Gerringong to Bomaderry
Princes Highway Upgrade

Preliminary Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Assessment

The Roads and Traffic Authority NSW

November 2007
Gerringong to Bomaderry Princes Highway Upgrade

Prepared for
The Roads and Traffic Authority NSW

Prepared by
Maunsell Australia Pty Ltd
Level 11, 44 Market Street, Sydney NSW 2000, PO Box Q410, QVB Post Office NSW 1230, Australia
T +61 2 8295 3600  F +61 2 9262 5060  www.maunsell.com
ABN 20 093 846 925

In association with
Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd
Unit 4, 71 Leichhardt St, Kingston, ACT 2604

21 November 2007

DEV06/04-HE-NO-Heritage-Rev-2

© Maunsell Australia Pty Ltd 2007

The information contained in this document produced by Maunsell Australia Pty Ltd is solely for the use of the Client identified on the cover sheet for the purpose for which it has been prepared and Maunsell Australia Pty Ltd undertakes no duty to or accepts any responsibility to any third party who may rely upon this document.

All rights reserved. No section or element of this document may be removed from this document, reproduced, electronically stored or transmitted in any form without the written permission of Maunsell Australia Pty Ltd.
Quality Information

Document Preliminary Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Assessment

Ref DEV06/04-HE-NO-Heritage

Date 21 November 2007

Prepared by Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd

Reviewed by Gillian Eckert (Maunsell) and Jon Williamson (Maunsell)

Revision history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revision</th>
<th>Revision Date</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Name/Position</th>
<th>Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>21/11/2007</td>
<td>For issue</td>
<td>Richard Merrett Project Manager</td>
<td>[Signature]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RTA acceptance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Unit</th>
<th>Southern Operations and Engineering Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Project No.   | DEV06/04                                      |

| Approving Manager | Jay Stricker |

| Reviewing Officer | Ron de Rooy |

60021933 - Gerringong to Bomaderry Princes Highway Upgrade
Preliminary Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Assessment – November 2007

Navin Officer

MAUNSELL | AECOM
Not used
Table of Contents

1.0 Background 1
2.0 Introduction 2
  2.1 Report outline 2
3.0 Study methodology 3
  3.1 Literature and database review 3
  3.2 Fieldwork 4
4.0 Indigenous heritage - ethnohistorical context 5
  4.1 Sources 5
  4.2 Tribal boundaries and social structures 5
  4.3 Historical overview 8
  4.4 Places of known or reported historical and cultural aboriginal significance 16
    4.4.1 Missions, reserves and settlements 16
    4.4.2 Cosmological, ceremonial and story places 21
5.0 Indigenous heritage – archaeological context 35
  5.1 Regional review 35
  5.2 The local area 37
    5.2.1 Kiama 37
    5.2.2 Foxground, Gerringong and Gerroa 38
    5.2.3 Berry 39
    5.2.4 Bomaderry and North Nowra 40
  5.3 The Princes Highway study area 41
    5.3.1 Recorded Aboriginal archaeological sites 41
    5.3.2 Reported Aboriginal archaeological sites 42
  5.4 Predictive model for Aboriginal archaeological sites 49
    5.4.1 Predicted site types, locations and distribution patterns 49
    5.4.2 Predictive mapping of archaeological sensitivity 54
6.0 Non-indigenous heritage 60
  6.1 Historical overview 60
    6.1.1 Early exploration 60
    6.1.2 Nineteenth-century estates in the study area 61
    6.1.3 Settlement and development of townships 68
    6.1.4 The dairy industry 76
  6.2 Previous studies and inventory of heritage items and places 78
    6.2.1 Shoalhaven City Council heritage study 1995-1998 83
    6.2.2 Kiama Municipality 93
  6.3 Potential archaeological deposits 94
  6.4 Predictive historical archaeology statement 95
7.0 References 96
List of Tables
Table 5.1: Information relating to Aboriginal sites and archaeological subsurface investigations recorded within the study area 45
Table 5.2: Predictive model for potential Aboriginal archaeological resource 57
Table 6.1: Recorded historical heritage items by type and individual heritage schedule in the vicinity of the Gerringong to Bomaderry study area 78
Table 6.2: Recorded historical heritage items by type and individual heritage schedule in the Upgrade study area 80
Table 6.3: Heritage items within the study area identified in the Shoalhaven City Council heritage study 1995-1998 86
Table 6.4: Heritage items in the study area identified in the Draft Kiama Heritage Inventory (DKHI) 2007 93
Table 6.5: Potential (non-indigenous) archaeological deposits identified to date in Gerringong to Bomaderry 94

List of Figures
Figure 2.1: Preliminary assessment study area (shaded in grey, including the shaded margins) 2
Figure 4.1: View of Gerroa and the mouth of the Crooked River estuary in 1920, looking west. The Aboriginal encampment was reportedly located on the far side of the river 19
Figure 4.2: Extract from Parish of Broughton Map 4th Ed 1893-1898, (Lands Dept ID 10353801), showing the location of the Seven Mile Beach Aboriginal Reserve which was gazetted in 1899 and revoked in 1953 19
Figure 4.3: The flats where the Berry Bowling Club is now situated is the reported location of a former Aboriginal historic encampment. View looking south from the Princes Highway 20
Figure 4.4: View of ‘Brookside’ and the adjacent flats of Broughton Creek, at Broughton Village, looking northeast from the Princes Highway. The west side of Toolijooa Ridge is in the background 21
Figure 4.5: View of Broughton Head on the southern Illawarra Range, looking northwest from Woodhill Mountain Road. This is one of several prominent, escarpment bound, flat topped hilltops on the range which may relate to the cosmology of the local Wodi Wodi people 24
Figure 4.6: Mount Coolangatta, viewed from the northern end of the study area, looking southwest 25
Figure 4.7: Mount Coolangatta, viewed from the Jaspers Brush area, looking southeast 25
Figure 4.8: The Broughton Creek flats, to the east of Broughton Village, looking southeast. This is the approximate reported location of a tribal battleground 26
Figure 4.9: Panoramic view of Toolijooa Ridge, looking west. Bellawongarah Mountain is located in the upper far distance 27
Figure 4.10: General view of the southeastern slopes of Moeyan Hill, looking north 28
Figure 4.11: View across general location of the bunan ceremonial ground recorded by Mathews on the southwestern slopes of Moeyan Hill, in 1896 28
Figure 4.12: Sketches made by R. H. Mathews of the features evident at the Moeyan Hill bunan ground in 1895 (Mathews 1896:328 29
Figure 4.13: A panel of engraved and pigment rock art from the Foxground engraving site (scale interval is 5 x 10 cm) (Officer 1991a and b) 30
Figure 4.14: General view across a section of Harley Hill Cemetery, looking northwest 31
Figure 4.15: View of the David Berry Memorial Hospital, Berry, looking south 32
Figure 4.16: View of cottages now located on the site of the Bomaderry Aboriginal Children’s Home, looking west 33
Figure 4.17: Known or reported places of historic or Aboriginal cultural significance in and around the study area (base map supplied by RTA) 34
Figure 5.1: Previously recorded Aboriginal archaeological sites (Western study area) 43
Figure 5.2: Predictive mapping of potential for Aboriginal archaeological sites (Western study area) 55
Figure 6.1: Extract from Robert Dixon’s 1837 map of the Colony of NSW showing early land grants and the approximate location of the study area – solid blue line (State Library of NSW) 62
Figure 6.2: Extract from Baker’s Australian County Atlas (County of Camden) 1843 - 1846 showing early land grants and the approximate location of the study area – solid blue line (NLA) 63
Figure 6.3 Alexander Berry (1781–1873) 64
Figure 6.4 Extract from map of County of Camden, NSW, 1866, showing land tenure and the approximate location of the study area – solid blue line (NLA) 66
Figure 6.5 Extract from map of County of Camden, NSW, 1895, showing land tenure and the approximate location of the study area – solid blue line (NLA) 67
Figure 6.6 Photograph of the tannery, Berry, c.1875 (Mabbutt n.d.:6) 69
Figure 6.7 Photograph of James Wilson’s store, Pulman Street, Berry, c.1875 (Mabbutt n.d.:9) 70
Figure 6.8 Broughton Creek Village along the ridge at Pullman Street in the 1870s (Bayley 1975: 74) 70
Figure 6.9 Photograph of the SS Coomonderry at the (second) Berry wharf, 1896 (Mabbutt n.d.: 58) 71
Figure 6.10 Early map of Broughton Creek Village area, probably 1870s (Berry Museum n.d.: 15) 72
Figure 6.11 Sketch plan of Broughton Township 1883 (Lidbetter 1993: 18) 74
Figure 6.12 Map of present day Berry showing locations of historic sites, including Pulman Street, the tannery and the two wharf sites (Lidbetter 1993: 75) 75
Figure 6.13 European historical heritage items (Western study area) 84
1.0 Background

Maunsell was engaged by the RTA in December 2006 to carry out an Options and Route Selection Study, Concept Development and Environmental Assessment (EA) for upgrading the Princes Highway between 42.6 km to 74.6 km south of Wollongong. Maunsell has engaged a number of prominent sub-consultants to contribute to the delivery of this project.

The work includes development of route options and concept development based on the identified preferred route, environmental assessment, public displays and handover period to allow for finalisation of all activities and reports following the announcement and display of the Preferred Route, the Environmental Assessment and the Conditions of Approval.

The project will provide a bypass of Berry. The northern extremity of the project is in the vicinity of the Mount Pleasant Lookout (north of Gerringong at the termination of the four lane configuration) and the southern extremity of the project is the intersection (roundabout) of the Princes Highway with Cambewarra and Moss Vale Roads at Bomaderry.

Community involvement is a key aspect of this project and will afford the broader community the opportunity to make a demonstrable input to the process and to ensure that the requirements and aspirations of the community will be adequately and appropriately addressed. This is particularly relevant to:

a) Any potential impacts on rural and residential areas within the study area;
b) Social and economic impacts;
c) Accessibility of the road network for local and through traffic;
d) Potential impacts on water quality;
e) Potential impacts on wetlands;
f) Potential impact on flooding;
g) Potential impacts on land uses;
h) Threatened flora and fauna species;
i) Indigenous and non-indigenous heritage;
j) Visual impact;
k) Noise; and
l) Air quality.

Several studies have been undertaken since the early 1990s to identify a preferred route to upgrade sections of the Princes Highway between Kiama and Nowra including a bypass around the town of Berry.

These studies include:

m) The 1991 Gerringong to Berry Route Study;
n) 1998 North Street Berry Bypass Corridor; and
o) 2004/05 Quantm Study from Kiama to Nowra.

Sections of the highway between Gerringong and Bomaderry have a poor accident record and limited safe overtaking opportunities.

Due to the significant changes in traffic, land use and population since 1991, the NSW state government, in March 2006 committed to investigating an area where it is likely a preferred route would be located to upgrade the Princes Highway between Mount Pleasant at Gerringong and Moss Vale/Cambewarra Road at Bomaderry to meet current road standards.
2.0 Introduction

2.1 Report outline

This report documents the results of a preliminary assessment of indigenous and non-indigenous cultural heritage within the broad Gerringong to Bomaderry Princes Highway Upgrade study area. The report provides the results of literature and heritage database reviews, maps known sites, and provides a predictive model for Aboriginal and European heritage sites within the area (Figure 2.1).

The information contained herein has been and will continue to be used in the route options selection process.

Figure 2.1: Preliminary assessment study area (shaded in grey, including the shaded margins)
3.0 Study methodology

3.1 Literature and database review

A range of documentation was reviewed in assessing archaeological and historical knowledge for the upgrade and its surrounds. This literature and data review was used to determine if known Aboriginal and historical sites were located within the area under investigation, to facilitate site prediction on the basis of known regional and local site patterns, and to place the area within an archaeological and heritage management context. The review of documentary sources included heritage registers and schedules, local histories and archaeological reports.

Aboriginal literature sources included the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) maintained by the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation (DECC) and associated files and catalogue of archaeological reports; and theses held in the library of the School of Archaeology and Anthropology, the Australian National University. Sources of historical information included regional and local histories, heritage studies and theses; parish maps; and where available, other maps, such as portion plans.

In addition, searches were undertaken of the following statutory and non-statutory heritage registers and schedules:

a) Statutory listings
   - Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) (NSW DECC);
   - World Heritage List;
   - The National Heritage List (Australian Heritage Council);
   - The Commonwealth Heritage List (Australian Heritage Council);
   - National Historical Shipwreck Register and Database (NSW Heritage Office);
   - The State Heritage Register (NSW Heritage Office);
   - Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register(s) compiled by the RTA; and
   - Heritage Schedule(s) from the Shoalhaven and Kiama Local Environmental Plans

a) Non-Statutory listings
   - The Register of the National Estate (Australian Heritage Council);
   - The State Heritage Inventory (NSW Heritage Office);
   - Register of the National Trust of Australia (NSW);
   - Royal Australian Institute of Architects Register;
   - Institute of Engineers (NSW) Heritage Register;
   - Professional Historians Association (NSW); and
   - Art Deco Society Register.
3.2  Fieldwork

Fieldwork for this study component was limited to reconnaissance inspections of selected areas within the broad study area only. No attempt at systematic or comprehensive survey was attempted. The reconnaissance inspections involved:

a)  Visual inspection of the study area from public roads;

b)  Evaluating and refining predictive mapping; and

c)  Opportunistic survey and inspection of a small number of properties which were selected either for their representativeness or specific non-indigenous heritage features.

No new Aboriginal sites were recorded as a result of the reconnaissance inspections. Some potential non-indigenous archaeological deposits were recorded and are tabulated in Section 6.
4.0 Indigenous heritage - ethnohistorical context

4.1 Sources

References to the Aboriginal history of the Illawarra district can be found in a large corpus of historical and ethno-historic documentary sources (Organ 1990), however most written references tend to be incidental in nature and vary in accuracy or perceived bias. Complementing (and sometimes also contradicting) the written record is an often rich body of oral history. Aboriginal oral histories relate to both distant and near past events and include references to places in the context of Aboriginal tradition as well as from archaeological perspectives. Places which remain within remembered tradition include nineteenth century and later camps and settlements, hunting, fishing and gathering grounds, burial grounds and story places. Reports of the locations of Aboriginal sites have also been provided by local European people with a long-term interest in the Aboriginal occupation and archaeology of the region. Various Aboriginal groups and individuals (some now sadly departed) have generously shared their knowledge of the region over the years with interested researchers.

The very nature of oral history means that it is an ever-changing and dynamic body of information. The core sources of tradition are constantly being reviewed and re-contextualised according to the motivations of the tellers and listeners. This means that the ‘truths’ or facts related in oral histories may not necessarily transpose accurately back to the transformed modern physical world. Place names and the meanings of words or actions change over time. As a consequence, the information can often only ever be considered ‘indicative’ or anecdotal until demonstrated otherwise. Often the confirmation of oral or written references is impossible due to the disparate or limited nature of potentially corroborative information. Despite these limitations, references to places in Aboriginal history and story tradition form a valuable corpus of information which has the potential to illustrate the Aboriginal cultural landscape which has largely been ignored by other forms of the historical record.

Places and events known from the oral record are often of considerable and continuing importance to the local Aboriginal community. Places identified from the historic written sources have sometimes fallen out of the oral tradition and provide a valuable means of re-identifying places of historical significance.

4.2 Tribal boundaries and social structures

Based on the gaps, inconsistencies and lack of detail within surviving records, it is now difficult to be certain about the location and nature of linguistic and tribal boundaries.

Tindale conducted a comprehensive review of boundary information across Australia in 1974 (Tindale 1974). Based on Tindale’s work, the Gerringong to Bomaderry study area falls within the tribal area of the Wodi Wodi people. Tindale found that the Wodi Wodi occupied an area which extended from approximately Stanwell Park in the north, to the northern bank of the Shoalhaven River in the south, and west as far as Picton, Moss Vale and Marulan. In keeping with his view that natural topographic boundaries were likely to coincide with cultural ones, Tindale considered the Shoalhaven River to form the boundary between the Wodi Wodi and the Wandandian people to the south.

These groups are distinguished by different languages, with the Wodi Wodi speaking Dharawal (Thuruwal) and the Wandandian speaking Dhurga. Howitt however, refers to the language of the Shoalhaven area as Gurungada (Howitt 1883, 1904). Dharawal was spoken as far north as the southern side of Botany Bay (Eades 1976). Both the Dharawal and Dhurga languages form part of the Yuin linguistic group which extends southward from Sydney to almost the Victorian border (Schmidt 1919).
Contrary to Tindale’s river boundary, ethnographers and other historic sources have tended to describe the Aborigines and linguistics of the lower Shoalhaven in terms of a single cultural character, one district, and one dialect (Capell 1963:S36; Dixon in Eades 1976:4). There is no mention of differences amongst the ‘Shoalhaven Aboriginals’ according to which bank of the Shoalhaven River they came from. In all references, the Shoalhaven tribes are treated collectively. It seems therefore more probable that the tribal boundary on the coastal plain was further south, and concomitant with linguistic evidence, adjacent to Jervis Bay. A boundary in this region would roughly be equivalent with the Shoalhaven-Jervis Bay watershed (Sefton 1980, Officer 1991a).

The term Wodi Wodi is first recorded by Ridley in 1875, who based it on the testimony of Lizzy Malone, the daughter of a woman of the Shoalhaven tribe. She stated that Wodi Wodi was the name of the language spoken by the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra (Ridley 1875, Organ 1990:xlii). Janet Mathews noted the name ‘Illawarra Tribe’ in 1960 stating that ‘old inhabitants around the lake swear that their tribe was called this, and it was bounded by the shores of the lake’ (Mathews c1960:1). She adds that ‘their language appears to be Dharawal, but the Aborigines never use or have heard of that word. They say there was a separate tribe at Shellharbour but that cannot be checked as they appear to have been extinct there for some time (Mathews c1960:1).

Many modern researches use the term Dharawal or Tharawal to refer to the tribal group within the Illawarra. Amongst contemporary local Aboriginal people the term Wodi Wodi is often preferred. However, some groups now identify the Illawarra tribe(s) as the Elouera, possibly guided by early references to the pronunciation of Illawarra as ‘Eloura’ or ‘Ellowera’ meaning a pleasant place (Thornton’s 1896 word list in Organ 1990:398, also McCaffrey’s notebook 13, 1910-1930 in Organ 1990:486). The Aborigines of the Nowra region refer to themselves as the Wandiwandian people (per comm. Sonny Simms 2007).

Within these broad language and tribal groupings were smaller social divisions, perhaps consisting of different family groupings, which appear to have been associated with local areas or home territories. European observers tended to identify these groupings as ‘tribes’ and associated them with localities which may have related to home territories. Examples from the study area include the Shoalhaven (Nowra and the adjacent area south of the Shoalhaven River), Murro (Meroo Meadow region), Broughton Creek (lower Broughton Creek and coastal plain north of the Shoalhaven River) and Gerongong (Seven Mile Beach hinterland to Gerringong) (Egloff, Navin and Officer 1995:41, Organ 1990:c.f. 190).

Howitt records the name of the Yuin ‘clan’ inhabiting the Lower Shoalhaven District as Gurungatta-manji (Howitt 1904:82).

Generally speaking, the term ‘tribe’ is employed to describe a large group of people who, for the most part, speak a common language and occupy a broad tract of land within which ‘clans’ consisting of loosely-related families own the land, and smaller groups referred to as bands perform the daily tasks of group maintenance. Matthews and Everitt (1900:264) described the clan organisation of the Shoalhaven as consisting of related males with married women joining the band of their husband but maintaining an affiliation with their clan of birth. Children belong to the father’s clan with both sons and daughters receiving the totem of their father’s clan.

Bands frequently change composition in what is referred to as a ‘fusion and fission’ model of local group organisation. The Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven banded together for specific activities, were together for a time, and then split apart; later they formed new groups which most likely had at their core a number of closely-related families. Leadership was assigned to experienced elders with the males being predominant. Alexander Berry (1838: letter 2, in Andrews 1979:6) described a band which was camping near his house as ‘natives who were all sitting in groups with their different families’.
Boundaries between local bands and clans were flexible and permeable, allowing groups to move about (Poiner 1976). Where resources, food or materials, were particularly rich, it is likely that use of those goods was controlled and permission had to be obtained from the custodians of that place. Where resources were widely distributed across the landscape, movement of people was less controlled. Disputes did occur, particularly between the coastal people and the mountain groups, but the nature of these arguments is not well recorded, generally speaking, conflict was ascribed to clashes by men over possession of women. It is known that there was armed conflict in the Shoalhaven district, but it is not certain how this impacted on Aboriginal patterns of land use (Egloff, Navin and Officer 1995).

It is likely that Aboriginal groups were able to maintain their structure throughout the early period of European settlement. Later responses may have include seeking refuge and establishing camps either at a distance or close to European properties, being partially integrated into maritime or pastoral activities, or dwelling on the fringes of European communities. As the land-use patterns of the new colonists intensified, there would have been a demand on natural resources, and the food sources of the indigenous people would have diminished radically. In the 1840s and 1850s, the introduction of dairy farming (Bell 1960) further reduced the availability of game in the Shoalhaven District. The issuing of rations by the government encouraged a clustering of people into camps, which would have caused some breaking down of the previous marriage patterns where polygamy (male having more than one wife) was the economically preferred strategy. It is thought that rations were issued to discourage multiple partners (Andrews 1979:9).

New camps frequently were situated close to towns, and most likely contained members of a number of different clans and bands. The camps became more or less permanent, much more fixed on the landscape than the hunting and gathering camps which had provided the primary locus in previous times. In the Shoalhaven district, camps were found at Bilong, near Currambene Creek, and at Coolangatta Mountain on the Berry property. Camp life, with a mixed population from a number of groups, broke down established patterns of local organisation. As the numbers of children with white fathers being born to Aboriginal women became more common, the practice of the offspring being absorbed by the mother's clan increased. Descent came to be reckoned through both lines and support for child-raising was more likely to come from the mother’s family (Alexander 1979). Ceremonies and group activities which once bonded together the clan groups began to weaken and take on new forms. The institution of Christmas was of particular importance, not for its religious connotation, but more for the social meetings which were permitted during the times when other kinds of gatherings of Aboriginal people for more traditional activities were actively discouraged (Egloff, Navin and Officer 1995).

Mobility, particularly among males seeking employment, increased as kinship ties become more extended through interclan marriages. Bell (1960) reported an incident which occurred in 1878 when a group of Aborigines from the South Coast camped in a disused structure at Circular Quay. When asked to leave, twenty-six people stated that they wished to remain. They formed the nucleus of the first Black settlement in Sydney, at La Perouse (Alexander 1976:11).

By the 1880s, it appears as if most of these arrangements were weakening and Aboriginal people were being pressed into reserves or missions. Although the missions provided places for ration distribution they also may have been inappropriately sited or offered constraints and other forms of control such as the infamous removal of mixed-blood children (Egloff, Navin and Officer 1995).
4.3 Historical overview

The first European sightings of the Shoalhaven region were made by Captain Cook in April of 1770. He noted a protected bay which would later be named Port Jervis, and on April 26 'several smokes along shore before dark'. This observation may relate to Aboriginal campfires in the vicinity of Bass Point.

The earliest contacts between Europeans and local Aborigines were amicable (Grant 1801). He recorded large numbers of unarmed Aboriginals whom he described as 'more robust than Sydney Blacks'. Friendly relations continued and in 1811 Governor Macquarie recorded that the population was numerous and disposed to trading for biscuits and tobacco.

First reference to interaction between the Shoalhaven tribes and Europeans comes from the recollections of survivors of the wreck of the 'Sydney Cove' who walked up the South Coast from Gippsland to north of the Illawarra before being picked up. As the exhausted party came towards the Shoalhaven they met with 'unfriendly natives, at whose hands it is thought some of the exhausted ones lost their lives' (Cambage 1916).

In 1805 James Meehan reached the Shoalhaven River on an exploratory trip and noted the existence of considerable stands of red cedar along the lower reaches (Antill 1982). The cedar getters, both legal and illegal, quickly followed and were almost certainly the first Europeans to venture into the coastal escarpment of the Illawarra Range. The first official shipment of cedar from the Shoalhaven, cut from its lower reaches, was in 1811. A year later seven ships were engaged in the trade.

Early cedar getting followed the accessibility of the River into Kangaroo Valley. At Burrier in 1818, Throsby was informed that a boat, probably of cedar-getters, had reached Bendeela (Parronrah) 'some time ago' previous to his entry into the Valley (Griffith 1978:18).

An undocumented and probably violent story of culture contact and exploitation followed the cedar cutters. The conduct of the cutters was mostly beyond the control of Colonial Officials. There is evidence to suggest that the Shoalhaven Aborigines were not friendly toward the newcomers. The timber getters were obliged to fell their timber near the river banks, not only due to transport limitations, but partly for fear of the natives who were described as never having been 'otherwise than inimical to us' (Perry 1954:30). It is possible that conflict between the cedar getters and the Aborigines led Governor Macquarie in 1814, to forbid vessels to enter the Shoalhaven to cut timber, a directive which appears to have been ignored. Such conflict is hinted at in a statement by Macquarie referring to the 'abuse' occasioned by cedar getters whilst logging and extracting timber:

>'There being reason to believe that the Indulgence which has occasionally been granted to Masters and Owners of Vessels to resort to and bring Timber from Shoalhaven is subject to considerable Abuse...' (Sydney Gazette 3/12/1814).

Shortly afterwards, in 1815, a party of three cedar cutters were found to have been murdered by natives 'soon after their arrival at Shoalhaven' (Perry 1954:30). One body was eventually located. This incident made the new white inhabitants afraid of the Aborigines for ten years (Bayley 1975).

Breton tells of an early Shoalhaven incident where 'Three natives persuaded a convict servant to accompany them in search of cedar...' The natives pushed him over a precipice and cut out the dead man's tongue in the hope that eating it would enable them to speak English (Breton 1834:168).

On 4 June 1816, Governor Lachlan Macquarie issued a proclamation which prohibited Aborigines from approaching towns or farms if they were armed or if in a group of more than six. All large gatherings were forbidden regardless of their proximity to any British settlement. This proclamation was seen as sanctioning actions of colonists in allowing them to fire on groups of Aborigines. Prisoners could be taken and those who refused could be shot and their bodies hung in 'public' places. These rules applied to men, women and children (Cleary 1993)
In 1812 the surveyor George Evans made the first recorded European explorations on the Cambewarra and Illawarra Ranges. Following completion of a survey of the Jervis Bay foreshores, Evans intended to return overland to Appin. The difficulty of his party’s ascent of Good Dog Mountain changed his mind, but before descending to the coast he camped overnight on Tapitalee Mountain. Evan’s exploration was assisted by a local Aboriginal he called Bundle (Griffith 1978:12).

In 1818 Charles Throsby and Deputy Surveyor James Meehan were commissioned to locate an overland route between Sydney and Jervis Bay. They were accompanied by Hamilton Hume. The party split into two groups after encountering the barrier of the Shoalhaven Gorge. Throsby, and two others returned to Bundanoon Creek accompanied by two Aborigines ‘a native boy’ called Broughton and Bundle (probably Evan’s guide). There they met two Aborigines both known to Throsby from Lake Illawarra, one called ‘Mamaa’ the other ‘Timelong’. Timelong was later known to the Europeans as ‘King of the Kangaroo Ground’ probably signifying both his co-operative position with the whites and possible high standing within the local Kangaroo Ground Aborigines (letter from Mrs Brooks 1827 quoted in Griffith 1978:13). The two Illawarra Aborigines guided Throsby’s party into Kangaroo Valley via Meryla Pass to a place on the Kangaroo River identified as Yarranghaa.

Meehan’s party notes meeting frightened family parties of Aborigines near Burrier and on the lower reaches near Tarranarrar:

‘We met five native women and three children, at our approach they were extremely frightened’ (field book 143 1/4/1818, in Flood 1980:287).

‘We fell in with several families of natives in all about thirty men, women and children who would all have run away’ [they had been fishing] (field book 143 1/4/1818, in Flood 1980:287).

During 1819, John Oxley and Meehan were returning from Jervis Bay to the Shoalhaven with the aid of a local guide, Broughton:

‘We fell in with five natives who were friends of our guide, Broughton, and at his request they joined us, and when we had recrossed the waterfall, guided us to a high conical forest hill, being the highest of the tract of country lying between Shoalhaven River and Jervis Bay [Nowra Hill], the country in its immediate neighbourhood, better clothed with grass, heavily timbered, the soil a stiff mould, with abundance of Indigofera and various species of Acacias. On the top of this hill was a native tomb, decorated with boughs; Broughton informed us it contained an infant daughter of his’ (Cambage 1916:9).

The surveyor Throsby returned to the Shoalhaven from Kangaroo Valley in 1821 and went to a place he called ‘Nou-woo-ro’, now known as Nowra (Griffith 1978).

From around 1820 the Kangaroo Valley was being used as a protected region to graze cattle. An early group of cattle belonging to a Captain Brooks were brought into the valley from Dapto by a cattleman led by an Aborigine over the mountains east of Carrington Falls (Griffith 1978:15).

Early in 1822, on returning from verifying the existence and source of the Clyde River, Alexander Berry spent several days exploring the Shoalhaven River, up as far as Burrier. Six months later Berry returned with the aim of establishing a permanent settlement. He was in receipt of a government grant of 10,000 acres on the Shoalhaven River, and a labour force of nineteen convicts. This marked the start of permanent European settlement in the Shoalhaven River valley.

Berry chose for the site of his settlement an area of elevated ground at the foot of a hill variously referred to as Coolungatta, Cullengatty, Coloomgatty (Antill 1982:10, Bayley 1975:24,27), and Cooloomgatta (Mitchell 1834 NSW Map). The name was recorded by Surveyor James McBrien in 1824 as Aboriginal, meaning ‘high hill’ (Antill 1982:10).
It is now known as Coolangatta. Howitt records the name of the Yuin ‘clan’ inhabiting the Lower Shoalhaven District as Gurungatta-manji (Howitt 1904:82). ‘Coolangatta’ may therefore be a derivation of the name used by the original Aboriginal social groups who lived in the Nowra region.

Berry’s selection of this location was apparently treated with apprehension by the local Wodi Wodi. Berry notes that in June of that year, during construction of a hut and a canal near the Shoalhaven Heads a native called Wagin (a local chief), confronted the workers and claimed the ground where they had been working (in Jervis 1942:235). This action falls into context when it is acknowledged that the Coolangatta Mountain was a place of ancestral significance to local Aboriginal people.

Another early project of Berry’s was the cutting of a track from Illawarra in order to drive cattle from Bong Bong to the Shoalhaven. It is probable the track traversed the Saddleback Ridge, which forms the eastern spur extending from Barren Grounds (Bayley 1975:24).

Berry’s settlement grew steadily with the immediate introduction of herds of cattle and the establishment of plant crops at Numbaa. Berry initially considered the local Aborigines to be ferocious and his timber workers tried to drive them away. For several years potatoes and maize was ‘stolen’ from the fields (Bayley 1975). Several weeks after Berry’s arrival a party of twenty Aborigines camped near his settlement. Berry notes that there were two chiefs, Wagin, chief of Numba (Lower Shoalhaven), and Yagen chief of Jervis Bay. He also describes Brogher, the brother of Broughton (an Aboriginal guide employed by Berry), as a native chief (probably of area north of Coolangatta). These probable band groupings suggest that most of the Aboriginal population was centred on the more fertile coastal plains.

In 1824 Berry employed seven men to cut cedar from the Broughton Creek (Berry) and Morow (Meroo) regions to supply the growing market demand in Sydney (Antill 1982).

Other grants followed including the first land grants within the Kiama hinterlands in the early to mid 1820s (Jervis 1942). From this period, settlers furnished brief descriptions of Aborigines in the Shoalhaven particularly those which settled on pastoral properties and gained employment (Berry 1834). Aboriginal people also gained employment in fledgling local industries such as the failed whaling station at Jervis Bay.

The population of the local Aboriginal groups was estimated in 1826-27 to be 68 for the ‘Bundgong’ (or Bridgong) and Shoalhaven (the lower Shoalhaven River), and 71 for Kangaroo Ground (Evidence given to Committee of Enquiry into Immigration 1841, in Ellis 1989, Science of Man 4(4):71).

In 1826, the majority of the cedar arriving in Sydney came from Kiama, and the ‘Long Brush’, an area rich in cedar stretching ten kilometres from Jeram (just west of Kiama), to Jamberoo. Equally abundant were the gullies feeding Broughton Creek in the Jasper’s Brush district (Griffith 1978).

In 1828 two employees of Alexander Berry crossed Bellawongarah Mountain and reported extensive cedar on the hillsides above Broger’s Creek.

In 1828 the ‘Astrolobe’, a French ship under the command of Dumont d’Urville landed at Jervis Bay. In his diary of November he remarks to the effect that the paucity of insects and animal life at Jervis Bay surprised him and that this lack could be due to the practice of the inhabitants of burning the bush each year (Rosenman 1988). Joseph Paul Gaimard, the ship’s surgeon and naturalist, published a vocabulary in 1834 of the local language (Organ op cit 1990; 147-148).

In 1829, a cedar cutter engaged by Berry named John Rivett, was reported as murdered at Broughton Creek by Broger (Brogher) a local Aboriginal ‘chief’ and brother to Broughton. Broger was caught and despite pleading his actions were in self defence, was hung in Sydney according to the European justice of the time (Antill 1982).
In 1830 Hoddle and a gang of twenty men cut a bridle track from the area of the present village of Robertson via Noorinan Mountain (the eastern spur of Barren Grounds) and the Saddleback to Kiama. The route however proved unpopular and was not regularly used (Jervis 1942:357).

In 1830 Alexander Berry testified in the trial of Brogar, a brother of his long-standing friend Broughton, who, it is alleged, offered to show a party of cedar cutters some trees and then killed John Rivett, an employee of Berry. The trial took place in Campbell Town, and was reported in the Sydney Gazette of 26 August 1830 (Organ 1990:159). A plea of self-defence was entered by the defendant, which was also held to be common knowledge shared amongst the local Aboriginals, but this did not mitigate the sentence, and Brogar was hanged in Sydney.

In 1831 Robert Anderson applied for 'two sections of land in the district of Shoalhaven known by the native name of Nowry' (Jervis 1942:246).

In 1835, a number of European settlers complained of the 'great and grievous losses' they had suffered from the depredations of the blacks at Kiama. Whole acres of corn were removed in one night and two of the complainants had lost twenty pigs in three months (Sydney Morning Herald Aug 20 1835).

In December of the same year, the convict transport ship the ‘Hive’ was wrecked off Bherwerre Beach. Ensign Kenny managed, with Aboriginal assistance, to reach Alexander Berry's estate for help (Navin and Officer 1995). This is not the only documented instance of local Aboriginal groups providing assistance to Europeans in distress. In 1805 the cutter 'Nancy' was wrecked and the crew was successfully rescued and travelled overland to Sydney (Organ 1990:29).

There are a number of historical accounts of enmities in the early to mid nineteenth century between tribal groupings of the northern and southern Illawarra Dharawal speakers. These consist of clashes between the 'Illawarra' tribes and apparent northward offensives of the Bong Bong, Broughton Creek, Kiama and Shoalhaven tribes. This has been interpreted as a consequence of changes in social order, resource distribution and political alliances brought about by the European settlement and occupation of tribal lands (DEC 2005:16). Examples are the battle of Fairy Meadow in 1830 between the Bong Bong and Illawarra groups (involving 1500 participants and 100 deaths), and a battle at Albion Park in around 1842 between the Broughton Creek and King Hooka's Illawarra tribes (DEC 2005:18).

The Albion Park battle occurred somewhere in the area between the present Albion Park railway station and Albion Park township. The battle involved more than 400 individuals and was reportedly precipitated when the 'Coolangatta blacks' moved into the Illawarra with the intention of attacking the white settlements. The Coolangatta force was repelled after a day of combat and the death of many participants, including King Hooka who was reportedly buried in a variety of locations around Lake Illawarra (Young in Organ 1990:375, Dollahan in Organ 1990:492 & 494, Thomas 1975:12).

In 1836, James Backhouse toured the Australian Colony and passed through the study region, travelling from the Five Islands (Wollongong), through Colomgatta (Berry's estate on the Shoalhaven), and Kangaroo Ground (Kangaroo Valley) to Bong Bong (Backhouse 1843). Backhouse encountered many parties of Aborigines, often describing them as partly clothed in European clothes and subsisting according to both traditional and European sources of food and materials. When at Dapto, Backhouse engaged an Aborigine known as 'Tommy, of the Kangaroo Ground' to guide the party to Bong Bong. As part of his wages he was provided with a shirt, a pair of canvass trousers and a woollen jacket to replace his 'ragged' suit. Tommy left the party 'without notice' at Shoalhaven and was met up again on the Kangaroo Ground where 'he had been engaged in a fight' (Backhouse 1843:435).

On the 1 October Backhouse's party crossed the Shoalhaven with John and William Berry being rowed by three blacks, one of whom named Lewis recognised us, having met us at John Batman's in Van Diemans Land. He is one of those who were employed in collecting the natives of that Colony and was dressed in an old suit of Colonel Arthur's clothes.
Backhouse goes on to recount that, ‘A Black came from a sawing establishment of Alexander Berry’s where he had learned to work and said he had cleared a piece of land and sowed some pumpkins. He asked also for some seed potatoes to plant, and said he thought it much better to have settled habitation than to lead a wandering life like his countrymen. Alexander Berry was much pleased with this spontaneous attempt on the part of the Black to settle, having often in vain tried to persuade some of these people to adopt such a course’ (in Organ 1990:205, and in Egloff, Navin and Officer 1995:37). This passage is revealing for its indication of Aboriginal employment in the Berry estate industries, and the provision of space for vegetable gardens tilled by Aboriginal employees.

At the foot of the Cambewarra Mountains, he met a group of six aborigines dressed in blankets and old European clothes. ‘These people were accoutred with hunting and fishing spears, and weapons of war’ including a death spear barbed with ‘pieces of glass’ and a shield painted in white with red lines (Backhouse 1843:433).

On the Kangaroo Ground (Kangaroo Valley) Backhouse noted an assembly of about two hundred Aborigines. It seems probable from his description that he observed the end of a ceremonial gathering amongst some of the southern groups of the Wodi Wodi people:

‘Three tribes of Blacks were assembled here last night; one belonging to the neighbourhood, and the others to Shoal Haven and Bong Bong. There were forty men in one of these tribes; they were going to Cow-Pastures, [Camden district] to learn a new song, that had been invented by some of their country people there!... All the men had undergone the ceremony of having one front tooth knocked out, on being admitted to the privileges of manhood; and they had the cartilages of their noses perforated, and bones, the thickness of a quill, and about four inches long, through them. They wore fillets of net-work around their heads, and beads, formed of short pieces of reed, around their necks’ (Backhouse 1843:435).

Perhaps in response to his need for cheap manual labour, Alexander Berry conducted a census of Aboriginal people in the immediate proximity to his estate in 1838. He remarked that the numbers had decreased in the last sixteen years.

His collation identifies the individual bands in the region:

- Gerongong Tribe: 21
- Uurro Tribe: 24
- Numba Tribe: 25
- Jervis Bay: 62
- Broughton Creek: 26
- Shoalhaven Tribe: 39
- Wooragee Tribe: 45

(By Burton Papers NSW Archives, in Egloff 1981:13)

By the late 1830’s the majority of the lower coastal plain between Gerringong and the mouth of the Shoalhaven River had been taken up as land grants. Major land grants covered some of the best grazing land in Kangaroo Valley and by 1840 permanent European settlement of the valley was well established with around 10-20 resident Europeans (Antill 1982, Griffith 1978:27).

By 1840 the Coolangatta Estate had a population of 270 people.

Through the 1840s and 1850s Aboriginal communities were increasingly impacted by the spread and consolidation of European settlement. In response, Aboriginal people either settled on the pastoral stations, in ‘fringe camps’ adjacent to European settlements, or were forced into adjacent rough and mountainous country. In the mid 1840s it was recorded that there were five Aboriginal camps in Kangaroo Valley, ‘each camp in a separate gully’ (Griffith 1978:9). Egloff (1981) concludes that by the 1840s the Shoalhaven Aborigines had been reduced to remnant groups either wandering large tracts of the coast, or subsisting at the edge of the now permanent European settlements.
Reports from the 1850s onwards suggest a trend in Aboriginal occupation and subsistence such that camps and most food gathering and hunting became concentrated along the coast. This pattern was shaped by European settlement which pushed indigenous people onto country unsuitable for agriculture, notably the coast and the adjacent wetlands (DEC 2005:25). Permanent Aboriginal camps became established on Broughton Creek (Berry), Crooked River (also referred to as Black Head or Gerongong), around Jervis Bay (notably Bilong on Currambene Creek), and in a gully on the northern side of the Coolangatta Mountain on the Berry Estate (Egloff 1981). The Coolangatta camp had grown with the Berry Estate, and a number of the residents there were employed as labourers and to grow vegetables (Egloff 1981).

Other encampments known from the later half of the nineteenth century include the banks of Broughton Creek at Broughton Village (Donlon 1991a:12), and the banks of Broughton Mill Creek adjacent to Berry (Barbara Timberry in DEC 2004:39-41).

In 1850 a newspaper article on the Shoalhaven region noted that:

'Bacchus has many more votaries than he used to have and aboriginal tribes have become great drunkards, yet there is only one public house in the neighbourhood' (Sydney Morning Herald Oct 5 1850, in Jervis 1942).

The first European house in Nowra is reported to have been built on the edge of the swampy plain by John Smith in 1855 (Bayley 1975). The proposed government township of Nowra was approved by the governor in 1852 and the sale of town lots began in January 1857. By 1875 the township of Nowra had a population of 120.

By the 1860's the potential refuge posed by the remaining mountainous and forested slopes was being eroded by closer European land settlement and consequential reductions in bush foods and game from forest clearance and the pasturage of herds of cattle and sheep.

In 1867, the death of an Aborigine known as 'Commodore' or 'Commandant' was noted 'from the effects of exposure and want' at the Aboriginal encampment on the Minnamurra Estuary, on the then Eureka Estate. 'Commandant', or Jaunda, had been listed in the 1837 blanket return at Shoalhaven (Coolangatta) as a member of the Gerongong tribe, then aged 14 (in Organ 1990:214, 321). This is suggestive of considerable movement of Aborigines between the main encampments in this part of the Illawarra, namely between Coolangatta (on the Berry Estate), Crooked River, and the Minnamurra River Estuary.

Reclamation of the Shoalhaven wetlands began on a major scale from 1873. By 1909 a total of 600 km of drains had been constructed. The draining of the wetlands effectively alienated the last terrestrial wild food areas open to the remaining local Aborigines.

Following cholera and typhoid epidemics in the Coolangatta camp in the late 1890's, The Board for the Protection of Aborigines moved residents to a newly proclaimed Reserve at Roseby Park (Orient Point) in 1900 (Antill 1982, Bayley 1975).

The last remembered initiation ceremony staged in the region was conducted in the late 1880's by 'the Shoalhaven River tribes' on the southwestern side of Moeyan Hill, a low hill to the north of Coolangatta Mountain (Mathews 1896).

Aboriginal groups responded to the dispossession of their lands in a variety of ways including fostering camps close to pastoral properties, as well as at places of refuge away from settlement. Some people moved into areas of settlement and communities grew on the edges of rural towns. In response to moves into areas of settlement, the New South Wales government established a system of Aboriginal reserves in the 1880's.
In 1881 a Protector of Aborigines was appointed. The Report of the Protector George Thornton provides the first comprehensive census since the blanket issue returns of the 1840s. It gives the following information with respect to the people of Shoalhaven and Jervis Bay (Thornton cited by Organ 1990:339-341).

Shoalhaven - Most of the half casts are employed. The Jervis Bay people live by fishing and Government rations. The Jervis Bay blacks get Government rations. This is necessary as there are few white people in that locality. Three boats in the district - one at Terrara, one Broughton Creek, one Jervis Bay. All in good order. Provided by Government. About thirty half-cast children are at school at Coolangatta, five at Jervis Bay and three blacks. [Blanket] issue necessary and not in any way misappropriated. [Supply of clothing needed] at Jervis Bay. A number of them given to drink. But since the Act of 1882 came into force drunkenness has ceased. [Medical] own expense.

The Protector was replaced in 1883 by the Aborigines Protection Board which by the turn of the century had established 133 reserves across the State. Aboriginal reserves were sited to allow for the exploitation of natural resources (marine and estuarine) at a distance from white rural centres (Goodall 1982).

The Aborigines Protection Board was also responsible for the infamous policy which resulted in the removal of thousands of Aboriginal children to the Cootamundra Girls Home, the Kinchela Boys Home, and in the lower Shoalhaven, the Bomaderry Aboriginal Children’s Home (Read n.d). The Bomaderry Aboriginal Children’s Home was established in 1908 when it received seven ‘native’ children, six orphans and one baby (Bayley 1975:176).

Missionaries were allowed to live on many of the reserves and in popular terms Aboriginal people came to refer to the reserves as ‘missions’. Reserves to which managers were assigned were referred to as ‘stations’. Like the many small reserves created in the nineteenth century these places were regarded by the government as temporary arrangements to be altered or closed on the advice of the Board.

Prior to 1890 at least two petitions were presented to the government of NSW requesting a reserve within the Shoalhaven district and at Jervis Bay (Navin 1995:46). These were refused by the Government.

The pattern of later nineteenth century Aboriginal occupation on the lower Illawarra coastal plain can be characterised by an early evolution of non government or mission-aided encampments, and later enforced translocation onto government reserves and mission institutions. Prior to the establishment of government reserves, most Aboriginal settlements developed around the remaining access to coastal resources such as at Crooked River (Gerringong), or sources of employment and/or provisions such as Berry’s Coolangatta Estate, and towns such as Broughton Creek (Berry). All of these areas of encampment appear to have been established or continued, despite the alienation of the lands to European freehold owners. Their location may have been determined by a variety of factors, including established seasonal camping locations, proximity to food resources, friendly (or non-hostile) white settlers/landholders, and proximity to European settlements, rations and employment.

Toward the latter part of the nineteenth century, government authorities placed pressure on Aborigines to re-settle within government reserves. This effectively removed local Aboriginal groups from freehold and crown lands, and concentrated the remaining populations onto reserve lands. Reserves were often situated on marginal land, away from people’s traditional lands and forced peoples of differing tribal affiliation into close contact. Despite this, the occupation of coastal and fringe camps continued, especially as part of the required movement of people looking for seasonal work.
In 1886 an Aboriginals Protectorate existed in Kangaroo Valley and two places were allocated for the few remaining Aborigines, one near Trimble's Creek at Barrengarry and the other on Chittick's Farm, on the southern bank of the Kangaroo River, one mile from the township (Griffith 1978:10). In 1889 a small privately instigated Aboriginal settlement was established, but by the end of 1890 Hughie Anderson, the Aboriginal director, claimed his mission was starved out of the valley (Bayley 1975:123). McGuigan (n.d:32) notes that a reserve of 370 acres was set aside in 1890. It is not clear if this relates to any of the reserves otherwise mentioned in the literature.

A description of the Valley published in 1889 stated that:

'There is still a settlement two miles from Barrengarry, where the queen of the tribe lives. When I visited the camp, it was occupied by a dozen aborigines including three handsome children, who were extremely shy, and rolled themselves in blankets the moment our party approached. The “homes” are as described by early writers – consisting of large sheets of bark propped up with sticks, a fire being kept burning day and night. This is the only shelter' (Morris 1889:224).

By 1891 a census recorded only eleven resident Aborigines within Kangaroo Valley (Griffith 1978:10-11).

In 1899 a government Aboriginal reserve of 43 acres was established near the northern end of Seven Mile Beach (Figure 4.3). The reserve was revoked in January 1953 (AR 29911, McGuigan no date:39). Although the exact nature of Aboriginal occupation on this reserve is not well documented, its location and duration supports the documentary evidence for a historical focus of Aboriginal occupation in the Crooked River (Black Head/Gerringong) area.

In a census conducted by the Commonwealth in 1901 the Aboriginal population of the Illawarra was distributed across seven camps with 33 at Port Kembla, 13 at Minnamurra River, 8 at Dapto, 18 at Bombo, 20 at Gerringong, 3 at Jamberoo and 3 at Kiama, giving a total of just 98 (DEC 2005:24). Noted by the census at Coolangatta were the Amatto, Ardler, Ferguson, Judson, Methven, Nipple and Steel families. Families at Roseby Park were Bundle and Carpenter (State Archives NSW in DEC 2005:25).

In 1903 there were 100 people living at Roseby Park. Other local Aboriginal camps and reserves included: Bilong on Currambene Creek at Jervis Bay, Beecroft Peninsula, Orient Point, and Wreck Bay. The old Wreck Bay and Orient Point reserves are now Aboriginal owned land.

From 1940 to 1969 the Aborigines Protection Board vigorously pursued a policy of assimilation. Reserves were reduced in size or were revoked (Long 1970). Houses and facilities were allowed to deteriorate in an attempt to force Aboriginal people to move off the reserves.

Goodall considered that the pattern of reserve establishment reflected changes in European landuse more than it does the distribution of the people they were supposed to be servicing (Goodall 1982:58):

‘South Coast Guris continued in the 1900s to use both reserved and non-reserved land as a residential base. Some gained casual or seasonal work with white dairy or crop farmers while others were employed in the continuous work of the timber industry, either felling or in saw mills. Many South Coast Guris, however, continued to support themselves fishing, some at a subsistence level but others increasingly selling their catch in competition with white fishermen. A total of 37 Board-provided boats were in use by the turn of the century; more than half had been supplied to South Coast Guris who used them for fishing …’

Town expansion caused the revocation of the Ulladulla reserve in 1922 and that at Tomakin near Moruya in 1925.
In 1935 the Shoalhaven Council received a petition signed by 64 citizens requesting that the Aboriginal people who had established 'shanty' dwellings in the public reserve be removed to Roseby Park. It was claimed that the living conditions were unsanitary. The Board responded that it could not force the people to move to the reserve. By March of 1937 all informal dwellings, those erected without council approval, had been demolished throughout the township and the squatters removed to the reserve. However this did not meet fully with the needs of the town citizens and further complaints were lodged against an Aborigine who had erected a dwelling with council approval (Antill 1982:104 in Organ 1990:381, Goodall 1982:306). The council was wise enough not to heed the citizens demand for removal (Egloff, Navin and Officer 1995).

A Directorate was established in 1969 to control reserves and an advisory council with Aboriginal members was appointed. In 1979 the New South Wales Aborigines Welfare Board, the successor to the Aborigines Protection Board, was abolished and the reserves transferred to the Aboriginal Lands Trust. To meet the new policy of self-determination, steps were then taken to consolidate, revitalise and upgrade reserves. Reserve ownership has for the most part been transferred to Local Aboriginal Land Councils.

Today, Aboriginal people live throughout the Illawarra and South Coast as residents of the larger towns and cities - Bega, Nowra, and Wollongong, as well as maintaining communities on former reserves, and are found throughout the region in family groups. Communities of Aboriginal people are located at La Perouse, Orient Point (Jerrinja), Wreck Bay, and Wallaga Lake, as well as on 'informal reserves' such as Browns Lane near Nowra and Murray’s Flats outside of Bega.

4.4 Places of known or reported historical and cultural aboriginal significance

The following sections provide information on known or reported places which have, or may potentially have, historical and cultural significance to the local Aboriginal community. This information has come from previously prepared heritage assessment reports and other published material, including local histories and some recent compilations of oral histories. The locations of these places are shown indicatively in Figure 4.17.

Despite the fact that the number of places occurring within the Princes Highway Upgrade study area is limited to four, the following review is inclusive of places situated within the broader region of the southern Illawarra range and coastal plain, the lower Shoalhaven, and the Kangaroo Valley. All of these places form part of an interlinked cultural landscape, within which the Princes Highway Upgrade study area is situated.

The four places which occur within the upgrade study area are the historical encampments at Berry and Broughton Village, the “Little Mountain” or “Dicky Wood’s Meadow” battle ground, and Toolijooa Hill.

4.4.1 Missions, reserves and settlements

4.4.1.1 Coolangatta Estate

The Wodi Wodi people of the lower Shoalhaven responded in part to the establishment of the Berry Estate at Coolangatta with the development of an Aboriginal settlement adjacent to the European one. The settlement may have had both an independent ‘fringe’ character, as well as a more formal and estate sanctioned function. It is known that Aboriginal people were variously employed on the estate and that the encampment probably served as a residence for these workers. Egloff states that the camp grew with the Berry Estate and a number of the residents were employed as labourers and to grow vegetables (Egloff 1981). The Estate appears also to have provided food and supplies to camp residents and as a consequence, the encampment population probably fluctuated with residents of varying transience. The annual distribution of government issued blankets by Berry is an example of such resource distribution.
The exact location, or locations, of the encampment are not well established although Egloff states that the Aboriginals camped in a gully at the northern foot of the mountain (Egloff 1981, Egloff, Navin and Officer 1995).

In the 1880s the report of the Protector of Aborigines George Thorton noted the presence of ‘about thirty half-cast children are at school at Coolangatta’ (cited by Organ 1990:339-341).

By 1890, the situation of the Aboriginal people on the Berry Estates had deteriorated such that they apparently presented a neglected and ragged appearance (Bayley 1975). One hundred and thirty Aboriginals are recorded in 1890 as living in the overcrowded camps when fever broke out that year (Egloff, Navin and Officer 1995). The relatively large number of people at the encampment at this time suggests that the settlement also functioned as a refuge for the Wodi Wodi people, now largely constrained from accessing their most productive lands on the coastal hinterland and plains.

In September of 1897, Archibald Campbell made the following notes from Janie an Aborigine from the Crooked River encampment:

She... stated that several of her people, or tribe, lived at Coolangatta in houses occupied by them from the late Mr Berry & from which Dr Hay their present landlord did not disturb them.

She could not tell how many were at that encampment, but said that there were only three real Blacks among them - one man & two women - all the others being half-castes.' (in Organ 1990:464)

The cholera and typhoid epidemics in the Coolangatta camp in the late 1890s were closely followed by the break-up of the Berry Estate lands and the end of the practice of managers looking after the camp. The Board for the Protection of Aborigines moved residents to a newly proclaimed Reserve at Roseby Park (Orient Point) in 1900 (Antill 1982, Bayley 1975, Egloff, Navin and Officer 1995).

Nellie Mooney relates how her father Joseph Luke Ardler was born on Coolangatta Mountain in 1899 (Nellie Mooney in DEC 2004:17-18). She states that her father ‘could remember the move when the Berry family moved all the Aboriginal people to Roseby Park. He was about two years old at the time. He could just remember being put up on the horse and dray with all the family goods and being taken down to the river and rowed across to Roseby Park’ (DEC 2004:18).

4.4.1.2 Roseby Park

After David Berry’s death, the Coolangatta Estate was broken up and the Board for the Protection of Aborigines decided to move the residents of the Aboriginal encampment to a new reserve dedicated at Roseby Park (Orient Point). This reserve was situated on the southern side of the mouth of the Crookhaven River and suited the purposes of the Board in keeping Aboriginal people off the arable land, and relocating them where they were more or less out of sight. Roseby Park was ideally situated for a fishing community and, as long as it did not result in economic competition with Europeans, fishing was encouraged by the authorities with boats and gear being provided by the Protector of Aborigines.

Two reserve areas totalling 66 acres were declared between 1901 and 1907 (McGuigan n.d.:42). Aboriginals came to live at Roseby Park not only from the Berry estates but also from a nearby camp at Greenwell Point (Cane 1988). At first, the housing was nothing more than huts, some of them transported from Aboriginal camps, others built of whatever was available. In 1900, five old buildings were moved from Coolangatta and five new ones built at a total cost of £300. An eighteen foot boat was provided and £50 was given by Dr John Hay of Coolangatta. In 1903 there were one hundred people at Roseby Park of which 42 were children. A provisional school became a public school in 1906.
In 1927, the reserve was expanded with an additional 39 acres. The accommodation deteriorated however and by 1930 the situation had become so bad that the place had to be completely rebuilt (Long 1970). Currently, after more than a century of continuous occupation, the Roseby Park community is referred to as Jerrinja.

4.4.1.3 Crooked River

There are a small number of references in official and ethno-historic documentation which indicate that the Crooked River estuary at Gerroa was a focus for Aboriginal occupation following European settlement of the Illawarra. This location appears also to have been referred to in a general sense as Black Head and Gerringong. Alternatively there may also have been fringe settlements at Gerringong, perhaps along the Werri Creek estuary (Figure 4.1).

The 1834 Return of Aboriginal Natives taken at Shoal Haven identifies eleven people, including five male adults, 3 ‘wives’ and three children, belonging to the ‘Gerongong’ tribe. The return notes that the Gerongong tribe reside at Blackhead (in Organ 1990:189). Given the absence of water on the point itself, it is probable that the encampment was sited on the Crooked River estuary, in the general area of present day Gerroa. Local oral history indicates that the encampment was focused on the southern side of the estuary near its mouth (pers. comm. Margaret Weir Feb. 2007).

In the 1836 Return at Shoalhaven (Coolangatta), the Gerongong tribe included fourteen people, and by 1837, twenty one people, including eleven male adults, five wives and five children (in Organ 1990:201,214). A similar number was indicated in Berry’s Census of Natives in 1838 (in Organ 1990:240). Berry’s blanket return for 1840 lists thirty four recipients, including eleven adult males, eleven adult women and twelve children (in Organ 1990:264-5).

Two references to the Crooked River encampment date to the 1890s. Bayley notes that following the extension of the railway to Gerringong in around 1893:

‘A buggy met the trains to take tourists to the beauty spots of the district, sometimes as far as Crooked River, where the aborigines had boats and fishing nets and Chinese collected mutton fish for export to China’. (Bayley 1976:142)

In September of 1897, Archibald Campbell made the following notes:

‘Saw a Black Jin at Kiama Railway station today - who stated as follows in reply to questions by me:
That she was one of the Crooked River Encampment Blacks, & her name Janie - her husband’s name “Tom”.
That she was the only pure Aboriginal in the encampment, which included 5 men; 4 women; 10 children - or nineteen altogether - 18 being half castes’ (in Organ 1990:464).

These references suggest that the settlement was in place from at least the 1830s to the turn of the century and probably beyond. The encampment appears to have developed as a non-government sponsored settlement, centred on the amenity and resources of the river estuary. The settlement may have been reliant upon fishing, occasional government rations such as blankets and the provision of boats, and possibly casual employment from local farmers and/or the Chinese abalone collectors mentioned by Bayley.

Some local Aboriginal families have maintained their association with the Crooked River area throughout the twentieth century, using the area for hunting, fishing and bush camping. Many of these activities and associations continue to the present day.

Colley (1988:3) documents evidence from a local Aboriginal elder stating that the Crooked River area is believed to be the location of an Aboriginal and European burial site. The late Mr Dick Henry, Illawarra Community Elder, also mentioned to Navin in 1992 that he was aware of two known burials from the Crooked River Estuary (Navin Officer Heritage Consultants 2000).
Figure 4.1: View of Gerroa and the mouth of the Crooked River estuary in 1920, looking west. The Aboriginal encampment was reportedly located on the far side of the river.

4.4.1.4 Seven Mile Beach Reserve

The establishment in 1899 of a government reserve on 43 acres just one kilometre west of the Crooked River estuary mouth suggests an intention by the Aborigines Protection Board to support, and or impose a level of control over the existing Cooked River settlement (McGuigan n.d:39). It is not known if the reserve location is indicative of the original settlement, or an attempt to move the settlement away from the general recreation reserve which occupied the southern bank closer to the estuary mouth. The reserve was revoked on 25 January 1953 (McGuigan n.d:39). It is not known to what extent the reserve lands were occupied or utilised. (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2: Extract from Parish of Broughton Map 4th Ed 1893-1898, (Lands Dept ID 10353801), showing the location of the Seven Mile Beach Aboriginal Reserve which was gazetted in 1899 and revoked in 1953.
Berry encampment

Barbara Timbery was born at Roseby Park in 1913. She recalls camping at the Berry Camp and being employed to pick beans on the local farms. The camp was situated on Broughton Creek, just before you get to the town, ‘That’s where we camped. There near the creek. That’s up where the hospital is, across the bridge there. There’s a club there now, but that’s where we camped back then’ (Barbara Timbery in DEC 2004:41). Her reference to the club indicates that the camp was situated on the western flats of Broughton Mill Creek, where the Berry Bowling Club is now situated). (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3: The flats where the Berry Bowling Club is now situated is the reported location of a former Aboriginal historic encampment. View looking south from the Princes Highway

Aboriginal encampment at Brookside (Broughton Village)

Information collected from a local community questionnaire for a previous highway upgrade option analysis revealed a local oral tradition that ‘Aboriginal people were known to have camped along the banks of Broughton Creek in the vicinity of ‘Brookside’ at Broughton Village until at least the turn of the century’. (Figure 4.4). It was added that ‘artefacts have been observed and collected in this area in the past’, suggesting that this location also was occupied in prehistory (Donlon 1991a:12).
4.4.2 Cosmological, ceremonial and story places

4.4.2.1 The southern Illawarra Range

Only fragments of ethnographic information survive for the Southern Illawarra Range. From these it can be demonstrated that specific routes and passes were used across the range and that certain places had cosmological significance and were places of high cultural significance.

In 1872 Mackenzie recorded a Thurawal ‘legend’ from the ‘Kangargraon’ region ‘word for word from the mouth of the teller’ which he translated as the Nut Gatherers or The Purungalaioula (Mackenzie 1874). Mackenzie provides an English translation and an expanded English prose version. The story recounts how several women who had been collecting ‘poorawang’ nuts were turned into stone after meeting and speaking to a dog along a path across the range. The dog carried a mullet which it had brought from the river. This occurred at a place called Bendthualaly:

'At Bendthualaly they lie side by side,
With uplifted arm, as they fell down and died
To this day may be seen, with their nuts round them strewn
The Purungalaioula all turned into stone'.
(Mackenzie 1874:256).

Mackenzie states that Bendthualaly is ‘between Perry’s Meadows and the Kangaroo Ground’. Perry’s Meadows is probably a reference to (B)erry’s meadow country on Broughton Creek. This would indicate a portion of the Illawarra Range between Mount Cambewarra and Barren Grounds. Mathews (1904) describes the same story stating that the story describes a taboo on women conversing with dogs during ‘the legendary period’.

'...they were immediately changed to stone, together with their bags of burrawangs and their yamsticks, gualang. Rocks bearing a fanciful resemblance to these women are pointed out at a place on the hills between the Kangaroo Valley and the coast.' (Mathews 1904:347).
Unfortunately there is not enough detail to provide anything other than a tentative location for Bendthualaly. The closest surviving local name is Bundewallah which corresponds relatively well, given that the Dharawal ‘d’ sound was ‘d-th’.

Bendth-u-al-a-ly
Bund-ew-all-ah

Bundewallah Creek forms the eastern catchment between Broughton Head and Bellawongarah (Tapitalee) Mountain. These are two prominent flat topped hilltops on the Illawarra range, northwest of Berry (Figure 4.5). Both are narrow, horizontally bedded Hawkesbury sandstone residuals which stand out against the ridgeline as an obvious pair. In the absence of any indication of the scale of the Purungalaioula these residuals seem the most probable candidates for the women turned to stone. Broughton Head in particular includes a narrow rock promontory (ending in Wildfire Trig) which could be interpreted as an extended arm and both residuals are variously fringed by dislodged rock tors which may represent the burrawang nuts.

The Purungalaioula met the dog along an Aboriginal trail and it is known that one of the earliest European bridle trails passed just 800 m northeast of Broughton Head through Woodhill Gap. It is highly likely that this trail followed an existing Aboriginal trail which utilised the Woodhill Mountain Ridge down to Broughton Creek.

Bellawongarah Mountain is also the recorded home of the Wulthegang. The story of the Wulthegang was described to Archibald Campbell on several occasions between 1899 and 1902 by Buthring, a local Shoalhaven Aborigine (in Organ 1990:lix-ix). Buthring described the Wulthegang as an immortal “little hairy man”, about two feet high, of abnormal strength, and the colour of a “quarter caste”, ‘...who lived in a cave on the highest point of Cambewarra Mountain Range – the sandstone capped summit southwestward of Mr Graham’s residence on the Berry – Kangaroo Valley Road. The name of this mountain was “Boorul”. Reference to the second edition of the Bunberra parish map reveals the Graham farm to be modern day ‘Rockfield Park’ situated immediately northeast of Bellawongarah Mountain. Buthring added that the Wulthegang ‘did not eat bread or such things as ordinary blackfellows and white fellows did, but ate bush possums, which existed in the locality for his use’. The Wulthegang and his several small “Jins” are never seen. ‘He always disappears into his cave when approached. But if he did not do so all would be killed by him that came his way’ (in Organ 1990:lix-lx).

A different but perhaps related cosmological creature was described to R.H. Mathews by a Shoalhaven Aborigine and published by Mathews in 1909 (in Organ 1990:lviii). This creature was called a Wallanthagang and ‘frequented the thick tea-tree scrubs and brush in the swamps near Cambewarra mountain’. This was also ‘a small man-like creature, but very thick set and strong. He wore plenty of feathers in his hair and carried a large bundle of light spears. His food consisted of parrots which he speared and carried in a bag slung over his shoulder. Only one is ever seen at the same time and their camp sites or fires are never observed. If unlucky enough to encounter a Wallanthagang, a blackfellow could look forward to being thrown up several feet into the air and let fall heavily upon the ground until helpless. He would then be carried to a bull-dog ant’s nest ‘so that these insects might sting him until he recovered’ (in Organ 1990:lix).

There are interesting parallels across the Wulthegang and Wallanthagang descriptions. These include similar sounding names, small stature, great strength, difficulty of detection, residence on or near the southern Illawarra Range, a diet consisting of a single animal type, and possessing considerable potential for malice. Both stories underscore the significance of the range as a foundation for local tradition and lore.
Before the 1860's there were no roads into Kangaroo Valley and all European access was via established bridle trails which followed the routes used by the early squatters and their stockmen (Bayley 1975:49). Most of these probably followed existing Aboriginal trails or were based on routes and passes originally revealed by local Aboriginal guides. An example is a trail marked as 'Mr O'Brien's Road from the Five Islands to the Kangaroo Ground' on a sketch map by Cornelius O'Brien in 1824 (letter to Governor Brisbane Sept 22 1824 in Bayley 1975:42, Griffith 1978:16). This trail follows the Brogers Creek valley before crossing the escarpment near its head through the Woodhill Gap. The present Wattamolla and Woodhill Mountain Roads approximate this early route and it was this trail that passed close to Broughton Head and may have been the path used by the Purungalaioula.

An indication of the ritual or sacred significance of sites on the Southern Illawarra Range comes from a reference in a story by Percy Mumbulla (recorded by Robinson 1958:118-20). The story describes contemporary events about Bertie Bennelong, a Kempsey tribe member who attempts to avoid two doowan, men with devils' powers, sent to avenge his breaking with tribal law by marrying a Nowra woman. Bertie consults Jimmy Clemens, a local clever man:

'... Bertie wants to go through the rules of old Jimmy's tribe to make him strong to beat these two men.

'Old Jimmy takes him to the mountain at Nowra. This mountain is the one called the Three Sisters. Old Jimmy says to him, "You must follow me up this mountain. Whatever I eat, you must eat. If big stones and rocks come down, rushing and crashing past you, if tree limbs fall, come straight down and stick in the ground in front of you, you must keep on walking. You will be getting power all the time.

'Old Jimmy starts walking up the mountain and Bertie follows on...

'At last Bertie can't go on. He can't stand the strain any longer. He says to old Jimmy, "Its no use, old man, this power is too strong for me." (Robinson 1958:118-19)

The name Three Sisters may be a reference to the lithified nut gatherers, however the specific location of the mountain remains unclear.
Figure 4.5: View of Broughton Head on the southern Illawarra Range, looking northwest from Woodhill Mountain Road. This is one of several prominent, escarpment bound, flat topped hilltops on the range which may relate to the cosmology of the local Wodi Wodi people.

Coolangatta Mountain

Coolangatta Mountain has been recorded as a cosmological site that features strongly in local spiritual beliefs (Matthews 1896, Mathews 1898). The hill has been variously referred to as Coolungatta, Cullengatty, Coloomgatty (Antill 1982, Bayley 1975), and Cooloomgatta (Mitchell 1834). The name was originally recorded by Surveyor James McBrien in 1824 as Aboriginal meaning ‘high hill’ (Antill 1982; op cit). (Figures 4.6 and 4.7).

Of Coolangatta, Mathews (1898a) wrote:

> It is believed that it was to this mountain that the dead went after burial in midden sands. The spirits of the recently buried had to ascend from a rock on the mountain's eastern side, to a world of spirits. In doing so they were required to avoid various dangers which were relative to their life's deeds.

> The deceased ‘arose and travelled to the spirit world, sliding down cabbage palms through a fiery barrier to the spirit world’ (ANCA 1995).
Figure 4.6: Mount Coolangatta, viewed from the northern end of the study area, looking southwest

Figure 4.7: Mount Coolangatta, viewed from the Jaspers Brush area, looking southeast
The Little Mountain or Dicky Wood’s Meadow battle ground

An Aboriginal battlefield is recorded within the study area, in the vicinity of Broughton Village. This information comes from notes made in 1900 by Archibald Campbell from various interviews with a Shoalhaven Aborigine known as Buthring (in Organ 1990:470). Campbell writes 'Buthring says that one of the main battle-fields the blacks used in the olden times was 'The Little Mountain" or “Dicky Wood’s Meadow” beside the creek , on the east side of Broughton Village. He said the different tribes from all directions used to fight there – mostly about women matters. “Lots” of blacks were killed there in battle, and buried here and there about’ (in Organ 1990:470). (Figure 4.8).

Figure 4.8: The Broughton Creek flats, to the east of Broughton Village, looking southeast. This is the approximate reported location of a tribal battleground

Toolijooa Ridge

Toolijooa ridge is a locally prominent ridgeline which extends southwards from Currys Mountain, to the east of Foxground, to Toolijooa and Harley Hill in the south, adjacent to Foys Swamp on the coastal plain. (Figure 4.9).

Information collected from a local community questionnaire for a previous highway upgrade option analysis revealed a local oral tradition that ‘an old cattle trail now running along Toolijooa ridge and down towards the coast actually follows an old Aboriginal trail which had its origins in Foxground. In addition, ‘on Toolijooa Hill, close to this trail, there is thought to be a fairly open area associated with a stand of Lilli Pilli trees, a stone arrangement and bora ring. Stone artefacts have also been found by locals on the north saddle close to this trail’ (Donlon 1991:13).

This information is supported by a note on the DECC site card for site 52-5-0399 compiled by Stuart Huys in 1999 during the Eastern Gas Pipeline investigations. He notes that artefactual deposits identified on the [Toolijooa – Harley Hill] spur are probably representative of ‘sporadic movement’ by Aboriginal people utilising the spurline as an ‘occasional walking route from the coastal hinterland down to the coastline around Gerroa’ (DEC site card site card no. 52-5-0399)
The Moeyan Hill Bunan Ground

The remains of a ceremonial male initiation ground on the southwestern slopes of Moeyan Hill were inspected and described by R.H. Mathews several years after the event in 1895 (Mathews 1896). (Figures 4.10 and 4.11). The ground was shown and interpreted to Mathews by a group of (presumably local) Aborigines. Mathews describes the ceremony which occurred there as the 'last initiation ceremony, held by the Shoalhaven River tribes'. The ceremony was estimated to have occurred sometime between the years 1886 and 1888.

Mathews identified the ceremony as a bunan. This was considered by ethnographers to be the fullest version of the Kuringal, where boys approaching the age of puberty were initiated through several days of ceremony. This included instruction on aspects of tribal lore, through the use of dance, drama, and instructional pictures. Pictures and motifs were constructed on the ground in relief, or carved into the turf, or onto the surface of tree scars and surface bark. All of the pictures and designs, whether located on the ground or on trees were known collectively as 'muttima' (Mathews 1896:330).

Typically, a bunan ground included two low earth 'rings', one more restricted and secret than the other, connected by a narrow path. Instructional designs would be located along the path and around the restricted 'ring'. The ceremony extended over many days and included the removal of a top front tooth from the initiates.

There are very few records of the muttima used in southeastern NSW and most of these are of the more durable carved designs which survived on the trees surrounding the bunan grounds. A rare and local exception is the simple sketch made by Mathews of the surviving bunan ground designs at the Moeyan Hill bunan ground (Figure 4.12).

Mathews describes the existence of twenty nine carved trees with geometric linear designs, together with the former existence of 'nondescript patterns and devices' cut into the soil, and numerous raised earth figurative sculptures including a 'porcupine', kangaroo, fish and snakes. He provides drawings of nine of the tree designs and recorded two horizontal anthropomorphic representations, over two metres long, which had been moulded by banking earth into low relief representations. The larger occurred inside the more restricted of the ground's two 'bora rings' and was identified, by an informant to Mathews, as 'Dharamoolun' (Mathews 1896:330).

The area of the Moeyan Hill ceremonial ground is subdivided into rural residential lots and includes a number of residential buildings together with substantial areas of cleared slopes supporting pasture grasses. The tributary creekline is still evident. The overall and large-scale landscape character of the region also remains. Remnant and regenerating forest remains on the steeper and upper gradients of Moeyan Hill, and the profile of the hill has not been significantly impacted by quarry scars of other excavations.
The area of the bunan ground, together with the Moeyan Hill region in general is valued by the local Aboriginal community as a landscape of cultural significance. Both form an integral component of a larger cultural landscape within the lower Shoalhaven which includes the Illawarra Range and Mount Coolangatta.

Figure 4.10: General view of the southeastern slopes of Moeyan Hill, looking north

Figure 4.11: View across general location of the bunan ceremonial ground recorded by Mathews on the southwestern slopes of Moeyan Hill, in 1896
Figure 4.12: Sketches made by R. H. Mathews of the features evident at the Moeyan Hill bunan ground in 1895 (Mathews 1896:328)
**Foxground engraving site**

The Foxground engraving site is situated on the Illawarra Escarpment and consists of two shallow rock shelters which have formed by cavernous weathering in the sides of a large sandstone tor.

At least eighty one art graphics have been recorded at the site, many are now faded or indistinct ([Figure 4.13](#)). Seventy four of the graphics consist of engravings (shallow surface carvings) with the remainder made using pigment. All of the engravings consist of animal track motifs including kangaroo, emu, and smaller bird and hopping animals. Many of the motifs are arranged as tracks and shown in "hopping" pairs. The pigment art consists of hand stencils and other mostly indeterminate fragments ([Officer 1991a](#)).

The site was well known amongst local landowners during the first half of the nineteenth century, but was first recorded by a local ranger, R. McQueen in 1972. A comprehensive archaeological recording of the art was conducted in 1989 by Officer. At the time of this recording the site was inspected by two members of the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council, Neville Stewart, and elder Dick Henry, who assisted in interpretation and the identification of management issues ([Officer 1991a](#)).

The site is considered to have high cultural significance by the local Koori community. The rarity of the site and the isolated location suggests a ritual and restricted purpose. The physical form of the site and the nature of the art are considered to be suggestive of a burial cave and initiation area ([Officer 1991a](#)).

The Foxground site is of high regional archaeological significance. This is based on the rarity, and stylistic characteristics of the art it contains, and the future research potential of both the art and archaeological deposits ([Officer 1991a](#)).

**Figure 4.13:** A panel of engraved and pigment rock art from the Foxground engraving site (scale interval is 5 x 10 cm) ([Officer 1991a and b](#))
Harley Hill Cemetery

Information collected from a local community questionnaire for a previous Princes Highway upgrade option analysis revealed local oral information that the Harley Hill Cemetery is thought to contain Aboriginal burials, ‘possibly from the Aboriginal/European contact period’ (Donlon 1981a:13). Given that the cemetery was dedicated in 1899 it is unlikely that burials from the early contact period form part of the cemetery, however the reported potential for Aboriginal burials remains. (Figure 4.14).

Local oral tradition provides the suggestion that many of the early burials at this cemetery were due to an outbreak of plague or some other contagious illness (pers. comm. Margaret Weir Feb 2007). In this context it is relevant to recall the epidemics of cholera and typhoid in the Coolangatta Aboriginal encampment in the late 1890’s. The correspondence of the cemetery dedication and these epidemics suggests that the combined oral traditions of early Aboriginal interments and an epidemic may reflect actual past events.

Figure 4.14: General view across a section of Harley Hill Cemetery, looking northwest

Berry Hospital

Grace Coombs states that many Aboriginal women from the Shoalhaven district went to the David Berry Memorial Hospital (Figure 4.15) to have their children (Grace Coombs in DEC 2004:13). This was apparently due a policy of access for Aboriginal people established by the Berry family when the hospital was established. As a consequence, it is probable that the hospital will have particular significance for many generations of local Aboriginal family members. Grace recalls that:

‘I had my own kids in hospital, just over there in Berry. There was only one hospital in Nowra. The Prince Edward...It was a private hospital. So we went over to Berry and we wouldn’t have been able to go there either, except for this old fella, David Berry, he had that hospital built over there. He had this thing that said all Aboriginal women could go there to have their babies. So that’s why most of our babies were born there. Over in Berry’ (Grace Coombs in DEC 2004:13).
Bomaderry Children’s Home

The Bomaderry Aboriginal Children’s Home was established by the Bomaderry United Aboriginal Mission in 1908 when it received seven 'native' children, six orphans and one baby ‘rescued’ by Miss Thompson, ‘a missionary to the Aborigines’ (Bayley 1975:176). It was situated at 59 Beinda Street Bomaderry and consisted of a range of cottages, dorms and grounds (Alice Adams in DEC 2004:1-5). The Home continued to operate under a number of authorities until 1988 when it was closed. Many Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven can relate childhood experiences at the home, most following removal from their families – members of what are now known as the stolen generation. The Nowra Local Aboriginal Land Council bought the property in 1993. (Figure 4.16).
Figure 4.16: View of cottages now located on the site of the Bomaderry Aboriginal Children’s Home, looking west
Figure 4.17: Known or reported places of historic or Aboriginal cultural significance in and around the study area (base map supplied by RTA)

**Indicative locations**
- escarpment & ridgeline features

- **Djerriyaroo**
- **Crooked River ‘Oorajang’**
- **Coolangatta Estate Aboriginal encampment**
- **Coolangatta Mountain ‘Djullubugung’**
- **Moeyan Hill Bunyan Ground (1880s)**
- **Bomaderry Creek bushland and rock shelters**
- **Bomaderry Aboriginal Childrens Home 1908-1988**
- **Shoalhaven River**