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SYDNEY NSW 2000**

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26 April 2023

Corey O'Driscoll
Senior Assessment Officer
Via email: corey.odriscoll@environment.nsw.gov.au

Dear Corey,

UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE - CENTRAL COAST CAMPUS - RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

INTRODUCTION

Urbis have prepared this letter in response to the Submission received by Heritage NSW (HNSW) to State Significant Development Application (SSDA) SSD-47749715. This SSDA provides for the redevelopment of the site at of 305 Mann Street, Gosford, NSW, within the Central Coast Local Government Area (LGA) (hereafter referred to as 'the subject area') including the demolition of existing structures, excavation and bulk earthworks for site levelling, and construction of a new educational building on the western portion of the subject area with provision of open public space to the east. Response was received by HNSW on 27th March 2023, with the current letter addressing the queries from HNSW.

RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

Urbis understand that in preparing their submission, HNSW have referred to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared by Urbis (2023) and as part of the EIS, the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) prepared by Urbis (2022). We would also like to draw attention to the Historical Archaeological Impact Assessment (HAIA) prepared by Urbis (2022), and the Archaeological Research Design and Excavation Methodology (ARD&EM) prepared by Urbis (2022) for the subject area, which have been considered in providing our response.

Urbis have considered the submission provided by HNSW and provide the following response to queries, as detailed in Table 1.

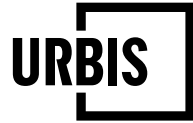
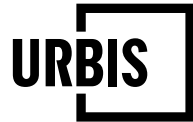
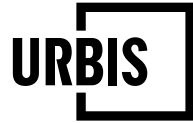


Table 1 – Response to submissions.

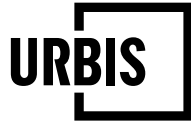
Comment	Urbis Response	Amendment in Reports
<p><i>Please update Heritage NSW's Departmental details in the ACHAR from Department of Premier and Cabinet to the Department of Planning and Environment.</i></p>	<p>Noted. This amendment has been actioned.</p>	<p>Across the ACHA</p>
<p><i>Please clarify why the only newspaper advertisement was placed in the Koori Mail and not the local newspaper as per Section 4.1.3 of the Aboriginal cultural heritage consultation requirements for proponents 2010 (DECCW).</i></p>	<p>The public notice was placed in the KooriMail as opposed to the local newspaper on the basis of several considerations.</p> <p>Urbis note that a number of local newspapers are not publishing to full capacity or delivering as a result of the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 crisis. This required us to adapt our approach for this stage of consultation. We publish public notices in satisfaction of Stage 1.3 of the Consultation Requirements in the KooriMail as this is an Aboriginal owned newspaper which has high circulation and readership within the Aboriginal community across New South Wales (c.100,000+ readers per fortnight). Resultingly, we found that registrations for projects has increased correlating with our publications in the KooriMail. We also assert that publishing in an Aboriginal owned newspaper is in accordance with the ethos of the ACHA process and assists in supporting regional Aboriginal businesses. We have had feedback on other projects that RAPs are supportive of the public notice placed in the KooriMail.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>



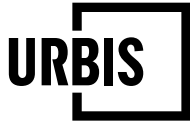
Comment	Urbis Response	Amendment in Reports
<p><i>Heritage NSW recommends that all assessment should be undertaken prior to the approval of impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage to establish the cultural significance of sites and inform the EIS. Without adequate and complete assessment, including recommended test excavation, it cannot be demonstrated that more places of significance or places which may further enhance the significance of the known Aboriginal cultural heritage in the area will not be found.</i></p> <p><i>However, Heritage NSW does understand that for the reasons specified including the nature of the site, test excavations are proposed to be conducted post project approval, in accordance with the measures outlined in the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (ACHMP).</i></p>	<p>Urbis concur that under normal circumstances, the undertaking of excavation prior to approval is the most appropriate course of action. However, we affirm that due to site conditions that is not possible on the current site, as acknowledged. This has been confirmed with Registered Aboriginal Parties prior to submission of the reports/SSDA at the site visit and Stage 4 review.</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>
<p><i>Mechanical archaeological excavation should be limited to removal of fill and/or known culturally sterile sediments. All excavation of potential archaeological deposit should be undertaken by hand excavation methods.</i></p>	<p>We confirm that mechanical excavation will be limited to the removal of hardstand and fill, and natural soils will be subject to hand excavation. Mechanical excavation will be monitored and ceased should natural soils be encountered as per the methodology. The existing structure will be demolished to slab with careful removal of the foundations using</p>	<p>Clarified in ARD Section 4.5.</p>



Comment	Urbis Response	Amendment in Reports
<p><i>Please provide further details on how the removal of the existing structure and hardstand will be managed in relation to not impacting the potential archaeological deposit.</i></p>	<p>mechanical excavation under the supervision of a qualified archaeologist. Mechanical excavation will be monitored and ceased should natural soils be encountered.</p>	
<p><i>Please provide further information on how finds of historical significance are identified, especially if they are found associated with Aboriginal cultural heritage.</i></p>	<p>Historical archaeological deposits/relics are not anticipated to occur within the subject area, and thus the works will proceed in accordance with the recommendations of the HAIA prepared by Urbis (2022). This includes an Unexpected Finds Procedure, as well as an archaeological induction.</p> <p>Excavation will be undertaken by suitably qualified archaeologists, with the ability to recognise historically significant deposits. Should historically significant deposits be identified during the excavation works, physical works will stop, the relevant area secured, HNSW will be notified through the submission of a Section 146 notification and an updated methodology provided to manage these unexpected finds.</p>	<p>Not applicable, addressed in HAIA and ARD.</p>
<p><i>Please provide further details on triggers for the expansion and cessation of excavation units based on the artefactual material identified during excavation and expected depth of works.</i></p>	<p>Excavation units will be expanded where a significant number of objects, exceptional objects, or cultural layers are identified. For this purpose, a significant number of objects will be subject to the site conditions and context. It will typically be understood to be >10 objects, however if objects are only identified in a small number of test pits, this number may be revised down to the test pits with the highest frequency of objects. Excavation will be ceased on the identification of culturally sterile layers, of</p>	<p>Clarified in Section 4.5 of ARD & EM.</p>



Comment	Urbis Response	Amendment in Reports
	<p>the end of the deposit (i.e where objects are no longer occurring), which is anticipated to occur at depths of approximately 0.5-1.3m on the basis of geotechnical investigations.</p>	
<p><i>o The excavation methodology should include provisions for the expansion of excavation units to enable shoring, benching, and/or stepping of excavation units to allow for safe working conditions beyond 1.5 m below the surface.</i></p>	<p>Provision for benching of excavation units will be included in the ARD&EM as requested. The excavation will also be undertaken under a Safe Work Method Statement (as per Section 4.13.1 of the ARD&EM), which provides information regarding safe work practices and mitigation of risk.</p>	<p>Clarified in Sections 4.5, 4.6 and 4.13.1 of the ARD & EM.</p>
<p><i>o The ACHAR must include provisions for the conservation and avoidance of highly significant Aboriginal Cultural heritage that may be identified during the test excavations</i></p>	<p>As per section 8.2 of the ACHA, "Further recommendations on the basis of the findings of the field investigations should be made within the post excavation report, including in relation to the management or interpretation any Aboriginal objects identified." This could include options for in-situ retention of significant deposits. Urbis have added a clarifying sentence within this section for the avoidance of doubt.</p>	<p>Additional sentence added in Section 8.2 of ACHA.</p>



CONCLUSIONS

Urbis assert that the amendments made to the report and responses provided above should satisfy the questions raised by HNSW, and this matter should now be considered closed with no further concerns relating to Aboriginal or European heritage. We note that the changes are insubstantial and do not warrant further consultation with Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) in the form of re-submission of the report for Stage 4 – Review of Draft Cultural Heritage Assessment Report.

If you have any further queries, please don't hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M Walker".

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