Leppington House Park Archaeological Excavation-Staging Report

Stockland
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<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Leppington House Park Archaeological Excavation - Staging Report</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td>Karyn McLeod</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepared by</td>
<td>Karyn McLeod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewed by</td>
<td>Jennifer Norfolk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approved by</td>
<td>David Bonjer</td>
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background
Eco Logical Australia Pty Ltd (ELA) was commissioned by Stockland to manage the archaeology contained within Leppington House Park on the eastern boundary of the Willowdale Estate, East Leppington. Stockland are currently developing the Willowdale Estate for residential, commercial and recreational uses and the study area forms Leppington House Park. The archaeological remains of Leppington House and its outbuildings are located on the eastern edge of the park and Stockland intend to conserve, interpret and make the remains publicly accessible as a surviving remnant of early settlement of the area. The aim of the archaeological investigation was to expose existing hard surfaces and structural remains within the park boundaries to aid the detail design of the landscaping and interpretation of the archaeological remains.

The archaeological investigation of Leppington House Park was proposed as two stages. Stage 1 included removal of demolition material and clarification of the nature and extent of the above-ground structural remains as well as test trenching to determine the extent to which potential archaeological remains survive within targeted areas on the periphery of the core archaeological site (Figure 1). ELA completed Stage 1 of the archaeological excavation and testing on Friday 13 March, 2020.

![Figure 1 Location of Leppington House Park (yellow) and approximate core archaeological area (blue)]:

1.2 Approvals
Excavation permit (Application number 2019/S140/011) was approved 14 November 2019 with Condition 3 of the permit requiring a staging report at the end of the testing program for approval of the Heritage Council of NSW or its delegate prior to commencing the Stage 2 monitoring works. The
staging report is required to provide additional information regarding artefacts and significance of the site as well as to advise whether a change in the approach to the landscaping for Leppington House Park is required based on the results of Stage 1 archaeological testing.

Stage 2 proposes archaeological monitoring of bulk earthworks, including levelling of areas downslope from the archaeological remains, for playground and path construction. These areas of steeply sloped topography have been assessed as having low potential for significant archaeology. The core archaeological site on the ridgeline will be fenced off and will not be impacted by the bulk earthworks (Figure 14). The landscape plans do not require amendment prior to the bulk earthworks stage in regard to the results of the archaeological testing.

The development application for Leppington House Park, Ridgeline Trail and Hilltop Park and associated civil and landscaping works has been approved by Campbelltown Council (Development Application No.: 755/2019/DA-CW) which states that Amended Landscape Plans are required prior to issue of a construction certificate (CC). Therefore, details such as furniture locations, plant schedule, lighting, retaining walls, irrigation and play equipment as well as details of the proposed community garden are not necessary for the bulk earthworks stage. The landscape plan does not include treatment of the archaeological resource or interpretation. These details will also be provided at CC stage.
2. Staging Report

2.1 Stage 1 Investigations
As detailed in the Research Design (ELA April 2019), Stage 1 of the archaeological investigation comprised removal of loose/collapsed brick and stone to be stored for future use and interpretation, as well as clearing of demolition material and exposure of above ground structural features such as foundations and paved surfaces.

- No excavation of significant underfloor and yard deposits or below ground features such as cess pits and wells was undertaken as it was not necessary.
- No State significant features and deposits were removed.
- Views to the east and west have been established by removal of noxious weeds and the existing mature trees have been retained.
- The original driveway and terraced gardens to the west of the main house remain intact.
- Most of the archaeological resource relating to Leppington House and its outbuildings on the ridgeline remains in situ.
- No unexpected archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

The remains of each building were excavated individually which generally involved manually clearing surfaces and exposing foundations. Interior deposits are only present within Leppington House and an early stone building. These deposits remain mostly in situ as they did not require removal. All excavation was undertaken in accordance with the Research Design (ELA 2019). The following addresses the information required by Condition 3 of the excavation permit approval.

2.2 Analysis of the testing results

2.2.1 Basic artefact analysis and interpretation
The following provides a summary of the main types of finds associated with the remains of Leppington House and its outbuildings where investigated. Any interpretation presented here is preliminary, but is intended to highlight differences across the site, where they exist, and provide an overview of the assemblage. Further detailed analysis and interpretation of the assemblage will be undertaken by the nominated artefact specialist, Jeanne Harris in respect of Condition 22 of the Approval 2019/s140/011.

To better understand site-wide processes following the abandonment of the buildings, context numbers were assigned across the site for various structures and deposits. In addition, an alpha-numeric grid of 10m² was used to spatially differentiate these contexts for post-excavation processing, linking them to the structures or areas they were associated with (Figure 4). The discussion of artefacts presented here provides a summary of materials by the main excavation areas, starting with Leppington House, the stone building, the main paved courtyard area and associated structures before discussing outbuildings and test trenches not incorporated into previous sections (Figure 3).
Figure 2 Core archaeological site overlaid on 1956 aerial image (Land and Property Information)
Figure 3 1956 aerial and archaeological survey overlay with location of structural features (Guy Hazel and ELA 2020)
Figure 4 Grid squares overlain on surveyed orthophoto of the ridgeline of Leppington House Park pre-excavation (Bernadette McCall and Guy Hazel 2020)
Leppington House

Limited artefacts were recovered from investigations in the area of the main house as excavation was limited to exposing the extent of the structural remains of the house. The few items recovered provide an indication of the changes made to the building over time, but minimal information about activities in different parts of the house. Demolition deposits from the exterior and interior of the house were kept separate, as were materials relating to different building phases and additions. Apart from building materials, the demolition Context 045 from the exterior of the house contained a limited number of architectural fixtures and fittings, including a shutter hook, some lead flashing and plain or figured window glass that indicates post-1890 alterations to the windows. A few fragments of burnt wood and charcoal were sampled from 045/C3 as evidence of burning.

The interior demolition material (Context 038/C3 and D4) contained mainly architectural elements including render, plaster and paint fragments, a cut brad and late wire nail fragments, lead flashing, fragments of thick mirror glass and pre-1870 crown window panes, along with several glass fragments that were deformed from intense heat or fire. There was also material that appeared to be later rubbish from the mid-20th century including a post-1930s AGM glass bottle and a small aluminium tin that contained hospital-grade tablets.

Demolition material from the later northern addition to the main house (Context 046) also contained some thick mirror glass fragments and some evidence of burning on painted render fragments. The finds were limited to a circular brass wall mount for a switch, fragments of a grey hairnet and a red enamelled and gold brooch that appears to be Art Deco or later in style. A small sondage (Context 054) dug in the south-west corner of Leppington House to investigate the demolition debris (Context 055) contained mainly plaster and mortar fragments and metal objects consisting of mixed nails, brads, screws and an iron rod up to 220mm long. The three brads were cut iron brads from c1840-1860, a wire nail without the head and several galvanized screws and washers were difficult to date securely.

More utilitarian items were found in the demolition material from the kitchen that was added to Leppington House post 1900 (Context 050), in keeping with the archaeological remains of a large iron oven, a fireplace and food preparation area. A large quantity of artefacts included the typical later architectural (metal, timber and glass) elements found in the northern additions, but there were also several stove parts, a door knob and decorative lock plate and wall bracketing. There were also several glass bottles some with their contents, probably condiments, and fragments of glass and ceramic. A few of the glass fragments had been melted and may have been incinerated in the oven or fireplace. No evidence of burning around the foundations, similar to Leppington House, was uncovered.

A slate damp course layer was set into the brickwork of the exterior south-eastern corner of Leppington House. This is the only slate damp course found in any of the building remains on the site and is associated with a later addition or repair to Leppington House. A large quantity of post-1890 figured glass was found in this location along with a small base plate, bracket and a lever handle with a white (Bakelite?) knob for opening louvre windows. Pressed into the corner of the exterior surface and the building was a complete cast iron gem scone tray encrusted with burnt material. Further metal tools and fragments including a hammer were found above the exterior degraded concrete surface.
The stone building and southern additions

The stone building to the south of Leppington House is early and constructed with shell mortar like Leppington House. No other buildings on the site are constructed in this manner. Demolition material covered the entire footprint of the building and was removed from the northern exterior of the building as Context 003/F4, from the eastern exterior (Context 003/F5) and on the southern exterior of the building (Context 003/G5). A separate demolition context number was assigned to the interior (Context 011) to provide further spatial differentiation.

The demolition layer on the eastern side of the building contained a large quantity of window glass fragments from different panes, several complete mid-1950s amber beer bottles and assorted milk, beverage and condiment bottles of roughly the same date. Ceramics included fragments of large plates, a teapot lid and part of a chamber pot. A few personal items were found including a celluloid comb and a shell button. All items post-dated 1900. The context was dominated by metal objects including a small cooking pot, a heavy brass curtain pull weight or similar, a steel knife blade and a metal lamp shade. Assorted hardware included hinges, fittings, wrought and wire nails and brads, single and stranded wire, paint and oil tins, lids and a horseshoe mounted on timber representing more utilitarian objects. Fragments of lead flashing, galvanised roofing nails, metal sheeting and washers suggest a covered verandah. Samples of the cement render (Context 009) on the eastern side of the building were retained.

To the north, the demolition material (003/F4) was very similar also containing amber beer bottles, including one with a 1962 base mark. There were fewer artefacts from the southern exterior demolition deposit (003/G5) but they also included personal, architectural and utilitarian items including a ferrous metal boot scraper and a handle that likely belonged to the bricked in southern doorway of the stone building. Remnants of wire, nails, and large bolts were found, along with a bone toothbrush handle, mixed bottle fragments from the 19th to 20th centuries, more fragments of a chamber pot, a few mixed mammal and rodent bones and an early electrical or similar fitting.

To the north, the demolition material (003/F4) was very similar also containing amber beer bottles, including one with a 1962 base mark. There were fewer artefacts from the southern exterior demolition deposit (003/G5) but they also included personal, architectural and utilitarian items including a ferrous metal boot scraper and a handle that likely belonged to the bricked in southern doorway of the stone building. Remnants of wire, nails, and large bolts were found, along with a bone toothbrush handle, mixed bottle fragments from the 19th to 20th centuries, more fragments of a chamber pot, a few mixed mammal and rodent bones and an early electrical or similar fitting.

The interior demolition deposit (011) was partially excavated to define the building’s footprint. It contained diagnostic elements of two late 19th-20th century glass bottles, a few probably earlier mixed glass fragments plus a small collection of plain, transfer-printed and painted ceramic tablewares and utilitarian stoneware. The painted ceramics appear to match several fragments from a remnant foundation trench deposit in the demolished building Context 007 on the opposite side of the paved courtyard (see Context 053 below). No foundation or underfloor deposits were recorded in this area. The artefacts recovered from the interior demolition deposit appear to be rubbish thrown into the remains of the building during or after the demolition process. Large quantities of bone and fencing wire characterise this deposit.

The largest concentration of artefacts (Context 021) came from the interior of a series of brick structures (Context 020) that are an addition to south of the stone building. There was a large component of rusting metal food tins (sardine, fruit) and other containers (kerosene, paint), butchered bone, leather shoes, wire offcuts as well as a synthetic hair comb and a teaspoon. The diverse glass collection included a large number of whole glass bottles including amber beer bottles dating from 1941-1964 (embossed dates), multiple complete small phials/oval medicinal bottles, condiment bottles (Faulding essence and olive oil bottles, Holbrook’s sauce), and several other proprietary bottles. Non-food items included a crimped
rim lamp chimney and a small dropper tube. There were also large pieces of a thick plate glass mirror and some window glass. The ceramics formed a generally homogenous tableware assemblage with large fragments of plain whiteware or porcelain saucers and plates, some with moulded or minimal decoration. A few isolated decorative vessels, cups, plates and an egg cup were also found adding to the domestic nature of the context. Interestingly, the construction of this building suggests it was used for storage not accommodation.

**Paved courtyard**

The stone paved courtyard Context 004 east of the stone building was partially covered by demolition debris from the stone building (Context 003/F5 discussed above) along the western edge of the flagging but the majority of finds came from the surface accumulation (Context 002/F5) resting directly on the flagging surface (Figures 4 & 5). There was a large quantity of metal objects and offcuts in the deposit and most of these were clearly utilitarian or architectural including multiple nails, brads, bolts, screws, hooks, brackets/bracing, a metal wall socket mount (possibly electricity-related) and steel rails. Amongst the large quantity of cast metal objects and farm equipment were a long metal hinge and two heavy shallow iron wedges which may have been used on a wide external door. There was also a small rectangular copper door plate bearing a hand made hammered number ‘142’. Tools included a complete axe head, a chisel or knife blade, a metal file, part of a plough or rake, a broken curved handle, lengths of improvised gate loops, fencing wire fragments and a rabbit trap, further evidence that this was a working outside area. Two medical bottles were also found, one labelled as ‘Elliman’s Embrocation’ which likely dates from after 1896 following a trade mark application. It was considered a useful item in most early 20th century rural medical kits as a liniment for use on people and animals, including horses (Lynn 1928; NSW Government Gazette 1896). Minimal bone and other organic items were also retained.

The surface material extended south to a single brick border on the southern side of the paved courtyard and the southern side of the covered well (002/G6). The finds were much the same, dominated by metals, as over the broader expanse of the courtyard, varying only in some of the individual items. Among these were the base of an iron, a hinged metal plate from a large door, farm machinery parts, stirrups and buckles. A few decorated items were found near the brick building (Context 20) including a wall hook and what appears to be a gas fitting. Several ceramic plate fragments appear similar to those found in Context 021 and there was also a small etched wine glass (post-1870s).

**Eastern building Context 007 and surrounds**

Following the removal of surface accumulations in the adjacent pavement, the partial foundations of a demolished building Context 007 were identified bordering the eastern extent of the paved courtyard (Context 004). The demolition layer (Context 039) inside the eastern building footprint contained metal, glass, ceramics, bone and other miscellaneous materials that form a mixture of architectural, domestic and utilitarian items. There were several large horseshoes, lengths of chain, nails, hooks and an escutcheon plate with a sliding opening and also a table knife blade, food and beverage bottles and a glass bottle stopper. Personal items such as buttons and a heel plate add to the range of functional items. Among the few miscellaneous ceramics were fragments of stoneware, transfer printed whiteware, yellow ware, and a small glazed porcelain fragment with ‘Japan’ incised on the base which dates post-1921. Several large animal bones without signs of butchering were also recovered.
Figure 5 002/F5 sample of metal objects on pavement including door hinges, building nails and screws, a metal file and spike and elements of farm machinery (scale 50cm) (B McCall)

Figure 6 002/F6 sample of finds from the southern end of the paved courtyard provide a sample of the metal objects that range from architectural items, farming equipment, containers and part of a shoe repair stand (Scale 50cm) (B McCall)
A small area of occupation deposit (Context 047) remained adjacent to a remnant section of brick foundation. Apart from three black beer/wine bottle bases and a complete finish, the finds were all small items. There were several cut nails, stone and clay marbles, a bone game counter, a clay pipe stem, six early upset head pins (post-1820) and metal and shell buttons dated post-1850. Context 047 also contained two copper coins, including a British penny from the reign of Victoria dated 1881 which provides a potential terminus post quem for the deposit (Figures 6 & 7). The second coin was heavily worn but could be identified as a 1 Pice Bengali sikka from the trilingual Bengali, Persian and Hindi script stating the coin’s value. The other side is in Persian stating the coin was struck in the 37th year of the reign of Shah Alam (Shah Alam II, the nominal Mughal Emperor of India from 1759-1806 during the period of the British East India Company) suggesting a date of 1796. The British continued to produce coins in his name for another 30 years after his death and the 1 Pice coin was not issued until 1829 and 1831 (Museums Victoria). This is likely to be a keepsake.

Figure 7 Above centre: Front and back of Bengali 1 Pice sikka from Context 047 compared with reference images of a well-preserved sikka (Museums Victoria Collection) (B McCall)

Figure 8 Front and back of British 1881 penny from Context 047 (B McCall)

A small sample of foundation trench fill against the remaining western wall of the building was excavated (Context 053). It contained minimal butchered bone and a rodent mandible, four fragments of thin window glass, several wrought flat head nails, brads of c1840-1860 type and a slate pencil fragment. A partial ceramic yellow earthenware plate rim with white and pink painted decoration was found and appears to be the same pattern as fragments from within the stone building (Figure 9). The ceramic suggests a post 1840 construction date for this building.

A surface deposit (Context 003_E7) on the eastern edge of the slope beyond the demolished building 007 contained a concentrated collection of mainly glass bottles, some ceramics and a few metal objects including part of a cast iron bed head. The ceramics were utilitarian earthenware or stoneware storage items. Most of the bottles were dark green or ‘black’ glass beer/wine bottles and dated from c1820 to
c1870s on the basis of manufacturing techniques. One of the bottles had particles of lead shot wedged into the interior push-up fold suggesting the bottle was used for target practice. Other glass containers included foods (embossed ‘Sanitarium Health Food Co.’) and the Australian Glass Manufacturer (AGM) mark dating from 1934-1948. There were several salad oil bottles and another commercial bottle from ‘Taylors Chemical Co. Sydney’ makers of cough medications which suggest rubbish from multiple phases across the site was dumped in this area.

Figure 9 Foundation trench fill 053 finds (B McCall)

Context 016/017 structural remains

Several artefacts were found in association with the stone and brick foundations of the former stable (Context 003/H6). Similar to many of the outbuildings, they were mainly discarded metal items including two different sized horseshoes, harness buckles, a possible farrier’s tool, a sash hook, building spikes, machine parts and some wire offcuts. Fragmentary glass included 2 beer bottles but there was also an amber ridged bottle marked ‘Simplex Soda Acid Extinguisher’ made by Wormald Brothers. These bottles contained the chemicals used to create the foam inside Simplex fire extinguishers and this particular bottle has an AGM base mark used from 1930 onwards. A few other fragments of animal bone, leather strap loops and some used shell casings made up the rest of the deposit.

A few artefacts were also found in the redeposited red clay (Context 024) used as a base for the stone foundation (Context 018) alongside the stable including another ‘black’ glass beer/wine bottle with lead
shot wedged inside the interior base, small bullet casings, some window glass, galvanised roofing screws, washers and some mixed wire nails dating from c1890-1930.

**Context 028 features**

Items scattered across the surface associated with a demolished building (Context 028) on the eastern edge of the site were recorded as Context 001/G7. There were some similarities with artefacts from the paved area, with multiple nails, hooks, buckles, sheet metal, plain and barbed wire but with fewer tools. Various sizes of chicken wire, lengths of chain and fragments of a leather girth strap, a pierced metal tag, and possible stirrup/harness buckles suggest animals, including horses were kept in this area. There was also a small concentration of complete large Sydney rock oyster shells which appear to be the refuse from a relatively recent meal. The glass items include various condiment and beverage bottles, fragments of thick window glass and another ‘Simplex Soda Acid Extinguisher’ bottle and several melted, amorphous lead fragments. A damaged coin, possibly from an attempt to punch a hole through it, dates from 1958.

**The dairy building**

Cleaning around the various structural surfaces associated with the former dairy building (Context 002/I8) revealed a small collection of metal artefacts, mainly steel bolts, screws, washers, wall brackets and lead sheeting. Other utilitarian objects included a horse shoe, a small axe and a small cast machine attachment. A few fragments of animal bone, several plastic bottle caps and glass bottles of mixed function and date, up to the middle of the 20th century, were likely discarded after the building was no longer in use - probably 1960.

**Test trenches**

Test trench 1 contained a poorly preserved concrete surface laid over reused bricks abutting the south-eastern corner of Leppington House. Evidence of burning was found in the exterior demolition deposit above this surface (Context 032). Some glass artefacts had been heat damaged and clearing back to the wall of the house revealed more evidence of in situ burning and burnt timber fittings. Test trench 2 contained sparse evidence of a highly damaged structure but no associated artefacts. Test trench 3 and 4 contained fragmentary and sparse metal and glass items post dating 1920s. Test Trench 5 on the lower western slope of the site contained artefacts that are likely to relate to the ephemeral archaeological remains of an early structure. The finds in this area (Context 048) consist of small fragments of bottle glass, black, olive or dark green beer/wine bottle body fragments dated from c1820-c1920. The ceramics were also fragmentary and sparse comprising fragments of green and blue transfer print white earthenware and a blue banded hollow ware rim.

**Other surface artefacts**

Surface artefacts were observed on the periphery of the core archaeological site, mostly displaced by later demolition activity and site disturbance and mostly consisting of building debris, various brick types, metal, glass and other general refuse typical of discarded materials on rural properties. These included several corrugated iron rainwater tanks, discarded metal and ceramic pipes used in plumbing on the eastern slope in square F7. Most notable were the remains of four large riveted cube-shaped steel containers. They measure approximately 1.22m square with a circular opening, approx. 0.33m.
They were identified as ship tanks and were used for shipping water and other perishable items. Earliest records in Australian contexts date from 1838, but they were commonly repurposed for land transportation and re-used on rural properties. They continued to be made into the 1940s (Pearson 1992) making a precise date difficult to determine. These tanks are likely to have held liquid fuel as there was no electricity supplied to the property and all lighting and machinery would have been fuel driven.

**Artefact summary**

The vast majority of artefacts recovered from the site comprise of utilitarian metal objects associated with building and farming. All artefacts were recovered from overburden or demolition material and generally date to the late 19th and early 20th century. The bulk of the artefacts were associated with the central courtyard and remains of the buildings around it and predominantly represent rubbish and unwanted items left lying around on the surface after the abandonment of the buildings. Beer bottles from the 1950s and 60s were common across the site, particularly in association with the courtyard. No rubbish pits, concentrated artefact deposits or underfloor deposits were excavated and test trenches on the periphery of the site contained only very small quantities of fragmentary material.

2.2.2 Site integrity

The archaeological site on the ridgeline of Leppington House Park contains the remains of Leppington House and its later additions, the remains of at least five separate outbuildings and several interior and exterior paved or rendered surfaces, two cisterns and a well, part of a paved courtyard, the driveway and the terraced garden.

All previous buildings, apart from one, have been demolished to ground level and much of the site has been extensively disturbed, probably systematically, by mechanical excavation and mounding. At least three buildings along the eastern boundary of the archaeological site have been removed completely and pushed over the eastern edge of the ridgeline. In addition, the volume of demolished building material remaining on the site is a mere fraction of the material required to build the multiple structures, suggesting large quantities of material have been removed from the site. As a result, there are limited stratigraphic deposits across the site and deposits containing artefacts are mixed.

No below ground deposits or features were required to be investigated so their presence/condition/integrity is unknown. Only Leppington House and a stone building are likely to contain an interior underfloor deposit, all other deposits across the site comprise of demolition material and accumulated vegetation debris.
Figure 10. Demolition rubbish in the southwestern part of the site (K. McLeod)

Figure 11. Steel shipping tanks in the south eastern part of the site (K. McLeod)

Figure 12. Demolition material and water tank on the eastern edge of the ridgeline (K. McLeod)

Figure 13. Iron roofing and timber building post with remaining gate hook south of the dairy (K. McLeod)
2.2.3 Review of research questions based on preliminary information

There is very little historical information, plans and historical images regarding the 700 acre property known as Leppington. Questions posed in the research design include both broad and detailed questions appropriate to the lack of information available for the site. Stage 1 of the excavation has answered many of those questions and provided detail regarding the configuration and footprint of the original main house as well as evidence of several early buildings that were demolished and/or reconstructed. The excavation has also answered questions relating to phasing of alterations and additions, the types of construction materials used across the site and confirmed that the two most southern buildings of the group were dairies.

Due to the limited scope of Stage 1, very few artefacts were recovered from the site and those largely utilitarian items predominantly date to the late 19th century through to the late 1950s. Questions regarding material culture and associations with previous property owners are unlikely to be answered due to the disturbed nature of the site and the lack of deposits containing artefacts that were excavated.

Five test trenches were positioned around the periphery of the core archaeological site to identify the extent to which potential archaeological remains survive within targeted areas outside the main activity areas. Excavation of the test trenches answered questions regarding phasing, the temporary or permanent nature of previous structures and the nature of deposits outside the core archaeological site.

Stage 2 monitoring of bulk earthworks is unlikely to require reassessment of the research questions as there will be no excavation in areas of high archaeological potential. Broad research questions regarding the nature and extent of archaeological remains across the entire park will still be appropriate.

2.2.4 Reassessment of significance

Stage 1 testing indicates that the site is unlikely to meet the threshold for State significance. Leppington functioned as an agricultural and pastoral property from the time it was granted in the 1820s through to the 21st century. The historical information available for the site does not indicate that the property figured prominently in the Campbelltown or Liverpool region socially or economically. Apart from having Government Official William Cordeaux as Leppington’s first owner, no other owners were well known or had historical or social associations. It is also possible that the Cordeaux family only lived on the property temporarily as they had other property holdings in the Illawarra. Evidence relating to the presence of horses on the site may relate to the Perry ownership in the 1930s where riding school was present on the site. Evidence of dairying is also present on the site however, there is no evidence of specific activities undertaken in the early history of the site such as blacksmithing, brickmaking, stone cutting or agricultural practices.

Leppington House was not architecturally designed, and Stage 1 investigations have determined that the main house was small and practical rather than a stately residence. The foundations of the building are not well constructed, the bricks are porous and unstable, and the house would have been dark and damp. There was no water, electricity or sewer connected to the house. The fact that the main house was abandoned by the 1940s and then demolished demonstrates that its upkeep was not considered worthwhile. The site is not a listed item further demonstrating its lack of importance to the local community.

The integrity of Leppington House and its outbuildings has been severely compromised by the removal of structures and deposits. The remains of Leppington House may contain an underfloor deposit which
has the potential to be of State significance if features and deposits can be associated with the Cordeaux occupation and material culture of a pre-1860s reasonably remote farming establishment is present. The remainder of the archaeological remains associated with the outbuildings and garden are unlikely to be able to answer substantive questions relating to Australian history as subsequent phases of development and demolition have disturbed or removed earlier archaeology. In addition, there are many similar farming establishments in south western Sydney and across NSW as detailed in the comparative analysis of the Archaeological Assessment and Research Design previously prepared for the site (ELA 2019).

No below ground deposits such as cess pits or rubbish dumps were located in the area excavated as much of the ridgeline is paved and rubbish would have been disposed of at a considerable distance from the main activity areas. Rubbish and cess pits are more likely to be located to the east of the ridgeline as the western slope was a fenced paddock associated with the dairy. The area to the east of the ridgeline will not be impacted by the approved bulk earthworks.

The archaeological investigation has confirmed the site has local historical, scientific and aesthetic significance.

2.2.5 Review of the landscaping plans
Change to the approach to the landscaping for Leppington House Park, based on the Stage 1 archaeological program is not required for the bulk earthworks. The proposed landscaping works associated with the creation of Leppington House Park has been designed in consultation with the Archaeological Excavation Director to have minimal impact on areas of high archaeological potential. The location of above ground structural remains and historical imagery have been used to map the core archaeological site and the landscaping has been designed around it.

Stage 2 archaeological monitoring of bulk earthworks will include levelling of areas downslope from the archaeological site for playground and path construction. These areas of steeply sloped topography have been assessed as having low potential for significant archaeology. Stage 2 works do not include impacts to the archaeological site on the ridgeline (Figure 14).

Condition 3 requires consideration of plantings, signage, interpretative elements, re-establishing views; retaining existing mature trees; terraced gardens to the west of the house and pathway locations. Weeds have been removed and views to the east and west have been established, existing mature trees have been retained and the terraced gardens to the west of the house remain intact. Details concerning the conservation and treatment of the structural remains, plantings, signage and interpretative elements will be included in the Amended Plans supplied to Council prior to issue of a CC.
Figure 14 Bulk earthworks plan showing blue hatched area that will not be impacted by the works (Source: Patterson Design Studio 2020)
2.2.6 Impacts

The only known archaeological remains that will be impacted by the bulk earthworks are the minimal structural remains uncovered in Test trench 5 downslope from the core archaeological site. Bulk earthworks will level this part of the park and will result in the removal of the archaeological remains. The original structure was demolished long ago, there is no evidence of it in the 1947 aerial image and only one course of brick and stone survive. The former structure’s sandstock brick and stone remains are so damaged that it’s footprint and extent is unknown and no information regarding its date or function can be gained from the archaeological evidence. The remains have been extensively recorded.
3. References


Eco Logical Australia Pty Ltd April 2019 Leppington House Park – Archaeological Assessment and Research Design prepared for Stockland, as amended by Section 140 Application for Leppington House Park – Request for Further Information August 2019.

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