

3 February 2020

Rod Ward
Project Manager – Capital Projects
Woollahra Municipal Council
536 New South Head Road
Double Bay NSW 2028

Dear Rod,

**RE : DRAFT Due Diligence Aboriginal Heritage Assessment
Gap Park Tramway Path, Watsons Bay**

This Due Diligence Aboriginal Heritage Assessment report has been prepared by Coast History & Heritage [Coast] to inform the environmental assessment of the installation of proposed new tramway path within Gap Park at Watsons Bay. Its purpose is to determine whether any further Aboriginal heritage investigations may be needed in relation to the proposal. Woollahra Council requested the assessment because a previous 2007 Aboriginal heritage assessment identified areas of Aboriginal archaeological potential and recommended that and proposed impacts in these areas be subject to detailed Aboriginal heritage assessment.¹

Since the completion of the 2007 study there have been substantial changes to the laws and processes governing Aboriginal heritage assessment and management in NSW. The most appropriate type of assessment for the current proposal is a Due Diligence Aboriginal Heritage Assessment which will determine if any further and more detailed assessment is required and which meets the reporting requirements of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE).² This Due diligence Aboriginal heritage assessment report was written by Dr Paul Irish (Director) and Rebecca Bryant (Archaeologist).

1 What we are assessing

The property and proposal

The study area is within a public reserve known as Gap Park at Watsons Bay, which comprises ocean clifftop and adjacent lands at Watsons Bay, about seven kilometres to the east of the Sydney CBD and five kilometres north of Bondi Beach (see **Figure 1** and **Figure 2**). Gap Park is about 4.6 hectares in size, and is bounded on the east by a sheer cliff bordering the Pacific Ocean and on the west by Gap Road and Old South Head Road. The study area comprises a linear corridor within Gap Park (see **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**). It is within the Woollahra Local Government Area, in the Parish of Alexandria, County of Cumberland, within the boundaries of the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council, and within the Department of Planning, Industry & Environment Metropolitan Sydney Region.

¹ AHMS Pty Ltd 2007. *Re: The Gap, Watsons Bay, NSW – Preliminary Aboriginal Archaeological Investigation* (Report to Thompson Berrill Landscape Design Pty Ltd).

² DECCW 2010 *Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales*

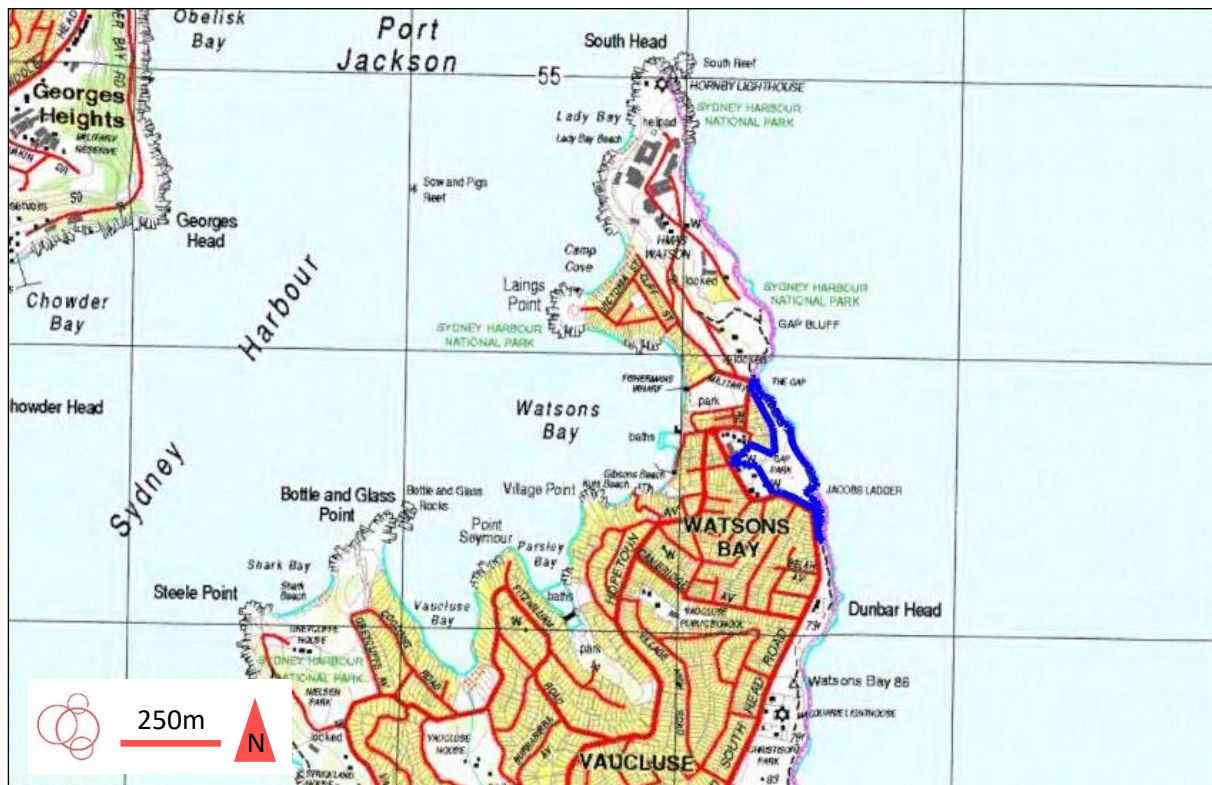


Figure 1. Gap Park (blue outline) and local topography.



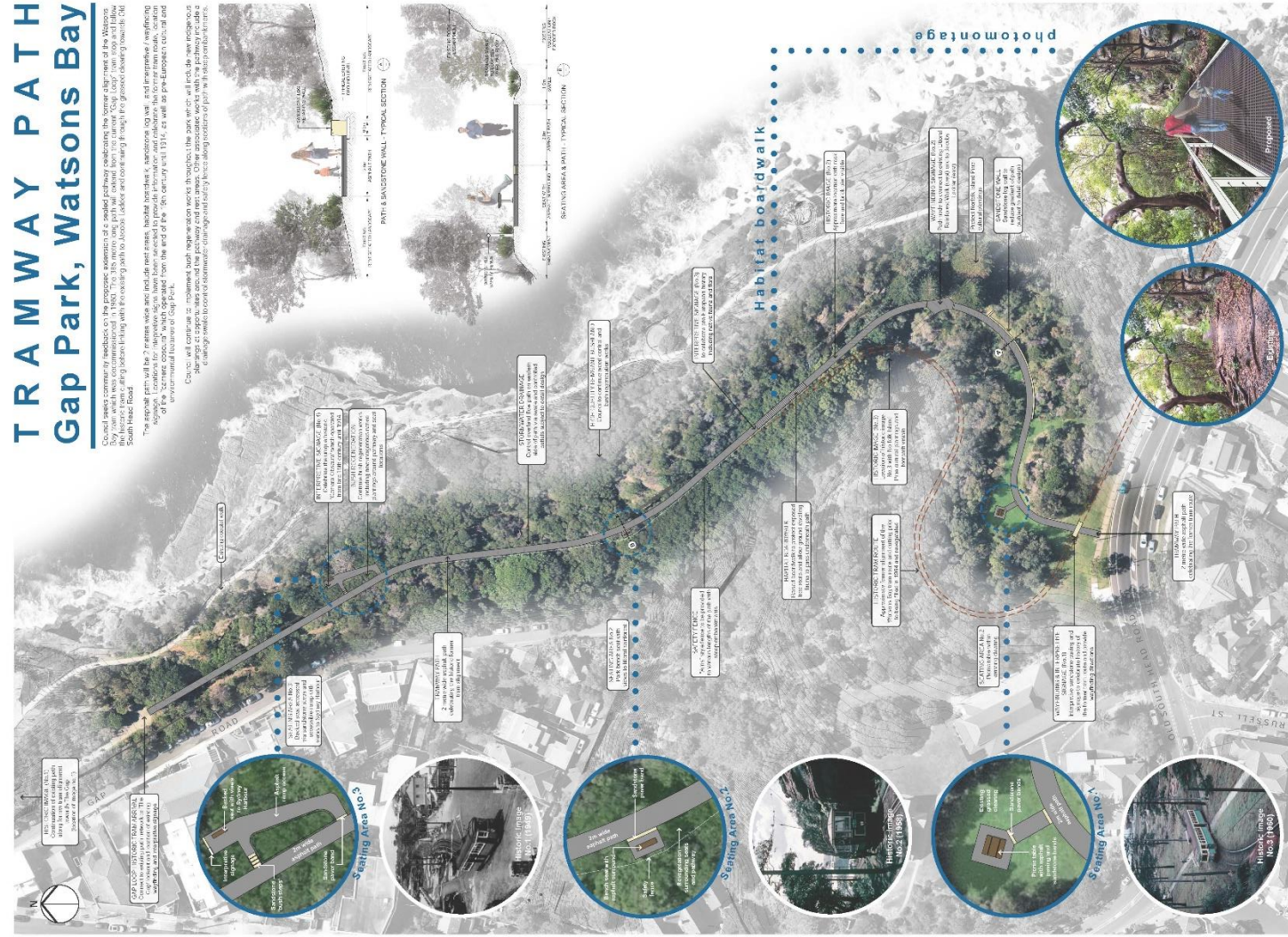
Figure 2. The local context of Gap Park (red outline) and the proposed new walkway (yellow line).

TRAMWAY PATH Gap Park, Watsons Bay

Council seeks community feedback on the proposed extension of a sealed pathway overlooking the former alignment of the Watsons Bay tram which was commissioned in 1901. The 350 metre long path will extend from the current 'Gap Loop' tram loop and follow the former tramway alignment, with the existing path to be widened and resurfaced. The path will be a paved, sealed, wheelchair accessible path.

The proposed path will be 7 metres wide and include rest areas, landscaped areas, a sandstone log wall, and interpretive landscaping. The path will be a paved, sealed, wheelchair accessible path. The path will be a paved, sealed, wheelchair accessible path.

Council will continue to implement such signage works throughout the park and will look to develop new signage works throughout the park and will look to develop new signage works throughout the park.



SCALE 1:500 (A3) 1:1000 (A3)

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PLAN



Figure 3. Plan of the proposed walkway.

The 385m long walkway will largely follow the alignment of a former tramline and areas filled in the 1970s in the southern end of the park, with several small sections outside these area (**Figure 3**). The path is proposed to be 2m in width and consist of crushed sandstone or granite with sandstone edging. It will largely rest on top of existing surfaces. Potential subsurface impacts include the following:

- localised impact of existing areas of path through construction of the new walkway;
- a small section where the path bends north at its south-eastern corner will involve removal of trees and construction of a new path;
- several small areas adjacent to the walkway for interpretive signs and seats, the largest of which is a separate platform towards the northern end of the walkway; and
- removal of some trees along the pathway alignment.

The new pathway alignment passes through areas identified in the 2007 Aboriginal heritage assessment as having the potential to contain either Aboriginal rockshelters, as discussed further below.

2 Who we have spoken with

Aboriginal community consultation

As part of this Due Diligence Aboriginal Heritage Assessment we spoke with the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council (LPLALC) to provide an Aboriginal community perspective on the assessment, and to identify any particular Aboriginal cultural or historical associations that might need to be considered in relation to the proposal. Under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* the LPLALC has a responsibility 'to promote the protection of Aboriginal culture and the heritage of Aboriginal persons'³ within its boundaries, which includes the study area. It also represents families with cultural and historical ties to coastal Sydney.

The project was discussed with the LPLALC, and Site Officer David Ingrey participated in the site inspection on Tuesday 21 January 2020. During and after the inspection, we discuss what we had seen and the possible implications of the proposed development for Aboriginal heritage. We then provided the LPLALC with a draft copy of this report and asked them to let us know of any Aboriginal cultural or historical connections or information that they thought should be considered in this assessment. We also asked them to consider its recommendations. Their comments are attached in **Appendix 1 – discuss on receipt**.

³ *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983*, s52(1)(m).

3 Information we have considered

Environmental, archaeological and historical context

3.1 Environmental context

If we want to understand how Aboriginal people may have used the local area in the past, and what traces of that use might still physically remain on and below the ground surface, we need to understand the local environment and how it has changed over time.

The study area is situated above the southern side of Sydney Harbour, on a peninsula of land which extends north to the southern headland at the harbour's entrance. It sits immediately to the west and downslope of a large sandstone outcrop extending about 50m back from the ocean cliff top, before sloping gently to steeply downwards across the alignment of the majority of the walkway alignment. The southern/south-western portion of the walkway is situated on made ground consisting of fill deposited in the 1970s.⁴

Soils in the study area are formed from the weathering of the sandstone and are known as the Hawkesbury soil landscape.⁵ Such soils are highly susceptible to erosion, especially in sloping areas like the current study area. This is important in working out what physical traces may remain of the past Aboriginal use of the area. Flat exposed boulders or outcrops of sandstone can contain rock engravings or grooves from the sharpening of stone axes. In sloping areas like this, Aboriginal people most likely camped in sandstone overhangs, which may still contain evidence of their use both as artefacts buried within the sandy floors of these shelters, or as painted artworks on the rear wall or roof. The physical evidence within sandstone overhangs is often better protected over time due to its sheltered location, but rain erodes soil from shelter floors, and this will get washed downslope.

Fresh water may have been available in erosion channels during heavy rains in the western portion of Gap Park.⁶ The natural vegetation in the area is likely to have included heath, scrub and trees including bottle brushes, acacias and eucalypts, which would have provided habitat for animals, and useful plants.⁷ Fish and shellfish would have been available in Watsons Bay. As the number of Aboriginal sites in the area show, this was a resource-rich and well-used area for Aboriginal people.

Contrary to popular belief, Aboriginal people did not disappear from areas like Watsons Bay soon after Europeans arrived in Sydney in 1788. One of the authors of this report has researched these ongoing Aboriginal connections across coastal Sydney, and in particular to the Vaucluse and Watson's Bay areas.⁸ Aboriginal people continued to live within local properties such as the Vaucluse Estate through the nineteenth century, and were still visiting and camping on the estate in the early twentieth century. There were also large Aboriginal settlements at nearby Camp Cove in the 1830s

⁴ Aspect Australia 2019. *Design Summary Statement. Gap Park, Watsons Bay. Proposed New Pathway Along Historic Tramway Route* (Report to Woollahra Municipal Council): 2.

⁵ Chapman, G. & Murphy, C. 1989. *Soil Landscapes of the Sydney 1:100 000 Sheet* (Soil Conservation Service of NSW).

⁶ AHMS 2007:10.

⁷ Benson, D. 2011. 'Native plants of Sydney Harbour National Park: historical records and species lists, and their value for conservation monitoring', *Cunninghamia* 12(1): 61-84.

⁸ Irish, P. & Ingre, M., 2011. *Aboriginal Connections to Vaucluse House and Elizabeth Bay House*. Research Report (Report to Historic Houses Trust of NSW); Irish, P. 2017. *Hidden In Plain View: The Aboriginal People of Coastal Sydney* (Sydney: New South Publishing).

and 1840s, and just a few hundred metres west of the study area at Watsons Bay (near the Greenwich Pier Hotel – now Watsons Bay Library) in the 1890s.⁹ By the end of the nineteenth century most Aboriginal people in coastal Sydney had come to live at the La Perouse Aboriginal fishing village on Botany Bay,¹⁰ though it is likely that they continued to visit the Watsons Bay area well into the twentieth century.

It is unlikely within the study area that traces of the historical Aboriginal use of the area will have survived. Instead, it is more likely that traces of pre-European Aboriginal use may be present. These will most likely be closely associated with outcropping sandstone, where it has survived historical impacts. Gap Park was made a public reserve in 1887 and in the northern end of the study area, a building was constructed to house a camera obscura around the turn of the century, which proved a popular tourist attraction until it was removed in 1914.¹¹ The majority of the study area was impacted by the construction of the tramline in 1909, which operated until 1960. A 1943 aerial photograph shows the park during the operation of the tramline and the extent of vegetation clearing evident at that time (**Figure 4**). Most of the current vegetation in the vicinity of the study area dates to after the closure of the tramline. After the tramline closed, the southern portion of Gap Park was landscaped and filled. These activities are likely to have impacted to some degree any archaeological evidence of past Aboriginal use that may have survived within the current study area.



Figure 4. Gap Park in 1943 showing the tramline.

⁹ Irish 2017: 32-33, 36-38, 126-7.

¹⁰ Irish 2017: Chapter 7.

¹¹ Woollahra Local History Centre 2005. *Gap Park, Watsons Bay*: 1.

3.2 Archaeological recordings and research

For this assessment we checked the main Aboriginal heritage database for New South Wales, the Department of Planning, Industry & Environment ('DPIE') Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System ('the AHIMS Register'). We searched the AHIMS Register over a 4km x 4km area centred on the study area (see **Appendix 2**).¹² While no Aboriginal sites are registered within the study area, there are 67 sites within the search area, which covers the Vaucluse/Watson's Bay peninsula.¹³ The distribution of sites largely reflects the focus of Aboriginal life around the coastline, and their occupation of rockshelter sites and creation of rock engravings where suitable sandstone outcrops (**Table 1**). Specifically, almost all of the registered sites are clustered around the shore of Watson's Bay/South Head and the Vaucluse Peninsula.

Table 1. Summary of AHIMS Register search results.

Site Type	Number	Percentage
Rock Engraving	22	33%
Rockshelter with Midden and/or Stone Artefacts	15	22.5%
Open Midden	12	18%
Rockshelter with Art	8	12%
Rockshelter with Potential Archaeological Deposit (PAD)	3	4%
Rockshelter with Art and Midden	1	1.5%
Historical Aboriginal Place	1	1.5%
Burial	1	1.5%
Restricted Site	1	1.5%
Open Midden and Engraving	1	1.5%
Axe Grinding Groove and Engraving	1	1.5%
Open area of Potential Archaeological Deposit (PAD)	1	1.5%
	67	100%

Only five of the 67 sites are located within 500m of the study area (**Figure 5**), however some of these have been incorrectly registered. Rock engraving sites #45-6-0711, #45-6-0712 and #45-6-0717 were recorded in the 1890s by surveyor W.D. Campbell as part of a study he conducted on rock engravings in the Sydney area.¹⁴ The original detailed plans and sketches made by Campbell are held in the NSW State Library and contain more specific information about site locations.¹⁵ Between these maps and Campbell's published descriptions, it is clear that these three engravings are located several hundred metres further west, in association with areas behind Gibson Beach (where

¹² AHIMS Search ID 480587, on 30/1/2020 within co-ordinates E339370-E343370, N6251600-N6255600 (GDA94 / MGA Zone 56).

¹³ The search contained 68 sites, but #45-6-2971 is listed as a duplicate of #45-6-1518.

¹⁴ Campbell, W.D. 1899. *Aboriginal Carvings of Port Jackson and Broken Bay* (Memoirs of the Geological Survey of NSW).

¹⁵ Thank you to Dr Shane Ingre of the La Perouse Aboriginal community for making us aware of these records.

rockshelter #45-6-2084) is located. The final of the five registered sites shown in **Figure 5** is an engraving located within the national park, about 200m to the north of northern end of the current study area.



Figure 5. Registered Aboriginal sites close to the study area with approximate corrected locations indicated with red arrows.

Gap Park was the subject of a preliminary Aboriginal archaeological study in 2007 to inform future planning for the park.¹⁶ The study included background archaeological and historical research and a brief field inspection. The inspection did not locate any Aboriginal sites, but observations from this and background materials, allowed the identification of areas of potential archaeological sensitivity, as shown in **Figure 6**. These included an area associated with outcropping sandstone along the ocean coast which could potentially contain rock engravings or axe grinding grooves on their exposed upper surface. The other is an area west of this and covering some of the current study area, in which there is considered to be some potential for rockshelters with archaeological evidence to be present.

¹⁶ AHMS 2007.



Figure 6. Approximate extent of areas of potential archaeological sensitivity as determined in the AHMS 2007 study, in relation to the current study area (blue line).

As well as the AHIMS Register, we also searched some other heritage registers to see if any other sites or places of Aboriginal cultural or historical significance had been recorded. The NSW State Heritage Inventory (incorporating the NSW State Heritage Register) was searched on 30/1/2020 for the suburb of Watsons Bay. No items in within close proximity to the study area are listed for their Aboriginal heritage values. The tramway cutting is seemingly listed on the local heritage inventory (item #436) as part of a combined entry with the Dunbar shipwreck anchor (at the north end of Gap Park), but the listing only mentioned the anchor.

Although no sites are listed on the heritage registers, this doesn't mean that there are no Aboriginal sites or areas of Aboriginal heritage significance within the study area. The AHIMS Register records only where things have been found, usually because of Aboriginal heritage assessments undertaken

for previous development proposals. So, if nothing specific has been proposed over the last 30-40 years in or near the study area, it is likely that this area has never been subject to detailed archaeological survey (beyond the brief inspection in 2007). Based on what we know from the surrounding area, the most likely traces of past Aboriginal life which might survive within the property will be associated with outcropping sandstone, either as rock engravings or as sandstone overhangs with traces of past Aboriginal use (such as stone artefacts or art).

4 What we have observed

Site inspection

On Tuesday 21 February 2020, the study area was inspected by Paul Irish (Coast) and David Ingrei (La Perouse LALC), accompanied by Rod Ward (Woollahra Municipal Council). Although the study area has been considerably disturbed through historical activities, the observations we made, together with the other information about the area reviewed above, were enough to determine the likelihood for Aboriginal archaeological remains to be present within the study area. Observations were made along the route from south to north.

The southern 70m of the walk from Old South Head Road traverses an area filled in the 1970s and currently cleared and grassed (**Figure 7**). The next 60-70m includes grassed areas and existing tracks but includes a roughly 10m section through regrowth bush at its northern end, before meeting the original alignment of the tramway (**Figure 8**). This is also where the path meets the western edge of a sandstone outcrop, at the base of which is a low (ca. 0.5m high) overhang. Immediately to the north of this is a small shelter about 1m high and 1.5m deep and 3m long, with a brick pylon at its entrance, probably erected in association with the adjacent tramline (**Figure 9**). The floor deposit is partly disturbed loose grey sand. No artefacts, faunal remains or charcoal were observed, nor was any art observed on the roof or rear wall. The overhang is small and unlikely to have been used by Aboriginal people in the past, however this cannot be definitely discounted.

The next 100m of the route follows an existing path along the original tramline alignment. The path is strewn in sections with broken bitumen from a previous attempt to create a hard surface along the track. Some of this is loose and could easily be removed without damaging the soil below, but other pieces appear stuck to the underlying deposit. The tramline appears to have been constructed by cutting through the steeply sloping edge of the sandstone outcrop to the east and using the spoil to level a 2-3m wide corridor above the continuing moderate to steep slope below (west) (**Figure 10**). Mature fig trees are growing in this slope immediately west of the path.

The northern 150m of the proposed walkway follows the existing track immediately east of a steep slope down to houses on Gap Road, while outcropping sandstone is lower and generally 10-20m further east of the path. About 50m from the end is a small clearing to the east of the track which is proposed to be used as an interpretation/seating area discussing the camera obscura tourist attraction that was located there in the 1890s and 1900s. This has a low sandstone outcrop to the east, which was inspected for engravings (**Figure 12**). Sandstone is also immediately below the clearing and is exposed in several places, suggesting the soil in this area is shallow and that the sandstone outcrop below may once have been exposed (**Figure 12**). The area contains expansive views west along the harbour and it is possible that rock engravings are present on the sandstone under the clearing.



Figure 7. View west over filled area at the southern end of the proposed path.



Figure 8. View south from low rockshelter to area where new path required to be cut through existing bush.



Figure 9. View north-east into small rockshelter with supporting brick pylon at its entrance (10cm gradations on scale).



Figure 10. View south along former tramline showing cut sandstone outcrop to the east (left) , levelled tramline corridor and continuing slope to the west (right).



Figure 11. Sandstone outcrop on eastern edge of interpretation/seating area and ground below which consists of shallow vegetation and soil over sandstone.



Figure 12. Sandstone outcrop immediately below the surface in the area proposed for interpretation and seating.

5 Our conclusions

In this assessment we have considered the environmental setting and historical context of the study area, what is currently known about past Aboriginal use of the surrounding area, and have conducted a field inspection. Based on all of these things, we have been able to determine whether the current proposal is likely to impact any items of Aboriginal heritage, and whether it may have other impacts to Aboriginal heritage values. In doing so, we have also addressed the Due Diligence assessment requirements of the DPIE.¹⁷

There are no previously recorded Aboriginal archaeological sites within the study area, and none were identified as a result of the research or site inspection for the current assessment. No mature trees were present within or in close proximity to the study area which may contain scars of Aboriginal cultural origin. One possible rockshelter and one possible engraving site were noted and the implications of these are discussed below.

The majority of the proposed walkway route follows an existing path along the former tramway route and is likely to be highly disturbed. The remainder at the southern end is largely situated in an area historically filled after the closure of the tramline. No excavation is proposed for the installation of the pathway. Materials are to be deposited on the existing surface, including concrete footings for the proposed boardwalk section of the walk (see **Figure 3**). As such, it is considered highly unlikely that the construction of the path will directly impact any known or potential Aboriginal archaeological remains. There is some potential for indirect impacts to the low rockshelter at the south-eastern end of the study area from dust or entry to the shelter, and this has been addressed in the management strategy below. Similarly, the possible presence of engravings in the interpretation/seating area towards the northern end of the path will require consideration.

Providing that the management strategy outlined below (and with reference to **Figure 13**) is implemented, there are considered to be no further archaeological requirements in relation to the current proposal, and no further archaeological investigations are considered warranted prior to the commencement of construction.

It is recommended that the following be implemented during design and construction:

- Where possible avoid, or else minimise any subsurface impacts, for example by ensuring any footings are broad and either sit on the current surface or involve very shallow excavation; by grinding the stumps of any trees to be removed rather than removing them, and by leaving embedded bitumen fragments in the existing path.
- The location of the small shelter as shown in **Figure 13** should be protected through the erection of temporary protective fencing during construction to prevent people or dust from entering the shelter.
- The design of the interpretation/seating area shown in **Figure 13** should seek to minimise subsurface impacts, as there is potential for rock engravings to be located immediately under

¹⁷ As outlined in the DECCW 2010 *Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales*.

the current ground surface. This could be achieved by raking over the existing top matter and building on top of this, rather than excavating for footings.

- Where subsurface impacts cannot be avoided, they should be subject to archaeological monitoring to ensure that any Aboriginal archaeological remains that may be exposed can be appropriately managed.
- With the implementation of these measures, it is considered unlikely that Aboriginal archaeological remains will be impacted by the proposal, but it should be noted that any unexpected Aboriginal objects remain protected by the provisions of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. Our recommendations therefore include measures to ensure that any such objects are identified and appropriately managed during the course of the works.

Draft

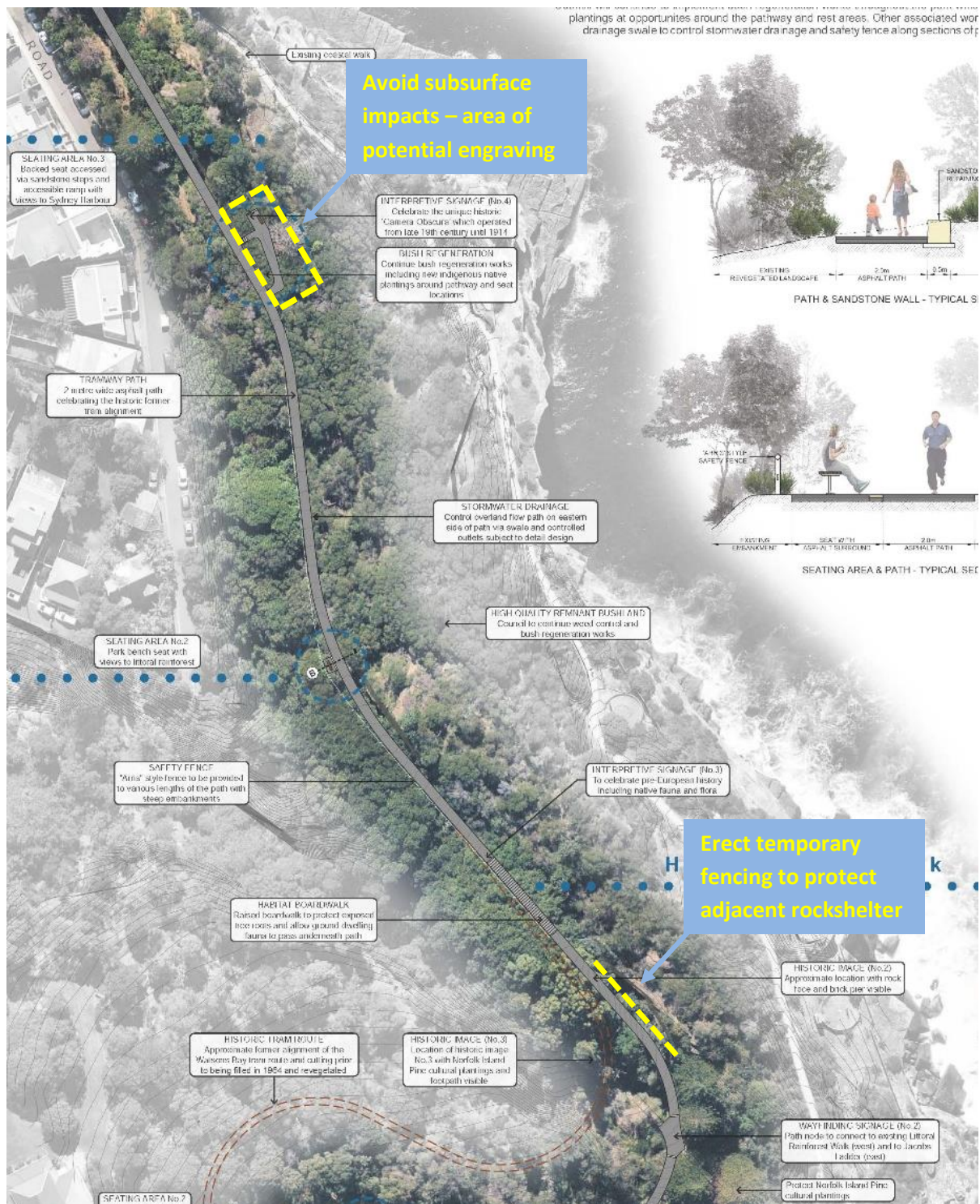


Figure 13. Extract of tramway path plan showing areas requiring management during construction.

6 Our recommendations

We have based our recommendations on:

- the research and conclusions of our assessment as outlined in this report;
- the views expressed during our consultation with the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council, including during the field inspection and as outlined in their report attached in **Appendix 1**;
- the legal protections provided to Aboriginal 'objects' and 'places' under s.86 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*;
- current policy and regulatory requirements relating to the assessment of Aboriginal heritage, and in particular the DECCW (2010) *Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales*;

We recommend that:

1. No further Aboriginal heritage investigations are required in relation to planning of the current tramway path proposal within Gap Park, Watsons Bay.
2. Subsurface impacts should be avoided or minimised in accordance with the strategy outlined in this report.
3. Any proposed subsurface impacts should be subject to archaeological monitoring by a representative of the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council (and a suitably qualified archaeologist if required).
4. The location of the small shelter as shown in **Figure 13** should be protected through the erection of temporary protective fencing during construction to prevent people or dust from entering the shelter.
5. The design of the interpretation/seating area shown in **Figure 13** should seek to minimise subsurface impacts, as there is potential for rock engravings to be located immediately under the current ground surface. This could be achieved by raking over the existing top matter and building on top of this, rather than excavating for footings.
6. If any Aboriginal objects or bones suspected of being human are identified during construction, site workers must:
 - a. Not further disturb or move these remains.
 - b. Immediately cease all work at the location.
 - c. In the case of suspected human remains only, notify NSW Police. In the case of Aboriginal objects, notify The Department of Planning, Industry & Environment (DPIE) Environment Line on 131 555 as soon as practicable and provide available details of the objects or remains and their location. If not already present, the La Perouse Local

Aboriginal Land Council should also be notified to assist in the determination of appropriate management for the objects or remains.

- d. Not recommence any work at the location unless authorised in writing by the Department of Planning, Industry & Environment.
7. One copy of this report should be forwarded to the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council.
8. A copy of this report should be forwarded to:

The Registrar
Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System
NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment
Locked Bag 5020
Parramatta NSW 2220

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Paul Irish

Director

E: paul@coasthistory.com.au

W: www.coasthistory.com.au

Appendix 1

Correspondence with the La Perouse LALC

Appendix 2

AHIMS Register Search

[The search is of a 4km x 4km area centred on the study area. To help protect the listed Aboriginal sites we have provided only the basic search results without site coordinates. If the extensive search results showing site names and coordinates are required, please contact Coast History & Heritage].

Coast History & Heritage

Date: 30 January 2020

PO BOX A74 7 Mitchell Street
Arncliffe New South Wales 2205

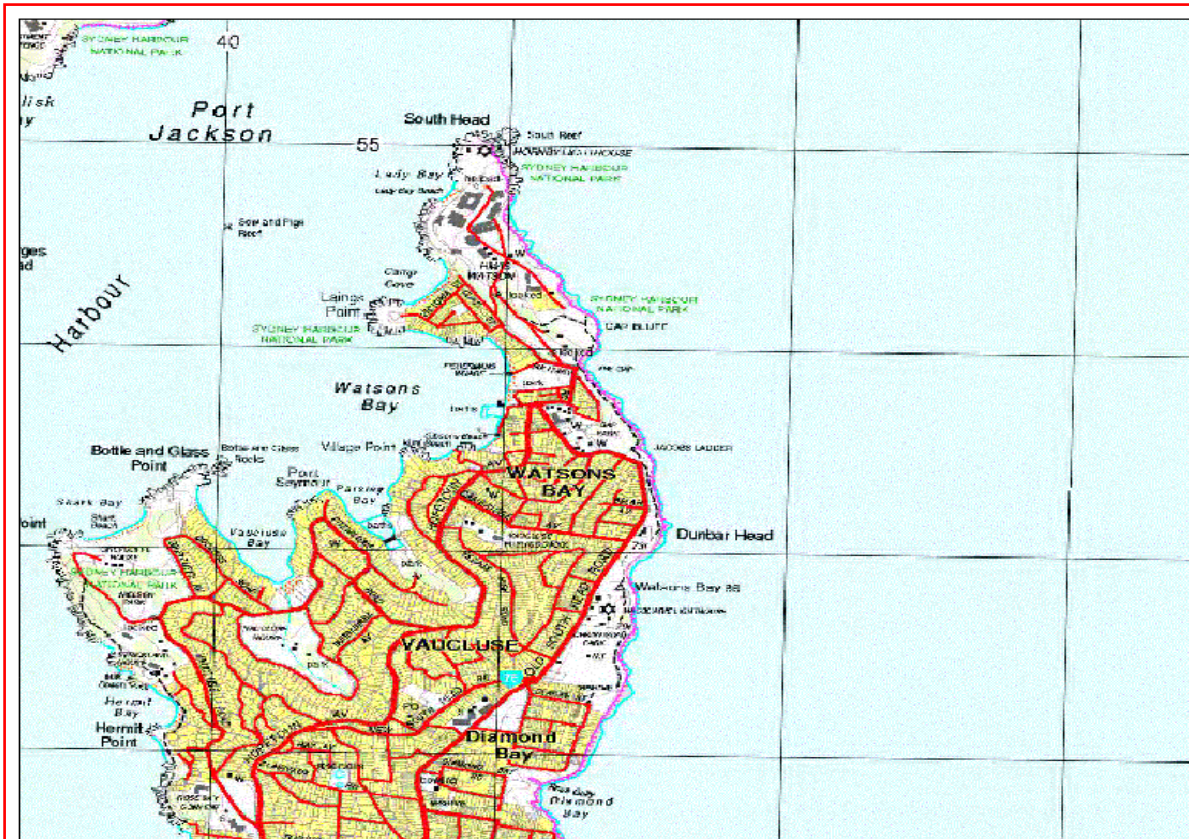
Attention: Rebecca Bryant

Email: rebecca@coasthistory.com.au

Dear Sir or Madam:

AHIMS Web Service search for the following area at Datum :GDA, Zone : 56, Eastings : 339370 - 343370, Northings : 6251600 - 6255600 with a Buffer of 0 meters. Additional Info : Due diligence, conducted by Rebecca Bryant on 30 January 2020.

The context area of your search is shown in the map below. Please note that the map does not accurately display the exact boundaries of the search as defined in the paragraph above. The map is to be used for general reference purposes only.



A search of the Office of the Environment and Heritage AHIMS Web Services (Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System) has shown that:

68	Aboriginal sites are recorded in or near the above location.
0	Aboriginal places have been declared in or near the above location. *

If your search shows Aboriginal sites or places what should you do?

- You must do an extensive search if AHIMS has shown that there are Aboriginal sites or places recorded in the search area.
- If you are checking AHIMS as a part of your due diligence, refer to the next steps of the Due Diligence Code of practice.
- You can get further information about Aboriginal places by looking at the gazettal notice that declared it. Aboriginal places gazetted after 2001 are available on the [NSW Government Gazette \(http://www.nsw.gov.au/gazette\)](http://www.nsw.gov.au/gazette) website. Gazettal notices published prior to 2001 can be obtained from Office of Environment and Heritage's Aboriginal Heritage Information Unit upon request

Important information about your AHIMS search

- The information derived from the AHIMS search is only to be used for the purpose for which it was requested. It is not be made available to the public.
- AHIMS records information about Aboriginal sites that have been provided to Office of Environment and Heritage and Aboriginal places that have been declared by the Minister;
- Information recorded on AHIMS may vary in its accuracy and may not be up to date .Location details are recorded as grid references and it is important to note that there may be errors or omissions in these recordings,
- Some parts of New South Wales have not been investigated in detail and there may be fewer records of Aboriginal sites in those areas. These areas may contain Aboriginal sites which are not recorded on AHIMS.
- Aboriginal objects are protected under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 even if they are not recorded as a site on AHIMS.
- This search can form part of your due diligence and remains valid for 12 months.