



Information Brochure



Historical Archaeology in Parramatta

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Photos by Government Architect's Office
and Casey & Lowe Pty Ltd

**PARRAMATTA
CITY COUNCIL**

PARRAMATTA

is the second oldest European settlement in Australia. Within its boundaries, there is evidence of its history and growth, including its eighteenth century town layout, Australia's first land grant and oldest standing European building, early cottages, shops, factories, bridges, historic cemeteries, landscapes, parks and street trees. The study of this evidence is referred to as historical archaeology.

Historical archaeology is the study of the impact of the arrival and presence of Europeans, primarily through material evidence. Examples of archaeological resources include the remains of roads, infrastructure such as drains, public buildings, houses, farming activity and wharf structures. Archaeological resources are irreplaceable. They have enormous potential to contribute to knowledge of our history, providing information that is unavailable from other sources. It is important that significant archaeological resources are adequately investigated and recorded if they are to be disturbed.

An important resource document for managing these archaeological resources is the Parramatta Historical Archaeological Landscape Management Study (PHALMS), which is a comprehensive study of European archaeological resources in the Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No. 28 Primary Centre area. PHALMS includes an 'inventory sheet' for each Archaeological Management Unit (AMU) identified in the study. An AMU is an area of land which has similar archaeological potential and similar recommendations as to how archaeological issues should be managed. PHALMS is a significant aid to those preparing development applications within the study area as it indicates where archaeological resources are likely to survive. The PHALMS information is then used to determine the recommended management actions for these resources.

Frequently asked questions

Q: Is PHALMS relevant to my land?

A: The study does not apply to the whole of the Parramatta local government area, but rather, only applies to the area covered by the Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No. 28 known as the Parramatta Primary Centre. This includes the Parramatta city centre, Harris Park, North Parramatta Government sites, Westmead, Rydalmere and Camellia. However, while PHALMS may not apply to your land, the potential for archaeological resources to exist is always present. PHALMS merely makes it easier to predict the likelihood of such resources existing for those properties included in the study area.

Q: When do I need to be mindful of the recommendations of the PHALMS study?

A: Any time works are proposed which will involve excavation you should first refer to PHALMS to determine the management recommendations for your land.



Frequently asked questions

Q: How do I use PHALMS to determine the management recommendations for my land?

A: The first step is to identify which AMU your property is located within on the PHALMS map. Then look up the individual AMU on the database to determine the level of significance and the level of archaeological research potential. Once you have determined these levels, staff from either Council or the NSW Heritage Office can advise you on how to proceed. Sites that are of state significance will almost always require an archaeological assessment. Sites that are of no significance almost always require no further action. Requirements for sites that are of local significance will vary based upon the likelihood of finding relics on the site. In the case where it is necessary to determine the likelihood of containing relics, the historic maps included in PHALMS provide information to help determine this based on the history of land use over time.

Q: Do the recommended management actions affect what I am allowed to do on my land?

A: PHALMS does not prohibit development. Rather, the permissible land uses are established by the Parramatta Regional Environmental Plan and the Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2001. However, archaeology must be addressed in the Statement of Environmental Effects accompanying any development application in the study area. The Statement of Environmental Effects must refer to the level of significance and the level of archaeological research potential set out in PHALMS in relation to the subject site, and must show how the applicant intends to address these issues.

Q: What is an archaeological assessment and what type of person is required to prepare it?

A: An archaeological assessment, compiled by an archaeologist, consists of documentary research undertaken to investigate previous uses on the site and to establish its archaeological significance and potential to contain significant relics. Historical archaeologists are people who have completed tertiary training in archaeology, prehistory or a related field and who have specialist training and experience in historical archaeology. Historical archaeologists carry out archaeological assessments, do archival research and undertake survey recording and archaeological excavations.

In many cases, the assessment may conclude that no further action is required. For those sites where the assessment concludes that significant archaeological material may be present, the most likely scenario is a requirement for an Excavation Permit to be obtained from the Heritage Council of NSW, followed by monitoring of site works with an archaeologist present. An archaeological excavation may be required for sites identified as having high archaeological significance or potential.

Q: What if I am doing works that don't require development consent from Council but do involve excavation? Do I still need to worry about the recommendations of PHALMS?

A: Yes, definitely. If you are excavating land and information in PHALMS indicates that the site is of state significance or is likely to contain relics, you will need to obtain an archaeological assessment and possibly seek an excavation permit from the NSW Heritage Office. If the site is not likely to contain relics, or the works are minor, you may be eligible to seek an exception or exemption from the NSW Heritage Office. Advice can be sought from the NSW Heritage Office about how to go about these application processes.



Frequently asked questions

Q: What if I have obtained all required approvals and subsequent works uncover an unknown relic?

A: Whilst PHALMS forms the basis for the management of archaeological resources in the study area, there are also “catch-all” requirements under the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW). If, at any time, unexpected archaeological remains (defined as ‘relics’ under the Act) are uncovered or disturbed, work must stop immediately and the NSW Heritage Office must be notified. This applies throughout the whole of the Parramatta local government area and indeed, the state of NSW.

Q: Where can I view PHALMS?

A: PHALMS consists of three volumes. Volume 1 is the written report setting out the philosophy and the methodology of the study. Volume 2 contains the AMU database which lists the management recommendations for the individual AMUs. Volume 3 contains the maps which identify the location of the AMUs, copies of the historic maps used in the preparation of the study, aerial photographs and various other maps prepared as part of the study such as landscape character, soil type and vegetation.

All three volumes of the study can be viewed at either Council’s main branch library at Civic Place, Parramatta or the Local Studies library at the Heritage Centre, Church Street, Parramatta. Volumes 2 and 3 can also be viewed at the Development Counter at the Parramatta City Council Administration Building at Darcy Street, Parramatta.

A print-out of the maps relevant to your property and the AMU database sheets can be obtained from Council’s main administration building at the Development Enquiry counter. Such print-outs may be required to be submitted to the NSW Heritage Office should you be required to seek an exception or exemption.

The database in Volume 2 can also be viewed on the NSW Heritage Office’s web site, www.heritage.nsw.gov.au. The AMUs are located by selecting “search the online heritage database”, then by selecting “state heritage inventory”. Select “Parramatta City Council” to view the entire list of heritage items within the local government area, including the PHALMS AMUs. You can refine your search to an individual AMU or your own property using the database search options.

Q: Where can I get further information?

A: Should you have further questions regarding PHALMS, the requirements for your site or archaeology in general, you can contact Council’s Development Unit on 9806 5108 or the archaeologists at the NSW Heritage Office on 9873 8500.