Reserves, archaeology and indigenous people in Queensland

In Chapter 3, it was established that there has been little archaeological work in those parts of Queensland that have large resident populations of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island people. This is perhaps explained by the remoteness of such areas and the difficulties that this presents for researchers. Trigger and Robins (1989: 39) drew attention to this problem, suggesting that it may be explained in terms of the often distanced relationship between archaeology and anthropology in this country and the problems inherent in undertaking fieldwork in remote areas. In a similar vein, Rowland (1985b: 119) suggests that 'logistical difficulties' may account for the comparative lack of archaeological investigation in Torres Strait.

Byrne (1993: 198) states that archaeologists have distinguished between Aboriginal 'remains' (as things from the past) and living Aboriginal people. He also notes that while most anthropological work was being carried out in the north, the early focus of archaeological work was in south-eastern Australia. This separation between living peoples and the past accounts in part for the surprisingly small amount of archaeological work undertaken in areas with large populations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait people. Certainly, there has not been an extensive amount of ethnoarchaeological work carried out in Australia. Such work, although distinguished from the present project, may at least have brought archaeologists into closer contact with indigenous people.
However, while all of these explanations have undoubtedly contributed to this phenomena, they do not satisfactorily address this apparent lack in Queensland. For example, in spite of this 'distance' between archaeology and living people, projects were being undertaken in the Northern Territory from the earliest period of professional archaeology (e.g. White 1967; Allen 1978; Meehan 1982). The locations in which these were conducted were similarly 'remote' and must have entailed 'logistical difficulties'. This suggests that there is a more complex, and perhaps localised explanation.

This chapter examines the relationship between archaeology and indigenous people in Queensland. While the factors outlined above played a role in all parts of Australia, it is suggested that a localised explanation may be drawn from the political context in which 'Black-White' relations took place in Queensland. This is especially relevant on what were the reserves, where large populations of indigenous people currently live. In this chapter, a brief history of the Queensland reserve system is outlined. This is followed by a description of the development of heritage management in the State and the location of the heritage agency, Archaeology Branch, within the Department that administered the reserves (see also Ellis 1994: 11-12). This discussion places the present research within the social and political context in which it unfolded.

4.1 A history of the Queensland reserve system

This section illustrates the conditions in which Aboriginal people in Queensland have lived since the very beginnings of the state. It includes a brief history of legislation and policies relating to Aboriginal people and specifically addresses two aspects of the reserve system.
The first of these is the policy of removal which was embedded in various pieces of legislation from 1897 until 1965. The second surrounds the disempowerment of Aboriginal people in the reserve system and the implications of both of these aspects for the process of consultation.

Summaries and historical accounts of policies and legislation relating to Aboriginal people in Queensland can be found in Taylor (1984), Anderson (1981, 1986) and Nettheim (1982). Anderson (1981:54) has stated that there were two ideological threads that underwrote all of the policies and pieces of legislation relating to Aboriginal people in Queensland up to the early 1980s. These were the firm belief in the superiority of European people and lifestyle and the power wielded by interested lobby groups. He has defined four historical periods (1981: 55) viz.:

1. 1830-1872: characterised by the dispossession of Aboriginal people through violence and the use of the Native Police;
2. 1873-1896: a period in which experiments in the setting up reserves (both private and government-sponsored) were undertaken;
3. 1897-1956: the beginnings of a legislative framework and life 'under the Act'; characterised by so-called 'Protectionist' policies;
4. 1957-early 1980s: period characterised by the policies of 'Assimilation'.

From 1897 when the first legislation, the Aborigines Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act of 1897, was passed the state assumed a 'Protectionist' policy. 'Protectionism' has been described by
Anderson (1981: 64) as stemming from a notion of 'smoothing the pillow of a dying race' and protecting them from the abuses of alcohol, opium and exploitation by whites. However, while the policies during this period went under the banner of protection, they were also motivated by the European desires to be rid of what they perceived to be problems. Thus, the period is also characterised by an approach based on the segregation of Aboriginal people. In this respect, the establishment of government reserves was necessary for the introduction of the 1897 Act. Once segregated on the reserves, Aboriginal people could be 'protected' from themselves and others. As it was assumed that they were dying out, it was implicit that the reserves were a temporary measure.

4.1.1 The policy of removals

One of the most damaging and consuming aspects of this Act was its clause concerning the removal of Aboriginal people. This stated that the Minister had the power to remove any Aboriginal person to a reserve either in the same area or elsewhere (see Anderson 1986: 303). It facilitated the removal of problematic groups of Aboriginal people occupying lands coveted by Europeans for development, and thus prevented the inevitable conflicts that might have otherwise arisen. It allowed for the collection of Aboriginal people into larger groups, which concentrated resources and better enabled the 'protectionist' policies (i.e. dealing with illness, malnutrition and exploitation by Whites) to be carried out. The fear of being removed also provided the police with a stick with which to exercise control over Aboriginal people and allowed the government to 'relocate' Aboriginal people according to the labour needs of Europeans (Anderson 1986: 303). As Anderson (1981:62) has pointed out:
The new reserve system thus provided convenience for whites through control and segregation under the guise of Aboriginal 'protection'.

The removals clause was used often and for a variety of reasons in the ensuing sixty or so years. For instance, in 1897, 50 people were moved from the Maryborough area, and in 1899 a further 165 people were removed because the settlers there requested it. They were taken to a reserve on Fraser Island. One hundred and fifty people were removed from south-western Queensland and taken to Durundur, near Caboolture, hundreds of kilometres from their traditional homes. A reserve was set up at Taroom near Roma, but the people who were removed here were later taken to Woorabinda. Similarly, the reserve at the Hull River end of Mission Beach, near Tully, was shifted to Palm Island after it was destroyed by a cyclone in 1918. The reserves at Palm Island, Yarrabah, Cherbourg and Woorabinda received Aboriginal people from all over Queensland under this policy, often for the most insignificant 'offence' (see Trigger 1992: 235-237). After 1934, women and children (especially those who had one non-Aboriginal parent) were removed under the Children's Industrial Act of 1865 to these settlements (Anderson 1981: 62-63; 1986: 303). Control of Aboriginal people's movements was also achieved by the 'ticket of exemption' system, which was the only means by which they could live outside of the reserves.

Several instances of 'relocation' are of relevance to the present study area. In 1958, people from Port Stewart were 'removed' from their Princess Charlotte Bay lands to northern Cape York following complaints by station owners (Anderson 1981: 80; Fuary and Greer 1993). In the late 1950s and early 1960s, a new and hitherto
unprecedented threat loomed for Aboriginal people living on reserves. This surrounded the discovery of mineral deposits (particularly bauxite) in Cape York. The community of Mapoon, for instance, on the west coast of Cape York were forcibly 'relocated' over 100 km north to the same area in the early 1960s, following the sale of their reserve to Comalco (Anderson 1981: 65; Fuary and Greer 1993). In addition to the problems of the people suffering removal, there is an associated problem relating to the fact that they were often 'removed' onto the traditional lands of other groups, with whom they often had little or no connection. This was certainly the case in northern Cape York. Many of these people never returned to their homes and such communities have had to forge an identity in the face of this historical backdrop. Only six of the 14 former reserves in Queensland are said to consist only of a 'local population'. The other eight, including the communities within the study area, have all experienced some degree of 'removals' (Anderson 1986: 306). Removals, however, were only part of the story.

4.1.2 'Life under the Act': the Queensland reserves
Specific regulations and policies made in association with a range of government acts that appeared up until the late 1970s resulted in a well-founded distrust of Europeans by Aboriginal people on the reserves. In the past, Europeans had had the power to decide who was and who was not Aboriginal; they could 'remove' people as outlined above. After 1939, the Director of Native Affairs (DNA) was the legal guardian of every Aboriginal person under 21 years of age and as such had the power to consent to or deny marriages of those under this age. Government officers controlled who was in employment, determined wage rates and were responsible for the personal property of people
under the act. 'They were also empowered to prohibit customary practices which, in their opinion, could have been injurious to Aborigines' (Taylor 1984: 308).

The *Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders Affairs Act of 1965* brought a number of changes to the reserve system. The Department of Native Affairs became known as the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs (DAIA), and the 'Superintendents' and 'Protectors' under previous legislation became known as Managers and District Officers. This did not, however, provide the solution that the Government anticipated. In 1971, new legislation, namely the *Aborigines Act, 1971* and the *Torres Strait Islanders Act, 1971*, was introduced after considerable external pressure was put on the Government. Under this new legislation, changes were made to the role of managers under the Act, community councils were set up and there was a general amelioration of the power of DAIA.

From this point, each reserve was administered by a manager, who was responsible for providing housing, employment etc., and who generally supervised the provision of services to community members. The position was a powerful one and the person who filled it could dictate the quality of many people's lives over a broad spectrum. For example, the manager, in association with the community councillors had the power to refuse permission for visitors to the reserve. Similarly, they could request residents or visitors to leave if, in their perception, they were disturbing the community in some way or other. In this way, external influences on communities were effectively controlled. In the paternalistic approach of this Department, this was seen as a means of 'protecting' people in
the communities from unsavoury dealings with the outside world. In reality, this system perpetuated governmental control over the movements of people to and from the reserves and prevented the poor conditions of many such places from becoming widely known. Although each community elected a council, the real power in this system rested with the government representatives, and in particular, the reserve managers as they were known. The managers had a broad spectrum of control on the reserve and, importantly, could ultimately decide who could and who could not come onto the reserve.

A statement made by a council chairman from the Aboriginal settlement of Doomadgee in the state's north-west illustrates something of the flavour of life for many Aboriginal people in Queensland. Trigger (1992: 143-4) quotes him as follows:

I told 'em: 'Any you fellas been under the Act?' None of them fellas could give an answer for that because they been live in a place, live free, they been brought up free...I said: 'The Act was the Act and we were well under it'.

It is obvious that a system such as that outlined above must have implications for the power relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people on the reserves.

In the early 1980s, amendments to the 1971 pieces of legislation plus the introduction of new legislation in 1984, the Community Services (Aborigines Act and the Community Services (Torres strait) Act, brought about several changes on Queensland reserves. However, while this legislation provided the first suggestion of Aboriginal ownership of land, there had been little consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait people and the bills themselves were passed under controversial circumstances. Under this legislation, Aboriginal
reserves were to be transferred to Deeds of Grant in Trust or DOGITS as they are known. While this gave community councils control of land, the ability to establish by-laws and the provision of services such as housing, it did not provide inalienable freehold title to land. Moreover, portions of land under reserves could be removed on granting of the DOGIT. While there were many problems with this legislation, it did however provide for some degree of Aboriginal ownership and control. The Department underwent yet another name change and was now known as the Department of Community Services.

In 1989 the conservative National Party Government that had been in power in Queensland for more than two decades was replaced by the Goss Labor Government. There was optimism in some circles that this would result in increasing power and control of their lives and lands by indigenous people themselves. In May 1991 two new pieces of legislation, (the Aboriginal Land Act and the Torres Strait Islander Land Act were enacted in the Queensland Parliament. In spite of the previous history and a Labor Government, the consultation process during the drafting and presentation of these bills was no more satisfactory (Brennan 1991). Yet again, indigenous people in Queensland had found that governments felt that they were able to decide what was best for them. Brennan (1984) has documented the 'process' by which indigenous representatives tried to insist on such consultation, but without success. His account summarises the history and nature of successive governments' dealings with Aboriginal and Torres Strait people in this State.
Following the Australian High Court decision on Mabo in June 1992, the enactment of federal Native Title legislation in 1993 has added a new dimension to indigenous ownership of land in this country. For indigenous people in Queensland, there are now a range of ways in which land can be claimed back. Communities (especially for example in Cape York) may be engaged in a number of claims under various pieces of legislation. In some areas, land councils have been formed. The Cape York Land Council, for example, has taken on the role of coordinating and facilitating such actions with northern communities.

It is clear that Aboriginal people in Queensland have suffered significant dislocation of traditional groups and from traditional lands. They were involuntarily placed into a system which did not value custom or culture and which was highly invasive of personal matters, from marriage to wages and the management of personal property. Even after the breakdown of the most repressive aspects of this system, the disregard for consultation, especially with regard to new legislation, has not instilled much hope that any changes will be satisfactory. This brief (and selective) history of black-white relations in Queensland provides the necessary backdrop within which to examine the development of heritage management in Queensland.

4.2 Heritage management in Queensland

After a comparatively early start with the introduction of legislation in 1967 (Queensland was among the first to introduce such legislation), heritage management in Queensland has had only episodic development. In 1974, the Archaeology Branch (the authority set up to administer the Aboriginal Relics Act of 1967) had participated in the Sites of Significance Recording Project, funded by the then AIAS and
administered through the states (see also Chapter 2). While the first Aboriginal Ranger was appointed in the early 1970s, it was in the middle to late 1970s that the Aboriginal Ranger Service became well established within the Branch (Peter Smith, pers. comm.). For more than a decade from this point, the Ranger Service undertook a liaison role between archaeologists and Aboriginal people in the State.

Archaeology Branch, with its small staff of archaeologists and Aboriginal Rangers, was responsible for the location and protection of Aboriginal archaeological sites in the State. An archaeologist who wished to undertake archaeological work in Queensland, including desk-top research, was required (and still is) to apply for a permit from the Branch. In 1984, there were Rangers stationed in a number of key locations across the state including Injune, Mount Isa, Townsville, Cairns, Laura and Bamaga, as well as a senior ranger stationed in the capital, Brisbane. They were responsible for recording sites within their area, for the local management of sites and they undertook public relations work, both with school children and tourists in relation to Aboriginal sites and culture. In addition, they often worked with archaeologists, at least in the initial stages of research.

4.2.1 Archaeology Branch and its association with DAIA

One of the greatest hindrances to the development of the Branch was its location in DAIA. Although the Department had had (and would have)\(^1\) a number of name changes, it remained essentially the same Department. The association of Archaeology Branch with the

\(^1\)Over the years it was variously called the Department of Native Affairs, the Department of Aboriginal and Islander Advancement, the Department of Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, the Department of Community Services and Ethnic Affairs and the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs.
Department could only have negative connotations, perhaps especially on the reserves.

During the 1980s, only one Aboriginal Ranger position was located within an Aboriginal reserve, and this was at Bamaga. Given that the community councils had much to do with the running of everyday life in communities at this time, this Ranger interacted much more directly with the councils and the community than those in other locations. The negative associations with DAIA were offset to some extent by the fact that an Aboriginal (or Torres Strait Island) person represented the Branch, and the nature of their work in cultural matters was seen as being one of the few positive aspects of the Department.

The process of setting up a research project during this period required written communication in order to visit the reserve, at which point consultation could be undertaken with the community council concerning the project. The permission of the Aboriginal community was required before Archaeology Branch would issue a permit for work to be undertaken within a reserve. However this was motivated by the council's status as quasi-landholder more than as a recognition of traditional ownership. The procedure by which this was to be procured was by no means clearly formulated or straightforward. Moreover, at this time, the manager of the reserve attended community council meetings, which were the venue at which consultation could take place. In this sense, consultation was also being undertaken with DAIA who still had significant power on the reserves, especially in terms of entry and ejection. In addition, the presence of the manager may well have influenced this process in the
sense that some people might have been loath to go against the Department's wishes.

This process is familiar to anthropologists who have worked in Cape York and Torres Strait. Trigger (1992: 1-7) and Fuary (1991: 11-13) have both described the negative attitudes of DAIA staff, both on and off the reserves, to the suggestion that it was worth undertaking research into 'culture' in their respective study areas. Implicit in this attitude was the enormous distance between the two groups, even when co-existing in the same, sometimes isolated, location. For example, Trigger (1992) has described the white and black spatial domains at the Doomadgee reserve. He describes the physical separateness of black and white residential areas on the reserve. He notes that while Aboriginal people had to enter and operate in the white domain, the reverse was not often the case (1992: 90):

In the settlement, the fact that visiting Whites (such as public servants) rarely, if ever, met with people in the village [the Aboriginal domain] did not go unnoticed.

The separateness of the two worlds, in what is otherwise a very small community, and the lack of communication and knowledge between the two is also illustrated by the fact that (1992: 90-91):

Groups of whites (e.g. school teachers) sometimes themselves went on camping trips to waterholes in the bush. There was a feeling among certain older residents that Whites should have consulted with key old people before visiting some areas.

The difficulty for a European researcher is perhaps typified by the difficulty Trigger (1992: 85) experienced in locating himself residentially at the outset of his fieldwork. Although obviously a
'whitefella', he had to reside in the black domain in order to conduct his fieldwork. Even then, however, he had to acquire other skills (for example language and the ability to live with and like Doomadgee people) in order to break down people's inherent distrust of whites.

For archaeologists working in reserves, the association with Rangers was something of a two-edged sword. In my own experience, the Rangers provided a buffer between DAIA and the community, they introduced me to key people within communities and greatly facilitated the initial stages of consultation with community councils. However, the association with DAIA gave me an 'official' status, a connection with the Department which, as a white, was only broken down by a long period of association and residence. Working within communities provides an unusual experience for white archaeologists, as it is one of the few instances in which a member of the 'dominant majority' is in the minority.

4.3 Conclusion
In the previous chapter, it was illustrated that there have been few archaeological projects undertaken within Aboriginal or Torres Strait communities in Queensland. This is in spite of early suggestions, such as by Thomson (1939) of the potential of such work. More recently, archaeological work in Queensland has been focused on the development of archaeological regions. The majority of this work has not involved indigenous groups (other than in preliminary consultation) and few projects have been undertaken from within Aboriginal communities. Again, this is in spite of the fact that there has been a considerable amount of anthropological work which could provide the necessary backdrop and support for such work.
It is, however, obvious from the above discussion that there are many difficulties to overcome when working on indigenous lands. These difficulties are not insurmountable, but they require long-term commitment from researchers. Since the late 1980s, the reserves have been replaced by DOGITs and there are increasing opportunities for indigenous people to claim back their land through a number of pieces of legislation, including the *Aboriginal Land Act* and the *Torres Strait Islander Land Act* and by making claims under the Federal *Native Title Act*. However these changes are very recent, and so it would be naive to assume that indigenous Australians would treat these without some degree of caution. While the old 'reserves' are no longer the isolated outposts of previous decades, it should not be assumed that attitudes and responses built up over this period will be extinguished in the short-term.

Explaining why little archaeological work has been undertaken in areas where there are large populations of indigenous people in Queensland involves weaving together a number of threads. The perception amongst Australian archaeologists that archaeological remains are somehow removed from living people is the first of these. The logistical difficulties provides yet another. However, it is perhaps the distanced relationship between archaeology and anthropology in this country and the political and social context of indigenous people in Queensland that have been most damaging in this instance. A tradition in which archaeologists and anthropologists work together provides the archaeologist with a better understanding of community perspectives. The anthropologist can act as a guide and interpreter between the archaeologist and community. Such work has the
potential to provide new insights into approaches to Australian archaeology. It may also provide new insights for anthropology in this country. This point is explored in subsequent chapters.
Fieldwork in 1984: Reconnaissance and consultation

This chapter describes archaeological work and consultation that was undertaken in 1984 for the original project. I visited northern Cape York for the first time from the 27th August till the 11th September, 1984. The aim of this trip was to consult community councils in the area concerning the regional archaeological survey I hoped to undertake in the following year. In addition, I wanted to undertake some preliminary reconnaissance work, particularly aimed at assessing potential access around the study area and ground surface visibility of archaeological evidence.

Prior to this first visit, I had some basic lessons in Torres Strait Creole. Shnukal (1988) has suggested that the language spoken on the mainland is a dialect of that spoken in Torres Strait. Certainly, Cape York Creole has many points in common with that spoken in Torres Strait. Both dialects are referred to as 'Broken' and are mutually understandable. At this time, my 'education' consisted of basic terms of greeting and the rudiments of polite conversation. My language preparation (rudimentary as it was) was aimed, perhaps obviously, at maximising communication during consultation. In addition, it served to distinguish me from other non-Aboriginal people on the reserve (Department staff, teachers, nurses, doctors etc) who rarely spoke 'Broken' (cf. Trigger 1992). The importance of language is a thread which is woven into many subsequent chapters.
In Chapter 1 the connections between archaeology and heritage management were outlined. In Chapter 2, it was suggested that archaeologists have avoided working in reserves in Queensland. The comparatively short field seasons and the desire to 'open up' vast archaeologically unknown areas of the State have, amongst other reasons, mitigated against an archaeology that could effectively operate within Aboriginal communities. In addition, the location of heritage management within the Department responsible for managing reserves in Queensland provided something of another barrier that had to be broken down. When I went into the field in 1984, this was the Department of Community Services (DCS).

This relationship dominated the earliest stages of this project. This was largely due to the fact that the study area was located within an Aboriginal reserve. At this time, permission to enter reserves was nominally held by community councils, however the Manager had formal and informal power to intervene in this process. In addition, there was a degree of hostility towards researchers as it was felt that they might bring with them ideas and attitudes that would influence people on the reserves (see also Chapter 4; Trigger 1992; Fuary 1991). In my case, Archaeology Branch staff acted as something of an advocate. From the Department’s perspective, the close association between archaeological research and Archaeology Branch was an ameliorating influence. In the background was the perception that archaeologists deal with the inanimate objects of the past. It seems likely that this was more acceptable than anthropological research which involves close connections with living people.
5.1 Origins and themes in the original project

Inspiration for the original project was drawn from two major sources. The first was Lourandos' (1983) which suggested that socio-economic intensification might account for changes in the Holocene archaeological record in Australia (see Chapter 2). Lourandos' work followed closely on the heels of a paper by Hynes and Chase (1982) who defined and demonstrated the concept of 'domiculture' in northeastern Cape York. Their discussion of patterns of settlement and residence in this area, and the evidence of artificially created groves of native fruit trees and yam patches provided convincing arguments that a reappraisal of Aboriginal economies in the recent past in this area was in order. Hynes and Chase (1982) suggested that the intensive occupation observed at Stony Point was perhaps representative of systems in operation along the entire north-east coast. From an archaeological perspective, defining the antiquity of such systems, in the light of the gauntlet laid down by Lourandos (1983), offered a research opportunity that was difficult to resist. In addition, the project offered an opportunity to develop some of the themes that were present in archaeology in Queensland (e.g. definition of a 'new' archaeological region, coastal settlement and occupation sequence). However, this was to be undertaken using a new perspective; namely, an explanatory model that was driven by social forces. In this sense, the project represented a new direction in archaeological research in Queensland.

The topical potential of the project became even more emphasised in its second year with the publication of Beaton's (1985) work in Princess Charlotte Bay, to the south-east of the study area. Beaton reacted strongly against Lourandos' proposition of intensification, particularly his use of social models as an explanatory tool. His interpretation of the evidence
at Princess Charlotte Bay strongly advocated the use of an ecological explanation of culture change. The emergence of a debate in Archaeology in Oceania, surrounding these conflicting views reinforced my conviction that this project could make an important contribution to the discipline (see Lourandos 1983, 1984, 1985; Beaton 1983, 1985; Cribb 1986).

5.1.1 Research aims and design

The research was intended as multi-stage and regional in approach. The broad aims were:

1. to locate a representative sample of archaeological sites in the northern Peninsula area;
2. to undertake intensive investigation of specific sites that had the necessary attributes to determine whether the 'general indicators' of intensification, as proposed by Lourandos (1985: 391) were present in the region.

The latter include questions such as: the intensity of site usage over time, the history of occupation and settlement of the region, the usage of particular environmental zones, the nature of both resource-management strategies and exchange systems in the region and the (see again Lourandos 1985: 391).

Lourandos' archaeological model necessitated:

1. broad and reliable regional knowledge of sites and the resource zones in which they are found;
2. stratified sites that illustrated the nature of changes in the archaeological record over the relevant timeframe;
3. a body of ethnographic and/or ethnohistorical information that provided information on aspects of the economy, settlement patterns and ceremonial activity within the region.
The first consideration therefore was the initiation of a large-scale regional survey which would incorporate the range of resource zones within the chosen area. The selection of sites for further and more specific investigation would be made on the basis of results of the preliminary survey and after geomorphological investigation of the antiquity of the landsystems within which such sites were located.

### 5.1.2 Why northern Cape York?

Aboriginal people at Cape York had a shared history, which included residence, intermarriage and trade, with the Muralag people who were familiar with gardening practices (Moore 1979; Fuary 1991: 60). In other parts of Australia, for example in Arnhem Land, the contact between the Macassans from Sulawesi and Aboriginal mainlanders was seasonal and the visitors did not take up permanent residence (Macknight 1972; Mulvaney 1975). It seemed that if intensification did occur across Australia in the late Holocene then this might be an obvious area to look for it.

However, while the choice of study area was made on solid theoretical grounds, the level of archaeological knowledge of the area was extremely limited. In 1984 only four sites were recorded on the Archaeology Branch register for the area. These were the rockshelter at Red Island Point and the campsite at Evans Bay that were recorded and excavated by Moore (1965, 1979), the historical site of Somerset and its outstation at Lockerbie and a painting site that is associated with Somerset. Because of this, the project required an enormous amount of preliminary archaeological survey work in order to provide the regional archaeological context and to locate sites that could provide a regional dating programme.
Moreover, to use Lourandos' model, a stratified site (or sites) would have to be located in order to provide the framework for detecting and testing change.

While archaeological work had been limited, linguistic, historical and sociological work had been undertaken in the area as part of broader projects. Crowley (1980; see also Fuary and Greer 1993) interviewed a number of community residents in 1975 in relation to research on Northern Paman languages. None Sharp (1981, 1992: ix) passed through in 1980 and interviewed a number of people. Her earlier paper gives a brief historical sketch of one of the northern Cape York communities (Cowal Creek). However, a detailed history of the area, outlining the different Aboriginal and Island communities and their relationships was not available. The absence of such information made the task of consultation in the early stages of the project extremely difficult. This was problematic as consultation was an important and integral component of the original project. This was particularly pertinent as Aboriginal people within the study area had apparently maintained residency over their land to some degree.

Such issues will be explored in this and subsequent chapters. Theoretical concerns were given further inspiration by the location of the study area at the very top of the Australian mainland, with its shores lapped by the waters of Torres Strait. Romantic stories of pearling and beche-de-mer had filled my childhood in North Queensland, and I lived around Aboriginal and Island people who called this place 'home'.
5.2 Description of the study area

The original study area consisted of the northern-most peninsula of land extending from the tip of Cape York in the north and bounded by the mouth of the Jardine River on the west coast and the Kennedy inlet on the east coast (see Figure 1). This changed as the project continued to include all of the traditional lands of northern Cape York people (see Chapter 8).

My only source of information concerning the study area was Archaeology Branch, Department of Community Services. Before entering the field I learned that there were five separate communities in the region: Bamaga, Cowal Creek¹, Umagico, New Mapoon and Seisia. Together, these communities were the focus of the large reserve known as the Northern Peninsula Area (NPA). Each had an elected community council, with the exception of Seisia which was then a satellite community of Bamaga. The Combined Northern Peninsula Area Council was an aggregation of all of these. Cadastral maps indicated that some leases existed within the reserve area and Sharp (1981) confirmed that these were associated with mining and tourism. In terms of the latter, Air Queensland had only recently obtained the lease to an area of land surrounding the tip of Cape York and had established a 'wilderness' style of resort there. I was advised by Archaeology Branch to undertake consultation with the Combined Northern Peninsula Area Council.

Northern Cape York has a rich and varied landscape. The coast is fringed with sand beaches interspersed with ferruginous rocky points. Large dunes of fine white sand run north-east to south-west, often forming the boundary with the dry dune thickets. Large and small offshore islands dot

¹In 1987, Cowal Creek became known as Injinoo or Cowal Creek-Injinoo. Injinoo is one of the Aboriginal names for the place where the village is located.
Figure 1: Location of the research area
the seas which surround this peninsula. Some of these, such as Possession and Albany Islands have their place in post-contact history. The former was the spot on which Captain Cook proclaimed the east coast on behalf of the Crown and the latter was the site where the ill-fated Kennedy was to have been picked up. Muri and Muralag\(^1\) form the backdrop to the Barbara Thompson story (Moore 1979) while others (such as Red, Barn and Crab Islands) have their place in local history.

In the interior the red soil dominates the landscape. In dry season, the dry rainforest is drowned with a cloak of red dust, as is anyone who travels along the corrugated roads. The 'Lockerbie Scrub', which is located in the area around the historical homestead of 'Lockerbie' has many species of plant in common with Papua New Guinea, which is suggestive of a shared past prior to the rising of the seas in the Torres Strait. In spite of the dusty 'dry', the area is extremely well watered. It has mighty rivers such as the Jardine and Escape Rivers (the latter being the site of the Kennedy massacre) and large creeks (e.g. Cowal Creek). Huge mangrove forests, nurseries of crustaceans, fish and crocodiles, form the margins of these large waterways. In addition, the landscape is finely veined with water courses of a range of sizes. Along the east coast there is a series of current and dried-up lakes, swamps and waterholes which add to the impression of a watery realm. During wet season, the monsoon makes overland travel all but impossible.

There is an overwhelming presence of the sea in the narrow northern section. Even when travelling in the interior, the narrowness of the peninsula at this point (less than 20 km) affords an impression of land and vegetation 'dipping' down to the sea on either side. On the coasts

\(^1\)Muri and Muralag are Mt Adolphus and Prince of Wales Islands respectively.
the sea is rarely devoid of dinghies travelling back and forth. These small
craft are used for transport, fishing and hunting turtle and dugong. This
is in spite of the presence of rough 'boxing seas' (where currents meet),
treacherous currents and winds and the presence of formidable sea
creatures such as crocodiles.

5.3 Consultation and the original project in 1984

While legal ownership and control of the reserve rested with the
Queensland Government through the Department of Community
Services, permission to go onto the reserve had to be obtained from the
Combined Northern Peninsula Area Council and the Manager. I wrote
to the Council seeking permission to visit the area and to undertake
consultation concerning my project. This was granted with the help of
Aboriginal Relics Ranger, Mr Peter Smith, who was the Archaeology
Branch representative on the reserve. Mr Smith provided the main
point of contact between the Council and me at this stage.

The aims of this first visit were extremely broad. Firstly, I needed to
consult with the Combined Northern Peninsula Area Council. While
the smaller community councils had responsibility for their individual
communities, the Combined Council was the only political structure
which could decide on matters across a broad area of the reserve. Mr
Smith arranged for me to attend a meeting of the Combined Council
which took place towards the end of my stay. He also took me to each of
the communities and introduced me to members of each community
council prior to this. This was extremely helpful in that by the time I met
with the Combined Council, I had already (albeit briefly) had the
opportunity to be introduced and to explain my request to a number of
councillors in their own communities. My introduction to these people
was enhanced by the association with Mr Smith, whose work was known to them and who, although not a local, had established excellent relations with these communities. This was important as the barriers of being white and associated with DCS were otherwise significant.

Formal consultation with the Combined Council was aimed at determining if a regional archaeological survey could be undertaken in the area during 1985. On Wednesday 5th September 1984, I attended a meeting of the Council which included more than 20 people. In addition to community councillors, the DCS Manager and one other staff member were present. I was introduced by Mr Smith and proceeded to outline my project.

I explained that I was interested in the fact that Island people and Aboriginal people had lived together in this region, yet were thought to have had significant differences in their economic strategies (gardening being an important component of the former, gathering and hunting of the latter). I explained that I was interested in talking to community members about past lifestyles and customs. I stressed that fieldwork was designed in several stages and that what I was requesting from this meeting was the opportunity to undertake the first of these: a regional archaeological survey. I briefly outlined what was involved in surveys of this nature.

Given the physical isolation of northern Cape York and the socio-political barriers that separated reserves from the outside, my request must have seemed somewhat unusual. To my knowledge, the Council had no precedent; Moore's work was undertaken long before the notion of consultation had become commonplace in Australian archaeology. In
spite of this, the response was enthusiastic, particularly towards that part of the project that was concerned with talking to people about their traditional knowledge. One person spoke to this meeting about the desperate need for people to record this knowledge, especially that of the elderly community members. From my perspective, however, this aspect of the research constituted a relatively small component.

I became aware during this trip that consultation with the Combined Council did not assure me of consultation with traditional owners. While I was aware of the differences between the latter and the formal structures of power, such as councils, there was an assumption on my part that the Combined Council would direct me on this matter. For several reasons, this did not prove to be the case and I discovered that this was by no means a straightforward task. Firstly, people in the communities were used to a structure in which any kind of consultation took place with councils. In many ways, the councils provided a buffer between them and the government or other interactions outside the reserve. They were unused to being directly consulted on the basis of traditional ownership, and indeed the enormous social and historical complexity of the communities rendered the task of finding traditional owners beyond the scope of a quick trip. This has interesting implications for archaeological research and heritage management, and this point is further explored in subsequent chapters.

5.3.1 Working with rangers
In addition to formal consultation, I accompanied Mr Smith and his assistant, Mr Richard Tamwoy, on trips they undertook as part of their work within the study area. These trips were aimed at providing me with the opportunity to assess factors such as access to and visibility of
potential sites. In addition, the rangers took me to sites that were on the Archaeology Branch register such as the Red Island Point site excavated by Moore (1979), the historical sites of Lockerbie and Somerset and the 'rock art' site located at the latter.

Mr Tamwoy is from Injinoo and in the course of working with him, I was introduced to many local people, including his relatives. He was also responsible for taking my language lessons one step further than basic courtesies. Through discussions with him, I unravelled some of the history behind the establishment of the five communities. I learned for example that Injinoo was the first settlement in the area and that it had been established by the survivors of a number of cultural groups (see also Sharp 1981). These groups are known as 'tribes' in northern Cape York. I discovered that the other communities (Bamaga, Seisia, New Mapoon and Umagico) had all been 'relocated' to northern Cape York from their homelands. The people of Bamaga and Seisia were originally from the island of Saibai near the Papuan coast, the people of Umagico were forcibly shifted from their Port Stewart home and New Mapoon was created for the people of 'Old Mapoon' who had been removed when Comalco undertook mining ventures on their traditional lands. Each relocation had an important story documenting the history of reserves in Queensland, although the Mapoon story was known outside the reserves.

It seemed that Injinoo was the appropriate place to begin if consultation was to proceed beyond the Combined Council. I did, however, meet Injinoo people who were now living in other communities and it was

1Although the term 'tribe' is viewed as problematic within the anthropological literature, it is used within the community to denote different cultural groups. It is used here out of respect for local usage.
explained to me that these people had married into other communities. In addition, I learned that many Injinoo people could be found in other Aboriginal communities (such as Weipa and Lockhart) and in southern urban centres such as Cairns, Townsville and Brisbane. Although I was gaining knowledge, I was also becoming more confused as the complications of identifying and locating traditional owners, and the implications for consultation, became more and more evident.

It was through these informal introductions and conversations that I became aware of several important issues. Most importantly, I came to the realisation that if consultation was to be anything other than superficial, then a much deeper understanding of the social and political complexities of the communities was necessary. Moreover, in spite of the fact that the Combined Council had a custodial role (granted by the Government) over all the lands on which I wanted to work, the relationship between each community and particular tracts of land would have to be established. This would also subsequently prove to be even more complex than I imagined at this time.

5.4 Archaeological/geomorphological reconnaissance
Reconnaissance work was undertaken by Chris Meagher, a geomorphologist, and me. Meagher (pers. comm.) had examined aerial photographs prior to entering the field. These suggested that an older shoreline might be located on an area on the east coast, just north of Jackey Jackey Creek. Trips into this area were aimed at locating tracks (especially those that were not marked on maps) which provided good physical access to such features. One of the outcomes of this work was the recognition both of the need for local expertise in locating such tracks.
and that in some instances these would have to be reopened due to fallen trees etc.

Two major conclusions were drawn from work undertaken on this brief visit. Firstly, limited access to many parts of the study area suggested that a systematic survey strategy would be, at least initially, problematic. It was felt that much time and energy would be consumed in gaining access to and precisely locating survey units (this was before electronic GPS instruments were readily available). Moreover, the location of the few tracks that were marked on available maps was at best an approximation given that their specific locations are largely dependant on seasonal conditions. Difficulties of access were compounded by the presence of dense vegetation over much of the study area and consequently poor ground surface visibility. In some instances, visibility was further restricted by the presence of deep, loose and highly mobile sands.

Therefore it was decided that for the initial survey, an opportunistic method (using existing tracks) would be employed. It was felt that this would provide a reasonable sample for the preliminary stages of the investigation, with the possibility of subsequent intensive work being undertaken using a more systematic approach. An opportunistic strategy was dependant on knowledge of tracks used by local people to gain access to hunting, fishing and recreation areas. The need to obtain this type of assistance confirmed my growing conviction that I should obtain funding to employ local people during the next field season.

While preliminary reconnaissance had indicated that access to the 'shoreline' features was difficult, it was anticipated that this area might
contain evidence of occupation associated with former sea-levels. Therefore, this area was targeted for specific work in the next season.

5.5 Conclusion

At the end of this short field trip in 1984 some progress had been made on the two fronts of consultation and archaeological planning. Reconnaissance had suggested a number of important points concerning fieldwork to be undertaken in 1985. Firstly, problems related to visibility and access indicated that an opportunistic approach, facilitated by local involvement and knowledge was most appropriate. My task then was to obtain funds to employ local people in the following year. The joint geomorphological/archaeological work had managed to identify an important area for further investigation.

I had some answers and many more questions. The more I learned about the community, the more I realised that I knew very little. I did, however, know that consultation would have to be taken beyond the council level, and I was keen to take it to its finest level of resolution. I anticipated that this would mean negotiating with the 'owners' or 'custodians' of particular tracts of land on which I wished to work. At this early stage, however, the process by which this might be achieved was unclear. During the 1984 trip, I found that my informal interactions, albeit brief, were more fruitful than formal consultation. I acknowledged that the task of identifying traditional owners in an area in which people have experienced considerable dislocation was perhaps a major research undertaking in itself. This was a problem without immediate solution. I had, however, gained permission from the Combined Council to undertake the survey in the following year. I decided that a major undertaking would be made in the following year to identify owners for
the Jackey Jackey area in which we had planned further survey. I decided that before any intensive and especially intrusive investigations (such as excavation) were undertaken, the issues of ownership had to be addressed.

In addition, I began to experience the first vague feelings of unease concerning the notion of 'consultation'. On the one hand, there was general agreement, even enthusiasm, for the research at the Combined Council meeting. However, both in the interactions at this meeting and through impressions gained in informal interactions, it seemed that this response may have in part stemmed from the desire to record and collect information on 'culture' and 'custom'. The point was made to me many times that the people with knowledge were often elderly and it was feared that much of what they knew would pass with them. While agreement to this research was voluntary and apparently happily given, I had the feeling that people were focusing on this one element of the project. I was somewhat concerned that I would not be able, within the terms of my project, to provide them with what they needed.
Fieldwork 1985: archaeological survey and consultation

The second field season was undertaken from 17th July to 10th September 1985. Work carried out included a general archaeological survey of the region, an aerial survey and further consultation. In the field, I was assisted by Chris Meagher, the geomorphologist from the previous year, and Paul Packard, an archaeologist. In addition, funding was obtained from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (now the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Studies) to employ two local people to help with some of the problems of access and to assist in the location and recording of sites. Albert Bond of New Mapoon and Paul Wasiu of Bamaga were employed for a period of approximately five weeks during this field season. They were chosen by their respective community councils in consultation with Peter Smith, the Aboriginal Ranger.

The aim of this season’s work was to locate as many archaeological sites as possible over the entire region. This was achieved in two ways. Firstly and most importantly, we utilised the local knowledge of our two workers, inspecting as many areas as we could depending on ease of access. Secondly, we undertook two aerial reconnaissance trips and one survey by boat along the west coast. These were aimed at supplementing information gained from the ground survey or at providing access to areas that were difficult to reach by road or track.

As planned in the previous year, the area just north of Jackey Jackey Creek was to be further investigated. In addition to the shoreline feature
previously identified, Meagher had noted a number of irregularly-shaped areas which appeared to be sand blowouts on the photographs. Due to constraints of time, our first priority became a transect through the swamp to one of these, which we called the 'W' site because of its shape when viewed from the air (see Plate 2).

6.1 The 'W' site

The transect was undertaken at the southern end of the 'shore-line' feature observed on the aerial photographs. The aim of the transect was to inspect, on the ground, features that had been identified from the photographs, especially the 'W' area. It was hypothesised that if archaeological sites were located in this region, they would be linked with the geomorphological history of the landscape.

The transect began just north-east of Jackey Jackey airport, on the southwestern side of the swamp. The team was dropped along the track located west of the swamp and proceeded along a transect, south-west to north-east, for approximately 250-300 m until reaching the edge of the swamp. Bearings were taken from here to a point on the other side which would facilitate direct access to the sandy 'W' area. From here, the team skirted around the southern edge of the swamp to this point, proceeding north-east until the 'W' area was reached in the late afternoon.

Visual evidence consisted of a fringe of white sand enclosing areas of dead 'ti-trees' (Melaleuca), which suggested that the 'W' was actually formed by the shores associated with two episodes of filling and drying of lake features. However, by this stage, there was no evidence of surface water. On the white sand we located a few unidentifiable fragments of
Plate 2  The 'W' feature, Jackey Jackey Creek area.

Plate 3  Beachrock features, Freshwater site, Sandago.
shell, a couple of pieces of introduced stone and what appeared to be a hearth feature. A preliminary recording of the site was undertaken.

The team camped at the 'W' site overnight before continuing the transect through to the track that had previously been located east of this area. The path undertaken was marked with survey tape in order to ensure easy relocation of the site at a later date. This was particularly important as this country consists of seemingly identical fingers of vegetation interspersed with saltpan. It is easy to become disoriented in this country and we learned that it is known locally as 'dangerous' country to walk through.

Unfortunately, the geomorphological work planned by Mr Meagher (including determining the origin and dating of sediments at the 'W' site) was not completed. I was unable to attract another geomorphologist to the project, however after the next season, the focus changed and this work became unnecessary for my revised project.

6.2 Ground survey
Our initial aim was to develop some idea of local tracks that would give us access to various parts of the landscape. In some instances, I identified areas and our co-workers directed us where tracks permitted. In other instances, we asked our co-workers to show us along tracks they used for hunting, fishing etc. It was necessary to be both opportunistic and spontaneous when using this approach, as often we had only the most general idea of where we were headed prior to setting out.

Approximately 30 sites, including archaeological campsites, middens and shell scatters, contemporary campsites, historical sites and story places
were located during this field season. However, specific details of each site are not provided in this thesis because the community is reluctant to make such information public. In addition, although this was important for the original topic, details of sites are not directly relevant to the current project.

6.2.1 Precontact sites

Several large deflated campsites were located on dunes associated with five beaches in the northern section of Newcastle Bay. These we called the 'East Coast' sites. They are large, some more than 200 by 100 m, contain an enormous quantity of surface material which includes shell, bone, fine- and medium-grained flaked stone material (including several ground-edge hatchets) as well as the distinctive red beachrock. The latter is present as the parent material on the small headlands which separate these beaches. As with the other stone found on these sites, it has been imported (albeit from the adjacent headlands). It was presumably brought in to use as oven or hearth stones (see Chapter 7). All of these sites exhibit varying degrees of disturbance owing to wave action and submersion during high tides, vehicle disturbance (often evident in observable tracks) and the severe effects of the unceasing south-easterly winds which blow from April till October.

The most interesting aspect of these sites is that while much of the surface material is loosely scattered over the sites, it would appear that some beachrock features have been retained, even if only temporarily, intact (see Plate 3). Some of these appeared to contain quantities of charcoal and resembled hearths (see again Chapter 7).
On initial observation, the East Coast sites could represent a major gathering of people in precontact times. This was suggested by the sheer size of the sites (although the apparent total area was probably exaggerated by the deflation of the dunes) and by their close proximity. It was thought that this might reflect the movements of people up and down a strip of coast in the manner suggested by Hynes and Chase (1982). Moreover, an examination of topographic maps indicated the presence of freshwater lakes approximately 3 to 4 km to the west, and the resources of the more established forests at a similar distance. The location of a major camp (perhaps a Wet season camp given the presence of the irritating soueasterlies in the Dry) was supported by the presence of freshwater springs which are present in at least two of these areas. Certainly, even the surface evidence at these sites had potential in terms of documenting socio-economic factors.

In addition to these, other precontact sites consisted chiefly of sparse scatters of shell, smaller more discrete scatters and the occurrence of small scatters of somewhat dubious pieces of stone. The latter sometimes occurred in a location or context which suggested a cultural origin; that is, they occurred as discrete phenomena in the absence of similar but more obviously natural features. Alternatively, they were at times observed in entirely plausible natural locations but exhibited features that are best put into that well-used category of 'flaked piece'. That is, often pieces had clean regular fractures with sharp edges but no particularly diagnostic flaking features and/or signs of use. Sometimes, this was compounded by the presence of coarse- or medium-grained materials and/or an apparent high degree of weathering. It is interesting that although there is one art site at Somerset which we visited during 1984, no further art sites were located in this second season.
6.2.2 Contemporary sites

Contemporary sites are sites that are still used by people as 'weekenders' or bases for fishing and hunting trips. These are evident in almost every area we visited. They often include a shelter, varying from a simple frame over which a tarp is draped to a fully-constructed shed (cf. Britnall 1991). These sites are often associated with scatters of shell, bone (including fish and turtle) and other domestic detritus. Given the prime location of many of these, it is reasonable to assume that camps such as these have been using the same location for a considerable period of time. In fact, in a number of instances, such sites were located on top of precontact sites.

6.2.3 'Historical' sites

Historical sites recorded in the survey include Somerset, which is the site of a government outpost from the 1860s and also the residence of the Jardine family. The homestead, outbuildings and other structures at Somerset have long since been removed, and the site was bulldozed by Queensland government employees in the 1970s. However, what remains is a remarkable house site on top of a cliff which overlooks Albany Island and the Torres Strait, the remnant of an historical coconut plantation and a small family cemetery which is nestled into the bay at the bottom of the cliff (see Plate 4). Stone retaining walls still extend in straight lines through the now overgrown vegetation on the slope which separates these two, and the house site is littered with a plethora of domestic and other items. The latter reflects more than 130 years of post-contact occupation, the Jardine family having been succeeded by a series of local people who acted as caretakers of the site until the 1970s.
Plate 4 The historic site of Somerset, northern Cape York.

Plate 5 World War II 'hospital' site, Jackey Jackey Creek area.
In addition, the Jardine family had a cattle property which centred around the homestead at Lockerbie, approximately 15 km south-west of Somerset. Again, most above ground features have long since gone from Lockerbie. However, it is notable for an historical lane edged by mango trees which probably marked the main entrance. Unfortunately, it has been reported to me that some of these trees were removed in recent years. Other features at Lockerbie are the loosely piled lines of stone which served as edgings for the gardens. These have a poignancy, also present at Somerset, which derives from the futility of such attempts to impose order on the encroaching forest which has now reclaimed the site. There is also a stone-lined spring which provided the settlement with freshwater. The Holland family arrived here in 1913 and were in partnership with Frank Jardine. Some time after his death, they took over Lockerbie and lived there for many years. As with Somerset, the passing of Europeans did not mark an end to the site's usage and local people have been associated with the site from the time of its establishment. Certainly, the signs of more than a century of occupation are evident at the site.

In addition to Somerset and Lockerbie, the bush especially in some areas such as around Jackey Jackey airstrip, is littered with the evidence of a large military encampment that sprawls over an extensive area of the scrub around the airstrip. This was initially occupied by the United States Army Air Force and then subsequently the Australian Army during World War II. These include whole corrugated iron 'igloos' that are said to have served as a hospital, complete with iron bedsteads, a pushbike and other paraphernalia (see Plate 5). There are also huge trenches that were the hiding places for large vehicles (the trench being 'roofed' with organic material). There are the wrecks of aeroplanes (for example, a
DC3) still in situ, and the small rocks that marked the paths, edges of tents and 'gardens' of the small tent city of military personnel that occupied the area. Like at Somerset and Lockerbie, this habit of edging with rock (although having many variations) appears to be characteristic of the area and the period.

6.2.4 Problems with management

During this field season, it was noted that Somerset and Lockerbie were visited by large numbers of tourists. At that time, the Cape York tourist boom was comparatively new, the roads having been virtually untrafficable until about five years beforehand. However, in 1985 thousands of tourists visited the area. Visitation of Somerset and Lockerbie, which are generally known to have some historical significance, was (and still is) largely unsupervised (but see McIntyre 1994). As a result, the sites undoubtedly suffered at the hands of casual collectors and sightseers whose appreciation of the sites was limited by the lack of structural remains. This also had the effect of devaluing the importance of objects strewn across the surface of the sites, which, to the visitors eyes appeared 'unowned' and 'uncared for'. Moreover, at that time, little or no on site information was available. Tourists tended to be disappointed and dissatisfied when visiting the sites, and the romance of the overgrown garden beds and retaining walls obviously required supplementing with the visions and realities of former days.

Visitation to the World War II sites was less intense, but not necessarily less destructive. Such sites were generally targeted by individuals interested in war relics and this was especially the case with the aircraft crash sites. Both of these sites are in situ. However, while one has been fenced and signs erected, the other sits somewhat poignantly enveloped
in the encroaching bush. These sites have interest and appeal as they are, but like all of the historical sites, they have enormous management problems.

The East Coast strip also had considerable management problems. A number of the sites had evidence of trail-bike and four-wheel-drive tracks running through them. At least one had been fenced and sign-posted by the Aboriginal Relics Ranger on account of this. In addition, the sites are regularly visited by wild pigs which abound in this region, and they are also subjected to wave and wind action on a seasonal basis. While the problem of the pigs and other natural agents was less easy to solve in the short-term, there appeared to be an urgent need for some protection from tourists.

6.3 Aerial survey

In addition to the ground survey, an aerial survey of the region was undertaken to locate areas of potential archaeological interest. Two trips were undertaken in a fixed-wing light aircraft. The first of these, like the ground survey, focused on the area adjacent to the airport, in particular the 'W' site. By the time of the first aerial survey, we had already visited the site and established its archaeological interest. The aerial survey was aimed at obtaining good quality photography of the site and locating similar features in this area. At least one other such place was located.

The second trip was aimed at providing an overall picture of the study area. Apart from obtaining aerial photographs of a range of places in the study area, the major finding was the location of small discrete scarred areas on dunes along the west coast between the Jardine River and Red
(Vrilya) Point\textsuperscript{1}. These scarred areas were distinguished by the small red ferrucrete stones that are characteristic of the fireplaces in the sites along the east coast at Newcastle Bay. However, it appeared from the air that these were smaller and the dunes much less deflated. This is probably due to the fact that the west coast is much less subjected to erosional forces than the east which is much-affected by the strong south-easterly winds and high-energy coastline. It seems likely that these small blow-outs in the dunes were only visible from the air and that relocating them on the ground, over such a vast area, would be difficult.

6.4 Working in the community

By the time of the 1985 field season, Mr C. Lifu (now deceased) of New Mapoon had taken over as the chairperson of the NPA Combined Council from Mr A. Adidi of Bamaga. Prior to returning to northern Cape York I wrote to Mr Lifu outlining plans for the survey and giving him information on dates, duration and personnel involved in the 1985 field season. Through Peter Smith, the Aboriginal Ranger, I also negotiated about the two local people to be employed on the project. On arriving in the area, I was introduced to Mr Lifu.

Working with our two local co-workers not only facilitated access around the study area (indeed both were keen hunters and knew the area well), but also provided an environment in which further contact could be made with the broader community. People tended to know us (and the project) through our association with them. At this stage, we had only a rudimentary knowledge of the history and establishment of each of the communities and were therefore unaware that neither of these men had

\textsuperscript{1}Vrilya Point is known locally as 'Red' Point, which derives from the presence of bauxite cliffs in this area.
direct traditional connections with the area. We were fortunate in that
one of them had relationships (through marriage) with those who did
have such associations. Several times he alerted us to important places in
the landscape and directed us to others for more information. It is
interesting to note, however, that although the project was addressing
matters of 'culture', the people chosen to work for us did not have
traditional affiliations with the particular area in question.

Another key person with regard to informal consultation and contact
with the communities was Richard Tamwoy who was still the assistant
ranger and who had facilitated much informal consultation in the
previous short field season. Richard introduced me to a number of key
people. Firstly, he introduced me to Mr Silas (Snowy) Woosup and
arranged for a number of interviews with Mr Woosup and others at his
house at Injinoo. We recorded these interviews as well as a number of
songs that were performed for us. It was at these sessions that I began to
understand the cultural complexity of the Injinoo community, which
comprises people from a number of precontact groups. Mr Woosup is
from the Seven Rivers 'tribe', one of those that were responsible for the
establishment of Injinoo (see Chapter 8). After visiting Mr Woosup and
his family, I realized that the woman who had spoken so encouragingly at
the NPA Combined Council meeting the year before was Mr Woosup's
wife, Mrs S. Woosup (now deceased).

6.4.1 Stories, history and meaning in the landscape
At these sessions, I was able to discuss the so-called 'W' site with Mr
Woosup. I discovered that local people consider the area around the
airport (and indeed much of the east coast) as dangerous country. It is
associated with supernatural beings, some of whom are considered to be
malicious in intent. Certainly, there was some surprise when I indicated that we had camped in the middle of this country. Now my understanding of the fires that our co-workers vigorously fueled throughout the night assumed a different interpretation. Prior to this, I was under the impression that they were aimed at keeping mosquitoes and/or crocodiles at bay. Mr Woosup informed me that the language name for this place was *Inangapudan* or Fishbone Swamp. I told those present about the small hearth-like feature we had found at the 'W' site and the fragments of shell and stone. This confirmed for them the presence of the 'old' or 'bifor taim'² people, that is, those of previous generations who inhabit a spiritual domain. Areas where the 'old' people congregate also seem to be associated with the malevolent spirits, although I have not been able to determine whether these are separate or the same.

He also told me that there is an important story which broadly relates to this area. This story has been recorded as the Wamera Story in Fuary and Greer (1993). It concerns a boy who lived with his mother and who left her because of her greed in keeping the best yams *orkuthay* for herself. The boy dug up a large watervine and went underground at *Inangapudan*, dragging it with him. He passed through the earth like a corkscrew or a fence-post digger, emerging at a number of spots. At such points a pool of water was left behind and someone commented that the small waterhole we had seen at *Yunyerra* (on the east coast) was no doubt one of these. This story also explains the creation of the many lakes and waterholes that occur along the east coast. Finally, the boy emerged from the ground at Payra near Somerset, and as he passed he formed the Albany Passage which separates the mainland and Albany Island. At the

²'Bifor taim' can be roughly translated from Broken as 'before time'.
time, it seemed to me as Mr Woosup might be articulating an oral account of the rising of the seas and the creation of the Torres Strait.

In addition, Mr Tamwoy also introduced me to another relative, Mr George Williams who, at the time resided in Bamaga, but who is also a senior Seven Rivers man, originally from Injinoo. Mr Williams took the team by boat to Red Point, a place I had often heard people speak of which is in the heart of Seven Rivers country. This was a non-stop trip until reaching our destination, although Mr Williams pointed out several important places along the way. These included Gel ('Girl') Point, which is associated with the story of Chiviri, a culture hero who makes an epic journey from Mapoon in the south to the passage between Hammond and Thursday Islands in the north (see also McConnell 1957). At Gel Point, one of Chiviri's wives (the elder of two sisters), had a sore breast and so he left her there, continuing on. The younger sister looked back to the other, crying, and was turned to stone. The rocks of Gel Point are the older woman's right breast hanging down. On reaching Red Point, Mr Williams informed us that this was an important story place, and that you must either be able to speak language to visit this place or go with a language speaker. While at Red Point, we learned at first hand about 'burngrass'. As the country around Red Point is a long way from the communities, visits are not frequent. When we arrived, the country was very overgrown or 'wild'. Mr Williams proceeded to burn the undergrowth, and I was given to understand that this is part of the procedure whereby 'wild' country is made safe for people to travel in.

A third important introduction provided by Mr Tamwoy was to yet another uncle, Mr Goody Massey. Mr Massey is from the McDonnell 'tribe', another of the precontact groups. While Mr Massey is originally
from Injinoo, he now lives at Umagico. I learned that prior to the establishment of Umagico, Injinoo people had lived on the foreshore, close to the site of the present village, and that Injinoo people refer to this place as 'Alau'. In fact, Mr Williams, who had taken us to Red Point, had spent much of his childhood at Alau. Mr Massey is an important 'song man' (a composer and singer) in the communities. On at least one memorable occasion, he came to our camp with several dancers from Umagico and performed a corroboree for us. Mr Massey led another corroboree, for our benefit, at the Woosup home at a later date. We recorded these as part of our undertaking to record and collect 'culture'.

From all of these people and others, I began filling out the brief historical sketch that I had previously obtained. I began to find out more about the different 'tribes' who made up the original settlement at Cowal Creek or Injinoo as it is now known. These were principally Seven Rivers people, who occupied part of the west coast south of the Jardine River; the McDonnell River people, whose land was the inland area through which the telegraph line ran; the Red Island people, whose country ran from just north of the present settlement of Injinoo to Cape York; and the Sandbeach people, who lived along the east coast and the northern tip. In addition, a number of people from the islands of the Torres Strait, as well as from other northern Cape York communities had settled at Injinoo, and some Injinoo people were now resident in the other communities (see Chapter 9; see also Fuary and Greer 1993).

Sometimes the 'discoveries' were quite accidental. When discussing informally where we had been and what we had seen, information from a community perspective was volunteered. For example, we learned that the 'historical' sites such as Somerset, Lockerbie and those associated with
the World War II encampment held strong significance for local people. In the case of Somerset, we were told that local people had helped to build the place up for the Jardines and had lived there both during the Jardines' residency and later as caretakers. Moreover, Somerset was established on land that was traditionally owned by 'Somerset' people. These people were most likely a local group within the broader Sandbeach people (see again Chapter 9; Fuary and Greer 1993).

A similar history of associations is present for Lockerbie, and again local people were involved in the setting up, maintenance and service of this establishment. Moreover, both sites were established at the cost of life and land, and many of the stories we heard were grim reminders of this. While the Jardines and other Europeans may have spent several decades living in these places, Aboriginal people in the area have a continuity of occupation and a much longer association with them. These sites were (and are) still largely perceived by the broader community as examples of European heritage, the frontier of colonial expansion. However, my interactions with local people suggested that this would be a very limited interpretation of such sites.

The World War II sites have a different story to tell. In this instance, the appearance of U.S. Army Air Force and later Australian Army personnel, and the massive scale of their encampments, marked a considerable change in the lives of local people. The village of Injinoo was deserted, with local people moving into the bush for security. Local men were involved in the transport of goods and services between the mainland and the islands of the Torres Strait. For example:

A huge Army/Airforce base was set up in the scrub adjacent to Jacky Jacky Creek while smaller installations of equipment and personnel were scattered throughout.
Jetties were built, roads constructed, and an airstrip was put in at Jacky Jacky. The area was crawling with military personnel and the resulting social interactions with local people were something of a double-edged sword (Fuary and Greer 1993:64).

While the region had always been on the fringe of a busy shipping lane and Thursday Island had been, at various points in time, something of a centre of commerce, the War brought the outside world to the Cape York mainland. With the military came vehicles and picture shows, aeroplanes and many other elements of life that had previously not been experienced in the settlement (Fuary and Greer 1993). Moreover, local people have strong memories of this time and the friendships and bonds that were established. I was introduced to a woman in Umagico who had been a cook at the wartime base. In other instances, women were employed as laundresses for military personnel. The sites that are the visible remains of this time are, for the people living around them, symbolic reminders of the military personnel who occupied them and of this period of enormous change.

6.4.2 Community relations in northern Cape York

I also learned that while these communities were bound together by affinal and other ties, political differences nevertheless existed. This was partly due to the understandable tensions of living together. This was exacerated by the favouritism shown to some communities by the Queensland Government administration, e.g. all of the facilities and services, schools etc. are based at Bamaga which is predominantly a Torres Strait Islander community. In addition, it must be acknowledged that the end result of the process of 'relocation' favoured by successive governments is that one group of people are displaced from their own
country, and another group has their own traditional lands occupied by someone else. The presence of the NPA Combined Council did not appear to be enough to unify people under these circumstances.

6.5 Conclusions

At the end of this season in the field, a major evaluation was required in order to determine the course of subsequent work. Archaeological work had yielded a mixture of encouraging and disappointing results. In particular, the overwhelming problems of access across a wild and heavily vegetated area seemed daunting. On the other hand, some large and seemingly rich sites (at least on surface evidence) had been located. However, few of these had the potential to address the research problems posed by the original topic, which involved testing for evidence of economic intensification. While the sheer size and quantity of material on the East Coast sites offered a wealth of information concerning socio-economic factors, all of this was extremely limited unless residual portions of the dunes containing the sites were located and excavated. This would have been required in order to assess adequately demographic factors, and in order to develop a chronological sequence that could be associated with these. While the 'W' site offered some potential for stratification, the sparse surface evidence suggested probable limitations on this site. In spite of these constraints, at the end of this season, the plan for the following year was to undertake further limited survey, and to target these two areas for excavation.

Results of consultation were no less perplexing. It seemed that the more I learned of the history and current complexity of the communities, the more difficult the task of consultation became. Formal and informal interactions with local people had led to a number of conclusions and
observations. Firstly, there were strong and widely held beliefs that the Jackey Jackey Creek area was inhabited by dangerous supernatural beings. In addition, I had discovered that this area was the physical setting of an important story which explains the origin of several landscape features. Given this, the next stage of consultation was considered to be extremely important. This was therefore to be geared to specific owners of specific tracts of land that contained the sites I wished to excavate.

However, there were some considerable problems with this. Firstly, the concept of this type of ownership seemed foreign to most of the people I spoke to. Unfortunately, the history of dislocation which extended into the last century, the years of living within the reserve system and the firm hand of church and government leaders had loosened many aspects of traditional life. This was further compounded by factors relating to the establishment, history, composition and relationships of the five communities. Secondly, it seemed that while key figures could be readily identified for the various 'tribal' groupings, the task of determining who should be consulted for specific sites was more complex and difficult. At this stage, it seemed that communities viewed consultation as the business of 'officialdom', the realm of councils. It also occurred to me that perhaps people did not wish to be singled out for this type of attention and responsibility (see Chapter 9).

In 1984, I had developed a strong impression that some of the motivation for agreeing to the original topic stemmed from the need to record traditional knowledge, especially that of the elderly people. These original impressions were confirmed as a result of working with people in 1985. While some preliminary work was begun on recording local stories and songs, often at the request of local people, it was becoming
increasingly difficult to balance this against the direct needs of the original project. However, given the circumstances I felt obliged to facilitate the continuation of this work. Moreover, some important observations had been made as a result of this process. The identification of the cosmological importance of the Jackey Jackey area on the East Coast was one of these. Similarly, identification of the importance of the so-called 'historical' sites (Somerset, Lockerbie, the World War II sites) also came about as a result of such work with local people. For several reasons, it seemed that the best option was to try to encourage a social anthropologist to undertake some work in the region. This work would be specifically directed toward providing a baseline from which consultation concerning archaeological work could proceed. In particular, some considerable help was required in order to identify and consult with the traditional owners/custodians of the two areas along the East Coast that had been identified for intensive archaeological work.

In addition to research-oriented problems, one of the strongest impressions gained in this field season was that all of the sites had enormous management problems. Although the work I now planned for 1986 might be useful in developing management strategies for the East Coast sites, such work was essentially outside the parameters and scope of the original project. Yet the potential for destruction and disturbance continued to present a dilemma. In addition, I had not planned to undertake any work (beyond basic recording) on the historical sites. It seemed that in addition to an anthropologist, there was scope for an historical archaeological project, which could perhaps hinge on the unexpected discovery of the strong association and interest of the local Aboriginal people in these sites. Such work might then provide the basis
for management of these sites. Work on historical sites has been taken up by McIntyre (1994, In Prep.).

Most importantly in this field season, I had been given several insights into the community's perspective, largely as a result of informal interactions with local people. These included the local significance of the historical sites outlined above, and the way in which parts of the East Coast are perceived in contemporary community cosmology. In this sense, 'archaeological' sites as well as 'natural' features had to be viewed, not as elements within a natural landscape but as the very substance of a living cultural landscape. For example, the hearth at the 'W' site had provided tangible evidence for contemporary cosmological beliefs (see Chapter 10).

At the end of 1985 I was in a position to reflect upon these insights and why they had emerged within the context of this project. As noted in Chapters 3 and 4, in 1985 long-term archaeological research in Queensland was rarely undertaken within the context of a reserve. One of the most important aspects of this research was that we were located, geographically and culturally, within a community. This provides both researchers and the community with access to each other outside of formal consultation times and the camaraderie that is (sometimes) associated with field trips. In some senses, the community has greater opportunity to direct the researcher than in other contexts. These issues are elaborated in subsequent chapters (see especially Chapters 9 and 11).