ARCHAEOLOGICAL
ASSESSMENT AND
EXCEPTION NOTIFICATION

Bathers Way
Dixon Park to Bar Beach
Merewether
Disclaimer

The veracity of this report is not guaranteed unless it is a complete and original copy.

This report may be inaccurate, incomplete, not original, or modified, if it appears in monochrome form and the signature below is a copy.

Martin Carney
Director
(mobile 0411 727 395)

Cover Image

An 1850 plan showing part of Newcastle, and the extensive railway lines for coal mining south of the main town settlement.
Newcastle Regional Library (Reference map AM A1/2-3)
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF FIGURES</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 BACKGROUND</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 STUDY AREA</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 SCOPE</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 AUTHOR IDENTIFICATION</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 STATUTORY CONTROLS AND HERITAGE STUDIES</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.1 NSW Heritage Act 1977 (as amended)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.2 National Parks and Wildlife Act (1974)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.3 State Heritage Register and Inventory</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.4 The National Heritage List</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.5 The Commonwealth Heritage List</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.6 Newcastle Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plan</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0 SITE HISTORY</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 HISTORY</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 ORIGINAL GRANT</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 SUBSEQUENT OWNERS AND OCCUPANTS</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 SITE INSPECTION</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 STATEMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 IDENTIFICATION OF SIGNIFICANCE</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 STATEMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0 RESEARCH DESIGN</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK METHOD STATEMENT</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 REASON FOR EXCEPTION</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK METHOD STATEMENT</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0 RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 RESULTS</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1.1 Documentary Research</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1.2 Significance</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1.3 Physical Evidence</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3 STATEMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE IMPACT</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.0 APPENDICES</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE HERITAGE INVENTORY LISTING: NEWCASTLE COKE OVENS</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundary:</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The study site forms part of a 456 acre grant given to A.W. Scott in 1834. The land was held shortly by Scott before being sold to Dr James Mitchell. Dr Mitchell who already owned a surrounding 900 acres amalgamated his property and the area became known as the Burwood Estate. Through Mitchell's influence by the early 1850s, coal mines and shafts had been opened all across the Burwood Estate and Newcastle Coal and Copper Company (NCCCo) had formed.

The current study site, bordering the beachfront and comprising of sandy hills, appears to have been undeveloped and unoccupied prior to the 1850s coal industry. A railway siding was constructed along the eastern edge of the study site to facilitate the dumping of refuse coal in the area. This continued well after the demise of the NCCCo and Mitchell's death, to which the study site and surrounding areas were passed to David Scott Mitchell and Edward Christopher Merewether.

With a shift towards residential development of the area, the property was renamed the Merewether Estate. The existing train lines were abandoned for the construction and extension of streets and land allotments. The study site had been specified as a public reserve by 1911. The Council of the City of Newcastle officially purchased sections of the study site in 1949 and 1960.

The study site is demonstrative of the progressive development of the greater Newcastle area from industrial to domestic use with the emergence of residential properties within Merewether Estate. This early 20th century transition correlates to the population growth of Newcastle and the desire to reside along the coastlines of Newcastle. This change is the catalyst for the establishment of public reserves, such as Dixon Park, and community groups including Dixon Park Surf Club and illustrates the needs of the local community to have public facilities to their homes.

The study site can be considered to be of potential local significance. This relates to the important role that coal mining had economically to Newcastle in the 19th Century and the construction of new railway lines during the 1850s, improving transportation between the ‘Burwood Seam’ mine shafts and Newcastle Harbour.

Based on the condition of the adjoining Jefferson Park and Merewether Beach projects and the observable topography, isolated, truncated or discrete remains are expected. The potential also exists for occupation material associated with the construction and use of the refuse dump and railway. While not considered a relic (in terms of the Act), rail and rail infrastructure is still considered significant, dependant on the condition of the material and the ability to extract information contributing to the historical record. The extent of disturbance in terms of whether fills were removed, levelled or added to for the later use of the site is unknown.

It is recommended that this report be submitted to the Heritage Division of the Office of Environment and Heritage along with an application for an Exception Notification under s139(4) of the Heritage Act 1977. This application will allow for archaeological monitoring to take place on the study site during excavation works to locate and identify any archaeological material.

Any fieldworks and reporting should be carried out in compliance with guidelines issued by the Heritage Division of the Office of Environment and Heritage, on behalf of the Heritage Council of NSW, under the methodology set out here. The Heritage Division may require a re-evaluation or assessment of relics of significance (in terms
of the Act) if unexpected finds are made which are outside the scope or findings of this study. A final report, addressing the results of all monitoring work on the site will be required to be completed.
TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1  Site location, outlined in red ................................................................. 6
Figure 2.2  Aerial view of the study area, site outlined in red ................................. 7
Figure 2.1  Part of an 1850-1859 plan of Newcastle, showing the site’s proximity to
the township of Newcastle. .................................................................................. 27
Figure 2.2  An 1850 plan of Mitchell’s Estate, showing the greater vicinity of the
study site (red) and early development of train lines for coal
transportation. ........................................................................................................ 28
Figure 2.3  Copy of stratigraphic sketch from Nobby’s Island Newcastle to
Burwood, showing coal seams and their Order of superposition. ....... 29
Figure 2.4  Plan of the Burwood Estate, workings of the Burwood Seam and rail
lines in 1855, also showing location of the coke ovens (green)
southeast of the Racecourse (north to bottom) and the study site (red).
......................................................................................................................... 30
Figure 2.5  Plan of the Burwood Estate showing railways, tramways and pit
tunnels.................................................................................................................... 31
Figure 2.6  Vertical section of strata in the Victoria Colliery, Newcastle Coal and
Copper Company, 1860 ....................................................................................... 32
Figure 2.7  Part of an 1886 parish map showing the original land size and location
of Scott’s 456 acre grant (blue) and the approximate greater area of
the study site (red). ............................................................................................. 33
Figure 2.8  Detail from Plan of Merewether Estate, Land District of Newcastle,
Land Board District of Maitland, 1903. Approximate area of study site
outlined in red. ................................................................................................... 34
Figure 2.9  Advertisement for a 1911 residential subdivision, showing the
northernmost portion of the study site already reserved for park space.
............................................................................................................................. 35
Figure 2.10 Remains of Mitchell’s coke ovens above the Redhead railway, believed
to be the current located of Merewether Beach. Date unknown. ............... 36
Figure 2.11 A c1930 photograph facing south and showing both Merewether beach
(green) and Dixon Park (red). ............................................................................. 37
Figure 2.12 A c1950 photograph showing Merewether Beach with the study site
and Dixon Park Surf Club in the background (green) ................................. 38
Figure 2.13 A c1960 photograph showing Dixon Park Surf Club ......................... 39
Figure 2.14 A c1960 photograph showing Dixon Park Surf Club ......................... 39
Figure 2.15 Part of an 1850 plan overlay onto a current aerial photograph, showing
the location of the study site within sand hills. ............................................... 40
Figure 2.16 An overlay of a 1903 plan on top of a current aerial photograph
showing the site’s use as a refuse coal dump and the area containing
the railway sidings. ............................................................................................. 41
Figure 3.1  The southernmost end of Dixon Park, from Ocean Street. Facing south
east...................................................................................................................... 43
Figure 3.2  Recreational equipment in Dixon Park, from Ocean Street. Facing east.
............................................................................................................................. 43
Figure 3.3  Northern portion of the site, showing Dixon Park Surf Club and the
sloping topography. Facing northeast. .............................................................. 44
Figure 3.4  Northern portion of Dixon Park, showing the southwards slope of the
landscape. Facing south. ................................................................................... 44
Figure 3.5  Dixon Park Surf Club and adjacent car park. Facing east .................... 45
Figure 3.6  Photograph showing the current southwards slope of the ground
surface. Facing west ............................................................................................ 45
Figure 3.7  Photograph showing the public car park for Dixon Park beach. Note Merewether beach in the distance and the steep cliff face. Facing south.................................................................46

Figure 3.8  Current car park for Dixon Park Surf Club. Facing northwest...........46

Figure 3.9  Photograph showing some of the exposed soil profile of the study site. Facing west. .................................................................47

Figure 3.10 Northern edge of the site, showing proposed walkway development. Facing north..................................................................................47

Figure 3.11 Photograph showing the natural topography of the greater area, north of the study site. Facing north.........................................................48

Figure 3.12 A photograph from the 2011 archaeological monitoring of surf house, showing the remnants of the ‘Redhead Railway’ behind the Merewether Bathers Pavilion. Facing southeast........................................51

Figure 3.13 A photograph showing railway sleepers positioned underneath the lower car park area for Merewether beach. Facing south..............51

Figure 3.14 Demolition plan showing works to be completed at the southern area of the site including the car park. ...........................................53

Figure 3.15 Demolition plan showing works to be completed in the central area of the site near Dixon Park Surf club............................................54

Figure 3.16 Demolition plan showing works to be completed in the northern area of the site and Ocean Street.......................................................55

Figure 3.17 Demolition plan showing works to be completed at the northernmost area of the site.................................................................56

Figure 3.18 Plan showing the various development phases of the study site........57

Figure 3.19 Plan showing new stormwater lines (bold black) to be installed within the proposed development and the proposed bio-retention swales (yellow)..................................................................................58

Figure 3.20 Detail plan for construction of lower swale......................................59

Figure 3.21 Detail plan of the proposed upper swale construction.......................60

Figure 3.22 Plan showing new landscape and surface works proposed for the southern area of the site..............................................................61

Figure 3.23 Plan showing new landscape and surface works proposed for the central area containing Dixon Park Surf club..................................62

Figure 3.24 Plan showing new landscape and surface works proposed for the northern area of the site and Ocean Street...........................................63

Figure 3.25 Plan showing new landscape and surface works proposed for the northernmost area of the site.................................................64

Figure 3.26 Section plan showing the variable subsurface excavation levels for the site..................................................................................65
Figure 1.1  Site location, outlined in red
NSW Land and Property Information Six Viewer (2014)
Figure 1.2  Aerial view of the study area, site outlined in red
King and Campbell (2013) Cover Sheet and Site Plan – Stage 1
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The City of Newcastle has commissioned the Archaeological Management and Consulting Group to prepare an Archaeological Assessment for application of a S139(4) Exception Notification. This report forms a companion study to an Aboriginal Archaeological Assessment and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study completed by Benjamin Streat (in press) and relevant to the same study site. The report conforms to Heritage Office Guidelines for Archaeological Assessment.¹

1.2 STUDY AREA

The study site is that piece of land described as Lot 3 Deposited Plan 227107, Lot 7021/1128695 and Lot 26 Deposited Plan 1140755, known as Dixon Park at Ocean Street, Merewether, Parish of Newcastle, County of Northumberland.

1.3 SCOPE

This report does not consider the potential Aboriginal archaeology of the study site. However, any Aboriginal sites and objects are protected by the National Parks and Wildlife Act (see Section 1.5.2). An Aboriginal Archaeological Assessment and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study by Benjamin Streat of Streat Archaeological Services (AMAC-SAS), in accordance with the NPW Act, is currently being completed for the study site.²

The heritage value of the structures currently standing on the study site is not assessed as part of this report.

The discovery of unknown and unassessed remains will require additional assessment.

1.4 AUTHOR IDENTIFICATION

This report was researched by Ivana Vetta, Jaki Baloh and Kelly Strickland. The report was written by Kelly Strickland and reviewed by Martin Carney. Portions of the historical information in Section 2.0 were written by Kevin Hickson. Site inspection was conducted by Martin Carney.

The main collections used include the State Library of NSW, NSW Land and Property Information, State Records NSW, National Library of Australia Trove Collection, Newcastle Regional Library and the Hunter Photo Bank collection.

¹ Heritage Office and Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (1996).
² AMAC Group/ Streat Archaeological Services (In press).
1.5 STATUTORY CONTROLS AND HERITAGE STUDIES

1.5.1 NSW Heritage Act 1977 (as amended)
The NSW Heritage Act 1977 affords automatic statutory protection to relics that form archaeological deposits or part thereof. The Act defines relics as:

Relic means any deposit, artefact, object or material evidence that:
(a) relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement, and
(b) is of State or local heritage significance

Sections 139 to 145 of the Act prevent the excavation or disturbance of land for the purpose of discovering, exposing or moving a relic, except by a qualified archaeologist to whom an excavation permit has been issued by the Heritage Council of NSW.

1.5.2 National Parks and Wildlife Act (1974)
The National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (as amended) affords protection to all Aboriginal objects and is governed by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage. These objects are defined as:

any deposit, object or material evidence (not being a handicraft made for sale) relating to the Aboriginal habitation of the area that comprises New South Wales, being habitation before or concurrent with (or both) the occupation of that area by persons of non-Aboriginal extraction, and includes Aboriginal remains.3

It is an offence to destroy Aboriginal objects or places without the consent of the Director-General.4 Section 86 discusses “Harming or desecration Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places:

(1) A person must not harm or desecrate an object that the person knows is an Aboriginal object. Maximum penalty:
(a) in the case of an individual-2,500 penalty units or imprisonment for 1 year, or both, or (in circumstances of aggravation) 5,000 penalty units or imprisonment for 2 years, or both, or
(b) in the case of a corporation-10,000 penalty units.
(2) A person must not harm an Aboriginal object. Maximum penalty:
(a) in the case of an individual-500 penalty units or (in circumstances of aggravation) 1,000 penalty units, or
(b) in the case of a corporation-2,000 penalty units.
(3) For the purposes of this section, “circumstances of aggravation” are:
(a) that the offence was committed in the course of carrying out a commercial activity, or
(b) that the offence was the second or subsequent occasion on which the offender was convicted of an offence under this section.
This subsection does not apply unless the circumstances of aggravation were identified in the court attendance notice or summons for the offence.
(4) A person must not harm or desecrate an Aboriginal place. Maximum penalty:
(a) in the case of an individual-5,000 penalty units or imprisonment for 2 years, or both, or
(b) in the case of a corporation-10,000 penalty units.
(5) The offences under subsections (2) and (4) are offences of strict liability and the defence of honest and reasonable mistake of fact applies.

(6) Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply with respect to an Aboriginal object that is dealt with in accordance with section 85A.
(7) A single prosecution for an offence under subsection (1) or (2) may relate to a single Aboriginal object or a group of Aboriginal objects.
(8) If, in proceedings for an offence under subsection (1), the court is satisfied that, at the time the accused harmed the Aboriginal object concerned, the accused did not know that the object was an Aboriginal object, the court may find an offence proved under subsection (2). \(^5\)

1.5.2.1 **Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in NSW**

In October 2010 DECCW, now Office of Environment and Heritage, introduced the “Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in NSW”.\(^6\) This code should be used by individuals or organisations who are contemplating undertaking activities which may harm Aboriginal objects.

This code provides a process whereby a reasonable determination can be made as to whether or not Aboriginal objects will be harmed by an activity, whether further investigation is warranted and whether the activity requires an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) application.

If through this or any other process that meets the standards of this code, such as an environmental impact assessment, you have already taken reasonable steps to identify Aboriginal objects in an area subject to a proposed activity and it is already known that Aboriginal objects will be harmed or are likely to be harmed by an activity, then an application should be made for an AHIP. Individuals or organisations who are contemplating undertaking activities which could harm Aboriginal objects should consult this code or engage the services of an appropriately qualified Archaeological consultant to carry out a due diligence study on any proposed development.

This code of conduct was released in response to changes in the NPW Act which are outlined below which now states “A person must not harm or desecrate an object that the person knows is an Aboriginal object” or that “A person must not harm or desecrate an Aboriginal place” (NPW Act, Amendment 2010).

1.5.3 **State Heritage Register and Inventory**

The NSW State Heritage Register or Inventory is a list which contains places, items and areas of heritage value to New South Wales. These places are protected under the New South Wales Heritage Act 1977.

The site is not listed on the NSW State Heritage Register or Inventory. An Inventory listing for ‘Newcastle Coke Ovens’ is listed at 3A Ocean Road, Merewether, which if accurate, is situated at on the same side as the study site and possibly at the north-eastern edge of the site.\(^7\) The physical description however states that “the coke ovens were positioned on the lower cliff face at the south end of Merewether Beach, probably on the site of the present Public Dressing Pavilion, possibly in the vicinity

---

of the stairs”.8 If this description is correct, then the coke ovens are further west of the current site. While the absolute position of the coke ovens is unknown and remains speculative, if encountered, are considered to be of potential state significance.

1.5.4 The National Heritage List
The National Heritage List is a list which contains places, items and areas of outstanding heritage value to Australia. This can include places and areas overseas as well as items of Aboriginal significance and origin. These places are protected under the Australian Government’s EPBC Act.

The study site is not listed on the National Heritage List.

1.5.5 The Commonwealth Heritage List
The Commonwealth Heritage List can include natural, Indigenous and historic places of value to the nation. Items on this list are under Commonwealth ownership or control and as such are identified, protected and managed by the federal government.

The study site is not listed on the Commonwealth Heritage List.

1.5.4 Newcastle Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plan 2012
The Newcastle Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plan was revised and updated in 2012. Within the Local Environment Plan, in Schedule 5: Environmental Heritage, Part 3: Archaeological Sites, Item 3 “Newcastle Coke Ovens”, previously noted on the State Heritage Inventory, is listed as being positioned within Lot 7021 DP112695 (3A Ocean Street).9 The archaeological item is specified as being classified as local significance.

Within the Development Control Plan 2012, ‘Section 5.06: Archaeological Management; B. Managing Archaeological Resources’, the following objectives and controls have been stated regarding the treatment of sites:10

B. Managing archaeological resources:
Objectives:
1. Ensure archaeological sites are managed in accordance with the requirements of the NSW Heritage Act 1977.
2. Manage archaeological sites in accordance with the assessed levels of heritage significance.

Controls:
1. Adhere to the recommendations of any archaeological assessment or preliminary archaeological assessment.

---

2. Manage archaeological sites in accordance with the requirements of the NSW Heritage Act 1977.

1.5.5 Heritage Division Consultation and Endorsement

A 2009 publication, *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and ‘Relics’*, composed by the Heritage Branch of the Department of Planning (now the Heritage Division), provides information regarding types of sites and their potential significance. Section 4.1.2; ‘Protection of Archaeological Sites and Relics’, states the following remarks concerning the classification between ‘works’, ‘relics’ and their significance:

“Section 139 prohibits the excavating or disturbing of land leading to a relic being discovered, exposed, moved, damaged or destroyed. To excavate and disturb land in the context of the NSW Heritage Act is associated with the activity of digging or unearthing. The new definition also indicates that the ‘relic’ being exposed or disturbed is considered significant (or has the potential to be significant) at the time of its excavation, removal or destruction.

In practice, an important historical archaeological site will be likely to contain a range of different elements as vestiges and remnants of the past. Such sites will include ‘relics’ of significance in the form of deposits, artefacts, objects and usually also other material evidence from demolished buildings, works or former structures which provide evidence of prior occupations but may not be ‘relics’.”

In consultation with the Heritage Division regarding the definition of potential archaeological material, it is the understanding of the Heritage Division at the time that rail and rail infrastructure is considered a ‘work’. This type of archaeological material or find may retain an archaeological significance independent of the statutory definitions. Where it is determined that archaeological data of scientific value is embodied in any ‘work’ exposed in this programme it will be archaeologically recorded in terms of the existing Heritage Division guidelines, or where feasible, retained.

1.6 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

James Clarence and Clare McLay from Newcastle City Council for all of their assistance.

---

11 Heritage Branch Department of Planning (2009), p. 7.
2.0 SITE HISTORY

2.1 HISTORY

Prior to European arrival, the study area lay within the lands of the Awabakal language group. Aboriginal presence in the Hunter Valley precedes the end of the Pleistocene epoch around 11700 BP, which coincides with the end of the last glacial period. Discovery of relics of such date is very rare and the great majority of sites are Holocene and less than 5000 years old. This may be due to population increase and/or rising sea levels forcing migration to new coastlines. Between 4100 BP and 3200 BP sea levels reached about 1.7m higher than today, followed by a stabilisation at current levels. Establishment of littoral environments would have taken time but it is safe to assume that the study area has long being part of aeolian sand formations along Bar Beach towards the Merewether Beach foreshore.

Along with ground plants such as pigface (Carpobrutus glaucescens) and salt-tolerant grasses, dune flora may have included the coastal banksia (Banksia integrifolia) and the coastal she-oak (Casuarina equisetifolia). Low hills were situated behind the beach and flatter land beyond with Cottage Creek running through, and as a result the area north of the ridge running along the south and the ridge itself would have presented varying flora regimes. Southward and including those that emptied into Glenrock Lagoon, several creeks drained the surrounding ridges and watered a rainforest. This range of environments no doubt provided Aborigines with an array of resources. Available foods within close vicinity to the study area would have included fish, pipi, shellfish from the rock platforms, eastern grey kangaroo, pigface fruit and the nectar of banksia flowers.

Another primary and readily available resource was volcanic tuff for tool production. Known as ‘Nobby’s tuff’ or ‘Merewether chert’, the stone could be extracted from cliff faces or subsequently found as fallen cobbles and boulders at places such as Nobbys Island, Merewether Beach and Glenrock. Open campsites with tuff implements, flakes and waste are the most common type of archaeological site found in the Newcastle area, and in coastal contexts shell middens are also common. A number of such sites have been found along the Hunter River and an open campsite was identified and recorded in Dixon Park less than 1km north of the study area (NPWS Site #38-4-0048). Sites mostly occur in close vicinity to fresh water and/or resources; in the case of the current study site, tuff and various foods were readily available but no permanent creeks are known to have existed within the immediate vicinity. However, there may have been seasonal watercourses off the southern ridge and ground water seeping from the beachside cliffs that potentially provided a small supply. Consequent to the initial European settlement being a very localized and small population, local Aborigines were able to maintain their pre-contact lifestyle more than those residing in the Sydney and Hawkesbury districts.

European Settlement

Official discovery of the Hunter River and of its coal is credited to Lt. John Shortland, after an unsuccessful pursuit of another group of escaped convicts as far as Port Stephens in 1797. Sydney merchants were immediately attracted and began sending small vessels to acquire coal and timber. Hugh Meehan, a merchant, briefly established a sawpit at Freshwater Bay (west side of Stockton) in 1801 as part of these operations. After a survey in June-July 1801, Governor King established a small post at Colliers Point on the southern side of the river mouth (near Fort Scratchley). Initially consisting of Corporal Wixstead, 5 privates and 16 convicts, its role was to procure coal, timber and lime for the government. By November the population was 24 and the area was producing nine tonnes of coal per day. Despite this success, the settlement was closed in December of the same year.

King seized another opportunity with the convict uprising at Castle Hill in 1804, selecting Lt. Charles Menzies to establish those rebels in a new settlement at Coal River. Known as Kingstown or Kingston, this settlement was also on the southern bank, centred on George Street running south from the river (later Watt Street). Through to 1821, the convict population ranged between 74 and 1051 and the infrastructure was that of a penal colony geared for the exploitation of local resources. This included coal mining at Colliers Point where the Dudley Seam was exposed in the cliff face and near the south end of George Street where the first shaft was sunk in 1814 to the Yard Seam named on account of it being 3ft thick. Mostly burnt in Newcastle or shipped to Sydney, coal output did not exceed 2000 tonnes until 1819.

Partly due to the arrival of free settlers, in 1819 Governor Macquarie proposed shifting the convicts to Port Macquarie and the new settlement began in 1821. By 1824 Newcastle was officially no longer seen as a penal town although some convicts were retained for government projects such as coal mining, road maintenance and construction of the breakwater to Nobby’s Island. The change in status did not result in growth; with Newcastle having relatively infertile soils, most of the free settlers headed for the flood plains around Maitland and Morpeth. Development of the town commenced with the advent of steam-powered shipping and the arrival of the Australian Agricultural Company (AA Co) in 1828-30. With the Government seeking to increase the output and efficiency of coal mining, the AA Co were granted permission to establish a colliery in NSW on 2000 acres of their choosing. Selecting the Hunter River foreshore, the AA Co transformed local coalmaking but at the same time gained an effective monopoly on production. Its grant extended from the western edge of the main settlement (Brown Street) to the eastern edge of Honeysuckle Point (Merewether Street) and the south boundary roughly equates with Glebe Road running west through The Junction to Adamstown (Figure 2.8).

---

13 HRA, I (III), p. 772.
14 HRA, I (III), p. 772.
15 Turner (1980a), p. 10, Table 1.
2.2 ORIGINAL GRANT

Adjacent to the south-eastern part of the AACo grant, a parcel of 456 acres on which the study site is situated was granted in 1834 by Alexander Walker Scott (1800-1883) (see Figure 2.8). In a Government Gazette of July that year an advertisement located Scott’s holding on the east of 900 acres, more or less, being offered for sale. To its north was the Australian Agricultural Company’s 2000 acres grant, to the west Government land and to the south the ocean and a saltwater lake (Glenrock Lagoon). After further advertising, Dr James Mitchell (1792-1869) purchased the land in 1835, forming the initial and largest part of what would become the Burwood Estate and a major industrial precinct of early Newcastle.\(^{17}\)

Born in Fifeshire, Scotland, Mitchell trained as an army surgeon and visited Australia twice before being posted to Sydney with the 48\(^{th}\) Regiment in 1821.\(^{18}\) He soon sought leave on half-pay and took up farming on two 2000 acre grants, one at Burraborang in the County of Camden and the other at Glendon Brook near Singleton in the County of Durham. This proved to be an interlude with Mitchell resuming medical practice as an Assistant Surgeon at the Sydney Civil Hospital in June 1823. Although taking charge that year, his official appointment as Surgeon on an annual salary of £273/15/0 was delayed until 1829.

Mitchell also had other interests; attending the first meeting to form the Sydney Banking Company and becoming a foundation member of the Australian Subscription Library in 1826, a committee member of the Australian Library and Literary Institute in 1832 and a director of the Bank of Australia in 1833. In this period he is thought to have been developing a private practice and his association with the Hunter Valley, particularly with Robert and Helenus Scott, who were neighbours near Singleton and probably acting as his agents in the region. Other members of family included Patrick, David, Alexander and Augusta Maria, who married Mitchell in August 1833. The union produced three children; Augusta Maria (1834), Robert (1836) and Margaret (1840).

Mitchell’s medical service ended in September 1837 after clashes with a new head of the Colonial Medical Department, and despite spending several years trying to vindicate himself the only outcome was reinstatement for a day to allow for his resignation.\(^{19}\) Around this time and probably by means of access to more capital through Augusta or her mother, Mitchell embarked on a program of land acquisition and establishing himself as a rentier, paying off the purchase price by subdividing and leasing.

Government Gazettes between 1836-1840 record James Mitchell purchasing 17 properties totalling 10533 acres 2 roods in the counties of Northumberland, Argyle, Durham and Cumberland. A smaller holding of 32 perches was in Newcastle and another of 1 acre 10 perches in Sydney; a grant promised to James Mitchell. Gazettes dating to 1841-42 record six small properties in Northumberland and

\(^{17}\) As recorded more precisely in the Gazette of 20 January 1836, Mitchell’s purchase consisted of 950 acres and occurred between an advertisement on June 20 1835 and dating of the deeds 6 January 1836. Later that year the United Church of England and Ireland was given possession of a Glebe of 35 acres at the northeast corner of the property but formal granting did not occur until 1859 (Dixon, 1935), p. 67.

\(^{18}\) Smith (1966), p. 10ff

\(^{19}\) Smith (1966, p. 16) asserting that this occurred in October 1841 seems at odds with the Gazette notice of Mitchell’s restoration to rank of Surgeon appearing in the edition of 22 March 1842.
Gosford, and those of 1839-42 indicate James Mitchell also acquired land by making claims before the Commissioners for land grants in the County of Northumberland. In seven cases totalling 1600 acres, Mitchell was granted the land in trust and in 1842 he secured 914 acres.20 At this time he was building a tweed factory on part of 70 acres purchased at Stockton in 1835. With Alexander Scott holding 50 acres, the two owned the peninsula and Turner (1980:23) suggests that the rapidity of development until 1844 shows an intention to create an industrial estate. On completion in 1843 Mitchell’s factory was leased and operated successfully until it was destroyed by fire in 1851. Coinciding with the onset of the 1840s depression, the factory appears to mark the end of the first phase of Mitchell’s business career, though the period following was brief and more of a setback than financial ruin.

Between 1842-43 the Bank of Australia failed and each shareholder, including Mitchell, was responsible for its debts to the full amount of his property. Disputes with the creditor: the Bank of Australasia, were finally resolved with the Privy Council deciding in favour of the Australasia in early 1848, by which time the debt plus interest and costs had reached £222, 689. After a bank committee was formed in June to assess the shareholders and release assets, settlement took three years and the bank finally closed in 1851. Mitchell survived by selling properties and, given new business activities in 1846-47, possibly did so before the assessment committee was formed. He was able to retain the family home in Sydney and the extensive properties in and around Newcastle, and in 1849 was in a position to expand the Burwood Estate westward with purchase of 413 acres.21 Eastward expansion also around this time appears likely, at least preceding Mitchell’s activity on that land in 1853. With his Stockton ventures unsuccessful, Alexander Scott owed his brother-in-law £8230 by 1849 and Mitchell held mortgages on ‘some of Scott’s land’.22 It seems probable that these properties included the 456 acres adjacent to the Estate or it was transferred as part payment of the debt. Whichever the case, expansion to over 1800 acres allowed Mitchell a wider scope in exploiting the Estate’s coal resources, to which he had turned his attention to as early as 1846.

Records and plans show that Mitchell attempted to exploit his grants in numerous ways, fostering by lease or under his management mining, glass and pottery making. When the first coalmining on the Estate was undertaken, and whether it was by Mitchell or by lessees, is unclear. Smith asserts that Dixon’s claim of mines operating in the early 1840s had not been verified, was not supported by evidence

20 Smith (1966, p. 16f, 46, 56) refers also to 1010 acres purchased in 1838 at Fern Bay in the County of Gloucester, 120 acres at Stockton, 1300 acres near Gosford, 2 houses in Sydney, and to holdings at Woronora River, Hunters Hill, Mrs Darling’s Point, Cooks River and Jack the Miller’s Point. Purchased by his mother-in-law and bequeathed to Augusta, the core of the empire was the family residence in Cumberland Place, Sydney, at which Mitchell developed a private practice and conducted business affairs.

21 Government Gazette, 3 August 1849, deed dated 1 May 1849. The status of 100 acres adjacent north of this holding and owned at one time by Elizabeth Muir is unclear. Dixon (1935, p. 5) included it as part of the Estate and seems to credit acquisition to Mitchell. Smith (1966, p. 16, 45, 55) makes no mention, listing only three component properties – the original 950 acres, Scott’s 465 acres and the western 413 acres - then observing that expansion after 1849 was by purchase and lease of neighbouring land. His plan of the Estate (Figure 2.4) excluding Muir’s land may suggest it was held by lease, though the Estate plan extends the western property (marked E C Merewether) to the southern boundary of the Australian Agricultural Company’s grant so as to include not only Muir’s land but also Thomas Adams’s 54 acres adjacent north. Resolving this question is beyond the scope of the present study and is not relevant to the study area.

of the 1847 Coal Inquiry and the actual beginning date was not known.\textsuperscript{23} The first major extraction may have been in 1846, with 2000-3000 tonnes coming from a seam encountered when Mitchell drove a road tunnel through the southern ridge to access a planned copper smelter on the northern side of Glenrock Lagoon. With no anchorage available, transport to the harbour was required and in 1847 Mitchell secured permission from the AACo to construct a tramway over their land. Although the Company surrendered its monopoly on coalmining in August of that year, it stipulated that the line not be used for carrying coal. Thus coal delivered to The Junction, to which wooden tramways from the Burwood mines converged, had to be carted on a roundabout route towards staithes Mitchell built in 1849 on Crown land at the bottom of Perkins and Wolfe Streets. Right of way across AACo land was secured the following year with passage of \textit{Mitchell's Tram Road Act}.\textsuperscript{24}

Dixon records 6 lessees operating 7 tunnels around this time (see Figure 2.4 - Figure 2.5).\textsuperscript{25} All were exploiting the same seam, properly called the Burwood Seam but better known as the Victoria Seam; a name derived from Morgan’s ‘Victoria Tunnel’ in Victoria Gully. Nott’s and Big Brown’s tunnels were also located in that gully (Morgan Street and Myambla Crescent area). Jimmy Brown’s first tunnel was located just above Kempster Road, J. & A. Brown had a tunnel above Cronin’s Paddock southwest of Merewether Street, and W. & J. Donaldson had two tunnels in Happy Valley (Rowan Crescent). Each gully had its own tramway connecting to the Junction; that ran from Victoria along Railway Street, from Cronin’s along Merewether Street and from Happy Valley along Mitchell Street, which was also known as the Red Road due to being formed from pit refuse that had been on fire and subsequently coloured bright red.

Work on the copper smelter near Glenrock Lagoon appears to have commenced in 1846-47 (see Figure 2.5 for location). After an approach in 1845, the AACo declined to establish a smelter aimed at reducing the high freight costs for smelting in Europe.\textsuperscript{26} However, given the amount of ore coming from New Zealand for shipment to Britain, Governor Gipps tried to foster interest by suspending NSW duties on ore and removing restrictions on vessels using the Port of Newcastle. Although using Burwood Estate coal would be infringing on the AACo’s rights, Mitchell was convinced the monopoly would not last and began construction adjacent to what became known as Smelters Beach. Citing W.J. Gould\textsuperscript{27}, Smith says he took over a salt works established by J. Donaldson for conversion to a smelter.\textsuperscript{28} In asserting that Mitchell gave the impression of building a salt works (most probably to avoid AACo opposition), Turner seems to imply a new establishment however may mean renovation and enlargement of pre-existing works.\textsuperscript{29} Turner also notes that the report of ores sold to the Newcastle Smelting Company in 1850 had not been confirmed and shipments in 1851 were regarded by contemporaries as the first ores delivered to the Burwood smelter.

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{Turner1980} Turner (1980), p. 36. The solicitors’ notice of intention to apply to the Legislative Council for leave to present a bill to authorize connection of the tram road at Burwood to the Wharf at Newcastle appeared in the Government Gazette of 19 July 1850.
\bibitem{Dixon1935} Dixon (1935), p. 70.
\bibitem{Turner1980} Turner (1980), p. 35f
\bibitem{Gould1931} ‘The Pioneers: Dr Mitchell’ in \textit{Voice of The North} (No.250, 10 June 1931)
\end{thebibliography}
The smelter complex consisted of a two-storey brick building of 32 x 130ft with a shingle roof housing two offices, assay furnace, a large storeroom, two dwellings and a fresh water tank sitting underneath. A second shed of 28 x 52ft housed a calcining furnace, two melting furnaces, a refining furnace and a roasting furnace. Ancillary structures included blacksmiths’ and carpenters’ shops, the manager’s house, a labourers’ hut, two three-room workmen’s cottages of brick and shingle construction, stables and a harness room. Regarding fuel, a tunnel was driven into a nearby coal seam (probably exposed through road tunnelling) and a system of roads and tramways were planned to link the site with the port. A newspaper report in 1854 describes the smelter as being reached via a tunnel big enough for carriages and teams and having “various well-appointed establishments of the Superintendent and the other officers; and the comfortable cottages of the artisans of many classes … miners, masons, bricklayers, carpenters, blacksmiths, wheelwrights and labourers”. Keene’s 1854 sketch of the coal strata (Figure 2.3) shows the smelter chimney in the distance.

The business structure of the Estate changed in 1853 with formation of the Newcastle Coal and Copper Company (NCCCo) to manage all mining and smelting operations. The initial capital was £100,000, or 4000 shares of £25 and the Governor assented to its Act of Incorporation on 24 October 1853. The formalities appear to have taken several years with the first meeting held on 31 July 1854 and a special general meeting in late 1855 finalizing the amalgamation of the mines involved. Lessees Brown, Donaldson, Nott and others agreed to sell their leases to the company but remained large shareholders while Mitchell relinquished his ‘lordship’ and received a stipulated share of the profits. A slow start in other ways are also indicated by a newspaper report in 1854 noting that the completion of NCCCo’s tramway had been completed, however was not yet fully operational and the branch lines not yet complete. The abovementioned notice of the first meeting in July 1854 seems to imply that necessary commencing operations were yet to be completed and the plant was not ‘fairly at work’. Although the smelter had produced 74 tonnes of copper ingots and cakes in the preceding years from 1851-53, the NCCCo produced none and remained purely a coal business. The Sydney Morning Herald reporter in 1854 noted that smelting had been suspended due to the prohibitory cost of labour and the smelting-house was occupied by mechanics preparing the tramways and carriages required for the coalmines. Visitors were shown some ingots made of ore from Bathurst, South Australia and New Zealand. Although workmanship was of high quality it was not possible to compete with British works because of high wages, hence the intention was to install sheet-copper machines. The malleability and ductility of Australian ores made this more suitable in producing sheet for ship-sheathing and other purposes.

Coal output presumably had increased with the opening of a new mine in 1853; the Beach Tunnel driven into what became known as the Dudley Seam although this coal, at least in part, appears to have been intended for coke production with the...
establishment of a battery of ovens placed adjacent to the entrance. As shown in an 1855 plan (Figure 2.4) both were located on the north side of the ridge to the smelter, above where the Merewether Baths were later built, and connected by a line to The Junction. The ovens were constructed with exterior wall blocks of locally quarried sandstone and the interior lined with English fire bricks (see Figure 2.10 for a view of the ruins). By mid-1855, coke production stood at about 50 tonnes per week.

The NCCCo also invested in replacing the wooden tramways with iron rails. The *Sydney Morning Herald* of 23 June 1856 reported that the Company had recently imported about 700 tonnes of heavy rails and chairs of the same weight used for Government railways which, with about 400 tonnes previously supplied, would enable them to relay the whole of their several lines (about seven miles in length altogether) and to replace horsepower with locomotives. The present gauge 4ft 1½ inches (the ½ not certain) was being enlarged to 4ft 8½ inches, however the narrower gauge was preserved by retaining one of the rails so that the old rolling stock could still be used.

In April 1861 the Company called for tenders for the construction of a railway to the smelter and the Redhead Colliery; a new mine on the south side of Glenrock Lagoon. A.C. Davidson’s tender was accepted, with works to be completed within 6 months. Due to disputes between the Company and contractor resulting in legal proceedings meant that this timetable was not kept. The *Empire* of 12th June 1862 records that work had been suspended in September 1861, after which the Company called for new tenders, but later resumed the laying of the rails until the required termination point was expected very shortly. From The Junction this line ran to the beach where the coke ovens were located, through two tunnels to the smelter and over a bridge towards the new coalmine. The *Empire* report described the first tunnel as progressing through rock; 445 yards long, 12ft wide at the bottom, 6ft at the top and 16ft high. Its sloping supports were 10inch square ironbark piles, with a roof of timbers of similar size with planking over the top and along sides where the cutting was soft. Only 150 yards long, the second tunnel (a few hundred yards south) was also through rock and just beyond was the smelter works which hadn’t operated for several years however expected to resume with the railway construction. These cuttings became known as the ‘Big Tunnel’ and ‘Little Tunnel’.

March explains the route in terms of better access to the smelter, although passing the coke ovens appears more than an incidental consideration (see Figure 2.4 and Figure 2.5 for plans showing the route).

---

35 The NCCC0 being responsible for opening the Beach Tunnel and building the coke ovens is unclear. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reporter in 1854 saying the ovens were being constructed would support March (1983, p. 1) claiming this to be the case. If not an error, Turner (1980, p. 61) dating them 1853 would suggest – given the time required for stone quarrying and perhaps for import of the fire bricks – that Mitchell began the project before the NCCC0 was established. The exact location of the coke ovens is uncertain but it seems likely that the bench on which they were erected is at least in part the present upper carpark level.

36 The *Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (6th June 1855). Dixon (1935, p. 7) reported that the NCCC0 also built 13 workers’ houses nearby, on the slope where the band rotunda stood on the beach reserve.

37 A call for tenders for the sinking of an airshaft at the Red Head Colliery appeared in the *Newcastle Morning Herald* of 9 November 1861.

The court case dragged well into 1862, with newspapers of the time carrying many notices of the action. One article in The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser dated to 23rd December 1862 incidentally provides additional information about the railway. The case was Dibbs versus the NCCCo in Supreme Court; Dibbs a trustee for A.C. Davidson, expressed concern over the construction of a branch of railway approximately 2 miles 45 links in length from The Junction on the Company’s Burwood line to a new coal-works at Redhead, for a lump sum of £1200. The plaintiff had been awarded £1850 damages but the defendants had sought and been granted a new trial. The extent to which this case affected Company finances is not known, although Turner believed that the smelter could not be re-opened because of near bankruptcy.  

By late 1863 it was reported that the men at the Victoria Tunnels were understood to be under notice preparatory to abandonment of these works in favour of the Redhead colliery alone.

Demise of the NCCCo came in 1864. In a meeting on March 8th it was resolved to dissolve so that works would now be shut until they pass into other hands. A shareholder meeting on July 13th passed a resolution to end the company and confirmed an agreement that it would surrender leases on certain conditions and Mitchell would purchase certain assets. The Company also gave up its loading facilities; the draft being too shallow for newer and larger vessels caused ships to be topped off midstream. The Government, having resumed the wharf in 1865, prompted Mitchell to complain in a letter to E.C Merewether that he was being charged 1/- per week and 1d per tonne of coal to use shoots that he had constructed.

Edward Christopher Merewether (1820-1893) joined the Mitchell family in April 1860 by marriage to the eldest daughter, Augusta Maria. Having arrived in Australia in 1838 as aide-de-camp to Governor Gipps, Merewether went on to serve Governors Fitzroy and Denison and, at the time of his marriage, was Clerk of the Executive Council. Shortly after he accepted the position of General Superintendent of the AACo and took up residence at The Ridge, just to the west of the new railroad tunnels and overlooking the Estate (for location see Figure 2.2).

Subsequent to the collapse of the NCCCo, Mitchell’s attempt to establish a glass and porcelain factory on the Estate proved unsuccessful and he turned his attention to forming the Burwood and Newcastle Smelting Company. In May 1866 Thomas White, engineer, was engaged for 10 years and the works were completely renovated prior to recommencement of smelting in September with ore from Mitchell’s Currawong mine near Goulburn and coal supplied by his Burwood Coal Company. The first shipment of copper left port in late 1866 but ceased nine months later due to inadequate ore supply. Thomas was sent to South Australia to obtain ore but it was never landed in Newcastle due to uncertainty of payment after Mitchell’s death in February 1869.

41 The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser (18 August 1863)
42 Sydney Morning Herald (12 March 1864)
43 The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser (16 July 1864)
44 Ports and People (undated), p. 16; Marsden (2002), p. 22. Marsden believed that the costly method of loading contributed to the Company’s failure.
45 Smith (1966), p. 37f
46 Turner (1980a) p. 69
2.3 SUBSEQUENT OWNERS AND OCCUPANTS

Mitchell’s demise required a company restructure and local investors tried to establish the Newcastle Smelting Company Ltd with £10,000 capital to take over the works. A 21-year lease was secured and ores sourced, however other investors showed no interest. The smelter was leased to Ebenezer Vickery of Sydney in 1871 and managed by James Christoe until at least 1886, but it remained a small works and Turner found its continuity hard to gauge.\(^{47}\) When the smelter works finally closed is not known. Other ventures undertaken by lessees on the Estate were more successful; these included Newcastle’s first tannery opening in May 1866, pottery production previously undertaken at Burwood Pottery resuming under Mr. Welham and the establishment of the Burwood and Newcastle Fire Clay and Brick Works by Hughes and Drury later in the year.\(^{48}\) With Wianamatta beds overlying coal seams, clay was plentiful and other brick makers also took up leases: Joseph Bowtell, Giddey (or Giddy), John Gulliver, Mills and James Wood.\(^{49}\)

After a sensational court case involving a German confidence trickster E.W. Wolfskehl, and a will made shortly before Mitchell’s death, probate was granted to Augusta in May 1869.\(^{50}\) With Mitchell having died owing considerable sums, the final cash disbursement was just £10,279 but the land component was over 45,000 acres. Augusta died in 1872 and bequeathed Burwood to the Merewether family; hence the change to Merewether Estate and the name of the suburb that developed. In 1876 the family moved to Sydney leaving Augusta’s nephew, Robert Scott, to manage their affairs. That same year a lease for coalmining on Estate land was granted to the six men who formed the Newcastle Coal Mining Company Ltd.

With the smelter probably inactive by the later 1880s, the Redhead railway’s function could have been only to service the Redhead coalmine and possibly the coke ovens. How long the ovens operated is not known, perhaps ending with the NCCCo in 1864 when the anticipated Melbourne market did not materialize, however also possibly contributing to 126 tonnes of coke exported to India in 1868.\(^{51}\) They may have possibly survived through to the commencement of nickel mining in New Caledonia in the early 1880s. Turner records that this caused a previously insignificant production to rise to 4000 tonnes annually between 1882-84. This was followed by a sharp decline then recovery in 1888 associated with Broken Hill mining.\(^{52}\) Output reached more than 11000 tonnes annually but fell to 600 tonnes by 1891; the reduction being an issue of the quality of the coke. Unfortunately, the photograph showing the ovens as a ruin (Figure 2.10) is undated but even these remains seem to have been long gone by 1935 when Dixon noted that recent terracing works on the slopes of the Beach Reserve had cut into the foundations.\(^{53}\)

The Redhead coalmine and rail line appear to have lasted well into the 20th century, contrary to the assertion by Shoebridge that the branch line to the Dudley area through the Fernleigh tunnel being near complete in 1889 allowed the Burwood Coal Company to close the line along Smelters Beach, which had become too expensive

\(^{47}\) Turner (1980), p. 75.  
\(^{48}\) Smith (1966), p. 38.  
\(^{49}\) Gemmell (1986), p. 74-78.  
\(^{50}\) Smith (1966), p. 39-42.  
\(^{51}\) Bingle (1873), p. 58.  
\(^{52}\) Turner (1980), p. 61.  
to maintain.\textsuperscript{54} The line was clearly operating after 1910 when the famous ‘Coffee Pot’ locomotive began running. Named because of a vertical boiler enclosed in a wooden box-like cabin, this locomotive was built by the Hudson Brothers in 1887 and bought second-hand in 1899 by the Toronto Hotel and Tramway Company which ran between Toronto and Fassifern. This tramway ceased operation in 1909 and the ‘Coffee Pot’ was purchased by Thomas Howley to haul coal hoppers from the Glenrock Lagoon Colliery to The Junction.\textsuperscript{55} The shape of the beachside tunnels required modification to the wooden cabin such that it tapered inwards above waist level, but even then the space was so restricted that the crews refused to drive through. The throttle would be set, the crew would get down and another would board when the engine came through to the other side.\textsuperscript{56} The ‘Coffee Pot’ lasted many years and later locomotives were also dubbed Coffee Pots. According to March the Redhead line operated until the early 1940s and the tunnels were sealed with concrete around 1945.\textsuperscript{57} Preston dates cessation of all traffic to about 1950 and local anecdotal evidence indicates that the line was removed in the 1950s.\textsuperscript{58} The later date at least for closure of the south tunnel appears correct given a photograph proving it was still open in February 1951 (ARHS Rail Resource Centre 16521, not reproduced here). Figure 2.12 provides views of the railway in the vicinity of Merewether Baths and Surf Club in the 1920s and 1930s prior to its removal. Dixon Park Surf Club has been established and can be seen in the background.

More specifically to the study site, descendants of the Merewether family to which the land grant area was given to through Maria Augusta’s will subdivided and sold the current portions of land to The Council of the City of Newcastle in 1949 and 1960.\textsuperscript{59} William David Mitchell Merewether and Edward Robert Hickson Merewether sold 8 acres, 3 roods and 23 ½ perches of land in November 1949 for a sum of £4,166.\textsuperscript{60} It can be assumed that the Council already held plans to establish the area as a public reserve as in 1960 they acquired a further 7 acres 2 roods and 25 perches of land adjacent to the first purchase, the seller once again being Edward Robert Hickson Merewether.\textsuperscript{61} However this portion of land sold for a miniscule amount at 11 pounds and 11 shillings compared to the first purchase eleven years earlier. It is not known why the purchase price is so minimal; it could have been a prearranged earlier agreement between the Council and the Merewether family at the time of the first purchase, or perhaps the land was unusable for residential occupation due to its previous use as a coal dump (see Figure 2.8). The exact date as to when Dixon Park became a public reserve is unknown, although a 1911 subdivision sale advertisement shows the north-eastern half of the study site already reserved for a park (Figure 2.9).

\textsuperscript{54} Shoebridge (1983), p. 45.
\textsuperscript{55} The Toronto Coffee Pot Tramway and Museum: A Brief History of the Coffee Pot Tramway.
\textsuperscript{56} Preston (1983), p. 85.
\textsuperscript{57} March (1983), p. 3.
\textsuperscript{58} Preston (1983), p. 85.
\textsuperscript{59} Land Title Book 2115 Number 70; Book 2538 Number 779.
\textsuperscript{60} Land Title Book 2115 Number 70.
\textsuperscript{61} Land Title Book 2538 Number 779.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 Jan 1835</td>
<td>Grant Alexander Walter Scott 456 Acres</td>
<td>Bk 2538 No 779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td>Conveyance From: Alexander Walter Scott To: Dr James Mitchell 456 acres</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Dec 1893</td>
<td>Probate of Will Edward Christopher Merewether (deceased)</td>
<td>Bk 2538 No 779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Nov 1949</td>
<td>Deed From: William David Mitchell Merewether, Sydney, Barrister, Edward Robert Hickson Merewether, Merewether, State Architect (Trustees of the wills and Codicils of Edward Christopher Merewether) To: The Council of the City of Newcastle £4166 8 acres 3 roods 23½ perches – Part of A.W. Scott’s 456 Acres being Part of Portion 26A and Lots 46-58 Section 2A Registered Plan 393 (Lot 3 DP 227107)</td>
<td>Bk 2115 No 70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4 DEVELOPMENT

The study site is located to the southwest of the original town settlement of Newcastle, and slightly north of Merewether beach. Based on the short ownership period, no evidence exists to suggest development on the site while in A.W. Scott's possession. The conveyance to James Mitchell in 1835 saw the whole 456 property amalgamated with adjacent land totalling more than 900 acres which Mitchell already owned. A plan of Mitchell's Estate dated to 1850 (Figure 2.2) identifies the greater study site area as “sand hills” which may contributed to the area’s prolonged development.

The first visual evidence for use of the study site dates to the early 1850s. The Burwood Estate was Mitchell’s property and almost the entirety of the area was being used for commercial coal mining, as the ‘Burwood Seam’ was situated on his estate. An 1855 plan (Figure 2.4) shows the extensive number of private train lines constructed for coal transportation creating a path from the mines and pits to 'The Junction', which progressed further north to Newcastle Harbour. Specific to the study site, the c1855 plan shows part of the north-eastern edge of the approximate site situated on an area specified as “W. Davidson’s house and paddock”. Davidson’s property appears to have been fenced off from the rest of Mitchell’s land and is clearly identified on the plan as a separate entity. The large structure, most likely being a residential dwelling, is positioned further inland away from the paddock boundary. The dwelling is believed to be identifiable on a more reliable and schematic plan dated to 1903 (Figure 2.8). The 1903 plan places the 1850s dwelling further north of the study site, positioned on the elevated area now contained by residential houses at the termination of Ocean Street. Whether this indicates that Davidson had purchased a small area from Mitchell or leasing the property is unknown, however it is possible that the northern edge of the site may be positioned on a small portion of Davidson’s paddock.

A darker, bold line across a section of the study site on the 1855 plan (Figure 2.4) almost bordering the edge of the beachfront may signify the area later referred to as the ‘old exchange siding’. A diagram composed by March in 1983 (Figure 2.5) utilising the current streetscape shows past railway lines, tunnels, coal seams and the approximate location of smelters and historic sites. On this plan the section of the study site contained by Ocean Street and running along the beachfront of Dixon Park specifies the “old exchange siding-Burwood and sand pit siding” (see Figure 2.5). The tracks for the siding joined a main line at the current southern intersection of Watkins Street and John Parade whereby the line continued around the Merewether beachfront, through two tunnels on the cliff face. This area was later known as the 'Redhead Railway'. March’s plan does not show the presence of Davidson’s house or paddocks, although no buildings have been represented on the plan.

Historical research indicates that the Newcastle Coal and Copper Company (NCCCo), the company operating the nearby mines, and seams, had dissolved by the late 1860s due to financial strain. Following this various smaller leases exists around the greater area of the site although documentary records and plans do not infer direct occupation of the area during this period, or whether the siding continued to operate.

A 1903 plan of the Merewether Estate, previously known as the Burwood Estate, identifies the study site area as “open sand hummocks now covered with refuse coal” (see Figure 2.8). Therefore it can be assumed that the railway siding was constructed on the study site as a means to dump coal refuse from the mining.
process further south of the site. The practice of coal dumping must have ceased during the early 20th century as the area had already been marked as a public park by the 1910s (Figure 2.9). Residential subdivisions were occurring around all facets of the study site by the 20th century which can cause speculation as to whether the study area was deemed unusable for residential development. Its position backing onto the beachfront is a readily desired development area and domestic homes exist on either sides of Dixon Park and opposite Ocean Street. Whether coal dumping affected the surface of the site, or the presence of sand hummocks prevents extensive construction may have prevented development. At the same time, the land may have simply been earmarked as an early public reserve providing beach access for nearby residents.

A 1930 photograph showing the residential development of Merewether illustrates the vacant state of the study site. No train lines are visible in the photograph, although due to the distance of the photograph it is possible that they are still present. The first dwelling constructed for Dixon Park Surf Club, a dismantled and reconstructed former fire damaged shoe repair shop, was established on the study site in 1934.62 The overall landscape forms sandy hills for the majority of the area as identified in the 1850 plan (Figure 2.2). No coal is visible to suggest that dumping was still occurring in the area.

Concerning the possible presence of coke ovens at the north-eastern area of the study site, no historical evidence could be found to suggest that any coke ovens existed on or in close vicinity to Dixon Park. The State Heritage Register and Inventory listing for the coke ovens place its location at 3A Ocean Street. While the southern side of Ocean Street, where Dixon Park is located, would correspond with containing odd numbered street addresses, 3A Ocean Street does not exist on any plans or maps found to date. The earlier 1855 plan of the ‘Burwood Seam’ (Figure 2.4) and March’s later 1983 diagram (Figure 2.5) shows the location of the coke ovens as being located within the cliff face of the present day Merewether beach, considerably further southwest of Dixon Park and Ocean Street. A photograph showing the remains of coke ovens situated above the Redhead railway line (Figure 2.10), to which the date is unknown, demonstrates the elevated cliff landscape which the ovens were built into. This type of landscape does not correlate with the current site; a c1950 photograph shows the study site area to be set considerably lower than Merewether beach and predominantly encompasses sand dunes with a sloping hill rather than a sharp cliff face (Figure 2.12).

Furthermore, the description of the site location of the coke ovens as per the Inventory listing states that: “The coke ovens were positioned on the lower cliff face at the south end of Merewether Beach, probably on the site of the present Public Dressing Pavilion. Possibly in the vicinity of the stairs”.63 The listing also states that “Council workmen uncovered the remains of the ovens during work on Frederick Street in the 1930s”.64 With this in mind, it can be suggested that the primary

address for the location of the coke ovens is incorrect and that no historical evidence has been found to suggest the presence of any coke ovens in vicinity of the current study site.
Figure 2.1 Part of an 1850-1859 plan of Newcastle, showing the site’s proximity to the township of Newcastle. National Library of Australia (Reference Map F53)
Figure 2.2  An 1850 plan of Mitchell’s Estate, showing the greater vicinity of the study site (red) and early development of train lines for coal transportation.
Newcastle Regional Library, Local History archives (AM A12-3)
Figure 2.3  Copy of stratigraphic sketch from Nobby's Island Newcastle to Burwood, showing coal seams and their Order of superposition.  
William Keene (Examiner of Coal Mines/Fields), 31 May 1854. 
Detail 9 NSW State Archives, Map SZ325 (photographs held by Cultural Collections, University of Newcastle)
Figure 2.4 Plan of the Burwood Estate, workings of the Burwood Seam and rail lines in 1855, also showing location of the coke ovens (green) southeast of the Racecourse (north to bottom) and the study site (red). Reproduced in Branagan (1972, p. 54)
Figure 2.5  Plan of the Burwood Estate showing railways, tramways and pit tunnels.  
The ‘old exchange siding’ runs through the current study site area which is outlined in red. The coke ovens described in the State Heritage Inventory Listing are believed to be located further south of the site, identified by the text and green arrow.  
March (1983, pl. XVI)
Figure 2.6  Vertical section of strata in the Victoria Colliery, Newcastle Coal and Copper Company, 1860. Reproduced in Branagan, (1972, p. 55)
Figure 2.7  Part of an 1886 parish map showing the original land size and location of Scott’s 456 acre grant (blue) and the approximate greater area of the study site (red).
National Library of Australia (Reference map F 48a)
Figure 2.8  Detail from Plan of Merewether Estate, Land District of Newcastle, Land Board District of Maitland, 1903. Approximate area of study site outlined in red. Land and Property Information (Req: R317696 /Doc:CP 01030-3070 P, Part 2).
Figure 2.9 Advertisement for a 1911 residential subdivision, showing the northernmost portion of the study site already reserved for park space.

National Library of Australia (Reference map Ifsp1906)
Figure 2.10  Remains of Mitchell’s coke ovens above the Redhead railway, believed to be the current located of Merewether Beach. Date unknown.
(Burt Lovett Collection [B1P4R5N1_08_F3L4], Cultural Collections, University of Newcastle)
Figure 2.11  A c1930 photograph facing south and showing both Merewether beach (green) and Dixon Park (red). Note the headland indicated by the orange arrow emulates the same shape in the previous photograph showing the coke ovens (Figure 2.10). Newcastle City Council Cultural Collections, Hunter Photobank (Reference number 16300198)
Figure 2.12  A c1950 photograph showing Merewether Beach with the study site and Dixon Park Surf Club in the background (green). University of Newcastle Cultural Collections (accessed through Hunter Photobank)
Figure 2.13  A c1960 photograph showing Dixon Park Surf Club.  
R.J. Morrison (1960; Hunter Photobank reference number 004000111)

Figure 2.14  A c1960 photograph showing Dixon Park Surf Club.  
R.J. Morrison (1960; Hunter Photobank reference number 004000114)
Figure 2.15  Part of an 1850 plan overlay onto a current aerial photograph, showing the location of the study site within sand hills.  
Note that the scale may not be accurate and the image is to be used for indicate purposes only. Overlay by Strickland using map AM A12-3 (Newcastle Regional Library)
Figure 2.16  An overlay of a 1903 plan on top of a current aerial photograph showing the site’s use as a refuse coal dump and the area containing the railway sidings.

Note that scale may not be accurate. The 1850s house occupied by W. Davidson is believed to be represented on the 1903 plan north of the study site (green arrow). The railway siding track has been identified on the overlay by an orange line. Overlay by Vetta.
3.0 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

3.1 SITE INSPECTION

Martin Carney, Director of AMAC Group, inspected the study site on the 8th, 15th and 20th of January 2014. The site encompasses a large public reserve which includes Dixon Park Surf Club, two bitumen car parks, a children’s playground, public facilities (bathrooms, showers, water fountains and picnic tables) and various concrete paths and steps providing pedestrian access from Ocean Street through to Dixon Park beach (Figure 3.1 - Figure 3.8).

Parts of the site appear to have been cut down and levelled for the construction of the surf club and car park at the north-eastern section of the site (Figure 3.8). The southwards slope from Ocean Street at the north to Dixon Park appears to have been modified from its original formation when compared to the hill slopes and faces further north of the site (Figure 3.6 and Figure 3.11). It appears that the slope has been significantly reduced in certain areas to provide better use of the area and improved public access to the whole site.

3.2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development seeks to redevelop and renovate Dixon Park as a means to improve public facilities and access to the area. The development is planned over a number of stages including stormwater and bio-retention swale construction, landscaping works and modifications to already existing car parks (Figure 3.19). A demolition program, entailing minor subsurface impact will include the removal of items such as concrete islands in car parks, existing stormwater pits, public showers and drinking fountains, concrete paths, kerbs and gutters (Figure 3.14 - Figure 3.17). No significant subsurface excavation, such as basement parking levels, has been planned for the development.

Renovations to existing buildings and structures have been planned, although will not heavily impact the current ground surface (Figure 3.22 - Figure 3.25).

Two bio-retention swales have been planned for the site, the lower swale of which will sink to approximately 0.4-1 metre below the ground surface of the surrounding area will be constructed (Figure 3.20). The larger upper bio-retention swale will be located further north and in closer vicinity to Ocean Street. The gradual slope or depth of the bottom of the swale will vary between 0.3-1.2 metres in certain areas based on the current topography of the ground surface (Figure 3.21). The sloping embankments will be planted with dune species to reinstate the fauna to the area. New stormwater pipes will be embedded around multiple areas of the site (refer to Figure 3.19 for stormwater pipe locations).

65 Site Inspection photographic register includes digitalos 0580-0599 (8th January 2014), 7910-7958 (8th January 2014), 8014-8019 (15th January 2014) and 0600-0605 (20th January 2014).
Figure 3.1  The southernmost end of Dixon Park, from Ocean Street. Facing south east.
AMAC Group (2014, digital 0600)

Figure 3.2  Recreational equipment in Dixon Park, from Ocean Street. Facing east.
AMAC Group (2014, digital 0601)
Figure 3.3  Northern portion of the site, showing Dixon Park Surf Club and the sloping topography. Facing northeast.
   AMAC Group (2014, digital 0602)

Figure 3.4  Northern portion of Dixon Park, showing the southwards slope of the landscape. Facing south.
   AMAC Group (2014, digital 0603)
Figure 3.5  Dixon Park Surf Club and adjacent car park. Facing east.
AMAC Group (2014, digital 0605)

Figure 3.6  Photograph showing the current southwards slope of the ground surface. Facing west.
AMAC Group (2014, digital 7911)
Figure 3.7  Photograph showing the public car park for Dixon Park beach. Note Merewether beach in the distance and the steep cliff face. Facing south. AMAC Group (2014, digital 7925)

Figure 3.8  Current car park for Dixon Park Surf Club. Facing northwest. AMAC Group (2014, digital 7918)
Figure 3.9  Photograph showing some of the exposed soil profile of the study site. Facing west.
AMAC Group (2014, digital 7937)

Figure 3.10  Northern edge of the site, showing proposed walkway development. Facing north.
AMAC Group (2014, digital 7942)
Figure 3.11  Photograph showing the natural topography of the greater area, north of the study site. Facing north.
AMAC Group (2014, digital 7953)
3.3 STATEMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

The study site holds potential to contain archaeological evidence pertaining to the use of the site as a refuse coal dump for nearby mines during the second half of the 19th century. A c1850 plan of the greater area of Newcastle identifies the study site as falling within an area marked as ‘sand hills’. This identification likely specifies why the study site and immediate surrounding areas were most probably undeveloped during the first half of the 19th century and later formed a dumping ground for coal refuse, as perhaps it was seen as unsuitable to for residential development at the time.

A plan dated to approximately 1855 (Figure 2.4) shows that some of the study site may have formed part of a paddock occupied by W. Davidson. An overlay (Figure 2.16) illustrates that the residential dwelling is not positioned on the study site however the eastern edge of the paddock may encroach on the northernmost section of the current study site towards Kilgour Avenue. If Davidson’s paddock did extend to include part of the study site, it can be suggested that there is an unknown to low potential for archaeological material such as sheds, outbuildings, or postholes for stables or fencing.

The later 19th century use of the site as a dumping area resulted in the construction of a railway siding along the eastern edge of the current site to enable trains to travel off the main line and offload refuse coal. The railway siding was constructed sometime between 1850 and 1855, and utilised up until at least the 1860s when the NCCCo dissolved. However a 1903 plan (Figure 2.8) of the Merewether Estate suggests that the site was still being used a dumping site for refuse coal at the turn of the 20th century. The 1903 plan overlaid onto a current aerial photograph of the site (Figure 2.16) shows that the line for the railway sidings lies across the eastern edge of the study site within the car park at the southern end of the site and further across the grassed sections and pavilions in front of Dixon Park Surf Club. While not documented, it is possible that archaeological material associated with the construction of the private railway exists on the study site. This may include evidence for dwellings used for construction worker’s camps or miner’s camps, and other occupation material including rubbish pits, outbuildings or associated deposits.

The southern car park, at the time of construction, may have already removed remnants of the railway sidings for levelling of the car park. At the same time, considering the land slopes southwards, it is also possible that the immediate area of the car park was in filled for levelling. The area fronting Dixon Park Surf Club does not appear to have experienced significant development, leaving a higher potential for archaeological remains in this area. Overall, it can be suggested that there exists a moderate potential for archaeological material relating to the site’s use as a refuse coal dump during the second half of the 19th and possibly into the early 20th century. Features may include wooden railway sleepers, metal bolts and fragments of metal railway track. Any fill layers containing a significantly large amount of coal within the stratigraphic profile will further signify the site’s use as a dump.

Based on photographic evidence (Figure 2.12), the location of the first dwelling constructed for Dixon Park Surf Club, in around 1934, appears to be within close vicinity to the current standing two storey structure. There is slight potential that archaeological material pertaining to the construction and use of the early surf club building may be present in areas surrounding the current surf club. At the same time, levelling and construction work for the new surf club and associated pavilion areas positioned at the front likely removed any footings or occupation deposits from this period.
Recent archaeological monitoring at Merewether Beach, further south of the current study site, uncovered and recorded a section of the ‘Redhead Railway’. Fragments of the track and railway sleepers were recorded across the lower levels of the streetscape and at the rear of Merewether Bathers Pavilion (Figure 3.12 - Figure 3.13). The position of the railway lines throughout the excavated trenches correlates to the historical plans and photographs showing the location of the line. With this in mind, it can be assumed that the railway sidings running through the current study site is likely to be located within the area specified by the historical plans. Of the six trenches excavated by AMAC Group in 2011, the railway sleepers were located approximately 20-29.5 centimetres below the ground surface, which if the stratigraphic profile and levels are similar, may signify that potential remnants of the railway sidings may be situated just below the current ground surface and top soil.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Occupation Period/ Phase</th>
<th>Work/ Relic/ Former Relic</th>
<th>Archaeological Potential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postholes, sheds, outbuildings, stables, fencing</td>
<td>W. Davidson’s Paddock (1850s)</td>
<td>Former Relic (material of ephemeral nature)</td>
<td>Unknown - low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway sidings</td>
<td>Coal refuse dump (1850s-early 20(^{th}) C.)</td>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rail infrastructure</td>
<td>Coal refuse dump (1850s-early 20(^{th}) C.)</td>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rail/ track</td>
<td>Coal refuse dump (1850s-early 20(^{th}) C.)</td>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction worker’s camps during railway building, Miner’s camps, informal beach occupation</td>
<td>Coal refuse dump (1850s-early 20(^{th}) C.)</td>
<td>Relic/ or former relics</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Dixon Park Surf Club dwelling/shed</td>
<td>Public reserve and park (1930s)</td>
<td>Relic/ or former relics</td>
<td>Unknown - low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach development and infrastructure</td>
<td>Public reserve and park (20(^{th}) century)</td>
<td>Relic/ former relics/ or not of state or local significance</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3.12  A photograph from the 2011 archaeological monitoring of surf house, showing the remnants of the ‘Redhead Railway’ behind the Merewether Bathers Pavilion. Facing southeast.
AMAC Group (2011, Digital 0461)

Figure 3.13  A photograph showing railway sleepers positioned underneath the lower car park area for Merewether beach. Facing south.
AMAC Group (2011, Digital 0428)
3.4 STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

The proposed development seeks to renovate and redevelop multiple areas of Dixon Park. The development intends to create two bio-retention swales which will significantly impact the current ground surface, however not in locations where potential known archaeological remains are expected. A demolition program, entailing minor subsurface impact including the removal of concrete islands in the car park, public showers, water fountains, existing stormwater pits and concrete paths will encompass the areas believed to contain the railway sidings.

While excavation for the removal of these items will not require deep subsurface excavation, remnants of the railway sidings, if present, are expected to be located within the upper layers of the stratigraphic profile. As such, archaeological monitoring by a qualified archaeologist is recommended during demolition and excavation work. This will ensure that any significant archaeological material associated with the 19th century use of the site as a refuse coal dump are identified and not removed.

Significant archaeological relics, surviving in a coherent and interpretable form, will be recorded and retained. Other material within the ambit of this application (former relics, material of neither local nor state significance), and ‘works’ are to be fully recorded in terms of the Heritage Act guidelines.
Figure 3.14 Demolition plan showing works to be completed at the southern area of the site including the car park.

King and Campbell (2013)
Figure 3.15 Demolition plan showing works to be completed in the central area of the site near Dixon Park Surf club.

King and Campbell (2013)
Figure 3.16 Demolition plan showing works to be completed in the northern area of the site and Ocean Street.

King and Campbell (2013)
Figure 3.17 Demolition plan showing works to be completed at the northernmost area of the site.

King and Campbell (2013)
PRELIMINARY STAGING PLAN

Figure 3.18 Plan showing the various development phases of the study site.

ZONE 1A - BIORETENTION SWALES
ZONE 1B - OCEAN STREET CIVIL & STORMWATER
ZONE 1C - LANDSCAPE WORKS OCEAN ST TO KILGOUR
ZONE 2A - LANDSCAPE WORKS JOHNS PARADE SOUTH OF CAR PARK
ZONE 2B - LANDSCAPE WORKS EAST SURF CLUB TO OCEAN STREET
ZONE 3 - LANDSCAPE WORKS BETWEEN CAR PARK TO SURF CLUB
ZONE 4 - CAR PARK
PROPOSED COMPOUND LOCATION
Figure 3.19 Plan showing new stormwater lines (bold black) to be installed within the proposed development and the proposed bio-retention swales (yellow).

Equatica (2013)
Figure 3.20. Detail plan for construction of lower swale.

Equatica (2013)
Figure 3.21  Detail plan of the proposed upper swale construction.

Equatica (2013)
Figure 3.22 Plan showing new landscape and surface works proposed for the southern area of the site.

King and Campbell (2013)
Figure 3.23 Plan showing new landscape and surface works proposed for the central area containing Dixon Park Surf club.

King and Campbell (2013)
Figure 3.24 Plan showing new landscape and surface works proposed for the northern area of the site and Ocean Street.

King and Campbell (2013)
Figure 3.25 Plan showing new landscape and surface works proposed for the northernmost area of the site.

King and Campbell (2013)
Figure 3.26  Section plan showing the variable subsurface excavation levels for the site.

King and Campbell (2013)
4.0 **Assessment Of Significance**

4.1 **Methodology**

The current standard for assessment of significance of heritage items in NSW is the publication ‘Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and ‘Relics’ produced by the Heritage Branch of the NSW Department of Planning (December 2009). This production is an update to the NSW Heritage Manual (1996), and the criteria detailed therein are a revised version of those of the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, formulated in 1979, which was based largely on the Venice Charter (for International Heritage) of 1966.

Archaeological heritage significance can also be viewed in light of the framework set out by Bickford and Sullivan in 1984. Bickford and Sullivan, taking into consideration the “archaeological, scientific or research significance” of a site posed three questions in order to identify significance:

1. Can the site contribute knowledge which no other resource can?
2. Can the site contribute knowledge which no other site can?
3. Is this knowledge relevant to general questions about human history or other substantive problems relating to Australian history, or does it contribute to other major research questions?

These questions have been broadly used to shape the response to the heritage significance criteria as described in Section 4.2 and 4.3.

The criteria and the definitions provided by ‘Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and ‘Relics’ have been adhered to in assessing the cultural significance of the potential archaeological site at Dixon Park, Merewether. An assessment of significance, under each of the criteria, is made possible by an analysis of the broad body of archaeological sites previously excavated both locally and elsewhere, in conjunction with the historical overview of the study site in particular.

The Criteria used to assess Heritage Significance in NSW are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criterion A</td>
<td>An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW’s or the local area’s cultural or natural history</td>
<td>State significant or locally significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion B</td>
<td>An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW’s or a local area’s cultural or natural history</td>
<td>State significant or locally significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion C</td>
<td>An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW or the local area</td>
<td>State significant or locally significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

The following assessment deals only with sub-surface archaeological features and deposits. The built environment is not considered in this study.

4.2 IDENTIFICATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

Archaeological Research Potential (NSW Heritage Criterion E)

The site holds potential to provide historical information regarding the 19th century development of the Newcastle coal industry. The earliest known use of the study site and wider vicinity of the area was for a refuse coal dump during the second half of the 19th century, with access to the area facilitated by a railway siding. The extensive private railway system for the transportation of coal across the 'Burwood Seam' signifies the importance of the industry to Newcastle during this period. As a result, the site holds potential to yield information regarding Newcastle’s coal mining history as well as the development of Newcastle’s private railway transport systems. Furthermore, unknown potential exists for occupation material such as miners’ camps or construction camps which may have been on or in close vicinity to the railway siding and study site area. If present, any interpretable material would provide information previously scarce in the historical record including the working life of coal miners. At the same time, any relics (in terms of the Act) which have been considerably disturbed no longer hold significant research potential.

The site is believed to contain remains identifying a single occupation phase during the 19th century. The site, in terms of rail infrastructure, is not considered to be rare as other similar sites, such as the 2011 excavation of a section of the ‘Redhead railway’ at Merewether beach by AMAC Group, has already provided information including construction methods, condition and its position in relation to historical plans. The research potential of the study site is expected to provide similar data and information already obtained from the Merewether beach site which is in considerably close vicinity. It can be suggested that any archaeological evidence found will provide historical information of local significance.

Associations with individuals, events or groups of historical importance (NSW Heritage Criteria A, B and D)

The study site is not widely recognised, nor does it hold any symbolic value. The site may hold an element of significance to a small community of people associated with
the Newcastle mining industry, however this association will not be represented within the archaeological record. Therefore the site is not considered significant according to this criterion.

**Aesthetic or technical significance (NSW Heritage Criterion C)**

The site may retain evidence of technical data relating to rail and mining infrastructure, similar to data recovered at the ‘Surf House’ excavation site (Merewether Beach).\(^{68}\) However based on the condition of the adjoining Jefferson Park project and the observable topography, isolated, truncated or discrete remains are expected. Dependant on the nature and condition of remains, the study site may be considered to be of local significance.\(^{68}\)

**Ability to demonstrate the past through archaeological remains (NSW Heritage Criteria A, C, F & G)**

The site holds the potential to contain a low to moderately well preserved archaeological record demonstrating the occupation and use of the site as a refuse coal dump during the second half of the 19\(^{th}\) century and possibly the early 20\(^{th}\) century.

It is possible that the site may have only been used during the control of the ‘Burwood Seam’ by the NCCCo, which would create a short term period of use of approximately 20 years. However, historical evidence appears to suggest use of the railway siding up until the 20\(^{th}\) century resulting in the study site’s use as a coal dump for around 50 years. There is also an unknown potential for archaeological material pertaining to the use and occupation of construction camps and miners’ camps which may have been utilising the immediate areas. The site does not represent long term occupation by individuals and no buildings or structures are known to exist on the study site during this period. The first identified building on the site is Dixon Park surf club, which is known to have been established on the study site in 1934.

The site demonstrates change as it evolved from a 19\(^{th}\) century industrial coal dumping ground into a public reserve and recreation area which is regularly utilised by the local residents of Merewether whose residential dwellings now surround the study site. Remains of the 19\(^{th}\) century railway, if present, are believed to be of a fragmentary, isolated and discrete nature leaving the site to be considered of local significance dependant on the condition of archaeological material.

4.3 **STATEMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The study site, forming part of A.W. Scott’s original 456 acre grant, demonstrates the dynamic change of the outer suburbs of Newcastle from a thriving industrial coal mining area into a residential suburb, comprising of housing and community areas. This overhaul and change from industrial use to residential occupation further exhibits the growth of the region during the early 20\(^{th}\) century, and the desire to reside along the coastlines of Newcastle.

Based on the above criterion, the study site can be considered to be of potential local significance. Coal mining and its monopoly by the Australian Agricultural

\(^{68}\) AMAC Group (January 2012)

\(^{69}\) AMAC Group (July 2012)
Company and later by smaller independent corporations, such as the NCCCo, can be considered to be one of the most instrumental economic features of Newcastle during the 19th century. The construction of new railway lines during the 1850s, connecting to large central junction points, allowed for improved transportation between the ‘Burwood Seam’ mine shafts and Newcastle Harbour. This in turn created more coal refuse which was offloaded in undeveloped and uninhibited spaces such as the study site. The potential also exists for occupation material associated with the construction and use of the refuse dump and railway, such as construction camps and miners’ camps, which may have been located on or in close vicinity to the study site.

While not considered a relic (in terms of the Act), rail and rail infrastructure is still considered significant, dependant on the condition of the material and the ability to extract information contributing to the historical record. Based on the condition of the adjoining Jefferson Park and Merewether Beach projects and the observable topography, isolated, truncated or discrete remains are expected.

The progressive development of residential properties within Merewether Estate during the early 20th century exemplifies the change of the greater area for domestic occupation, correlating to the population growth of Newcastle. The development of public reserves, such as Dixon Park, and community groups including Dixon Park Surf Club illustrates the needs of the local community in having available public facilities to utilise in close vicinity to their residential homes.
5.0 Research Design

The work proposed for the study site consists of the possible exposure of archaeological relics of local significance. The following research design is therefore limited to questions that may be answered by this work.

The following research design has been developed based on the Heritage Council of NSW's Historical Themes in order to guide the methodology for the proposed archaeological excavation of the site. The research design has been set out in accordance to these themes (Table 5.1). Should the relics found on the site allow further questions to be answered; the research design will be extended.

Table 5.1 Historical Themes concerning the study site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Australian Theme</th>
<th>NSW Theme</th>
<th>Local Theme and study site example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Peopling Australia</td>
<td>Aboriginal cultures and interactions with other cultures</td>
<td>Activities associated with maintaining, developing, experiencing and remembering Aboriginal cultural identities and practises, past and present; with demonstrating distinctive ways of life; and with interactions demonstrating race relations- Aboriginal object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Developing local, regional and national economies</td>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Activities associated with the manufacture, production and distribution of goods- Refuse coal dump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Developing local, regional and national economies</td>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>Activities associated with the identification, extraction, processing and distribution of mineral ores, precious stones and other such inorganic substances- Refuse coal dump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Developing local, regional and national economies</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>Activities associated with the moving of people and goods from one place to another, and systems for the provision of such movements- Railway sidings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Questions

What is the extent of the archaeological evidence and at what depth?

Can an approximate date be suggested for any archaeological features or artefacts found?

Is there any evidence of Aboriginal activities on the site? If so, this evidence is protected by the National Parks and Wildlife Act.
What evidence is there of previously unknown features or structures?

Settlement of Newcastle, Scott’s grant and Mitchell’s purchase: 1800s-1850s

Prior to Scott’s grant of 456 acres in 1834, no evidence could be found to suggest European occupation or use of the area during the early 19th century. Scott’s short ownership of less than one year suggests that he did not develop or utilise the greater study site area. James Mitchell’s purchase of the 456 acres in 1835, amalgamated with his adjacent grant of 900 acres, saw the area now known as Merewether largely used for coal mining and trade transportation by the 1850s. Some 19th century plans indicate that the northern portion of the study site may have been part of a paddock occupied by W. Davidson.

Does any evidence exist to indicate occupation of the study site prior to Scott’s 456 acre grant?

What evidence, if any, exists for occupation of the study site during Mitchell’s early ownership? Are there any previously unknown features or structures?

Is there any evidence to suggest that the greater area of the site was used for any other purposes during this period?

Is there any evidence for occupation of the northern portion of the study site for use as a paddock by Davidson?

Are there any cesspits, sheds or outbuildings to suggest occupation and use of part of the site as a paddock? Can any information be obtained regarding the specific use of the paddock?

NCCCo and the coal mining Industry: 1850s-20th century

James Mitchell and other members of the Newcastle community formed the Newcastle Coal and Copper Company (NCCCo) in 1853 to manage all mining and smelting operations on the Burwood Estate (later known as Merewether Estate). Train lines were extended from The Junction all over the Burwood Estate to facilitate transportation of the coal. A c1850-1855 plans show a railway siding running through the study site for the purposes of dumping refuse coal from the nearby mine shafts. The demise of the NCCCo by the later 1860s caused a heavy reduction on coal production however smaller leases existed over the Estate through the early 20th century.

What physical evidence exists of the remains of the railway sidings? What is the condition of the remains? Is the location of the railway lines within the area located on the plan?

Does any evidence exists to suggest that the railway line was constructed on the study site earlier than the 1850s?

Is there any evidence for a transportation system on site prior to the establishment of the railway line in the 1850s?

Is sufficient data present to plot the alignment of the former track?
Does any evidence exist for any unknown features or structures present on the study site?

Is there any evidence to suggest that the study site was being used or occupied for any other purpose besides a refuse coal dump?

Residential subdivision of Merewether and Dixon Park: post 20th century

By the early 20th century, the majority of coal mining expeditions in the greater area of the Merewether Estate had ceased and residential subdivisions progressively developed the area into a new desirable beachfront suburb of Newcastle. The study site appears to have been designated as a public reserve as early as 1911.

Does any evidence exist to suggest the cessation period of coal dumping on the site?

Is there any evidence available to suggest when the railway sidings stopped being used? Were the tracks removed or left insitu?

A 1950 photograph shows the presence of Dixon Park Surf Club already on the study site. Is there any evidence for buildings or structures prior to this date?

Is it possible to determine the level of impact of modifications?
6.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK METHOD STATEMENT

6.1 REASON FOR EXCEPTION

According to Section 139(4) of the NSW Heritage Act 1977 (as amended), excavation or disturbance of land does not require an excavation permit under Section 139 of the Heritage Act:

SCHEDULE

1. Excavation or disturbance of land of the kind specified below does not require an excavation permit under section 139 of the Heritage Act, provided that the Director-General is satisfied that the criteria in (a), (b) or (c) have been met and the person proposing to undertake the excavation or disturbance of land has received a notice advising that the Director-General is satisfied that:

(a) an archaeological assessment, zoning plan or management plan has been prepared in accordance with Guidelines published by the Heritage Council of NSW which indicates that any relics in the land are unlikely to have State or local heritage significance; or

(b) the excavation or disturbance of land will have a minor impact on archaeological relics including the testing of land to verify the existence of relics without destroying or removing them; or

(c) a statement describing the proposed excavation demonstrates that evidence relating to the history or nature of the site, such as its level of disturbance, indicates that the site has little or no archaeological research potential.

This is provided that the Director-General of the Department of Planning is satisfied that this is the case, and has issued a notice stating the same.70

The present work on the site fulfils Criterion C above; that is, that historical research and assessment into the history and nature of the site has revealed that the site is likely to contain limited archaeological potential based on its levels of disturbance. It is anticipated that archaeological material within the study site has been previously impacted by previous landscaping or demolition episodes. However as there is still potential for archaeological material in the form of both ‘works’ and ‘relics’, which may be considered to be of local significance, all excavation works will be archaeologically monitored.

Any relics (in terms of the Act) on the site remain protected by the Heritage Act 1977. Should any unexpected relics of local or state significance be found during the proposed work, work will cease and advice sought from the Heritage Division.

6.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK METHOD STATEMENT

Based on the archaeological potential of the site, isolated, truncated, discrete or disturbed archaeological material of reduced significance is expected. Archaeological monitoring is recommended for excavation work occurring to the site

70 Heritage Act 1977, Notice of Order under Section 139 (4). See Appendix 5.1.
as part of the proposed development. The site holds moderate potential for archaeological material associated with the 19th century use of the site as a refuse coal dump, access having been possible through railway sidings extending from lines which travelled to the coal mines. These are likely to be disturbed by the proposed works. The development may also impact on unknown archaeological material such as construction workers’ camps, miners’ camps and occupation deposits associated with the use of the industrial area.

To ensure that any material including both ‘works’ and unknown ‘relics’ (in terms of the Act) of local or state significance are not impacted by the current development, as the exact position of material within stratigraphic layers is unknown, archaeological monitoring is recommended as a precaution. Archaeological monitoring will occur on the site until the maximum excavation depth which is required for the proposed development is reached, or to the point at which a sterile, natural soil horizon is reached. For this reason, a qualified archaeologist must be on site to supervise all work in areas where there is a possibility of revealing archaeological material.

The proposed development at the study site requires only minor excavation, with proposed excavation within the main areas of concern not expected to reach more than 30-40 centimetres below the current ground surface. The only area on the site requiring deep excavation is for the installation of the bio-retention swales towards the west of the site, which will be excavated to an approximate maximum depth of 1.2 metres below the current ground surface. The removal of modern soils and fills will be carried out according to the direction of the archaeologist. Where a mechanical excavator is used it must have a flat edged or mud bucket, rather than a toothed bucket, in order to maintain a clean excavated surface. In general, any machinery used will move backwards, in order not to damage any exposed archaeological material.

Experienced operators will be required to undertake this work. The soil will be removed in layers, with no more than one context, such as topsoil, being removed at one time. This will allow any material to be identified. Should any archaeological relics of local or state significance be found during the excavation of the site, excavation will cease while these are investigated and if necessary re-assessed.

Where archaeological material including ‘works’ or highly disturbed ‘relics’ (in this case considered to be former relics due to their isolated, disturbed or fragmentary nature) of no significance are encountered, these will be photographically recorded and removed. Should unexpected relics of significance, including state significant relics, be uncovered by the proposed work, works will cease and the Heritage Division will be contacted and appropriate action taken. A written description of each feature and context will be made using printed context sheets. A scaled plan will be made of the site and of each feature found, and levels will be taken as part of this process. The site and features will also be recorded photographically, according to current Heritage Division guidelines; photographs will be processed to archival standards. The results of these works will be summarised in a report prepared for the Heritage Division with all necessary interpretation such as Harris Matrices as required.

The discovery of objects or cultural material of Aboriginal Heritage should immediately be reported to the NPWS as governed by the Office of Environment and Heritage. An Aboriginal Archaeological Assessment and Aboriginal Cultural
Heritage Study evaluating the current study site is being completed by Streat Archaeological Services (in association with AMAC Group) as a companion study.\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{71} Streat Archaeological Services (In press)
7.0 RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 RESULTS

5.1.1 Documentary Research

The study site forms part of a 456 acre grant given to A.W. Scott in 1834. Scott held no interest in developing or retaining the land and subsequently sold it the following year to Dr James Mitchell. Mitchell immediately amalgamated his recent land purchase with a surrounding 900 acres which he already owned.

This greater area of land was named the Burwood Estate and by the early 1850s, the Newcastle Coal and Copper Company had formed, primarily through Mitchell’s influence. Coal mines and shafts were opened all across the Burwood Estate. The current study site, bordering the beachfront and comprising of sandy hills, appears to have been undeveloped and unoccupied prior to the 1850s coal industry. A railway siding was constructed along the eastern edge of the study site to facilitate the dumping of refuse coal in the area. This continued well after the demise of the NCCCo and Mitchell’s death, to which the study site and surrounding areas were passed to David Scott Mitchell and Edward Christopher Merewether.

The property was renamed the Merewether Estate and by the turn of the 20th century, extensive residential developments were engulfing the suburb. The existing train lines were abandoned for the construction and extension of streets and land allotments. The study site had been specified as a public reserve by 1911. The Council of the City of Newcastle officially purchased sections of the study site in 1949 and 1960.

5.1.2 Significance

The study site, forming part of A.W. Scott’s original 456 acre grant, demonstrates the dynamic change of the outer suburbs of Newcastle from a thriving industrial coal mining area into a residential suburb, comprising of housing and community areas. This overhaul and change from industrial use to residential occupation further exhibits the growth of the region during the early 20th century, and the desire to reside along the coastlines of Newcastle.

The study site can be considered to be of potential local significance. Coal mining and its monopoly by the Australian Agricultural Company and later by smaller independent corporations, such as the NCCCo, can be considered to be one of the most instrumental economic features of Newcastle during the 19th century. The construction of new railway lines during the 1850s, connecting to large central junction points, allowed for improved transportation between the ‘Burwood Seam’ mine shafts and Newcastle Harbour. This in turn created more coal refuse which was offloaded in undeveloped and uninhibited spaces such as the study site. The potential also exists for occupation material associated with the construction and use of the refuse dump and railway, such as construction camps and miners’ camps, which may have been located on or in close vicinity to the study site.

While not considered a relic (in terms of the Act), rail and rail infrastructure is still considered significant, dependant on the condition of the material and the ability to extract information contributing to the historical record. Based on the condition of the adjoining Jefferson Park and Merewether Beach projects and the observable topography, isolated, truncated or discrete remains are expected.
The progressive development of residential properties within Merewether Estate during the early 20th century exemplifies the change of the greater area for domestic occupation, correlating to the population growth of Newcastle. The development of public reserves, such as Dixon Park, and community groups including Dixon Park Surf Club illustrates the needs of the local community in having available public facilities to utilise in close vicinity to their residential homes.

5.1.3 Physical Evidence
The study site forms a large public reserve which currently contains Dixon Park Surf club, two car parks, a children’s playground, public facilities, concrete paths and pavilions covering tables for visitors. A gradual southwards slope occurs over the entirety of the area. The extent of disturbance in terms of whether fills were removed, levelled or added to for the later use of the site is unknown.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS
In liaison with the Heritage Division, it is recommended that this report be submitted to the Heritage Division of the Office of Environment and Heritage along with an application for an Exception Notification under s139(4) of the Heritage Act 1977. This application will allow for archaeological monitoring to take place on the study site during excavation works to locate and identify any archaeological material.

Any fieldworks and reporting should be carried out in compliance with guidelines issued by the Heritage Division of the Office of Environment and Heritage, on behalf of the Heritage Council of NSW, under the methodology set out here. The Heritage Division may require a re-evaluation or assessment of relics of significance (in terms of the Act) if unexpected finds are made which are outside the scope or findings of this study. A final report, addressing the results of all monitoring work on the site will be required to be completed.

5.3 STATEMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE IMPACT
The proposed development seeks to renovate and redevelop multiple areas of Dixon Park. The development intends to create two bio-retention swales which will significantly impact the current ground surface, however not in locations where potential known archaeological remains are expected. A demolition program, entailing minor subsurface impact including the removal of concrete islands in the car park, public showers, water fountains, existing stormwater pits and concrete paths will encompass the areas believed to contain the railway sidings.

While excavation for the removal of these items will not require deep subsurface excavation, remnants of the railway sidings, if present, are expected to be located within the upper layers of the stratigraphic profile. As such, archaeological monitoring by a qualified archaeologist is recommended during demolition and excavation work. This will ensure that any significant archaeological material associated with the 19th century use of the site as a refuse coal dump are identified and not removed.
Significant archaeological relics, surviving in a coherent and interpretable form, will be recorded and retained. Other material within the ambit of this application (former relics, material of neither local nor state significance), and ‘works’ are to be fully recorded in terms of the Heritage Act guidelines.
8.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Act of Incorporation, Newcastle Coal and Copper Company.  

Archaeological Management and Consulting Group (January 2012) Final  
Archaeological Report for Surf House and Merewether, Beach Esplanade,  
Newcastle, NSW

Archaeological Management and Consulting Group (April 2012) Final  
Archaeological Report for Merewether to Newcastle CBD 770 Cable Feeder  
Project

Archaeological Management and Consulting Group (July 2012) Exception  
Notification s139 (4) Jefferson Park, Newcastle, NSW

Bingle, J. (1873) Past and Present Records of Newcastle, New South Wales.  
Newcastle.

Newcastle City Council.


Dyall, L.K. (1971), ‘Aboriginal Occupation of the Newcastle Coastline’ in Hunter  

Empire, (12th June 1862)  
http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/result?sortby=dateAsc&q=Empire


Gemmell, W. (1986) And so We Graft from Six to Six: The Brickmakers of New  
South Wales. Sydney.

Griffin NRM (2002), Glenrock Lagoon Cultural Landscape: Conservation  
Management & Cultural Tourism Plan. Draft document prepared in  
conjunction with National Heritage Consultants.

Hunter Photo Bank, Newcastle Region Library.  

Launceston Examiner (15th December 1855)


Marsden, S. (2002), Coals to Newcastle: A History of Coal Loading at the Port of  

National Library of Australia, Online collection,  


*Sydney Morning Herald* (20th September 1854)

*The Hobarton Mercury* (16th August 1854)

*The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (6th June 1855; 30th May 1861; 18th August 1863; 16th July 1864)

The Toronto Coffee Pot Tramway and Museum: A Brief History of the Coffee Pot Tramway.  
home.kooee.com.au/ajl/cp/background.htm


Turner, J. (1980b), *When Newcastle was Sydney’s Siberia*. Hunter History Publications, Stockton.

9.0 APPENDICES

STATE HERITAGE INVENTORY LISTING:
NEWCASTLE COKE OVENS

Item details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of item:</th>
<th>Newcastle Coke Ovens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other name/s:</td>
<td>Newcastle Coal &amp; Copper Company Coke Ovens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of item:</td>
<td>Archaeological-Terrestrial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group/Collection:</td>
<td>Mining and Mineral Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category:</td>
<td>Other - Mining &amp; Mineral Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary address:</td>
<td>3A Ocean Street, Merewether, NSW 2291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local govt. area:</td>
<td>Newcastle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundary:</td>
<td>MERE.007 Field Survey No. 0814</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All addresses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Address</th>
<th>Suburb/town</th>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3A Ocean Street</td>
<td>Merewether</td>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Primary Address</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statement of significance:

The site marks the place of the first Coke Ovens in Australia and has been assessed by industrial archaeologists as being of state significance.

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Branch intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Physical description: Site only. The coke ovens were positioned on the lower cliff face at the south end of Merewether Beach, probably on the site of the present Public Dressing Pavilion. Possibly in the vicinity of the stairs (2006; pers.comm, John Shoebridge).

Further information: Action - Further research required.

History

Historical notes: The coke ovens were started in 1853. By March, 1854, the first was in production and four more were being built. In 1855 three more were at work. The company had hoped to sell coke to South Australia to use to smelt South Australian copper, but the copper
companies found it cheaper to import Welsh coke in otherwise empty ore ships. The coke ovens ceased production in 1861. Council workmen uncovered the remains of the ovens during work on Frederick Street in the 1930s.

Historic themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Australian theme (abbrev)</th>
<th>New South Wales theme</th>
<th>Local theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies</td>
<td>Mining-Activities associated with the identification, extraction, processing and distribution of mineral ores, precious stones and other such inorganic substances.</td>
<td>(none)-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a) [Historical significance] Rare State
SHR Criteria e) [Research potential] Rare State
SHR Criteria f) [Rarity] Historic - State. Research - State.

Assessment criteria:

Items are assessed against the State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Recommended management:

Alertive. Amend existing LEP listing to include.

Listings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heritage Listing</th>
<th>Listing Title</th>
<th>Listing Number</th>
<th>Gazette Date</th>
<th>Gazette Number</th>
<th>Gazette Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Environmental Plan</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>15 Jun 12</td>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Study details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Inspected by</th>
<th>Guidelines used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle City Wide Heritage Study</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>MERE.007</td>
<td>Suters Architects Snell</td>
<td>DB</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References, internet links & images

None

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.

(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:
Name: Local Government
Database number: 2171166
File number: 1166

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the Database Manager.

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Branch or respective copyright owners.