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CAWDOR LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

EUROPEAN HERITAGE VALUES

5.5.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The study area was first explored during the later 1790s when herds of wild cattle, descended from domestic stock, were located in an area subsequently called "The Cowpastures". By 1801 efforts were being made to incorporate these animals in the government herds and until 1805 the Cowpasture country (Camden, The Oaks, Picton, Cawdor etc), was practically reserved as a run for these wild cattle.

Initial surveys were made in 1805 along the track that later became the Great South Road and the first grants were issued in the area, including one to John Macarthur. These were located east of the study area, Macarthur's land being the nucleus of the Camden Park Estate. No further grants were made until the 1820s as the result of an 1812 edict issued by Macquarie forbidding settlement west of the Nepean. The land was thus reserved for government use. Until c.1822 development in the study area was concerned with a government stock station established for the purpose of introducing the wild cattle into the government herds.

In 1822 these herds were moved to Bathurst and private settlement was again permitted in the area. In this year Macarthur applied for and was given an extension of 5000 acres to his grant. This land included the government village of "Cawdor", just outside the current study area. Cawdor Village was, for a short time, the administrative centre of the district, however, it was gradually eclipsed after the establishment of Camden during the later 1830s.

During the 1820s the Camden Park lands were enlarged by grants acquired in exchange or by purchase. The estates of "Roslyn" and "Melrose" were granted to the Macarthurs in 1822. In 1823 they gained "South Camden", "West Camden" and "Brisbane Farm". In 1825 they received "North Camden" and "Cawdor", the latter including the study area.

Throughout the nineteenth century the Macarthur properties diversified their economic basis from wool through wheat, dairying, viticulture, orcharding, mixed farming, a nursery and a horse stud. Dairying eventually became the dominant concern and remained so throughout the twentieth century. This mirrored the general district development.

To facilitate the various operations, during the later 1830s and 1840s, skilled immigrants were brought to the estates. These eventually became

tenant farmers. Rent from these farms became an important income for the estates.

From the 1840s portions of the properties were sold, as were lots in Camden, to ease the way through economic problems. In 1882 5100 acres were sold off at North Cawdor as freehold farms. During the twentieth century the large holdings of the Macarthurs have gradually been reduced through the sale of small farms. The study area remained part of the Camden Park Estate company holdings during the early part of the twentieth century but was eventually sold. It is currently owned by a development company.

5.5.2 DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAND

The government stockyard at Cawdor was centred around the current site of the Wesleyan Church. By 1804 a hut had been established here for government stockmen. By 1815 fenced enclosures and a substantial house for the government overseer had been completed on this site. The latter was a brick house with kitchen, outbuildings and a garden.

After the abandonment of the site in 1826 a report prepared in 1827 described the poorly built and decaying structures. However the house was repaired and served as a place of worship until the 1840s. In the early years of the 1840s a Wesleyan chapel was founded in the old overseer's house. A school was also conducted in the building. The land, with an area for a cemetery, was a gift from the Macarthur family. In 1861 the chapel was rebuilt and again in 1902; a hall was added to the back of the church in 1962.

There is no evidence to suggest that this portion of the Cawdor grant was ever extensively developed by the Macarthurs. It appears to have served as paddocks throughout most of the nineteenth century. By the beginning of the twentieth century the study area encompassed "Campbell's Paddock", "Cameron Paddock" and "Neals Paddock". Map references from the 1860s described the land as "forest" with a strip of grass near the church. During the 1890s it was referred to as "slightly undulating open paddocks".

There appear to have been a few cultivated areas at the junction of Cawdor Road and Remembrance Drive but the remainder was simply fenced. The small farming concerns of Cawdor leased from the Macarthurs and which were renowned for wheat and later dairying were all located around the village and across The Great South Road from the current study area.

During the later nineteenth and early twentieth century other civic services were created, apparently serving the Cawdor Village. These included a school and Church of England. They were located on excisions from the Macarthur estate property.

By the early years of the twentieth century the study area was utilised for low key dairying concerns. It has remained generally in this state of development throughout most of this century only the northernmost portions of the site being redeveloped

in any other form.

5.5.3 EVIDENCE REMAINING

There is no visible evidence of the former government stockyard. However, the substantial nature of these early developments in an area of relatively minor later disturbance suggests that this may be an area of considerable and significant archaeological potential.

The primary evidence for the land usage of the nineteenth century remains in the landscape. The cleared timber stands and open fenced paddocks are a legacy of the grazing areas created during this period. The Great South Road is testimony to the surveys and push south during the early nineteenth century. Both have strong historical associations.

The earliest physical evidence of settlement in the area is found in the former Wesleyan, now Uniting Church, cemetery. The graves range in date from the 1840s until the present day and constitute significant social evidence for the continued occupation of the area. The current church was built in 1902. A hall was added to the back of the building in 1962.

The current building is not a significant architectural example but the site does have important historical associations with both the Macarthur family and the expanding community of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A simple timber, early twentieth century cottage adjacent to the church and cemetery serves as the parsonage.

The school house, located at the junction of the Great South Road and Cawdor Road, was constructed in 1888. This, and the adjacent Church of England which appears to date to this phase or the early twentieth century, relates to the Cawdor Village development rather than the estate and both are important in defining the former importance and role of this community. The school building also has some architectural merit. In recent years, demountable buildings have been located close to the nineteenth century structure. A garage is also situated on the site.

The late nineteenth and/or early twentieth century pastoral use of the land is the dominant feature in the study area. A single timber, gable roofed cottage and outbuilding located on the Great South Road adjacent to the Uniting Church group appears to have been erected as a worker's cottage on the estate during this period. It is significant for its definition of the social structure and economic

basis of the area and also has some architectural quality. A variety of exotic trees and shrubs surrounds the site. Nearby are a pole framed hay shed, a gabled hay shed and a flat roofed iron shed mostly in ruins. Additional hay sheds are located near the large dam in the south-eastern corner of the site and on the central Wire Lane perimeter. The latter has collapsed.

In the central eastern portion of the site a cluster of buildings appears to form a dairy from the same period. The group consists of an open fronted shed, gabled shed and stockyards. A mature group of trees and shrubs nearby may mark the site of former buildings. The site of a creamery which was present in the early years of the twentieth century is marked by a mature group of trees and shrubs adjacent to the school site on Cawdor Road. All these sites are significant for their demonstration of the continued pastoral use of the property.

There is little evidence of later twentieth century use of the site. A small brick shed located near the dairy buildings is a minor addition. The major change has been the construction of the Camden Valley Inn during the 1930s at the junction of Remembrance Drive and Wire Lane. The building is a good example of revival architecture and the partially restored gardens add to the quality of the site.

It may be concluded that the majority of structural evidence relates to the later nineteenth and early twentieth century pastoral use of the property. A small number of sites predate and post date this period. The major archaeological sites relate to the former government stockyard and a creamery on Cawdor Road. There is little probability of additional sites being located elsewhere in the study area. The landscape is a product of the continued pastoral use of the land and stands of exotic trees and shrubs mark the sites of current and past areas of building activity.

The significance of the study area is mainly at a local level although the site of the government stockyard, if found to have intact archaeological evidence, would be of high significance on a regional and state basis. The area has strong historical associations with the Macarthur family and with the period of the southern expansion of the colony during the early years of the nineteenth century. The landscape, structures and relics define a pastoral development associated with the "great estates" phase of colonial development and the

evolution and decay of that pastoral usage
throughout the twentieth century.

5.5.4 DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES AND HISTORICAL VALUES

Continued rural use of the land would complement the landscape qualities of the site and would preserve the standing and sub-surface sites which have been identified in this study. The only safeguards which should be applied in this option are the protection of the two archaeological sites of the creamery and government stockyard. No sub-surface works such as drainage lines, road easements etc should be allowed in these areas without prior archaeological investigation and participation. In particular any work proposed for the site of the government stockyard should be preceded by a complete archival and archaeological assessment.

The impact of rural residential development would alter the landscape definition although this is not seen as detrimental at this level of development. However it is considered necessary that the vistas surrounding the church remain intact. The same safeguards would be required for the archaeological sites as those recommended for the option of continued rural use.

It is possible that this option may impact on existing structures. It is recommended that the Church group (church, cemetery, hall and parsonage), school, Camden Valley Inn and the worker's cottage on The Great South Road remain intact and protected from such developments. If any of the remaining buildings should be effected by such development it is recommended that all structures, features and landscape elements be investigated and recorded prior to the commencement of any work.

The impact of both low density urban and normal urban residential uses is, in this case, essentially the same. As in the preceding options the two archaeological sites should be protected or actively investigated and assessed before any work commences in those areas. The church group, school, worker's cottage and Camden Valley Inn should remain protected. However, because of the impact these levels of development would have on the vistas surrounding these sites, it is further recommended that buffer zones of open space be created around all of the primary buildings.