



CHAPTER 20 – CULTURAL HERITAGE

STANMORE ID EXTENSION PTY LTD
ISAAC DOWNS EXTENSION PROJECT

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20. CULTURAL HERITAGE

20.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the Indigenous and non-Indigenous (historical) cultural values of the Project area. This includes the measures that are being implemented to protect, mitigate and manage heritage values which may be impacted by the Project. It also provides information about native title in relation to the Project tenements and native title process required for the Project. The Native Title holder for the Project area is the Barada Barna Aboriginal Corporation (BBAC).

The non-Indigenous cultural heritage assessment is based on the information provided in **Appendix X**.

20.2 Regulatory Framework

20.2.1 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth)

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) is a key piece of Commonwealth legislation for management of the environment and cultural heritage. The EPBC Act protects places of world heritage value, including those listed on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage List, as well as places of national significance listed on the Australian Heritage List or the Commonwealth Heritage List. Both lists include sites that were previously part of the Register of the National Estate. In particular, the EPBC Act establishes a legal framework with specific ‘triggers’ that require approval for actions likely to have a significant impact on places of heritage significance or on cultural heritage aspects of the environment located on Commonwealth land. These provisions aim to ensure the protection and proper management of heritage values.

20.2.2 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 (Qld)

The *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003* (ACH Act) provides a system to protect, preserve and manage Aboriginal cultural heritage areas and artefacts in Queensland. The objective of the ACH Act is to provide recognition, protection and conservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage. The following components are required by the ACH Act:

- Section 23 legislates a ‘duty of care’ by which anyone conducting activities on land must take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure the activity does not harm Aboriginal cultural heritage. Penalties apply for causing unauthorised harm.
- Section 87 requires that a cultural heritage management plan (CHMP) be developed and approved wherever an environmental impact statement (EIS) is required for the approval of any project.
- Section 38 requires the establishment of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Database maintained by the Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism (DWATSIPM).

Aboriginal cultural heritage is defined as:

- a significant Aboriginal area in Queensland, or
- a significant Aboriginal object, or

- evidence of an archaeological or historic significance of Aboriginal occupation of an area of Queensland.

20.2.3 Native Title Act 1993 (Commonwealth)

The *Native Title Act 1993* (NT Act) recognises native title rights and provides the government with ways in which to validate or legitimise past acts such as the granting of leases. This legislation provides for the determination of native title claims, the treatment of future acts which may impact on native title rights and the requirement for consultation and/or notification to relevant native title claimants, where future acts are involved.

20.2.4 Queensland Heritage Act 1992

The *Queensland Heritage Act 1992* (QH Act) provides for the conservation of Queensland's cultural heritage for the benefit of the community and future generations. Administered by the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI), the QHA sets out a framework for identifying and protecting heritage places by establishing the Queensland Heritage Council (QHC), the Queensland Heritage Register (QHR), local heritage registers, regulating development, and enabling the management of heritage places through heritage agreements.

A place is considered of State cultural heritage significance if its heritage values contribute to the understanding of the wider pattern and evolution of Queensland's history and heritage (Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP), now DETSI, 2013a:6). This includes places that contribute significantly to the understanding of the regional pattern and development of Queensland.

20.2.5 Queensland Heritage Register

The Queensland Heritage Register (QHR) is a record of places of cultural heritage significance to the people of Queensland. Places may be entered in the QHR under two categories, State Heritage Place (SHP) or Protected Area (PA). SHPs are the most common category.

For a place to be listed on the QHR, it must satisfy one or more of eight cultural heritage criteria specified in Section 35 of the QHA. The QHR criteria are:

- The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Queensland's history.
- The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of Queensland's cultural heritage.
- The place has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Queensland's history.
- The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of cultural places.
- The place is important because of its aesthetic significance.
- The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.
- The place has a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
- The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organisation of importance in Queensland's history.

20.2.6 The Burra Charter

The Commonwealth and Queensland cultural heritage legislation is primarily based on the principles outlined in the *Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* (Australia ICOMOS, 2013). The Burra Charter establishes the definition of cultural significance as 'aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations', and sets the basic principles for cultural

heritage conservation legislation for all Australian states and territories. It also establishes criteria for assessing the significance of heritage values, including value of a site to part or all the community (social), and scientific and historical value.

20.2.7 Human Rights Act 2019

The *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld) (HR Act) protects 23 fundamental civil, political, and specific economic/cultural rights, requiring public entities to act compatibly with them. DETSI must consider the HR Act in making decisions about approvals for the Project. An act or decision is compatible with human rights if it does not limit a human right or, where it does, the limit is only to the extent reasonable and justifiable in a free and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom. The test of compatibility of a limit to a human right is known as the proportionality test.

20.2.8 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritages—EIS Information Guideline

This EIS information guideline - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritages¹ advises proponents about the information and assessment requirements in relation to First Nations Peoples cultural heritages when preparing an EIS (Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, 2026). The EIS has been undertaken in accordance with the EIS information guideline - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritages. The relevant EIS section where the requirements of this guideline have been address are provided in sections 20.3, 20.4.3, 20.5.1 and 20.6.1.

20.2.9 Non-indigenous Cultural Heritage—EIS Information Guideline

The EIS Information Guideline - Non-indigenous cultural heritage² advises proponents about the information and assessment requirements in relation to non-indigenous cultural heritage when preparing and EIS (Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, 2026a). The EIS has been undertaken in accordance with the EIS information guideline - non-indigenous cultural heritage. The relevant EIS sections where the requirements of this guideline have been addressed are provided in sections 20.4.2, 20.5.2 and 20.6.2.

20.2.10 Environmental Objectives and Outcomes

The environmental objectives and outcomes, based on the EP Regulation and terms of reference (ToR) for the Project's EIS, that are relevant to the cultural heritage, are provided in Table 20-1. A corresponding EIS section reference is provided in this table demonstrating how the Project meets these environmental objectives and outcomes.

Table 20-1 Environmental Objective and Outcomes

Requirement	Environmental Objectives and Outcomes	EIS Reference
Terms of Reference	The construction and operation of the project must achieve the purposes of the <i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i> and the <i>Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i> with respect to the project site and ensure that the nature and scale of the project does not compromise the cultural heritage significance of a heritage place or heritage area.	20.3, 20.4, 20.5, 20.6

¹ https://www.detsi.qld.gov.au/_global/policy-register/policy-register-pdf?getdoc=5296&name=eis-tm-atsi-heritages-information-guide.pdf

² https://www.detsi.qld.gov.au/_global/policy-register/policy-register-pdf?getdoc=5302&name=eis-tm-heritage-information-guide.pdf

20.3 Native Title and Cultural Heritage

The Barada Barna People hold determined native title rights and interests in part of the proposed Project area. The native title rights and interests of the Barada Barna People are held on trust by BBAC, the prescribed body corporate for the purposes of the NT Act.

The 'Right to Negotiate' process under section 29 of the NT Act, for the Project's mining lease applications (MLAs), was commenced mid-October 2025 (being the notification day of the MLAs). However, since before that time, Stanmore has been engaging and working with BBAC in good faith to agree:

- a Section 31 agreement to record the agreement of the BBAC, the State and Stanmore to the grant of the MLAs required for the Project to which the Right to Negotiate process applies
- a separate and confidential Ancillary Agreement between BBAC and Stanmore in respect of, among other things, native title compensation to be provided by Stanmore in consideration for BBAC's consent to the grant of the MLAs.

BBAC is the Aboriginal party for the purposes of the ACH Act.

Notices under the ACH Act in respect of the proposed development of a CHMP, covering the Project MLAs, were issued to BBAC and other required recipients in or around May 2025. The terms of the CHMP have subsequently been negotiated and agreed by Stanmore and BBAC, and the CHMP is proposed to be entered into at the same time as entry into the Section 31 agreement and submitted for approval by the Chief Executive shortly thereafter.

The CHMP contemplates specific processes for management of cultural heritage, including protocols for clearance surveys, avoidance of known places, monitoring of works areas, and courses of action to be taken when artefacts are discovered.

20.4 Description of Existing Values

20.4.1 Historical Overview of the Project Area

Early exploration of the Isaac region was first recorded by German explorer Ludwig Leichhardt in February 1845 during his expedition from Moreton Bay to Port Essington. Leichhardt named the Isaac River after Frank Isaacs and documented several creeks in the area, including Cherwell Creek and what is now known as Conrock Gully both within the Project area. His journals also describe interactions with Aboriginal people and the discovery of water sources along the Isaac River. Although coal was observed, Leichhardt's focus was on identifying land suitable for pastoral use, which later shaped the region's development.

Pastoral settlement officially began in 1856, with numerous runs established by early settlers such as Jeremiah Rolf, the Archer Brothers, Oscar de Stage, John Muirhead, and Andrew Scott, who held the 'Moranbah' run near the Project area. Legislation introduced by the Queensland colonial government required settlers to occupy and work their land, reinforcing pastoralism as the dominant industry by the 1870s. Attempts at sheep grazing failed due to harsh climatic conditions and spear grass, leading to beef cattle becoming the primary and enduring agricultural activity. By the late 19th and mid-20th centuries, the 'Moranbah' run was consolidated into 'Grosvenor Downs', with the Project area later forming part of 'Stalbridge Holdings' and 'Winchester Downs'.

Mining became a dominant land use in the region from the 1960s, although earlier activity focused on small-scale gold and copper mining near Clermont during the 1860s. The expansion of rail infrastructure later supported coal mining across central Queensland, with open-cut methods successfully introduced at Blair Athol in 1937. Large-scale coal production in the Bowen Basin commenced in the late 1960s, driven by multinational investment such as Utah Development Corporation's operations at Blackwater. The town of Moranbah was established soon after to support the growing workforce, marking the region's emergence as a major centre for coal mining.

20.4.2 Non- Indigenous Cultural Heritage

A Non-Indigenous Cultural Heritage Assessment (**Appendix X**) has been completed for the Project by a suitably qualified cultural heritage practitioner with substantial experience in cultural heritage assessment and reporting. This assessment was completed in accordance with the *Non-Indigenous cultural heritage – EIS information guideline* (Department of Environment, Science and Innovation, 2024).

The searches of databases and registers and the respective findings is outlined in Table 20-2. The heritage registers and databases have identified that there are no local, State or Commonwealth heritage-listed places within or in proximity to the Project area.

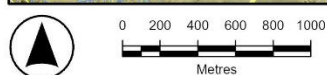
Table 20-2 Database and Register Search Results

Statutory Database/ Register	Results (within 100m)
World Heritage List (WHL)	Nil.
National Heritage List (NHL)	Nil.
Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL)	Nil.
Queensland Heritage Register (QHR)	Nil.
Isaac Regional Council Local Heritage Register	Nil.
Non-Statutory Database/ Register	Results (within 100m)
National Trust of Australia (Queensland) Heritage Register (NTAQHR)	Nil.
National Trust of Australia Register of Significant Trees (Trust Trees).	Nil.
Register of the National Estate (RNE)	Nil.
Queensland WWII Historic Places Database	Nil.
Queensland Native Mounted Police Research Database	Nil.
Monuments Australia Database	Nil.

A review of the Project area, including searches of databases, registers, the Isaac Regional Council Planning Scheme, the results of the historical aerial photographs and a physical analysis (being the reviews of previous studies for heritage potential) has identified that there are no known places of historical cultural heritage significance located within the Project area. As a result it was not considered necessary to undertake field surveys to identify sites of potential non-Indigenous heritage significance, with any unexpected finds to be managed in accordance with the procedures described in Section 20.6.2.

This lack of identified potential sites within the Project area is likely a reflection of the area's remoteness and past historical land use, whereby most activities have been highly dispersed grazing practices over very large parcels of land, which have not left significant or lasting physical traces.

Through consultation and further analysis of historical records, it became apparent that a shared burial site for three women is located near the Project area. The burial site is approximately 2 km south west of the Project. Though the Project activities will not impact the grave site, the location has been recorded (shown in Figure 20-1).



Datum:	GDA2020 Zone 55
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DISCLAIMER: Third party data sources are used in this map compilation. Minserve makes no warranty regarding this data's accuracy or currency.

20.4.3 Indigenous Cultural Heritage

Indigenous cultural heritage significance can take many forms. It may be reflected in tangible objects made or modified by people, such as stone artefacts, buildings, or collections of items. Cultural significance may also be associated with natural features that show no evidence of human modification, such as mountains, rivers, rocks, or landscapes that hold meaning for a community.

It is understood that the Isaac River holds considerable Indigenous cultural significance, serving as an important site for traditional activities and sustenance for local communities over generations. An archaeological investigation of Poitrel and Riverside Open Cut Mines completed in 1976 (Brayshaw, 1976) described the historical importance of the Isaac River and Cherwell Creek. Historical records indicate that these waterways hold strong cultural significance due to their long standing use as camp sites and their role in providing wells for fresh water within the riverbed.

The Isaac River and Cherwell Creek corridor is central to the living cultural landscape of the Barada Barna people, who are the Native Title holders across parts of the Isaac region. Community feedback captured for the Project consistently describes these waterways as “the lifeblood” of Barada Barna Country, with cultural, historical and spiritual significance tied to travel routes, resource gathering places, storylines and enduring obligations to “law and country.”

A search of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Database and Register was completed in April 2026 for mining lease (ML) 700081, ML700082, ML700083, ML700084. One isolated find is located on the southern portion of ML700083 which was recorded prior to 2015. It was likely identified through surveys for a historical project and therefore managed under the applicable projects CHMP at the time.

20.4.3.1 Stanmore’s History with Indigenous Cultural Heritage

Stanmore’s engagement with Indigenous cultural heritage in the Isaac region spans multiple projects and active mine sites, including the Isaac Plains Complex (IPC), comprising Isaac Plains Mine (IPM) which commenced operation in the mid 2000’s, and Isaac Downs Mine (IDM) through approvals and operations over the prior 5 years, as well as other mines sites acquired more recently (e.g. Poitrel Mine and Eagle Downs Mine).

Stanmore’s understanding of the significance of Indigenous cultural heritage within and surrounding the Project area is also informed by historic EIS materials prepared under previous ownership for the Integrated Isaac Plains Project (IIPP). The historical IIPP EIS largely covers the Project area. The IIPP EIS documents mapped project context, hydrology and regional heritage sensitivities, including river crossings and low-level crossing concepts, which reinforced how the Isaac River and nearby creeks shape movement, resource use and cultural practice. The cultural heritage assessment, completed in 2008 as part of the IIPP EIS, combined a desktop review of heritage registers and consultation with the Traditional Owners, including BBAC representatives. There were no major artefacts found within the IIPP proposed mining footprint, though isolated stone artefacts and low density scatters were recorded in peripheral areas surrounding IPM, reflecting transient camp activity. More importantly, it confirmed the Isaac River and Cherwell Creek as culturally significant corridors.

An EIS was prepared for IDM, which adjoins the Project area, in 2019 and 2020. As part of the IDM EIS, a cultural heritage assessment was completed. The IDM Cultural Heritage Assessment also identified the Isaac River and Cherwell Creek as culturally significant landscapes with strong historical associations to campsites and water sources. The Indigenous cultural heritage surveys undertaken in collaboration with the BBAC found no major artefact concentrations within the IDM project footprint.

Stanmore recognises the cultural importance that terrestrial and aquatic fauna hold for the BBAC. Species such as the White-Throated Snapping Turtle, the Fitzroy River Turtle, and the Murray Cod were traditionally significant food sources for the Barada Barna People and remain integral to their cultural heritage. Through ongoing consultation with BBAC, Stanmore has established a ‘meeting place’ on the

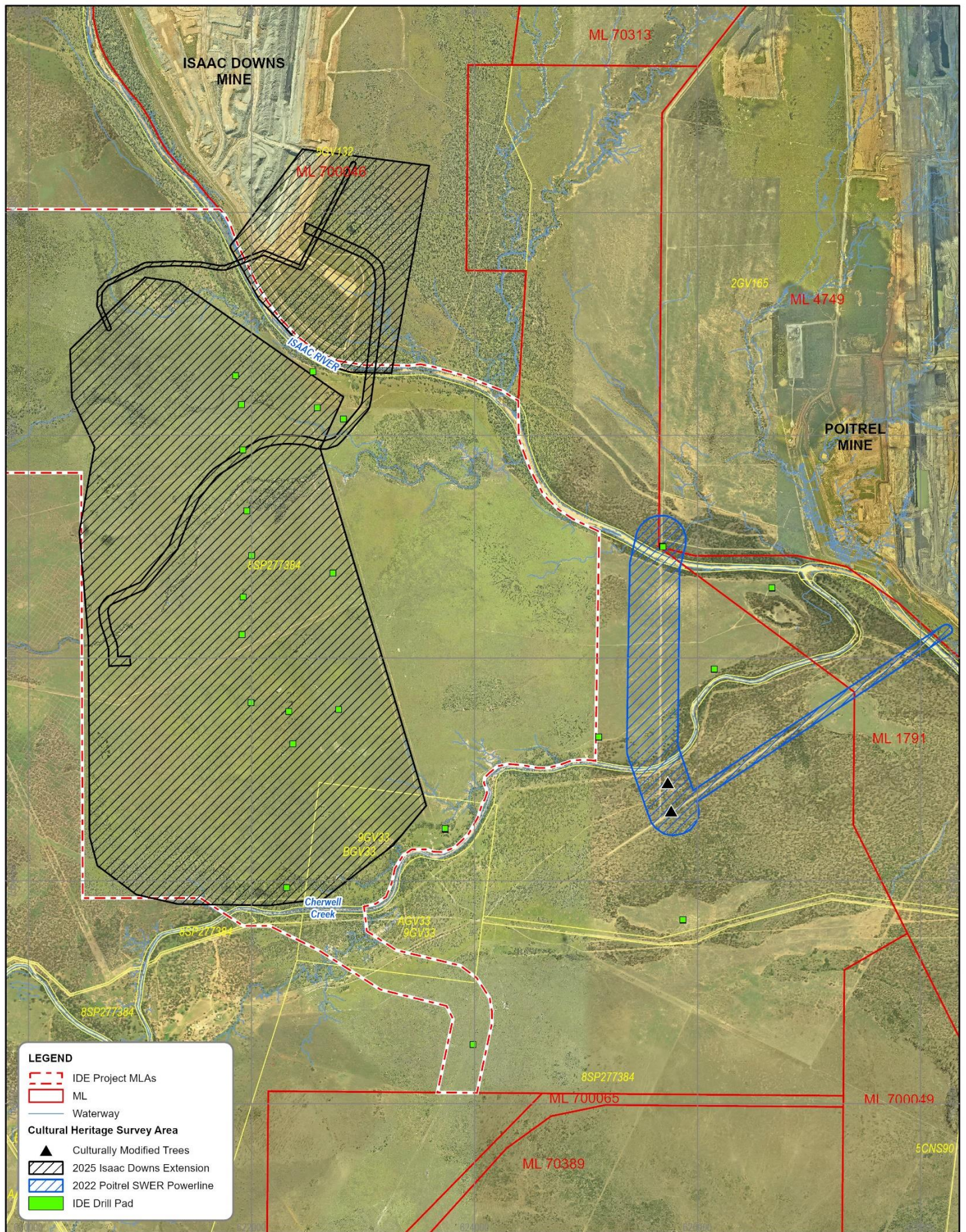
banks of the Isaac River, that can be used jointly by Stanmore and BBAC to facilitate access to this area of the Isaac River and promote the appreciation of cultural significance for the Barada Barna people. It is envisaged that this meeting place will also be part of an annual ‘elders’ visit to the site that Stanmore plans to promote and participate, as well as utilised in workforce training in cultural heritage matters.

The legacy of these findings continues to shape Stanmore’s governance today. The principles of cultural landscape sensitivity and procedural controls historically established underpin current frameworks, including CHMP development, ‘permit to disturb’ processes, and workforce training. This continuity demonstrates Stanmore’s commitment to respecting cultural heritage values and maintaining strong partnerships with Traditional Owners, ensuring that historic learnings inform every stage of Project planning and execution.

20.4.3.2 Project Surveys

In 2025, a series of Indigenous cultural heritage clearance surveys were undertaken by the Barada Barna People to support exploration activities across the Project area. These surveys were aligned with ensuring that cultural heritage considerations were integrated into early Project planning. Each survey involved Barada Barna representatives traversing the designated areas, guided by detailed maps and Project layouts, with the primary objective of identifying any Indigenous cultural heritage artefacts or sites of significance. The process was collaborative and thorough, occurring over multiple days to allow sufficient time for careful inspection and prioritisation of areas known or suspected to hold cultural value. Survey teams focused on riparian zones, elevated landforms, and historically significant corridors, reflecting traditional knowledge of where artefacts are most likely to occur. No artefacts were identified within the surveyed areas outlined in Figure 20-2, confirming that the surveyed footprint does not intersect previously unknown Indigenous cultural heritage sites. Additional surveys will be conducted to ensure all Project activity areas will be adequately assessed in accordance with the proposed CHMP.

In addition to these recent surveys, a 2022 Indigenous cultural heritage survey for the Poitrel single-wire earth return (SWER) line project identified two culturally modified (scar) trees located south east of the Project area shown in Figure 20-2. While these trees fall outside of the Project area, they are formally recorded as known Indigenous cultural heritage artefacts within close proximity to the Project and will be considered in ongoing cultural heritage management planning.



Datum: GDA2020 Zone 55
 Scale: See Scale Bar
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 DISCLAIMER: Third party data sources are used in this map compilation.
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20.5 Potential Impacts

20.5.1 Indigenous Cultural Heritage

Project activities, including vegetation clearing, infrastructure construction, and mining operations, will cause surface and sub-surface disturbance and may pose a risk of harm to surface or subsurface Indigenous cultural heritage items.

The management of the potential impacts to Indigenous cultural heritage will be undertaken in accordance with the approved CHMP. The specific management and mitigation measures outlined in the CHMP are described in Section 20.6.1.

20.5.2 Non-Indigenous Cultural Heritage

A search of the Queensland Heritage Register was undertaken as part of the non-Indigenous cultural heritage assessment where no records were found within the Project area. As a result approval under the QH Act is not required.

The probability of finding additional historical places or items within the Project area is considered low. Should any further non-Indigenous cultural heritage sites be discovered, they would most likely be associated with pastoral activities such as dams, survey areas, remnants of boundary fences.

20.5.3 Human Rights Act 2019

Under the HR Act, the cultural rights of First Nations peoples have potential to be impacted by the Project, including water-related cultural use values. The proponent will enter into a Native Title agreement and cultural heritage management plan with the BBAC, thereby managing impacts on the rights of First Nations peoples. Furthermore the Project's social impact management plan (**Chapter 21**) proposes a number of measures for mitigating and managing social impacts and benefits for Indigenous peoples. **Chapters 8, 9 and 10** describe the potential impacts of the Project on surface water and groundwater, and the management measures to protect water-related environmental values, including those related to cultural heritage values. In summary, these chapters identify that impacts to water-related environmental values, with the implementation of proposed management measures will be negligible to minor. In the context of the Project's proposed socio-economic benefits, including for First Nations peoples, it is considered that the Project will be compatible with cultural rights of First Nations peoples, and to the extent there is any limitation on human rights, it is appropriate and proportional.

20.6 Mitigation and Management Measures

20.6.1 Indigenous Cultural Heritage

Previous surveys within the Project area have not identified sites of tangible Indigenous cultural heritage, noting that any additional surveys undertaken under the CHMP for the Project may identify sites of tangible Indigenous cultural heritage. Potential impacts of the Project on Indigenous cultural heritage will be managed pursuant to an approved CHMP for the Project. Stanmore recognises that cultural heritage management is an ongoing process and will implement a comprehensive framework to avoid, minimise and manage potential impacts.

All activities will be conducted in accordance with an approved CHMP developed in consultation with the BBAC. An overview of the management measures described in the CHMP includes:

- undertaking monitoring through field surveys
- measures undertaken following the completion of cultural heritage surveys
- management actions when dealing with cultural heritage finds
- outlining the salvage and storage of cultural heritage

- cultural heritage awareness training
- corrective actions.

Through these measures, Stanmore will ensure that cultural heritage values are safeguarded and that management actions are developed collaboratively with BBAC, reinforcing the commitment to cultural integrity and compliance throughout the life of the Project.

20.6.2 Non-Indigenous Cultural Heritage

Although no known sites of non-Indigenous cultural heritage have been identified within the Project area, there is potential to discover historical non-Indigenous cultural heritage features during construction and operations. The mitigation and management measures include:

- Implementing the unexpected finds procedure that is outlined in **Appendix X**, and will be incorporated into the Project's environmental management system. This relates to the discovery of non-Indigenous cultural heritage and should comply with the Section 89 of the QH Act.
- A cultural heritage induction, outlining potential finds (including human remains), will be prepared and delivered to workers as part of the Project inductions. This cultural heritage induction will be carried out for the life of the Project.

Applying these strategies will help reduce negative effects and strengthen positive outcomes for cultural heritage values.

20.7 Conclusion

Assessments of non-Indigenous and Indigenous cultural heritage values have been undertaken.

Desktop searches and surveys of the Project area did not identify non-Indigenous cultural heritage sites. Never-the-less, an unexpected finds procedure will be implemented for the management of any non-Indigenous cultural heritage values identified during Project activities.

Indigenous cultural heritage will be managed in accordance with the CHMP developed in consultation with the BBAC. Previous surveys within the Project area have not identified sites of tangible Indigenous cultural heritage, noting that any additional surveys undertaken under the CHMP may identify sites of tangible or intangible Indigenous cultural heritage, with these to be managed in accordance with the CHMP.

Stanmore recognises that cultural heritage management is an ongoing process and will implement a comprehensive framework to avoid, minimise and manage potential impacts, including workforce inductions. With the proposed management measures, cultural heritage values of the Project area will be protected.

20.8 References

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