FACT SHEET 1

Landcare Australia

INTRODUCTION

Living Landscape is an environmental and educational initiative to restore degraded land, increase biodiversity and reconnect native habitat across the Bundanon properties. The project includes weed eradication and bush regeneration, restoration of riparian zones, improvements to conservation and wildlife connectivity, and improvements to agricultural productivity and sustainability.

This case study is an education resource designed for NSW secondary school students and teachers studying Science courses.

Image: View of Pulpit Rock across Bundanon paddocks.

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ABOUT THE CASE STUDY & THE PROJECT

This case study is an education resource designed for NSW secondary school students and teachers studying Earth and Environmental Science courses. This case study closely aligns with learning outcomes for two parts of the year 11 and 12 courses. The case study is also applicable to a wide variety of other learning contexts. The case study was prepared by Bundanon Trust with the assistance of the Living Landscape partners and a Teacher Reference Group.

The LIVING LANDSCAPE project is an environmental and educational initiative to increase biodiversity, capture carbon and reconnect native habitat on the Shoalhaven River properties managed by Bundanon Trust. In 2012, through the auspices of Landcare Australia, Bundanon Trust benefitted from both the Borland Bequest and the Clean Energy Futures Biodiversity Fund. In partnership with Landcare Australia, South East Local Land Services, Jacobs Group and Greening Australia, Bundanon Trust will have seen over one million dollars spent over four years on the restoration of this culturally significant landscape.

The project focuses on the 1,100 hectares of land uniquely gifted to the Australian people by the artist, Arthur Boyd and his wife Yvonne Boyd. Bundanon Trust properties include over 11.5 kilometres of Shoalhaven River frontage and comprise significant areas of high conservation value bushland, watercourses and river flats previously cleared for farming and grazing. Bundanon is an important refuge for threatened flora and fauna species. There are over 14 different vegetation communities across the properties.

This is a unique project, particularly for a cultural organisation, and demonstrates the leadership role the arts can play in foregrounding the importance of protecting the environment for future generations. The Trust's high profile and its success as a platform for public education was instrumental in securing the engagement of the other agencies.

The four year project, (2012-2016) aims to increase biodiversity and reconnect native habitat in the Shoalhaven River catchment of NSW. The benefits extend well beyond the property through community engagement and education. The project also aims to demonstrate how revegetation and regeneration of degraded land can be practically integrated into the Trust's wider responsibility for land management.

Image: The Sydney launch of the Living Landscape project: Project Ambassadors William Barton and Jack Thompson; Chairman of Landcare Australia Campbell Anderson and Chair of Bundanon Trust Shane Simpson

View an introdcution to the Living Landscape project at this link: http://vimeo.com/60978462

LIVING LANDSCAPE PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives of the Living Landscape project, as stated in the Memorandum of Understanding between the project partners are to coordinate, undertake and fund actions that:

- Reconnect currently fragmented landscape within and adjoining Bundanon properties through protection of new and existing native habitat.
- Achieve biodiversity outcomes with respect to the protection, restoration, enhancement and conservation management of certain lands of high conservation value that are managed by Bundanon Trust within the project area.
- Exclude livestock from all bushlands, watercourses and riparian zones on Bundanon Trust properties resulting in improved ecological condition, function, biodiversity and water quality. Restrict stock grazing to approximately 40ha of the Bundanon property.
- Improve the agricultural productivity and sustainability of the grazed areas of the Bundanon Trust properties through appropriate contributions to a rotational grazing system.
- Control noxious and priority environmental weeds in the previously grazed and degraded bushlands and riparian zones.
- Revegetate approximately 65 ha in manner consistent with the CFI Environmental plantings methodology for carbon sequestration, generation of carbon credits, biodiversity and water quality improvements.
- Contribute to continuous native riparian habitat created on the northern frontage of the Shoalhaven River, which will be an integral part of the Illawarra Regional Environmental Plan Wildlife Corridor.
- Demonstrate practical methods for integrating grazing management with revegetation and improved environmental outcomes.
- Implement an environmental education program.
- Increase community education and awareness relating to land rehabilitation, conservation, wildlife connectivity, and carbon sequestration for many of the property visitors through bushland walks, interpretive signage, monitoring programs and Bundanon Trust events.
- Increase engagement of community volunteers in land management.
- Pending the completion of GIS mapping and ecological surveying, secure in perpetuity through the use of an appropriate conservation mechanism that is compatible with the realisation of commercial carbon-related or biodiversity offsets, all rehabilitated conservation areas and erosion control sites funded by the Living Landscape project across the Bundanon Trust properties.
- Deliver the opportunities for carbon-related and biodiversity offset benefits of revegetation, regeneration and conservation delivered by this project on the Bundanon Trust properties landholding to the Bundanon Trust to support on-going environmental rehabilitation and maintenance of the Bundanon Trust lands.

Image: Shane Norrish atop Pulpit Rock photographing the Bundanon property prior to the commencement of the project.

LIVING LANDSCAPE PROJECT OUTCOMES

- Reconnect currently fragmented landscape within and adjoining Bundanon Trust through protection of new and existing native habitat.
- Reduction of cattle numbers over 2011 levels and exclusion of cattle from all bushlands, watercourses and riparian zones on Bundanon properties resulting in improved ecological condition, function, biodiversity and water quality.
- Control of noxious and priority environmental weeds in the previously grazed and degraded bushlands and riparian zones.
- Reforestation on >65 ha under the Carbon Farming Initiatives Environmental plantings methodology for carbon sequestration, generation of carbon credits, biodiversity and water quality improvements. Deliver the opportunities for carbon-related benefits of revegetation and regeneration to the Bundanon Trust to fund on-going maintenance and rehabilitation of the Bundanon lands.
- Greatly improved native riparian habitat created along the northern frontage of the Shoalhaven River, which will be an integral part of the Illawarra Regional Environmental Plan Wildlife Corridor.
- Demonstration of practical methods for integrating grazing management with revegetation and improved environmental outcomes.
- An environmental education program targeting senior school visitors to Bundanon Trust.
- Community education and awareness relating to land rehabilitation, conservation, wildlife connectivity, and carbon sequestration for many of the 50,000 property visitors through bushland walks, interpretive signage, monitoring programs and Bundanon events.
- Significantly increased engagement of community volunteers on rehabilitation, planting and monitoring works through the Bundanon Landcare Group, CVA and special community planting events.
- Improve the agricultural productivity and sustainability of the Trust's grazing operations

Key Documents and References

There are a number of guiding documents which inform and provide content for this case study. Some of these documents were completed prior to the commencement of the Living Landscape project and others during the project. The key documents are listed below, with a more extensive bibliography at the conclusion of this document.

- Land Management Plan for the Bundanon Trust Properties, Total Earth Care, 2011
- An Indigenous Cultural Heritage Management Plan for the Bundanon Trust Properties, Sue Feary and Heather Moorecroft, August 2011
- Landscape Assessment, Craig Burton, 2011
- Land Rehabilitation Works Plan, Jock Waugh, 2012
- BioBanking Assessment, Jacobs, Draft 1 August 2014

Image: Comparative photographs which demonstrate the control of the priority environmental weed lantana in the previously grazed and degraded bushlands and riparian zones. These photographs were taken of the Haunted Point location from the opposite side of the Shoalhaven River on the Wogamia property. The clearing of lantana can clearly be seen in the October 2013 image.

PROJECT PARTNERS

BUNDANON TRUST

The Bundanon Trust is a wholly owned Australian Government company limited by guarantee. The Company holds, as a charitable trust, the unique cultural and environmental gift made by Arthur and Yvonne Boyd to the Australian people of the Bundanon properties and collections. The Bundanon properties include an aggregation of land holdings known as Bundanon, Riversdale, Eearie Park and Beeweeree, and unnamed permissively occupied or leased Crown lots. The Bundanon Trust properties are located on 1,100 hectares of bush and agricultural land overlooking the Shoalhaven River, near Nowra in New South Wales. The Bundanon Trust promotes arts practice and enjoyment by making the Bundanon properties a living arts centre for the creation and presentation of visual arts, writing, music and other performing arts, and the promotion of education and research in the arts. The Bundanon Trust conserves the natural and cultural heritage of the Bundanon properties, provides access to Bundanon and the Shoalhaven River, and encourages an appreciation and understanding of the importance of the landscape in the lives of Australians.

Bundanon Trust's role in the Living Landscape project includes managing the Bundanon properties to achieve enhanced agricultural productivity and the reparation of areas of environmental degradation. The Trust aims to protect and reinstate wildlife connectivity and effect biodiversity conservation, where such does not compete with enhanced agricultural production opportunities. The Trust's role is to manage certain areas of the holding such that the values of those areas in providing environmental offsets and/or biodiversity offsets and/or carbon credits are maximised. The Trust also manages the education program and experience of other visitors to the property in such a way as to increase their awareness of environmental and conservation issues.

Landcare Australia

Landcare Australia Ltd. (LAL) is a private not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, responsible for promoting community awareness of natural resource management issues and creating corporate partnerships to support the landcare movement. LAL's role in the Living Landscape project is to deliver a portion of the Raymond Borland bequest in a genuine, satisfactory and reasonable manner to the Living Landscape project. This includes: the administration of funding from the Biodiversity Fund; assisting the partners to achieve outcomes associated with environmental repair, habitat connectivity, education and awareness, enhancement of environmental services, including improved water quality, biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration; assisting Bundanon Trust to realise appropriate commercial environmental offsets that may emerge through the project works to be used for the on-going maintenance and environmental rehabilitation of the Bundanon Trust properties and seeking to involve local Landcare and volunteer community groups in land rehabilitation and maintenance works of the project, wherever appropriate.

NSW GOVERNMENT Local Land Services South East

Local Land Services (LLS), launched in January 2014, delivers quality, customer-focussed services to farmers, landholders and the community across rural and regional New South Wales. LLS bring together agricultural production advice, biosecurity, natural resource management and emergency management into a single organisation. Importantly, LLS has a local focus. It is run by local people, employs local people like vets, rangers, livestock, agronomy and natural resource management advisors, and focuses on local issues and delivery of quality services in your region. Spanning coastal shores and alpine areas, our region is known for its dairy, sheep and beef cattle farming, as well as wines.

South East Local Land Services' role in the Living Landscape project is to assist the signatories achieve best natural resource management practice in implementing the Living Landscape project; provide technical expertise and support the process to protect the long-term integrity and ecological connectivity of the project and funded on-ground works through appropriate conservation mechanisms; facilitate and assist core biodiversity conservation outcomes on landholdings that are linked to and/or extend ecological connectivity of the Living Landscape project area within the region, promotion and adoption of land management practices to regional graziers and other landholders that integrate conservation with improved productivity.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Greening Australia is a private not-for-profit company limited by guarantee with 30 years of experience in creating sustainable environmental outcomes. Greening Australia engages the community in vegetation management to protect and restore the health, diversity and productivity of our unique Australian landscapes. Greening Australia is committed to practical solutions for Australia's environmental problems and tackles critical issues such as salinity, declining water quality, soil degradation, climate change and biodiversity loss through practical experience, science and community engagement. Greening Australia is dedicated to protecting Australia's heritage, its biodiversity and natural resources.

Greening Australia's role in the Living Landscape project is to: facilitate and assist ecological connectivity and core biodiversity conservation outcomes in the Living Landscape project through technical expertise and linkages to regional conservation initiatives; provide technical expertise and support the process to protect the long-term integrity and appropriate commercial offset opportunities for biobanking initiatives; make available environmental education assets and resources for integration with the Bundanon Trust's education program.

Jacobs is an international engineering, architecture, and construction firm with offices located around the world. Jacobs Engineering Group and Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM) have combined to form one of the world's largest and most diverse providers of technical professional and construction services across multiple markets and geographies. Founded in 1964, SKM is an employee owned company with broad consulting, planning, engineering, architecture, scientific and construction management capabilities.

To complement the Living Landscapes project, Jacobs has completed a BioBanking assessment of the Bundanon properties using the NSW Bio-Banking Methodology, as part of the Jacobs Corporate Social Responsibility environmental program, for Landcare Australia Ltd. BioBanking benchmarking creates a potential opportunity for Bundanon Trust to participate in the development offsets market, which may generate funding for on-going maintenance of land rehabilitation works. The work also provides a valuable benchmark for monitoring and evaluation of ecological change as the Living Landscape project progresses.

FUNDING BODIES

Borland Bequest
The Raymond Borland estate bequeathed significant funds to Landcare Australia to be used for the "restoration of degraded non-urban lands and the non-tidal portions of river systems within the State of New South Wales".

Clean Energy Futures Biodiversity Fund
The Australian Government Biodiversity Fund invests in projects to help land managers store carbon, enhance biodiversity and build greater environmental resilience across the Australian landscape. It is part of the Land Sector Package of the Clean Energy Future initiative, administered by the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Populations and Communities. The Biodiversity Fund supports land managers to restore, manage and better protect biodiversity on public and private land. It also provides support to land managers who wish to take advantage of emerging opportunities in the new carbon market. The Biodiversity Fund provides support to establishing new carbon stores or better managing carbon stores of existing native habitat.
The Biodiversity Fund invests in three main areas:
- Biodiverse plantings: assisting land managers to expand native habitat on their property through planting mixed vegetation species appropriate to the region.
- Protecting and enhancing existing native vegetation: supporting land managers to protect, manage and enhance existing native vegetation in high conservation areas on their land for its carbon storage and biodiversity benefits.
- Managing threats to biodiversity: controlling the threat of invasive pests and weeds in a connected landscape.

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Other stakeholders, including the Australian Government Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Populations and Communities, the NSW Government Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water and Department of Primary Industries have similar interests and properties located in the region.

THE STEERING COMMITTEE

All key stakeholders participate in the "Living Landscape Steering Committee", which is an informal association and meets regularly to coordinate the aims, objectives, activities and outcomes of this project. Members of the Steering Committee are:
John Kerin, Independent Chairman
Dr Shane Norrish, Director, Major Projects, Landcare Australia
Bridget Dowsett, Landcare Australia Board Member
Deborah Ely, Chief Executive Officer, Bundanon Trust
Richard Montgomery, Chief Operating Officer, Bundanon Trust
Jason Carson, South East Local Land Services
Michael Vyse, Greening Australia

BACKGROUND TO THE LIVING LANDSCAPE PROJECT

The 1,100 ha property has 91% healthy natural bushland with 9% cleared agricultural land. The Beeweeree and Eearie Park properties were originally agricultural ones dating back to the mid 19th century. As agricultural practices and land use changed, and properties exchanged hands, these places suffered invasion by non-native species, in particular Lantana (Lantana camera), in areas no longer maintained for agriculture. In areas such as Haunted Point, where cattle grazed until as recently as the 1980's, the lack of fences meant that, as practices changed and it was no longer possible for the traditional custom of grazing cattle right up to the river bank, cattle had to be brought back to the better fenced central paddocks of the Bundanon Property.

In 2010, Bundanon Trust embarked on a Master plan of all four properties, requiring an audit of all the land in its care. Central to this master plan was the desire to protect the healthy bushland from further invasion by weeds, improve bio-diversity and to improve the appearance of the properties for all visitors. The Board of Bundanon Trust commissioned the **Land Management Plan**, from Total Earth Care in 2010. This was completed in 2011. In addition to this plan, other key documents followed. Sue Feary and Heather Moorecroft completed **An Indigenous Cultural Heritage Management Plan for the Bundanon Trust Properties** in August 2011, including in an appendix a report of an Aboriginal archaeological survey of the Bundanon Trust properties.

A **Landscape Assessment** was completed by Craig Burton in 2011, outlining the historic curtilage and redefining the paddocks and 19th century farmscape. This was based on an understanding of the evolution of the place together with a consideration of the visual and spatial structure of the developed properties. Recommendations of this report concluded that the diversity of the landscape character within the Bundanon Trust lands be conserved and that the experience of interacting with both natural elements and cultural elements be maintained.

To further direct the land rehabilitation works, the **Land Rehabilitation Works Plan (LRWP)** was prepared for the Bundanon Trust properties by Jock Waugh. The LRWP responded to the request by Bundanon Trust for further clarification of specific management and rehabilitation works guidelines for the following priorities:

- Weed eradication/bush regeneration works
- Riparian zone improvement
- Agricultural/grazing land maintenance
- Reforestation works/carbon farming initiative program
- Biodiversity corridors and habitat management/revegetation works

Recommendations made within the LRWP acknowledge the considerable work undertaken and presented in the Land Management Plan by Total Earth Care Pty Limited. However they do not necessarily concur with methodologies and costings provided for land use management, revegetation techniques, bushland regeneration, woody weed control and private native forestry production. Further, the integration of revegetation and bushland regeneration works is recommended to coincide with the landscape assessment planning undertaken by Craig Burton of CAB Consulting Pty Limited especially in regard to landscape vistas and "forest coupe" style plantings within open grazing lands.

As with many environmental programs, these plans have been adapted and responses made in the field during the undertaking of the works program. The Living Landscape project has finite funding and the fruits of the bush regeneration and treatment will not be complete for many years to come.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Community education and involvement is paramount to ensure public understanding and uptake of the forest habitat reconstruction program and associated revegetation works. Capacity building and information transfer has been promoted by direct inputs to various sections of project works for example:

- Bundanon Landcare Group undertaking bush regeneration works within designated sites
- School groups growing plants or working on supervised planting sites
- Externally funded NGOs such as Conservation Volunteers Australia and Greening Australia assisting with project works
- Indigenous Green team weed control at Haunted Point
- Field days, farm walks and revegetation/bush regeneration workshops are key activities to demonstrate rehabilitation techniques and facilitate the cross flow of information and understanding of project outcomes.

EDUCATION: SITEWORKS FOR SCHOOLS

Over 100 students and teachers from three local high schools explored biodiversity, bush regeneration, issues of feral and native fauna and conducted a flora audit at Bundanon on Thursday 18 September. Year 9 and 10 students studying zoology, biology, science and earth & environmental science from Bomaderry, St John the Evangelist, and Nowra High Schools, had the opportunity to learn from and engage in field work on site with leading ecologists and scientists. With funding from NSW Science Week Grants and Inspiring Australia, participants experienced first-hand environmental issues. As they explored the property, the groups rotated through five different activities. Volunteer students acted as reporters and photographic documenters during the day to record their experiences and learning. This field day for schools was a prelude to the Bio Blitz held during SITEWORKS 2014, on 27/28 September at Bundanon.

View Siteworks for Schools environmental education day here http://vimeo.com/107131978

PROJECT PERSONNEL

Living Landscape involves personnel from many different organisations and with diverse skills sets. This section is designed to give students an insight into the specific role of these personnel within the scope of the project and their career backgrounds to highlight the career opportunities in environmental science and management as well as roles in an arts and cultural organisation.

Deborah Ely
CEO, Bundanon Trust

As CEO of Bundanon Trust, Deborah plays a key role as a member of the project's Steering Committee and liases with government and other stakeholders involved.

Shane Norrish
Landcare Australia
Director of Farming and Major Projects, Landcare Australia

In his role as Project Manager for the Living landscape project Shane has overall responsibility for the roll out of the project, acquittal of the funding, arrangements with contractors and monitoring and evaluation. He is also a member of the Steering Committee.

Henry Goodall
Property Manager, Bundanon Trust

Henry's role as the Poperty Manager at Bundanon Trust is to oversee the project as representative of Bundanon Trust, within his overall role from a land and environmental management perspective. Henry is a member of the Steering Committee.

Image: Living Landscape project wins 2013 NSW & ACT Visy Environmental Sustainability Award left to right: Deborah Ely, Jon Ward, Shane Norrish.

John Kerin
Independent Chairman

John Kerin is the Independent Chairman of the Steering Committee and brings to this role a wealth of experience in federal government, farming and the environment.

Richard Montgomery
Chief Operations Officer
Bundanon Trust

As Chief Operations Officer, Richard is repsonsible for built and natural assets and plays a key role as a member of the Steering Committee.

Brigid Dowsett
Board member, Landcare Australia

Bridget is a member of the Steering Committee representing Landcare Australia

Jason Carson
Catchment Officer,
South East Land Care Services

Jason plays a role as an advisor in the implementing the Living Landscape project, provides technical expertise and supports the process to protect the long-term integrity and ecological connectivity of the project. He is on the Steering Committee and links with many landcare, bushcare and local envrionmental groups. Jason has also presented to a range of audiences during community education and field days.

Michael Vyse
Greening Australia
Michael's role on the Steering Committee is to assist ecological connectivity and core biodiversity conservation outcomes in the Living Landscape project through technical expertise and linkages to regional conservation initiatives. He also links environmental education assets and resources for integration with the Bundanon Trust education program.

EMPLOYMENT AND CONTRACTORS WORKING ON THE PROJECT

The Living Landscape project has generated significant employment for local contractors. There are a series of protocols which are managed by Bundanon Trust. All access and works on the Bundanon properties occur on condition of approval by the Property Manager of Bundanon Trust. All contractors, consultants, members of each signatory organisation, or other individuals with legitimate business on the Trust's properties as part of the Living Landscape Project must contact the Property Manager, Bundanon Trust on, or before each day of planned work for approval to enter the property and commence the works. Following any wet weather, the Property Manager, Bundanon Trust may request work be delayed until the ground is adequately dry, or redirect the work to other areas. All contractors, consultants or groups with two or more employees or members working on the Trust's properties must have a nominated on-site supervisor. All contractors, consultants or individuals working on the Trust's properties have to be responsible for their own waste. All land must be left in the state in which it was found following the completion of specific site activities.

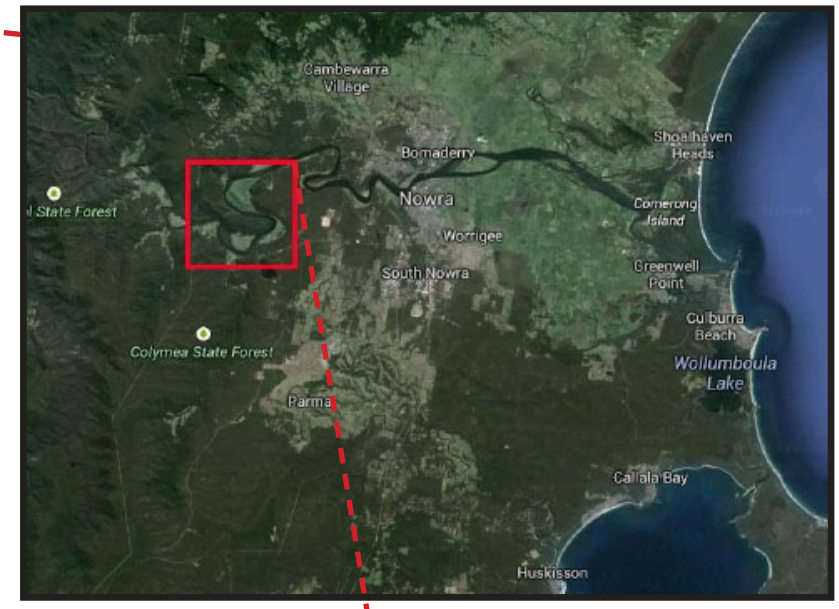
Contractors, consultants and individuals working on the Bundanon Trust's properties need to conduct their activities in a manner that does not cause, in the opinion of the Property Manager, Bundanon Trust, any undue or unreasonable disturbance to grazing stock and on-farm activities. Contractors, consultants and individuals working on the Bundanon properties must seek authority from the Property Manager to work in close proximity to students, children, artists and guests – prior to commencing work.

Image: Contractors Mountain Echo working in the field at Bundanon; Ryan Hogan from Mountain Echo planting seedlings at Bundanon; Garry Daly from Gaia Research Pty Ltd, conducted scientific surveys for flora and fauna during the project and presented to children during environmental education programs; Microbat being handled by Garry.

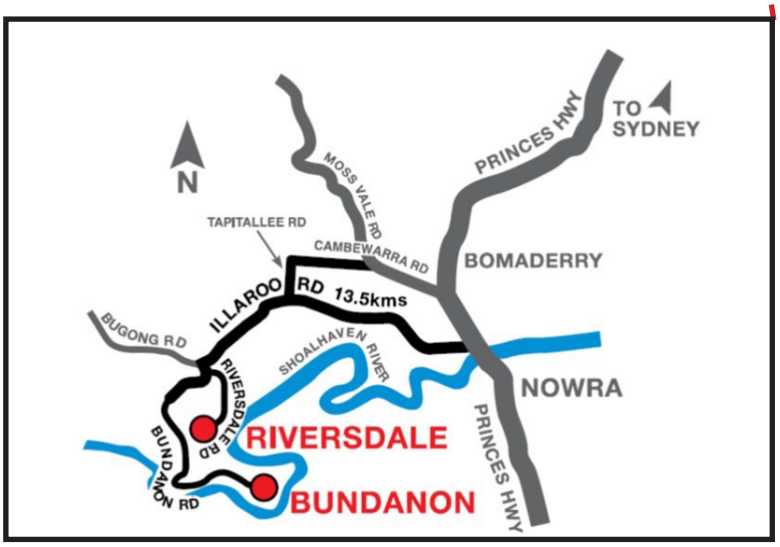
LOCATION OF THE PROJECT SITE

The Bundanon Trust properties comprise a unique cultural and environmental asset of 1100 ha on separate properties, which were amalgamated by Arthur and Yvonne Boyd. The properties, which include Bundanon/Beeweeree, Riversdale, Eearie Park, Crown lease and permissively occupied lands were gifted by the Boyds to the Australian people in 1993 and are now managed as a charitable trust. The properties have over 11.5kms of Shoalhaven River frontage and comprise significant areas of high conservation value bushland, river flats previously cleared for farming and grazing, watercourses, buildings and rural infrastructure. The properties are approximately 8km west of Nowra, two and a half hours south of Sydney.

East Coast of Australia



Shoalhaven area



Location of Riversdale and Bundanon