Environmental Health and Regulation Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 4 October 2016
Commencing at the conclusion of the Finance and Strategy Committee Meeting

Council Chambers,
Level 2, Administration Building
4-20 Eton Street, Sutherland
ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

2. APOLOGIES

3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

5. PRESENTATIONS

6. REPORTS FROM OFFICERS
   EHR011-17 Caravan and Camping Ground at Bonnie Vale in the Royal National Park
   EHR012-17 Proposed State Heritage Item Nomination - Lucas Watermills Archaeological Sites

7. QUESTIONS

8. CONSIDERATION OF BUSINESS IN CLOSED SESSION
EHR011-17 CARAVAN AND CAMPING GROUND AT BONNIE VALE IN THE ROYAL NATIONAL PARK

Attachments: Appendix A and Appendix B

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- In August 2016, Council requested a report detailing the feasibility of establishing a caravan and camping ground at Bonnie Vale within the Royal National Park.
- There is currently a caravan and camping ground with 74 campsites already established at this location. Development on this land is undertaken by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) or under lease from OEH, under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 and the adopted Plan of Management for the Royal National Park prepared by OEH. Council has no formal role in the assessment or approval process.
- The OEH is currently preparing a new Plan of Management for the Royal National Park, Council has previously made a submission in support of tourist accommodation at Bonnie Vale.

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That Council continue to liaise with the Office of Environment and Heritage regarding the new Plan of Management for the Royal National Park, expressing support for tourist accommodation opportunities in this locality.
PURPOSE
The purpose of this report is to advise that as Council has no direct role in planning and development in the Royal National Park, support for a caravan and camping ground can only be expressed through a submission by Council to the new Plan of Management for the Park which is being prepared by the OEH.

BACKGROUND
On 15 August 2016 (MOT006-17) Council indicated in principle support for the establishment of an eco-friendly caravan and camping ground within the Royal National Park and requested a report detailing the feasibility of establishing a caravan and camping ground at Bonnie Vale, adjoining Bundeena.

There is already a campground with 74 campsites located at Bonnie Vale between Bundeena and Maianbar. The facilities include picnic tables, barbecue facilities, drinking water, hot showers and toilets. The Royal National Park website states that the site is suitable for caravans, but large motor-homes may have trouble accessing the site. Plans and photos of the site are shown in Appendix A.

Bonnie Vale campground is owned and operated by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. This is the only formal camping area in the Royal National Park. The land is zoned E1 National Parks and Nature Reserves under SSLEP2015 (Appendix B). Development on this land is undertaken by OEH, or under lease or licence, in accordance with the Plan of Management and the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. Council has no formal role in the assessment or approval process.

There is one Plan of Management covering the Royal National Park, Heathcote National Park and Garawarra State Recreation Area, finalised in 2000. This Plan of Management provides for car based camping facilities at Bonnie Vale with specific guidelines for the scale and management of the campground. A review of this Plan of Management is currently underway. In August 2016, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service invited Sutherland Shire Council to contribute to the review process by raising any issues or interests relating to park management, prior to the formal public exhibition of the plan. In response, Council raised a number of issues for consideration, including an expression of support for the support of a caravan and camping ground within the Royal National Park at Bonnie Vale adjoining Bundeena as a tourism initiative.

DISCUSSION
In broad terms, the established campground at Bonnie Vale may be considered for enhancement or enlargement. Some possible changes could include:

- Increase in the number of caravan or camping sites;
- Supply of power to the sites;
- Improved road access to allow larger caravans or large motor homes into the site; and
- Construction of cabins for holiday rental.
There are potential benefits to having a larger campground/caravan park at Bonnie Vale, including meeting the demand for overnight campervan sites and economic benefits associated with tourist and visitor accommodation.

These changes would increase the intensity of the use of the site by allowing more people and more vehicles onto the site more frequently. Any increased intensity of use could have environmental and heritage impacts and should be subject to detailed assessment. These should be considered as part of the review of the Plan of Management for the Royal National Park.

The economic feasibility of a larger camping/caravan park at Bonnie Vale is dependent on the scale of the proposed operation. Council does not have the in-house expertise to conduct an economic feasibility evaluation. It is also not appropriate to conduct such an evaluation in the absence of a specific proposal and as Council has no direct role in the planning, approval or operation of such a facility.

Further development of proposals for Bonnie Vale and economic feasibility analysis of these should be undertaken by OEH as the owner, potential lessor and approval authority. If Council chose to undertake a speculative economic feasibility analysis based on a conceptual proposal, external expertise would have to be engaged at considerable expense.

**BUDGET AND RESOURCES**
The submission previously lodged by Council with the OEH and ongoing liaisons will be undertaken utilising existing resources with the Strategic Planning Unit.

**POLICY**
Support for tourism accommodation is consistent with The Sutherland Shire Destination Management Plan.

**CONCLUSION**
There is an existing campground at Bonnie Vale in the Royal National Park with 74 camping/caravan sites, as permitted under the current Plan of Management for the Royal National Park. Council has previously made a submission to the OEH in support of a caravan and camping ground at Bonnie Vale. Council will continue to liaise with the OEH in support of tourist accommodation opportunities in this locality.

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER**
The officer responsible for the preparation of this Report is the Acting Manager Strategic Planning, Margaret Paige, who can be contacted on 9710 0169.

File Number: 2016/251619
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Heritage Division of the Office of the Environment and Heritage is proposing to list the Lucas Mills Archaeological Sites (including the Woronora Mill) as a State heritage item.
- The Woronora Mill is located on the riverbed of the Woronora River, just downstream of The Needles. The land forming the proposed curtilage of the site is Council owned or in the care, control and management of Council.
- The Lucas’ Mills are of heritage significance as two of the earliest and substantial watermills sites in the state. They were constructed by convict labour, and shows Lucas’ endeavours to adapt his milling techniques to new environmental challenges. The sites also demonstrate the difficulties of food production and processing, converting grain into flour in the early colony. The two sites are a statement of early colonial entrepreneurial pursuits and the industrial development of the colony.
- The sites are worthy of support as a State heritage item under the Heritage Act 1977.

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

1. The proposed nomination of the Lucas Watermills Archaeological Sites as a State Heritage item be supported.

2. The Heritage Division of the Office of the Environment and Heritage be advised of Council’s support for the nomination.

3. Council staff liaise with the Heritage Division in relation to site specific exemptions for the proposed State heritage item.
PURPOSE
This report is to advise and seek support from Council of the proposed nomination of the Lucas Watermills Archaeological Sites (Brisbane Mill and Woronora Mill) as a State heritage item.

BACKGROUND
The Heritage Division of the Office of the Environment and Heritage is seeking Council’s feedback regarding the proposed nomination of the “Lucas Watermills Archaeological Sites” for inclusion in the State register as research has shown the item to be of State significance. The Heritage Council will review and recommend its listing in October and are seeking comments from Council.

The proposed nomination is a composite listing of two archaeological sites known as the Lucas Watermills Archaeological Sites. These sites compromise the remains of the Brisbane Mill, constructed in 1822 and located on Williams Creek in Holsworthy, and the Woronora Mill, constructed in 1825, located in the Woronora River and the subject of this report. The proposed listing includes associated infrastructure including dams, flour processing machinery and accommodation.

DISCUSSION
The Woronora Mill archaeological remains, from 1825, are located on the Woronora River, just downstream of The Needles on the Woronora River. The proposed curtilage of the site compromises part of Lot 294 DP 8755 (Barden Ridge), part of Lot 7314 DP1147726 (Barden Ridge) and part of Lot 7038 DP 1027187 (Engadine) and the section of the Woronora River that is surrounded by those lots. The land is Council owned or under the care, control and management of Council.

The Heritage Division has sent the information below regarding the description of the items to be listed and a map (Appendix A) regarding the nature and the location of the remains:

“The Woronora Mill... is located on the Woronora River in a steep valley of rocky, open woodland in Barden Ridge. It can be accessed on foot via a fire trail upstream at the Pass of Sabugal. The visible remains suggest that the mill was located on a relatively level shelf of bedrock on the north eastern bank of the river.

There are 3 types of visible features of the mill itself:
1. Cuts in the bedrock, made with rock picks. The largest of these cuttings could support a timber beam up to 450mm wide, a suitable support for a bearing of the water wheel.
2. Holes drilled into the rock, all of approximately 50mm diameter.
3. Remnant cement which can be used to trace the line of the mill dam.
Fires and floods since the abandonment of the mill have removed most of its structure however archaeological remains may include evidence of structures that controlled water flow, the waterwheel, mill machinery, ancillary buildings and associated infrastructure. On the south western bank of the river the foundations of a rough stone structure are visible. West of this, a small area of the woodland is cleared of sandstone rubble, and may have been used for keeping livestock or cultivating crops."

The Lucas’ Mills are of state significance as two of the earliest and substantial watermills sites in the state. They have been constructed by convict labour, and it shows Lucas’ endeavours to adapt his milling techniques to new environmental challenges. The sites also demonstrates the difficulties of food production and processing, converting grain into flour in the early colony. The two sites are a statement of early colonial entrepreneurial pursuits and the industrial development of the colony. The sites are therefore worthy of support as a State listing under the Heritage Act 1977.

State Heritage listing means that the item is legally protected under the Heritage Act 1997 and that development within the identified curtilage will require approval from the Heritage Council. The Heritage Division has noted that there are likely to be existing management practices e.g. bush regeneration, weed management, sediment control and activities such as bush walking on site which have minor impact on the heritage significance of the site. The Heritage Division has suggested that these can be considered for inclusion in a list of site specific exemptions, which will allow these uses without the need for formal approval under the Heritage Act 1977. This is a practical approach to ensuring that the listing is manageable and that works that are minor in nature and will have minimal impact on the heritage significance can continue.

CONSULTATION
At its meeting held on 17 August 2016 the Heritage and Shire History Sub Committee were consulted and expressed their support for the nomination of the Woronora Mill and its inclusion in the State Heritage Register.

BUDGET AND RESOURCES
The listing has no financial implications for Council as this is a State initiative.

POLICY
The nomination falls under the powers of the Heritage Council to list heritage items that are of State significance under the Heritage Act 1977. It is consistent with the Community Strategic Plan: Our Shire, Our Future –Our Guide for Shaping the Shire to 2030 primary strategy to ‘Respect and value all heritage and culture’.
CONCLUSION
The Woronora Mill, as part of the Lucas’ Watermills Archaeological Sites, are two of the remaining mill sites in NSW. These sites demonstrate early colonial life, entrepreneurial pursuits of the colony, early development of the food industry and the life of convicts which is pertinent to the establishment of the State of NSW. The conservation of these remains are important to the understanding of the colony and convict life. Listing in the NSW State Registry under the Heritage Act 1977 would allow the protection of the sites. It is therefore recommended that the nomination for listing with specific site exemptions be supported.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
The officer responsible for the preparation of this Report is the Acting Manager Strategic Planning, Margaret Paige, who can be contacted on 9710 0169.

File Number: 2015/87446
SSLEP2015 Zoning Map Extract:

Bonnie Vale campground. E1 zone is National Park and Natural Reserves
State Heritage Register - Proposed Curtilage for Investigation:
Lucas Watermills Archaeological Sites (Draft)
Plan: 2960

Legend
- Proposed Curtilage
- SHR Curtilage
- LGAs
- Suburbs

Scale: 1:2,000 @A4
Datum/Projection: GCS GDA 1994
Date: 16/06/2016