

LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY REGISTER

Policy No. 3.31

POLICY TITLE: ABORIGINAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY
REQUIREMENTS

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OBJECTIVE

To identify the areas of circumstances in which an Aboriginal Archaeological Survey will be required as part of any Development Application or rezoning request.

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POLICY STATEMENT

Liverpool Plains Shire Council recognises that the area occupied by the Kamilaroi people and this policy is aimed at dealing with Aboriginal archaeology, in particular those areas which are likely to be significant from an archaeological perspective and where approval to disturb an Aboriginal artefact is likely to be required.

Aboriginal heritage comprises two distinct elements i.e.

(i) Aboriginal archaeology

- Concerned with archaeological relics and artefacts associated with Aboriginal occupation of a place.

(ii) Aboriginal culture

- Concerned with the social attachment to a place.

Areas of importance for Aboriginal culture are probably best dealt with by a local heritage planning control or similar rather than any statutory controls relating to the disturbance of artefacts.

The following criteria has been identified as being of a site/area in which Aboriginal artefacts are likely to occur.

The criteria is based on land form, known sites and remnant vegetation areas. For rural areas the criteria is narrowed to ridge tops and watercourses. For remnant vegetation in rural areas there are separate controls that minimise works in these areas (i.e. threatened/endangered species, vegetation clearing controls). These controls will assist in minimising any adverse impacts on artefacts in these areas.

Criteria

1. Proximity to a watercourse, lake or lagoon

- These are identified as a “blue line” on the 1:2500 Topographic Map Series.
- These areas were an important source of food and travel routes.
- Water is also considered to be culturally valuable and significant.

Note – Works within 40m of a watercourse (i.e. “blue line”) also requires an approval under the Rivers and Foreshores Improvement Act. Depending on the watercourse this distance may increase to 100m or 150m.

2. Major watercourse (Quirindi – Jacob and Joseph Creek and Mooki River)

- Artefacts more likely on the alluvial flats.
- An important source of food for Aboriginal Communities.

3. Lower slopes of undulating hills (especially in close proximity to water features)

- Higher land in close proximity to a food source/watercourse and possible camping area.

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4. Ridge Lines/Hilltops

- These sites may have been an observation point or defensive position.

Note – Development activity is restricted on land with a slope >18 degrees (i.e. “protected land”) due to the potential for slope instability.

5. Site is a declared Aboriginal Place under the National Parks and Wildlife Act

- These are sites of known Aboriginal significance. Unfortunately Council has limited access to the database – contact National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) for details.

Note – NPWS offer a service to search their database for known Aboriginal sites that can be assessed via the website.

Procedure

1. For an area or site not identified by the above criteria a preliminary assessment for artefacts for an Archaeological Survey will not be necessary.

This is not to say that Aboriginal artefacts do not/will not occur at the site. In these areas a precautionary approach should be taken during any works activity, with works ceasing immediately an artefact is found to enable it to be assessed and the necessary approvals obtained.

2. For an area or site within an identified area the following procedure is to apply:

- (a) A preliminary assessment to determine the likelihood of artefacts at the site. This assessment to include:

- Review of the site history.
- Identification of the level of disturbance.
- Literature review and consultation with NPWS on information they hold.
- Site inspection by a person skilled in identifying Aboriginal artefacts.
- Any consultation with the local Aboriginal community.
- A statement as to the likelihood of artefacts being found and the need, if any, for a more detailed Archaeological survey.

- (b) An Archaeological Survey undertaken by an appropriately accredited person/organisation in accordance with relevant guidelines on the preparation of such documentation.