



DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES REPORT

14th March 2006

**DSS11 GROUND PENETRATING RADAR
INVESTIGATION AT EAST KEMPSEY
CEMETERY**
FILE: 853 JMC {Folio No. * }

SUMMARY:

This report is an update on the results of the ground penetrating radar investigation carried out at East Kempsey Cemetery during January / February 2006.



In the 1980's, following discussions with Elders of the Aboriginal Community, Macleay River Historical Society and past gravediggers, Council marked an area of 64m in length and 14m wide on the eastern side of the East Kempsey Cemetery. The area identified was labelled as the location of Aboriginal graves.

As part of Council's Action Plan for Reconciliation, formal identification of these graves was desirable. Once the survey was complete it was hoped that new sites would be identified which could be used for future grave sites.

GBG Australia in conjunction with Georadar Research Pty Ltd undertook an investigation Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) on 4th January 2006 and 1st February 2006. Due to the cultural sensitivities of digging into unmarked graves it was decided to use a non-destructive technique and undertook a subsurface investigation of the area.

A total of 35 confirmed graves have been identified in the surveyed area, together with 39 possible grave sites. Copy of Plans A and B are attached [Appendix H](#).

The Council is under pressure to increase the available number of burial plots in the cemetery. Council's Design Engineer has been requested to design a plan for the future use of the land around the existing graves. In excess of 50 new grave sites have been made available as a result of the surveys.

Council's Aboriginal Liaison Officer will discuss with the Aboriginal Liaison Committee members the possibility of placing a memorial on-site for the existing graves, identified during the survey.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- *Environmental / Social*

Nil

- *Economic (Financial)*

\$5,910 paid from existing Budget.

- *Policy or Statutory*

Nil

- *Director's Review*

This project has been successful on two parts. It has progressed the reconciliation process between Council and the Kempsey Aboriginal community and has also made available additional grave sites at East Kempsey Cemetery.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the information be noted.

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G R Whelan
Acting DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES