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Report of an Ethnographic Consultation & Archaeological Inspection of Lot 4131 Smiths Beach, Yallingup, Western Australia

Prepared for Smiths 2014 Pty Ltd.

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Disclaimer

The results, conclusions and recommendations contained within this report are based on information available at the time of its preparation. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that all relevant data has been collated, the authors can take no responsibility for omissions and/or inconsistencies that may result from information becoming available subsequent to the report's completion.

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Abbreviations

AHA: *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*

AHIS: Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System

DPLH: Department of Planning, Land and Heritage

DDG: Aboriginal Heritage Due Diligence Guidelines

PDA: Proposed Development Area

S18: Section 18 AHA Application/Consent

Smiths 2014: Smiths 2014 Pty Ltd

Acknowledgements

Trevor Corbett

Jack Hill

Mark Blurton

Bill Webb

Josh “Koomal” Whiteland

Callum Hart

David Collard

Anneke Brown

Brad Goode

Summary & Recommendations

Smiths 2014 Pty Ltd (Smiths 2014) propose to develop Lot 4131 Smiths Beach, Yallingup, Western Australia as a tourism destination, which would also provide a hub for the adjacent Cape to Cape walk track. The planned development will include a welcome centre with a dedicated indigenous interpretation section with information on immersive cultural experiences. Ethnoscience was commissioned by Smiths 2014 to undertake an archaeological inspection of Lot 4131 and to undertake an ethnographic consultation with members of the Aboriginal Reference Group, established by the proponent, with the assistance of Mr David Collard of David Collard and Associates, to engage in long-term consultation regarding the proposed development and landscape management.

The desktop research revealed that Aboriginal site ID 15080 Smith's Beach 01, a low-density sparse artefact scatter, is located within the Lot. Site ID 15801 Smith's Beach 02 and Other Heritage Place (OHP) ID 15993 Canal Rocks are depicted on the AHIS as overlapping the area. However, ID 15801 is located outside the proposed development area (PDA) in the foreshore reserve to the west of the Lot and ID 15993 is located on the coast to the north of Lot 4131.

The Aboriginal consultants did not identify any new Aboriginal sites within the Smiths 2014 Lot 4131 proposed development area.

However, they did identify a potential soak adjacent to Smiths Beach Road, which the Aboriginal consultants suggest would have been used traditionally.

Apart from ID 15080, the pedestrian transects of the land by the Aboriginal and heritage consultants did not identify any artefactual material.

One of the Aboriginal consultants expressed the strong view that ID 15080 is significant and should be avoided. The other Aboriginal consultants, however, did not object to impacts on the site, which they did not consider particularly significant. However, several of the Aboriginal consultants thought that additional archaeological material could be present around ID 15080 and requested that monitoring is undertaken during initial ground

disturbance. There was also a concern that there was a potential for burials to be present in the study area, experience has shown that burials are frequently unearthed in the dunes systems along the coast in the Southwest.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Smiths 2014 consider revising development plans in order to avoid Aboriginal site ID 15080.

It is recommended that if it is not possible to avoid ID 15080 that Smiths 2014 lodge a s18 Notice for Ministerial consent to use the land on which the site is located.

It is recommended that Smiths 2014 continue to consult the Aboriginal Reference Group regarding the proposed development of Lot 4131 and engagement opportunities.

It is recommended that Smiths 2014 engage the Aboriginal Reference Group to monitor initial ground disturbance to ensure that any burials/skeletal material or artefacts unearthed during ground disturbance are handled in accordance with Wardandi customs and traditions and the relevant legislation.

It is recommended that the potential soak identified by the Aboriginal consultants be incorporated into the foreshore design if possible. If this is not achievable, further liaison with the Aboriginal Reference Group is recommended.

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Introduction

Ethnoscience was commissioned by Smiths 2014 Pty Ltd (Smiths 2014) to undertake an ethnographic consultation in respect of the proposed development of Lot 4131, Smiths Beach, Yallingup, Western Australia and an archaeological inspection of the area. Smiths 2014 plan to deliver a tourism development. The village hub will include a general store, café and bakery, and the Smiths Beach Surf Lifesaving Club. Central to the development will be the Cape to Cape HQ, a welcome centre planned to provide a curated selection of experiences for all visitors on the Cape-to-Cape walk track and the Margaret River Region more generally. The centre will include a dedicated indigenous interpretation section with information on immersive cultural experiences. It is planned that the rehabilitation and strengthening of native green corridors will then blend residences into the existing landscape (Figure 1).

Smiths 2014 through their Aboriginal engagement consultant, David Collard and Associates, has established an Aboriginal Reference Group, which has been involved in the planning process and in exploring long-term engagement opportunities for the local Aboriginal community, including landscape management and cultural interpretation and experiences.

The land was originally surveyed by McDonald, Hales and Associates in 1993 for Alan Tingay and Associates (Edwards, Murphy, Hammond and McDonald 1993).

Local Environment and Landform

Lot 4131 consists of two major landform components: (a) a ridgeline in the western sector that extends seaward in a north-westerly direction (ridgeline forms a slightly raised headland c. 58m) and (b) a gently south-north sloping eastern section (ATA 2006).

The Naturaliste-Leeuwin coastline has a Mediterranean climate with warm to hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters with an average rainfall of approximately 833mm. The geology of the Lot consists of Quaternary sand overlying Archaean gneiss with minor outcrops of Tamala Limestone in places. No wetlands have been recorded on the Lot (ATA 2006: 8). Approximately 200m to the northeast of the Lot is located Gunyulgup Brook, an ephemeral stream, which discharges into Smiths Beach Bay (ATA 2006: 8). The proposed development area (PDA) is situated within the Boranup System of the Drummond Sub-

District within the Darling District of the South-West Botanical Province (Beard 1981). Broadly two vegetation units are identified by Beard (1981) acacia shrubland and low woodland: *Agonis flexuosa* (Peppermint). ATA (2006: 8-9) provide a more detailed description of the vegetation types and variation across the Lot (see also ATA 2006 Figure 2 and Edwards et al. 1993). The Lot historically has been used for low-intensity sheep grazing, which was discontinued in the mid-1990's.

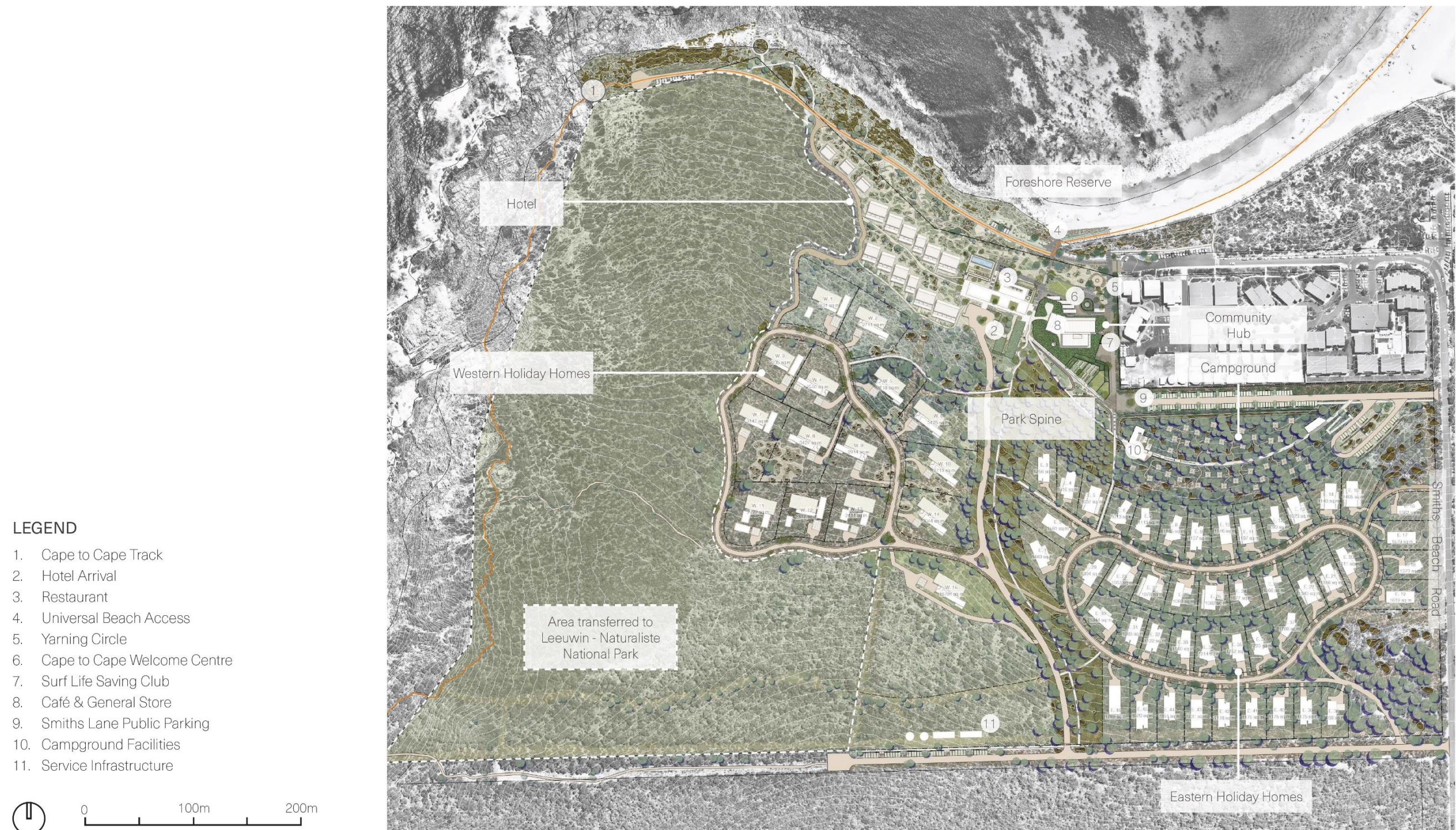


Figure 1: Smiths 2014 - Smiths Beach Master Plan Source: Smiths 2014)

Study Methods

The ethnographic consultation and archaeological inspection were conducted using the following methods:

- ❖ Desktop research
- ❖ Consultation with members of the Aboriginal Reference Group established with the assistance of David Collard and Associates
- ❖ Archaeological inspection of the PDA with members of the Aboriginal Reference Group and a detailed inspection of artefact scatter ID 15080 in order to confirm the results of the 1993 survey.

The desktop research included an examination of the DPLH's online Aboriginal heritage inquiry system (AHIS), and a review of pertinent site files and of previous heritage reports pertinent to the area and its surrounds (e.g., Edwards et al. 1993, Goode and Floyd 2004; Huxtable and Winton 2020, McDonald, Hales & Associates 1994 & Centre for Social Research Edith Cowan University & McDonald, Hales and Associates 1997).

The consultation with and inspections of the PDA with members of the Aboriginal Reference Group was undertaken by Dr Edward McDonald and Ms Tania Phillips of Ethnoscience. Mr David Collard of David Collard and Associates had previously been commissioned to establish the Aboriginal Reference Group representing the key Noongar families from the region. The members include Trevor Corbett, Jack Hill, Bill Webb, Josh "Koomal" Whiteland and Mark Blurton (Table 1 below lists the 1993 and current Aboriginal consultants)

1993 Aboriginal Consultants	2021 Aboriginal Consultants
The late Norman Harris	Trevor Corbett
The late Ms Ellen Hill	Jack Hill
The late Ms Rose Pell	Mark Blurton
The late George Webb	Bill Webb
Wayne Webb	Josh "Koomal" Whiteland

Table 1: 1993 and 2021 Aboriginal consultants

Mr Wayne Webb is the sole survivor of the 1993 survey team. All the members of the Reference Group are related, part of the complex kin network that comprises the Busselton community and are all related to the 1993 consultants. More specifically, Mr Trevor Corbett is the son of the late Norman Harris, a senior Wardandi man. Mr Blurton is a nephew of the late Norman Harris: sister's son. Mr Hill is the nephew of the late Ms Ellen Hill and the late Ms Rose Pell: brother's son. They were senior Wardandi women, who were also part of the 1993 consultative team. Bill Webb and Josh Whiteland are the son and grandson respectively of the late George Webb, another senior Wardandi man, who was also on the 1993 consultative team and Bill Webb is Wayne Webb's brother (Edwards et al. 1993; Table 1 above).

Also, in attendance during the consultation and site inspection were Mr David Collard of David Collard and Associates and Mr Callum Hart of Smiths 2014.

Goode and Floyd's (2006) surveyed the adjacent Lot 364 (the former caravan park site) and their Aboriginal consultants included several of Edwards et al's. (1993) Aboriginal consultants and the others are close relatives and are also close relatives to the Aboriginal consultants in the current survey.¹

Following initial discussions, McDonald and Phillips joined the Reference Group members in undertaking pedestrian transects of the PDA generally and in the inspection of the previously recorded artefact scatter ID 15080 Smith's Beach 01 specifically. Following the departure of the Aboriginal consultants to Ngilgi Cave to inspect a traditional burning exercise, Phillips and McDonald continued with their archaeological assessment of ID 15080, which was undertaken to assess the site's current condition and to determine what if any changes had occurred since it was recorded in 1993.

¹ Goode and Floyd's (2006) Aboriginal consultants included Mrs. Barbara Corbett and the late Ken Colbung, the late Phillip Prosser, the late Ellen Hill and the late Vilma Webb from the SWB native title claim and Mrs. Minnie van Leeuwin and Gary Harris together with Mrs. van Leeuwin's siblings the late Norman Harris, the late Dorothy Blurton, and the late Marie Harris of the former Harris Family claim group.



Plate 1: Tania Phillips with several members of the Aboriginal Reference Group, from left, Mark Blurton, Bill Webb, Trevor Corbett and Jack Hill (Photo: McDonald, May 2021)



Plate 2: Callum Hart (Smiths 2014) checks coordinates of Lot 4131 boundary with Tania Phillips and Josh Whiteland, out of frame Jack Hill (Photo: McDonald, May 2021)



Plate 3: Members of the heritage team undertake transects of the PDA (note dense vegetation)
(Photo: McDonald, May 2021)



Plate 4: Members of the heritage team inspect a portion of the firebreak on which ID 15080 Smith's Beach 01 is located (Photo: McDonald, May 2021)



Plate 5: Tania Phillips inspects artefacts in site ID 15080 Smith's Beach 01 (Photo: McDonald, May 2021)



Plate 6: Quartz artefacts in site ID 15080 Smith's Beach 01 (Photo: McDonald, May 2021)

Ethnographic Consultation & Archaeological Inspection Results

Desktop Results

The search of the AHIS indicates, as noted above, that the land was previously surveyed archaeologically and ethnographically for Alan Tingay and Associates by McDonald, Hales and Associates in 1993 (Edwards et al. 1993). Also as noted above, Goode and Floyd (2004) surveyed the adjacent caravan park site that has since been developed as the Smiths Beach Resort. No sites were recorded in the Goode and Floyd (2004) survey.

The project area was also encompassed by several regional studies (e.g., McDonald, Hales & Associates 1994 and the Western Australian Regional Forest Agreement research by the Centre for Social Research Edith Cowan University & McDonald, Hales and Associates 1997).

The search of the AHIS found that there is one Registered Aboriginal Sites within Lot 4131-ID 15080 Smith's Beach 01 an artefact scatter (Figure 3).

Edwards et al. (1993) note that the site is a 'continuous', low density, artefact scatter stretching over a linear distance of approximately 1km, located on a firebreak behind the then caravan park. Two main concentrations of artefacts, all manufactured from quartz, were recorded with a maximum of three artefacts/m². Outside the two main concentrations artefact density fell to below one artefact/10m². The total number of artefacts recorded was 29. Edwards et al. (1993:12) conclude: "This site would appear to have little further research potential owing to the low density of artefacts and the disturbed context within which it is situated."

ID 15080 is located approximately 300m from Gunyulgup Brook, which is located to the east of the PDA. Goode and Floyd (2004: 15) record that the late Mrs Vilma Webb, the late mother of Bill Webb, report that there was a soak on the east side of Smiths Beach Road on Chandler's property.

The AHIS search also indicates that one Aboriginal site ID 15801 Smith's Beach 02, an artefact scatter and one 'Other Heritage Place' (OHP) ID 15993 Canal Rocks a camp and hunting place are depicted as impinging on Lot 4131. (Figure 3).

ID 15801 Smith's Beach 02 was recorded during the original 1993 survey (Edwards et al. 1993) and comprises a total of seven artefacts, which were recorded over an area measuring approximately 10m x 10m. The site is located on the slope of a limestone ridge which runs down to the coastline outside the original 1993 survey area (Edwards et al. 1993: 13) and therefore it is outside the current study area.

ID 15993 was recorded as part of the Aboriginal consultation associated with the Western Australia Regional Forest Agreement (Centre for Social Research Edith Cowan University & McDonald, Hales and Associates 1997) and relates to a fishing camp(s) that the late Norman Harris and others from the Busselton Aboriginal community had at Smiths Beach. The late Mrs Vilma Webb, for example, reported to Goode and Floyd (2004: 15) that she regularly visited Smiths Beach for salmon fishing. Though depicted as overlapping with the present study area on Lot 4131, the site is actually located outside of the property (Centre for Social Research Edith Cowan University & McDonald, Hales and Associates 1997 and Goode and Floyd 2004).

Neither ID 15801 nor ID 15993 will be impacted upon by the proposed development.

ID 4561 Wyadup Brook is a Lodged OHP comprising an artefacts scatter and shell scatter depicted on the AHIS as a 1x1km polygon which touches the west end of the southern boundary of Lot 4131. The place, according to Huxtable and Winton (2020), is actually located some distance to the south on the southern bank of the Wyadup Brook, approximately 900m south of the Canal Rocks Boat Ramp and therefore will not be impacted upon by the current development.

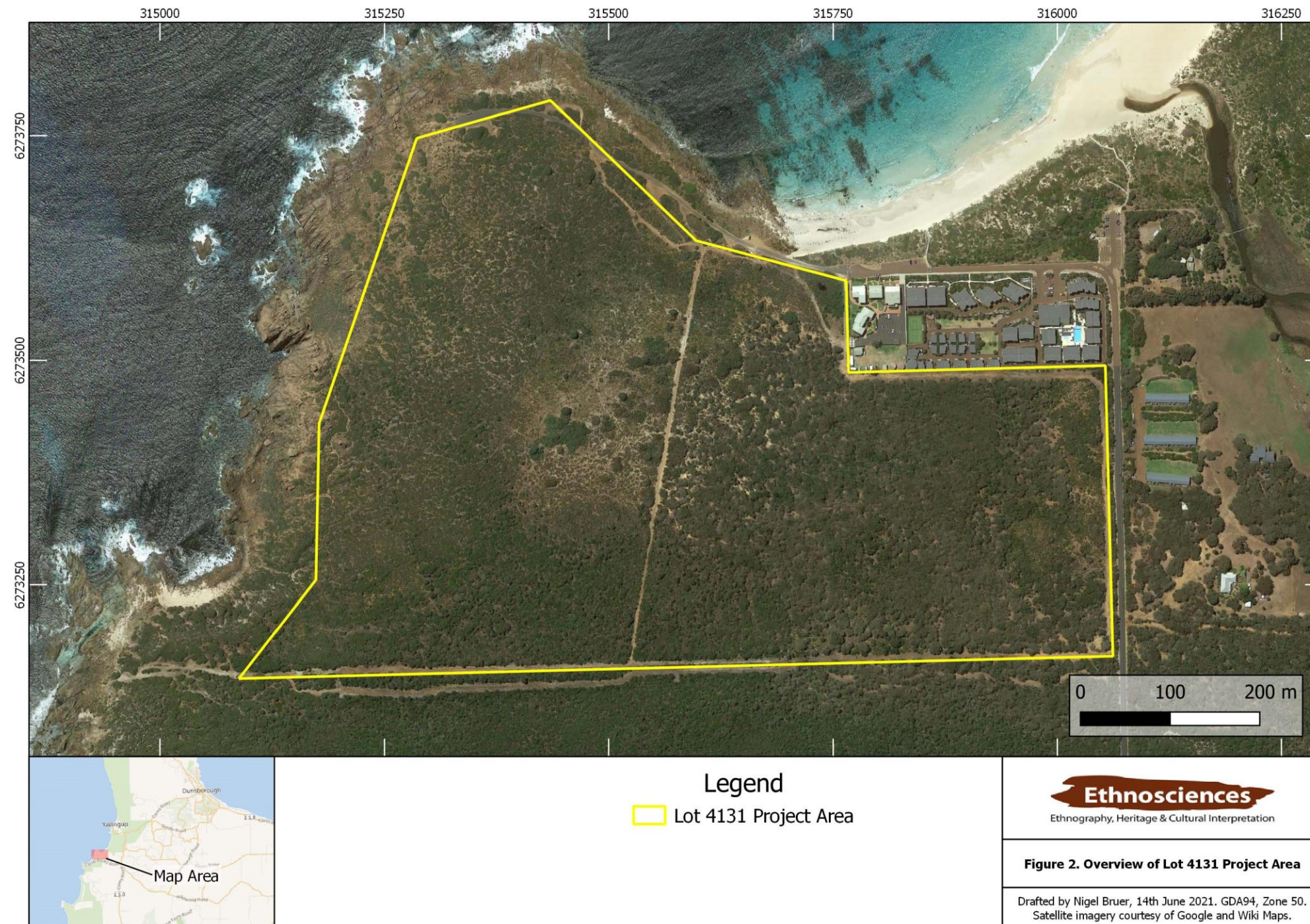


Figure 2: Lot 4131 Smiths Beach Master Plan Area (Source: Smiths 2014)

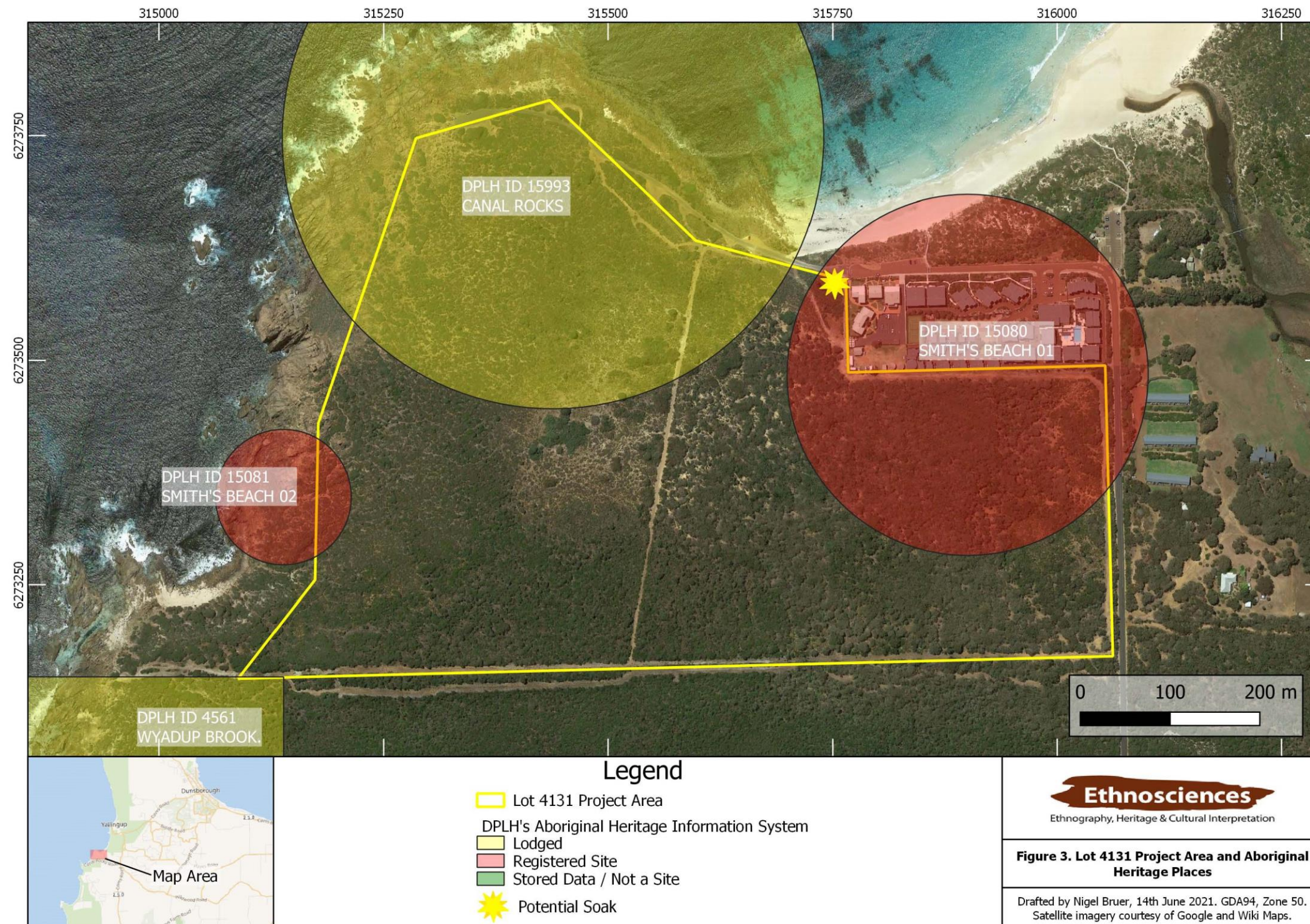


Figure 3: Smiths Beach Master Plan Area showing Aboriginal Sites and OHPs, also showing the location of the potential soak (Source: AHIS/Ethnoscience)

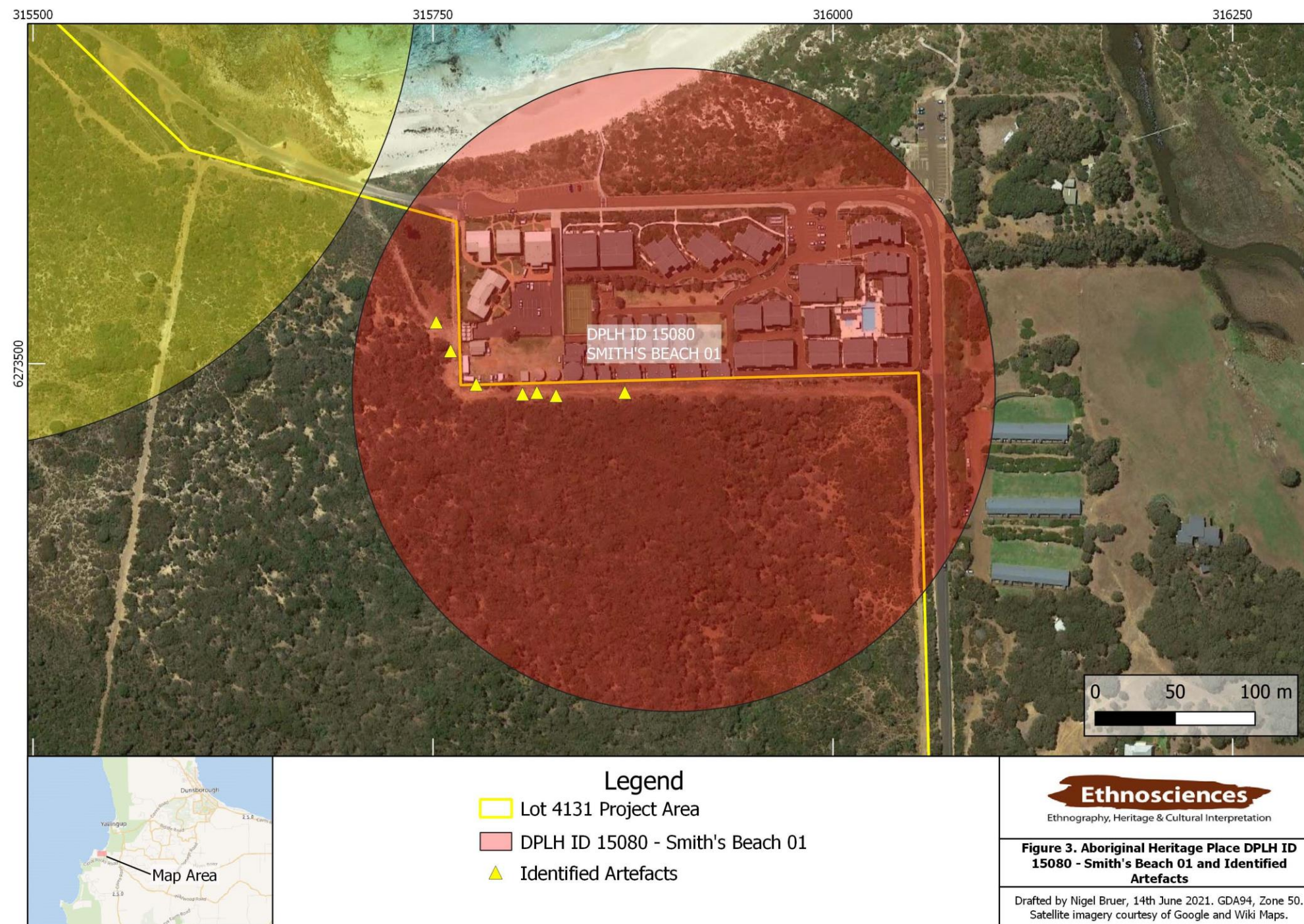


Figure 4: Map showing the AHIS depiction of ID 15080 in Lot 4131 and location of the clusters of artefacts recorded on the firebreak (Source AHIS/Ethnoscience):

Ethnographic Consultation Results

No new Aboriginal sites were identified by the Aboriginal consultants within the Smiths 2014 study area on Lot 4131.

The Aboriginal consultants did, however, identify a potential soak near where the firebreak joins Smiths Beach Road on the north side of the PDA (GPS Zone 50 315752E; 6273586N approximately) and suggested that this would have been used traditionally (Figure 3). The soak is in an area, which the Master Plan has designated as a Karla Boora (Yarning Circle) (Figure 1) and may therefore be incorporated into this feature.

ID 15993 Canal Rocks was not identified by the Aboriginal consultants on the land.

One of the Aboriginal consultants was somewhat fatalistic about the development noting that it was 'going ahead away'. That is, that he expects the proponent to get Ministerial approval regardless of Aboriginal community views. However, he reports that he is extremely pleased that the extensive consultative process through David Collard and Associates had been put in place. Which he sees as a valuable opportunity to input into the planning process and the start of a long-term engagement with the developers which would be beneficial to the local Aboriginal community and beneficial for the long-term management of the land, as well as for the interpretation of Aboriginal culture for residents and visitors. The other Aboriginal consultants also expressed a similar appreciation regarding their engagement early in the planning process and with the prospect of a long-term engagement in the development and did not raise any objections to the land being developed.

It is worth noting in this context that as the late James Weiner (2011) observed in NSW, undeveloped parcels of land may be seen by Aboriginal communities as an 'Aboriginal, landscape' that recalls a pre-colonial situation and that the landscape may be 'sacralised' to 're-inscribe' an Aboriginal version of historical events. Similar observations have been made elsewhere (e.g., Western Australia - McDonald, Coldrick and Christensen (2011) and Queensland - Martin, Sneddon and Trigger (2016)). In such contexts Noongars often lament the changes that development brings and express regret that things cannot be left in their 'natural state'. The earlier engagement with the Aboriginal Reference Group in the planning

process and the proponent's commitment to their long-term cooperative management of the landscape would, it seems, have allayed any such concerns by members of the Aboriginal Reference Group regarding the proposed Smiths Beach development.

However, one of the Aboriginal consultants expressed concern about the potential impacts on ID 15080 Smith's Beach 01, which he evaluated as an important site, noting its registered status. In contrast, others were not concerned about the proposed impacts on ID 15080: 'no I don't see that as a problem' as one reported. On the one hand, they either did not consider that the site was particularly significant or on the other, thought that the benefits of the proposed long-term engagement with the project outweighed any such impacts.

Archaeological Inspection Results

The archaeological results of the 1993 survey were confirmed. Except for ID 15080 Smith's Beach 01, no stone artefacts or other Aboriginal archaeological material was observed during the pedestrian transects in the PDA. As in 1993, dense vegetation covered most of the survey area limiting surface visibility. Nevertheless, the Aboriginal consultants were satisfied with the results of the archaeological inspection, indicating that they thought that the results were an accurate depiction of the area's archaeology.

The inspection of ID 15080 indicated that the site which is located on a firebreak is still extant. The boundaries of the site have not radically changed (Figure 4 above). However, more artefacts were observed (n=44) than during the original recording in 1993 by Edwards et al. The artefacts, which are totally comprised of quartz and ranging between 20mm to 5mm in maximum dimension, are distributed along the firebreak in several clusters, ranging from one artefact/m² to a maximum of five artefacts/m². It is possible that recent rain events resulted in the exposure of additional artefactual material. However, it is also possible that the disturbance caused by the construction of the adjacent resort (c. 2006) may have exposed material. As in 1993, artefacts included flakes, broken flakes and debitage.

However, as noted, one Aboriginal consultant thought that ID 15080 Smith's Beach 01 was a significant site and ought to be avoided. He was of the view that the place would have been an important traditional camping area, pointing to a hollow section of ground and suggesting

that this is where people would have camped. As noted above, Edwards et al. (1993) concluded that the site had little further research potential because of the low density of artefacts and its disturbed context. Our assessment concurs.

Nonetheless, the Aboriginal consultants were of the view that additional archaeological material might be present in the area and recommended that monitoring of ground disturbance is undertaken.

It was also noted that there was a potential for burials to be located in the dunes closest to the coast (see also Goode and Floyd 2004 whose Aboriginal consultants expressed similar concerns, see also McDonald, Hales and Associates 1994 and Corsini for a general discussion of the discovery of burials in the coastal dunes in the Southwest). Consequently, it was recommended that ground clearing should be monitored to ensure that any burials that were disturbed are treated in accordance with the relevant legislation and Wardandi customs and traditions.

Conclusions & Recommendations

This report presents the findings of an ethnographic consultation and archaeological inspection undertaken by Ethnoscience of Lot 4131, Smiths Beach, Yallingup, Western Australia, which Smiths 2014 hope to develop as a tourism destination, including a hub for the adjacent Cape to Cape walk track. On-going consultation with an Aboriginal Reference Group is occurring through David Collard and Associates regarding the proposed development of Lot 4131, management of the landscape and the proposed development's integration with the Cape to Cape walk track. It is planned that the development will include a welcome centre with a dedicated indigenous interpretation section with information on immersive cultural experiences.

The desktop research, which included a search of the AHIS and a review of previous reports found that Aboriginal site ID 15080 Smith's Beach 01, a sparse artefact scatter, is located on the land and that Aboriginal site ID 15081 Smith's Beach 02 and OHP ID 15993 Canal Rocks are depicted on the AHIS as overlapping the PDA. However, the archival and ethnographic evidence indicates that neither ID 15081 nor ID 15993 are located within Lot 4131 and will not be impacted on by the proposed development.

The Aboriginal consultants did not identify any new Aboriginal sites within the Smiths 2014 PDA. Though they did identify a potential soak, which they suggest would have been used traditionally. The Master Plan has designated the area as a Karla Boora (Yarning Circle) and the soak may therefore be incorporated into this feature.

Pedestrian transects of the land by the Aboriginal and heritage consultants did not identify any artefactual material except that which forms ID 15080. One of the Aboriginal consultants expressed the strong view that ID 15080 should be avoided. The other Aboriginal consultants, however, did not share that view and did not object to impact on the site. However, several thought that additional archaeological material could be present around ID 15080 and requested that monitoring is undertaken during initial ground disturbance. There was also a concern that burials might be present especially in areas close to the coast and for that reason monitoring was also recommended.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Smiths 2014 consider revising development plans in order to avoid Aboriginal site ID 15080.

It is recommended that if it is not possible to avoid ID 15080 that Smiths 2014 lodge a s18 Notice for Ministerial consent to use the land on which the site is located.

It is recommended that Smiths 2014 continue to consult the Aboriginal Reference Group regarding the proposed development of Lot 4131 and engagement opportunities.

It is recommended that Smiths 2014 engage the Aboriginal Reference Group to monitor initial ground disturbance to ensure that any burials/skeletal material or artefacts unearthed during ground disturbance are handled in accordance with Wardandi customs and traditions and the relevant legislation.

It is recommended that the potential soak identified by the Aboriginal consultants be incorporated into the foreshore design if possible. If this is not achievable, further liaison with the Aboriginal Reference Group is recommended.

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