WAMBO HOMESTEAD
SERVANT’S WING
REMEDICATION WORKS

Archaeological Assessment

FINAL

July 2020
WAMBO HOMESTEAD SERVANT’S WING REMEDIATION WORKS

Archaeological Assessment

FINAL

Prepared by
Umwelt (Australia) Pty Limited
on behalf of
Wambo Coal

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Report No.: 4486/R02
Date: July 2020

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Cover Image:  Approximately 1981 photograph of the Servant’s Wing (University of Newcastle Cultural Collections)

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Document Status

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<td>27 July 2020</td>
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1.0 Introduction

Umwelt Environmental and Social Consultants (Umwelt) have been engaged by Wambo Coal to prepare this historical (non-Aboriginal) archaeological assessment for the proposed Wambo Homestead Servant’s Wing Remediation Works.

A statement of heritage impact has been prepared for the project by EJE Heritage (EJE 2020) and submitted to Heritage, Department of Premier and Cabinet (Heritage NSW) as part of a S60 application for the works. We understand Heritage NSW have requested a Historical Archaeological Assessment be prepared as part of the S60 application.

1.1 Heritage Listings

‘Wambo Homestead’ (or ‘Wambo Homestead Complex’) is listed as Heritage Item 00200 in the State Heritage Register (SHR).

‘Wambo homestead and outbuildings’ is also identified as an item of state heritage significance on the Singleton Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2013 (ID I144).

In terms of the physical condition and archaeological potential / significance of the Wambo Homestead Complex the listing sheets state:

As a group of buildings, Wambo Homestead is rare in New South Wales in that many outbuildings still remain substantially intact allowing easy understanding of the development of a homestead complex.

As an archaeological resource the buildings and surrounding grounds provide an opportunity to contribute to the knowledge regarding the expansion of the colony of New South Wales, its agricultural diversification and everyday life on homestead properties from the 1820s till the 1890s.

1.2 Conservation Management Plan

The Wambo Homestead Complex Conservation Management Plan (Peabody 2019) identified that parts of the Wambo Homestead Complex have

...potential to contain archaeological remains associated with specific former built elements or other infrastructure. Areas of the site also have potential to contain accumulated material (deposits and artefacts) associated with the use of the site over time, including general occupation and specific activities within and around the buildings and yards. The site’s archaeological resources have potential to provide information about the operation of the Wambo Estate throughout its historical occupation, including information about the estate’s residents and workers (Peabody 2019).

The Servant’s Wing is a one-and-a-half-storey brick building sited close to, and immediately north of, the Kitchen Wing (refer to Plates 1.1 and 1.2). The Wambo Homestead Complex has four precincts ‘defined by a combination of functional use and surviving evidence of earlier boundaries’ (Peabody 2019). The Servant’s Wing is within Precinct 1; Home Compound (refer to Plate 1.3).
The Home Compound is considered in the CMP to have potential for:

- Structural remains (stone or brick foundations, and/or post holes).
- Occupation deposits containing domestic artefacts.
- Possible paved or compacted floor surfaces.
- Deeper subsurface remains of privy (Peabody 2019)

The Archaeological Zoning Plan (refer to Plate 1.1) included in the CMP assesses the Servant’s Wing and its surrounds to have potential for:

- Domestic related occupational deposits and artefacts
- Remains of former gardens and landscape features

1.3 Statement of Heritage Impact

The statement of significance in the 2020 Wambo Homestead Complex Servant’s Wing Building Wall Repair & Reconstruction statement of heritage impact (SoHI) (EJE 2020) included the following in relation to archaeology:

...there is potential in and around the Servant’s Wing for archaeological finds which may also increase knowledge about Wambo and similar homestead complexes (EJE 2020).
Plate 1.1 Archaeological Zoning Plan

Approximate location of proposed drainage trench shown with dashed red line
© GML 2012
Plate 1.2  Detail Aerial showing the Home Compound and Stud Master’s Cottage
© Nearmap 2020
Plate 1.3  Wambo Homestead Complex Precincts
© Peabody 2019
2.0 Historical Context

While the historical use and development of the Wambo Homestead Complex dates back to the 1830s, the earliest known plan dates to 1892. The first building was a single-storey stone building with a cellar, which would have served as home for James Hale and his family. Between 1835 and 1845, Hale continued to add buildings to the Wambo Estate. A new house was constructed by 1845 and the first building was converted into the kitchen wing; extended through the addition of several rooms including a kitchen, bathroom and an upper level constructed from brick. A servant’s quarters, stud master’s cottage, and a carriage house with stables were also constructed around this time. All of these buildings remain standing at the site.

After the death of William Durham (Hale’s stepson and heir to Wambo) in 1891, the Wambo estate was purchased by Benjamin Richards, a dominant figure in the cattle industry. While Richards and his family never lived at Wambo and his ownership was for a period of 4 years, it is possible that the slab butcher’s hut, horseboxes and the mounting yards were constructed around this time (Collins 1994).

In 1905, Wambo was acquired by Reginald Allen and Frank MacDonald to develop a thoroughbred horse stud; involving the construction of more horseboxes and mounting yards. The round yard was also built at this time. In 1908 Wambo was advertised for subdivision. Included in the description of estate was:

*There are also at the back of the homestead, on splendid ground, 30 Loose Boxes, 18 Stalls and Yards attached (Maitland Mercury, 21 April 1905)*

The Servant’s Wing is a one-and-a-half-storey brick building sited close to, and immediately north of, the Kitchen Wing (refer to Plates 2.1 to 2.2). The Servant’s Wing is considered likely to have been constructed between approximately 1840 to 1844 as a new kitchen. Although there is potential the Servant’s Wing was constructed after the 1844 New House was built; as late as the 1850s (EJE 2020).

When built it would have comprised

‘a ground floor kitchen with substantial hearth and chimney, and a separate, externally entered store - with, above them, an attic level of two rooms approached by an external stair at the southern end of the building’ (Peabody 2019).

In the late 1860s and early 1870s the cook at Wambo was of Chinese descent. He and his family, the Longs, lived in the Servant’s Wing and serve the MacDonald family. Mr Long’s kitchen (presumably in the ground floor of the Servant’s Wing) was described as ‘a picture of cleanliness, as he also was in person’ (EJE 2020).

The 2019 CMP should be referred to for further information.
Plate 2.1  Approximately 1981 photograph of the Servant’s Wing
© University of Newcastle Cultural Collections
Plate 2.2  Servant’s Wing Plan and Elevation
© Collins 1994
3.0 Proposed Works

The proposed repair and reconstruction works are required since a storm event in late January 2020 caused the collapse of the northwest corner of the Servant’s Wing building.

As described in the 2020 SoHI (EJE 2020) the sub-surface works associated with the proposed repair and reconstruction works with the potential to disturb archaeological remains are as follows:

- Excavate and create a new concrete footing to consist of 450 millimetre diameter concrete pier in corner (to 1000 millimetres below surface) with nominal 600 x 600 millimetres unreinforced concrete footing for reconstructed brickwork (final dimensions of footing to be confirmed following excavation and all designed by Bill Jordan – Chartered Structural Engineer) (refer to Plates 3.1 to 3.3)

- Create drainage pipe to drain stormwater away from the footings to the building. The trench is proposed to be approximately 70 metres in length to drain into an existing stormwater pit. The trench will be between 300 and 450 millimetres wide and 600 millimetres deep. Approximately 45 metres of the trench will be excavated immediately to an existing pipe; which is highly likely to be perforated – requiring the installation a new pipe to ensure adequate drainage (refer to Plate 3.4).

Plate 3.1  Detail of north elevation (drawing A102)

Detail shows the mass concrete footing and pier

© EJE Architecture 2020
Plate 3.2  Detail of west elevation (drawing A103)

Detail shows the mass concrete footing and pier

© EJE Architecture 2020
Plate 3.3  Detail of wall section (drawing A105)

Detail shows the mass concrete footing and commencement of proposed drainage. Refer to Plate 3.4 for extent of drainage trench

© EJE Architecture 2020
Plate 3.4  Aerial showing proposed drain
Dashed red line shows approximate extent of new drainage trench. Yellow line indicates existing drainage trench
© Peabody Energy 2017
Plate 3.5  2019 Photograph of the Servant’s Wing
© Bill Jordan 2019 (from EJE Heritage 2020)

Plate 3.6  2020 Photograph of the Servant’s Wing
Photograph is taken after the 2020 storm event showing collapse of the northwest corner
© EJE Heritage 2020
Plate 3.7  2020 Photograph of collapsed northwest corner

Photograph shows the proposed location of new concrete footing

© EJE Heritage 2020
Plate 3.8  2020 Photograph showing detail of proposed location of new concrete footing

© EJE Heritage 2020
Plate 3.9  View to north from existing pit

Photograph shows the alignment of existing and proposed trenches from the existing pit

© EJE Heritage 2020
4.0 Archaeological Potential

The Heritage Act affords automatic statutory protection to ‘relics’ which form part of archaeological deposits (except where these provisions are suspended by other prevailing legislation). The Heritage Act defines a ‘relic’ as any deposit, object or material evidence that:

- relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement; and
- is of State or local heritage significance.

4.1 Identified Archaeological Potential

As discussed in Section 1.2, the Archaeological Zoning Plan (refer to Plate 1.1) included in the CMP assesses the Servant’s Wing and its surrounds to have potential for:

- Domestic related occupational deposits and artefacts
- Remains of former gardens and landscape features

Table 1 provides the potential historical archaeological evidence that may be present within the Home Compound or in the vicinity of the Servant’s Wing (as identified in the 2019 CMP; sourced from the 2012 CMP Review).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Element</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Potential Evidence</th>
<th>Likely Integrity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possible early outbuildings associated with the first house, such as a detached kitchen and outhouse/privy. Location and form unknown</td>
<td>c.1830-1847</td>
<td>Structural remains (stone or brick foundations, and/or post holes). Occupation deposits containing domestic artefacts. Possible paved or compacted floor surfaces. Deeper subsurface remains of privy</td>
<td>Low -Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken coop</td>
<td>Note not in area of proposed works</td>
<td>Structural remains (post holes) Organic deposits. Associated artefacts</td>
<td>Low -Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underfloor occupation deposits within the building footprints of former and existing buildings, especially those that have or previously had timber flooring</td>
<td>c.1830 to late twentieth century</td>
<td>Domestic and/or agricultural-related artefacts, including ceramic, glass, fabric, leather, faunal remains, metal objects, organic material, building materials etc associated with the occupation, construction and/or demolition of the structures</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Element</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Potential Evidence</td>
<td>Likely Integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yard occupation deposits, including artefact scatters, rubbish dumps and pits</td>
<td>c.1830 to late twentieth century</td>
<td>Domestic and/or agricultural-related artefacts, including ceramic, glass, fabric, leather, faunal remains, metal objects, organic material, building materials etc associated with the occupation and operation of the estate.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(eg the 1994 CMP identified the series of mounds and ponds to the west of the Home Compound precinct as a ‘House Tip’)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression to the west of the New House (identified in the 1994 CMP as a ‘Well/Cistern’)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Structural remains (brick or stone). Domestic and/or agricultural-related artefacts associated with the occupation of the house and operation of the estate may have accumulated inside this feature, when it was in use or after they were decommissioned.</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note this feature is within the alignment of the proposed stormwater trench</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other wells, cisterns or privies</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Structural remains (brick or stone). Occupation or refuse deposits</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early services or drainage elements</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Trenches, ditches, pipes or lined channels</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former tracks and driveways into and across the study area</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Compacted surfaces, possibly with introduced fill. Linear depressions</td>
<td>Low-Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former fencelines</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Post holes</td>
<td>Low-Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former garden features and landscaping, including paths, garden beds, plantings and other features (such as a path along the south side of the New House and terracotta garden edging along the south and east side of the New House (as identified in the 1994 CMP)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Paths or paved areas (eg former path along southern side of New House)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gardens beds/edging (eg terracotta garden edging along southern and eastern sides of New House)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deposits within deeper subsurface features, such as privies, cisterns and wells</td>
<td>c.1830 to mid twentieth century</td>
<td>Domestic and/or agricultural-related artefacts may have accumulated inside these features, including ceramic, glass, fabric, leather, faunal remains, metal objects, organic material, building materials etc associated with the occupation and operation of the estate.</td>
<td>Moderate-High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note the relatively shallow nature of excavation likely negates the potential to expose artefacts that may be present within deeper subsurface features</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other wells, cisterns or privies</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Structural remains (brick or stone). Occupation or refuse deposits</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early services or drainage elements</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Trenches, ditches, pipes or lined channels</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former tracks and driveways into and across the study area</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Compacted surfaces, possibly with introduced fill. Linear depressions</td>
<td>Low-Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former fencelines</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Post holes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former garden features and landscaping, including paths, garden beds, plantings and other features (such as a path along the south side of the New House and terracotta garden edging along the south and east side of the New House (as identified in the 1994 CMP)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Paths or paved areas (eg former path along southern side of New House)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gardens beds/edging (eg terracotta garden edging along southern and eastern sides of New House)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Element</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Potential Evidence</td>
<td>Likely Integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botanical evidence of former plantings</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural remains (stone or brick foundations or post holes) of former garden structures (eg greenhouse, gazebo)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information sourced direct from CMP (Peabody 2019)

It is noted that archaeological monitoring and recording of reconstruction works to the Stud Master’s Cottage and its immediate surrounds in 2013 resulted in the:

...identification of minor archaeological remains, consistent with historical evidence. The archaeologists concluded that ‘given the limited extent and nature of the identified archaeological remains, the research potential of the site has not been fully realised.’ The report also noted, ‘any future ground disturbance works scheduled for the areas of archaeological potential within the State heritage curtilage of the site should be undertaken pursuant to an Excavation Approval under section 63 or Exemption under section 57(2) of the NSW Heritage Act.’ (Peabody 2019)

As part of the works archaeologists examined veranda post holes, confirming original cross sections. Excavation beneath the water tank and of the area of the new swale exposed artefacts broadly dated to the second half of the nineteenth century (Peabody 2019).

The Stud Master’s Cottage is located to the northwest of the Servant’s Wing, outside the Home Compound (refer to Plates 1.2 and 1.3).

### 4.2 Discussion of Archaeological Potential

As identified in the 2012 CMP Review (GML 2012) and 2019 CMP (Peabody 2019) the proposed area of works (the footing and drainage trench) is considered to have potential for:

- Domestic related occupational deposits and artefacts
- Remains of former gardens and landscape features
- Evidence of a potential well or cistern (refer to Plates 4.1 and 4.2):
  - Potential structural remains (brick or stone).
  - Potential domestic and/or agricultural-related artefacts associated with the occupation of the house and operation of the estate may have accumulated inside this feature, when it was in use or after they were decommissioned (Peabody 2019).

As discussed, the proposed excavation works comprise:

- Excavation for a new concrete footing and pier
- Excavation for drain installation to drain stormwater away from the footings of the Servant’s Wing building.
4.2.1 Building Footing

The concrete pier is proposed to have a diameter of 450 millimetres to a depth of 1 metre below the new concrete building footing. The footing will comprise a nominal 600 x 600 millimetres unreinforced concrete footing for the reconstructed brickwork. Excavation for the building footing and pier will be beneath and in the immediate vicinity of the existing building and its associated foundations. The area immediately adjacent to building is likely have been considerably disturbed during its construction. Noting however, this does not negate the possibility of domestic related artefacts.

4.2.2 Stormwater Drain

The trench proposed to be excavated for the stormwater drainage is approximately 70 metres in length; to drain into an existing stormwater pit. The trench will be between 300 and 450 millimetres wide and 600 millimetres deep for a conduit with an approximately 100 millimetre diameter. The trench comprises:

- Approximately 8 metres along north side of the Servant’s Wing building in a similar location to the concrete pier and footing discussed above.
- Approximately 17 metres southwest from the northwest corner of the Servant’s Wing building to the existing drainage system. The alignment of this section is likely the least disturbed section of the trench.
- Approximately 45 metres immediately adjacent to existing drain to the existing stormwater pit. Depending on the size of the previously excavated stormwater trench this section is likely to have been disturbed to some extent during excavation for the existing stormwater drain.
Plate 4.1  Detail of 1994 Conservation Plan image showing Home Compound

North to left of photograph. Approximate location of proposed drainage trench indicated with red dashed line. Note proposed trench crosses what is identified as the location of a filled in well or cistern in the 1994 CMP

© Collins 1994
4.3 **Summary of Archaeological Potential**

The proposed works are not extensive; comprising small discrete areas of excavation limited to a narrow utility trench and a small isolated area of excavation for the pier and footing. The excavation will result in a relatively low level of proposed subsurface disturbance within the Home Compound area.

Archaeological remains such as garden beds are typically ephemeral and, if present within the confines of a narrow linear trench or small area of excavation, it may be difficult to understand the context of any fragmentary evidence exposed within these limited areas of excavation as a result of their isolation and probable disturbed and fragmentary nature.
Any structural remains of the well or cistern (if within the area of works) will have been previously disturbed by the existing stormwater trench. If any structural remains are found they could confirm the presence/location and construction method of the well / cistern. However, potential impacts would be minimal and confined to the narrow utility trench. The trench is not expected to be deep enough to expose any accumulation of artefacts that may be present within the feature.

While there is also the identified potential for artefacts to be exposed during excavation, these are likely to be out of context or within the confines of the narrow trench with limited contextual information.

**Note**, it is understood that should significant archaeological remains be exposed during works there is the opportunity to redesign / move the alignment of the trench to avoid any potential impacts.
5.0 Significance

The significance of the Wambo Homestead Complex, including its archaeological significance, has been assessed in a number of documents. These are summarised below.

5.1 State Heritage Inventory Listing Sheet

Wambo Homestead State Heritage Inventory (SHI) Listing Sheet states:

As an archaeological resource the buildings and surrounding grounds provided an opportunity to contribute to the knowledge regarding the expansion of the colony of New South Wales, its agricultural diversification and everyday life on homestead properties from the 1820s till the 1890s (State Heritage Inventory Wambo Homestead Listing sheet)

5.2 2012 CMP Review Assessment

The Significance Assessment prepared as part of the 2012 CMP Review Assessment (GML) stated that:

...the place has the potential to contain archaeological evidence that may contribute information about various aspects and phases of the site, including early settlement in the Hunter Valley, the development and evolution of the Wambo Estate, the agrarian and animal-breeding operations, the physical character of the property and its elements, as well as the people who lived and worked there.

The potential archaeological resource of the place is likely to contain evidence of former structures and other built elements, infrastructure associated with the farming pursuits and animal-breeding operations, landscape features, occupation deposits, rubbish dumps and artefacts.

The place has the potential to contain archaeological evidence with high research value that may contribute information that could not be obtained through other sources (such as documentary records) or from other sites. As the physical characteristics of the place are not well documented in the historical record, especially during the early period of settlement and development during the nineteenth century, the archaeological evidence may be able to provide insight into aspects of the site’s form and layout that are otherwise unrecorded.

5.3 2017 CMP Review Notes (EJE Heritage)

The 2017 CMP Review noted that:

Archaeological evidence has the potential to supplement historical detail, particularly for the initial settlement
5.4 2019 CMP

The 2019 CMP (Peabody 2019) assessment of significance includes the following in relation to the archaeological significance of the homestead complex:

The place has the potential to contain archaeological evidence associated with its evolution and occupation. This evidence has the potential to contribute information about the physical character of the place, the occupants and their activities, that would be relevant to key historical themes (Criterion A).

The place has the potential to contain archaeological evidence that may contribute information related to key individuals who occupied and operated the property, as well as the activities and developments they fostered (Criterion B).

The place has the potential to contain archaeological evidence that may contribute information about various aspects and phases of the site, including early settlement in the Hunter Valley, the development and evolution of the Wambo Estate, the agrarian and animal-breeding operations, the physical character of the property and its elements, as well as the people who lived and worked there.

The potential archaeological resource of the place is likely to contain evidence of former structures and other built elements, infrastructure associated with the farming pursuits and animal-breeding operations, landscape features, occupation deposits, rubbish dumps and artefacts.

The place has the potential to contain archaeological evidence with high research value that may contribute information that could not be obtained through other sources (such as documentary records) or from other sites. As the physical characteristics of the place are not well documented in the historical record, especially during the early period of settlement and development during the nineteenth century, the archaeological evidence may be able to provide insight into aspects of the site’s form and layout that are otherwise unrecorded (Criterion E).

The place has potential to contain intact archaeological remains associated with this early rural settlement. The survival of intact archaeological evidence of this nature from this period is increasingly rare (Criterion F).

The place has the potential to contain archaeological evidence that is representative of early-nineteenth to mid twentieth-century rural development and occupation, including the physical characteristics of the site, as well as artefacts related to the site’s occupation and operation (Criterion G).

5.5 Servant’s Wing Building Section 60 Application

Wambo Homestead Complex Servant’s Wing Building Wall Repair & Reconstruction 60 Application (EJE Heritage 2020) concluded in relation to the potential archaeological resource:

There is potential in and around the Servant’s Wing for archaeological finds which may also increase knowledge about Wambo and similar homestead complexes.
6.0 CMP Polices

The proposed works and the preparation of this report are generally in accordance with the relevant policies and management strategies of the 2019 CMP.

The strategies and guidelines associated with Conservation Policy 3: Protect and Retain Existing Fabric include:

*Brief assessment of archaeological potential and the proposed work method where excavation or other ground disturbance is required, submitted to the OH&E for approval prior to commencement*

In addition, Conservation Policy 4: Undertake further physical research, documentation and recording requires:

*Further investigation to determine what confirmation and correlation exists between historical evidence, physical evidence and archaeological evidence. This is to inform a better understanding of the place and to inform interpretation strategies.*
7.0 Conclusion

The potential significance of the archaeological resource of the Wambo Homestead Complex is well established; particularly that of the Home Compound.

It is noted that the proposed works involve only minor excavation and as such are not expected to expose extensive intact and meaningful archaeological remains. Any potential archaeological resource that may be exposed within the limited areas of excavation is not expected to be intact or of high research potential.

However, to date excavation in the Home Compound has not been documented within areas assessed to have potential for:

- Domestic related occupational deposits and artefacts
- Remains of former gardens and landscape features
- Evidence of a potential well or cistern.

As such, excavation should be undertaken in accordance with the Work Method Statement provided in Section 8.0.
8.0 Work Method Statement

An archaeological assessment is prepared to recommend specific methodologies with regards to the archaeological investigation of a site. The recommendations will vary depending on the type and size of the site, the potential archaeological resource and its significance and the level of impacts resulting from the proposed development. Methodologies (recommended by NSW Heritage) could include no further action, archaeological monitoring, test excavation, archaeological excavation, or in situ conservation (Heritage Office 1996:8).

8.1 Archaeological Monitoring

In accordance with Conservation Policies 3 and 4, a program of archaeological monitoring will be implemented during proposed excavation works within the Home Compound.

The monitoring of any excavation undertaken as part of excavation works will be undertaken until the:

- maximum depth of excavation required for the works has been reached or
- culturally sterile deposits have been encountered or
- the nominated archaeological Excavation Director is satisfied that the area of excavation is of a highly disturbed nature or has no potential for an archaeological resource or
- archaeological evidence is exposed requiring investigation and recording to best practice guidelines prior to any further disturbance.

In the event that additional impacts not discussed in this report are required as a result of the works, all works in the area would cease and the Heritage NSW would be notified and consulted with prior to works recommencing.

Although not expected, if significant unexpected archaeological remains are discovered during the archaeological monitoring of excavation works or if potential state significant relics are exposed, all works in this area would cease and Heritage NSW would be notified and consulted with prior to works recommencing with regards to the appropriate management of the remains.

As noted, should significant archaeological remains be exposed during works there is the opportunity to redesign / move the alignment of the trench to avoid impacts.

8.2 Site Recording

Any archaeological remains exposed during archaeological monitoring would be recorded in accordance with the requirements of Heritage NSW and accepted best practice procedures.

All monitored excavation would be recorded photographically. If required, detailed archaeological recording would include photography, measured drawings and the completion of context sheets for single context recording (pro-forma sheets used to record basic information about each archaeological unit or context).
Any artefactual material (excluding Aboriginal objects) exposed will be collected in accordance to the context it was found in. The material would be retained and recorded using standard recording methods. Where possible, initial processing of artefacts and other preliminary analysis would occur on site. The detailed analysis and cataloguing of artefacts would be undertaken as part of post excavation works and the results included in the final archaeological report.

The Section 60 applicant is responsible for the storage of any historical artefacts collected from the site following any required cataloguing and analysis and should make arrangements for the collection to be stored in an appropriate repository.

8.3 Work Health and Safety

All requirements relating to Work Health & Safety (WH&S) must be adhered to during any archaeological works undertaken. Archaeological requirements may need to be reassessed if any safety constraints or issues arise during works. Constraints that can arise during archaeological investigation works include contaminated subsurface deposits and structural instabilities which can hinder the safe manual excavation.

8.4 Site Inductions

All on-site contractors/personnel will be provided with a briefing regarding the works, the intent of the archaeological monitoring and the role of the nominated archaeological Excavation Director, the significance of the Home Compound of Wambo Homestead, archaeological ‘relics’, Aboriginal objects and the statutory obligations that apply to their discovery.

8.5 Reporting

A report detailing the results of the archaeological monitoring will be prepared on completion of excavation works.

The format, content and length of the report will be determined by the nature and extent of any archaeological remains uncovered during archaeological monitoring. The report should include:

- a description of the results of the monitoring
- a response to the research design (refer to Section 8.8 of this report)
- the results of post excavation analysis of artefact collection (if any artefacts are recovered) and
- primary site records, including measured drawings and photographs.

8.6 Aboriginal Objects

In the event that any Aboriginal objects are identified within the area of works, works within the immediate vicinity of the Aboriginal object should cease and Heritage NSW should be contacted so that appropriate management strategies can be identified.
8.7 Potential Human Burial

In the unlikely event that a potential burial site or potential human skeletal material is exposed, work in the vicinity of the remains is to halt immediately to allow assessment and management. If the remains are suspected to be human, it will be necessary to contact local police and Heritage NSW to determine an appropriate course of action.

8.8 Research Design

The proposed archaeological monitoring of excavation works would be undertaken with the aim of recovering archaeological information (if present) available through no other source or technique. The investigation may allow both general and specific questions regarding the nature, extent and integrity of any surviving archaeological resource to be addressed with a focus on the question of whether there are potential significant archaeological remains present within the areas of proposed excavation within the study area.

The type of broad archaeological questions that might be asked include:

- What physical evidence of former activities survives on the site?
  - Is there evidence of the mapped well/cistern
  - Is there any evidence of predicted domestic related deposits or artefacts
  - Is there evidence of any former gardens and landscape features
- Is there evidence of previously unknown structures or outbuildings?
- What is the extent of the surviving archaeological evidence?
- What is the nature of extant archaeological features?
- What can any exposed remains contribute to our knowledge about this site?
- Is there evidence of any undocumented development and use of the study area?

The monitoring would be guided by these basic questions about the nature and extent of the archaeological resource. These questions provide a basic archaeological context for the monitoring.

At this stage when there is not expected to be a significant archaeological resource exposed, more specific questions to address the research potential of the study area have not been formulated. If an archaeological resource is exposed, the research potential of the study area and how the development of the Wambo Homestead can be better understood through the archaeological resource will be fully considered as part of required archaeological reporting.

The type of questions that should be considered include:

- Does the monitoring within the Home Compound confirm the assessed archaeological potential of the Precinct and can this information be utilised to guide any future works located within open external areas; rather than within the existing structures where there is potential for underfloor occupation deposits.
- Do the archaeological finds increase knowledge about Wambo and other similar homestead complexes in the Hunter Valley
- Do the archaeological finds contribute information related to key individuals who occupied and operated the property, as well as the activities and developments they fostered. In relation to the proposed works and the history of the Servant’s Wing specifically, is there any identifiable ethnic Chinese presence or material culture evident and did this influence the development of Wambo in any way.

- Does the archaeological resource contribute to the ‘knowledge regarding the expansion of the colony of New South Wales, its agricultural diversification and everyday life on homestead properties from the 1820s till the 1890s’ (SHI listing sheet).
9.0 Conclusions

This Historical Archaeological Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the Heritage NSW request for an assessment be prepared as part of the S60 application for the proposed Wambo Homestead Servant’s Wing Remediation Works.

As such, this report should be submitted for the approval of the Heritage Council or its delegate prior to the commencement of any excavation work required during the proposed repair and reconstruction works of the Servant’s Wing building.
10.0 References


EJE Heritage 2020 Wambo Homestead Complex Servant’s Wing Building Wall Repair & Reconstruction

GML 2012 Wambo Homestead Complex Conservation Management Plan Review

Peabody 2019 Wambo Homestead Complex Conservation Management Plan
