about 1 rood 23½ perches.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my Hand and caused the Public Seal of the State to be hereto affixed at Sydney, this twenty-first day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and thirteen, and in the fourth year of His Majesty's Reign.

By His Excellency's Command,

J. H. CANN.

[2466] GOD SAVE THE KING!

PROCLAMATION

NEW SOUTH WALES, } By His Excellency Sir GERALD
to wit, } STRICKLAND, Count della Catena,
(L.S.) Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor of the
G. STRICKLAND, State of New South Wales and its
Governor. Dependencies, in the Commonwealth of Australia.

WHEREAS by section 35 of the "Prisons Act, 1889" the Governor may, by Proclamation published in the Government Gazette, proclaim any place to be a place of detention for the purpose of carrying out sentences of imprisonment; And whereas it is deemed expedient to establish a camp at Tuncurry, in the Land District of Taree, for the purposes of employing prisoners in the work of tree-planting; to be known as the "Prisoners' Afforestation Camp, Tuncurry": Now, therefore, I, Sir GERALD STRICKLAND, Count della Catena, the Governor aforesaid, with the advice of the Executive Council, do, by this my Proclamation, declare and notify the area comprised within the following boundaries to be a place of detention for such purposes, and do further proclaim, declare, and notify all buildings which are now or may hereafter be erected within such boundaries to be comprised within and form portions of such places of detention, viz.:-

Parish of Tuncurry, county of Gloucester, area 40 acres. The Crown Lands within the following boundaries: Commencing at a point bearing north 89 degrees 12 minutes east 34 chains 33 and 7/8 links from the north-east corner of portion 108, Samuel Brown's conditional purchase 94-4 of 40 acres; and bounded thence on the south by a line bearing east 20 chains; on the east by a line bearing north 20 chains; on the north by a line bearing west 20 chains; on the west by a line bearing south 20 chains, to the point of commencement,—being measured portion 182 of 40 acres, shown on plan catalogued G. 4,484-1,497, Lands Department. Within forest reserve No. 47,715, notified 22nd May, 1912.

Given under my Hand and Seal, at Sydney, this twenty-eighth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and thirteen, and in the fourth year of His Majesty's Reign.

By His Excellency's Command,

DAVID R. HALL.

[2464] GOD SAVE THE KING!

2.3.2 The Pines Holiday Camp

The Dent family took out a 99 year lease on the prison camp site and established a holiday camp. Calling it 'The Pines' they re-arranged the prisoners huts incorporating cooking and eating facilities into the huts and providing separate toilet and bathing facilities.

The Pines Holiday Camp, with prior bookings from soldiers, was set to open in Christmas 1939, however, on the eve of war all leave was cancelled. The Dents, having already spent most of the deposits on food and supplies' were unable to refund the deposits. The Dent family in an attempt to stay solvent turned the area into a commercial vegetable garden. Some tourists did arrive and the Dents operated the camp until around 1949. Fire continued to be a problem with part of the camp including the kitchen and dining hall destroyed during that time (Great Lakes Historical Society, Life at the Pines).

In 1949 The Pines was sold to Mr Gordon Bowman. It appears that some time after this those buildings still standing such as the prisoners huts were removed from the area. Some of the huts were relocated to the Pine and Cabin Caravan Park in Tuncurry while one hut was moved to the Beach Street Tuncurry residence of Mrs Parmenter, a daughter of the Dents (Great Lakes Historical Society, Life at the Pines).

After The Pines closed it was reported that a row of Coral trees were removed as they were considered not to be in keeping with native vegetation (Stringer, Life at the Pines: 5). It is not known if the Coral trees were part of the original Afforestation camp or a later planting associated with The Pines Holiday Camp.

2.3.3 Afforestation Plantation Nursery and residence

Tuncurry Prisoners Afforestation Camp included a plantation nursery for seedlings and residence for the Nursery Manager. The nursery and residence was established at the same time as the prison camp and situated south toward Tuncurry. The first Nursery Manager was Mr Fry and he was followed by Mr Jack Killen (Stringer, Life at the Pines).

The nursery was described as including the residence (**Figure 4**); shed for storing bags of seeds; windmill and well (Stringer, Life at the Pines).

There is little further information on the nursery. Mrs Stringer (nee Killen), who lived at the house as a child, thinks the house was destroyed by fire some time before 1939. She considers this likely as Mrs Parmenter (nee Dent) who lived at The Pines as a child had no recollection of the nursery or residence.

There are a number of variations on where the nursery and residence was located including:

- A half a mile south of the prisoners huts based on recollections of Marie (Killen) Stringer daughter of Jack Killen. Nursery Manager (Stringer, First hand Information on the Camp).
- A mile south of the prisoners huts based on recollections of Marie (Killen) Stringer, daughter of Jack Killen. Nursery Manager (Stringer, Life at the Pines).
- Across the road from the Mr Tom Blunt's property on Tuncurry Road based on recollections of Marie (Killen) Stringer, daughter of Jack Killen. Nursery Manager (Stringer, Life at the Pines).
- Beside the current Tuncurry Cemetery and opposite the Blunt's house based on the recollections of Vince Greaves (Great Lakes Historical Society. More Information on the Camp).

2.3.4 Tuncurry Airstrip

The Tuncurry-Forster Aero Club was opened in 1973 by NSW Regional Director of Civil Aviation, Wing Commander A. W. Doubleday, D.S.O., D.F.C. following four years of planning. The airstrip and associated buildings were located on land leased from the Forestry Department. The construction of the airstrip

commenced in 1969 while the clubhouse building was re-located from elsewhere. The airstrip was intended to be used by holidaymakers and businessmen (Aero club makes history 12/4/1973).

Research found no information on when the airstrip closed, however, a file note attached to the above 1973 newspaper article indicated that the revival of the Wallis Island Airstrip within 5 miles of the Tuncurry-Forster Aero Club in 1980 caused it to be de-registered (Aero club makes history. 12/4/1973.) (**Figure 5** Tuncurry-Forster Airstrip & **Figure 6** Tuncurry-Forster Aero Club Clubhouse).

Figure 4 Afforestation Camp Nursery and Residence

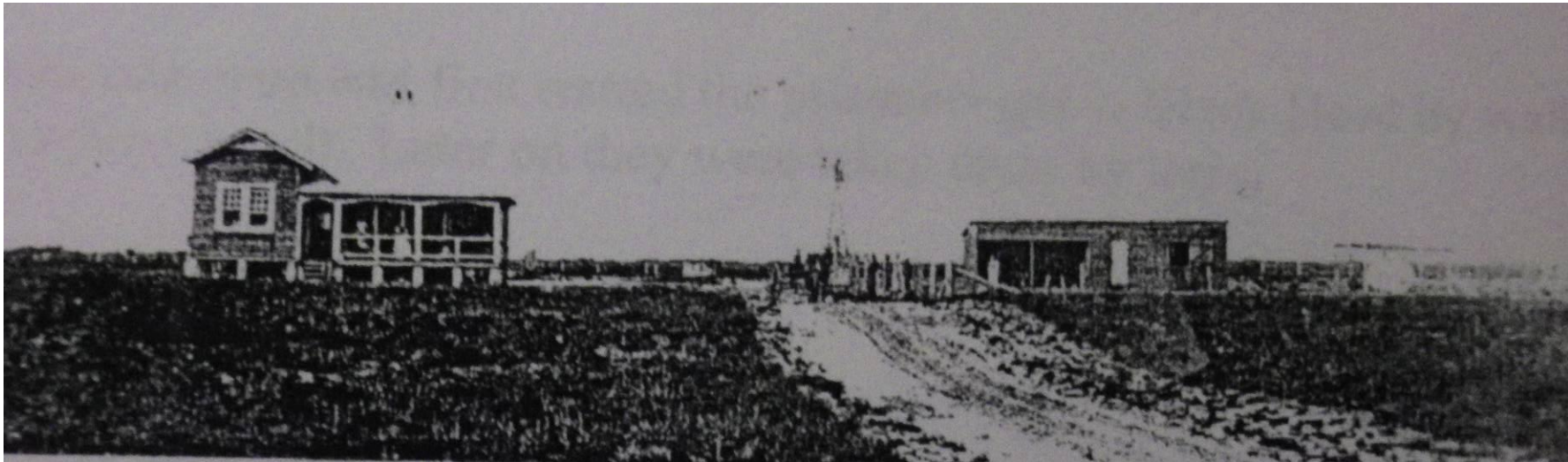




Figure 5 Tuncurry- Forster Airstrip. 1975 From: Doust, J. 1999. Past Days around Wallis Lakes, its Rivers and Villages, Great Lakes Advocate.



Figure 6 Forster-Tuncurry Aeroclub Clubhouse. 1973 From: Newspaper Article - Aero Club makes history

2.4 Thematic Approach to Heritage of the North Tuncurry Development Area

A thematic approach to the history of an area ensures that all periods and potential items of historical significance are assessed. Themes also provide a framework for the assessment and identification of physical evidence of cultural heritage across a study area ([NSW Heritage Office 2000:2](#)).

In 1993 the Principle Historic Themes Project was initiated by the Australian Heritage Commission to establish a practical and comprehensive framework of Australiana themes that would assist in the identification, assessment, interpretation and management of heritage places in Australia. The intention was that this thematic framework, applicable at National, State and Territory, regional and local level, would provide a consistent and balanced approach to the identification and conservation of heritage places.

The latest project output [Australian Historic Themes](#) (2001) provides and describes nine Theme Groups which encompass a more elaborate network of specific themes and sub-themes. These nine National Themes are supported by 36 State Historical Themes for NSW. Local Themes have been developed as sub-themes for local area or site-specific studies ([NSW Heritage Office 2000:2](#)).

To ensure best practice in heritage reporting a thematic approach has been used to assess the study area. Following research into the history of the North Tuncurry study area the themes detailed in **Table 1** were considered relevant.

Table 1 North Tuncurry Themes

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme
Theme 3 Developing Local, Regional and National Economies	3.8 Moving goods and people	3.8.9 Moving goods and people by air: Tuncurry Air Strip
	3.16 Struggling with remoteness, hardship and failure	3.16.1 Dealing with hazards and disasters: Fire
Theme 7 Governing	7.6 Administering Australia	7.6.5 Incarcerating people: Tuncurry Prison Camp
Theme 8 Developing Australia's Cultural Life	8.3 Going on holiday	8.3 Going on holiday: The Pines Holiday Camp

2.5 Heritage Registers

Historic registers are used to record items of significance at the National, State and Local government level.

2.5.1 National Heritage Database

The Australian Heritage Database incorporates: the National Heritage List; the Register of the National Estate and the Commonwealth Heritage List.

The National Heritage List is now the lead statutory document for the protection of heritage places considered to have national importance. This list comprises Indigenous, natural and historic places that are of outstanding national heritage significance to Australia. Listed places are protected under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). There are no items within the study area on the National Heritage List.

Prior to this the Register of the National Estate was the primary document. While the Register of the National Estate still exists it is now frozen and from 2012 will no longer have statutory status. The Minister is required to consider the Register when making some decisions under the EPBC Act.

The Commonwealth Heritage List comprises natural, Aboriginal and historic heritage places owned or controlled by the Commonwealth. Places on this list are also protected under the EPBC Act.

A search of the [Australian Heritage Database](#), that incorporates all of the above lists, found no references for the Tuncurry area.

2.5.2 NSW Heritage Branch Register

The NSW Heritage Inventory lists items at the NSW (State) level and/or at the local level. Items of State significance are registered by the NSW Heritage Council under the NSW Heritage Act. Those items are listed on the State Heritage Register as being under an Interim Heritage Order or protected under section 136 of the NSW Heritage Act.

The Inventory also includes some heritage places of heritage significance within a local government area. These places are listed by local council under their Local Environment Plans (LEP) and additionally may be included on the NSW Heritage Inventory database.

A search of the [NSW Heritage Database](#) found no references to items of State Significance in the Tuncurry area.

The Database includes the following items nominated as being of significance at the Local level, for the Tuncurry area:

- Timber Church, Wharf Street, Tuncurry;
- Tokalau (single dwelling) 2 Manning Street, Tuncurry;
- Tuncurry House, South Street, Tuncurry.

2.5.3 Great Lakes Council Local Environmental Plan (2014)

Items of significance at the local government level are included in the local government Environmental Plan (LEP) as Heritage Schedules. These are a list of European and some Aboriginal items which have been listed with council as having heritage value.

The Great Lakes Council LEP (2014) Schedule 5 contains those items considered of heritage value within the local area.

**Table 2 Heritage Items in the Tuncurry Area - Great Lakes Council LEP (2014)
Schedule 5**

Item Name	Address	Heritage Listing
Tuncurry Reorganised Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints	Lot 11, DP 1036872, 4 Manning Street	Local Government
"Tokalau" (single dwelling)	Lot 3 Sec 2 DP 759005, 2 Manning Street	Local Government
Tuncurry House	DP 619110 South Street	Local Government

2.5.4 Overview

A search of the Australian Heritage Database and the NSW Heritage Database found no items of National or State significance listed in the Tuncurry area. There is a variation in the NSW Heritage Database Inventory and the recently released Great Lakes LEP (2014), Schedule 5, Environmental Heritage. A timber church is listed at Wharf Street, Tuncurry (NSW Heritage Inventory) and on the Great Lakes LEP (2014), Schedule 5, Environmental Heritage the Tuncurry Reorganised Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints is listed at 4 Manning Street. It is possible these are the same building with an error in street address, however, as the NSW Heritage Database did not provide a Lot and DP it was not possible clarify.

The above search found no items of heritage significance listed within the study area.

2.6 Discussion

Research into the history of the study area, the identification of themes in accordance with the NSW Heritage Office Guidelines and an assessment of Heritage database indicate that while the study area has several Local Themes there are no items registered on heritage databases.

3.0 This is potentially because any items of heritage significance have been destroyed or relocated. Field Investigation

An investigation of the study area was carried out by Laraine Nelson and Ali Byrne on 31 March and 1 April 2011.

3.1 Investigation Strategy

An investigation strategy was devised following a meeting with Allan Wright, President, Great Lakes Historical Society at the Great Lakes Historical Museum, Tuncurry. The Historical Society has established a file on the Tuncurry Afforestation Camp incorporating government documents, newspaper articles and interviews with local residents. The Historical Society also held newspaper articles relating to the Tuncurry Forster Aeroclub.

This research was also assisted by a Land Use History Report (Whelans Land Information Consultants, 2005).

Following discussion and research, a targeted approach was devised because, despite the extensive study area, construction is only recorded as occurring in the three locations: the Tuncurry Afforestation Prison Camp site; the nursery and residence associated with that Tuncurry Afforestation Prison Camp; and the Tuncurry-Forster Aeroclub site.

The following details the site investigation for those three areas:

3.1.1 Tuncurry Prisoners Afforestation Camp

The North Tuncurry study area incorporates the plantation area of the Tuncurry Prisoners Afforestation Camp. An initial investigation using the Gloucester Parish Map for Tuncurry shows the area for the prison camp associated with the plantation to be to the north of the current study area [Whelans Land Information Consultants 2005:2.3.7(C)] (**Figure 7**). Because incarceration of the prisoners required they be kept within a confined area when not working the camp site was limited in size. There was also no indication that the area of the prison camp increased significantly during its role as The Pines Holiday Camp.

The location of the prison camp was inspected during the field investigation. The area is covered in dense vegetation including various ground cover species (Plate 1). On the eastern side of a north running gravel track a number of items considered most likely part of the Prison Camp complex were located. The largest being concrete slabs, one measuring 190cm X 237cm or 6'4" X 7'7" (Plate 2). This is similar to the measurement of the prisoner's hut recorded as 8'6" X 7'6".

Coordinates were taken with a Garmin Etrex GPS of the site and those coordinates (E453247, N6445989) GDA were used to log the location on **Figure 8**.

Following an inspection of the camp site an address at Beach Street in Tuncurry was visited. This was the location of the home of Mrs Parmenter, the daughter of Mr and Mrs Dent who ran The Pines Holiday Camp. Mr Wright, President, Great Lakes Historical Society had recounted that one of prisoner's huts was located in her backyard. Mrs Parmenter was away and while we were not able to access the premises, the hut is clearly visible from the street (Plate 3).

Afforestation Plantation Nursery and residence

The location of the nursery and residence as indicated in Section 2.3.3 proved problematic. The most consistent reference given was its location on the other side of Tuncurry Road to the Blunt's property. The Blunt's property is shown on the Parish Map at **Figure 7**. One other indicator was the photograph of the nursery and residence that shows them on a small hill or rise (**Figure 4**).

While it would be unlikely there would be any remnant of the nursery the residence as evident in **Figure 4** was a substantial dwelling.

The general location of the nursery and residence in relation to Blunt's property was determined and that area inspected on foot. The dense vegetation restricted visibility largely to tracks (Plate 4). Some building material was located but none had evidence of burning and given the repetitious nature of bush fires in the area the materials are most likely recent in origin.

Two cylinders set in concrete the size of 44 gallon drums were found. These had steel hooks set in the top and steel bars through and protruding from the lower section (Plate 5). No use for these could be determined, they are of considerable weight and close to water may have been mooring buoys, however, the nearest likely water body is over a kilometre to the west so this is perhaps implausible. It is conjecture but they *may* have been associated with the windmill at the nursery as an anchoring device. Nearby the drums was a concrete beam approximately 490cm long X 30cm wide and lengths of wire rope. Coordinates were taken with a Garmin Etrex GPS of the site and those coordinates (E452069, N6442903) were used to log the location on **Figure 8**.

Also seen in this area was a single coral tree amongst native vegetation. It was noted in Section 2.3.2 that there had been a row of coral trees at the prison camp, but perhaps coral trees had also been planted at the nursery and residence as well.

No substantial evidence of the nursery and residence was found during the investigation. The recollections of Mrs Stringer that it was destroyed by fire and that Mrs Parmenter, who knew the area from 1939, had no knowledge of it tends to confirm that it was most likely lost some time in the first half of the twentieth century (Stringer, First Hand Information on the Camp).

In 1988, Bonhomme conducted an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage survey over the current study area. In the report of that investigation she records the presence of the Afforestation Camp remnants to the north and the airstrip to the south but makes no mention of any other European cultural heritage items (Bonhomme 1988:2.2.4).

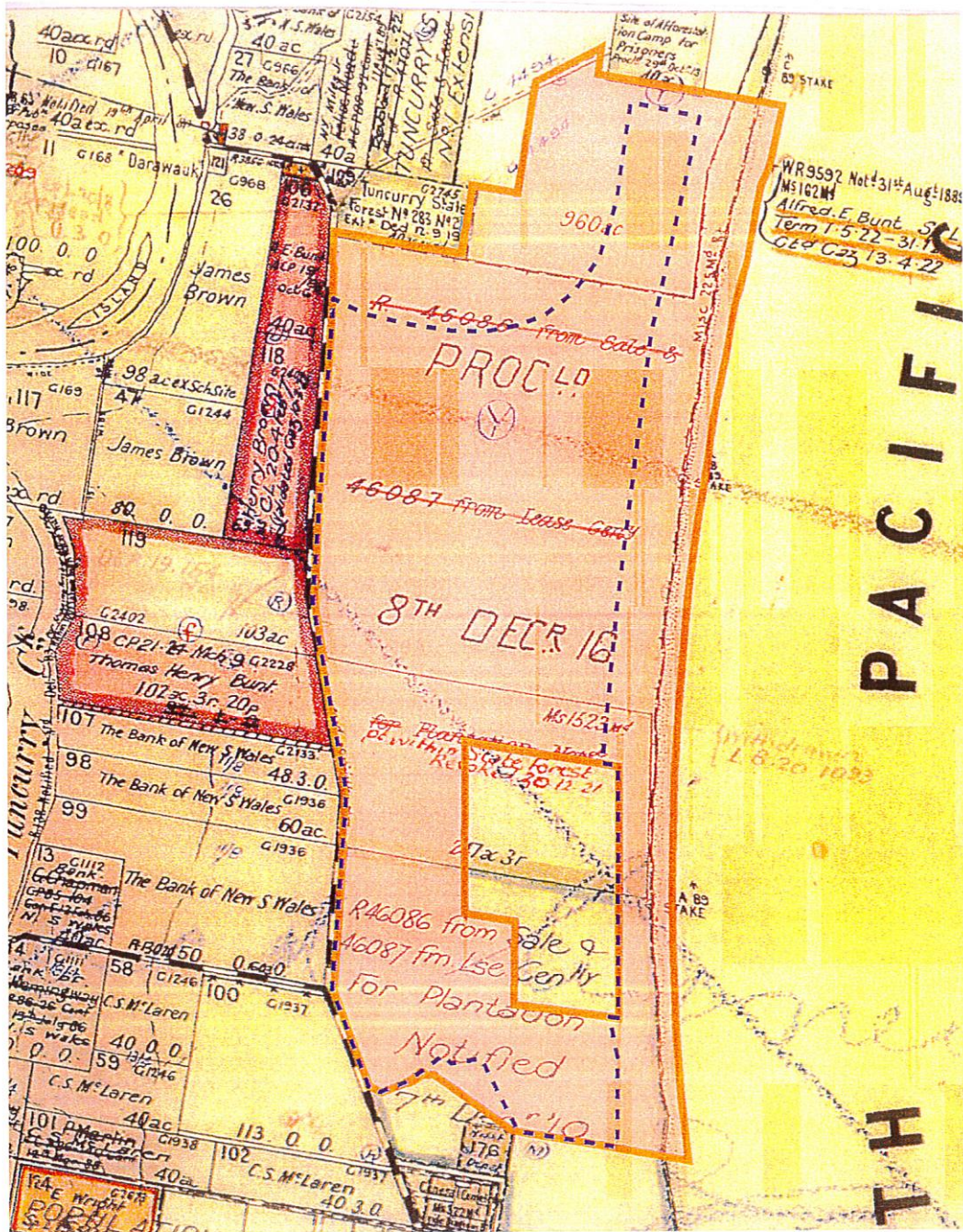
The area investigated as the location of the Afforestation Camp nursery and residence is shown on Figure 3-2 along with the concrete drums.

3.1.2 Tuncurry-Forster Aeroclub Airstrip

The location of the Tuncurry Forster Aeroclub airstrip is readily identifiable in early aerial photographs (Figure 3-3). The runway was later adapted to become the entrance road for the Tuncurry Golf Club (former Great Lakes Country Club) upon the closure of the Aeroclub.

The club house for the Aeroclub was situated at the southern end of the runway. This area is now near the junction of the access road and the Northern Parkway (Plate 6). A pedestrian inspection was carried out over this area. It appears to be used for the stockpile of road base materials on the eastern side while on the western side there were large mounds of old asphalt, building and garden refuse (Plate 7). No evidence of any structures associated with the Tuncurry Forster Aeroclub was seen.

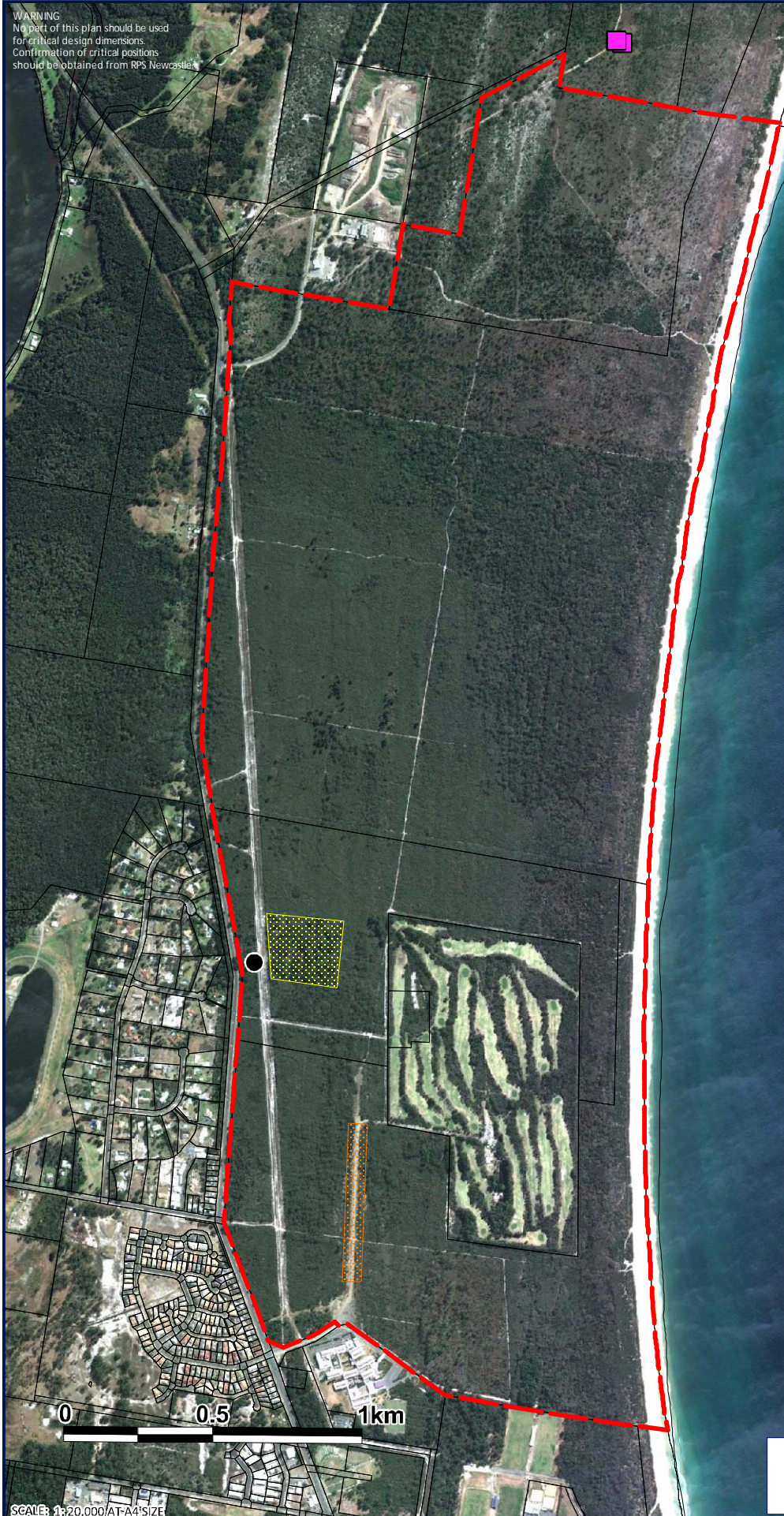
Figure 7 Parish Map (Sixth Edition) 1932 showing location of Afforestation Camp top right of map and the property of Thomas Blunt [Extract from Whelans Land Information Consultants 2005:2.3.7(C)]



WARNING
 No part of this plan should be used
 for critical design dimensions.
 Confirmation of critical positions
 should be obtained from RPS Newcastle.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Concrete Filled Drums
- Prison Camp Location 1 & 2
- Potential Area of Plantation Nursery Residence
- Disused Airstrip current Tuncurry Golf Club Access Road



SCALE: 1:20,000 AT A4 SIZE

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TITLE: Figure 3-2 Locations recorded during Study Area Inspection	LOCATION: NORTH TUNCURRY	DATUM: N/A PROJECTION: MGA ZONE 56 (GDA 94)	DATE: 28/4/2011 PURPOSE: ARCHAEOLOGY	LAYOUT REF: J:\JOBS\1076\107683 North Tuncurry\10- Drafting VERSION (PLAN BY) B A4 (NW-LN)
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Figure 9 Aerial photograph showing position of runway in lower centre of frame (Extract from Whelans Land Information Consultants 2005:2.6.3)



3.1.3 Tuncurry Prisoners Afforestation Camp

The investigation confirmed that the Tuncurry Prisoners Afforestation Camp is outside the study area. The GPS coordinates support the mapping evidence that the camp where the prisoners resided and that later became The Pines Holiday Camp were not within the study area and therefore will not be impacted upon by proposed development should any remnants of them exist at all.

3.1.4 Afforestation Plantation Nursery and Residence

No evidence could be found of the nursery and residence associated with the Tuncurry Prisoners Afforestation Camp. The area considered to have most likely been the site of the nursery and residence was covered in dense vegetation and all available and accessible areas within the vicinity were checked for evidence. In addition an earlier Aboriginal cultural heritage survey by Bonhomme (1988) made no reference to European heritage items being present. While the items such as the concrete filled drums *may* have been associated with the nursery, there is no substantial evidence to support that assumption.

Research indicated that the area had been subjected to regular fires and it would appear that during one of these fires the nursery and residence was destroyed.

3.1.5 Tuncurry-Forster Aeroclub

The only remaining evidence found of the Aeroclub was the remains of the runway now used as the Tuncurry Golf Club access road. The area where the Aeroclub club house would have been located is a stockpile for road base materials and dump for various construction and domestic refuse.

The photograph of the Aeroclub premises and outbuildings (**Figure 5**) shows small weatherboard buildings that according to records, in the instance of the clubhouse, had been relocated from another site. It is possible that the building was moved again or demolished when the Aeroclub closed.

4.0 Conclusions and Recommendation

This report has considered the historical and archaeological context of the study area and reported on the results of an investigation of the study area.

The literature review established the European history of the area providing a predictive model that was the basis for an investigation of the study area. The history of the study area was largely focussed on its role as an Afforestation Prison Camp.

The Tuncurry Afforestation Prison Camp was significant in being the first prison camp of its type in NSW with the plantation it established the first commercial pine plantation in the State. The only known remaining items associated with that Camp lie to the immediate north of the study area and therefore will not be impacted upon by the proposed development.

The sole remaining feature in the study area is the runway associated with the Tuncurry-Forster Aeroclub. The runway is now part of another form of transport; the motor vehicle, as it serves as the road into the Tuncurry Golf Club.

While no potential historic or archaeological sites were identified during this survey the dense nature of the vegetation means there is still potential for such items to occur. The following recommendation applies to future management of the study area:

Recommendation 1

No historic heritage items were uncovered during the area inspection. However if during future works significant historic heritage items are uncovered works should cease in that vicinity immediately. A significance assessment should then be undertaken by a suitably qualified cultural heritage specialist in accordance with NSW Heritage Office requirements to determine future action.

5.0 References

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6.0 Plates



Plate 1 Tuncurry Afforestation Prison Camp location - looking south along track



Plate 2 Tuncurry Afforestation Prison Camp location - concrete base



Plate 3 Prisoner's hut at Beach Street, Tuncurry



Plate 4 Vegetation in the area considered most likely the vicinity of the Afforestation camp nursery and residence.



Plate 5 Concrete filled drums



Plate 6 Golf Club Access Road looking toward the Northern Parkway.



Plate 7 Material stockpile in general location of the Tuncurry-Forster Aeroclub site.