

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HERITAGE MANAGEMENT  
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14<sup>th</sup> June 2007

Redfern-Waterloo Authority  
PO Box 3332  
Redfern NSW 2016

Attention: Ms Joanne McGuinness (Senior Town Planner).

Re: Former Rachel Forster Hospital – Initial Archaeological Assessment.

Dear Ms McGuinness,

With reference to our meeting (6/6/07) re the above matter and the archaeological site inspection undertaken following that meeting I write to present our initial archaeological assessment of the former Rachel Forster Hospital site.

**Site Identification**

The site investigated by this assessment is Lot 7 as shown in Deposited Plan 664804. The street address of this site is 134-150 Pitt Street, Redfern, NSW. Figure 1 shows the site location.

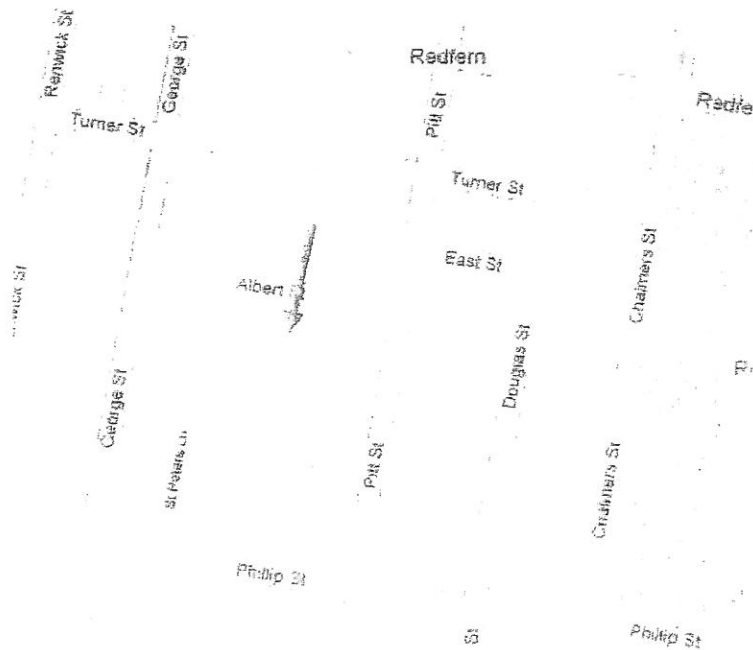


Figure 1: Site Location.

## **Project Initiation & Brief**

This initial archaeological assessment report was commissioned in response to the Final Director General's Requirements (DGR) for the Concept Plan of the Proposed Redevelopment of the former Rachel Forster Hospital site for residential purposes, as authorised by the Minister for Planning (Major Project Application number 07\_0029, issued to the Redfern Waterloo Authority (RWA) by the NSW Government Department of Planning on 15/5/2007). Further to this, the DGR for the project included general requirements to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) that considers the following key heritage issues:

1. Identification of any items of European heritage significance and provision of a heritage impact statement in accordance with the *Heritage Manual*, (NSW Heritage Office & DUAP 1996). Specifically, the design and form of the proposal needs to respond, and assess any impacts on the character of the surrounding conservation area and nearby heritage items.
2. Identification of the site's Aboriginal cultural heritage significance (if any) and, where applicable, preparation of an independent Archaeological report in accordance with the draft *Guidelines for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment & Community consultation*, DEC, July 2005.

In addition, it is noted that the EA was required to address measures to ameliorate potential impacts arising from the construction of the proposed development.

The Major Project Application prepared by RWA seeks concept approval, under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, for building envelopes with a view to develop detailed design following receipt of Part 3A approval. The objective of the current archaeological investigation is to provide a preliminary archaeological assessment of the former Rachel Forster Hospital site to support the major project application.

## **Objectives & Scope of Work**

The scope of work for the current investigation is an initial assessment of the extent and cultural significance of any historical archaeological relics (as defined by the NSW Heritage Act, 1977) and any Aboriginal sites or objects (as defined by the National Parks & Wildlife Act, 1974) at the site. This archaeological assessment was commissioned following the identification, by Weir and Phillips Pty Ltd (principal heritage consultants on behalf of the Redfern Waterloo Authority) during work on the heritage impact statement, of the partial remains of a well considered likely to be a remnant of Nineteenth Century occupation at the site. These remains are located within a basement in the main hospital building.

## **Methodology**

The site history prepared by Weir and Phillips Pty Ltd for the heritage impact statement was reviewed to gain an understanding of past development of land incorporating the site. An archaeological site inspection was then undertaken to allow an assessment of the remains identified in the hospital building basement. During this inspection the location and extent of the remains were recorded on a current survey plan of the site and observations were made regarding the type and age of the remains.

Historic maps and plans showing the configuration of former structures in the locality incorporating the site were then scaled to fit the current survey plan in an attempt to identify any spatial correlation between the extant remains and documented historic occupation at the site.

Initial conclusions regarding the cultural significance of both visible and other potential remains at the site was then made using the criteria set out in the NSW Heritage Office publication *Assessing Significance, 2001* (a NSW Heritage manual update).

Recommendations were then prepared for management of the visible and potential archaeological remains identified at the site taking into consideration an assessment of the potential impacts of the proposal on the remains.

## Results

### Occupation History

The following section presents a summary of the detailed history of past occupation of the site prepared by Weir & Phillips Pty Ltd for their Statement of Heritage Impact on the Hospital site.

Four general occupation phases were identified at the subject site:

- Aboriginal occupation (c15,000 years before present (BP) to 1788);
- Early Land grants and Redfern Farm, (1788-1842);
- Subdivision and Urban Development of Redfern (1842-1937); and
- Rachel Forster Hospital for Women and Children (1937-2000).

### Aboriginal Occupation (15000 BP – 1788)

The date of first human occupation of the Sydney basin is not known, however archaeological evidence indicates that Aboriginal people have lived in the region from around 15,000 years BP.

The *Darug* people are the traditional occupants of the Sydney area. The *Darug* are part of a language group that originally extended from the eastern suburbs of Sydney to La Perouse, Bathurst and the Hawkesbury River<sup>1</sup>. Early European settlers and explorers noted that the *Darug* comprised a number of sub-groups often referred to as 'clans'. Their recognition as separate groups was based on differences in language. The *Darug* clan group that occupied the Sydney area were the *Gadigal*<sup>2</sup>.

Accounts of Aboriginal people made by early British settlers indicate that the *Gadigal* people enjoyed a lifestyle based on fishing and gathering the abundant shell fish on the harbour shores, with seasonal exploitation of inland resources.<sup>3</sup> Although the *Gadigal* probably would have crossed the landscape incorporating the proposed development area, no site specific occupation was identified during the research for this assessment.

### Early Land grants and Redfern Farm (1788 – 1842)

The subject site lay outside of the official boundary of Sydney Town, as defined by Governor Phillip in 1792, and along with all of the land in the colony it was initially Crown Land. Land incorporating the site was first granted to Dr William Redfern by Governor Macquarie on 8 October 1816. It remained in the property of Redfern and his descendants until the early 1840's.

William Redfern arrived in Australia in 1801 as a convict transported for his part in the Nore Mutiny, at which time he had been serving in the Royal Navy as a surgeons mate. Redfern was sent to Norfolk

<sup>1</sup> Eades, D.K. 1976

<sup>2</sup> Attenbrow 2002: 24

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*: 47

Island where he commenced duties as an assistant surgeon in May 1802. A little over a year later, on 19 June, 1803 he received a conditional pardon, followed shortly afterwards by a free pardon.

Upon his return to Sydney in 1808, Redfern was appointed assistant surgeon. He was a pioneer of medical education in Australia, and was active in supporting public health and preventative medicine initiatives. He became a highly respected doctor, acting as physician to the Macquarie and Macarthur families.

Redfern was also actively involved in colonial affairs, serving as a magistrate for a brief period. He was also a Director of the Bank of New South Wales, a medical officer of the Benevolent Society, and a member of the Aboriginal Institution committee.

Redfern's 1816 grant to the south of Sydney consisted of 100 acres (Figure 2). Today, Cleveland, Regent, Redfern and Elizabeth Streets approximately define the boundaries of the grant. Over time the grant became known as *Redfern's Farm* or *Redfern's Estate*.

Details of the early development of the grant, such as the location of buildings and cleared and cultivated land, were not identified in the history prepared for the Heritage Impact Statement however a reference is made to surveyor's notebooks identified in the catalogue of the State Archives, Kingswood. Recovery and review of these notebooks could not be undertaken in the time allowed for the current assessment, but they may contain information relevant to archaeological investigation and assessment of the site because such records often contain notes regarding improvements made to grants prior to 1842.

In addition to Redfern's grant, a small section of the subject site formed part of 30 acres granted to William Roberts in January, 1794. Although the size of the grant indicates that Roberts was probably an emancipist, details regarding the early development of this grant have not been identified to date.

#### **Subdivision and Urban Development of Redfern (1842-1937)**

Between 1842 and 1937 the chain of title for the subject site is complex with some lots continuously owned by the same person for long periods while others changed hands many times. Semi detached, and terrace cottages were typical of buildings constructed on the site during the mid to late Nineteenth Century.

Weir & Phillips identified that the most significant building constructed on the site prior to the Rachel Forster Hospital buildings was Redfern Lodge, a single storey stone cottage. The earliest available plan that shows the Lodge is the 1865 Trigonometric Survey of Sydney (Figure 3). At this stage it is unclear if the lodge was actually constructed and/or occupied by Redfern or his descendants, however further targeted research should allow this matter to be clarified.

Comparison of the 1865 Trigonometric Survey of Sydney with the 1887 and 1894 Metropolitan Detail Series Plans (Figures 4 and 5) indicates that the subject site and surrounding land remained largely undeveloped during this period, however a row of terraces fronting Pitt Street, and several buildings towards the centre of the block, were constructed around the older building.

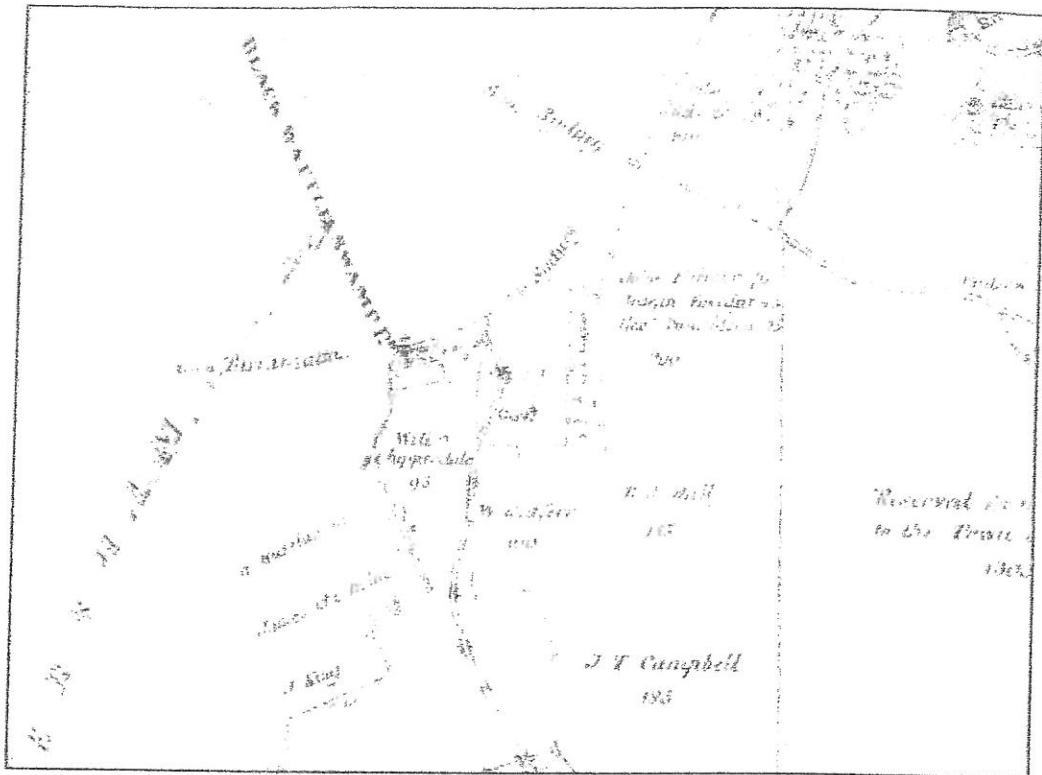


Figure 2: Detail from an undated plan of the Parish of Alexandria, County of Cumberland, showing William Redfern's grant.

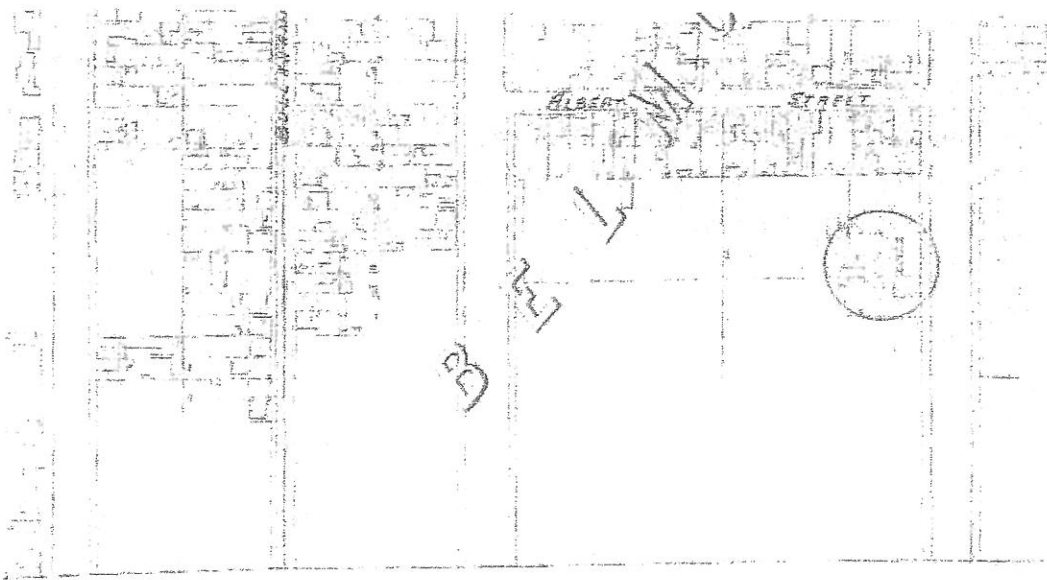


Figure 3: 1865 Trigonometric Plan, Redfern Lodge is circled.

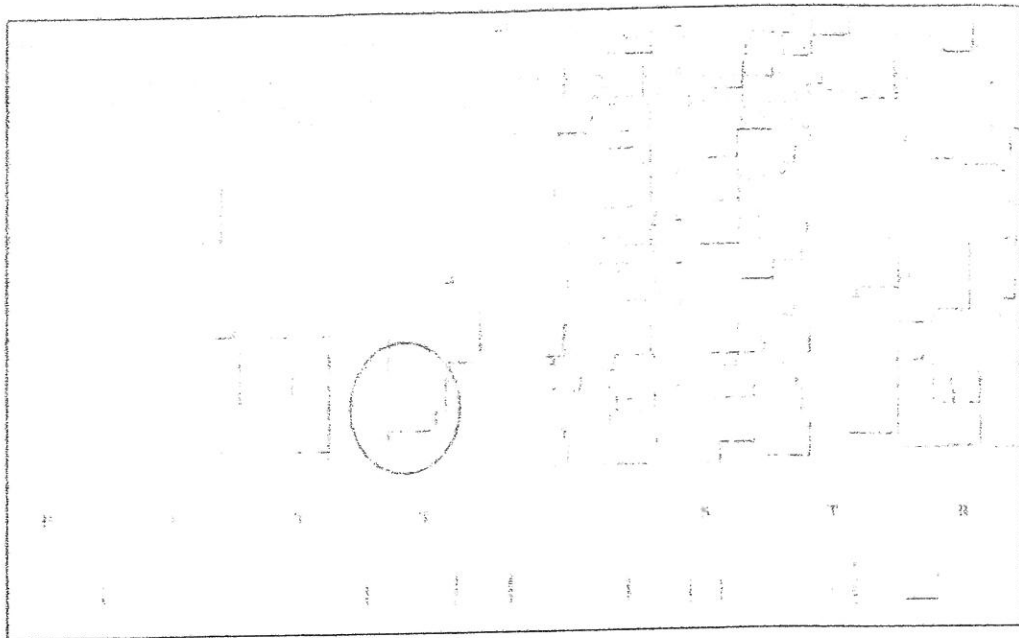


Figure 4: Metropolitan Detail Series Section 16 1887. Redfern Lodge is circled.

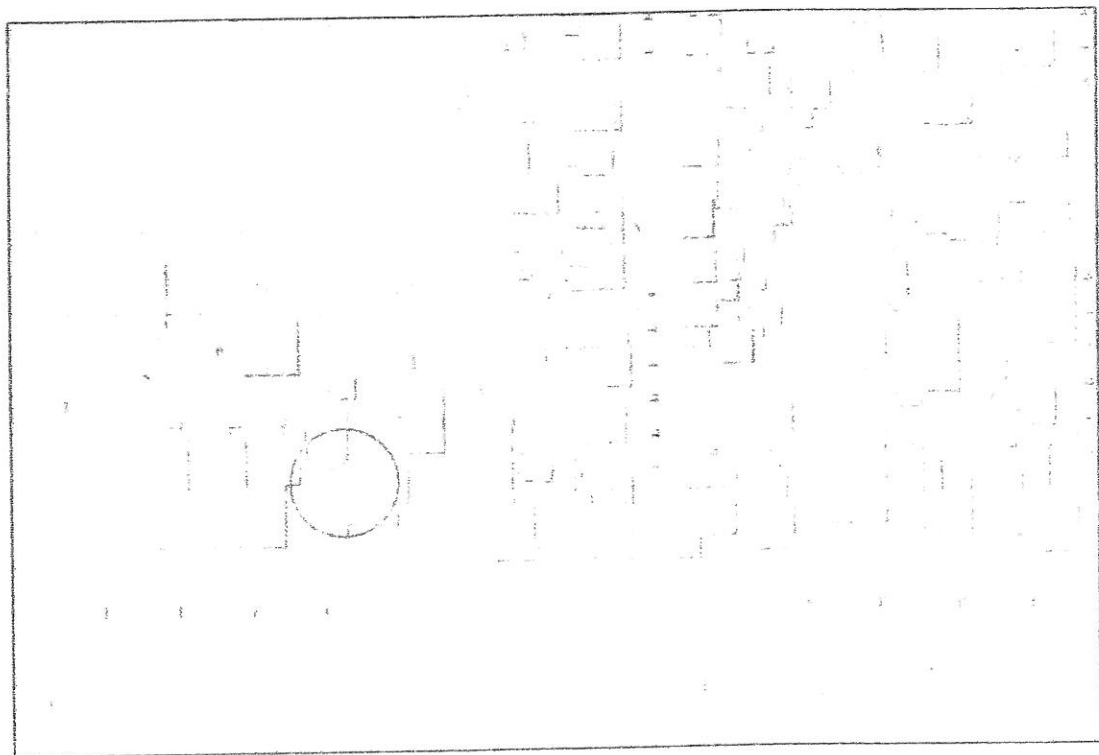


Figure 5: Metropolitan Detail Series Section 16 1894. Redfern Lodge is circled.

In 1875 a committee appointed by the Sewerage and Health Board surveyed the water supply of the Boroughs of Alexandria, Redfern and Waterloo. Water had not yet been installed in these areas, and wells were the main source of potable water. The survey found that the wells in the area were typically 25 feet deep, dug into sandy soil, and lined with bricks without mortar. Often they were located very close to the privies and cess pits in the rear yards of the houses.

When they were present, wells were usually recorded on Metropolitan Detail Series (MDS) plans, but because none are shown on the 1887 MDS this may indicate that a reticulated water supply had been established to the locality incorporating the subject site between 1875 and 1887.

#### **Rachel Forster Hospital 1937 - 2000**

Originally the Rachel Forster Hospital was known as the New Hospital and was located in a terrace in Surry Hills. Established in 1922 the focus of the hospital was to provide health care to women and children living in the inner city.

Patient numbers grew quickly and in 1935 land located at the corner of Albert and Pitt Streets, Redfern (the subject site) was being considered as a potential site for a new Hospital. The Hospital Board requested that the land was resumed and then secured a loan from the AMP with a Government Guarantee, to finance design and construction of the new Hospital. The hospital was designed by the architectural practice of Leighton Irwin, one of a few Australian Architects who studied overseas between World War 1 and World War 2. Irwin played an influential role in Australian Architecture, introducing European modernism to Australian Buildings. The hospital was completed and opened in 1941.

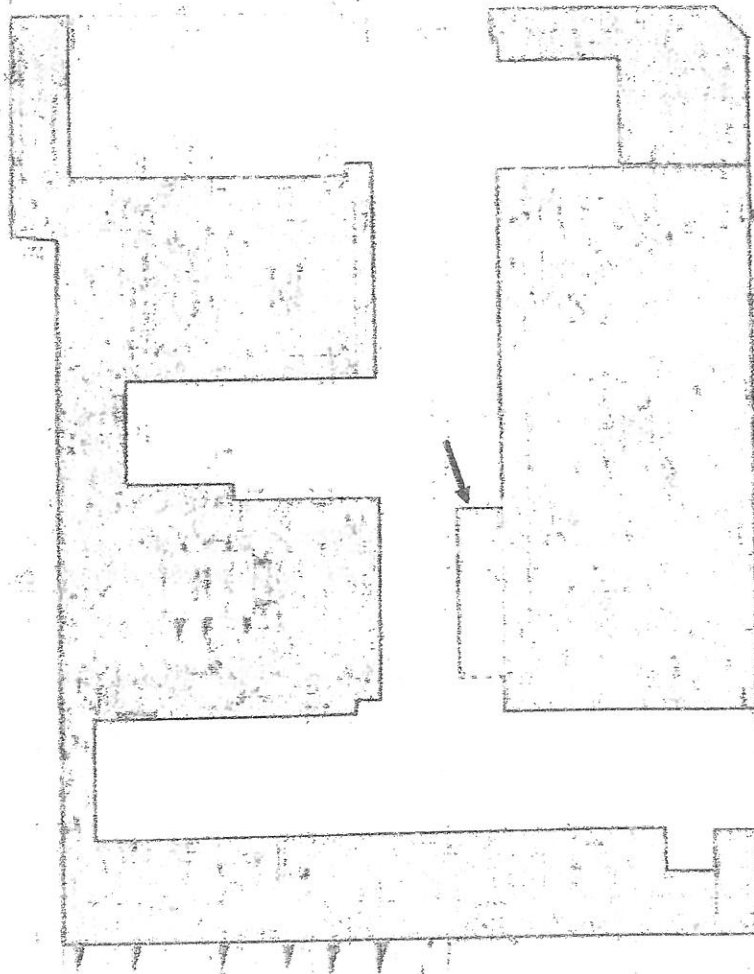
A number of alterations and additions to the original hospital buildings have been made since 1941. The buildings currently on site consist of the main hospital building, which has basement levels throughout, a small building at the rear of the hospital, with an indoor pool, and a weather board garage.

The Hospital has been vacant since 2000, except for the Community Health Centre operating out of the northern wing of the main hospital building.

#### **Visible Relics Identified at the Site**

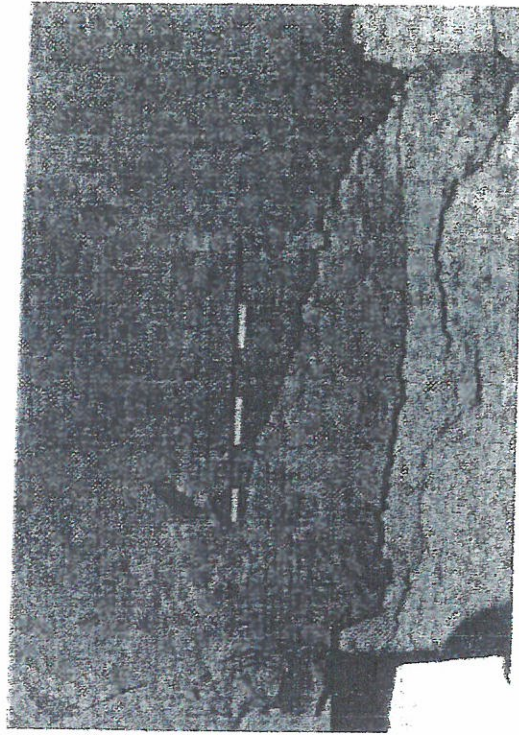
The well identified by Weir and Phillips is centrally located on the east side of the basement in the former North Wing building at the Hospital. This location, shown in Figure 6 (overleaf), is situated between the east wall of the corridor that runs approximately north-south through the basement and the eastern (front) wall of the North Wing. Access to the area is provided by a doorway set in the corridor wall.

The well was observed at the northern end of what is essentially a localised remnant of the upper portion of the soil deposits that existed at the site prior to construction of the Hospital in c1941. This remnant of the former landscape, including remains of the well and other structures present on-site before hospital construction, was "pedestalled" and enclosed within the basement by excavation undertaken to establish the North Wing building footings and the basement slab. This localised portion of the former landscape is approximately 36 metres in length and 4-5 metres wide. The height of the cross-section through the soil deposits left in situ by excavation in c1941 is approximately 1,700mm. The area identified by the dotted green line in Figure 6 shows the location and extent of this remnant landscape on a plan of the existing building configuration.



**Figure 6: Overlay plan of the North Wing building at Rachel Forster Hospital showing the location of the well in the basement (arrowed) and the probable extent of soil deposits with potential to contain physical remains of historical and Aboriginal occupation (shaded red). Soil deposits within the area defined by the green dotted line (i.e. within the existing North Wing footprint) are those that would be directly impacted by the Concept Proposal. The area shaded blue is below slab and the unshaded areas within the building footprint denote the basement corridors and rooms. Neither of these areas is considered to have potential to contain remains of past occupation.**

The upper western portion of the well was removed during excavation undertaken during construction of the hospital basement. The remnant portion of the well is approximately 1000mm in diameter, with a 1700mm high remnant standing section on the eastern side (Figure 7). The depth and content of the *in situ* well remains and any fill deposits is indeterminate but may extend to 5 metres below the level of the exposed section.



**Figure 7:** View of well remains and remnant soil profile (right of frame). The large sandstone blocks covering the well date to its abandonment, estimated at c1875-1887.

Complete sandstock bricks and brick bats bonded with mud mortar were used to construct the walls. The bricks derive from multiple batches and they are of varying quality and colour, including salmon pink, orange and yellow brown examples. Some of the bricks were well formed and well mixed, although most are poorly formed and poorly pugged. One brick was vitrified and may have been recycled from a fireplace constructed elsewhere. The materials used to construct the well suggests that the people who built it were conscious of cost, and reused bricks from a variety of sources, possibly demolished structures nearby.

The fabric and form of the well remains are entirely consistent with construction before c1870-1880 when mechanised brick manufacturing technology was introduced and was widely adopted by the brickworks in Sydney.

Soil deposits considered to have some potential to contain material remains of Aboriginal occupation were also identified within the soil landscape that pre-dates hospital construction. These are described in the following sections of this report within which the site stratigraphy and archaeological potential are discussed.

### Cross-section Description and Analysis

The stratigraphy visible within the east cross-section of the remnant landscape incorporating the well contains numerous historic structural and other remains, in addition to natural and culturally made soil deposits. Examples of these remains and soil deposits are shown in Figures 8 and 9.

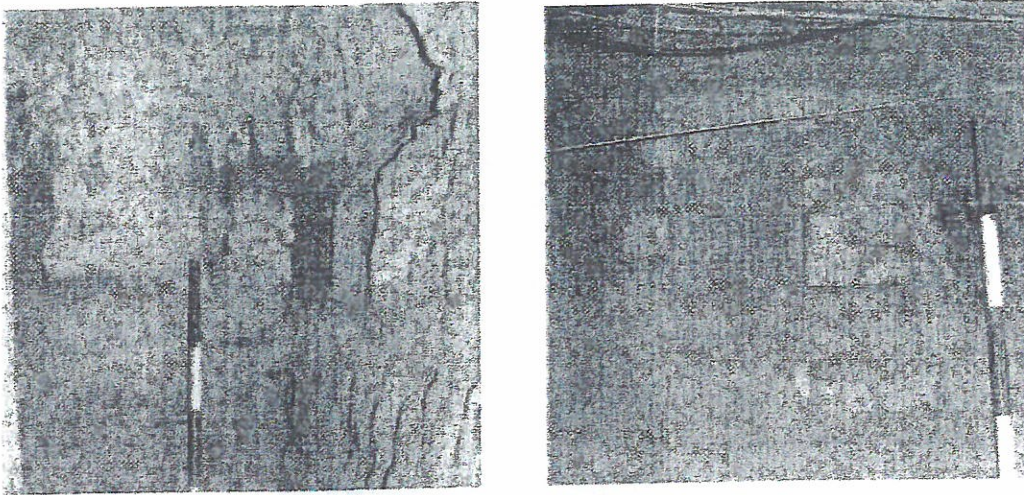


Figure 8: View of sandstone footing visible in section (Left). View of sandstock brick box drain, visible in section.

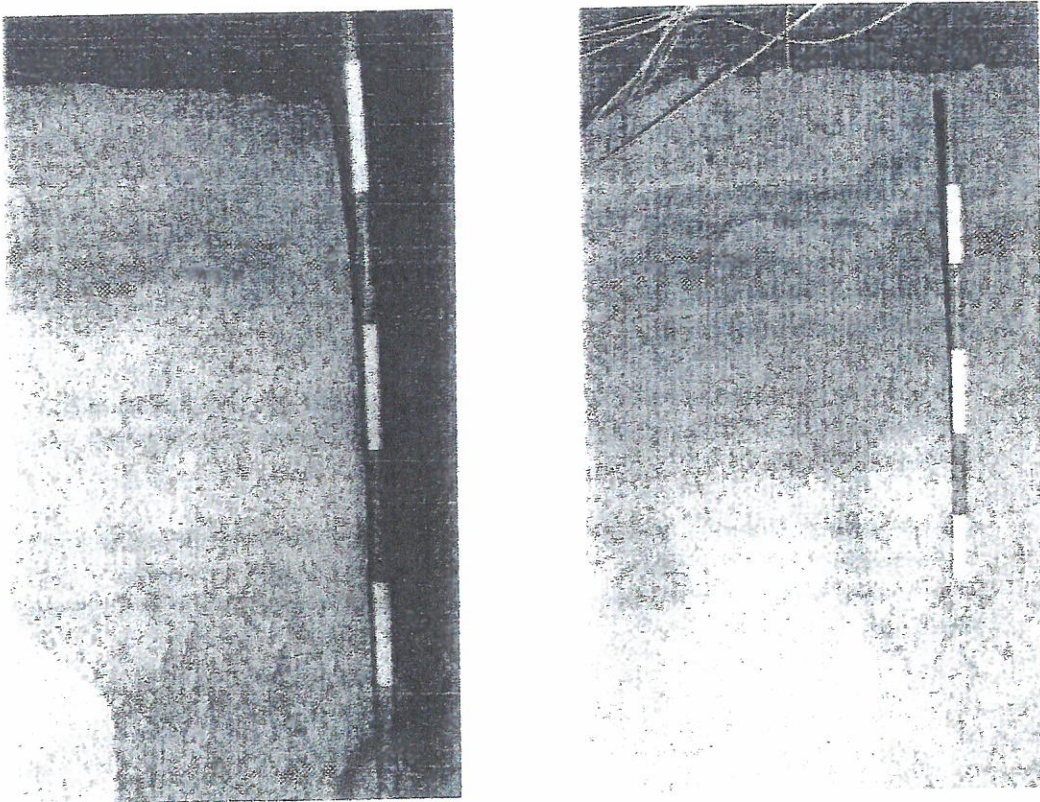


Figure 9: View of soil profile visible adjacent to the remains of the well (Left). View of deep sandy soil profile visible at the southern end of the pedestalled remnant archaeological landscape within the hospital basement.

At the northern end of the cross-section the stratigraphy includes:

- Fill deposits and truncated structural remnants associated with nineteenth century occupation;
- Mid-brown coloured sandy loam, approximately 100mm thick; this being interpreted as a remnant topsoil (former A1-horizon);
- Light-gray coloured, bleached sandy loam, approximately 300mm thick over a 150mm thick light-yellow coloured sandy clay with laterite inclusions; these being interpreted as part of the former A2-horizon; and
- Orange coloured clay, which is the subsoil or B-horizon.

At the southern end of the cross-section the visible soil profile was considerably different, consisting of:

- Historic soil deposits; overlying
- A former topsoil 200mm thick; and
- Bleached Light grey to white coloured sand approximately 800mm thick (former A2-horizon).

The relics observed both in cross-section and on the surface of the remnant soil landscape within the basement include sandstone building footings and pavers, sandstock brick box-drains, ceramic water pipes, possible yard deposits and demolition deposits containing welsh slate, brick fragments, coal and black bottle glass. Such remains are entirely typical of domestic occupation during the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century's.

During the site inspection ground surfaces at the front (east) of the main hospital building were assessed for evidence of landscape alterations such as bulk excavation or deposition of fill deposits. Comparison of the footpath surface level east of the site with levels inside the carpark/garden area indicates that the ground surface has been raised within this part of the site. Therefore it is possible that intact archaeological deposits and relics survive below current ground surfaces in this part of the site.

Taking the above information into consideration it is concluded that the site contains an intact portion of the pre c1940 landscape, with potential to contain remains of all forms of occupation prior to that time, including Nineteenth Century European occupation as well as Aboriginal occupation. The location of this area of archaeological potential is shaded red on Figure 6. The blue shaded and unshaded areas on Figure 6 are not considered to have any potential to contain historic relics and/or Aboriginal sites and objects.

## **Initial Assessment of Archaeological Potential and Significance**

### **Historic Relics**

The well and the above mentioned structural, infrastructural relics and culturally made soil deposits in stratigraphic positions above the natural soil profile are considered to be remains of historical occupation at the site dating from the period between the mid-Nineteenth Century (at a minimum) and c1941.

On the basis of available information it cannot be precisely determined whether or not any of these remains are directly associated with occupation of the historic building known as Redfern Lodge, which was constructed and was presumably in use by 1865. Similarly, it cannot be determined whether or not any of the relics and/or Redfern Lodge are directly associated with William Redfern.

The information available at the time of writing indicates that, despite being granted land incorporating the site, Redfern in fact decamped from Sydney fairly early during the period when he lived in NSW, instead establishing himself within premises, remote from the town, at Airds.

Having stated these uncertainties regarding the site's occupation history and historical associations, it is nonetheless clear that the relics observed at the site would probably be locally significant (at a minimum) for their values in relation to the following assessment criteria:

- (a) **History** - important in the course or pattern of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area); and
- (e) **Potential to yield information** – potential to contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area);

If the site contains relics associated with Redfern's occupation of his grant in south Sydney then it may also be significant for its heritage values in relation to criteria:

(b) **Association** - with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW' cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area); and

(f) **Rarity** - possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area);

#### **Potential to contain Aboriginal Sites**

The naturally occurring soil deposits observed below historic occupation layers are typical of those found within the Tuggerah and Newport soil landscapes which cover extensive portions of south and eastern Sydney. Both are Aeolian sands, laid down c10,000 years BP, with the Tuggerah landscape forming extensive dune fields, while the Newport landscape forms a sand mantle over earlier soil horizons. The date of formation of these sand deposits is therefore well within the known timeframe for Aboriginal occupation in the Sydney Basin.

The site does not contain any registered Aboriginal sites and no Aboriginal sites or objects were observed at the site during the current investigation, however the former presence of numerous streams and swamps within these soil landscapes was a resource zone that was attractive to Aboriginal people, as demonstrated by numerous early historic accounts of the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century's. This, combined with the documented identification of Aboriginal sites by archaeological investigations within development contexts on former dune fields and beside former water sources (e.g. Angel Place, Sydney and Prince of Wales Hospital, Randwick) suggests that the natural soil profiles in the basement at the North Wing of Rachel Forster Hospital have some potential to contain remains of Aboriginal occupation.

The significance of any such sites cannot be determined without further archaeological investigation and consultation with relevant Aboriginal community organizations and any registered Traditional Owners of the land incorporating the Hospital site.

## Development Proposal

Attachment 1 shows a current survey plan and copies of the building envelopes described in the Concept Plan for re-development of the former Hospital. In brief, the proposal would entail:

- Retention and alteration of the existing building at the southern site boundary (referred to as Building 1). Demolition of structures on the southern side of this building to allow its extension in a continuous line by construction of a new six storey building with a basement.
- Demolition of the North Wing, with the exception of the colonnade which will be retained and integrated with a new three storey building (Building 2) to be constructed behind the colonnade.
- Construction of a new three storey building (Building 4) between Building 2 and the western boundary of the site.
- Two levels of underground car parking will be provided by excavation under Buildings 2 and 4 and the area separating these buildings.
- The existing building on Albert Street will be demolished and a new four storey building, including a basement level, (Building 3) will be constructed.
- The provision of proposed public open space between Pitt St and Building 2, referred to above.

## Archaeological Impacts

The overlay plan presented at Figure 6 of this report (page 8, above) shows the assessed extent of the area considered to have potential to contain historical archaeological relics and/or Aboriginal sites and objects. This 'area of archaeological potential' (red shading) is limited to the eastern frontage of the Hospital site, mostly below the existing carriageway, and the central eastern portion of the North Wing footprint (ie between the main corridor in the basement and the front wall of the existing North Wing).

The rectangle defined by a green dotted line in Figure 6 shows the portion of the area of archaeological potential that would be directly impacted by construction of the proposal shown in the Concept Plan. This comprises approximately 144m<sup>2</sup> of the proposed development area. Archaeological remains within this area would be removed by excavation required to construct the Proposal. The balance of the area of archaeological potential will not be the subject of other than superficial impacts because the majority of the area is proposed to be dedicated for public open space.

The un-shaded and blue shaded areas on Figure 6 are not considered to have any archaeological potential because soil deposits, including any remains of past occupation within these areas would have been truncated by construction undertaken during establishment of Rachel Forster Hospital in the 1940's.

## Discussion and Management Recommendations

The proposed development site includes a localised area that would be impacted by the Proposal and which contains relics associated with historic occupation considered to date to the period between the mid-Nineteenth Century and 1941. Within this area and immediately below the level of the historic relics there are remnants of the surface stratigraphy that existed prior to European occupation of Australia. These soil deposits are assessed as having potential to contain Aboriginal sites and/or objects, although it is noted that the probability of such a limited area containing Aboriginal sites and objects is considered to be low.

The identified historic relics are assessed as having local heritage significance, on the basis of information available to date, however further investigation, including targeted research is required to determine the significance of the historic relics.

The significance of any Aboriginal sites within the localised remnant soil landscape below the historic relics cannot be determined without further archaeological investigation and consultation in accordance with Department of Environment and Conservation Guidelines.

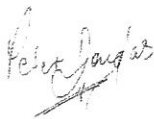
Taking the above conclusions into consideration, in addition to the Department of Planning and the Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) draft guidelines for the preparation of *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment and Community Consultation* required for Part 3A Projects (July 2005) and Heritage Office, Department of Planning *Guidelines for Archaeological Assessments*, as set out within the *NSW Heritage Manual* 1996 (updated in 2001), it is recommended that:

### Prior to determination of the Concept Plan

1. Targeted historical research should be undertaken to determine whether or not the relics identified at the site are associated with occupation by William Redfern, or other significant historical occupation; and
2. Following completion of this historical research a revised statement of significance should be prepared for the site, taking into consideration any results obtained by the research.

It is further recommended that the **Statement of Commitments for the Concept Plan** should include an undertaking to conduct the following work:

3. Preparation of an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA), in accordance with draft Department of Conservation Guidelines 1997;
4. Integration of the revised statement of significance and the results of the AHIA within an Archaeological Management Plan for the site that considers (i) heritage interpretation of the archaeological site within the proposed development and/or (ii) archaeological excavation and documentation of the site prior to construction.



**Peter Douglas.**

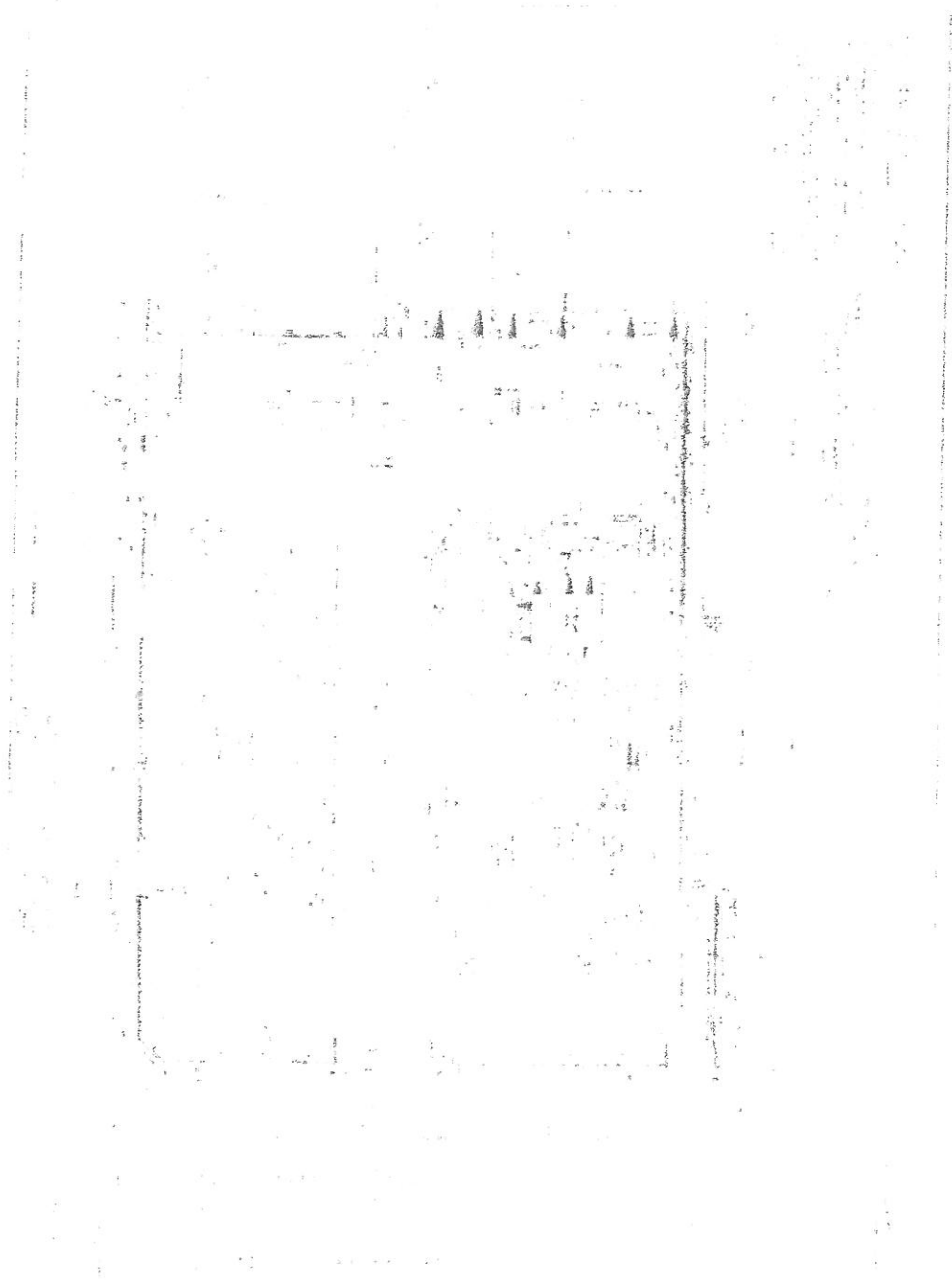
Director

## References

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Eades, D.K. 1976, *The Dharawal and Dhurga Languages of the NSW South Coast*, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, ANU, Canberra.

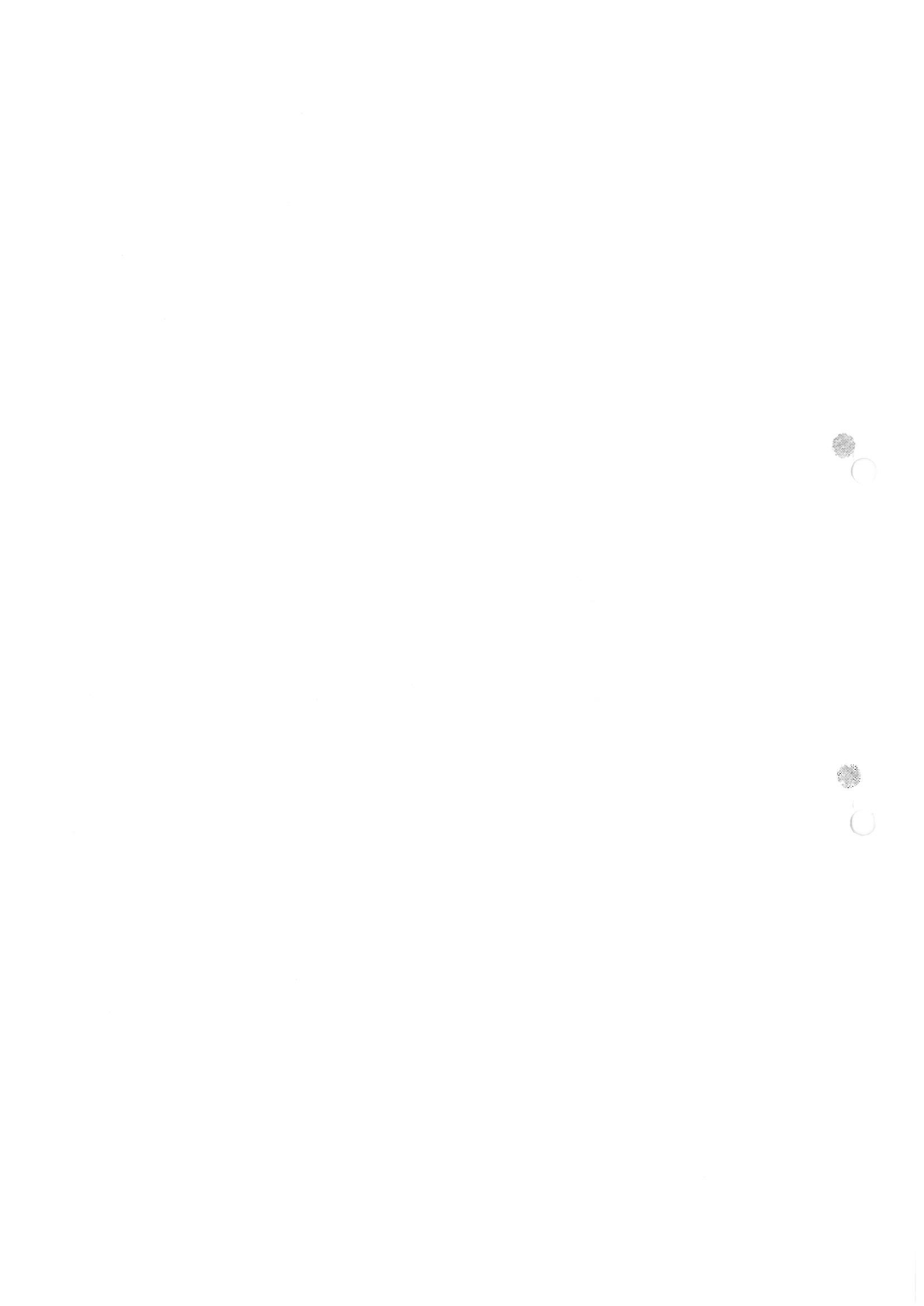
**Attachment 1**



Survey of Rachel Forster Hospital Site – showing current building configuration







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13<sup>th</sup> July 2007

**Redfern-Waterloo Authority  
PO Box 3332  
Redfern NSW 2016**

**Attention: Ms Joanne McGuinness** (Senior Town Planner).

**Re: Supplementary Archaeological Assessment - former Rachel Forster Hospital** (Lot 7, DP 664804).

Dear Ms McGuinness,

I refer to my company's initial archaeological assessment report (dated 14 June 2007) for the above-mentioned site and our subsequent discussions regarding the necessity to clarify the age and cultural significance of archaeological relics, in particular an historic well in the basement at Rachel Forster Hospital. You will recall that clear identification of the age and significance of the relics, particularly the well, was the key issue that was not resolved by the initial archaeological assessment for the site. Further to this, a possible association between this well and the noted Colonial Surgeon, William Redfern was considered to be a significant constraint on future redevelopment of the site. In order to address these issues we undertook targeted historical research in an attempt to answer the following questions:

1. Did William Redfern ever build on his grant?
2. If so, where and in what form?
3. Is there any documentary correlation between William Redfern's occupation of land incorporating the Hospital site and the remains identified in the basement at the Hospital?
4. If there is no documentary correlation between Redfern's occupation and relics at the Hospital, then which of the mid-Nineteenth Century allotments are the relics associated with?
5. Who lived in the dwellings on these allotments, when did they live there, and what activities did they undertake on the land?
6. What was the spatial relationship between the well and the former buildings associated with Redfern Lodge?

The detailed results of this research and significance assessment are presented in the attached report, but for brevity's sake they may be summarised as follows:

1. No documentary evidence was found to suggest that structures were built on the subject land in the period prior to, or during William Redfern's tenure;


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Annandale, NSW.

2. Similarly, there is no documentary evidence to suggest that Redfern, or his heirs constructed any buildings (or any other forms of construction, including a well) on the subject land;
3. The naming of the historic building that once occupied the site 'Redfern Lodge' has resulted in speculation that this building was an ancillary structure associated with a larger residence occupied by Redfern. This speculation has resulted in an unsupported association between Redfern and the site;
4. The documentary evidence clearly indicates that Redfern Lodge was constructed on Redfern's former grant after 1842. The building was oriented to, and faced Pitt Street. This line of road was not created until after the failure to sell the Redfern Estate as a single property in February 1842, after which the Estate was subdivided into eight sections for sale;
5. Deposition of the relics in the basement of the Hospital would have commenced between 1842 and 1865 and been added to progressively through until the early decades of the Twentieth Century;
6. They have archaeological potential to yield historically relevant information regarding occupation on the fringe of Sydney and development of the Redfern Grant. As such they are considered to be locally significant.

I trust that you will contact me in due course if you have any queries regarding the research results or the significance of the site.

Yours Sincerely,



**Peter Douglas.**

Director.

### Site Specific History

The following history documents results of research undertaken to address the questions drafted to guide investigation of the site's significance. The documentary research focussed upon the tenure by William Redfern and occupation on site in succeeding decades through to its subdivision in the mid-Nineteenth century. The objective of the research was to clarify whether or not the archaeological remains in the basement at Rachel Forster Hospital were associated with Redfern's tenure, and if not, then which occupation phase resulted in their establishment. A secondary consideration was to obtain better data for review of the significance of the remains, regardless of their date and associations with notable historical identities.

### The Initial Land Grant

The site is located within a 100-acre grant (Redfern) that incorporated an early grant of 30 acres. William Roberts received the first grant in the district on 8 January 1794. The terms of the grant were as follows:

*Granted 30 acres between the ground used as a brickfield without the town of Sydney and the east end of the land allotted for the maintenance of a school master.<sup>1</sup>*

The only certain part of this description is the indication that the property was located south and east of the present Haymarket (the location of the town boundary and the brickfield). No plan has been located showing the location of Roberts' grant and even his identity remains unclear. By 1800 Roberts' 30 acres had been purchased by former convict John Boxley.<sup>2</sup> The details of Boxley's conviction and transportation were described in the Proceedings of the Old Bailey:

*"Boxley was indicted for feloniously assaulting Elizabeth Monk, in a certain open place, near the king's highway, on the 12th day of September last, and putting her in fear, and feloniously taking from her person, and against her will, two linen shirts, value 4 s. two shifts, value 4 s. a cotton gown, value 5 s. and a cotton skirt, value 4 s. her property."<sup>3</sup>*

He was sentenced to death in October 1786 but this was commuted to transportation for life on 9 September 1789. He arrived in NSW on the *Scarborough* in 1790 and on 24 Oct 1792 he married Ann Barker. Roberts did not appear to have improved the property to any great extent; nor did Boxley initially because by 1802 Boxley had only 2 acres sown in wheat and 10 acres ready for maize.<sup>4</sup> The farm was known as 'Boxley's Clear' and according to Obed West the present line of Regent Street passed through part of the property.<sup>5</sup>

West's is the only detailed description of the district prior to its subdivision. West indicated that Boxley's property was the only cleared ground in what would later become the Redfern district. The property was adjacent to an extensive swamp (known as Boxley's Lagoon), which was on the present site of Redfern Park. West provided a further indication of Boxley's Clear in a description of a horse race held in 1822 from Mt Carmel (on the present corner of Elizabeth and Kellick Streets) around the Lagoon, finishing at Boxley's Clear on the site of the present Redfern Courthouse (Redfern Street).<sup>6</sup> This description suggests that it is possible that the study area was located within Boxley's Clear but it is more likely that the Hospital site lies immediately adjacent to the southern boundary of Boxley's property. Obed West's descriptions suggest that 'Boxley's Clear' is more likely to have been located between Cleveland and Redfern Streets rather than between Redfern and Phillip Streets.

Boxley died on 20 Nov 1816, but before this he had sold or transferred the property to the Quartermaster named Thomas Laycock. By 1805 the property was referred to as 'Laycock's Farm'. The only reference to use of the property around this time was made in the Sydney Gazette of 11 August 1805 following the break-up of a cock fight the following day in the Blackwattle Swamp (the reclaimed low-lying land between Glebe and the Pyrmont Peninsula):

<sup>1</sup> 1794 Book 1A No 140 in (Ryan (1981): 18)

<sup>2</sup> Flynn (1993): 169-170

<sup>3</sup> The Proceedings of the Old Bailey Ref: t17861025-3

<sup>4</sup> Flynn (1993) 169-170

<sup>5</sup> Marriott (1988): 44

<sup>6</sup> Marriott (1988): 46

*...a number of idle people assembled at Mr Laycock's Farm (formerly Boxley's) for the renewal of sport, supposing themselves out of the reach of the Magistracy; and having finished the cock fight, concluded the day's amusement by burning down the house.<sup>7</sup>*

This is the only reference to any structure on the former Boxley property. Laycock does not appear to have undertaken any substantial development of the property before he died in 1809. His affairs had been placed in the hands of an administrator three months before his death due to family concerns regarding his mental health. Details regarding the operation of the site following Laycock's death are unclear however, Dr. William Redfern became the new owner some time before 1815. The first reference to Redfern's association with the site comes from a notice in the Sydney Gazette:

*Mr Redfern requests that no person will cut TIMBER on his FARM at the Sand Hills formerly called Boxley's as he has sustained considerable injury by this Species of Trespass and out of necessity adopt every means the Law affords to prevent the continuance of the practice.<sup>8</sup>*

It would appear that Redfern's holdings at this stage consisted of the original 30-acre Roberts/Boxley property.

Redfern had originally been commissioned as a surgeon's mate in the Royal Navy but his involvement in the Nore Mutiny while on HMS Standard resulted in his court martial.<sup>9</sup> His death sentence was commuted and he was transported to Sydney on the *Minorca*, arriving in 1801. His medical career began as the assistant surgeon on Norfolk Island where he advanced his expertise and standing as a physician, eventually becoming the most popular doctor in the colony. He was known to have the largest practice (he was personal physician to the MacArthur and Macquarie families) and he was the leading obstetrician in the colony.<sup>10</sup>

William Redfern formally received his grant of 100 acres on 8 October 1816 (Figure 1). It incorporated an area bound by the current lines of Cleveland Street in the north, Elizabeth Street in the east, Phillip Street in the south, and Cope and Regent Streets in the west. As well as his Sydney estate Redfern also held extensive properties at Airds, near Campbelltown, Bathurst and Cowra.<sup>11</sup> Later land title documents cited in the Heritage Impact Statement for Rachel Forster Hospital indicate that the Redfern grant included the former 30-acre Roberts grant (Boxley's Farm).

<sup>7</sup> Sydney Gazette 11 Aug 1805 p 2

<sup>8</sup> Sydney Gazette 7 October 1815 : 2

<sup>9</sup> Edward Ford, 1967, Redfern, William (1774 - 1833), ADB : 368.

<sup>10</sup> ADB

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, and *New South Wales Calendar* 1832 and 1833.

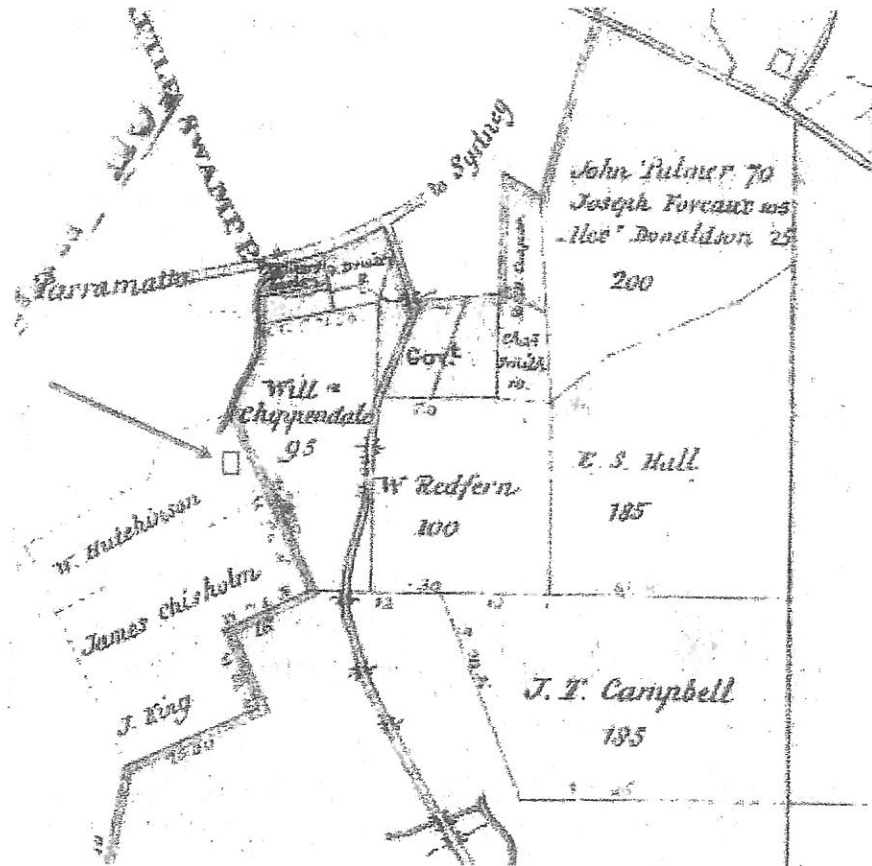


Figure 1: Undated Parish map showing the area prior to subdivision of the Redfern Grant. (NSW Lands Department). The location of Rachel Forster Hospital site is overlaid in green upon the historic map.

No immediate development of the land appears to have taken place following the formal issue of the grant to Redfern. In 1820 Redfern issued another notice in the Sydney press regarding trespass on his grant:

*Notice. Numerous Depredations being daily committed on my Farm, commonly known by the Name of Boxley's Farm I do hereby caution all Persons against committing Trespass thereon. Whether by Cutting Timber, making charcoal or destroying Brush-wood, and that I have given Mr William Hutchinson Authority to prosecute every Person detected in committing the above Trespases.*<sup>12</sup>

The notice suggest a number things in respect to the property. Firstly, the presence of timber and scrub indicates that at least a portion of the 100-acre property remained under natural vegetation cover. That Redfern would transmit authority for policing the property to a neighbour, William Hutchinson, indicates that Redfern himself was not residing on the property and that a bailiff or estate manager, who would otherwise be empowered to apprehend trespassers, was similarly not present.

Redfern would soon leave the Colony for an extended period. In 1817 the status of emancipists was imperilled by a ruling of the King's Bench that persons freed by the Governor's pardon, unlike those under pardons issued under the Great Seal in London, could not maintain personal action at law or acquire, retain or transmit property. At a meeting held in January 1821 it was decided to send Redfern and Edward Eager to present a petition to the King appealing against this ruling. Redfern sailed for

<sup>12</sup> Sydney Gazette 22 June 1820 p 1

England on 27 October. The delegation was successful and the position was rectified by the New South Wales Act of 1823.

After a brief period in Madeira, for reasons of health, he returned to New South Wales in the *Alfred* in July 1824. He lived at Campbell Fields and devoted more time to his farming activities, gradually withdrawing from his medical practice (this was finally abandoned in September 1826). Two years later he took his son William to Edinburgh to be educated. Though he intended to return to New South Wales he never made the journey back to Australia, instead dying in Scotland in July 1833.<sup>13</sup>

No record has been located of any improvement of the estate during Redfern's ownership. In other words apart from land clearance, for which there is no record, there is no evidence to suggest that buildings were constructed on Redfern's land prior to 1833.

In June 1834 Redfern's widow Sarah married John Alexander of Glasgow and returned to Sydney. Alexander subsequently figured as trustee for Redfern's surviving son. On 19 January 1842 the Redfern Estate was offered for sale by auction as a single property. The newspaper notice described the property as:

*Auction sale in February. 100 acres situated at the back of Cleveland House and Grounds, a portion being now in GARDENS all CLEARED.*<sup>14</sup>

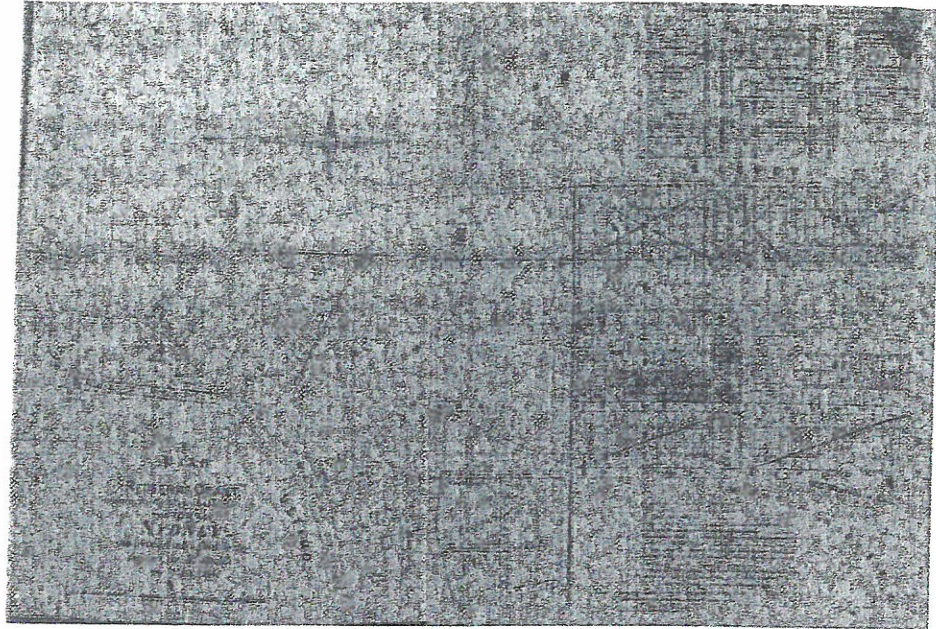
The advertisement was repeated five days later with the proposed auction date of 23 February. There is no sale recorded for this date and the property may have been withdrawn. It was then offered for sale by auction on 16 March 1842 in a subdivided form consisting of eight sections each containing up to 44 lots (see Figures 2 and 3). None of the lot descriptions contain any references to assets such as buildings or fences that might otherwise have distinguished particular lots from others. Conveyance of the properties from Redfern's estate to J Alexander in trust for W.L.M. Redfern and James Alexander and Sarah did not take place until 3 April 1842.

The purchaser of the lots on which Redfern Lodge and later Rachel Forster Hospital were located was George Cooper Turner. In 1839 Governor Gipps restructured the Crown Solicitors' Office into two branches, Criminal and Civil. In November 1839 George Cooper Turner was appointed Civil Crown Solicitor. Turner held this post for ten years and acted as the legal representative for at least one British bank. He also acquired or leased a number of properties in Sydney during this period including *Brooksby* at Darling Point.

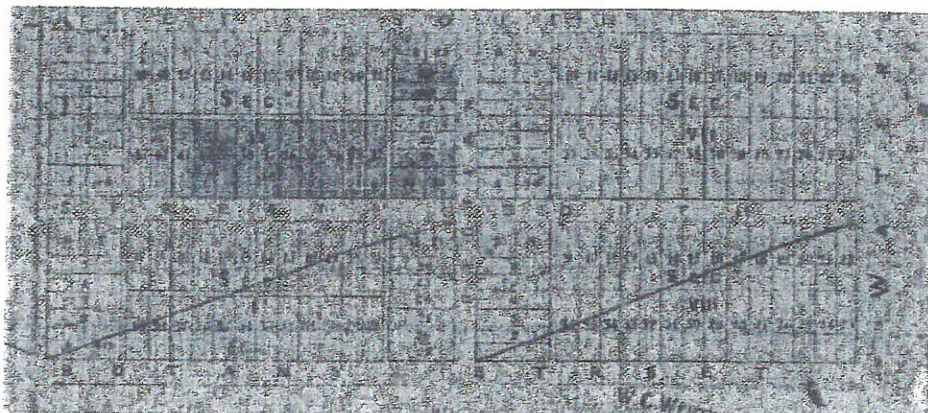
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<sup>13</sup> ADB

<sup>14</sup> *Sydney Herald* 19 January 1842: 4



**Figure 2:** Plan of early proposal for subdivision of the Redfern Estate in 1842. The Study area is shown as section VIII at bottom right of plan. "Plan of Redfern's Grant Forming the Southern Extension of the Town of Sydney for Sale by Mr. Stubbs on 16 March 1842" (NLA Map-f356).



**Figure 3:** Detail of above map showing Lots 16, 17 and 18 of Section VII purchased by G. C. Turner.

In 1849 Turner discontinued his legal career in New South Wales with a flourish of embezzlement and reportedly fled to California. His career in California remains unclear but he may have made contact with the Tong family of Hong Kong. Turner appears to have died in Hong Kong between 1858 and 1861.<sup>15</sup>

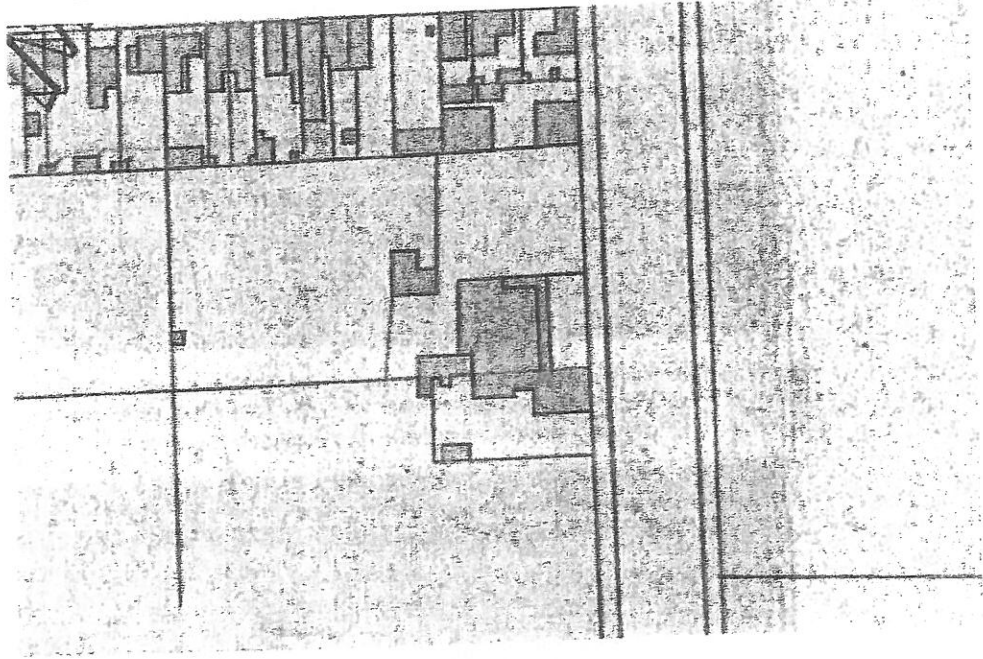
G. C. Turner's property was next acquired by the wine and spirit merchant Archibald Thompson (of Archibald Thompson & Co. at 196 Pitt Street, Sydney). It is unclear whether or not Thompson built on the land or acquired a property with a standing building, ie the cottage that occupied the site until c.1938. Thompson was listed as resident in Pitt Street Redfern in 1863 and in the following year the

<sup>15</sup> Hong Kong Public Records Office HKRS144-4-105 Will dated 4 April 1858 probate file PROB 248/1861

property was listed as 'Redfern Lodge'<sup>16</sup>, the first use of the name for the building. Other dwellings had been established in this part of Redfern by the early 1850s. In 1858 they were described by W. S. Jevons:

*East of George Street or south of Redfern Street however, the cottages are less thickly set and are much more neat and comfortable..... In Pitt Street as I have said are many first class houses surrounded with Native Fig trees or Norfolk pines standing in handsome gardens.*<sup>17</sup>

The cottage on the subject land was first depicted in the Trigonometrical Survey of 1865 (Figure 4).



**Figure 4:** Detail of 1865 Trigonometrical Plan of Sydney showing the study area. Redfern Lodge is the large structure on the central allotment (SR 1865 Trig Plan Section 152).

Following Thompson's departure from the site in c.1876 the property was occupied by one further tenant of some note: Captain Malcolm Melville Macdonald (1819-1899). Macdonald was a veteran of the Indian frontier and had commanded the Poona Horse in Upper Scinde and Baluchistan in 1847. This was followed by several important staff appointments, until in about 1854 he was given leave to proceed to Australia for health reasons and to act as a buying agent for horses for the army in India. A well-known figure in Sydney, Macdonald is remembered for one particular incident involving the Rev. John Dunmore Lang.

In March 1860 Lang announced in a letter in the *Empire* that, following a recent English Divorce Act, a divorced husband with three Scottish names had married his adulterous concubine. Such marriages, Lang said, were abominable in God's sight, and he suggested that the parties concerned, instead of applying to a Protestant clergyman, might rather have approached the lessee of the parish bull, or the jockey who let out stallions for hire. Soon afterwards Lang was accosted in Hunter Street by a large muscular man, twenty years his junior, who thrashed him with a horsewhip and left his card entitled Malcolm Melville Macdonald. Captain Macdonald, a well-known Sydney sportsman, was fined £5 for assault.<sup>18</sup> Macdonald is also remembered as the father of Australian Cavalry. In 1884 he was

<sup>16</sup> Sands' *Sydney and Suburban Directory* (1863 and 1864).

<sup>17</sup> W S Jevons (1858) quoted in Groom (1982): 74.

<sup>18</sup> ADB John Dunmore Lang

instrumental in forming the New South Wales volunteer mounted forces, eventually becoming Colonel commanding NSW Mounted Forces.

This brief history has to date covered available information regarding development of the site from first grant to a period in which the structure known as 'Redfern Lodge' was standing and occupied.

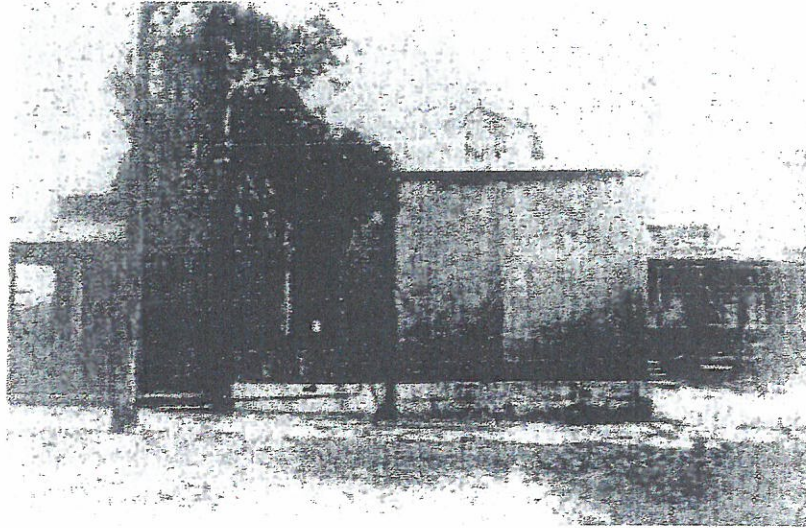


Figure 5: Entitled "Cottage built by Dr Redfern 150 Pitt Street Redfern" Date 1938. NAA C4076 [box 612]. The title is almost certainly incorrect because no evidence exists for construction by Redfern on his grant. The flagged surface adjacent to the cottage may form part of the flagged surface exposed in the present hospital basement.

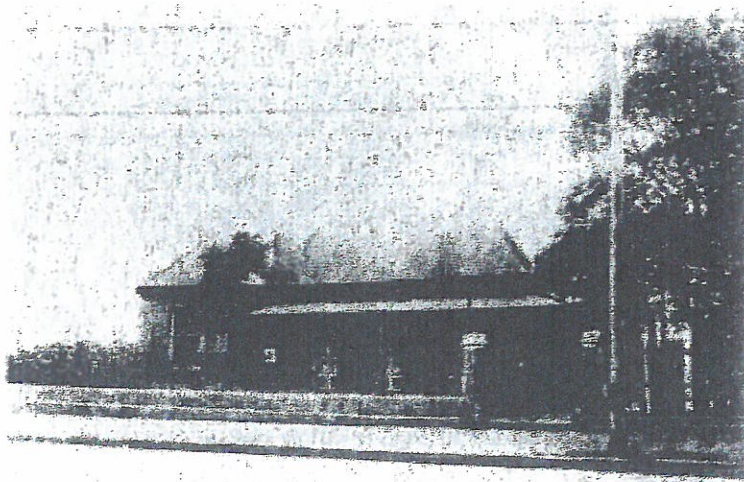


Figure 6: Entitled "Dr Redfern's cottage at Redfern demolished in 1938" [Item undated] NAA Series C4076 [box 607]. As with the image shown at Figure 5 the caption on the original of this photograph is probably incorrect given the complete absence of evidence for construction by Redfern on his grant

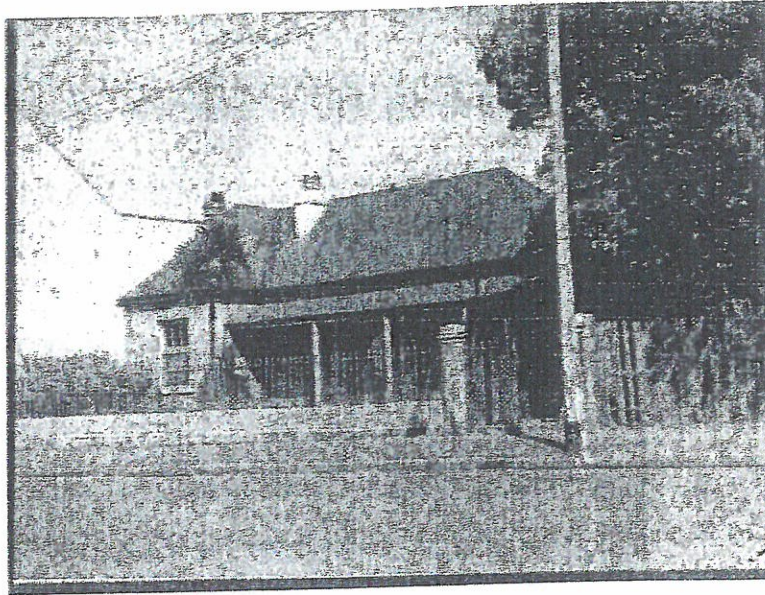


Figure 7: "House at Redfern" Sam Hood, September 1937. State Library of New South Wales NCY38/412.

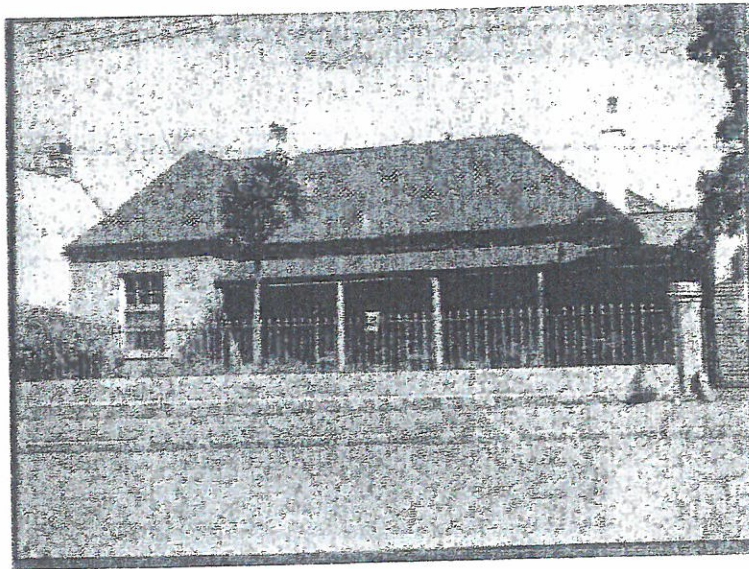


Figure 8: "House at Redfern" Sam Hood, September 1937. State Library of New South Wales NCY38/411.

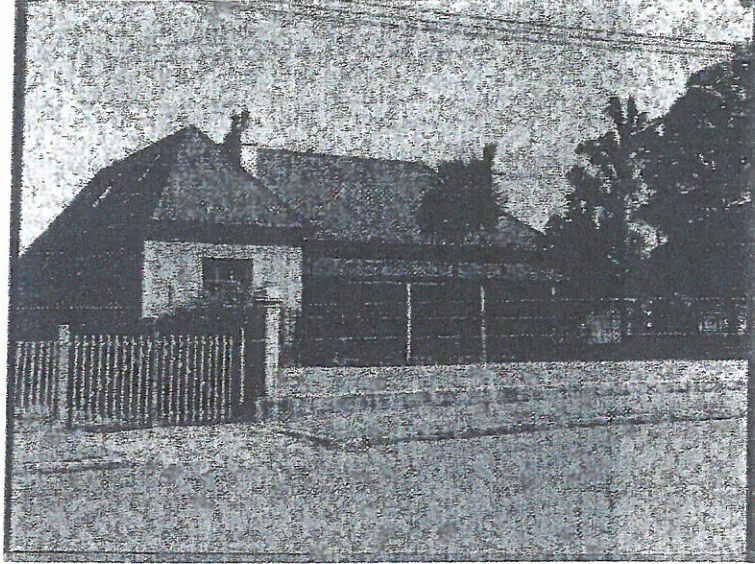


Figure 9 "House at Redfern" Sam Hood, September 1937 [State Library of New South Wales NCY38/413].

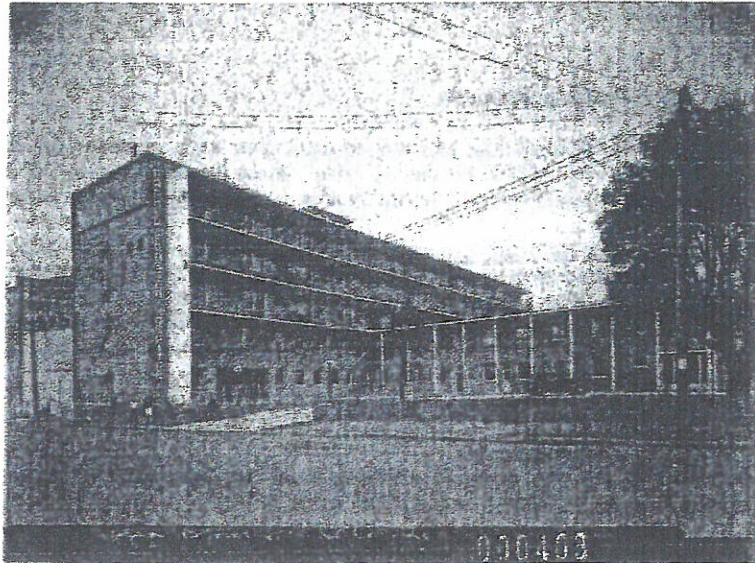
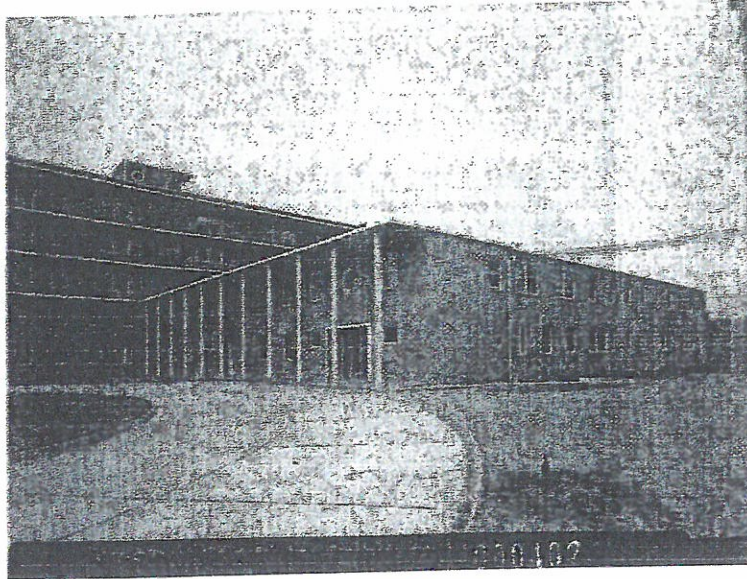


Figure 10: "Section of the exterior, Rachel Forster Hospital" Sam Hood January 1942 State Library of New South Wales [NCY31/403]. The vegetation visible in front of the hospital is the same as that visible in the 1937 photographs of 'Redfern Lodge'. The tree at right survives on the site.



**Figure 11: "Ambulance access road to casualty, Rachel Forster Hospital" Sam Hood January 1942 State Library of New South Wales NCY31/407.**

#### **Location of Physical Remains**

Figures 12-14 illustrate the location of structures and allotment boundaries at the site prior to construction of the Rachel Forster Hospital. These figures indicate the former location of 'Redfern Lodge' and its associated outbuildings relative to the existing Hospital buildings.

Location data for the relics exposed in the Hospital basement were plotted against both the overlays of 1865, 1887 and 1894 located on current survey. These suggest that the well was formerly located within an outbuilding, associated with Redfern Lodge. This building was constructed after 1842 and before 1865. It has not been determined if this was the original configuration or if the well was enclosed at a later date. The overlays suggest that for most of the Nineteenth Century the well was located within a structure.

#### **Revised Fabric Assessment**

Given the opportunity to revisit assessment of the site it was considered prudent to also obtain a second opinion regarding the date of fabric within and stratigraphically above the well. This re-assessment was undertaken by Graham Wilson (consultant historical archaeologist). Wilson's conclusions are as follows:

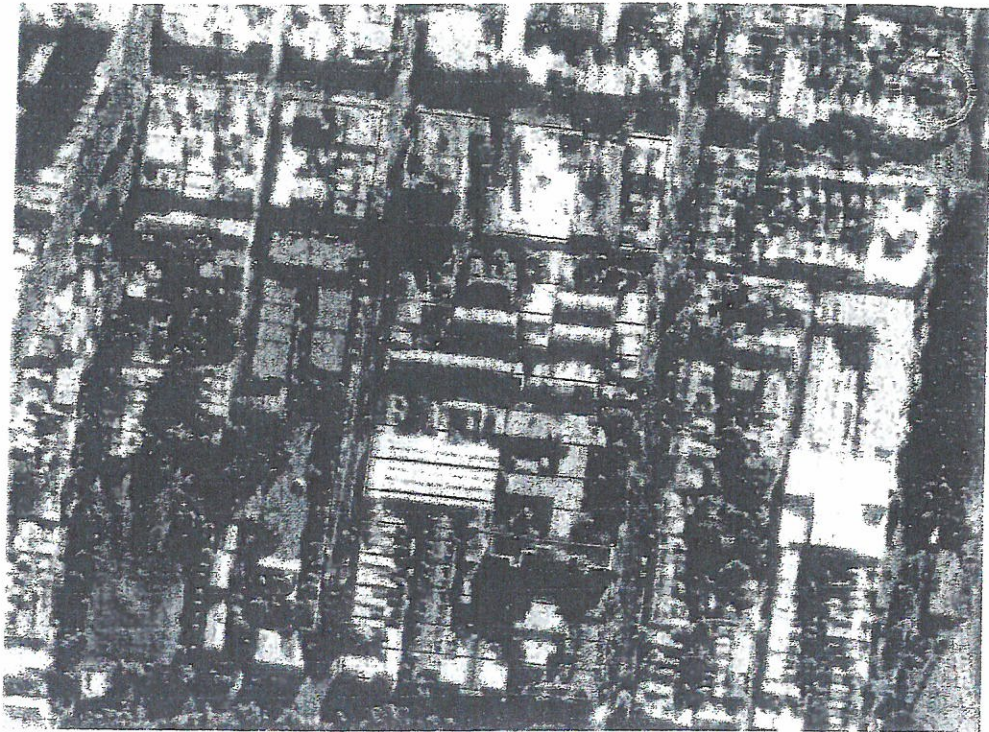
The visible remains within the basement consist of a section of brick-lined well, sandstone flagging, box drains and footings.

The material used in the construction of the well is inconsistent with a date prior to c. 1840.

The mortar used in the construction of footings above the well suggests a date prior to 1870.

The material in the backfill for the well cut contains inclusions that are also consistent with a post-1840 date.

A reasonable date range for the construction of all features visible in the basement lies between the mid 1840s and c1860 with the well bricks having been recycled from buildings constructed and demolished by c1840.



**Figure 12:** 1842 subdivision on current aerial photograph.

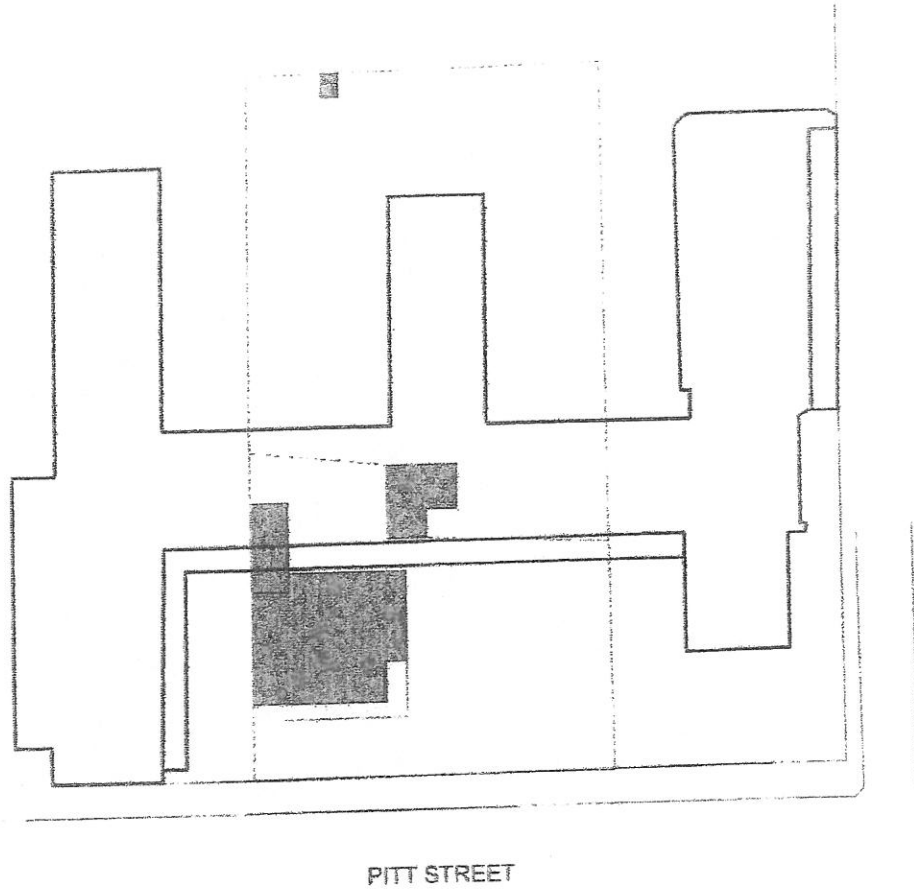
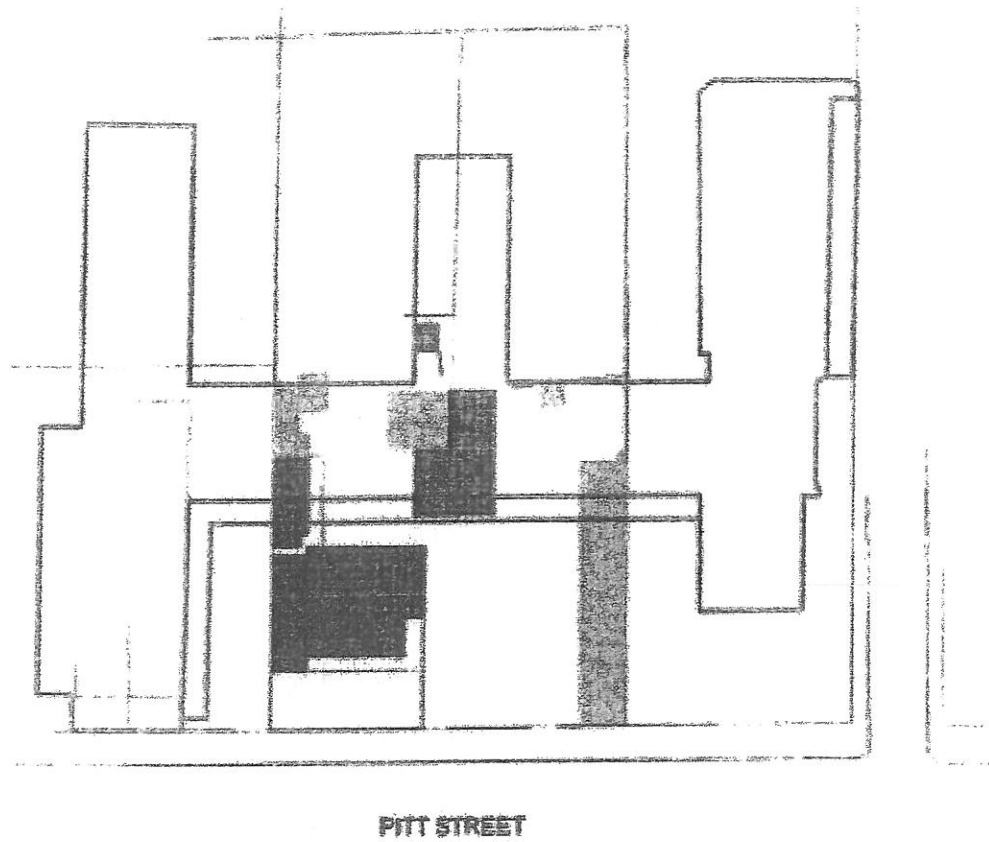


Figure 13: 1865 plan on current survey. The Hospital footprint is coloured purple. Structures present in 1865 are coloured green.



- Structures built 1885-1887
- Structures built 1887-1894

Figure 14: 1887 and 1894 plans on current survey.

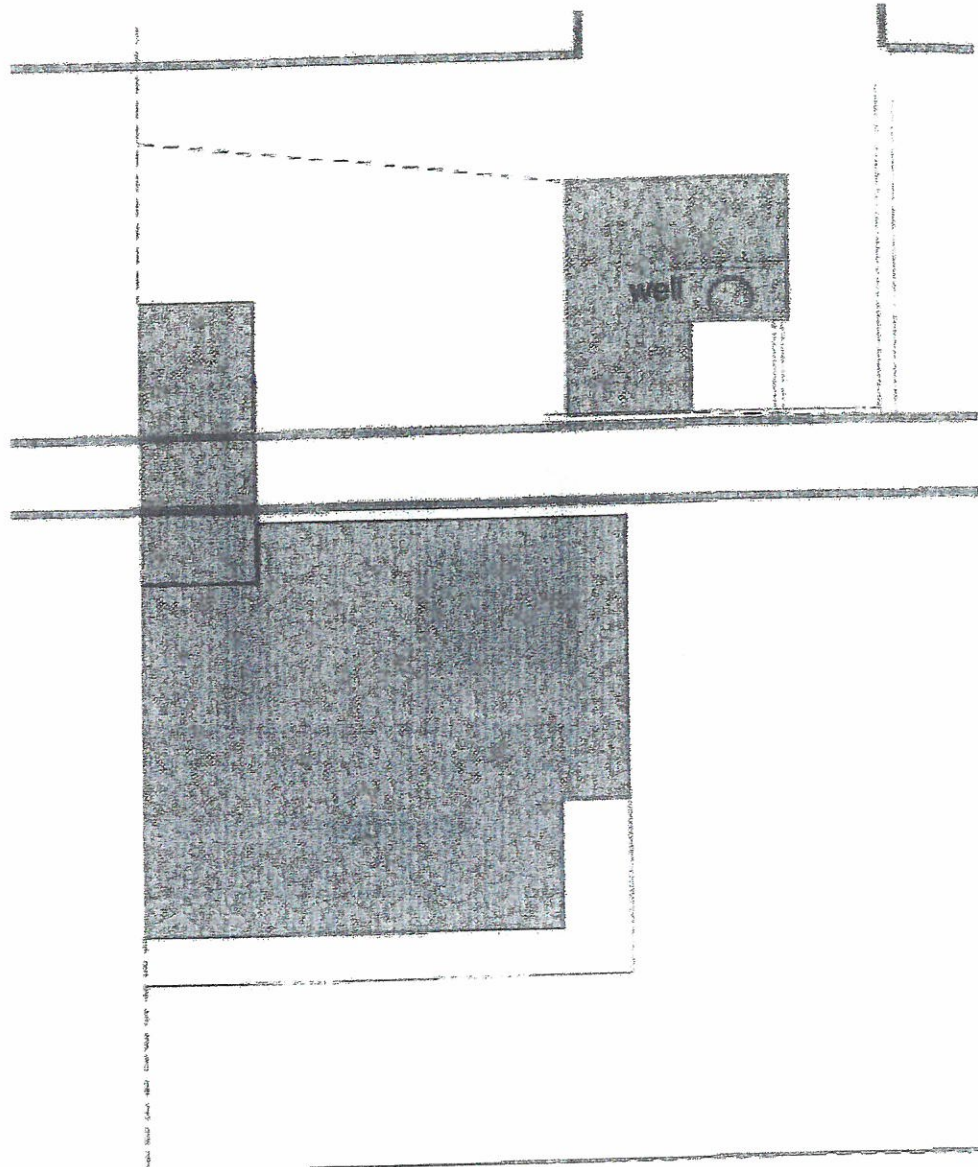


Figure 15: Position of well in relation to 1865 plan and current survey. The pale pink lines represent current basement walls.

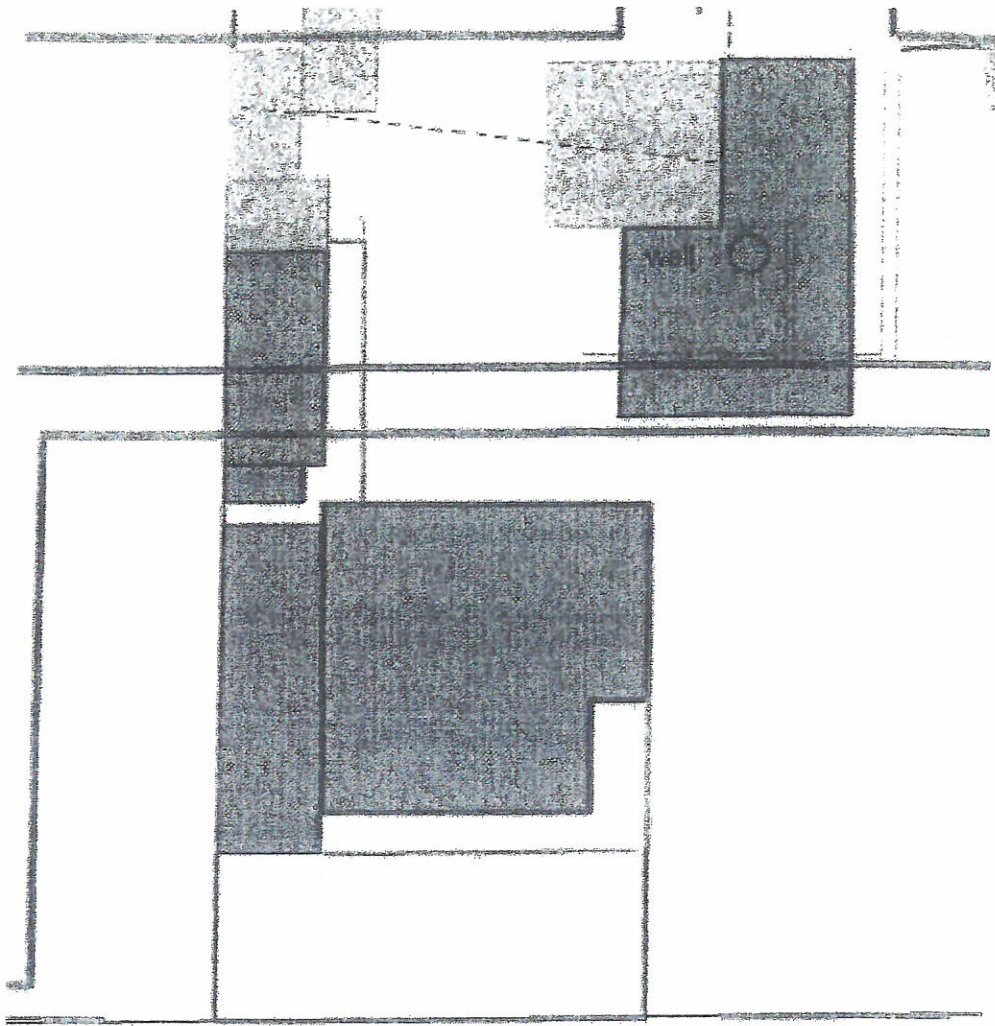


Figure 16: Position of well in relation to 1887 and 1894 plans and current survey.

## Response to Research Questions

In regard to the seven questions that define this study:

1. Did William Redfern ever build on his grant?
2. If so, where and in what form?
3. Is there any documentary correlation between William Redfern's occupation of land incorporating the Hospital site and the remains identified in the basement at the Hospital?

There is no documentary evidence to support a proposition that William Redfern constructed any structures on his 100-acre grant. The available evidence suggests that the Redfern Estate was left in a fallow condition, and may only have been cleared completely of timber and scrub in the years following Redfern's death in 1833.

The only connection between the remains exposed in the hospital basement with William Redfern is that the remains are located on land once owned by Redfern. The physical evidence (bricks, mortar and inclusions in the well cut backfill) all suggest a post-1840 date, that is, after Redfern's death.

4. If there is no documentary correlation between Redfern's occupation and relics at the Hospital, then which of the mid-Nineteenth Century allotments are the relics associated with?

The allotment that contained the relics is shown in Figure 13. It was one of numerous allotments subdivided from the former Redfern Grant in c1842.

5. Who lived in the dwellings on these allotments, when did they live there, and what activities did they undertake on the land?

The remains exposed in the basement consist of a brick-lined well, sandstone flagging, sandstone box drains and footings. These are related to the use and occupation of a single dwelling, 'Redfern Lodge'. Since the date of construction of 'Redfern Lodge' is still unclear it is not certain that the corrupt Civil Crown Solicitor, George Cooper Turner ever occupied the site. The first known occupant was wine and spirit merchant Archibald Thompson in c1863. The most notable resident was Captain (later Colonel) Malcolm Melville Macdonald, a former India Army officer and father of the Australian Cavalry. Given the middle to upper class status of these inhabitants it is considered highly improbable that the allotments were the subject of any activity other than the domestic. So, for example it is unlikely that the land was used for "backyard industry" of the sort commonly undertaken with allotments associated with lower class housing in Surry Hills and the Rocks.

The well and other basement remains were associated with an outbuilding. The precise function of this structure is unclear but it may have been a kitchen or wash house. The house itself is only recorded as a private residence.

6. What was the spatial relationship between the well and the former buildings associated with Redfern Lodge?

The well is located within the footprint of an outbuilding located at the rear of Redfern Lodge. This structure was standing by 1865 and underwent several modifications during the following decades. It may have been standing in its 1880s configuration until demolished in 1938 with the other buildings on the site in preparation for the construction of the Rachel Forster Hospital.

It should be noted that remains of 'Redfern Lodge', together with its attached wings, are likely to survive beneath the current driveway between the main hospital building and Pitt Street.

### Research Summary

In summary no documentary evidence was found to suggest that structures were located on the subject land in the period prior to or during William Redfern's occupation of the site.

Similarly the evidence for alienation of the subject property prior to Redfern's ownership is not confirmed by available historic documentation. The Roberts/Boxley 30-acre grant formed the core of the later Redfern grant but is unlikely to have extended any great distance south of Redfern Street.

There is no documentary evidence to suggest that Redfern or his heirs constructed any buildings or any other forms of construction including a well on the subject area prior to the subdivision of 1842. The naming of the cottage as 'Redfern Lodge' has resulted in speculation that this building was an ancillary structure associated with a larger residence occupied by Redfern and this has resulted in the unsupported association of Redfern with this structure. A further body of evidence supporting a post-1842 construction of 'Redfern Lodge' is that the building was oriented to, and faced Pitt Street. This line of road was not created until after the failure to sell the Redfern Estate as a single property in February 1842 after which the Estate was divided into eight Sections for subdivision.

### Significance and Management

Taking into consideration the above research results the significance assessment and management recommendations for the site presented in the initial archaeological assessment are considered to remain accurate. In brief:

The historic relics are assessed as being locally significant for their values in relation to the assessment criteria (a) **History** - important in the course or pattern of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area); and (e) **Potential to yield information** - potential to contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

In regards to their management during future development it is recommended that the Statement of Commitments for the Concept Plan should include an undertaking to conduct the following work:

1. Preparation of an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA), in accordance with draft Department of Conservation Guidelines 1997;
2. Integration of the statement of significance and the results of the AHIA within an Archaeological Management Plan for the site that considers (i) heritage interpretation of the archaeological site within the proposed development and/or (ii) archaeological excavation and documentation of the remaining portions of the historic site prior to construction.

References

	<i>New South Wales Calendar</i>
	<i>Sands' Sydney and Suburban Directory</i>
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	<i>Sydney Herald</i>
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Groom (1982)	Barry Groom and Warren Wickman, <i>Sydney - The 1850s. The Lost Collections</i> . Southwood Press 1982
Marriott (1988)	Edward West Marriott, <i>The Memoirs of Obed West. A Portrait of Early Sydney</i> . Barcom Press Australia 1988
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