



Aerial view of the Moree Hospital from the northeast (source: NSW Health Infrastructure).

ABORIGINAL DUE DILIGENCE ASSESSMENT REPORT

MOREE HOSPITAL UPGRADE

MOREE, NSW

AUGUST 2023

Report prepared by
OzArk Environment & Heritage
for NSW Public Works Advisory

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Acknowledgement

OzArk acknowledge the traditional custodians of the area on which this assessment took place and pay respect to their beliefs, cultural heritage, and continuing connection with the land. We also acknowledge and pay respect to the post-contact experiences of Aboriginal people with attachment to the area and to the Elders, past and present, as the next generation of role models and vessels for memories, traditions, culture and hopes of local Aboriginal people.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OzArk Environment & Heritage (OzArk) has been engaged by NSW Public Works on behalf of NSW Health Infrastructure (the proponent) to complete an Aboriginal due diligence heritage assessment for the Moree Hospital upgrade project (the project). The proposed works at the study area will include the construction of new buildings and associated facilities.

The study area for the assessment is the existing Moree Hospital site. The study area is situated on a flat landform to the south of the Mehi River which is approximately 30 metres north of the study area. Much of this landform has been substantially modified over the life of the hospital.

A visual inspection of the study area was undertaken on 27 July 2022 by OzArk Archaeologist, Harrison Rochford. No Aboriginal sites were recorded during the field inspection and all landforms were assessed as having low potential to contain Aboriginal objects in subsurface archaeological deposits.

The assessment concluded that the project will not have a significant impact under the Aboriginal due diligence heritage process. This moves the project to the following outcome:

Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) application not necessary. Proceed with caution. If any Aboriginal objects are found, stop work, and notify Heritage NSW (02) 9873 8500 (heritagemailbox@environment.nsw.gov.au). If human remains are found, stop work, secure the site, and notify NSW Police and Heritage NSW.

To ensure the greatest possible protection to the area's Aboriginal cultural heritage values, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) The project may proceed at the Moree Hospital without further archaeological investigation provided that all land and ground disturbance activities are confined to within the study area. Should the parameters of the project extend beyond the assessed areas, then further archaeological assessment may be required.
- 2) This assessment has concluded that there is a low likelihood that the proposed work will adversely harm Aboriginal cultural heritage items or sites. If during works, however, Aboriginal artefacts or skeletal material are noted, all work should cease and the procedures in the *Unanticipated Finds Protocol* (**Appendix 2**) should be followed.
- 3) Inductions for work crews should include a cultural heritage awareness procedure to ensure they recognise Aboriginal artefacts (see **Appendix 3**) and are aware of the legislative protection of Aboriginal objects under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* and the contents of the *Unanticipated Finds Protocol*.
- 4) The information presented here meets the requirements of the *Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales*. It should be retained

as shelf documentation for five years as it may be used to support a defence against prosecution in the event of unanticipated harm to Aboriginal objects.

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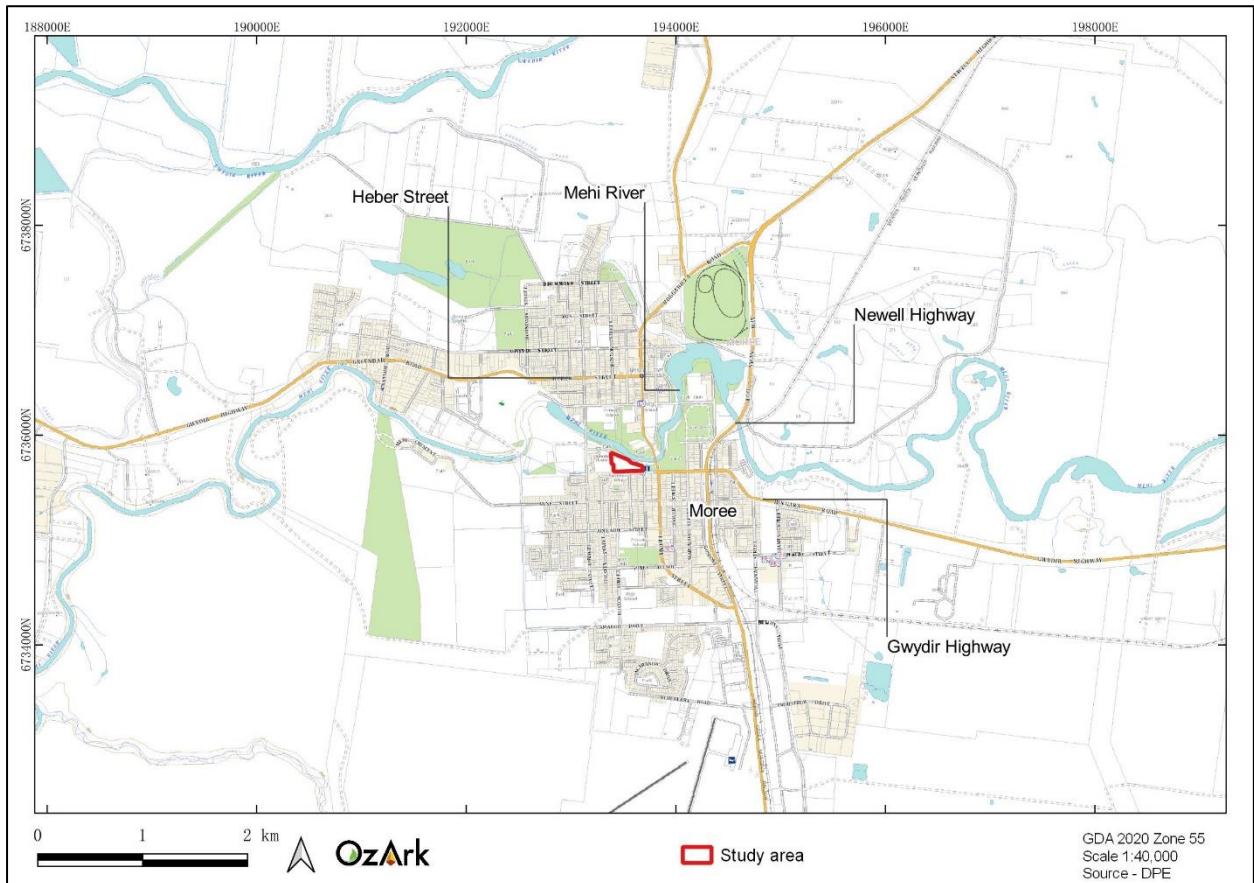
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

OzArk Environment & Heritage (OzArk) has been engaged by NSW Public Works on behalf of NSW Health Infrastructure (the proponent) to complete an Aboriginal due diligence heritage assessment for the Moree Hospital upgrade project (the project). The project is in the Moree Shire Local Government Area (LGA) (**Figure 1-1**).

Figure 1-1. Map showing the location of the project.



1.2 STUDY AREA

The study area for the assessment is the existing Moree Hospital site, located at Lot 11 DP1113157. The main entrance is on Alice Street, but the study area also fronts Victoria Terrace. The study area is shown on **Figure 1-2**.

1.3 PROPOSED WORK

This report relates to the entirety of the Moree Hospital Redevelopment and will the Review of Environmental Factors (REF). The current hospital site layout is shown on **Figure 1-3** and the proposed new site plan is shown on **Figure 1-4**. The proposed demolition plan is shown on **Figure 1-5**.

NSW Health Infrastructure proposed to redevelop the entirety of the Moree Hospital, including delivery of the following:

- Emergency care services including a 'safe space' to meet requirements of a designated mental health assessment facility;
- Overnight inpatient beds;
- An operating theatre;
- A birthing suite;
- Outpatient/ambulatory services;
- Clinical support services; and
- Onsite staff accommodation.

Major components of the project include the construction of a new two-storey Acute Services Building, construction of new car parks and demolition of several buildings that have reached the end of their useful life.

The proposal will also involve the installation of six prefabricated staff accommodation units near the current staff accommodation building. Detail of the accommodation layout is shown on **Figure 1-6**.

1.4 ASSESSMENT APPROACH

Aboriginal cultural heritage

The desktop and visual inspection component for the study area follows the *Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales* (due diligence; DECCW 2010). The field inspection followed the *Guide to Investigating, Assessing and Reporting on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in New South Wales* (OEH 2011).

Figure 1-2: Aerial showing the study area.

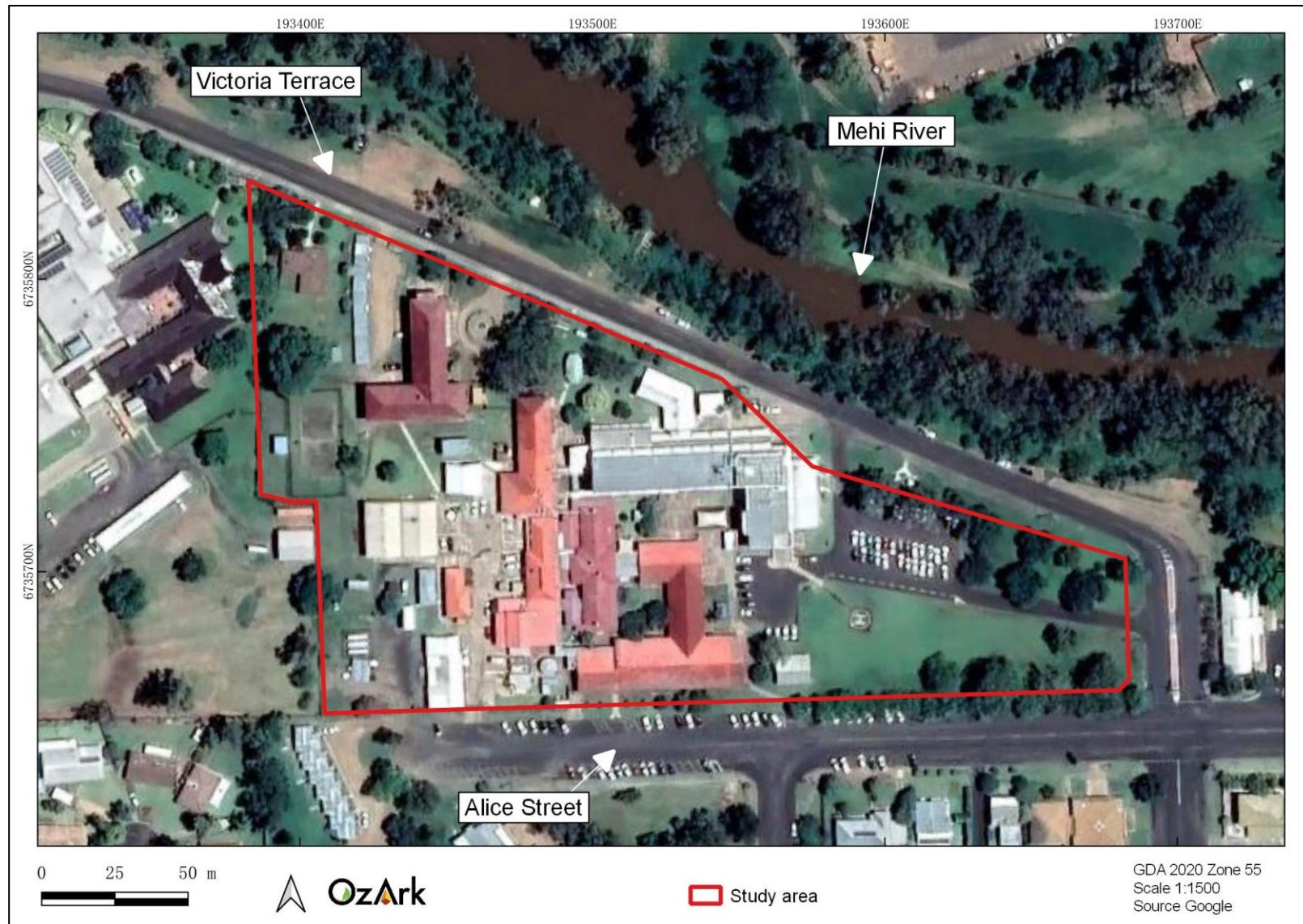


Figure 1-3: Existing site plan of Moree Hospital.

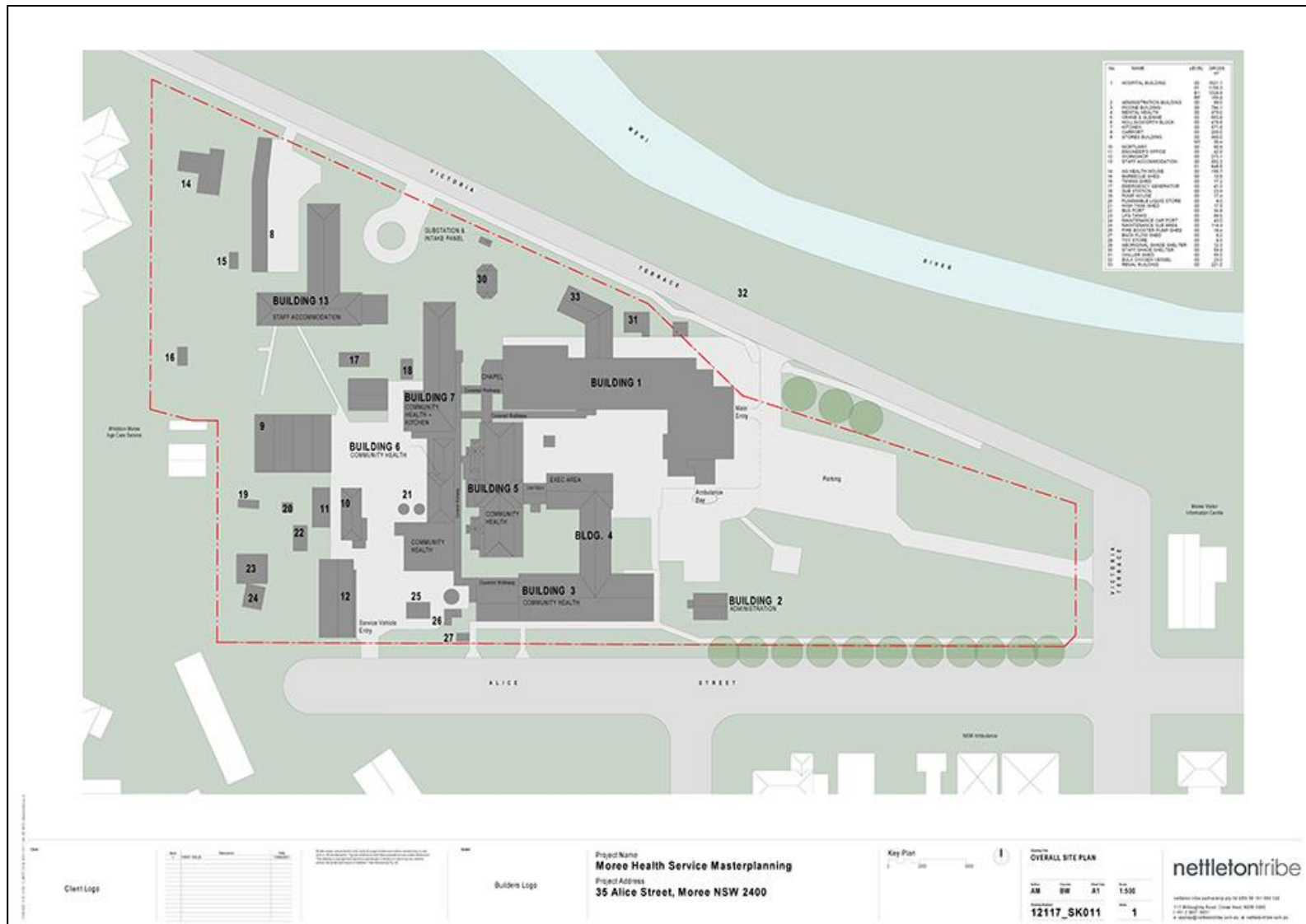


Figure 1-4: Proposed site plan.

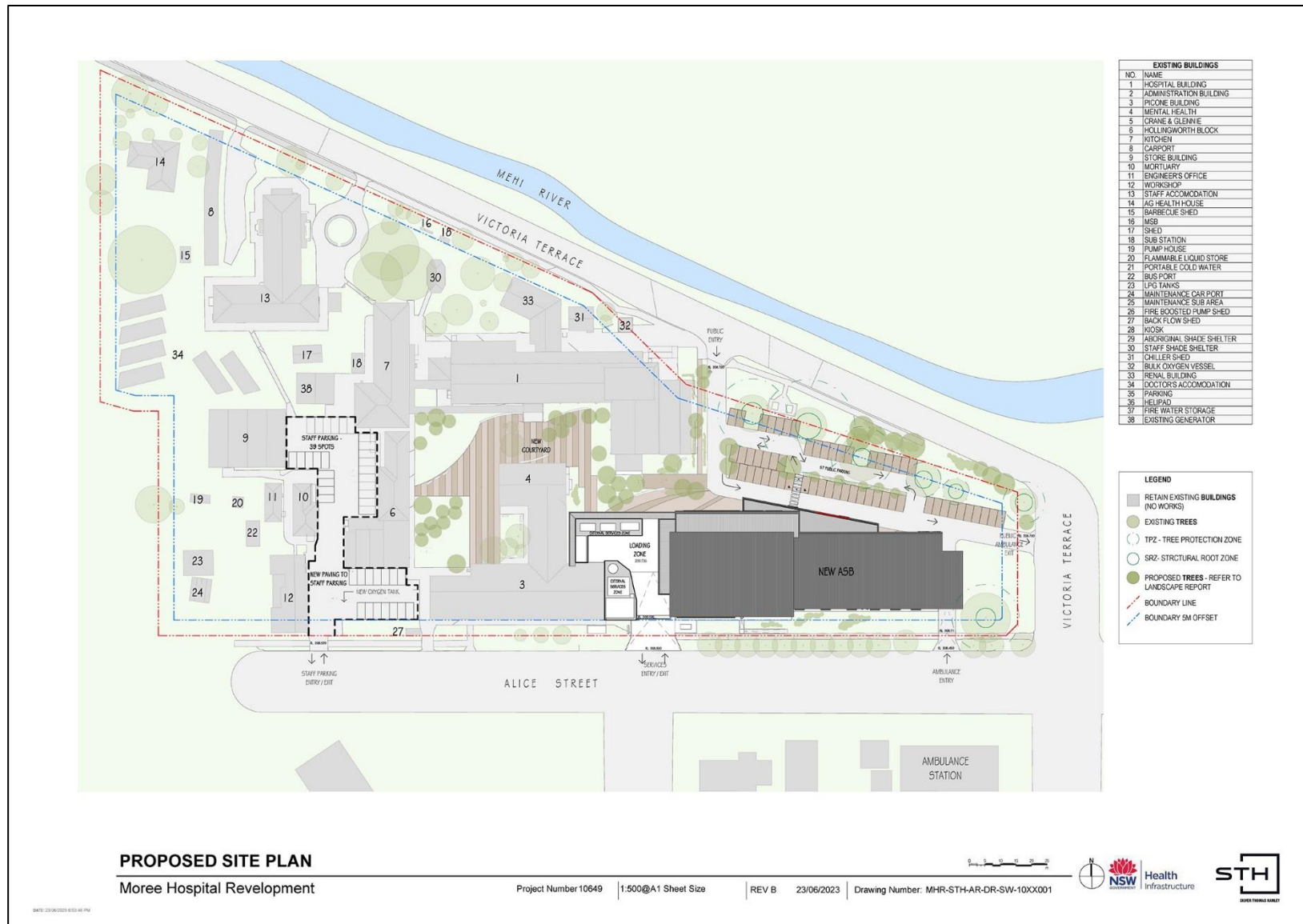


Figure 1-5: Demolition Plan

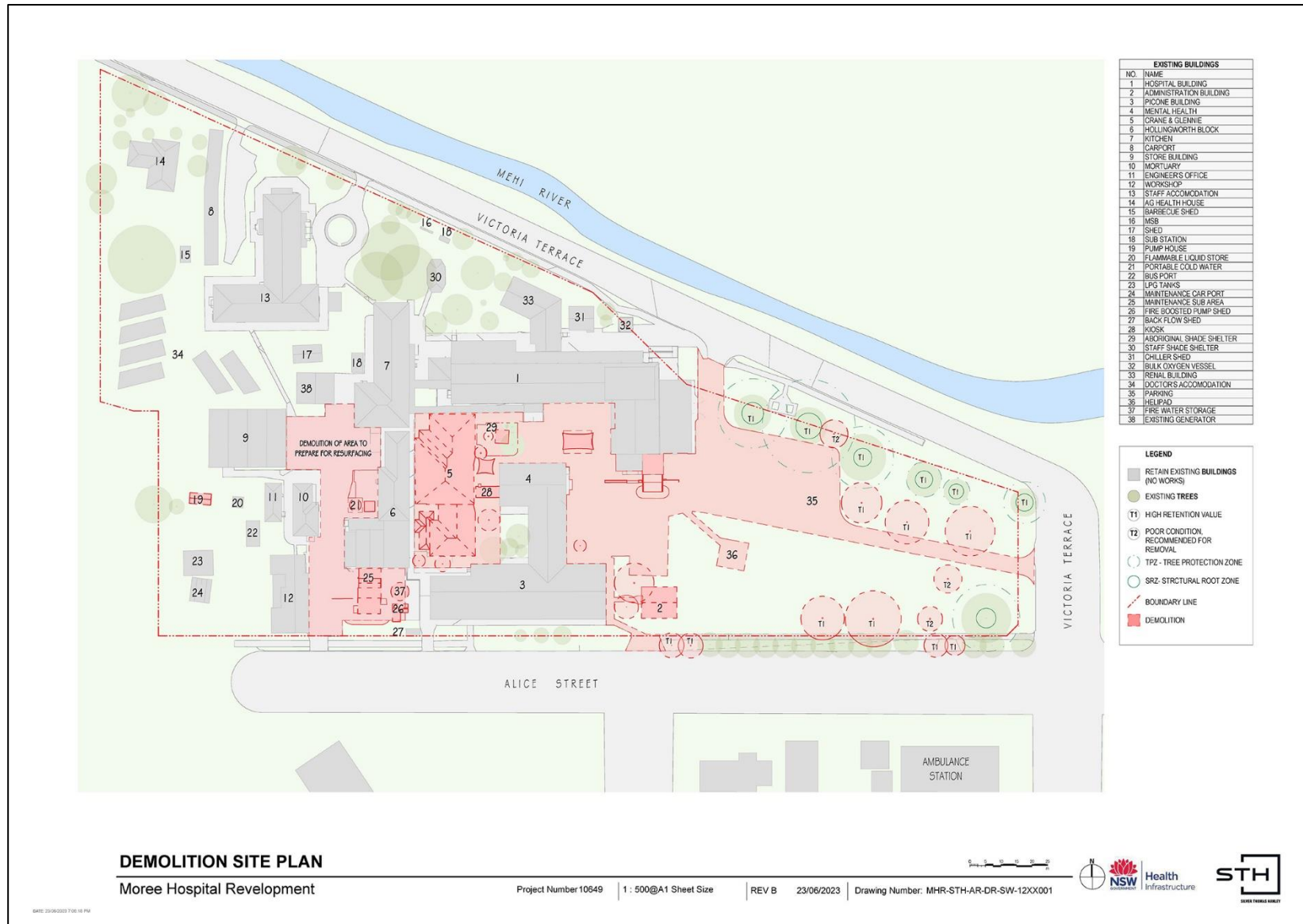
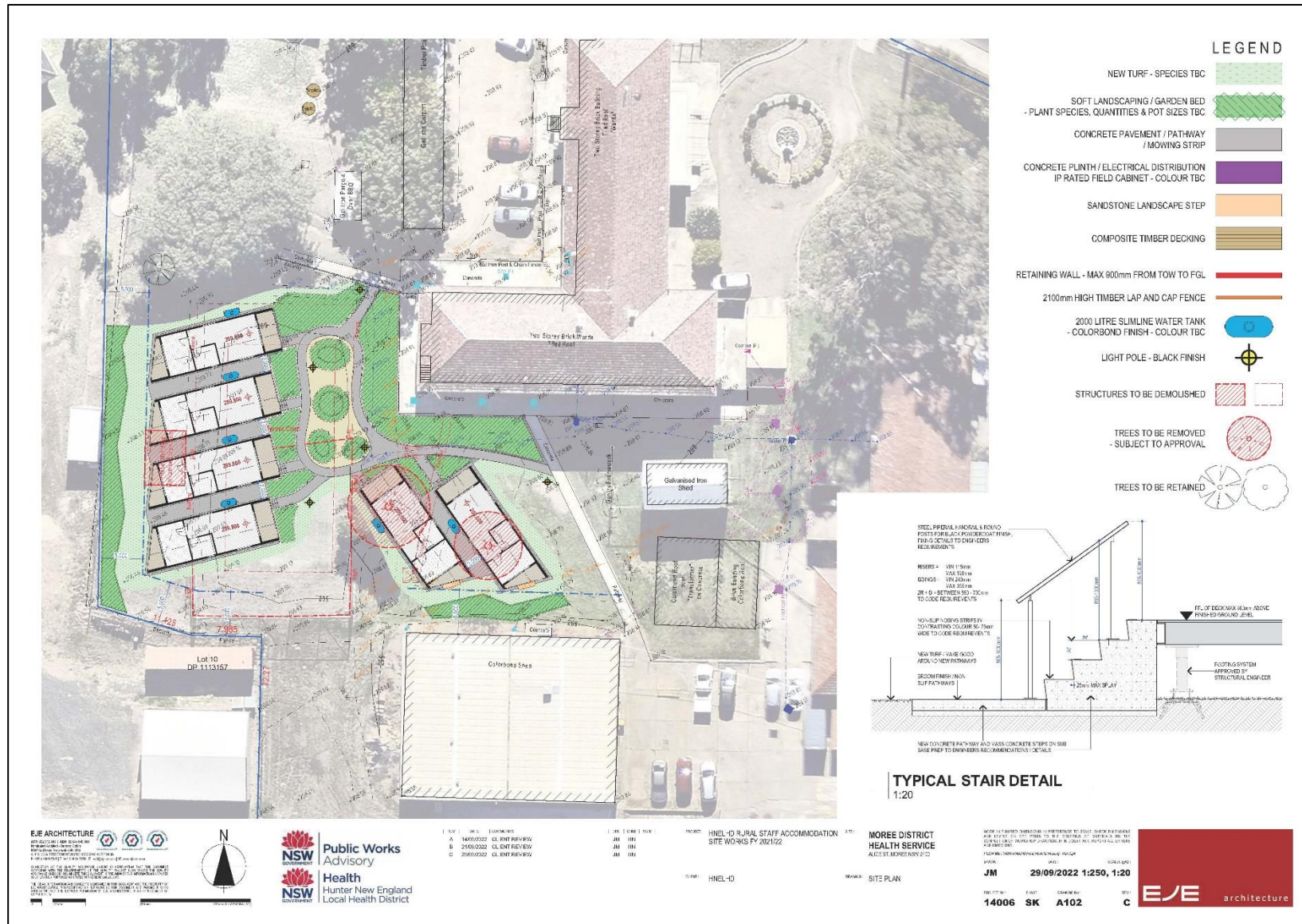


Figure 1-6: Detail of the proposed staff accommodation units at the west of the study area.



2 ABORIGINAL DUE DILIGENCE ASSESSMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Section 57 of the National Parks and Wildlife Regulation 2019 (NPW Regulation) made under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NPW Act) advocates a due diligence process to determining likely impacts on Aboriginal objects. Carrying out due diligence provides a defence to the offence of harming Aboriginal objects and is an important step in satisfying Aboriginal heritage obligations in NSW.

2.2 DEFENCES UNDER THE NPW REGULATION 2019

2.2.1 Low impact activities

The first step before application of the due diligence process itself is to determine whether the proposed activity is a “low impact activity” for which there is a defence in the NPW Regulation. The exemptions are listed in Section 58 of the NPW Regulation (DECCW 2010: 6).

The project will involve excavation and construction that are not ‘low impact’ activities in the regulation. Therefore, the due diligence process will be applied.

2.2.2 Disturbed lands

Relevant to this process is the assessed levels of previous land-use disturbance.

The NPW Regulation Section 58 (DECCW 2010: 18) define disturbed land as follows:

Land is disturbed if it has been the subject of a human activity that has changed the land’s surface, being changes that remain clear and observable.

Examples include ploughing, construction of rural infrastructure (such as dams and fences), construction of roads, trails and tracks (including fire trails and tracks and walking tracks), clearing vegetation, construction of buildings and the erection of other structures, construction or installation of utilities and other similar services (such as above or below ground electrical infrastructure, water or sewerage pipelines, stormwater drainage and other similar infrastructure) and construction of earthworks.

The study area consists of the existing Moree Hospital, which includes large established buildings, sealed carparks, and landscaped open space. As such, the entire study area could be considered ‘disturbed land’. However, the project has elected to follow a precautionary approach and complete the due diligence process.

In summary, it is determined that the project must be assessed under the Due Diligence Code of Practice. The reasoning for this determination is set out in **Table 2-1**.

Table 2-1: Determination of whether Due Diligence Code of Practice applies.

Item	Reasoning	Answer
Is the activity to be assessed under Division 4.7 (state significant development) or Division 5.2 (state significant infrastructure) of the EP&A Act?	The project will be assessed under Part 5 of the EP&A Act.	No
Is the activity exempt from the NPW Act or NPW Regulation?	The project is not exempt under this Act or Regulation.	No
Do either or both apply: Is the activity in an Aboriginal place? Have previous investigations that meet the requirements of this Code identified Aboriginal objects?	The activity will not occur in an Aboriginal place. No previous investigations have been undertaken for this project.	No
Is the activity a low impact one for which there is a defence in the NPW Regulation?	The project is not a low impact activity for which there is a defence in the NPW Regulation.	No
Is the activity occurring entirely within areas that are assessed as 'disturbed lands'?	Yes, but the study area will be fully assessed following a precautionary approach.	Yes
Due Diligence Code of Practice assessment will be followed as a precautionary measure		

2.3 APPLICATION OF THE DUE DILIGENCE CODE OF PRACTICE TO THE PROJECT

To follow the generic due diligence process, a series of steps in a question/answer flowchart format (DECCW 2010:10) are applied to the proposed impacts and the study area, and the responses documented.

2.3.1 Step 1

Will the activity disturb the ground surface or any culturally modified trees?

Yes, the project will impact the ground surface.

The proposed excavation and construction set out the proposed works will impact the ground surface. The project will not impact any mature, native vegetation that has the potential to be culturally modified as all vegetation proposed to be removed is non-native. Therefore, culturally modified trees will not be harmed.

2.3.2 Step 2a

Are there any relevant confirmed site records or other associated landscape feature information on AHIMS?

No, there are no previously recorded sites within the study area.

A search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) database conducted on 20 July 2022 returned 25 results for Aboriginal heritage site in a 10 kilometre (km) x 10 km search area centred on the study area.

Figure 2-1 shows all previously recorded sites in relation to the study area and **Table 2-2** shows the types of sites that are close to the study area. No previously recorded sites are located within

or near the study area. However, it is noted that the study area is within a place of Aboriginal cultural significance, as identified on the Moree Plains LEP 2011. The cultural significance of the place is understood to be associated with contemporary Aboriginal heritage values (Briggs-Smith 2003, Heritage Concepts 2008). The potential impact of the proposal on these contemporary heritage values is assessed in OzArk 2022a.

The AHIMS search results show that the common site types in the area are modified trees and artefact sites, including isolated finds and artefact scatters. **Figure 2-1** shows that most AHIMS sites tend to be close to waterways, especially the permanent water sources.

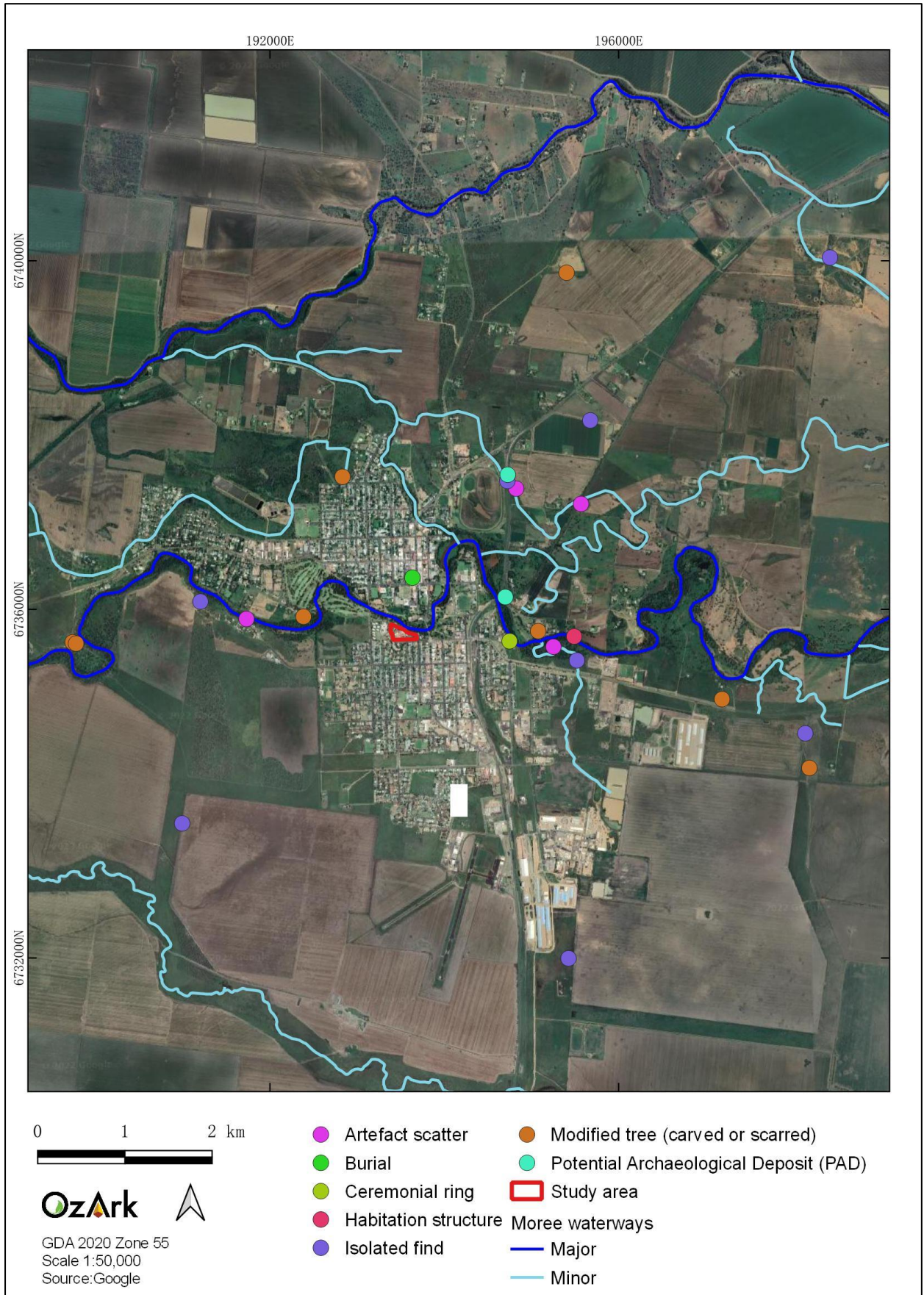
The closest site recording to the study area is a burial site (Taylor Oval burial) located 540 metres (m) to the north.

Based on the AHIMS data, the most likely site type that could be recorded at the study area would be an artefact site, as the other most common site type (modified trees) are unlikely to be present due to the clearing of native vegetation in the Moree town centre.

Table 2-2: Site types and frequencies of AHIMS sites near the study area.

Site Type	Number	% Frequency
Modified tree (carved or scarred)	8	32
Isolated find	8	32
Artefact scatter	4	16
Potential Archaeological Deposit (PAD)	2	8
Burial	1	4
Ceremonial ring	1	4
Habitation structure	1	4
Total	25	100

Figure 2-1: Previously recorded sites in relation to the study area.



2.3.3 Step 2b

Are there any other sources of information of which a person is already aware?

No, there are no other sources of information that would indicate the presence of Aboriginal objects in the study area.

Ethno-historic Information

The study area is in the country of the Kamilaroi. The boundaries of the Kamilaroi language group (now known as the Gamilaraay language) extend from Murrurundi Manilla up to Barraba and Bingara, down the Gwydir and Barwon to Walgett encompassing Binna Burra, Moree, west of Mount Kaputar and northeast of Burren Junction (Tindale 1974).

Toolkits of the Kamilaroi people are indicated to have included hafted stone axes, spears and spear throwers, fish traps, nets for catching fish and birds, throwing sticks, bark containers, wooden clubs for fighting and kangaroo skin cloaks (Balme 1986 in Murawin 2020). Historical accounts indicate the occupation shelters were semi-circular or circular with conical roofs located close to tree trunks for support, covered with bark sheets, reeds grass and boughs (Mitchell 1839:77 in Murawin 2020).

Regional archaeological context

In 1985, Balme (1985) conducted an Aboriginal heritage study of the existing heritage sites and assessments to inform the review of the Moree Plain Shire Council Local Environmental Plan (LEP). The study indicated that in 1985, modified trees constituted the dominant site type in the region (64%). The remainder of the site typology was composed of 23% of artefacts (isolated finds scatters and open campsites), 5% ceremonial sites, 4% burials, 1% grinding grooves, 0.8% art sites, 0.8% conflict site, 0.5% PADs, 0.3% earthen mounds, 0.3% middens, and 0.3% water holes.

In 2009, Heritage Concepts (2009) conducted an Aboriginal heritage study desktop assessment to inform the review of the Moree Plains LEP 1995. The assessment reviewed current registered heritage listings of the Moree area and found the same percentage of site types as recorded by Balme in 1985.

In 2010, OzArk (2010) conducted an archaeological assessment to inform the broader Environmental Impact Statement of a proposed solar power station to the southeast of the Moree township. Three Aboriginal heritage sites were identified including two modified trees (BPS-ST1 and BPS-ST2) and one open campsite (BPS-OS1).

BPS-OS1 is an artefact scatter and potential archaeological deposit (PAD) associated with a waterbody extending from Halls Creek. The artefact materials identified included quartzite, silcrete, quartz, chert, agate, petrified wood, chalcedony, and mudstone. The typology of the assemblage included flakes, cores, core fragments, a pounder, a possible scraper, a grinding

stone, and a possible piece of knapped glass. Agricultural disturbances were noted for most of the general area associated with BPS-OS1; however, the eastern section of the site was suggested to retain subsurface potential owing to avoidance of the area by ploughing activity coupled with an intact remnant shore landform. The extensive scatter and potential of the site to retain associated subsurface deposits are of high scientific significance.

Local archaeological context

Several archaeological investigations have been undertaken in the vicinity of the study area. These assessments are summarised below to gain an understanding of the archaeological potential of the local area.

Appleton (1997 as cited in Ozark 2004) undertook a heritage assessment as part of the inner route options study for the Moree bypass. No archaeological sites were recorded during the assessment, however, two culturally sensitive Aboriginal reserves, Steel Bridge Camp and Top Camp, were noted through consultation with the local Aboriginal community and subsurface archaeological sensitivity along the riverbank was also raised.

Subsequently, Kelton (1999 as cited in OzArk 2004) conducted a targeted archaeological assessment of the Gosport Street option of the bypass and demarcated the boundaries of the camps alongside representatives from the Aboriginal community and identified an isolated find (TC-IF-1) associated with the alluvial riverbank terrace of the Top Camp. The lack of surface materials associated campsites was attributed to the surface artefact falling through the cracking clay soils. Kelton (2000 as cited in OzArk 2004) identified the Mehi River, Camaroo Channel, Duffeys Creek, and Skinners Creek PADs as archaeologically sensitive landforms and recommended monitoring for any works proposed within these areas.

A desktop assessment of the previous Moree bypass assessments by Benton (2003 as cited in OzArk 2004) reviewed the validity of the previous PAD designations. Benton (2003) conducted that only the Mehi River PAD and Skinner Creek PAD had moderate potential for archaeological subsurface deposits to be retained. Conversely, the depth of geomorphic and anthropogenic disturbances associated with Camaroo Channel and Duffeys Creek had limited potential for any deposits to be retained within those areas. Test excavation as an alternative to monitoring was recommended.

As such, in 2004 OzArk (2004) conducted a subsurface testing investigation of the Mehi River PAD (AHIMS #10-3-0032) and the Skinners Creek PADs (AHIMS #10-3-0040 and #10-3-0041) located 1.1 km and 2.1 km northeast of the study area, respectively. No archaeological materials were recovered from AHIMS #10-3-0032, however, two artefacts were identified in association with the Skinners Creek PADs. These included a chalcedony broken flake recovered from Spit 2 within the first southern pit, and a silcrete flake identified on the surface. The absence of artefact materials from AHIMS #10-3-0032 does not support the classification of the PAD as a previous

Aboriginal campsite as suggested by earlier classification of the area by Appleton (1997) and Kelton (1999) as the Steel Bridge Aboriginal Fringe Camp. The alluvial context of those artefacts recovered from AHIMS #10-3-0040 and #10-3-0041 coupled with the disturbed nature of the area, suggests these artefacts were not *in situ* and likely moved by flooding from another area. The inclusion of European glass at a depth of 50–80 centimetres (cm) also supports that the landform may represent a modern floodplain and therefore further accounts for the lack of archaeological material (Ozark 2004).

OzArk (2008) undertook an Aboriginal heritage assessment for the proposed rezoning of 21 land parcels at Moree. During the investigation five Aboriginal sites were identified and two previously identified sites were ground-truthed. HC-OS1 consisted of an open campsite including five stone artefacts composed of grey mudstone and silcrete materials situated on the north-western bank of Halls Creek. The isolated silcrete flake identified as MRR-IF1 was identified along an eroded scald along the banks of the Mehi River. Also situated along the Mehi Riverbank, MRR-ST1 consisted of a scarred Coolibah (*Eucalyptus microtheca*) tree situated with two scars. SC-OS1 was a small open site situated along the eastern bank of Skinners Creek. The scatter consisted of two grey mudstone artefacts within a harvested paddock. A further archaeological survey was recommended for those areas where development was proposed.

Further to the south of the Moree township, OzArk (2012) conducted a heritage assessment for the proposed water storage ponds at the Evergreen Precinct. Three modified trees were identified during the assessment. These included MEP-ST1, MEP-ST2, and MEP-ST3.

In 2019, Ozark (2019) completed an archaeological due diligence assessment for the Moree East-West Bypass. An isolated silcrete core (AHIMS #10-3-0073) was identified and two previously recorded scarred trees (AHIMS #10-3-0062 and #10-3-0063) were also ground-truthed during the site inspection.

NGH (2020) undertook an Aboriginal archaeological assessment to inform the heritage environmental technical study for the Moree Special Activation Precinct (SAP) project (Aurecon 2021). During the field investigation, 15 isolated finds, 13 artefact scatters, and 12 possible scarred trees were identified. Across the 27 artefact sites, a total of 165 stone artefacts were recorded. The material composition of those assemblages identified contained silcrete, chert, quartzite, volcanic, and occasionally sandstone. The typology of the artefacts was predominantly typified by flakes and broken flakes, with some cores, retouched flakes, grindstone fragments, and core tools also present within the assemblage. Trees with evidence of possible or likely cultural scarring were generally characterised by the White box (*Eucalyptus albens*) and Bimble box (*Eucalyptus populnea*) species. In addition, a small waterbody present along the western side of Halls Creek, known locally as 'Crawbob Creek', was identified as a cultural area with modern and historic connections to the local Aboriginal community of the area as a local fishing hole (Aurecon 2021; NGH 2020).

Ozark (2022) undertook an archaeological assessment for the proposed Stage 1 Release Areas of the Moree SAP. A total of six Aboriginal sites were recorded during the survey. The predominate site type within the study area was isolated finds, accounting for five of the six additionally recorded Aboriginal sites. The remaining site recorded during the survey was a low-density artefact scatter. A total of nine artefacts were recorded including silcrete (n=3, 33.3%), volcanic (n=3, 33.3%, one being identified as basalt), chalcedony (n=2, 22.22%), and rhyolite (n=1, 11.11%) raw materials. The distribution of artefact types was dominated by flakes (n=5, 55.5%), with the remaining artefacts being comprising of cores (n=3, 33.3%) and a single flaked piece (n=1, 11.1%). The artefact site type and materials identified are consistent with those identified in previous studies for the local area and broader Moree region.

Implications for the study area

The study area has not been previously assessed and the regional archaeological models provide the best available information for the expected archaeological characteristics of the study area. This would suggest that all sites are most likely to be identified on flat landforms near reliable waterways, but that modified trees can occur on slopes and crests.

The archaeological testing of landforms near the Mehi River (OzArk 2004) demonstrated that, in the area tested, that subsurface deposits were not present. These findings can be loosely extrapolated to the study area with the conclusion that landforms near the Mehi River do not necessarily have archaeological potential.

There are no known cultural values or Aboriginal sites pertaining directly to the location of the proposed work.

2.3.4 Step 2c

Are there any landscape features that are likely to indicate presence of Aboriginal objects?

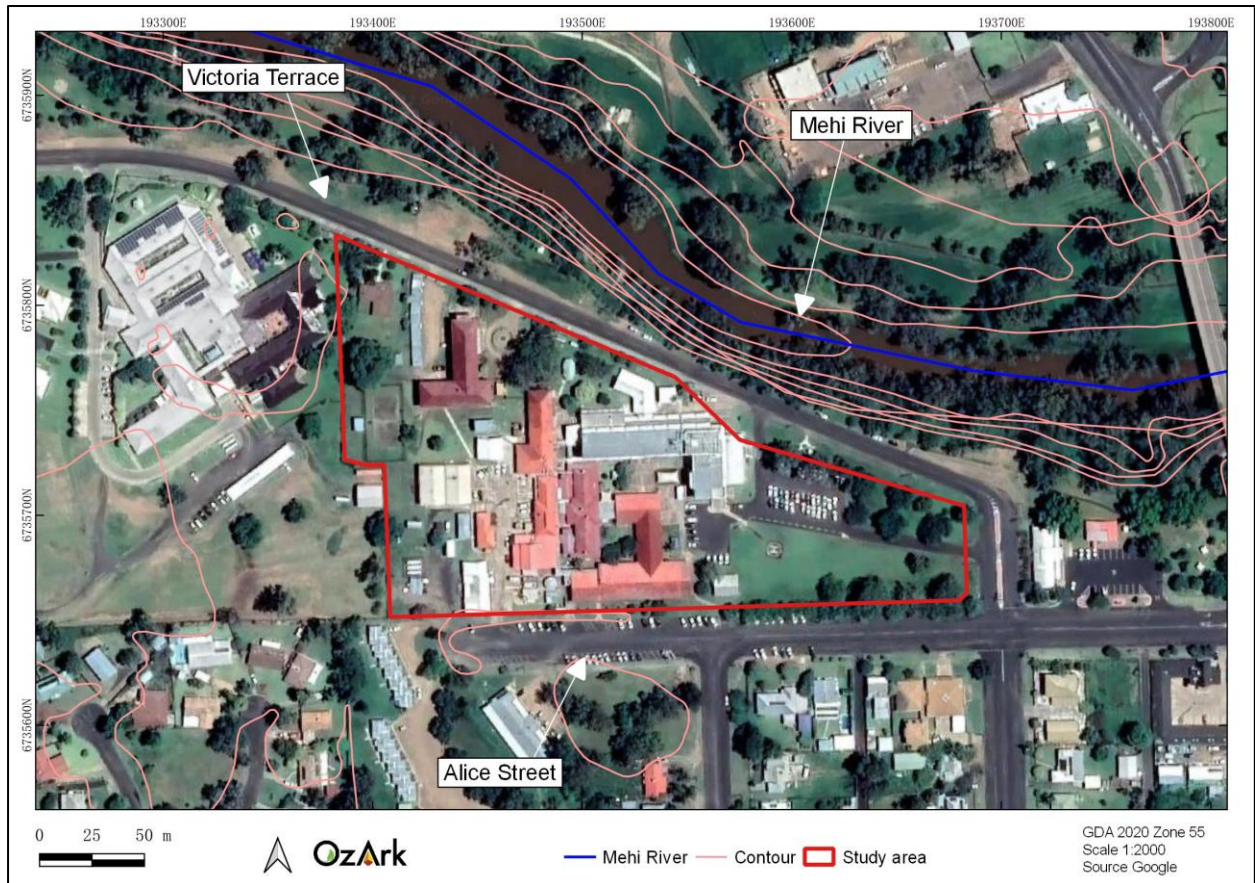
Yes, portions of the study area contain landforms with identified archaeological sensitivity.

The study area is situated on a flat landform to the south of Mehi River (**Figure 2-2**). Much of this landform has been substantially modified over the life of the hospital. Fluvial sediments within the study area extend from the backplain facies of the Mehi River. The 'Black Plains' of the Moree Plains area are characterised by textured dark grey and black medium to heavy clay soils (Mitchell 2002). Vegetation prior to colonial clearing would have been an open woodland of eurah (*Eremophila bignoniiflora*), Coolibah, black box (*Eucalyptus largiflorens*), flowering lignum (*Eremophila polyclada*), river cooba (*Acacia stenophylla*).

The Mehi River would have provided a permanent water source and other subsistence resources and therefore the study area has a heightened archaeological sensitivity under the Due Diligence Code of Practice.

However, it is noted that the landform near the Mehi River is a poor preserver of archaeological deposits due to its alluvial nature and that the study area has been extensively modified from the construction and use of the hospital.

Figure 2-2: Contours and waterways near the study area.



2.3.5 Step 3

Can harm to Aboriginal objects or disturbance of archaeologically sensitive landscape features be avoided?

Yes, sections of the study area have identified archaeological sensitivity and will be impacted, however, there are no known Aboriginal objects in the study area.

Landforms within 200 m of the Mehi River have identified archaeological sensitivity under the Due Diligence Code of Practice. However, it should be noted that these landforms have been extensively modified over the past 130 years and that this significantly reduces the potential for archaeological evidence to remain.

However, the project has elected to follow a precautionary approach and complete the due diligence process. Thus, the due diligence assessment continued to Step 4.

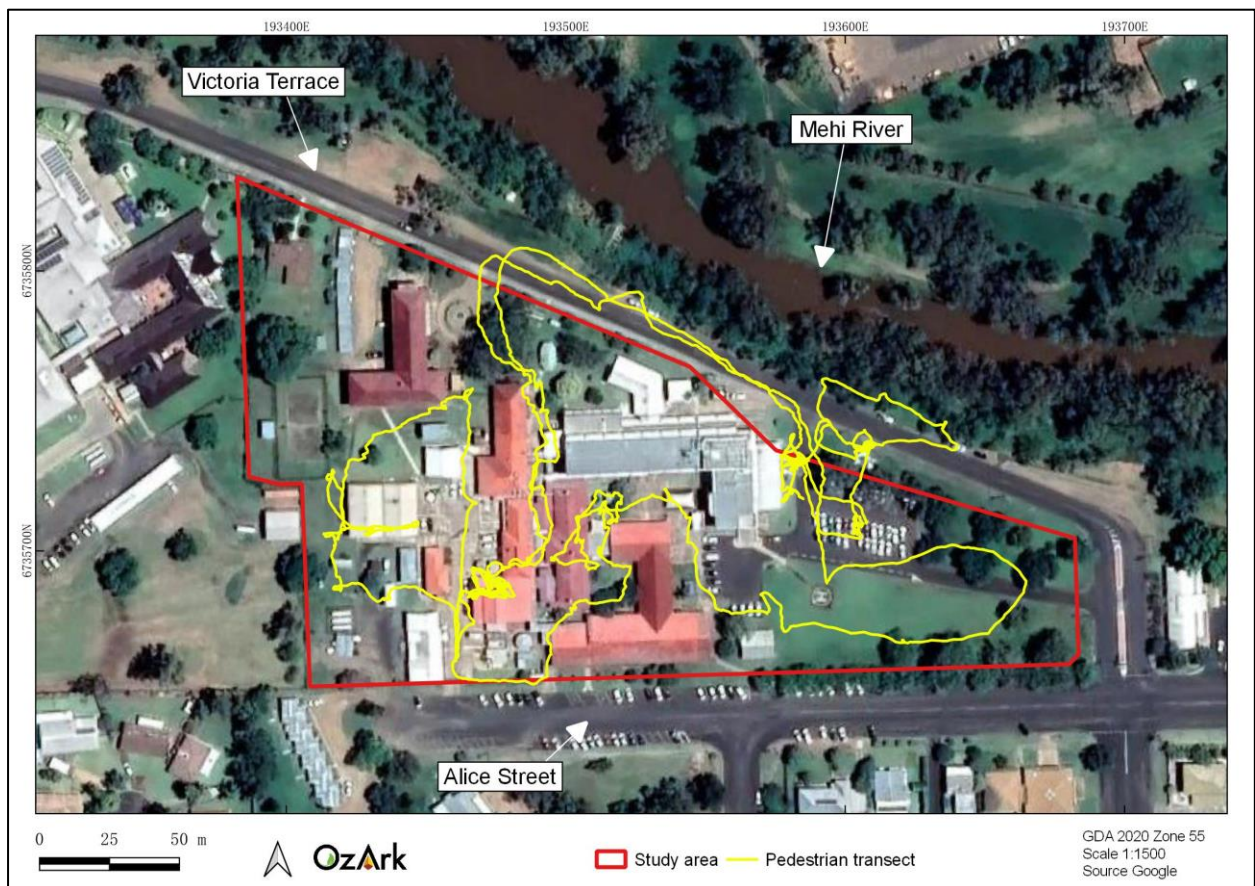
2.3.6 Step 4

Does a desktop assessment and visual inspection confirm that there are Aboriginal objects or that they are likely?

No Aboriginal objects were identified within the study area and the potential for subsurface archaeological deposits was assessed to be low.

The visual inspection of the study area was undertaken on 27 July 2022 by OzArk Archaeologist, Harrison Rochford. The pedestrian coverage during the inspection is shown on **Figure 2-3**.

Figure 2-3: Survey coverage within the study area.



Discussion

No Aboriginal objects were identified during the visual assessment. The levels of disturbance from the development of the hospital over the past 130 years were confirmed and the potential for archaeological evidence to remain at the site was assessed as low (**Plate 1** and **Plate 2**).

It is likely that the area could have been used by Aboriginal people of the area in the past given the flat landform and its proximity to the Mehi River. However, given the disturbances within the study area, it is unlikely that Aboriginal objects continue to be present.

A 'no' answer for Step 4, results in the following outcome (DECCW 2010):

AHIP (Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit) application not necessary. Proceed with caution. If any Aboriginal objects are found, stop work, and notify Heritage NSW (02) 9873 8500 (heritagemailbox@environment.nsw.gov.au). If human remains are found, stop work, secure the site, and notify NSW Police and Heritage NSW.

2.4 CONCLUSION

The due diligence process has resulted in the outcome that an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) is not required. The reasoning behind this determination is set out in **Table 2-3**.

Table 2-3: Due Diligence Code of Practice application.

Step	Reasoning	Answer
Step 1 Will the activity disturb the ground surface or any culturally modified trees?	The proposed works will disturb the ground surface through demolition of existing structures, excavation, and construction. The project will not impact mature, native vegetation and therefore will not harm culturally modified trees.	Yes
If the answer to Step 1 is 'yes', proceed to Step 2		
Step 2a Are there any relevant records of Aboriginal heritage on AHIMS to indicate presence of Aboriginal objects?	AHIMS indicated that there are no Aboriginal sites within the study area.	No
Step 2b Are there other sources of information to indicate presence of Aboriginal objects?	There are no other sources of information to indicate that Aboriginal objects are likely in the study area.	No
Step 2c Will the activity impact landforms with archaeological sensitivity as defined by the Due Diligence Code?	Landforms with identified archaeological sensitivity are present as portions of the study area are within 200 m of 'waters'.	Yes
If the answer to any stage of Step 2 is 'yes', proceed to Step 3		
Step 3 Can harm to Aboriginal objects listed on AHIMS or identified by other sources of information and/or can the carrying out of the activity at the relevant landscape features be avoided?	The project will impact landforms with archaeological sensitivity as identified in the Due Diligence Code of Practice: landforms within 200 m of 'waters'. There are no known Aboriginal objects within the study area.	No
If the answer to Step 3 is 'no', a visual inspection is required. Proceed to Step 4.		
Step 4 Does the visual inspection confirm that there are Aboriginal objects or that they are likely?	The visual inspection recorded no Aboriginal objects in the study area. Widespread disturbances from the construction and use of the hospital have contributed to the low archaeological potential of the study area.	No
Conclusion		
AHIP not necessary. Proceed with caution.		

3 MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The undertaking of the due diligence process resulted in the conclusion that the proposed works will have an impact on the ground surface, however, no Aboriginal objects or intact archaeological deposits will be harmed by the project. This moves the project to the following outcome:

AHIP application not necessary. Proceed with caution. If any Aboriginal objects are found, stop work, and notify Heritage NSW (02) 9873 8500 (heritagemailbox@environment.nsw.gov.au). If human remains are found, stop work, secure the site, and notify NSW Police and Heritage NSW.

To ensure the greatest possible protection to the area's Aboriginal cultural heritage values, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) The proposed Main Works package may proceed at the Moree Hospital without further archaeological investigation provided that all land and ground disturbance activities are confined to within the study area. Should the parameters of the project extend beyond the assessed areas, then further archaeological assessment may be required.
- 2) This assessment has concluded that there is a low likelihood that the proposed work will adversely harm Aboriginal cultural heritage items or sites. If during works, however, Aboriginal artefacts or skeletal material are noted, all work should cease and the procedures in the *Unanticipated Finds Protocol* (**Appendix 2**) should be followed.
- 3) Inductions for work crews should include a cultural heritage awareness procedure to ensure they recognise Aboriginal artefacts (see **Appendix 3**) and are aware of the legislative protection of Aboriginal objects under the NPW Act and the contents of the *Unanticipated Finds Protocol*.
- 4) The information presented here meets the requirements of the *Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales*. It should be retained as shelf documentation for five years as it may be used to support a defence against prosecution in the event of unanticipated harm to Aboriginal objects.

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PLATES




Plate 1: View north across the eastern portion of the study area towards the Mehi River.




Plate 2: View west across the eastern section of the study area.

APPENDIX 1: AHIMS SEARCH RESULTS

 AHIMS Web Services (AWS) Your Ref/PO Number : 3396 Client Service ID : 701851											
Extensive search - Site list report											
SiteID	SiteName	Datum	Zone	Easting	Northing	Context	Site Status **	SiteFeatures	SiteTypes	Reports	
10-3-0013	Middle Camp Moree Moree	AGD	55	773500	6736600	Open site	Valid	Artefact :-	Open Camp Site	204,1068	
	Contact	Recorders								Permits	
10-3-0034	BG-WS-1	AGD	55	776500	6736190	Open site	Valid	Ceremonial Ring (Stone or Earth) :-	Bora/Ceremonial	97714	
	Contact	Recorders	Central West Archaeological and Heritage Services Pty Ltd							Permits	
10-3-0052	BBS; Moree LALC; Top Camp 1	AGD	55	776834	6736288	Open site	Valid	Modified Tree (Carved or Scarred) : 1		98907	
	Contact Mr.Lyle (Terry Hie Hie Elder) †	Recorders								Permits	
10-3-0035	DC-05-1	AGD	55	777400	6737720	Open site	Valid	Artefact :-	Open Camp Site	97835	
	Contact	Recorders	Central West Archaeological and Heritage Services Pty Ltd							Permits	
10-3-0031	Top Camp	AGD	55	777000	6736100	Open site	Valid	Artefact :-	Open Camp Site	97714,97835	
	Contact	Recorders	Central West Archaeological and Heritage Services Pty Ltd							Permits	
10-3-0038	Yarraman gravel pit ST1	AGD	55	777371	6740378	Open site	Valid	Modified Tree (Carved or Scarred) : 1			
	Contact	Recorders	Archaeological Surveys & Salvage							Permits	
10-3-0069	MR-1F1	AGD	55	772983	6736826	Open site	Valid	Artefact : 1			
	Contact	Recorders	Mr.Phillip Cameron							Permits	
10-3-0074	MSAP 1F01	GDA	55	779948	6735144	Open site	Valid	Artefact :-			
	Contact	Recorders	Mr.Matthew Barber,NGH Heritage - Fyshwick							Permits	
10-3-0075	MSAP PST04	GDA	55	779975	6734745	Open site	Valid	Modified Tree (Carved or Scarred) : -			
	Contact	Recorders	Mr.Matthew Barber,NGH Heritage - Fyshwick							Permits	
10-3-0025	Moree scarred tree 14	AGD	55	778900	6735400	Open site	Valid	Modified Tree (Carved or Scarred) : -	Scarred Tree	1355,97835	
	Contact	Recorders	Bonhomme Craib & Associates							Permits	
10-3-0076	Moree to Camurra Isolated Find 02 (MTC IF 02)	GDA	55	780512	6740581	Open site	Valid	Artefact :-			
	Contact	Recorders	Artefact - Cultural Heritage Management - Pyrmont,Mr.Brian Marshall							Permits	
10-3-0039	Moree Cohen Street Scarred Trees	AGD	55	774684	6738172	Open site	Valid	Modified Tree (Carved or Scarred) : 2			
	Contact	Recorders	Ms.Suzanne Hudson							Permits	
10-3-0070	SC OS1	AGD	55	776666	6737934	Open site	Valid	Artefact : 2			
	Contact	Recorders	Mr.Phillip Cameron							Permits	
10-3-0065	BBS; Moree LALC; Top camp	AGD	55	777243	6736206	Open site	Valid	Habitation Structure : 1		98907	
	Contact	Recorders								Permits	

Report generated by AHIMS Web Service on 20/07/2022 for Yekun Zhang for the following area at Datum:GDA, Zone : 55, Eastings : 770519.0 - 780519.0, Northings : 6731483.0 - 6741483.0 with a Buffer of 0 meters.. Number of Aboriginal sites and Aboriginal objects found is 25
This information is not guaranteed to be free from error omission. Heritage NSW and its employees disclaim liability for any act done or omission made on the information and consequences of such acts or omission.

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 AHIMS Web Services (AWS) Your Ref/PO Number : 3396 Client Service ID : 701851											
Extensive search - Site list report											
SiteID	SiteName	Datum	Zone	Easting	Northing	Context	Site Status **	SiteFeatures	SiteTypes	Reports	
10-3-0033	TC-1F-1	AGD	55	777260	6735930	Open site	Valid	Artefact :-	Isolated Find	97835	
	Contact	Recorders	Central West Archaeological and Heritage Services Pty Ltd							Permits	
10-3-0079	Moree to Camurra Isolated Find 05	GDA	55	777670	6738857	Open site	Valid	Artefact :-			
	Contact	Recorders	Artefact - Cultural Heritage Management - Pyrmont,Mr.Brian Marshall							Permits	
10-3-0063	BBS Moree LALC Mehi River TSR 2	GDA	55	771610	6736621	Open site	Valid	Modified Tree (Carved or Scarred) : 1			
	Contact Mr.Lyle (Terry Hie Hie Elder) †	Recorders								Permits	
10-3-0062	BBS Moree LALC Mehi River TSR 1	GDA	55	771648	6736604	Open site	Valid	Modified Tree (Carved or Scarred) : 1		98907	
	Contact Mr.Lyle (Terry Hie Hie Elder) †	Recorders								Permits	
10-3-0073	Halls Creek IF-1	GDA	55	772757	6734481	Open site	Valid	Artefact :-			
	Contact	Recorders	OzArk Environmental and Heritage Management - Dubbo,Doctor.Alyce Cameron							Permits	
10-3-0068	MC-ST1	AGD	55	774154	6736393	Open site	Valid	Modified Tree (Carved or Scarred) : 1			
	Contact	Recorders	Mr.Phillip Cameron							Permits	
10-3-0067	Taylor Oval burial	AGD	55	775425	6736975	Open site	Valid	Burial :-			
	Contact Searle	Recorders	Mr.Craig Trindall							Permits	
10-3-0032	Steelbridge Camp	GDA	55	776593	6736883	Open site	Not a Site	Artefact :-, Potential Archaeological Deposit (PAD) :-	Open Camp Site	97714,99149	
	Contact	Recorders	Central West Archaeological and Heritage Services Pty Ltd,OzArk Environmental a							Permits	1974,2052
10-3-0040	SC-1F1	GDA	55	776684	6738212	Open site	Destroyed	Artefact : 1		98851,99149	
	Contact	Recorders	Doctor.Jodie Benton,OzArk Environmental and Heritage Management - Dubbo,Mis							Permits	1974
10-3-0041	SC PAD	GDA	55	776693	6738283	Open site	Partially Destroyed	Potential Archaeological Deposit (PAD) :-		98854,99149	
	Contact	Recorders	Christine Tester,OzArk Environmental and Heritage Management - Dubbo,Mis,Ste							Permits	1974
10-6-0076	MSAP 1F02	GDA	55	777103	6732706	Open site	Valid	Artefact :-			
	Contact	Recorders	Mr.Matthew Barber,NGH Heritage - Fyshwick							Permits	

**** Site Status**

Valid - The site has been recorded and accepted onto the system as valid

Destroyed - The site has been completely impacted or harmed usually as a consequence of permit activity but sometimes also after natural events. There is nothing left of the site on the ground but proponents should proceed with caution.

Partially Destroyed - The site has been only partially impacted or harmed usually as a consequence of permit activity but sometimes also after natural events. There might be parts or sections of the original site still present on the ground

Not a site - The site has been originally entered and accepted onto AHIMS as a valid site but after further investigations it was decided it is NOT an aboriginal site. Impact of this type of site does not require permit but Heritage NSW should be notified

Report generated by AHIMS Web Service on 20/07/2022 for Yekun Zhang for the following area at Datum:GDA, Zone : 55, Eastings : 770519.0 - 780519.0, Northings : 6731483.0 - 6741483.0 with a Buffer of 0 meters.. Number of Aboriginal sites and Aboriginal objects found is 25
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APPENDIX 2: ABORIGINAL HERITAGE: UNANTICIPATED FINDS PROTOCOL

An Aboriginal artefact is anything which is the result of past Aboriginal activity. This includes stone (artefacts, rock engravings etc.), plant (culturally scarred trees) and animal (if showing signs of modification; i.e. smoothing, use). Human bone (skeletal) remains may also be uncovered while onsite.

Cultural heritage significance is assessed by the Aboriginal community and is typically based on traditional and contemporary lore, spiritual values, and oral history, and may also consider scientific and educational value.

Protocol to be followed if previously unrecorded or unanticipated Aboriginal object(s) are encountered:

1. If any Aboriginal object is discovered and/or harmed in, or under the land, while undertaking the proposed development activities, the proponent must:
 - a. Not further harm the object
 - b. Immediately cease all work at the particular location
 - c. Secure the area to avoid further harm to the Aboriginal object
 - d. Notify Heritage NSW as soon as practical on (02) 9873 8500 (heritagemailbox@environment.nsw.gov.au), providing any details of the Aboriginal object and its location; and
 - e. Not recommence any work at the particular location unless authorised in writing by Heritage NSW.
2. If Aboriginal burials are unexpectedly encountered during the activity, work must stop immediately, the area secured to prevent unauthorised access and NSW Police and Heritage NSW contacted.
3. Cooperate with the appropriate authorities and relevant Aboriginal community representatives to facilitate:
 - a. The recording and assessment of the find(s)
 - b. The fulfilment of any legal constraints arising from the find(s), including complying with Heritage NSW directions
 - c. The development and implementation of appropriate management strategies, including consultation with stakeholders and the assessment of the significance of the find(s).
4. Where the find(s) are determined to be Aboriginal object(s), recommencement of work in the area of the find(s) can only occur in accordance with any consequential legal requirements and after gaining written approval from Heritage NSW (normally an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit).

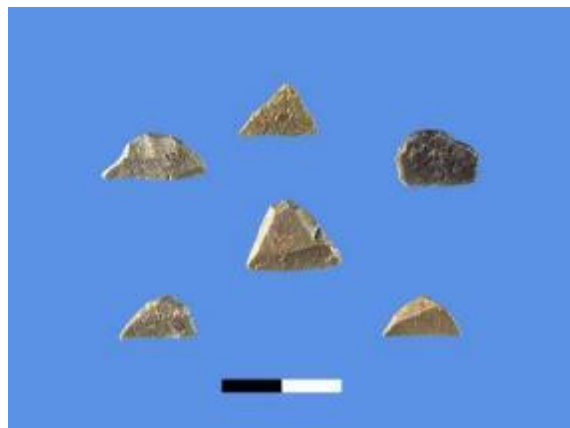
APPENDIX 3: ABORIGINAL HERITAGE: ARTEFACT IDENTIFICATION



A retouched silcrete flake



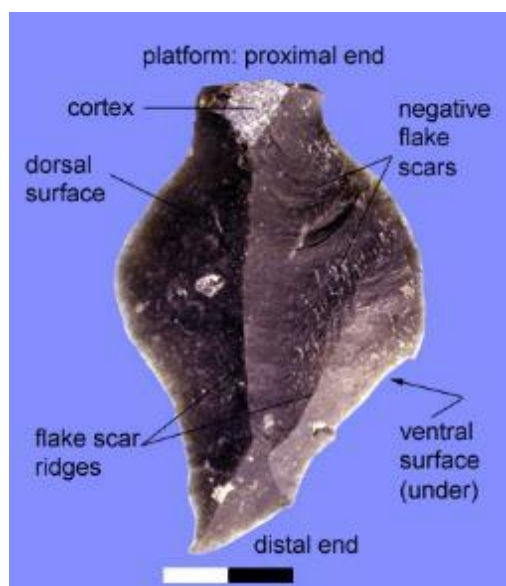
A quartz flake



Microliths (scale = 1 cm)



Volcanic flakes



Flake characteristics (scale = 1 cm)



A mudstone/tuff core from which flakes have been removed