

## 7. Aboriginal heritage

Aboriginal readers should be aware that this document contains potentially sensitive and distressing content relating to people who have passed.

### 7.1 Existing environment and background

This chapter draws on information from Appendix F (Aboriginal heritage assessment). Aboriginal heritage, Aboriginal consultation and connecting with Country are also discussed in various chapters throughout the EIS, including Chapter 5 (Project description), Chapter 6 (Stakeholder and community engagement), Chapter 10 (Place, design and movement) and Chapter 13 (Socioeconomic).

#### 7.1.1 History

##### **Archaeological evidence**

Aboriginal peoples have lived in the Sydney Basin and surrounding areas for at least 30,000 years. The oldest dated Aboriginal heritage site in the Botany Sands, an archaeologically sensitive soil landscape underlying Central Station, is from around 8,400 years ago. The existing archaeological record is limited to certain materials and objects that were able to withstand degradation and decay from, for example, air, humidity, water and light. As a result, the most common type of Aboriginal objects remaining in the archaeological record are stone artefacts, bones, and shells. Due to the presence of Aboriginal people in Sydney over thousands of years, there is potential for Aboriginal objects to occur across the landscape, including within the construction footprint.

##### **Aboriginal history and the contact period**

Central Station is on the traditional lands of the Gadigal (also 'Cadigal' or 'Cadi') people of the Eora Nation. The name Gadigal was used to describe the Aboriginal clan that lived on the southern shore of Port Jackson, from South Head west to the Darling Harbour area.

The wider area included tidally influenced flats associated with Cockle Bay and Blackwattle Bay, and freshwater swamp associated with Blackwattle Creek. The landscape and proximity to water sources made this area rich in resources, including shellfish that were used as a subsistence resource as well as for tools, such as fishhooks, spears, and other cutting implements.

The European account of the colonisation of Australia began with the establishment of a colony at Sydney Cove by Captain Arthur Phillip in January 1788 on Gadigal Country. The first encounters between the British colonists and the Sydney people were initially based on curiosity, however misunderstandings or transgressions of Aboriginal law and protocol led to violence and punishment. Due to this, as well as the outbreak of smallpox in the 1780s, the Aboriginal population around Sydney was significantly reduced. Sadly, the Aboriginal people's account of these events is not recorded.

##### **Aboriginal history with Central Station and the Stolen Generations**

Central Station has been a point of connection between Aboriginal peoples in regional areas and communities in inner city areas such as Redfern. The railway offered employment opportunities, and access to such opportunities for Aboriginal people, particularly in nearby Eveleigh.

However, Central Station, in particular Platform One, has a dark history for Aboriginal people, and especially for those of the Stolen Generations. Children who were forcibly taken were often completely disconnected from their families, with paperwork and identification documents destroyed, making re-connection near impossible. Many young Aboriginal children would be forcibly taken from their homes and their Countries throughout Australia, finding themselves at Platform One, where trains would transport them to and from various State-run welfare homes. Children from all states and territories passed through this platform on the way to their new 'lives' (Balarinji & Transport for NSW, 2022).

As a result, tangible and intangible Aboriginal community connections to Central Station and the wider area are strong and ongoing.

#### 7.1.2 Consultation

A total of 16 Aboriginal stakeholders registered to comment on the heritage assessment method and outcomes. Eight Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) provided comments on the assessment method, six of which were supportive and two were comments of acknowledgement. Detailed consultation outcomes can be found in Appendix F (Aboriginal heritage assessment).

Consultation with the RAPs on the outcomes of the Aboriginal heritage assessment is ongoing. As detailed in Chapter 6 (Stakeholder and community engagement), matters raised during the EIS exhibition period will be responded to in a Response to Submissions report post EIS exhibition. This report will detail any comments provided by the RAPs during this time.

### 7.1.3 Listed Aboriginal heritage

An extensive search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) database was carried out on 25 August 2022. An area of about a one-kilometre radius around the construction footprint was included in the search. 20 AHIMS sites were found to be registered within the search area, one of which is partially within the construction footprint (see Figure 7-1). The site was recorded at a depth of between 0.3 and one metre below ground level. This item is an artefact scatter, recorded as AHIMS site ID 45-6-3654, and is associated with intact Botany Sands. The scatter is made up of several stone artefacts.

### 7.1.4 Predictive model

A predictive model was used to predict the archaeological potential of the land within the construction footprint. The model comprised a series of statements about the nature and distribution of evidence of Aboriginal land use that is expected in the area. The statements act to define archaeological potential and sensitivity. Survivability of Aboriginal objects largely depends on the extent and nature of subsequent historical construction activities.

The statements are based on the following:

- Landscape context and landform units
- Ethno-historical evidence of Aboriginal land use
- Evidence of historical disturbance
- Distribution of natural resources
- Results of previous archaeological work within the construction footprint
- Predictive statements drawn from other assessments locally.

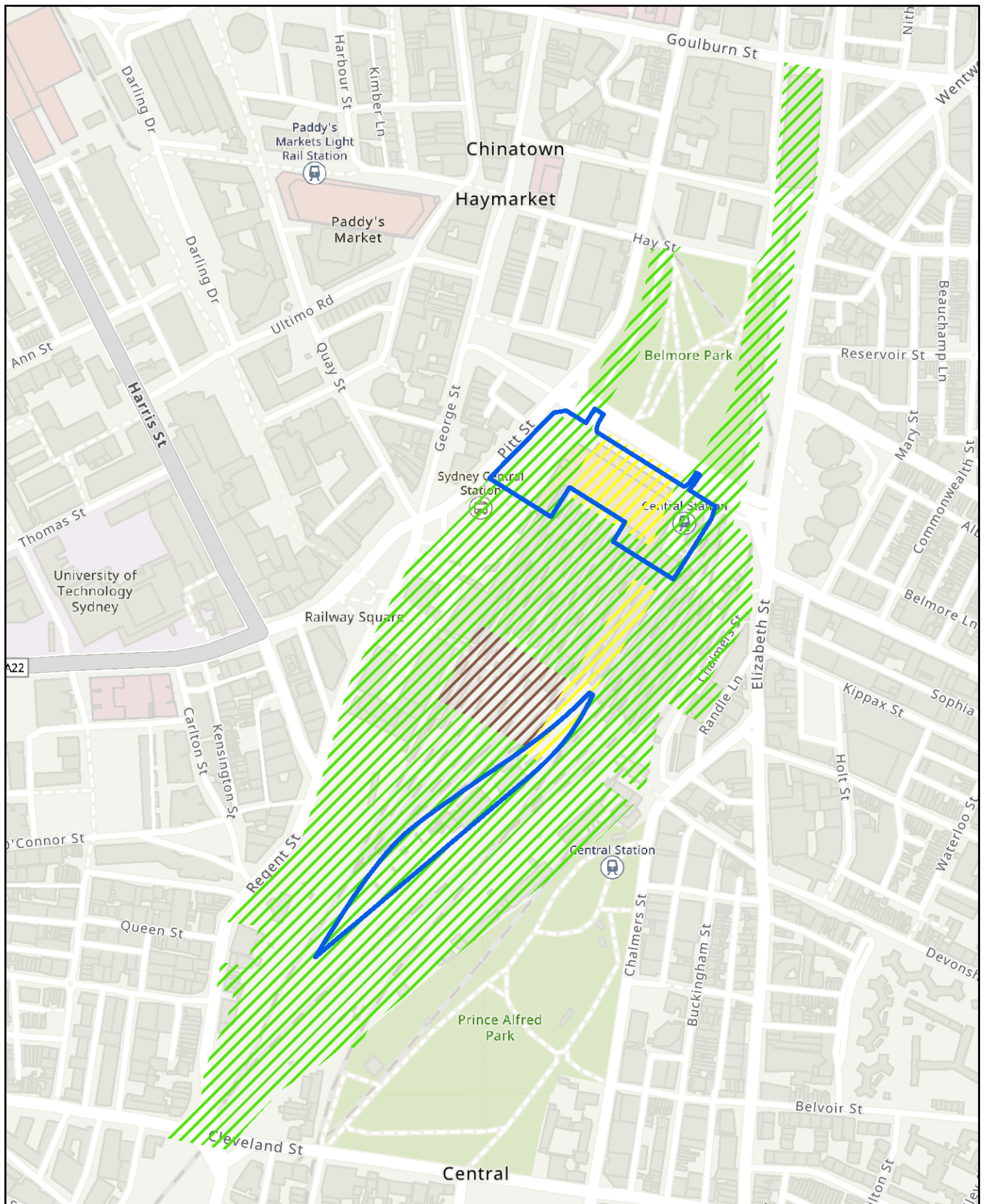
The construction footprints have been identified as lying on top of the Botany Sands, which are an archaeologically sensitive landscape/landform unit formed from Tuggerah Soils. Therefore, in the context of the project, archaeological potential is based on:

- The presence of intact Botany Sands or Tuggerah soils, this **increases** archaeological potential
- The presence of redeposited Botany Sands or Tuggerah soils, this **increases** archaeological potential
- The proximity to watercourses, for example, the former Devonshire Street Creeks that ran southeast to northwest across the southern construction footprint (see Appendix F (Aboriginal heritage assessment) for more detail), this **increases** archaeological potential
- Historical disturbance, for example, by the development of railway infrastructure, this **decreases** archaeological potential.

The predictive statements and how they relate to the construction footprint are provided in Appendix F (Aboriginal heritage assessment). In summary:

- The area of AHIMS ID 45-6-3654 and its associated extent is considered to have **high** archaeological potential
- Areas where remnant Botany Sands are present but have undergone a degree of historical disturbance are considered to have **low** archaeological potential
- Areas that have been subject to previous archaeological investigations associated with other projects, and are known to hold no archaeological potential, or that have undergone high levels of historical disturbance are considered to have **nil** archaeological potential.

Figure 7-1 provides a visual representation of this.



Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56



0 70 140  
Metres  
Scale at A4  
1:5,866

Data Source: Esri Community Maps Contributors, Geoscape, Esri, HERE, Garmin, Foursquare, METI/NASA, USGS

Prepared by: MD  
Checked by: CS  
Approved by: CS

## Legend

 Construction footprint

## Aboriginal archaeological potential

 High

 Low

 Nil

## Sydney Terminal Building Revitalisation Project

Figure 7-1: Aboriginal archaeological potential

Project Number: 287415

Drawings / Design Prepared By

**ARUP**

Client



**Transport for NSW**

### 7.1.5 Site inspection

No Aboriginal artefacts were identified, and no original soils were observed in the northern construction footprint during the site inspection. The southern construction footprint was not surveyed because there would be no ground disturbing works in this area.

### 7.1.6 Assessing significance

The cultural heritage significance of an item or place forms the basis of its management. An assessment of significance is made in relation to four values or criteria: social, historic, scientific and aesthetic, a combination of which allow for an overarching statement of significance. Detail on each criterion and the significance assessment made for each is provided in Appendix F (Aboriginal heritage assessment).

While consultation with the RAPs is ongoing, no socio-cultural, historic, scientific or aesthetic values have been identified within the construction footprint at this stage.

### 7.1.7 Policy and planning setting

The assessment considered the following relevant policies and guidelines:

- [Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents](#) ('The Consultation Requirements', NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW), 2010a)
- [Code of practice for archaeological investigation of Aboriginal objects in NSW](#) ('The Code of Practice', DECCW, 2010b)
- [Guide to investigating, assessing, and reporting on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in NSW](#) (Office of Environment and Heritage, 2011)
- Burra Charter (Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites, 2013)
- [Central Precinct Renewal – Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study](#) (Transport for NSW, 2022p).

## 7.2 Designing with Country

The [Central Precinct Renewal Program – Connecting with Country Framework](#) (Balarinji & Transport for NSW, 2022) ensures that local Aboriginal voices are embedded at all points of the project and to address the intention of the Government Architect NSW's [Draft Connecting with Country Framework](#) (2020). This report provides the project with a basis for an approach to Country-centred design, integrated with mutual community and project benefits, or 'designing with Country'.

Balarinji identified **13 themes** for integration into the design of Central Precinct, **seven** of which are most relevant for the project. A description of these and the associated project design responses are provided in Table 7-1. Further detail on Connection to Country themes is provided in Chapter 10 (Place, design and movement).

Table 7-1: Balarinji themes and design responses

Design theme	Description	Project design response
A Connection to Sky Country and cosmology	Aboriginal peoples have connected to the sky for millennia, lessons to be gained from Connecting to Sky Country include navigation, seasons, time and Songlines. Aboriginal culture is also connected closely with the constellations seen in the Southern hemisphere.  Central Precinct is a place of spirits and ancestors with links to celestial travel.	Designing the Grand Concourse roof to allow for a direct view of the sky during the day and evening.
The legacy of Sydney Trains	Aboriginal peoples have a connection to the railway industry which was one of the first employers of Aboriginal peoples in Sydney. There was also the development of activism through union membership. Sydney Trains is still one of the largest Government employers of the Aboriginal community today.	Including an interpretative element within the Interstate Booking Office by having a map of Australia on the existing Terrazzo floor.
A meeting place	Central Station is a place of convergence, where muru (pathways or travelling/trading tracks) meet. Many muru have become main roads or railway lines, with Central Station continuing to be a key meeting place.	Developing a multi-purpose event space within the Grand Concourse area to provide areas for people to connect in both the former Booking Hall and the Electrical Department

Design theme	Description	Project design response
Connecting to Country through layers of sandstone	Sandstone is the material upon which rock art is made and is a media for retelling stories.	Including sandstone in the design of Eddy Avenue Plaza and entries within Eddy Avenue Colonnade.
Acknowledging and healing	The history of Platform One and what it represented for the Stolen Generations.	Addressing the association of Platform One and Central Station with the Stolen Generations. What form this will take is the subject of sensitive and ongoing discussion.
Six seasons planting	Sydney has six seasons according to Country and landscape and flora represent the use of local resources in everyday life.	Selecting Indigenous plants to be planted within Eddy Avenue Plaza and the Grand Concourse to represent the six seasons.
Welcome to Country	<p>The Welcome to Country that most Australians experience is not generally connected to the ancient protocol.</p> <p>When Aboriginal peoples traditionally travelled across Country, they waited at the border of their Country and gained permission to travel into the Country of others. This would typically happen by setting fire to create smoke signals (visual) and through song and dance (auditory and movement) and gift or trade exchange. They would wait for someone to come to meet them and grant them permission to continue their travels.</p> <p>Part of being welcomed on to Country is accepting a responsibility to care for Country and treat it with the respect that it deserves.</p>	Welcome to Country to be integrated with entrances to the Sydney Terminal Building and within the Grand Concourse floor (major artwork commission).

## 7.3 Assessment of potential impacts

### 7.3.1 Construction

#### Southern construction footprint

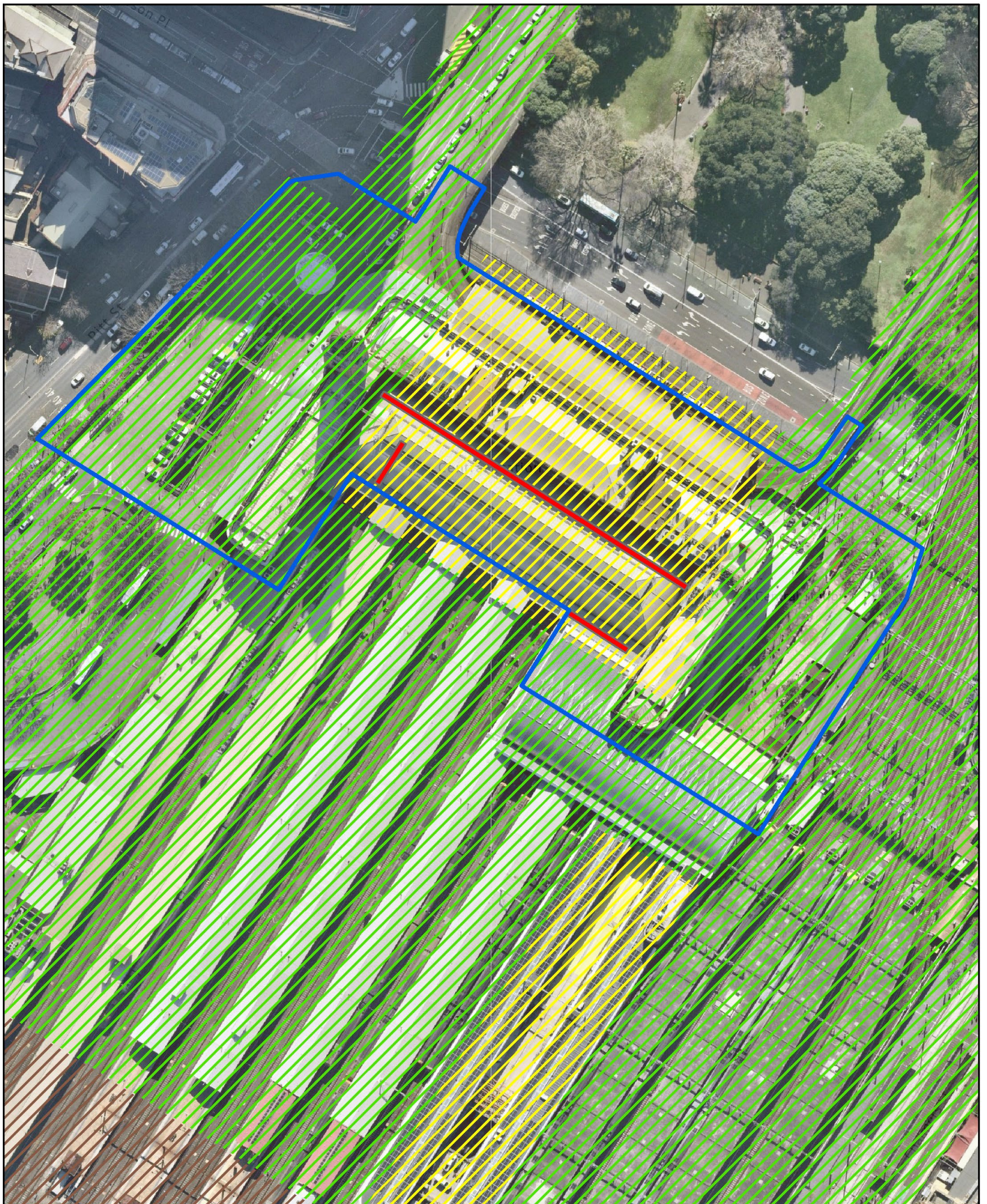
As there is no ground disturbance or excavation in the southern construction footprint associated with the construction compound within the Sydney Yard there will be no impact on the area below the surface. This includes both the area of low Aboriginal archaeological potential and the area of high archaeological potential associated with AHIMS ID 45-6-3654 and its extent, as shown in Figure 7-1.

#### Northern construction footprint

As shown on Figure 7-2, the proposed excavation on the Grand Concourse level is being carried out on areas that have no archaeological potential, therefore no construction impacts are expected here.

The proposed excavations on street level, that is, the Western Forecourt strengthening works and Eddy Avenue Plaza excavations, are in areas that have previously been assessed as holding low archaeological potential (see Figure 7-3). Excavation would be to around two metres below the surface. Therefore, there is a possibility of encountering Aboriginal objects within these areas, although it is unlikely. Measures to manage this risk are provided in Section 7.4.





Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56



Metres  
0 10 20  
Scale at A4  
1:1,500

Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatasysteisen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community, Esri Community Maps Contributors, Spatial Services, Geoscape, Esri, HERE, Garmin, Foursquare, METI/NASA, USGS

Prepared by: MD  
Checked by: CS  
Approved by: CS

### Legend

Construction footprint

Proposed excavation

### Aboriginal archaeological potential

High

Low

Nil

### Sydney Terminal Building Revitalisation Project

Figure 7-2: Proposed excavation on Grand Concourse level

Project Number: 287415

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Coordinate System: GDA2020 MGA Zone 56



Metres  
0 10 20  
Scale at A4

1:1,500

Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatasysteisen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community, Esri Community Maps Contributors, Spatial Services, Geoscape, Esri, HERE, Garmin, Foursquare, METI/NASA, USGS

Prepared by: MD  
Checked by: CS  
Approved by: CS

### Legend

Construction footprint

Proposed excavation

### Aboriginal archaeological potential

High

Low

Nil

### Sydney Terminal Building Revitalisation Project

Figure 7-3: Proposed excavation on Eddy Avenue level

Project Number: 287415

Drawings / Design Prepared By

**ARUP**

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**Transport  
for NSW**



### 7.3.2 Operation

There will be no adverse impacts on Aboriginal heritage in the project's operation due to Central Station resuming its typical operation and there being no ground disturbance associated with this. The impacts of the project on Aboriginal heritage during operation relate to the ways in which a Connection to Country is embedded in the station's operation (see Table 7-1 above).

By incorporating the design responses described in Section 7.2, and as detailed by Balarinji (2022), the project would help:

- Provide employment opportunities for Aboriginal peoples
- Encourage Aboriginal peoples' participation in decision making
- Support the locally connected Aboriginal community to bring its social impact priorities (such as employment and procurement) to the table
- Provide spaces that are both physically and culturally accessible, are more welcoming and encourage community connections
- Provide ongoing opportunities for community-led organisations or Aboriginal-owned businesses to be involved in the management of community assets such as community spaces and gardens.

## 7.4 Environmental management measures

Aboriginal heritage impacts will be addressed in the form of management measures. Measures to minimise impacts relating to non-Aboriginal heritage, visual amenity and socio-economic impacts are addressed in other impact chapters and have not been included here. Table 72 lists the measures to manage Aboriginal heritage impacts specifically.

Table 7-2: Environmental management measures – Aboriginal heritage

Ref	Impact / Uncertainty	Environmental management measure	Timing
AH01	Impact   Impact to Aboriginal heritage	<p>A <b>Cultural Heritage Management Plan</b> (CHMP) will be prepared and implemented as part of the Construction Environmental Management Plan. It will provide specific guidance on measures and controls to be implemented for managing impacts on Aboriginal cultural heritage. The CHMP will be prepared in consultation with all relevant Aboriginal groups. It will give effect to any management measures contained in the Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment carried out for the project and include, but not necessarily be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of investigations completed or planned to be carried out and any associated approvals required</li> <li>• Mapping of areas of Aboriginal heritage value and identification of protection measures to be applied during construction</li> <li>• Procedures to be implemented if previously unidentified Aboriginal objects, including skeletal remains, are discovered during construction</li> <li>• An induction program for construction personnel on the management of Aboriginal heritage values</li> <li>• Opportunities for on-going Aboriginal community engagement in the project</li> <li>• Any requirements contained within the <u>Central State Significant Precinct study</u> and supporting technical documents where applicable.</li> </ul>	Pre-construction
AH02	Impact   Indirect impact on AHIMS ID 45-6-3654	A protective barrier/fence will be installed at AHIMS ID 45-6-3654 to provide an exclusion zone to prevent any disturbance in this area.	Pre-construction
AH03	Uncertainty   Unexpected find	If an Aboriginal heritage site or object is identified during the construction of the project, the procedure outlined in the <u>Unexpected heritage items procedure</u> (Transport for NSW, 2022w) will be followed. Work will immediately stop at the location and the find immediately reported to the appropriate Transport personnel, Heritage NSW and NSW Department of	Construction



Ref	Impact / Uncertainty	Environmental management measure	Timing
		Planning and Environment. No work will restart near the find until any required approvals have been issued by the regulator.	