

Item Details

Name

Former Great Western Highway Alignment

SHR/LEP/S170

LEP #60

Address

Tarlington Place to Boiler Close PROSPECT NSW 2148

Local Govt Area

Blacktown

Local Aboriginal Land Council

Unknown

Item Type

Built

Group/Collection

Transport - Land

Category

Road

All Addresses

Addresses

Records Retrieved: 2

Street No	Street Name	Suburb/Town/Postcode	Local Govt. Area	LALC	Parish	County	Electorate	Address Type
	Tarlington Place,Reservoir Road, Yallock Place, Honeman Close, Boiler Close	BLACKTOWN/NSW/2148	Blacktown	Unknown			Unknown	Alternate Address
	Tarlington Place to Boiler Close	PROSPECT/NSW/2148	Blacktown	Unknown			Unknown	Primary Address

Significance

Statement Of Significance

The Former Great Western Road, Prospect has exceptional state significance as the only surviving original alignment of the 1818 Great Western Road that itself most likely followed an earlier Aboriginal track for a route over Prospect Hill. The road has the potential to retain highly significant archaeology of the convict and colonial eras. The Great Western Road was one of the three Great Roads built in the colony between 1815 and the 1840s. The others were the Great North Road (1826-36) and the Great South Road (1819-mid 1840s).

Criteria a)

Historical Significance

The Prospect Hill area has strong social and spiritual significance for Aboriginal people as a place regularly visited in pre-European times, as a meeting and trading place, as a place representative of early conflict between Aboriginal peoples and European settlers, and for its associations with the 1805 meeting which marked the beginning of the long road to reconciliation. (Prospect Hill, Heritage Landscape Study and Plan 2008).

The Former Great Western Road, Prospect demonstrates exceptional historical significance as a remnant surviving section of one of the three Great Roads (along with the Great North and Great South Roads) which were constructed between the 1820s and the 1840s by convict labour to open up the interior of the colony to agricultural and pastoral production and European settlement.

Criteria b)

Historical Association Significance

[Associative significance]

The Former Great Western Road at Prospect has state significance for its associations with Aboriginal people and with significant persons of the early colony of NSW.

[Associative significance]

The Former Great Western Road at Prospect has state significance for its associations with Aboriginal people and with significant persons of the early colony of NSW.

Criteria c)

Aesthetic/Technical Significance

The Former Great Western Road, Prospect has aesthetic and landmark significance at state level for its capacity to demonstrate the experience of travel with views of historical significance on a remnant section of the 1818 road that remains largely undeveloped and on its original 1818 alignment as it follows a ridge line and winds up and over the flanks of Prospect Hill in a semi-rural landscape with views of historical significance across to the Blue Mountains from the road's highest point close to Watch House Lane.

The views to the west to the Blue Mountains and to the north to the Blacktown hills still convey the sense of promise and anticipation to travellers, not felt on any other road out Sydney, as described by Helen Proudfoot.

The experience of the road and the surrounding landscape is intensified as the traveller realises that, elsewhere along the road, development has changed and will continue to change and alienate open land. The setting in the vicinity of the subject road at Prospect still retains a bucolic character with its early to mid-twentieth century subdivision pattern, built form, paddock enclosure and tree cover bordering the road. This survival is in contrast to the more intensive development elsewhere along the former Western Road which features road widening to six lanes and substantial traffic infrastructure flanked by suburban, industrial and logistics infrastructure.

Criteria e)

Research Potential

The Former Great Western Road, Prospect has the potential for state significant archaeology.

Criteria f)

Rarity

[Rarity]

The Former Great Western Road, Prospect is the only surviving section of Governor Macquarie's Great Western Road (completed in 1818) that follows its original alignment, is still in use and (at March 2012) remains relatively undeveloped.

Criteria g)

Representative

The Former Great Western Road, Prospect has state significance for its capacity to demonstrate the characteristics of the Great Roads network of the early colonial period.

Integrity/Intactness

The alignment, to and topography is currently intact although subject to some change. The setting of a rural landscape will remain reasonably intact due to the nature of surrounding development although this is likely to be diminished to an extent as development in the area continues.

Owners

Records Retrieved: 0

Organisation	Stakeholder Category	Date Ownership Updated
No Results Found		

Description

Designer

Builder/Maker

Physical Description

Updated

The alignment of the Former Great Western Road, Prospect, is laid onto the undulating ground to the north of Prospect Hill and to the north of Prospect Reservoir. This alignment (which was by-passed in 1968 for the present day alignment of the Great Western Highway) lies between the junction of Tarlington Place and the Great Western Highway in the east and travels almost 4 kms south west, west and north west to the northern end of Honeman Close at its western extent. The alignment is now not continuous, but is cut by the M4 Motorway between Tarlington Place and Reservoir Road in the east and Yallock Place and Boiler Close in the west.

The alignment of the Former Great Western Road now includes four separately named sections of road. From east to west, the first section commences south of the Great Western Highway at Tarlington Place which terminates north of the M4 Motorway. The Former Great Western Road recommences south of the M4 as Reservoir Road and travels in a westerly direction through the intersection of the Prospect Highway along the boundary of the Prospect Reservoir until its junction with Yallock Place. It then travels north-west to the southern edge of the M4, where it is cut again by the motorway. It recommences north of the M4 as Boiler Close where it crosses the modern section of Reservoir Road to become Honeman Close, terminating south of the Great Western Highway.

A modern extension of Reservoir Road has been constructed from the junction of Reservoir Road and Yallock Place. It extends beneath the M4 Motorway and across the Great Western Highway into Blacktown. This modern section of Reservoir Road is not part of the nominated Former Great Western Road, Prospect.

The subject length of the former Great Western Road as it travels through Prospect contrasts with the straightness of most of the rest of the road from Parramatta to Penrith. The road winds gently up and over the low northern ridge and spurs of Prospect Hill, winding alongside the boundary of the Prospect Reservoir. Beyond the M4 Motorway, the last quarter of the alignment travels north-west down the slope towards the Great Western Highway.

The Road has been generally maintained with patching and repairing after the realignment of the Great Western Highway in 1968, meaning that the road width, character, topography and alignment has remained generally unaltered since that time. The road is now subject to some change from Reservoir Road to Yallock place with the development around Wet and Wild and a link road to the M7 employment Lands. Further development and reworking of the Honeman Close and Boiler Close area is envisaged with the development of the Huntingwood Employment area.

However at present the road continues to maintain its topographic and rural character, and has the potential to continue to do so with the land to the south of the road protected as part of the Prospect Reservoir Reserve.

Physical Condition

Updated 12/02/2015

Modifications And Dates

Road was metaled in 1865.
Bitumen first added in 1939.
New Highway Alignment 1968
Connection to M4 from Reservoir Road in 1980.
2013 Road widening and resurfacing for Wet and Wild
2013-15 new round about and connection

Further Comments

Key remaining intact areas of the road are located along Tarlington Place, and Boiler Close - Honeman Close.

Current Use

Local Road

Former Use

Highway

Listings

Listings

Records Retrieved: 1					
Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Local Environmental Plan		60	7/7/2015 12:00:00 AM	430	

Procedures/Exemptions

Records Retrieved: 0

Section of Act	Description	Title	Comments	Action Date	Outcome
No Results Found					

History

Historical Notes or Provenance

Updated

Prospect Hill, being the highest point between the Blue Mountains and the sea, was used as a vantage point and navigational element for the Aborigines who moved through the area, referring to the place as 'Marrong'. The Prospect Hill area has high cultural significance for the Aboriginal community. Oral tradition identifies the area as a meeting and trading place for groups who were drawn from the Rooty Hill, Parramatta, Penrith, Baulkham Hills, Brooklyn and Richmond areas.

It is believed that up to eight different Aboriginal groups inhabited the area around Prospect and that Indigenous groups remained for short stays only along the ridge with more permanent camps being made along Prospect Creek. Research indicates that the Aboriginal population of the area was quite dense during the initial phases of European contact. Contact with the colonists was often acrimonious, leading to a number of skirmishes. Pemulwuy, an Eora man, led resistance and raids against the colonists (who had claimed large tracts of hunting lands and natural resources) from around 1790 to 1802 when he was killed by bounty hunters. After 1802 Pemulwuy's son Tedbury led Aboriginal resistance to the Europeans until his own death in 1805. Aboriginal trade networks are believed to have deteriorated following European occupation.

Governor Arthur Phillip explored the Prospect area in 1788 south west of the end of the headwaters of the Parramatta River and named the wide low hill Bellevue Hill (the hill is an ancient volcanic upwelling referred to as a 'Doleritic Laccolith'). Bellevue means 'Fine Prospect'. The area later became known as Prospect Hill and then gradually as Prospect.

In 1791, Phillip granted land on the eastern slope of the hill to thirteen ex-convicts to take advantage of the more fertile soils on the flanks of the ancient volcanic hill in contrast to the heavy clay soils elsewhere across the Cumberland Plain. The grantees took up the land but they all struggled with their improvements on the small plots (up to 70 acres) and remained reliant on the Government stores.

Governor King set aside a large area of land north of the hill in 1802 as a reserve for the Government's livestock herd. Part of this Prospect Stock Reserve was declared a common in 1804 for the use of surrounding settlers. The area of the common was reduced by later grants.

By July 1815, following the completion of the Cox's Road over the Blue Mountains, work was underway on a road from Parramatta to the Nepean River (at Penrith) across the Cumberland Plain that included the section that is the Former Great Western Road, Prospect. The Western Road was one of the three Great Roads that were built with convict labour to open up the colony to European settlement beyond the Cumberland Plain. The other two are the Great North Road (1826-36) to Newcastle and the Hunter Region, and the Great South Road (1819-mid 1840s), parts of which are on the Hume Highway alignment.

The 1812 drought provided an impetus for expansion as it highlighted the failings of the quality of land in the Cumberland Plain to support crop production for the growing colony. Prior to the crossing of the Blue Mountains in 1813, road transport out of Sydney and Parramatta had focused on expansion to the north and south. The successful crossing of the Blue Mountains dramatically refocused colonial attention to the fertile western plains beyond the mountains and highlighted the essential role that the Great Western Road played in European expansion beyond the Sydney basin.

William Cox was contracted to construct the road across the Cumberland Plain (including the subject section) as well as being contracted for the road over the Blue Mountains. Cox's specification for the Blue Mountains road (which may also be applied to the subject road at Prospect) determined a width of at least 12 ft (although 16ft was preferred by Cox to permit two carts or other wheeled carriages to pass). The timber along the road was cut and cleared out for a 20 ft wide alignment, all holes were filled and tree stumps grubbed out.

The surveyor of the road has not been definitively determined. George Evans, however, surveyed the road across the Blue Mountains and may have also aligned the road across the Cumberland Plain. The Prospect Heritage Study (T Kass) suggests that the alignment of the road at Prospect may have followed an earlier Aboriginal track for a route over the hill which avoids the creeks and the more flood prone and heavier ground to the north.

Governor Macquarie travelled the Great Western Road from Parramatta to Bathurst and inspected the work in October 1815. The road to Penrith appears to have been completed by 1818 when a Government notice specified tolls payable on the new Great Western Road. In 1814 Edward Cureton was contracted to provide 54 milestones for the road from Parramatta to Penrith. Until recently two milestones stood in, or close to, their original positions on the side of the Great Western Road at Prospect. But these have been relocated to the 1968 deviated section to the north.

The Great Western Road became the main transport route that opened up the vast hinterland beyond the Blue Mountains that bounded the Sydney basin. Helen Proudfoot captured the symbolic importance of the road in her Thematic History of Penrith (sourced from the Prospect Heritage Study):

"The great road west became a symbolic road as soon as it was formed. Its point of departure was George Street and Sydney Cove, the genesis of the colony; it travelled west to Parramatta, and then, near Prospect, its symbolic character begins to become apparent as the topography of long parallel ridges dipping down to the Nepean in prelude to the ascent of the river ramparts of the Blue Mountains beyond the river begins to unfold. The road held a strange sense of promise to its travellers, a sense of anticipation, quite unlike that felt on any other road out of Sydney" (Proudfoot, Fox & Assoc 1987, p. 24).

The Great Western Road was gazetted as a main road in September 1833. Unlike local roads, the three Great Roads were kept under the control of the Colonial Government which maintained and repaired the infrastructure. By 1865, the Western Road from Parramatta to Penrith had been metalled.

From 1820, the establishment of the Great Western Road became a catalyst for the development of the country in the Prospect Hill area. The small (up to 70 acres) first grants established by Governor Phillip on the east slopes of Prospect Hill were consumed within larger grants (over 500 acres) made by Governors Grose, Paterson, Hunter and Macquarie to ex-marines and later to ex-NSW Corps members, free settlers and Government officials. Notably, William Lawson received a 500 acre grant south of the road and established Veteran Hall, which Lawson further expanded with the addition of land to the north and west. Darcy Wentworth, Captain Lethbridge and John Campbell also received over 2000 acres to the north of the road.

Part of the Prospect Common, left after the 1820s grants, was transferred to the Church and School Estate in 1829.

By the 1820s regular coach services were provided along the Great Western Road, with five toll bars placed between Parramatta and Penrith. One of the toll bars was located opposite the entrance to William Lawson's estate, to the south of the road.

From the outset, the owners of the larger grants set about subdividing the land and offering parcels for sale. By the later nineteenth century the Prospect area was a patchwork of remnants of the larger grants mixed with medium sized land parcels. Subdivisions for small lots were not generally popular, exemplified by the mostly unsuccessful Flushcombe Village sale in 1879 and the State Land Investment and Agency Co sale in 1929.

By the end of the nineteenth century the eastern section of the Great Western Road at Prospect was the focus of the Prospect Village which had grown slowly through the century to become a scattered collection of buildings flanking the road. Most of the nineteenth century houses have been demolished except for Bridestowe/ Hick's Dairy (c1880s) on Reservoir Road at the eastern end of the Former Great Western Road, Prospect, south of the M4. Other notable buildings in the area include St Bartholomew's Anglican Church, constructed in 1841, which was recently repaired and still stands prominent on its hill viewable from along the eastern approaches and

from the highest point of Reservoir Road. The Prospect Inn, at the east end of the village, (licenced in 1850) was demolished and a modern roadside hotel occupies its site. The Fox on the Hill Hotel on the site of the modern Fox Hill Golf Club was originally built in the 1820s. It burnt down and was rebuilt in 1830s and then demolished in the 1970s. St Brigid's Catholic Church, constructed in 1856, was demolished in 1977 for the construction of the freeway. The Prospect Post Office, built in the 1880s, still stands (unused and boarded up) in Tarlington Place. The Cricketers Arms Hotel, built c1870, has been repaired and is a prominent feature on the corner of former Flushcombe Road and Reservoir Road. The Police Station, built 1883, west of Watch House Road still stands, albeit in poor condition and deteriorating.

The construction of Prospect Reservoir (from 1880 to 1888), to the south of the road, was a short, but notable catalyst for development of the area. However, the positive effects of development generated by the reservoir and its workforce was limited to its construction period and any economic activity in the Prospect area faded once the reservoir was completed and the workforce departed. The establishment of the western railway to the north with its local station at Blacktown also drew economic development away from the vicinity of the Great Western Road so that rural activities persisted in the area. The main legacy from the establishment of the Prospect Reservoir is that the land to the south of the Former Great Western Road, Prospect was resumed by the Government and never developed. The land is now a reserve of substantial indigenous regrowth as a secure catchment area surrounding the reservoir.

Prospect Hill provided a valuable source of grey dolerite within the ancient volcanic feature. Quarrying operated from the 1860s until recently and it provided constant low level economic stimulus to the area.

In 1925, the NSW Department of Main Roads was established and took over management of the Great Western Road. The new department reclassified many roads as main roads including the Western Road in 1926. The road was further reclassified in 1929 as a state highway and was retitled as the Great Western Highway. In the 1930s the Main Roads Department experimented with line marking, warning signs and concrete guideposts along the length of the Great Western Highway from Parramatta to Mount Victoria. One of these concrete guideposts survives on Reservoir Road east of the Manning Road junction. By 1939 the full length of the Great Western Highway was sealed and lined marked from Sydney to Bathurst.

The Great Western Road through Prospect continued its 1818 alignment for 150 years until 1968 when it was deviated to the north and straightened as the Prospect Deviation. The work was done to avoid the allegedly dangerous hills and bends on the Former Great Western, Prospect as it travelled over the flanks of Prospect Hill.

In 1948, the Great Western Highway was given the status of State Highway No 5. In the 1970s, the Western Freeway was constructed (and extended to Mays Hill in the 1990s) separating Reservoir Road and creating Tarlington Place in the east and Yallock Place and Boiler Close in the west. The western end of Reservoir Road was also deviated to the north to connect onto the new freeway creating and separating Boiler Close and Honeman Close. In the 1980s the four laned Western Highway and Prospect Deviation was widened to six lanes.

The isolation of the road at Prospect dragged against any intensification in development and subdivision, other than for rural uses (some fodder cropping and dairying, poultry etc) and the area slipped into obscurity. In planning terms, this was formalised with the County of Cumberland Planning Scheme, established in 1951, which zoned the land north of the Great Western Highway as green belt. This action froze the land use and patterns north of the road providing a pocket of open space now encircled by modern land use and subdivisions. One unusual development, contrasting with the predominant rural uses north of the road, involved the establishment of the Blacktown Drive-In cinema in 1963 which is now the site of a regular weekend 'trash and treasure' market.

In the 1990s the State Government commenced resumptions of privately owned land in the area for a special use and open space corridor. The road at Prospect is now within the Western Sydney Parklands, managed by the Parkland Trust on behalf of the NSW Government.

Historic Themes

Records Retrieved: 8

National Theme	State Theme	Local Theme
9. Phases of Life	Persons	Pioneers and social pressures/Settlement in the 19th Century
7. Governing	Government and Administration	Unknown
4. Settlement	Towns, suburbs and villages	Transport and Urbanisation
4. Settlement	Towns, suburbs and villages	Settlement in the 19th Century
3. Economy	Transport	Transport and its impact on urbanism
3. Economy	Pastoralism	Rural Industry
2. Peopling	Convict	Pioneering and social pressures/settlement in the 19th Century
2. Peopling	Aboriginal cultures and interactions with other cultures	Unknown

Recommended Management

Management Summary

Management

Records Retrieved: 0

Management Category	Management Name	Date Updated
No Results Found		

Report/Study

Heritage Studies

Records Retrieved: 2

Report/Study Name	Report/Study Code	Report/Study Type	Report/Study Year	Organisation	Author
In House Heritage Items Review			2009		Margaret Fallon
Prospect Heritage Study - Draft Final Report			2005		Terry Cass / Jackson Stepowski Planning and Robertson and Hindmarsh

Reference & Internet Links

References

Records Retrieved: 1

Type	Author	Year	Title	Link
Written	Multiple References	2014	Inventory Sheet	

Data Source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Data Source	Record Owner	Heritage Item ID
Local Government	Blacktown City Council	1140283

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