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**Aboriginal Affairs &
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Dear consultee

**Consultation Addendum (22 December 2023) - Riverlea Park Development –
Aboriginal Heritage Act**

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs is currently consulting on an application for authorisations under sections 21, 23 and 29(1)(b) of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988* (SA) (**Act**) from Walker Buckland Park Developments Pty Ltd (**Walker**).

Consultation materials relating to the application were last updated by Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation (AAR) on Friday 8 December 2023. Since then, further information has come to light that may be relevant to your consideration of this matter. This information, as well as further background information about the Aboriginal history of the region, is also provided in this letter. All terms used in this letter hold the same meaning as in AAR's consultation information pack (CIP), available at www.agd.sa.gov.au/heritage-applications.

**Aboriginal objects discovered in the 'Riverlea Project Masterplan'
area**

AAR's 8 December 2023 CIP included information about some 421 potential Aboriginal objects discovered within the Walker's 'Riverlea Project Masterplan' area.

On 13 December 2023, AAR archaeologists conducted a preliminary assessment of the objects to confirm whether they are archaeological objects. This assessment was undertaken 'on-site', within the 'Riverlea Project Masterplan' area, in the presence of Kaurna cultural heritage officers. No objects were removed from the area.

AAR's preliminary assessment identified more objects than had been reported to AAR. A preliminary estimate indicated possibly 2000 or more objects in total. However, this estimate, and all estimates provided below, are preliminary only, and may not reflect the total number of objects present. AAR notes that no wooden objects or ancestral remains were observed during AAR's assessment.

Further information is provided below:

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Drainage channel/haul road corridor

AAR's minimum count of objects retrieved from this area is 356. However, the total number may be higher. Of the 260 objects that have been physically assessed by AAR, only 14 were definitively assessed not to be Aboriginal archaeological objects. The remainder of the 260 objects that were assessed by AAR comprise ten quartz flakes, and flaked pieces including 'debitage' (a term used to describe small stone pieces that are produced as a by-product during stone tool manufacture). In addition to stone artefacts, AAR archaeologists observed charcoal, clay heat retainers and associated soil material.

Burial Locations 1 and 2

In AAR's preliminary estimation, between 1000 to 2000 objects have been collected from these two areas. AAR notes that a detailed physical inspection of the objects was not possible during its 13 December 2023 assessment, and so this estimate was based only on the number of bags observed by AAR archaeologists. In addition to the bags of stone objects, AAR also observed associated faunal material (animal remains) and shell.

While no physical assessment of the objects from Burial Locations 1 and 2 has yet been conducted by AAR, AAR understands that the 24 objects from Burial Location 1 that have been assessed by ND&A to be Aboriginal objects mainly comprise quartz and quartzite artefacts, with a lesser portion of silcrete artefacts.

Other areas within the 'Riverlea Project Masterplan' area

AAR also observed other bags containing potential Aboriginal objects collected from other parts of the 'Riverlea Project Masterplan' area. As the objects within these bags were not physically inspected, AAR is not yet able to provide an estimate on the nature or number of these objects. However, AAR notes that quartz and quartzite flakes are the most common artefact types found within the "Riverlea Project Masterplan" area. Given this, AAR considers it likely that objects collected from other parts of the 'Riverlea Project Masterplan' area would be of a similar type.

Additional Aboriginal Community consultation meeting

AAR's 8 December 2023 CIP provides details for an Aboriginal Community consultation meeting to be held from 5:30 pm on Thursday 11 January 2024 at the Mawson Lakes Hotel, Mawson Lakes.

In response to requests from Aboriginal Community members, an additional meeting will be held from 10:30 am on Saturday 13 January 2024 at Tauondi Aboriginal Community College – Port Adelaide, 1 Lipson Street, Port Adelaide SA 5015.

A light supper will be provided at the 11 January 2024 meeting, and a light lunch will be provided at the 13 January 2024 meeting. If you would like to attend either or both meetings, please advise AAR via email or telephone, for catering purposes.

Background heritage information relevant to the area

In response to queries from consultees for information about previous heritage studies in the area, AAR provides below a summary of relevant background information relating to the Riverlea Park area and surrounds. For further context, see AAR's CIP.

The 2008 ACHM report notes that "*the coastal strip west of Port Wakefield Road, between the alluvial and estuarine [environments], has been found to contain numerous mounds and other sites*". The report goes on to provide details about the large burial mound known as the 'Greenfields Mound Site', located some 21 km south of the 'Riverlea Project Masterplan' area. The term mound site is described below.

The 2013 ACHM report provides further background information on the historic land use of the region by Aboriginal people, both prior to and following contact. References to historic and literary sources in ACHM's 2013 report indicates the northern Adelaide plains, particularly around Buckland Park (now Riverlea Park), supported extensive Aboriginal occupation. AAR notes that this is evidenced by the high concentration of known Aboriginal sites in the area today.

ACHM's 2013 report references early literature and media sources, including an expedition conducted by Captain Charles Sturt in 1839 and articles in *The Advertiser* from the early 20th century. These describe the northern Adelaide plains as an area containing a high concentration of camping sites and mound sites, often found in proximity to water courses. Mounds and 'Aboriginal ovens' feature heavily in this literature, demonstrating ongoing and extensive occupation by Aboriginal people over hundreds or thousands of years. In this context, ACHM describes these sites as being distinctive artificial 'mounds' formed through the accumulation of occupation (i.e. camping and living) debris (i.e. objects/archaeology) and sometimes including ancestral burials, having accumulated over an extended period of time.

In its 2013 report, ACHM says of literature relating to the northern Adelaide plains:

Such an overview identifies the region as having the potential to contain significant Aboriginal sites, of which several have been previously recorded adjacent to the current project area. This should not be surprising as the northern plains provided a variety of ecosystems and thus ample resources to sustain local communities.

In addition to mound sites, the 2013 ACHM report also flags the potential for the general area to contain Aboriginal ancestral burials. The report goes on to provide information about burial sites found in Adelaide's northern suburbs between 1942 and 2011. In summary, the 2013 ACHM report says:

The results of the background research presented in this section of the report suggest intense levels of Aboriginal occupation and cultural

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activity in and around the project area. Archaeological investigation in the area has the potential to provide further evidence of continual occupation and cultural activity within the area over thousands of years. There is also a distinct possibility of human remains being unearthed should ground disturbance works be undertaken within the Buckland Park mound sites.

AAR notes at least one mound site is recorded west of the Overall Application Areas, but within the 'Riverlea Project Masterplan' area.

The 2013 ACHM report also provides information about previous heritage discoveries for which records are held by the South Australian Museum (SAM). A search using the term 'Buckland Park' yielded some 16 results, including the discovery of both archaeological objects and burials discovered between the 1930s and the late 1960s. It is not clear to AAR how many, if any, of these discoveries intersect the 'Riverlea Project Masterplan' area.

Lastly, AAR is aware of ancestral remains and mound sites recorded across the northern Adelaide suburbs, including the Buckland Park area, in the 1960s and 1990s. However, to AAR's knowledge none of these locations intersect with the 'Riverlea Project Masterplan' area.

Nonetheless, AAR notes that the information provided herein demonstrates that the 'Riverlea Project Masterplan' area intersects a highly sensitive heritage-rich landscape.

Consultation information

As previously stated, AAR has extended its consultation period for this application until **Thursday 25 January 2024**. A copy of this letter, and an updated version of the CIP, is available at www.agd.sa.gov.au/heritage-applications.

AAR is available to assist anyone who has any difficulty in recording a submission. If you would like to receive a hardcopy of this letter, or an updated version of AAR's CIP, please let AAR know.

Thank you for considering, and sharing your views about, this sensitive matter.

Yours sincerely
Aboriginal Heritage Team
Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation
Attorney-General's Department