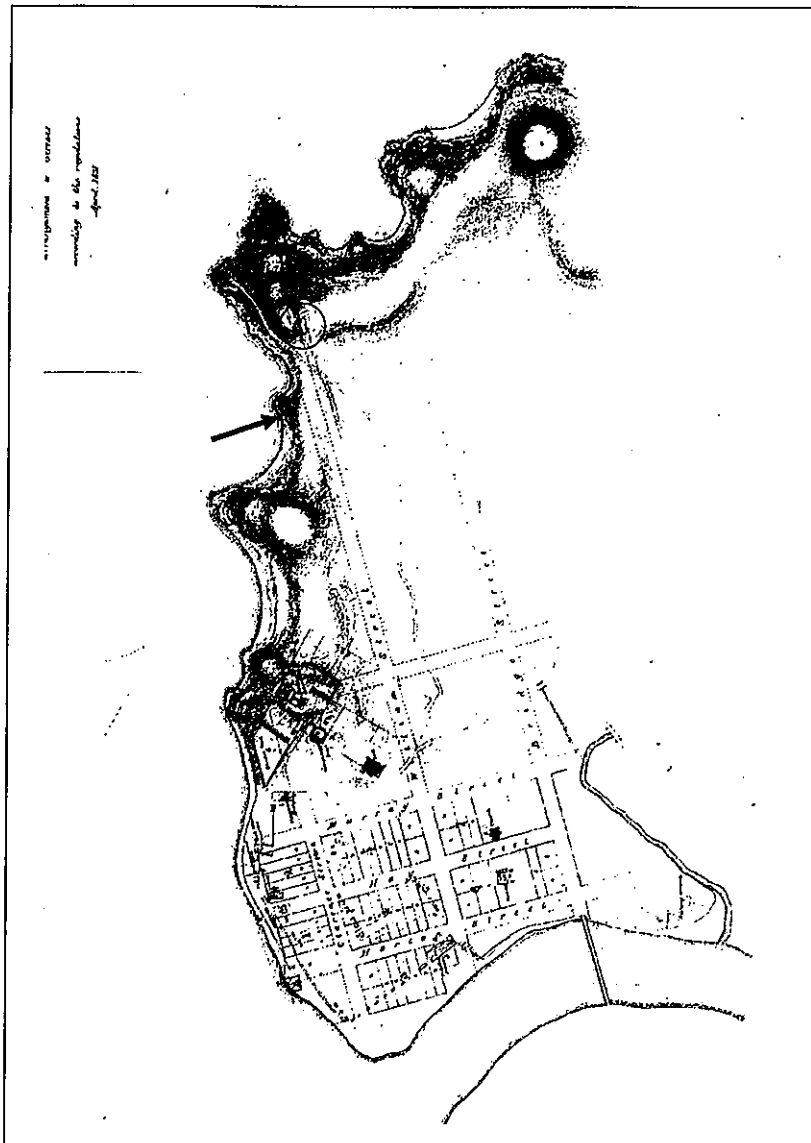


# TOWN BEACH KIOSK PORT MAQUARIE, NSW

## HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT



D'Arcy's 1831 Plan of Port Macquarie. The approximate location of the subject site is arrowed. Nearby are two buildings (circled) probably associated with the early Signal Station. The land surrounding the subject site has remained largely undeveloped since the 1830's.

**AHMS**
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL &  
HERITAGE MANAGEMENT  
SOLUTIONS PTY LTD**

349 Annandale St  
Annandale  
NSW 2038  
P: (02) 9555-4000

ACN 088 058 388 ABN 45 088 058 388

HASTINGS LIBRARY



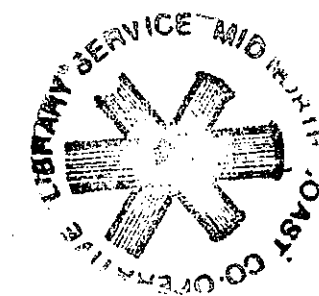
302058847

ON BEHALF OF  
DAVID BORAM & ASSOCIATES

January 2007

**Contents**

<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 BACKGROUND & PROJECT INITIATION.....	2
1.2 SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT WORK .....	2
1.3 REPORT STRUCTURE .....	3
1.4 STUDY TEAM & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	3
<b>2.0 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS &amp; HERITAGE LISTINGS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 THE NSW HERITAGE ACT (1977) .....	4
2.2 STATUTORY HERITAGE REGISTERS .....	4
2.2.1 The State Heritage Register.....	4
2.2.2 The State Heritage Inventory .....	4
2.2.3 Local and Regional Planning Instruments.....	5
<b>3.0 METHODS .....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 ARCHIVAL RESEARCH.....	6
3.2 ANALYSIS & MODELLING.....	6
<b>4.0 RESULTS .....</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1 HISTORICAL RESEARCH .....	7
4.2 HISTORY OF THE STUDY AREA .....	7
4.2.1 Exploration and Initial Occupation 1818-1821.....	7
4.2.2 Extension and Development 1822-1826.....	8
4.2.3 Free Settlement and the decline of the Penal Station 1832-1847.....	10
4.2.4 A Health and Tourist Resort.....	12
<b>5.0 TAPHONOMY &amp; ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL .....</b>	<b>16</b>
5.1 SITE FORMATION PROCESSES .....	16
5.2 RELICS INDICATED AT THE SITE.....	16
<b>6.0 SIGNIFICANCE EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>18</b>
6.1 PRINCIPLES & EVALUATION CRITERIA.....	18
6.2 EVALUATION .....	19
6.3 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS.....	19



## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Background & Project Initiation

Archaeological & Heritage Management Solutions Pty Ltd (AHMS) were commissioned by David Boram & Associates Pty Ltd (Architects) to undertake historical archaeological impact assessment of proposed development at the Kiosk site, Town Beach, Port Macquarie. The proposed development area is hereafter referred to as "the site" or "the subject site". The proposed development requires demolition of the existing Kiosk to make way for the construction of a new two-storey building that will house the Sea Rescue/Coastal Patrol and Public Amenities.

This report assesses the impact of this proposal on the sites historical archaeological potential, as required by Hastings Shire Council.



Figure 1.1: Site Location (arrowed) maps.google.com

### 1.2 Scope of Assessment Work

The scope of work for the assessment was limited to examination of the site's historical archaeological values and the impact of proposed development on any historic relics, as defined by the *NSW Heritage Act 1977*.

### **1.3 Report Structure**

This report was prepared in accordance with Heritage Council Guidelines "Archaeological Assessments" (1996), and the revised criteria for assessing heritage significance in 'Assessing Heritage Significance' (2001), a NSW Heritage Manual update. It is divided into the following sub-sections:

- **Section 2** provides a summary of relevant heritage legislation and results of a search of heritage listings for the site;
- **Section 3** summarises methods used during research;
- **Section 4** presents the results of this research, namely a site history;
- **Section 5** discusses site formation processes and the site's archaeological potential; and
- Evaluation of the site's cultural significance and recommendations for future management of this significance are presented in **Section 6**.

### **1.4 Study Team & Acknowledgments**

This report was written by Adam Paterson. Peter Douglas (Director, AHMS) reviewed the draft report.



## 2.0 Statutory Considerations & Heritage Listings

Current and future management of the site and its heritage values is determined by a number of legal requirements and statutory heritage listings described below.

### 2.1 The NSW Heritage Act (1977)

The NSW Heritage Act is designed to conserve the environmental heritage of New South Wales<sup>1</sup> and used to regulate development impacts on the state's heritage assets including archaeological sites. Archaeological features and deposits are afforded automatic statutory protection by the relic's provisions of the NSW Heritage Act 1977 (as amended in 1999). The Act defines 'relic' as:

*...any deposit, object or material evidence relating to the settlement of the area that comprises NSW, not being an aboriginal settlement, and which is fifty or more years old.*

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.

### 2.2 Statutory Heritage Registers

Heritage listings for historical sites are made on either statutory or non-statutory registers. In New South Wales protection for heritage items listed on statutory registers is provided by the NSW Heritage Act, 1977 (discussed above) and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979.

#### 2.2.1 The State Heritage Register

The State Heritage Register is a statutory list of places and items of State heritage significance made by the Minister of Planning. The Register lists a diverse range of places (including archaeological sites) that are particularly important to the State and enrich our understanding of the history of NSW. State heritage significance is defined by the Heritage Office, department of Planning as "significance to the State in relation to the historical, scientific cultural, social, archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic value of the item (Section 4A (1), Heritage Act, 1977)"<sup>2</sup>. Places and items listed on the Register are legally protected under the NSW Heritage Act and require approval from the Heritage Council of NSW prior to undertaking work that results in their alteration or modification.

- *The site is not listed on the State Heritage Register.*

#### 2.2.2 The State Heritage Inventory

The State Heritage Inventory (SHI) is an electronic database of statutory listed heritage items in New South Wales that are protected by heritage schedules of Local Environmental Plans (LEP's) and Regional Environmental Plans (REP's) or by the State Heritage Register. The inventory can include historical archaeological sites, maritime archaeological, industrial

<sup>1</sup> NSW Heritage Act, <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/>, p1

<sup>2</sup> NSW Heritage Office website, [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au)

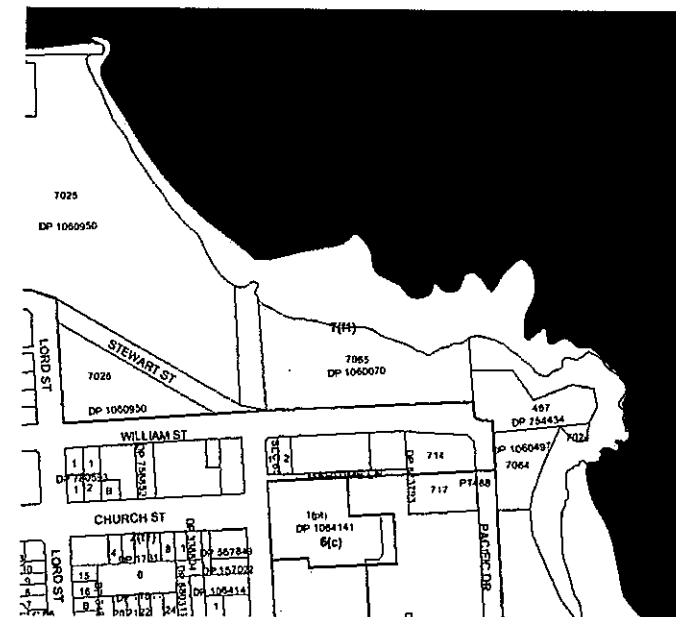
sites, urban landscapes including parks and gardens, private and civic buildings, heritage items owned by State government agencies, moveable heritage such as transport vehicles or heritage collections and Aboriginal heritage<sup>3</sup>.

- *The site is not listed as an Item on the NSW State Heritage Inventory.*

### 2.2.3 Local and Regional Planning Instruments

Other documents that include statutory listings for heritage items in NSW include Regional Environmental Plans (REP's), Development Control Plans (DCP's) and Local Environmental Plans (LEP's). These planning instruments are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the NSW Environmental and Planning Assessment Act, 1979 and are designed to integrate heritage management and conservation into the planning and development control process to ensure that development does not affect the significance of heritage items, sites and/or places, and conservation areas.

Part 10, Clause 37 of the *Hastings Local Environmental Plan 2001* (HELP), requires that consent for proposed development within land identified as a potential archaeological site is only given after the consent authority has considered an archaeological impact assessment for the proposed development.



**Figure 2.1:** Clause 37 of HELP – Archaeological. The Reserve containing the Subject Site is located within the zone of identified archaeological potential (yellow).

The figure above is based on information contained within an Archaeological Management Plan (AMP) for Port Macquarie prepared for the NSW Heritage Council and Hastings Shire Council by Edward Higginbotham & Associates in 1994.

The public reserve containing the subject site has been designated "Inventory No. 268." The AMP found that Inventory No. 268 may contain relics associated with a former boat shed located at Town Beach.

<sup>3</sup> NSW Heritage Office website, [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au),

<sup>4</sup> Higginbotham 1994

### **3.0 Methods**

Three tasks were undertaken to assess the site's archaeological potential and the impact of proposed development on any historic relics below existing buildings and surrounding surfaces:

- Collation of pre-existing historical research on Port Macquarie and site specific historical data;
- Analysis of the research to identify whether or not the site contains relics; and,
- Identification of the impact of proposed development on any such relics.

No site inspection was undertaken to limit the cost of the investigation. Details of the research and analysis are described in following sections of this report.

#### **3.1 Archival Research**

Archival research undertaken for this assessment included analysis of several general histories of Port Macquarie as well as numerous historical plans, paintings, and photographs of the subject site and its surrounding environs. This material was used to (i) examine the development of the site within the local historical and social context of which it formed a part, and (ii) identify site formation processes that may have contributed to or limited potential relics at the site.

#### **3.2 Analysis & Modelling**

Materials and information gathered by research were collated and analysed in an attempt to evaluate the impact of historic development episodes on pre-existing soil deposits at the site. The end products of this analysis are the assessments of relics indicated at the site (Section 5) and the significance evaluation (Section 6)

## 4.0 Results

### 4.1 Historical research

The following history outlines past use and occupation of the site and its surrounding locality from the period before European settlement through to the present.

#### *Occupation phases*

In general terms, four occupation phases took place on the site:

- Exploration and Initial Occupation (1818-1821);
- Extension and Development (1822-1826);
- Free Settlement and the decline of the Penal Station (1832-1847); and,
- A Health and Tourist Resort (1850's to 20<sup>th</sup> Century)

### 4.2 History of the Study Area

#### 4.2.1 Exploration and Initial Occupation 1818-1821

Following the early years of occupation, at Sydney Cove, the Town began to develop into a busy trading port; a process accelerated by growing numbers of whale ships operating in the South Sea fisheries. This increasing maritime activity posed a threat to the security of the penal colony, a problem that was solved in 1804, when a town was established at Newcastle. The new town was intended specifically to house convicts who continued to offend after transportation. Newcastle's isolation made it an ideal location for a place of secondary punishment, however, eventually extension of settlement into the Hunter, required that a penal town was created.<sup>5</sup>

In 1818, during an unsuccessful attempt to trace the Macquarie River and find an inland sea, Surveyor-General John Oxley's discovered a suitable alternative, the mouth of the Hastings River. The new discovery had considerable potential, meeting the key requirements for places of secondary punishment, remoteness, access by sea and useful, exploitable natural resources.<sup>6</sup>

Soon after Oxley's discovery Governor Macquarie wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, outlining the advantages of the newly discovered port on the Hastings as 'a place of banishment'. Late in 1820, as Macquarie was about to be replaced by his successor, authority was received to form a penal establishment at Port Macquarie, 'taking care however that it be so gradually formed as to lead to no heavy increase of Expençe.'<sup>7</sup>

On 21 March 1821, Captain Francis Allman and his party sailed from Sydney to found Port Macquarie. The convicts who formed the initial party were not being sent to Port Macquarie as a form of punishment, instead they had been promised Tickets of Leave or Conditional Pardons after eighteen months work, subject to good conduct, and sobriety. They were accompanied by a military detachment, from the 48th Regiment, consisting of a drummer, two sergeants, two corporals and thirty-three privates, and the Commandant.

<sup>5</sup>Bickford 2003: 18

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Bickford 2003: 18



Lieutenant W E B Wilson, Engineer and Inspector of Public Works and Stephen Partridge, Superintendent of Convicts and Public Labour were the officers of the new settlement.<sup>8</sup>

The fledgling town was situated on slightly elevated ground between the Hastings River and Kooloonbung Creek. Great progress had been made and by the time that Governor Macquarie visited in November of 1821 the following public buildings and works had been completed at Port Macquarie:

1. A Weather-boarded one Storey house with a Verandah and necessary Out Offices for the residence and accommodation of the Commandant, with a Garden enclosed and attached thereto.
2. Temporary Weather-boarded barracks for two Subaltern Officers and One Assistant Surgeon.
3. Temporary Weather-boarded barracks for 100 Soldiers with Kitchen Gardens attached thereto.
4. A Weather-boarded Barrack for the accommodation of the Superintendent of Convicts with a Kitchen Garden attached thereto.
5. A Weather-boarded Barrack for the accommodation of the Chief Constable.
6. A Range of large well Constructed Temporary Bark Huts for the accommodation of 300 Male Convicts with Kitchen Garden attached thereto.
7. A Weather-boarded Provision Store and Granary enclosed with a strong stockade.
8. A Weather-boarded Guard house close to the Landing Place.<sup>9</sup>

With the basic infrastructure complete the secondary offenders arrived and by September 1822 the convict population, had grown to 346. The population of the settlement was predominantly male, as few women convicts were transported to Port Macquarie. The wives and children of some of the convicts and the military joined their husbands in the new town.<sup>10</sup>

#### **4.2.2 Extension and Development 1822-1826**

Between 1822 and 1826, the convict population had reached over 1,500 men, with a diversified skills base. Through the exploitation of natural resources, the town was able to support itself. While timber, was the major industry attempts were also being made to raise useful semi-tropical plants. An exciting prospect, as crops such as sugar cane, tobacco and cotton, were among some of the world's most valuable economic plants.<sup>11</sup>

At a smaller scale cultivation of vegetable crops was encouraged to ensure self-sufficiency and the health of the population, and all classes of the population had kitchen gardens for their own use.<sup>12</sup>

Information about the layout of Port Macquarie from 1821-1832, the period that it served as a place of secondary punishment, can be gathered from historic plans. The earliest of these dating to 1824, focussed on the town centre and does not include the subject site (Figure 4.1). At this time the arrangement of buildings appears to have been fairly deliberate and three distinct areas were apparent. The Military occupied the high ground to the east known as Allmans Hill, overlooking the rest of the town. Immediately to the north were the Commandants residence, guardhouse, commissariat store and workshops.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*: 19

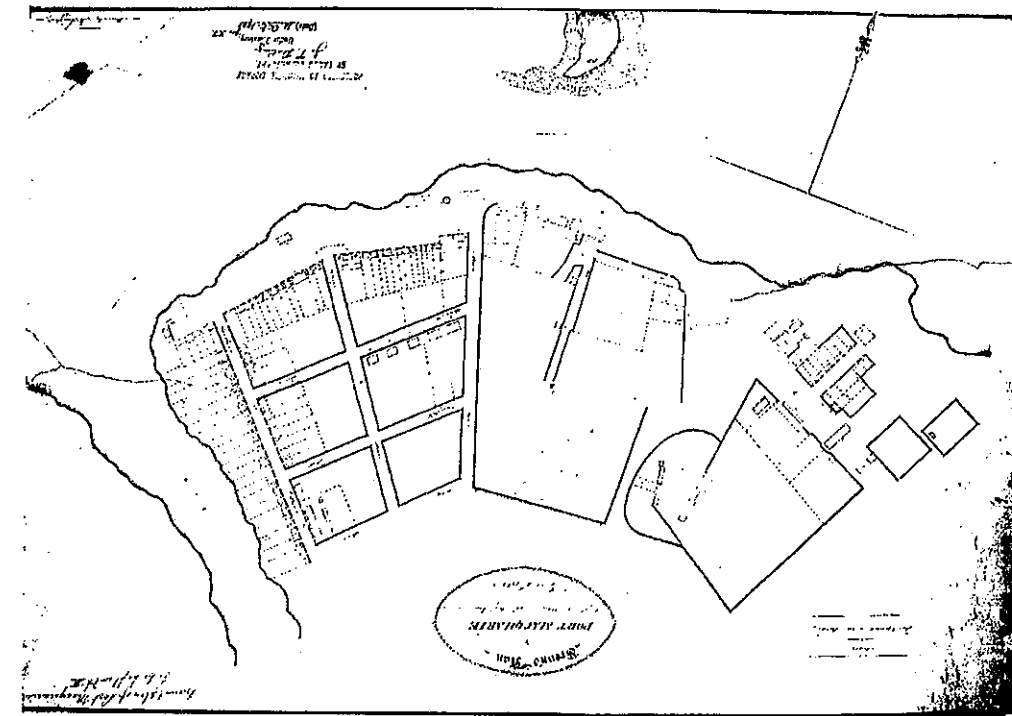
<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*: 20

<sup>11</sup> Bickford 2003: 20

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*

While to the west, neat rows of huts for the convicts and their overseers were laid out on a regular street grid.



**Figure 4.1:** Port Macquarie, Ground Plan, Captain Allman, 8<sup>th</sup> April 1824 (State Archives, A.O. Map 74). The subject site is over one kilometre to the east of the Town.

Two Augustus Earle watercolour paintings, (1825-27) provide views of the general area of the subject site during this period of initial expansion (Figures 4.2 & 4.3). Several small houses are visible on the south eastern point of Town Beach opposite the Flagstaff. These buildings appear to have been located at the top of the spur of land forming the point. As they are not included on the annotated 1824 plan of Port Macquarie the purpose of these buildings is unclear. Their location close to the Flagstaff suggests that they may have provided housing an assistant to the Harbour Pilot whose residence was in the town at this time.<sup>13</sup> It is also possible that they were occupied by enterprising convicts who had served their term or been granted a pardon, and had begun small-scale cultivation or perhaps fishing.

In May 1825 Governor Brisbane decided that Port Macquarie was no longer tenable as a place of secondary punishment and recommended that it be given up to free settlers. Colonial Office approval came in a despatch written in November 1828 and in 1830 Port Macquarie was proclaimed open to free settlement, however it was not until 1832 that its function as a place of secondary punishment ended.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Higginbotham 1995, Vol 3: 8

<sup>14</sup> Bickford 2003: 25

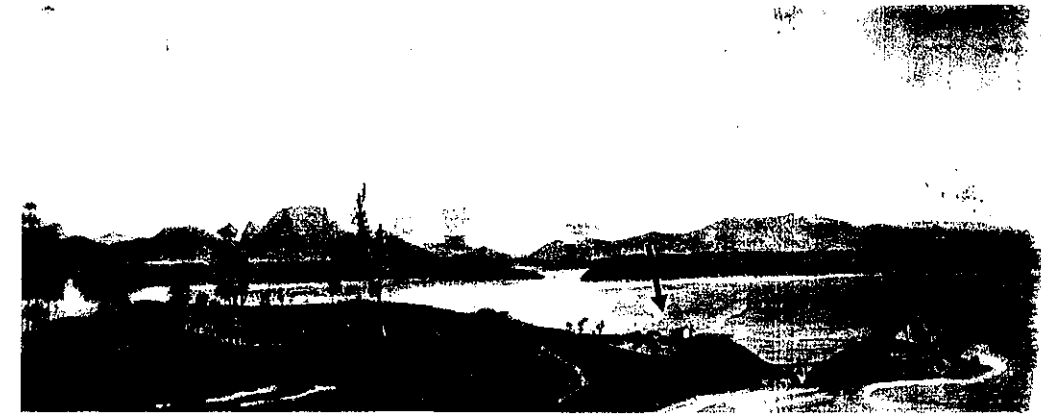


Figure 4.2: Water colour painting (1825-27) by Augustus Earle, looking north towards Flagstaff Hill and the eastern point of Town Beach (ML, Port Macquarie, SPF). Several buildings (arrowed) appear to have been constructed on the point to the east of the subject site at this time.

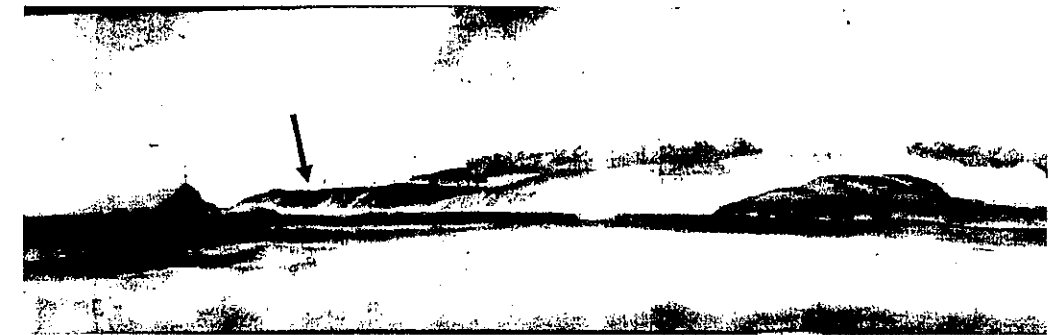


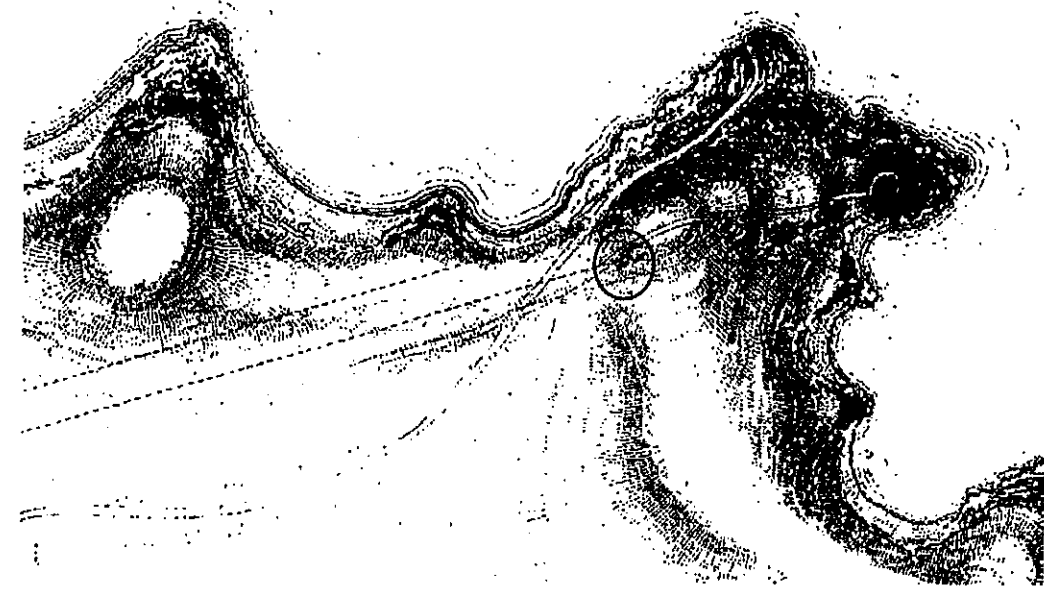
Figure 4.3: Water colour painting (1825-27) by Augustus Earle, looking south towards Flagstaff Hill and Town Beach (ML, Port Macquarie, SPF). The only structures within the general area of the subject site are the two buildings visible on the eastern point of the beach (arrowed). The subject site appears to have been undeveloped at this time.

#### 4.2.3 Free Settlement and the decline of the Penal Station 1832-1847

In April 1831 Surveyor D'Arcy carried out the first real survey of Port Macquarie and prepared a plan of proposed town allotments and a new arrangement for the streets (Figure 4.4). A new town plan was superimposed on the layout of the old penal settlement. On the western side of town, there was a rough degree of conformity between the existing streets and the new grid plan. On the eastern side, where strategic concerns such as maintaining line of sight to the convict huts and wharf, were imperative the layout of buildings was less regular.<sup>15</sup>

D'Arcy's plan confirms that there were two small buildings located on the point opposite the Flagstaff. As this plan is not annotated it provides no further clue to the function of the buildings at this time. Two roads ran from the main town past the buildings out to the Flagstaff and down to the eastern end of Town beach. The roads crossed one another close to the location of the subject site. Given their distance from the main town and an absence of large-scale settlement, the roads most probably consisted of compact earth tracks.

<sup>15</sup> Bickford 2003: 26



**Figure 4.4:** D'Arcy, Plan of Port Macquarie, showing new arrangement of streets 1831. The buildings (circled) shown adjacent to the roads running east towards Flagstaff Hill may be those depicted in the Augustus Earle watercolours (State Archives A.O. Map 75).

Suspension of the transportation of convicts to Port Macquarie in 1840, caused the convict population to diminish rapidly, and with it the pool of available labour. Combined with the depression of the 1840s the development of Port Macquarie was seriously hampered. In 1847 the last of the frail and infirm convicts were transported to Sydney and Liverpool, marking the end of the convict era in Port Macquarie.<sup>16</sup>

By 1840 some subdivision of land to the east of the Government buildings had occurred, with Owen Street marking their eastern most extent (Figure 4.5). The subject site remained undivided at this time, and although the proposed alignment of William Street is indicated, the earlier, winding roads leading down to Town beach and the Flagstaff are also shown suggesting that they were probably still in use. Two buildings are shown on this plan, one is located within the approximate location of the buildings indicated on the 1831 plan (Figure 4.4) and the other is indicated adjacent to the road leading to town beach. There are no annotations on the plan to suggest the function of these buildings although by this time the Pilots residence in the main town had become derelict and a new residence had been constructed adjacent to the Flagstaff. The Pilots residences are still standing today at numbers 2-6 William Street are listed on the State Heritage Inventory.

<sup>16</sup> Bickford 2003: 29

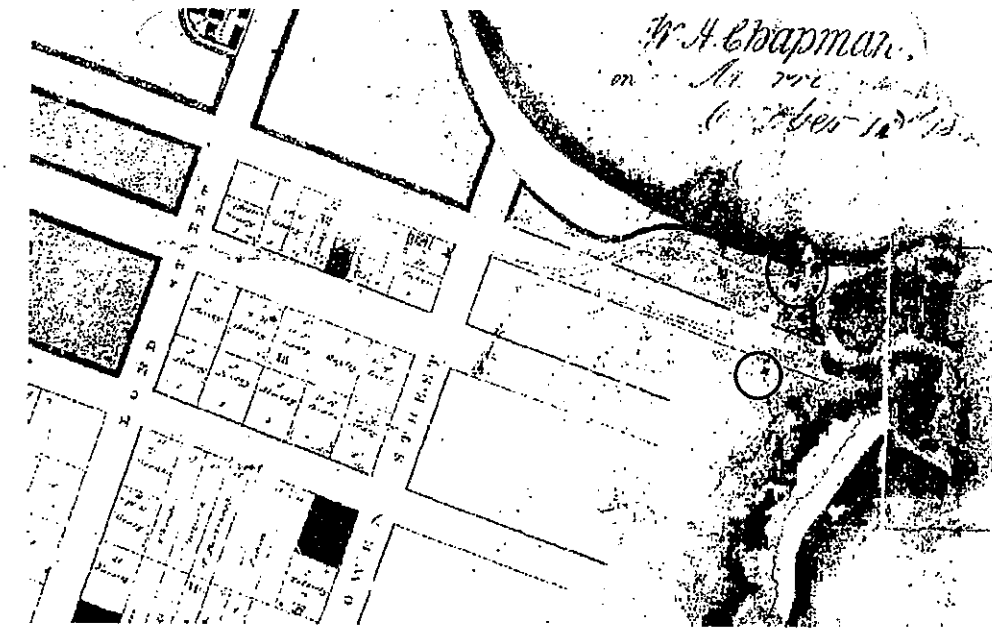


Figure 4.5: Plan of Port Macquarie 1840. Two buildings are shown (circled) although one of them is situated within a different location to the buildings shown on the 1831 plan. The roads evident in the 1831 plan are also indicated (M.L. Map M3/811.221/1840/1).

#### 4.2.4 A Health and Tourist Resort

In the late 1880's, many of the convict era buildings had become derelict and shortly after the establishment of local government a process of demolition was begun. Proceeds that were raised by the sale of building materials from the demolished convict buildings were used to finance the construction of a new town hall in 1892.<sup>17</sup>

Annotations on a plan of Port Macquarie dating from this period (1879-1894) indicate that it had been "notified" probably as a public reserve in 1881. Neither of the buildings indicated on earlier plans are shown at this time although the road leading down to the eastern end of Town Beach is shown and was probably still in use.<sup>18</sup>

Although development in Port Macquarie was slow during the second half of the Nineteenth century, it gained recognition as a wine producing district and in the 1870s the production of sugar cane was briefly revisited.<sup>19</sup>

Towards the end of the Nineteenth Century Port Macquarie's unspoilt, undeveloped character became an asset. Combined with its natural beauty and temperate climate, it was an ideal location "for that much sought after remedy for late 19<sup>th</sup> century life, health resorts". Eventually visitors were to become an important industry within Port Macquarie and following the development of the motor car in the early Twentieth Century, tourism became one of the town's major industries.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*: 30

<sup>18</sup> Bickford 2003: 31

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*

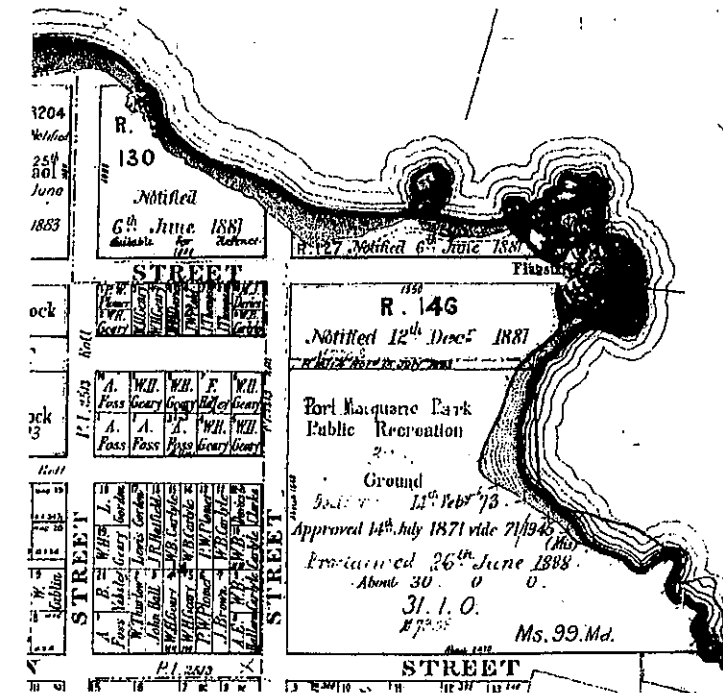


Figure 4.6: Plan of Port Macquarie 1879-1894 (State Archives A.O 1063). The northern fork in the early roads is still shown running down to the eastern end of town beach.

The physical development of the subject site during the twentieth century has been recorded in a number of photographs (see Figures 4.7 – 4.10). Some time between 1840 and the early Twentieth Century a small “boat shed” and a larger building were constructed within the approximate location of the subject site. The function of these buildings is unclear from the photographic evidence alone however given the developing tourism industry they may have been associated with recreational activities.

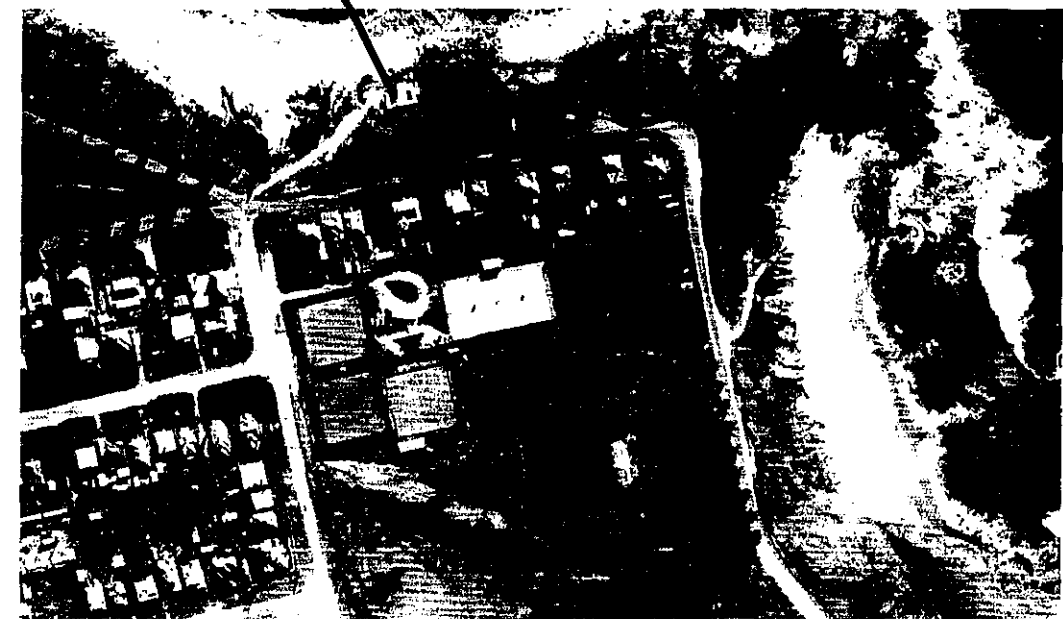
These buildings were demolished prior to 1959, at which time the Kiosk had been constructed.



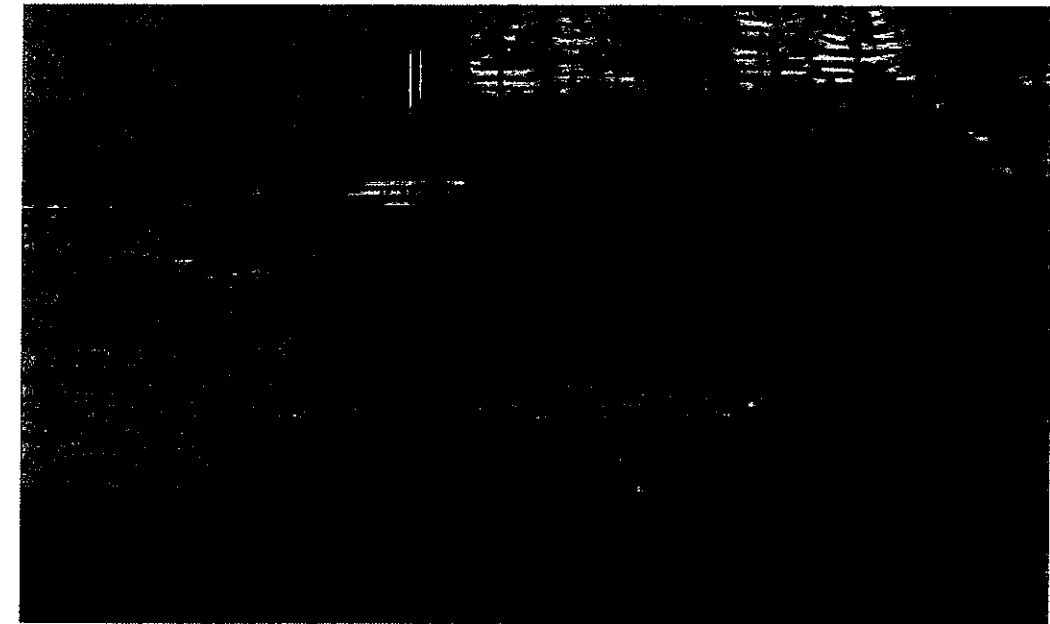
Figure 4.7: View East of Town Beach and Flagstaff Hill n.d. (probably early Twentieth Century) (ML, Port Macquarie, SPF). The Pilot station is visible on the top of the ridgeline forming the eastern point of Town Beach. A large building at the eastern end of the beach is also visible (red arrow). This is most probably the building shown at the end of the northern fork in the road on the 1840 plan of Port Macquarie (Figure 4.5). Although its function has not been determined for certain, given its location on the coast, and near to the Pilot Station it was probably a boatshed, or some other form of maritime infrastructure. A large building in the approximate location of the Kiosk (yellow arrow) is also shown in this photograph, with another small building (possibly a boat shed nearby). These buildings were probably constructed in the late Nineteenth or early Twentieth Century, and may have been associated with recreational activities.



**Figure 4.8:** View East of Town Beach c1939 (ML, Port Macquarie, SPP). The land surrounding the subject site was 'notified' (as a Public Reserve ?) in 1881 and appears to have remained undeveloped throughout the Twentieth Century. Three buildings located along the foreshore of Town Beach are visible.



**Figure 4.9:** Aerial photograph of Port Macquarie, June 1959, (Department of Lands, NSW 703 5004). The Kiosk building (arrowed) currently occupying the subject site is shown. The other earlier buildings along the beachfront appear to have been demolished by this time. Two tracks forming a fork to the north of William Street are probably the two roads, first shown on the 1831 plan of the town (Figure 4.4). The northern arm of the fork appears to lead down past the front of the Kiosk, and along the beach, while the road to the Flagstaff runs adjacent to William Street.



**Figure 4.10:** View east of the carpark and Kiosk (arrowed). The Kiosk has been constructed on a level platform excavated into the natural slope. These excavations will probably have removed any relics associated with Nineteenth Century use of the site.



## 5.0 Taphonomy & Archaeological Potential

### 5.1 Site Formation Processes

Current survey of the kiosk and its immediate surroundings (Figure 5.1) indicates that the building has been constructed on a level platform that has been cut into the slope. Any relics or deposits with potential to contain relics associated with Nineteenth Century occupation of the site will have been removed within the area excavated for the platform.

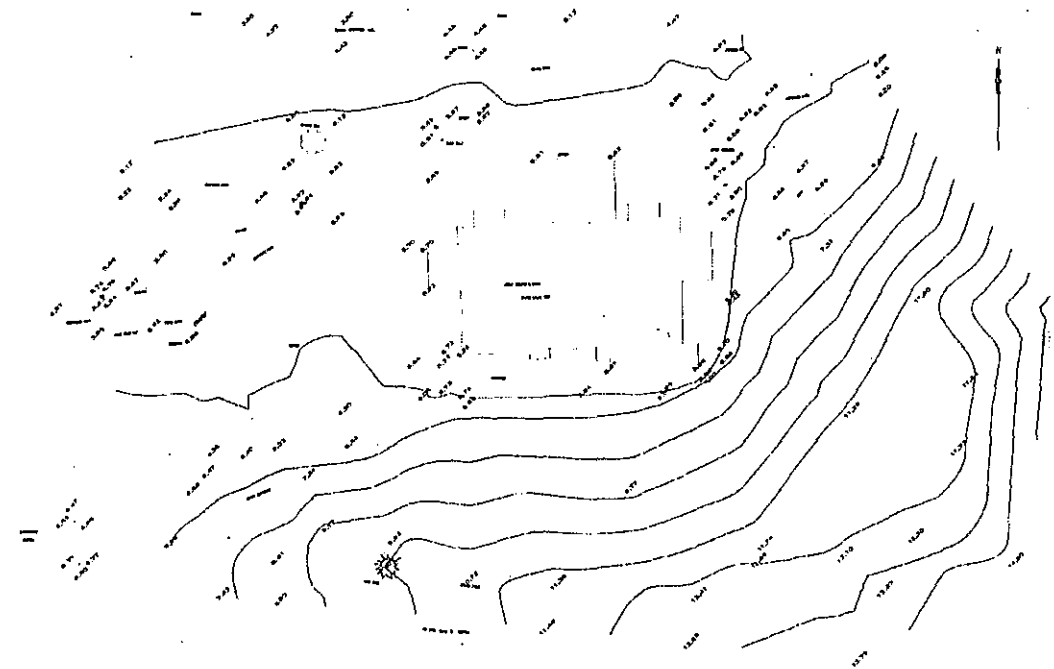


Figure 5.1: Current survey of the site. The contours indicate that the kiosk building is situated on a level platform cut into the natural slope.

### 5.2 Relics Indicated at the Site

Although historical research has identified that there were a number of buildings constructed in the general vicinity of the site during the convict occupation period, none of these appear to have been situated within the subject site (Figure 5.2). Two Nineteenth Century roads or tracks were established close to the Kiosk. The northern-most of these ran around the northern edge of the subject site (Figure 4.9). Based on the historical research discussed above, the fabric of the Nineteenth century roads is unclear however given their distance from the main town it is considered likely that they were compacted earth tracks at best.

In addition to the roads, photographs of the site taken in the early Twentieth Century (Figures 4.7 & 4.8) show an earlier building in the approximate location of the kiosk. This building was probably constructed in the late Nineteenth or early Twentieth Centuries and has since been demolished.

Subsequent excavation of the building platform during the construction of the Kiosk is considered likely to have removed or disturbed any relics associated with the early historic track and/or remains of the late-Nineteenth Century building.

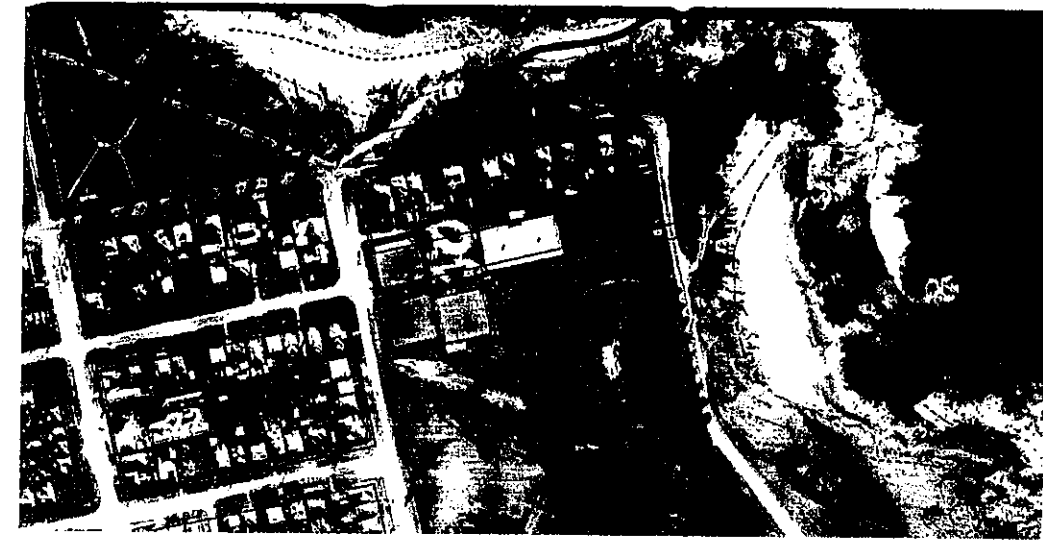


Figure 5.2: 1840 (red) and 1879-84 (green) plans overlaid on an 1959 aerial of Port Macquarie indicating approximate locations of Nineteenth Century roadways and buildings, relative to the Kiosk building. The D'Arcy 1831 plan has been excluded from the overlay as it was found to be too inaccurate within the location of the subject site. Inaccuracies in the later plans are still evident but are less pronounced.

## 6.0 Significance Evaluation and Conclusion

### 6.1 Principles & Evaluation Criteria

"Heritage significance" and "cultural significance" are terms used to describe an item's value or importance to our society. The Australian ICOMOS Burra Charter (1988) defines cultural significance as,

*"Aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations"*

This value may be contained in the fabric of the item, its setting and relationship to other items, the response that the item stimulates in those who value it now, or the meaning of that item to contemporary society.

Accurate assessment of the cultural significance of sites, places and items is an essential component of the NSW heritage assessment and planning process. A clear determination of a site's cultural significance allows informed planning decisions to be made, in addition to ensuring heritage values are maintained, enhanced, or at least minimally affected by development.

By applying standard evaluation criteria assessments of significance can be made. These criteria are as follows:

- Criterion (a) *An item is important in the course or pattern of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area);*
- Criterion (b) *An item has strong or special associations with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW' cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area);*
- Criterion (c) *An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area);*
- Criterion (d) *An item has strong or special associations with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;*
- Criterion (e) *An item as potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area);*
- Criterion (f) *An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area);*
- Criterion (g) *An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural and natural environments.*

To an extent the archaeological significance of a site may be seen as directly linked to its scientific or research value. The deposits it contains may include cultural artefacts and structural remnants of buildings and other features made by previous occupants at various times in the past. Such deposits, if they are subject to well designed archaeological investigation, can provide important information about historic occupation of a site, its locality and the State. They can reveal new information about people's lives, society and past social conditions, and the material and technology that was available to people in

different periods. Because of this, archaeological sites can have excellent research potential, and therefore high scientific significance.

In Australia this concept is commonly defined as a set of questions, originally proposed by Bickford and Sullivan in 1984<sup>21</sup>, that are used as a means of assessing the significance of an archaeological site:

- Can the site contribute knowledge that no other resource can?
- Can the resource contribute knowledge that no other site can?
- Is this knowledge relevant to general questions about human history or other substantive questions relating to Australian history, or does it contribute to other major research questions?

The following evaluation attempts to identify the cultural significance of potential historical archaeological deposits within the proposed development area at Town Beach.

## **6.2 Evaluation**

If intact, any surviving remains of the Nineteenth Century tracks, would probably have been significant at a local level for their associations with the development of the early historic town. The tracks provided a physical link between the Pilot Station, the Convict Town and the Signal Station on the point and as such formed part of the town's communications network and its maritime infrastructure.

Relics associated with the late Nineteenth, or early Twentieth Century buildings that may have been constructed on the kiosk site would probably have been moderately significant at a local level for their associations with Port Macquarie's early development as a recreation and tourism based township.

However the site is considered to have low to nil archaeological potential because the deposits with potential to contain the above relics appear to have been removed during construction of the Kiosk.

## **6.3 Conclusion & Recommendations**

Given that the site has been extensively disturbed this assessment concludes that the site has low to nil cultural significance and low to nil archaeological potential to contain relics associated with significant occupation of Port Macquarie.

**As a result, it is recommended that no further archaeological investigation of the site is warranted prior to the start of on-site work for the proposed development.**

<sup>21</sup> Bickford and Sullivan 1984:23-24

**References**

Bickford, A 2003, *Archaeological Assessment of the North West Corner of Clarence & Munster Streets, Port Macquarie*, prepared on behalf of King & Campbell Pty Ltd

Bickford, A., & Sullivan, S. 1984, 'Assessing the research significance of historic sites', in Sullivan, S. & Bowdler, S., (eds), *Site Surveys and Significance in Australian Archaeology*, Department of Prehistory, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, Canberra.

Higginbotham, E. 1995, *Archaeological Management Plan, Port Macquarie*, Vols 1, 2, 3, prepared on behalf of Hastings Council

NSW Heritage Act. <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/>

NSW Heritage Office website. [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au)