

Coal River Working Party Meeting

4th August, 2014 1:00pm – 3:00pm

University Council Board Room, IDC Building, University Drive

Minutes

Start: 1:00

1. **Welcome to Country:** Acknowledgement to Country by Gianni di Gravio.

Present: Gianni di Gravio (chair), Ann Hardy (minute-taker), Emeritus Professor John Fryer, Maree Shilling, Ken Shilling, Keith Parsons, Brian Roach, Peter Sherlock, Doug Lithgow, Bronwyn Law, Suzanne Martin, Robert Watson, Jane Ison, Charles Martin, Sarah Cameron, Damien Egan, Russell Rigby, Ken Thornton.

2. **Apologies:**

Emeritus Professor Maree Gleeson, Ruth Cotton, Member for Wallsend Sonia Horner, Coralie Watson, Kerrie Brauer, Ron Barber, Margaret Henry, Lesley Gent. Marilla, Tim Adams, North, Rob Jones, Howard Dick, Bruce Cooper, Jane Ison, Caroline McKay, Helen Denzin, Ziggy,

Visitors: Ethan Clark (APP), Martin Carney (Dir. AMAC Group), Barney Collins (EJE),

3. **Confirmation of Previous Minutes:** The minutes for 2nd June 2014 was confirmed (after minor changes to Sarah Cameron's report) by Brian Roach and seconded – Maree Gleeson.

4. **Business arising from previous minutes:** Nil

5. **Presentations-**

- a) **Presentation (Barney Collins, Martin Carney) University Campus NeW space -** Representatives of the project team involved in constructing the new university campus in Newcastle briefed the CRWP. Damien Burke the Senior Project Manager for the University of Newcastle described the scope of the development and partners involved.

Barney Collins from EJE Architecture spoke about the collaboration between themselves and Melbourne based architecture firm Lyons. These organisations are working well, each bringing something different to the project. Barney reflected on civic history of the area, friendly civic care, public use of area, and the importance of the new building being integrated with Christie Park. The key to activation of the area will be to reflect on the public use. The new campus will link with existing nearby buildings such as Civic Theatre and University House and will maintain the pedestrian orientation between King and Hunter Streets and the axis at Christie place. 'Civic green' and plans to generate a laneway culture. The campus will operate 24/7 and have the capacity to accommodate two and a half thousand students, will have study areas and variety of spaces in the student hub,

The urban panoramic features of the new building are also important. Looking out from the building is just as important as looking in, it is essential that people inside the campus building can see what is happening outside. Large windows of building will look up the river and provide a view towards Nobbys Headland, Burwood Street and City Hall, a place of 'enlightenment'. The entire streetscape is considered.

Martin Carney spoke about archaeological investigations. The site has the potential to find artefacts associated with domestic and industrial occupation and businesses associated with the area. However because a creek once ran through the area there may have been a lot of soil and infill washed in from other areas. There have been many businesses located there, for example Rogers's foundry. Martin showed Map 831 (AA Company submission c1858) to demonstrate what was located in the area in terms of buildings. Overlaid on this map was a plan showing 15 test trenches recently excavated. Trenches are 50 x 50 cm and will remain under footings of the new building. These will be covered and protected. All but 4 trenches relate to Indigenous archaeology, others showed some European archaeology, the location is very sandy and there is some infill. The Office of Environment & Heritage (OEH) guidelines are being followed, and input sought from School of Wollotuka (University of Newcastle). There are sensitivities related to this site and input from Indigenous communities is paramount. There have been hundreds of Indigenous artefacts found and these will be catalogued. Trench 5 - this trench was the second most artefacts found, many layers (1.6 metres above sea level). Trench 11- this trench is the third most productive, having many Indigenous artefacts. The design of the new building seeks to mitigate the impact to artefacts. Excavated trenches will be back filled and lined with plastic sheeting.

Martin advised he would be pleased to address the CRWP at a later date when further archaeological results have been analysed, particularly in regard to Indigenous archaeology.

Bronwyn Law raised the issue of transport to and from the new campus, particularly in regard to public transport now a decision had been made to truncate rail at Wickham. Damian Bourke informed that the University was working with the State Government to find ways to minimise transport and parking issues in the city. Doug Lithgow congratulated the team on the design of the NeW space campus, a very innovative and modern building, he asked whether engineers had considered structural issues and earthquake proofing the building. Barney informed that strict guidelines governing design of buildings had been adhered to. Gionni thanked the team for their wonderful presentations. Further information about NeW space project can be found <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/newsroom/featured-news/new-space-on-public-display>

6. Reports and Updates:

a) Updates- (Gionni di Gravio) – Gionni advised that he had recently been invited to the opening of the ‘*a very fine river: convict stories from the Hunter*’ exhibition at Lake Macquarie Art Gallery. Rob Cleworth of Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery has assisted in curating the exhibition and artists have used resources of the CRWP in their interpretations. Gionni thanked the gallery and artists for their kind acknowledgement of work of the CRWP in the catalogue.

Gionni advised that he and Ann Hardy have had discussions with the Melbourne based App developers about the Newcastle History App a collaboration between the National Trust and CRWP. The project is now in its final stage. Eighty stories have been completed and Ann is in the process of bringing together images. The proposed name of ‘Newcastle Lost & Found’ was far too long for the App; the new name is Newcastle WOW.

<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2014/07/22/newcastle-wow/>

Gionni advised that the CRWP was very honored with the recognition of the outstanding services of one of its researchers, Dr Ann Hardy at a ceremony on Wednesday 30th July 2014 at Souths Leagues Club Merewether. Ann received a 2014 Newcastle Volunteer Service Award for her services to Newcastle and its historic recognition. She was in fine company, as one of a number of distinguished people from all walks of life, who were recognised for their wonderful work across the community. Federal Member for Newcastle, Sharon Claydon MP, hoped that this gesture was a step towards a thank you for people who held the community together through their generosity of spirit is Gionni congratulated Ann Hardy on her recent achievement.

<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2014/07/30/volunteeraward2014/>

b) National Trust (Ann Hardy) – Advised that her PhD thesis is now available on-line. Thesis name is “. . . here is an Asylum open . . .” Constructing a Culture of Government Care in Australia 1801 – 2014” on the national significance of the former James Fletcher Hospital site is now available free of charge on the University’s NOVA database. It explores the earliest permanent settlement at Coal River, NSW, and the Newcastle Government Domain. Available

<http://ogma.newcastle.edu.au:8080/vital/access/manager/Repository/uon:14435>

The CRWP has received a letter from outgoing Governor of NSW Prof. Marie Bashir thanking us for our well wishes and research of ‘Coal River’.

c) Update (Sarah Cameron) – Sarah advised that council has received funding of \$150,000 to complete the next phase of the Christ Church Cathedral project. An architect will be engaged to produce a detailed design of the landscape work. Sarah also advised of proposed amendments to the Newcastle LEP; these are very minor changes and have no significant impact to heritage.

7. General Business

a) Newcastle East Public School- Suzanne Martin advised that Newcastle East Public School will celebrate 200 year anniversary in 2016. John Beach (Principal), Brian Suters, John Ramsland, Suzanne Martin, Liz Thwaites and others are working on a book, each contributing a chapter on the history of the school. Suzanne also pointed out that she wrote to Newcastle Council some time ago regarding the lack of acknowledgement of the European founding of the city of Newcastle in 1804. To her surprise she noticed that a copy of the ‘Declaration of Newcastle’ had been framed and hanging in the hallway of City Hall.

b) City’s History- Bronwyn Law advised of the work she has been doing in regard to collating names on School Honour Rolls in the local area. She also stated that there seemed to be many projects underway in regard to Anzac celebrations; but no particular individual or group coordinating events and projects. Gianni advised that a group recently met at the Newcastle Museum and suggested that Bronwyn contact Ken Fyale from Newcastle RSL.

8. Close: 3:00

Date of next meeting: Monday, 1st September, 2014 in the IDC Building, 1-3pm.