

December 2005

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT



Sydney Broadcast Property Pty Ltd

MOBBS LANE, EPPING

Graham Brooks and Associates
Architects and Heritage Consultants

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Assessment of Cultural Heritage Significance has been prepared for the proposed redevelopment of the ATN 7 site along Mobbs Lane, Epping. The intention of this redevelopment is to create a residential area set in parkland. This heritage assessment has been prepared by Graham Brooks and Associates Pty Ltd, Architects and Heritage Consultants. This report does not discuss the heritage impact of a specific redevelopment scenario, but rather identifies the key historical and socio-cultural aspects and makes recommendations as to what elements should be considered in any emerging proposal. A forthcoming Heritage Impact Assessment will evaluate the final proposed design for redevelopment to determine its compliance with Council and assess the extent of impact on the site.

The site is currently occupied by the Seven Network facilities, comprising office buildings, studios, open grounds, satellite dishes, helipad, car park and other amenities. The site is bound by Mobbs Lane, Mobbs Lane Reserve, and partially bounded by First Avenue. The land has not been listed as a Heritage Item under the Parramatta LEP, but is located in the vicinity of an identified local heritage item, being a weatherboard cottage at 4 Mobbs Lane. Similarly, the site is not within a Conservation Area, but lies near the Epping/Eastwood Conservation Area.

1.2 Methodology and Structure of the Report

Documentary research into the history and development of the property was undertaken to enable understanding of the property and facilitate the assessment of its significance. A site inspection was conducted in December 2005 to assess existing fabric, and the contribution of the site to the immediate area. The resultant assessment of cultural heritage significance has been based on the insights gained by the available historical research and the physical evidence of the property.

The format of the report follows the standard format for Heritage Assessment documents as set out in the NSW Heritage Office guidelines.

1.3 Documentary and Photographic Sources

Documentary material utilised for this heritage assessment has been sourced from the Mitchell Library, New South Wales Land and Property Information Office, and Parramatta City Council. Much of the general information regarding the early development of Epping has been obtained from *A History of Epping*, by Walter Hazlewood, *Mobbs Muster*, by Beryl Mobbs Lewis, and *History of Sydney Suburbs*, by Frances Pollon. Miscellaneous sources include the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Sydney Gazette*, NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, and the State Records Office of NSW.

All contemporary photographs of the site were taken in December 2005 by Louise Powell, specifically for the preparation of the report. GBA would like to acknowledge the information and assistance supplied by:

- Neil Chippendale, Hornsby Local Studies Centre
- Colin Kay, Sydney Water Archives
- Linda Kalkin, Publicity Department, ATN 7
- Paul Moller, Building Services, ATN 7
- John Norton, Production Resources Manager, ATN 7
- State Library of NSW
- State Records Office of NSW
- Land and Property Information
- Hornsby Local Studies Centre
- Parramatta Local Studies Centre
- Film and Sound Archives, Canberra

1.4 Limitations

The scope of works for the heritage assessment of the property was limited by the extent, accessibility and accuracy of historical records available. Many of the usual resources available for historical research were unavailable, missing or incorrectly catalogued. Substantial photographic records exist of Channel 7's occupation of the land; however, very few have been catalogued or stored in accessible locations. Consequently, the majority of aerial records have been sourced from the Land and Property Information Office. The Film and Sound Archives in Canberra has also been the recipient of much information, but only a proportion of the material has been

catalogued or available for research purposes to date. Similarly, Sydney Water has no historical surveys or documentation for the property, which has restricted the assessment of built elements on the site.

1.5 Authorship

This cultural heritage assessment has been prepared by Christina Amiet, Heritage Consultant, using research compiled by Louise Powell and Christina Amiet, and reviewed by Graham Brooks, Director.

1.6 Site Identification

The subject site is located on the northern side of Mobbs Lane, off Midson and Marsden Roads, Epping. It is bordered to the west by Freeman Place. On its western portion is Mobbs Lane Reserve. To the north, it is partially bounded by First Avenue. On the opposite side of Mobbs Lane is the former brickworks. It has a real property description of Lot 4, DP 219907, Lot 2 DP 570891 and Lot 2 DP 219907.

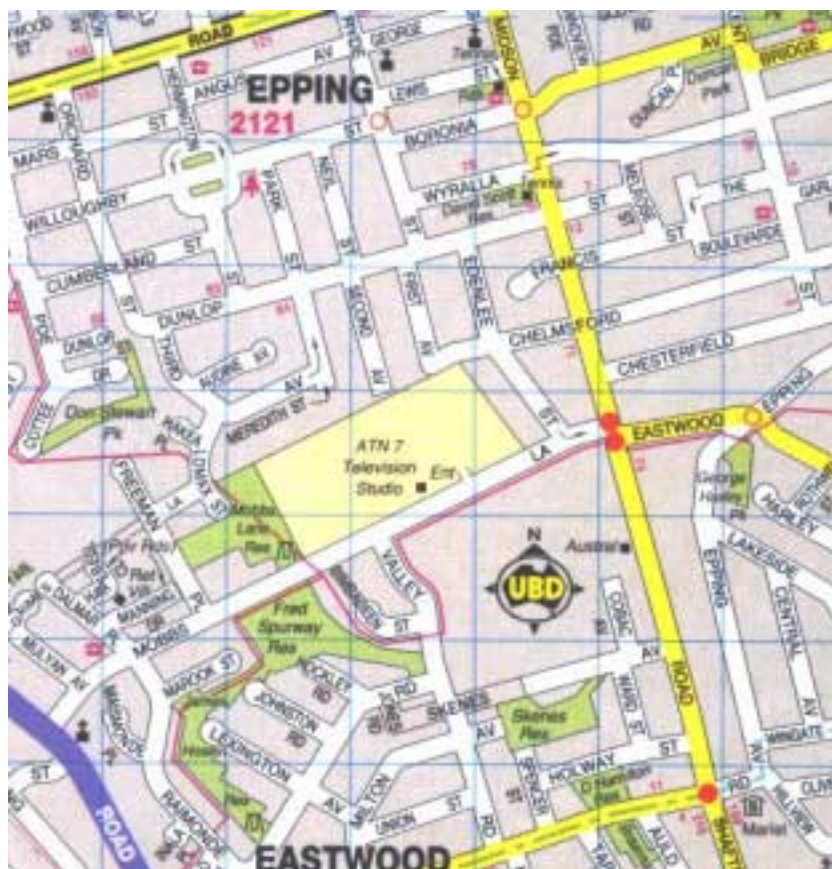


Figure 1: Location of subject site. (Source: UBD 2005)

2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE

2.1 Historical Summary of Epping

The earliest recorded name for present-day Epping was Pennant Hills, which extended between Kissing Point, Ryde; and Parramatta; to Wahroonga. Land in Epping was first granted to two naval officers, Captain William Kent (1751-1812) and his nephew, Lieutenant William Kent (b.1788). The elder Kent received 170 acres on 12th May 1796, and young Kent was given 460 acres, known as William Farm, north of his uncle's grant in April 1803, with the property extending as far as present-day Kent Street.¹

By 1804 the area was rife with undesirables, such as gaol escapees, sly groggers, thieves, smugglers and similar, so that more respectable settlers tended to avoid the area. Squatters established their bases on the Field of Mars Common, built lean-to shanties and planted orchards, and stayed until the common was subdivided by the government. Over time, the area was partially used for orcharding and for timber-cutting.

The first subdivision in the Epping area, in 1883, began the suburb's change of character from bushland and orchards to residential. The railway line opened up the area substantially. Initially it was known as Carlingford, but confusion arose with the construction of the first post office, called East Carlingford. Suggestions that the railway station be changed prompted discussion as to appropriate names, with William Midson eventually proposing Epping; this was adopted in 1899. The name itself, derived from the English Epping – birthplace of William Midson's father – meant "people of the look-out place," which appeared an appropriate choice for the hilly, once timbered area.

The early twentieth century was a period of mass subdivision and development throughout the area. The area immediately north of the subject site was subdivided as the Viewpoint Estate in 1920, with the other surrounding parcels developed similarly during the early 1920s. The subject site remained intact until acquired by ATN in the 1950s, when it underwent considerable change.

¹ F. Pollon, *Book of Sydney Suburbs*, p.100

2.2 History of the Subject Site

The subject site was originally part of the land parcel of 427 acres granted to Scots-born James Dunlop (1793-1848) on 30th June, 1823; additional land was granted to Dunlop in August 1825.² Dunlop had arrived in New South Wales in November 1821, in association with the newly-appointed Governor of New South Wales, Sir Thomas Brisbane. Upon his appointment, Brisbane resolved to construct an observatory in New South Wales, and encouraged Dunlop to join him in the colony. The proposed building predated the official southern-hemisphere observatory in Cape Town. A building was erected and regular observations were being made by Dunlop and colleague Charles Rumker from May 1822, although instruments were in position at an earlier date to observe the solstice. In June 1822 Dunlop was the first to see the reappearance of Encke's comet, of some significance given it was the second case of the predicted return of a comet being verified.³ Rumker left the observatory in June 1823, and eventually became the distinguished director of the Hamburg Observatory.

In his wake of his departure, Dunlop acted as sole astronomer. In the period until February 1827 he made approximately 40,000 observations which formed the basis of the Parramatta Catalogue of Stars and, using a self-made instrument, observed nebulae and star clusters.⁴ It is presumed that Dunlop lived in Parramatta itself rather than at the Observatory, as the building had '*no fireplace, nor any sign that the building was made for habitations.*'⁵

He then returned to Scotland in February 1822 to work in Brisbane's private observatory in Roxburgh, and sold much of his New South Wales land holdings. In 1828 Dunlop was honoured by the award of a gold medal from the Royal Astronomical Society for his catalogues of stars and nebulae.⁶ An additional two medals were awarded him, from the King of Denmark in 1833, and from the Royal

² Sydney Gazette, August 18, 1825.

³ Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 1, p.338.

⁴ J. Tebbutt, *On the progress and present state of astronomical science in NSW*, Government Printer, Sydney, 1871.

⁵ Cited in J. McClymont, *Thir Notadums: being the literary recreations of Lord Canticarl of Mongryhen (of little memory); to which is appended, A biographical sketch of James Dunlop Esq.*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1890, p.141.

⁶ Kincumber Progress Association, *In Memoriam; issued for the Kincumber Progress Association to mark the centenary of the death of James Dunlop Esq., first Astronomer Royal in NSW.*

Institute of France in 1835. Dunlop was also elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of London.⁷

Dunlop returned to the colony in 1829⁸ and was appointed as Superintendent of the Observatory, at a salary of three hundred pounds per annum.⁹ Upon his return Dunlop:

Found the observatory in a deplorable condition – the instruments were literally buried in ruins, the plaster from the ceiling was fallen down and one of the slides in the roof standing open to admit rain.¹⁰

Despite the damage, Dunlop managed to make regular contributions to the Memoirs of the Royal Astronomical Society as well as continue observation of asteroids, planets and comets. A residence was purpose-built for Dunlop on the western side of the Observatory in 1832.¹¹ Ill health, caused by a combination of dysentery and tetanus, plagued him from about 1837 and was the cause of a decline in the frequency and quality of his work.

The Observatory closed in 1847 following a commission of inquiry that condemned the building as in:

a very dilapidated state,...the floor and partitions perfectly rotten from the effect of white ant; and the roof admitting rain in most parts, the canvas coverings of the domes are quite rotten and torn, and affords no protection to the Instruments; in fact, they are all but entirely exposed to the weather, and will soon be destroyed unless steps are taken to protect them, until another building be erected.¹²

The Observatory's instruments were stored away and eventually transferred to Sydney Observatory;¹³ James Dunlop resigned in 1847¹⁴ and then retired to his farm, Boora Boora, at Kincumber, Brisbane Water. In 1848 Dunlop was temporarily lost off the Gosford track and suffered illness brought on by exposure and the cold weather.

⁷ McClymont, *Thir Notadums*, p.158.

⁸ *Sydney Gazette*, January 22, 1829.

⁹ Letter R. Darling, Government House, to J. Dunlop, 22 April 1831, State Records Office of NSW.

¹⁰ Letter J. Dunlop to Governor Brisbane, 1832, State Records Office NSW.

¹¹ McClymont, *Thir Notadums*, p.158.

¹² Captain Philip King, Report of a Commission appointed by the order of His Excellency the Governor, dated 14th April, 1847, for the purpose of examining the Inventory of Instruments and Books, &c., belonging to the Observatory at Parramatta, 47/5007, State Records Office of New South Wales.

¹³ Sydney Observatory, State Records Office of NSW.

¹⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9th November 1847.

After a three week period of illness, Dunlop died, with urinary calculus cited as the cause of death.¹⁵



Figure 2: James Dunlop, c.1843, Astronomer Royal of NSW, oil portrait by Joseph Backler (State Library of NSW)



Figure 3: Map showing early land holdings, (detail), with Mobbs lane alignment already in place (Land and Property Information), n.d.

¹⁵ McClymont, *Thir Notadums*, p.203.

2.3 Transfer of Crown Grant

James Dunlop sold the three adjoining parcels of land to William Mobbs, Senior. William Mobbs (c.1763-1839) was born in Middlesex, England, and married Ann Grover in 1790. By 1796 the couple had three sons and one daughter, and in that year William was committed to trial at Newgate on a charge of stealing salt petre. Convicted for seven years, he was kept in gaol for more than a year before being transported via the *Barwell* to New South Wales. His wife, Ann, together with their children William (b.1791), Isaac (b.1793), Ann (b.1795) and George (b.1796), came out to Australia as free immigrants aboard the *Earl Cornwallis* in 1801. The family was completed following the birth of John at Parramatta in 1802.¹⁶

William was emancipated in 1803, allowing him to focus on the acquisition of land. His first formal grant was in the Field of Mars in 1802, of thirty acres, although documents suggest he owned land in the present-day Carlingford area from 1798.¹⁷ Twenty-six of these acres were cleared, with eleven and a half acres under wheat and maize. He also had 44 sheep, 19 horned cattle, 12 goats and 2 pigs.¹⁸ In 1820 he applied to the Government for additional property, and received another 300 acres, used for cattle grazing. By 1823 he had another 80 acres for the propagation of fruit trees,¹⁹ and by 1825 the *Sydney Gazette* had declared that William Mobbs of Pennant Hills “has one of the finest crops of wheat ever beheld in the Colony.” The 1828 Muster credits William Mobbs with 907 acres, and he was widely known for the best apples and oranges in the colony. In the same year the *Sydney Gazette* reported that “an orange measuring 16 inches round was gathered in William Mobbs’ orchard.”²⁰

An early diary by Mrs Felton Matthews commented of William Mobbs that:

Old Mobbs was among the first convicts who arrived in the country, and was for years employed in the Government garden, from whence he obtained a cutting from the first orange tree brought from Rio: this tree he showed with pride as being the parent of his whole orchard, either by cuttings, layers or seedlings...he was the first possessor of Peaches.²¹

¹⁶ B. Mobbs, *Mobbs Muster*, p.1.

¹⁷ E. Mobbs, *From Poverty to Mayor of a city: being the life story and memories in brief of Eric Arthur Mobbs*, p.2.

¹⁸ C. Baxter (ed), *Musters of NSW and Norfolk Island, 1805-1806*, Sydney, 1989.

¹⁹ C. Baxter (ed), *General Muster and Land and Stock Muster of NSW 1822*, Sydney, 1988.

²⁰ *Sydney Gazette*, 28th July, 1828.

²¹ Cited in Pollon, *Book of Sydney Suburbs*, p.51.

Mobbs died in 1839 and was buried in St John's Cemetery at Parramatta. His widow Ann, "of Orange Orchard"²² remarried but was buried following her death in 1850 beside her first husband.

In the main, their children followed their father's interests in the rural domain and became successful in their own right. Son William was identified in the 1828 Muster books as a farmer with 300 acres, while brother Isaac had 200 acres. The youngest, John, was a gardener and fruiterer and died aged 26 years. Their daughter, Ann, married three times and died in 1867 at the age of 74.

The Mobbs enterprise, together with other orchard-producing businesses in the area, including Cox, Spurway and Neil, were affected during the 1860s by the attack of small white insects on the fruit trees; diseased plants had to be destroyed. Few orchards in the area were untouched by the animals. A second environmental disaster soon followed, which exacerbated the orchardists: a severe drought set in, and it was another seven years before the orchards could operate effectively.²³ However, the orchards and larger land holdings were subdivided for residential development, notably after the first subdivision in 1883 and the Carlingford railway extension of 1902.

Appn. No. 9705.

Following acquisition of the parcel of land from Dunlop,²⁴ Mobbs then leased the site to Samuel Bailey in September 1854, and sold it ten years later, on 17th May 1864, to Joseph Eyles.²⁵ In turn, Eyles passed it on to his son, James Eyles, on 12th January 1866. On 22nd May 1888 the parcel of land was conveyed by the Administrators of the estate of James Eyles to his son, James Eyles Jnr,²⁶ a Ballina farmer, and to fruitgrower and Dundas alderman²⁷ Alexander Eyles on 22nd November 1889.²⁸ Certificate of issue showed that the lot comprised 10 acres, 0 roods and 12 ½ perches, which was transferred on 24th April 1896 to Winifred Margaret Dodds, wife

²² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24th October 1840.

²³ Pollon, *Parramatta: the Cradle City of Australia*, p.325.

²⁴ No.364, Bk 18., Land and Property Information.

²⁵ No.359, Bk 88.

²⁶ No.706, Bk 389, LPI.

²⁷ Pollon, *Parramatta*, p.328.

²⁸ No.288 Bk 392, LPI.

of Leonard Dodds, mining agent.²⁹ Subsequent transfers of ownership of the site were to:

- Susan Elizabeth Stockfeld (1912)³⁰
- Katharine Mary Hill (1914)
- Adolphus James Taylor and Perpetual Trustee Pty Ltd (joint tenants, 1924)

Following the death of solicitor Adolphus Taylor, the Perpetual Trustee Company was the sole surviving tenant.³¹ The property was then sold to Amalgamated Television Services Pty Ltd on 24th October, 1955.³²

Appn No.9710

This lot was passed via power of attorney to William Mobbs, senior, on 17th May 1828,³³ before being mortgaged by Thomas Mobbs to Samuel Bailey and Joseph Eyles. It was then conveyed via Richard Marshall and others to Joseph Eyles on 17th May 1864.³⁴ This was then passed to son James Eyles in January 1866, and identified in a letter of Administration in October 1887.

A Certificate of Title was issued to Local orchardist Henry William Catt for the parcel of land, comprising 10 acres, 0 roods, 1 perch between the parcels owned by Mary Walton and Alexander Eyles, on 2nd April 1896.³⁵ This was immediately sold to Winifred Margaret Dodd, "for her private use".³⁶ Subsequent owners were:

- Susan Elizabeth Stockfeld (1912)³⁷
- Katharine Mary Hill (1914)
- Adolphus James Taylor and Perpetual Trustee Pty Ltd (joint tenants, 1924)

Following the death of solicitor Adolphus Taylor, the Perpetual Trustee Company was the sole surviving tenant.³⁸ The property was then sold to Amalgamated Television Services Pty Ltd in October, 1955.³⁹

²⁹ Transfer No.250815, Vol.1186 F.219, LPI.

³⁰ Transfer No. 642190.

³¹ Notice of Death &22091, 6/6/1949, LPI.

³² Transfer No.9404799, LPI.

³³ No.364, Bk 18., LPI.

³⁴ No.389, Bk.88.

³⁵ Vol.1186, F.217.

³⁶ Transfer No.250813.

³⁷ Transfer No. 642190.

³⁸ Notice of Death &22091, 6/6/1949, LPI.

³⁹ Transfer No.9404799, LPI.

Appn. No. 9741

William Mobbs senior acquired the land from James Dunlop on 17th May 1828 and, under his 1836, was eventually leased by Thomas Mobbs to Samuel Bailey in September 1854. Thomas Mobbs also mortgaged the lot to Joseph Eyles, on 6th August 1860. It was conveyed to Richard Marshall, George Spurway and James McRoberts (trustees) of the first part, John Mobbs of the 2nd part, Thomas Mobbs of the 3rd part, George Mobbs of the 4th part, Maria Mills of the 5th part and Joseph Eyles, of the 6th part.⁴⁰ The records then indicate that the property was included in the will of Joseph Eyles, as noted 17th May 1864, and that the land was conveyed to James Eyles on 12 January 1866. Letters of administration were issued in the Estate of James Eyles, granted to James Eyles Jnr., and Mary Fenwick.

Following the death of James Eyles Jnr, his widow, Frances Bevan, remarried and their daughter Mary Walton – who also lived in Ballina and married engineer Benjamin Walton- became owner of the parcel of land. It was then transferred on 2nd June 1896 to Winifred Margaret Dodds.⁴¹ Subsequent owners, as with the adjacent lots, were:

- Susan Elizabeth Stockfeld (1912)⁴²
- Katharine Mary Hill (1914)
- Adolphus James Taylor and Perpetual Trustee Pty Ltd (joint tenants, 1924)

Following the death of solicitor Adolphus Taylor, the Perpetual Trustee Company was the sole surviving tenant.⁴³ The property was then sold to Amalgamated Television Services Pty Ltd in October 1955,⁴⁴ and modified to facilitate a Council roadworks scheme in December 1963.

Erosion of the original boundaries of the three parcels of land occurred as part of this process. The aerial photograph of 1930 distinctly shows that a portion of the land along its northern boundary had been subdivided and developed, with a number of buildings, presumably for residential and small-farming use. Given the pattern of land ownership and the lack of detailed records, these were probably erected in the early part of the twentieth century, with the track leading through the property to the buildings. Further development on the original property occurred soon after, with five

⁴⁰ Primary Application No.9741, LPI.

⁴¹ Transfer No.252422, Vol.1188 F.135, LPI.

⁴² Transfer No. 642190.

⁴³ Notice of Death &22091, 6/6/1949, LPI.

⁴⁴ Vol.1188, F.135.

houses in evidence on the eastern part of the site by 1951 and carried out as part of the wider Epping subdivision process under the period of ownership of Adolphus Taylor.

2.4 Development of the site

At the time of purchase by Amalgamated Television Services, the subject site was an undeveloped parcel of land comprising the core of the three lots granted to James Dunlop and sold to the Mobbs family. The earliest aerial photograph of the property showing its existing boundaries was recorded in 1930, and showed an empty site, dotted sparsely with trees. At the northern end, a forked track led from Mobbs Lane through to the residences subdivided from the original grant. This was lined with an avenue of mature trees; elsewhere on the land there appeared to be smaller foliage. In the near vicinity, the area was sporadically developed with residences, being part of the subdivision of the View point Estate.



Figure 4: 1930 Aerial photograph of the site, showing open space and forked track. (LPI)



Figure 5: 1951 aerial photograph of the site showing subdivision and development on the eastern and northern boundaries, with the remainder of the site lying vacant (LPI)

The subsequent, 1951, photograph showed the maturation of the foliage across the site (see Figure 5). The track leading through the site from Mobbs Lane to nearby properties, subdivided from the original grant, was still in evidence. The image photograph also showed a number of residences at the south-eastern corner of the original property. Within the next decade, the entire eastern boundary of the site had been subdivided into individual lots and developed for residential housing.

Following acquisition of all three parcels of land in October 1955, Amalgamated Television Services (ATN 7), commenced construction of a Sydney-based television studio, to complement the Melbourne studio which had commenced broadcasting in November 1956. This was intended to compete with the Nine Network, who claimed distinction for the first broadcast in Australian television history in September 1956, featuring the talents of pioneer Bruce Gyngell.⁴⁵ During this early period, Australian broadcasting consisted of the Australian Broadcasting Commission (later the

⁴⁵ O'Regan, T., *Australian Television Culture*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1994.

Australian Broadcasting Tribunal) and the two commercial stations of Seven and Nine ; these were eventually joined by an additional station, the Ten network.⁴⁶

The development of the Epping property for the first ATN 7 Sydney station entailed removal of the trees, general land clearance and levelling towards the Midson Road end of the land and erasure of the forked track running through the property. The project was directed from the Sun building in Elizabeth Street, Sydney, with ATN7 going to air on 2 December 1956 in what is known as Studio B. Only the one studio was fully completed and operational; the remainder of the complex was still under construction. The Seven Network's opening night was hampered by an electrical storm which swept the area, soaking the grounds and creating chaos with the lighting console and technical equipment.⁴⁷

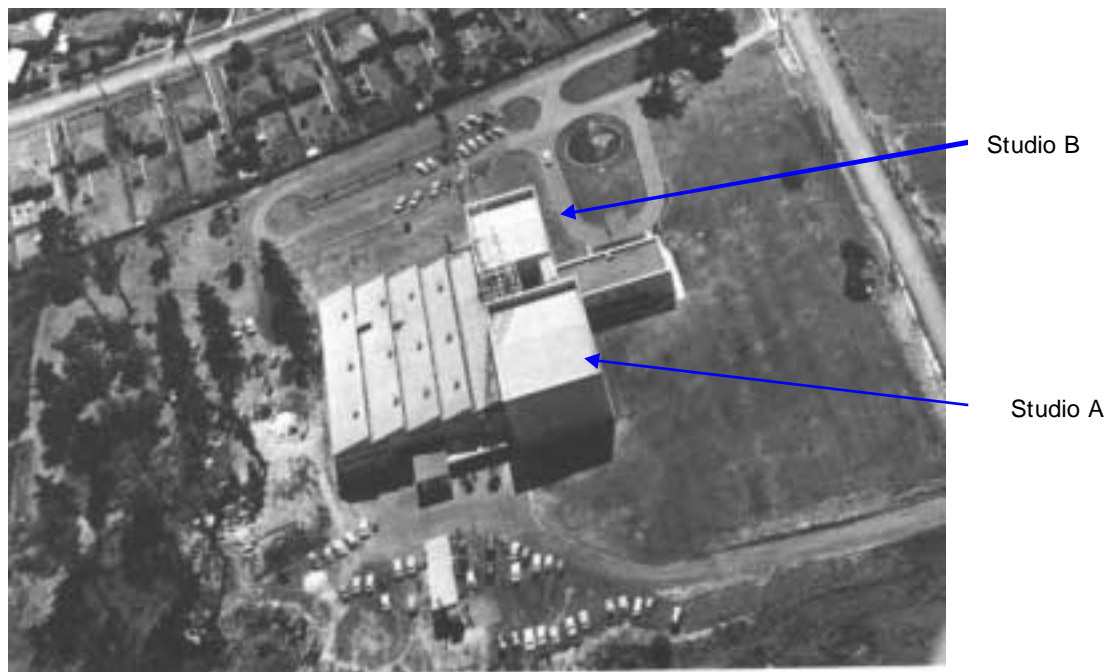


Figure 6: ATN 7, 1958, with Mobbs Lane at top-right corner.

⁴⁶ Jacka, E, and Johnson, L., "Australia" in Smith, A (ed), *Television: An international History*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995.

⁴⁷ J. Morrell, *Forty Years of Television: Story of ATN 7*, p.14.



Figure 7: 1961 aerial photograph showing the sections cleared for early site development

When completed, the early facilities comprised a distinctive saw-toothed roofline at one extent of the complex that extended off two functionalist flat-roofed double-storeyed sections and main access through a single storey, rectangularly shaped administration and reception wing. This was approached by a curved drive that led to a gatehouse positioned along Mobbs Lane, with a second driveway access leading to a car park west of the main studio building. Landscaping was limited to the main entrance approach to the complex; the car park was left in its cleared state, turning into mud and slush on the opening night and obliging guests to make use of timber planks hastily laid down to alleviate the worst of the muddy conditions. To the west of the main complex was a small outbuilding and car park. By 1961 a canteen had also been erected, to the northwest of the main building. The remainder of the property remained uncleared, as indicated in the 1961 aerial photograph (see Figure 7). This clearly showed a variety of foliage, as well as line of Terry's Creek marked by denser grass following the line of the creek bed.



Figure 8: The site still under construction on opening night, 1956.



Figure 9: Opening ceremony, Studio B, 1956

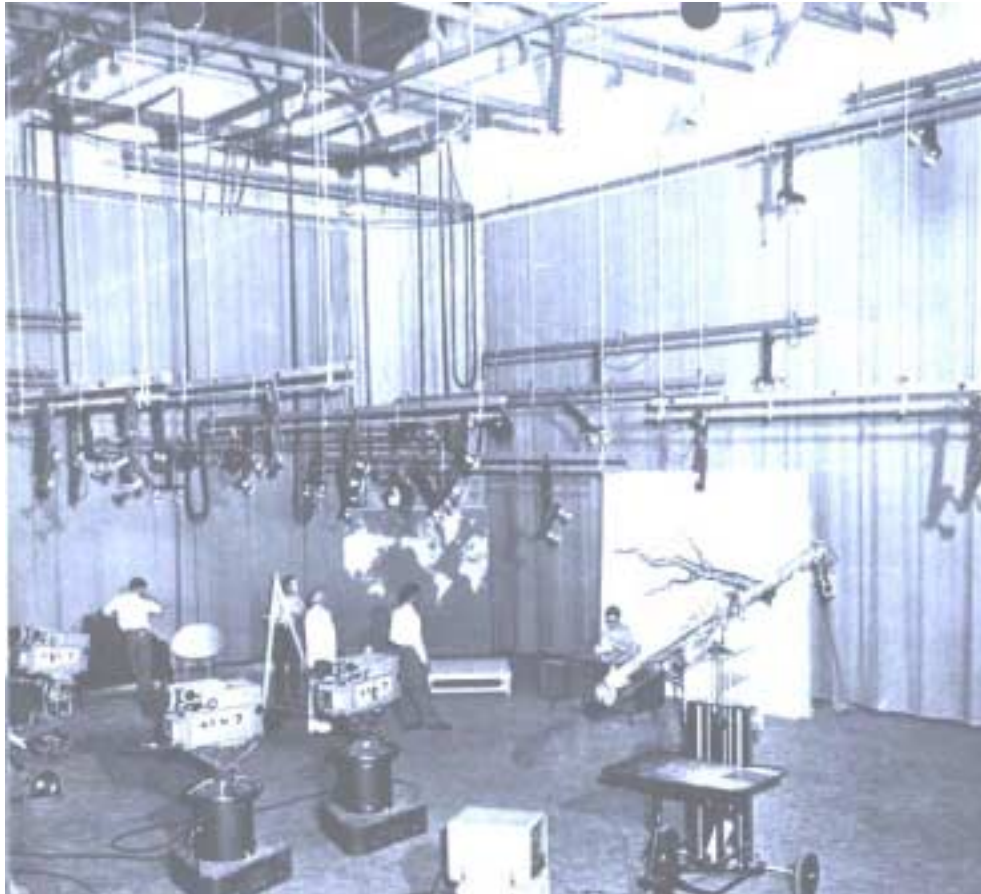


Figure 10: Interior of Studio B, 1956.

Less than a year after the opening ceremony at Epping, Studio A was completed, and was for some time the largest television studio in the country. Studio C was completed and operational as a sound stage c. 1962, before its eventual conversion for studio purposes. Other early technical milestones for the Seven Network included the successful microwave link between Sydney and Canberra to screen the visit of HM Queen Elizabeth II in 1958, and the live link between Sydney and Melbourne in 1959 for the broadcast of test cricket at the Sydney Cricket Ground. An additional credit to the station was the introduction in 1959 of videotape recording from California; whilst other stations showed little interest in the new technology, Channel 7 Sydney embraced the opportunity. Over the following years of the 1960s, ATN switched from black-and-white to colour television production.⁴⁸

In the late 1960s Bruce Gyngell left the Nine Network to join ATN 7 following a dispute with Nine's owner, Sir Frank Packer. As managing director of the Seven Network, Gyngell spearheaded the "Seven Revolution", which sought (successfully) to boost Seven's ratings ahead of Channel Nine.

⁴⁸ Morrell, *Forty Years*, p.53.

As part of this competitive drive for dominance, substantial modifications were carried out to the Epping studio. By the early 1970s the single studio facility had expanded into a six studio complex, utilising high quality equipment.⁴⁹ The majority of this expansion was contained within a part single-storeyed, part double-storeyed addition on the northern side of the building, effectively sandwiching the saw-toothed roofline into the middle of the television complex. The saw-toothed roof component itself had also been extended, with an additional ridgeline appearing in early 1970s aerial photographs. Additional car parking facilities had been added to the surrounds, and more comprehensive tree clearing had been carried out in the proximity of Mobbs Lane. As part of more general landscaping, flagpoles were erected immediately preceding the entrance foyer and reception area, bordering a grassed, landscaped roundabout.



Figure 11: 1972 aerial photograph, showing substantial expansion of the complex at right (Morell)

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.101.

Periodic upgrading of technology meant alterations to the equipment and fabric of the site. A helipad was laid out and a formal gatehouse erected at the Mobbs Lane boundary. The interior of the building was also repeatedly upgraded and modified to suit the changing technological needs, new building code requirements, and general refurbishing. It would appear that other works were carried out in the period 1975-1983, including an extension for loading docks and other amenities at the eastern end of the building, which protruded beyond the original 1950s Studio B facility. This addition is visible in Figure 14.

A further change to the building fabric was a small addition on the south side of the entrance wing, visible at top right of Figure 13, extensions to the eastern elevation, conversion of the rubbish tip to new use as a tennis court, and office spaces on the western side of the building, featuring Sydney-school styled timber panelling. Offices were altered to become more open-plan in nature, and specialist facilities of Custom Video, additional studio space and Electronic Field Production constructed to keep the station up-to-date and to alleviate difficulties caused by location taping.⁵⁰

By the mid-1970s, Australia had begun to receive daily satellite news bulletins, with a government task force in 1978 assessing the merits of a potential domestic national communications satellite system. The task force endorsed its establishment as quickly as possible, with the ABC successfully sending programmes via satellite to remote regions of Australia.⁵¹ By the early 1980s, the Epping facility featured twin satellite dishes, with additional equipment subsequently installed to supplement the service.

⁵⁰ General Manager Ted Thomas, in Morell, *Forty Years*, p.144.

⁵¹ Beilby, *Australian TV*, p.52.



Figure 12: Publicity photograph taken in 1975, showing the Channel 7 helicopter, vans and news vehicles overshadowed by the prominent tower.

One additional outcome of this recommendation was a report was produced in early 1983 for the Minister for Planning and Environment proposing an upgrading of helicopter and associated facilities at the television studio. Proposed works included new work on the helipad, as well as the construction of a hangar in the north eastern corner of the site, construction of a concrete taxi-way, fuel and oil storage and on-site refuelling facilities.⁵² An earth mound was to be constructed to act as a sound barrier to limit helicopter engine noise, and was to be grassed and planted with small shrubs “to provide a visually attractive area.” These facilities enabled ATN7 to develop a top-quality helicopter news coverage service with electronic news gathering microwave links.⁵³

⁵² J. Woodward, Commissioners of Inquiry, *Proposed Helicopter and Associated Facilities at Channel 7 Television Studios, Mobbs Lane, Epping*, 1983, p.6.

⁵³ Morell, *Forty Years of Television*, p.114.



Figure 13: 1983 photograph, showing installation of satellite dishes and helipad to the complex and outbuildings.

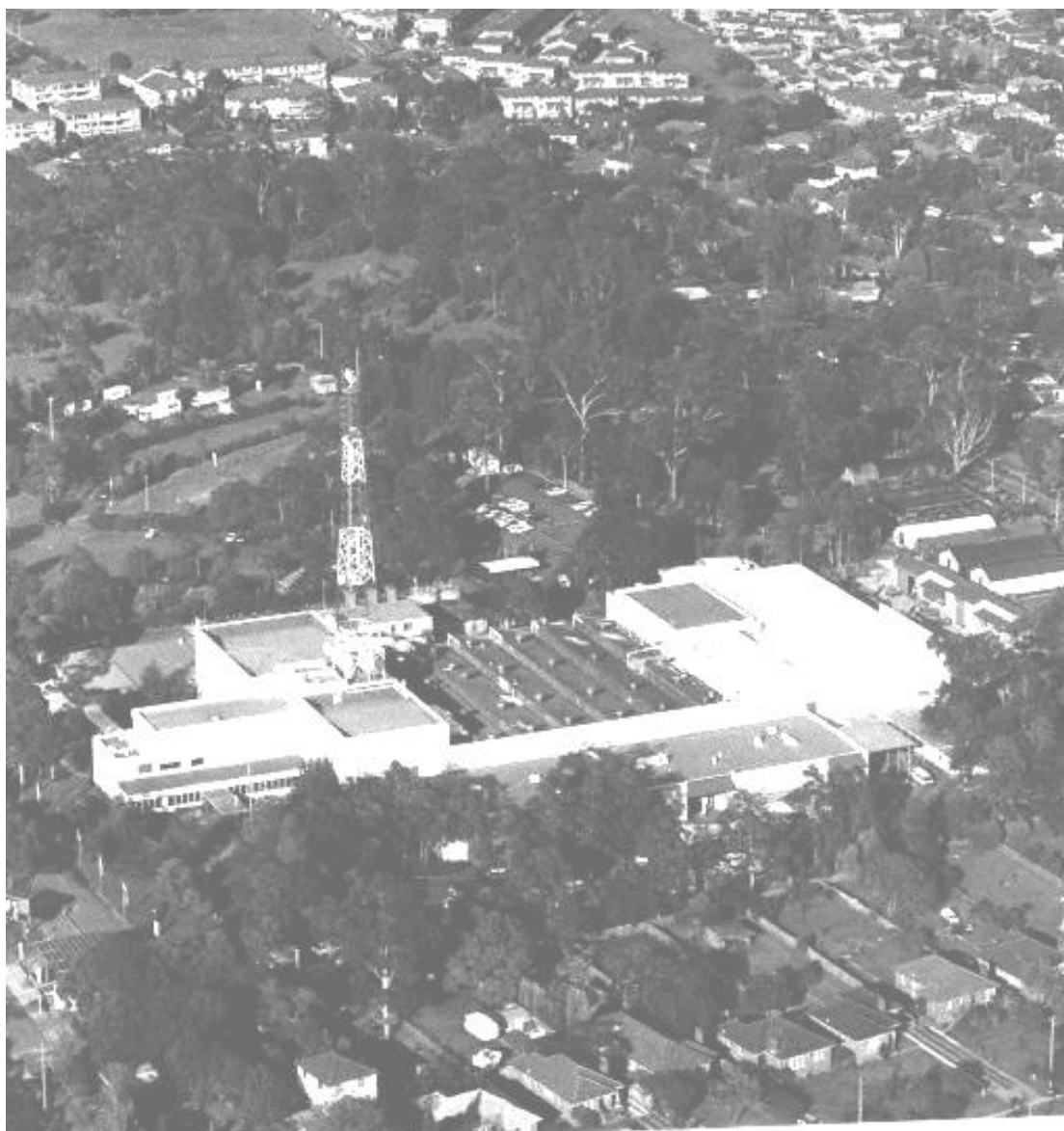


Figure 14: 1996 photograph of ATN 7, showing extensions to the original complex at front.

2.5 Amalgamated Television Services: Programmes and Audiences

Throughout this forty-year period of development, Channel 7 was strongly identified by its actors and personalities, many of whom recorded their shows in the Epping studios. Other Seven Network productions were recorded and transmitted from studios in Brisbane and Melbourne.

Within three years of commencing operations, the Epping studio, like other television networks, was governed by the Australian Broadcasting Control Board, which stipulated that forty percent of all programmes had to be local content, including four hours' prime-time programming each month. This directive was in response to the

low level of Australian content broadcast from all networks in the first two years of operation.⁵⁴ The majority of the early television shows transmitted from the Epping studio were live and were highly influential in post-war Australian culture. Such shows included the first current affairs show, *At Seven on 7*,⁵⁵ the first breakfast show, *Today*, the first quiz program, *The Price is Right*, and the first soap opera: *Autumn Affair*.⁵⁶ Within the first decade of operation, ATN 7 was responsible for classic programming including *Romper Room*, *The Johnny O'Keefe Show*, *Revue '61* and *Pick-A-Box*. *Pick-A-Box* host Bob Dyer became the first of ATN 7's identities to be awarded a Gold Logie as Australia's Best National TV Personality in 1960.⁵⁷

Personalities included Tommy Tycho, O.A., MBE, who was the pianist on the studio's opening night and became ATN7's Musical Director from 1957 to 1972, dominating the variety shows during this period; and Bruce Gyngell, who had the distinction of being the first person broadcast on Australian television during his time with the Nine network before joining ATN 7. Other identities associated with the television station included Garry McDonald, Maggie Tabberer, Paul Hogan, Rowena Wallace and Andrew Denton, with ATN 7 acting as a springboard for many celebrities' careers. Guest stars on ATN 7 shows routinely visited the Epping site, such as Broadway legend Ethel Merman and diverse UK and American celebrities including Dave Allen and David Frost, who were contracted by the Seven Network to host interviews with well-known Australians.

The programmes reflected the changes in Australian social and political life, with the more gentle shows of the 1950s giving way to scathing, insightful or controversial concepts that appealed to the growing, increasingly sophisticated audience. In 1969 ATN 7 launched what became known as the "Seven Revolution" under the directive of Bruce Gyngell, which entailed a comprehensive assault on the long-established dominance of the Nine Network. The following year, this campaign was expanded to include the "Make it Australian" policy, with the Australian Broadcasting Control Board establishing a minimum of six hours of local drama, and four hours of children's programming per month.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ P. Beilby, *Australian TV: The First 25 Years*, p.16.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p.9

⁵⁶ Morell, *40 Years*, p.18.

⁵⁷ Beilby, *Australian TV*, p.17.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.36.

Both personalities and television productions became entrenched in domestic life across Australia, with families watching dramas, game shows and soap operas as part of household routine. Many television shows continued production for years at a stretch, with *A Country Practice* being one of the most popular, and longest-running productions in Australian television history. Viewers' affection for, and identification with, the characters of *A Country Practice* was enduring throughout its extended run, with a wedding ceremony of two of its key characters ensuring record audience ratings. A second show produced by Channel 7 that engendered fierce loyalty by viewers was the *Mavis Bramston Show*, which boasted prime-time top-rating records and featuring an all-Australian sponsorship. As an early ATN 7 production, it became one of the classic icons of the station. Audience loyalty was further demonstrated by the long-running *Romper Room*, which was broadcast from 1963 until 1988, and *Sons and Daughters*, which explored the interrelationships of two Australian families. One of its more enduring programmes, *Home and Away*, was created to replace *Neighbours*, which the Seven Network axed after six months and which was subsequently sold to rival Channel 10.⁵⁹



Figure 15: Photograph of cast and crew of *A Country Practice*, 1980s

⁵⁹ J Lewis, *Cult TV*, p.216.



Figure 16: Immigration Minister Al Grassby (Film and Sound Archives, Canberra)

In addition to family drama and game shows, the Epping studio recorded current affairs programmes that informed and engaged the Sydney and wider communities. Politics and 'topics of the day' were routinely aired and addressed controversial issues in Australian society, with political debates and interviews with prominent politicians and government ministers. Key current affairs identities included Mike Willisee, who worked with ATN 7 from 1975 to produce weekly current affairs and interview programmes, as well as hosting productions such as *This is Your Life* and *Willisee at Seven*. Audience participation in ATN 7 current affairs programming peaked during Andrew Denton's Chase for Skase in 1995. Having hired a bounty hunter for \$125,000 live on air to assist in the extradition of businessman Christopher Skase, Denton received more than \$200,000 from viewer pledges. The campaign was abruptly terminated following intervention by the Attorney General's Office, but audience dedication to the project clearly demonstrated the way in which audiences associated themselves with television personalities and the manner in which the program stimulated topical discussions and public rallying of controversial issues.



Figure 17: Andrew Denton's Chase for Skase, which incited audience participation to unparalleled interest in current affairs.

Activities at the Epping Studios began to wind down in the early years of the twenty-first century, with more projects being directed and carried out from facilities at Martin Place and Pyrmont studios. At present, a number of programmes are recorded on site, including *All Saints*, *Home and Away*, and *Wheel of Fortune*.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

3.1 Context

The Seven Network's Epping studios are situated in the midst of suburban development represented by housing styles identifiable from the early twentieth century to contemporary designs. East of the subject site, properties are distinguished as the Epping/ Eastwood Conservation Area, with a significant proportion of intact interwar bungalows that retain their curtilage as originally subdivided in the early part of the twentieth century in response to the construction of the Epping railway line. South of the complex is the former brick pit, seen at lower right of Figure 18. Immediately north are those residences subdivided as part of the View point Estate, with many of the original interwar houses still extant.



Figure 18: Aerial photograph showing setting of ATN 7, Epping



Figure 19: View along Mobbs Lane looking east towards Midson Road



Figure 20: View along Mobbs Lane looking west, with ATN 7 gatehouse at right



Figure 21: View from subject property facing south showing residences along Mobbs Lane

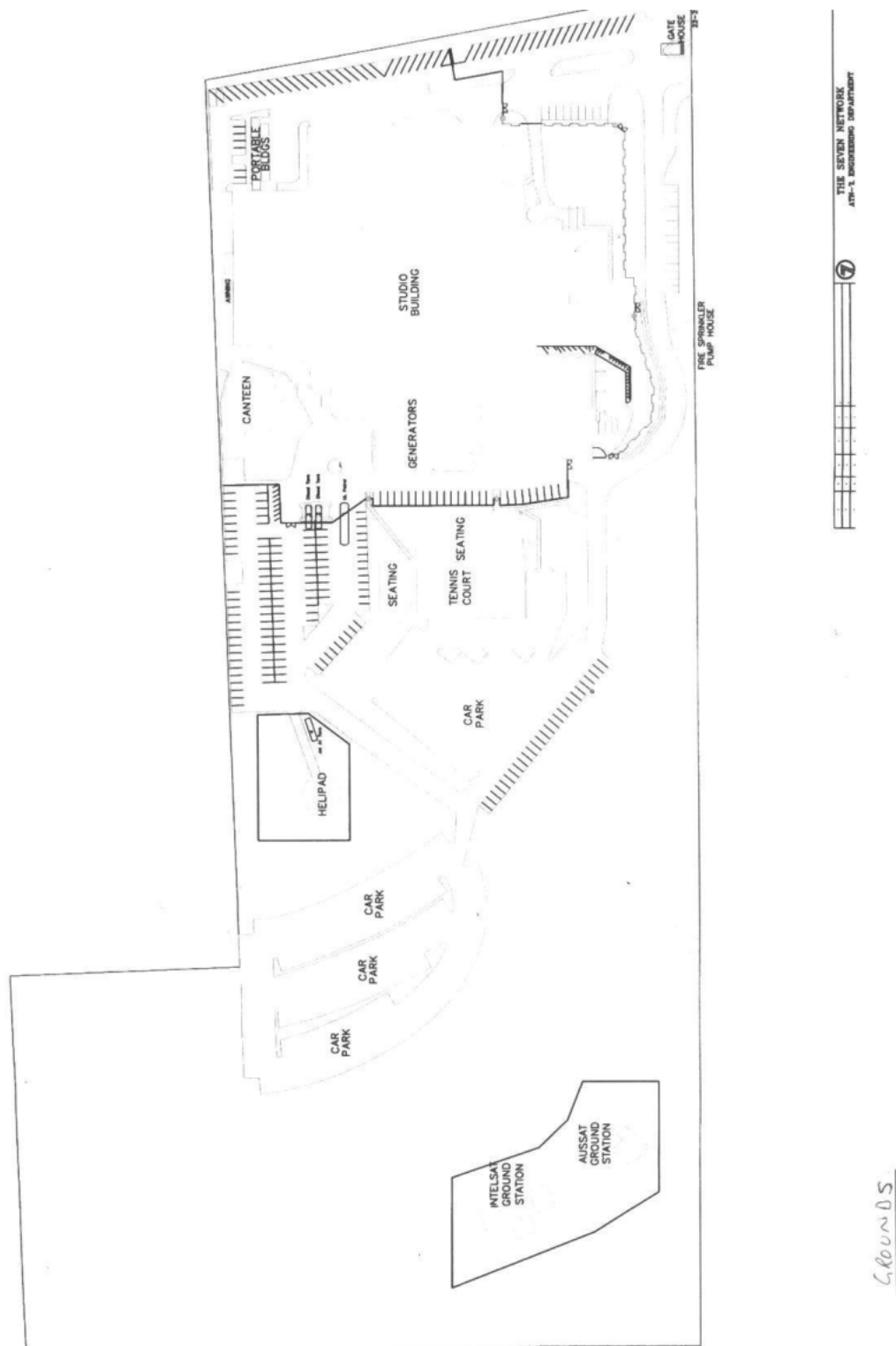


Figure 22: Site map, ATN-7. (Map courtesy of John Norton, ATN 7)

3.2 The Existing Site

Exterior

The existing site retains the original form and boundary alignment of Dunlop's grant of land, and retains part of the open aspect identified in the 1930 and 1950s aerial photographs. The ATN 7 site is sharply distinguished from the surrounding residential properties through the Mobbs Lane alignment and by its treed aspect and open park-like grounds across the western half of the land. The majority of built elements are limited to the eastern upper half of the site, while the western is defined by open grassed areas dotted with satellite dishes and with mature trees in the western corner of the property. This latter portion of the property is sited at a gradually sloping 30m lower terrain level than the eastern, developed portion. Across the site, a series of pathways connect the built elements to each other and to the open parkland.

Primary access to the building is via the Mobbs Lane gatehouse, which features a distinctive barrier emblazoned with ATN-7's colour spectrum. The main facility is located north-west of the gatehouse, preceded by a glass-canopied porte-cochere and landscaped roundabout fitted with flagpoles and featuring beds of agapanthus plants. The façade of this two-storeyed building features vertically-oriented window openings and a centrally located balcony on the upper level. The rear of this structure has vertically banded windows set at two levels in a modern extension to the fabric, and a verandah and atrium behind that is connected to Studio A and commonly used as a waiting room for the *The Wheel of Fortune* audiences.

To the north of this entrance are loading docks and related facilities, contained within a c.1980s extension. These extend almost to the northern boundary and leave only a small setback from the property line. Along this northern portion is a small awning and external access to the studio. The dominant visual element of the main studio building is the tower extending from the centre of the building, which can be readily seen from the wider vicinity.

The rear view of the studio, facing east, shows the distinctive saw-toothed roofline with a single band of horizontal window openings and ventilators at the ridgeline. This rises above a concrete-poured balcony with red-painted railings and metal stair leading to ground level. At the south-western aspect of the building is a double

storeyed extension that features horizontal window openings on both floor levels and a loading dock at ground level. The windows are partially shielded by metal awnings.

Behind the main studio building is a canteen abutting the northern boundary line, and generators which are situated in a central position, behind the studio. Amenities include diesel tanks for refuelling. To the west of these amenities is open space and car parking facilities sited on sloping terrain. These give way to the helipad, tennis court, lower car parks, and Aussat ground station satellite dishes, before the landscape becomes less interrupted by built elements and presents smooth grassed slopes gradually leading down to the more natural landscaping in the north-western corner that contains the remains of Terry's Creek.



Figure 23: Mobbs Lane gatehouse entry to the site, in south-east corner of the property



Figure 24: Main entrance to ATN-7 building with glassed porte-cochere



Figure 25: Rear of main entrance, looking towards gate house and showing atrium.



Figure 26: View from north-east vicinity of site facing south-east towards gatehouse



Figure 27: View of canteen, with main studio building in rearground



Figure 28: Rear view of ATN-7 building facing south-east, with saw-toothed roof line



Figure 29: View of main building from diesel bowlers, facing south-east, showing generators at centre



Figure 30: Southern portion of studio



Figure 31: View facing west, showing diesel bowisers and car park



Figure 32: View of western car park



Figure 33: Westerly view of helipad



Figure 34: Satellite dish ground station, located south-west area of the site.



Figure 35: ATN-7 grounds with Mobbs Lane at far right showing sloping terrain. Note brickworks chimney in rearground



Figure 36: View of western portion of the site, showing undeveloped surrounds



Figure 37: Remnant of Terry's Creek, sited on western portion of ATN 7 site.

Interior

Inspection of the interior of the Seven facility was by necessity limited to the main floors of the building, designated as Levels 1 and 2. Not all studios and facilities were able to be inspected, as filming was in process in several studios. Based on information supplied by John Norton, Production Resources Manager, there are five levels, with the upper levels of the complex used as offices, air conditioning, plant rooms, links hut, and related spaces. The main activities of the facility are carried out on Levels 1 and 2.

Access into the building is via Level 2 reception, fitted with tinted twin glass doors that feature metal doorhandles with the Channel 7 logo. Reception features a modern timber laminate fitout with a curved and banded administration desk in the north-west corner. The ATN 7 logo is clearly displayed on the wall immediately behind reception, emphasised by strategically located downlights. The remainder of the room is fitted with a combination of modern timber laminate, glass and metals, and furnished with couches and waiting facilities.

Reception precedes a corridor leading to a series of offices and dressing rooms accessed by a main corridor lined with studio portraits of ATN7 personalities. This main corridor has skirting and fluorescent light fittings, and leads to the central service area and thus to the television studios, workshops and other essential amenities. The service area is used for storage of sets and studio equipment and displays a range of building fabrics from diverse phases of construction and repair

works. At its upper level runs a catwalk with metal railings that extends across the ceiling space and along the western side of the service area, flanking office spaces that are presently used for storage purposes. Across its ceiling are also a number of metal struts and ducting, with the whole supported by metal columns. The asbestos ceiling was replaced c.2002 with new, BCA-compliant fabric.

Studio B, the earliest studio opened in December 1956, is situated south of the service area and accessed via a short corridor fitted with fluorescent tubing and ceiling panels, with original green vinyl flooring. An original reinforced sliding door precedes the studio access door to restrict noise penetration into the studio during filming. The main Studio B door, whilst also on a track, has an additional single door cut into its body to allow individuals access to the studio without opening the main sliding door. The heavy reinforced door has a multi-coloured lowercase 'b' stencil, along with food and beverage warnings. Inside, the studio has vinyl floor fabric and rockwall that is original, as is the stair and railing fabric leading to the control room annexe. Extending from the roof space are battens with light and sound equipment, as well as a variety of extension cables, suspended fluorescent lighting, backdrops, and filters. Along the north wall, running directly beneath the control room horizontally oriented window, electrical cables have been mounted. In one corner stands an early, still operative studio camera. It is considered that the fabric in this portion of the building has high integrity and comprises predominantly original material.

Studio A, which was completed within twelve months of ATN 7's opening, has larger dimensions than Studio B but features similar fabric and fittings, from vinyl flooring to lights, filters and other equipment. Parts of the set of *Wheel of Fortune* were in place during GBA's inspection, with the wheel and boards occupying the majority of space within the studio, leaving the east wall for audience seating. An atrium is situated adjoining the south wall of the studio, with the control room to the north, accessed by metal stairing. The control room overlooks the studio with a large horizontal window and is fitted with a large number of monitors, computer equipment and seating. The original fabric appears to have been modified during the 1970s with the insertion of timber panelling across much of the ceiling, as well as fluorescent lighting. The floor also appears to be replacement material. Adjacent rooms show more recent modifications to the fabric.

Not all rooms and spaces on this floor were accessible during inspection: Studios C, E and F were recording at the time of inspection, with *All Saints* in Studio C and *Home and Away* in Studio E. Areas accessible to GBA included the carpentry and paint workshops, which comprised partitioned areas used for various tasks. These tasks have now been outsourced and the workshops for the most part abandoned and used for storage. At the easternmost extent of the building are loading docks, together with rooms for All Saints wardrobe storage, a print room, and film storage. The loading dock is lined at the upper level with monochrome photographs of ATN 7 crews, sets and equipment. Assorted television ephemera is scattered about the loading dock or hung off hooks or mountings. At the rear of the building are new production offices contained within the most recent building extension, at its south-west corner. These appear to be fitted with glass and metal fabrics and furnished with modern office equipment and partitioning.

At the lower level of the ATN 7 facility is a range of additional services, including Studio D, which is a small and presently unused space, the tape library and training theatre, technical and electronic areas, plant rooms, and offices dedicated to Disaster Recovery in the event of station malfunction, production taping, master control suite and custom video suites. A foyer with external glass and metal automatic door leads from the west of this level to ground level adjacent to the generators. The building fabric on Level 1 is a combination of modern materials for production offices and suites, featuring glass, metal and contemporary laminate and carpeting; and functional 1970s fittings, including Sydney School-style timber panelling and doors in Custom Video. Much of the flooring and wall fabric is original. As on Level 2, the main corridors are lined with photographs depicting ATN 7 staff events, personalities, and stills. The technical suites are for the most part dated in fitout and are either original or of 1970s provenance.

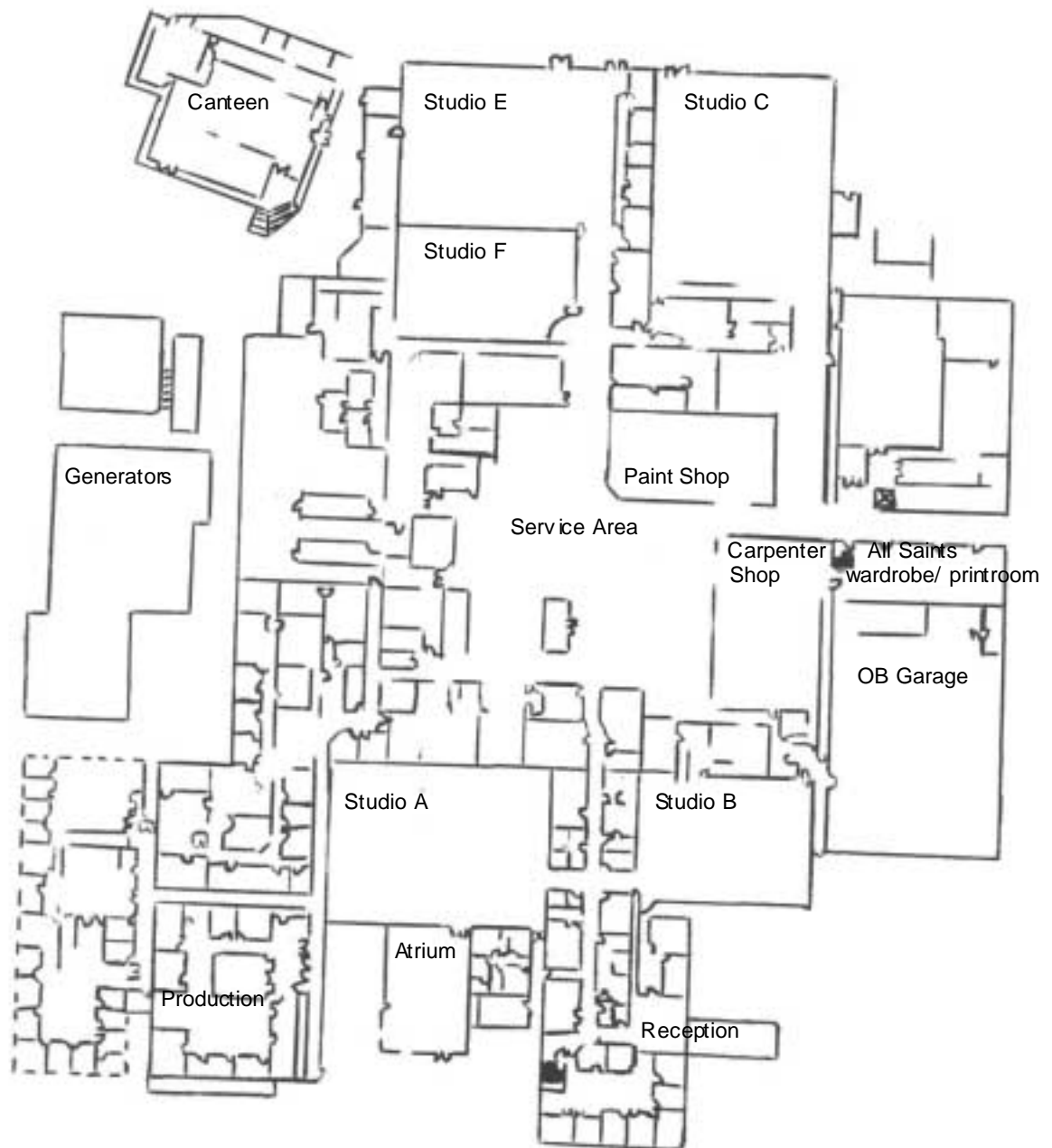


Figure x: Sketch of Key floor layout of Level 2

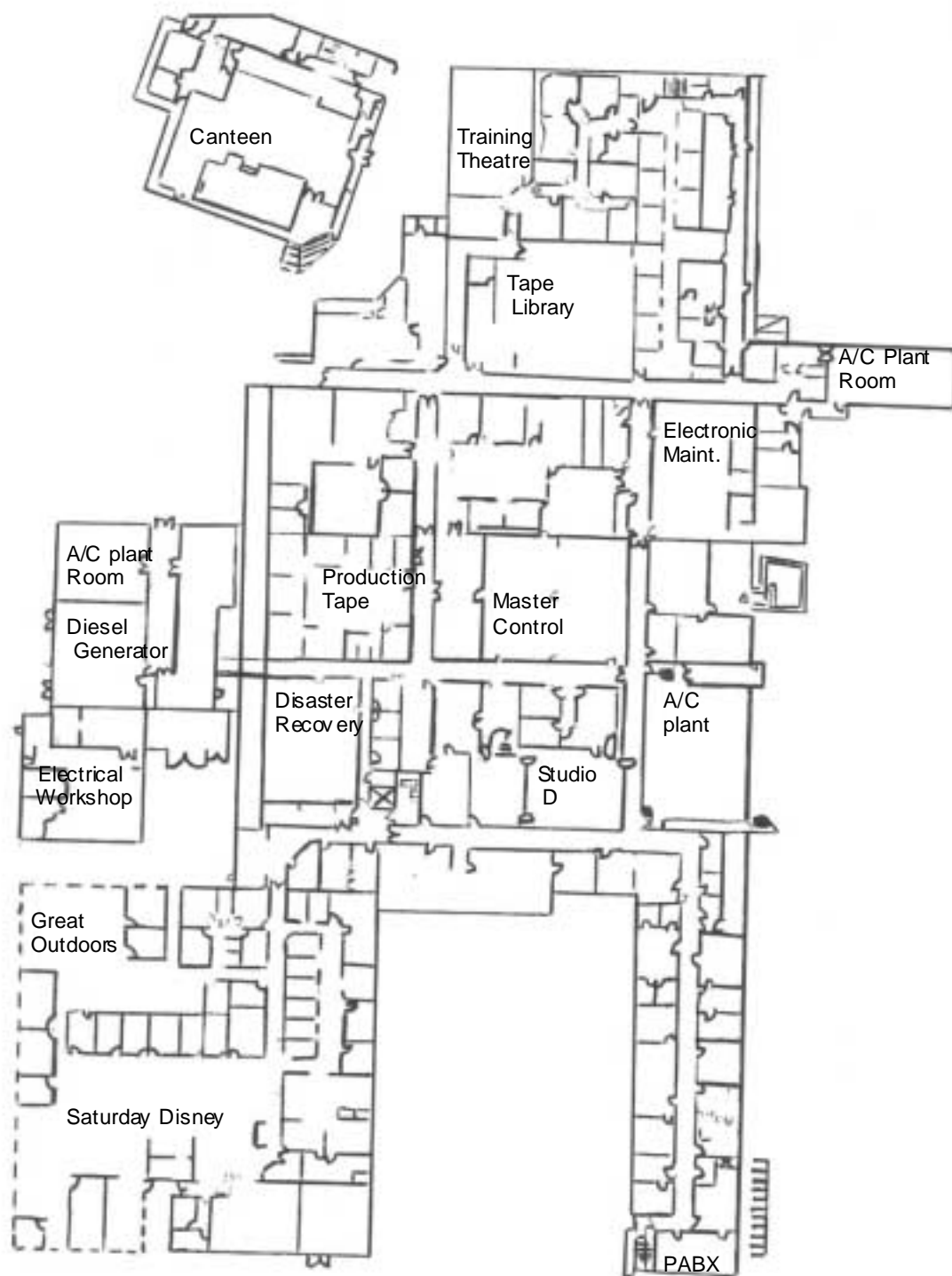


Figure 39: Key floor lay out, Lev el 1.



Figure 40: Channel 7 reception at south-eastern entrance to the building



Figure 41: Detail of glass entrance doors, showing Seven network logo.



Figure 42: Level 2 Service area, with open storage capacity



Figure 43: Catwalk and offices above main service area



Figure 44: Entrance to Studio B, with second insulating door at left



Figure 45: Interior Studio B, constructed 1956, with stairs at left leading to control room



Figure 46: Interior Studio A, completed c. 1957.



Figure 47: Control room, Studio A



Figure 48: Level 2 Carpenter's shop



Figure 49: Level 2 Loading dock, with station memorabilia including photographs and original Wheel of Fortune



Figure 50: 1970s editing suite, showing original timber panelling, Level 1



Figure 51: Interior of Level 1 office addition



Figure 52: View of Level 1 internal corridor in western portion of ATN-7 building



Figure 53: West entrance to ATN-7, Level 1

4.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SITE

4.1 Assessment of Significance

The following assessment of heritage significance has been prepared utilising the current evaluation criteria established by the New South Wales Heritage Council.

Criterion (a) – An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)

ATN 7 has significance as the Sydney base of operations for the Seven Network, following on from the initial Melbourne station. It has some degree of local historical value as part of the pattern of development in the Epping area, and social significance across Sydney for audience association with characters, television identities and programming. The site reflects the early land grant pattern of ownership, and the later process of subdivision that was carried out in the early twentieth century.

Productions broadcast from the site have historical and social value for their reflection of key events and pervasive attitudes in Australian history and society since the first broadcast in late 1956. Comedies and dramas portrayed the changing social norms from the early postwar period through to the present day. Current affairs and news productions illustrated the increasing interrelationship of Australia with the global community, through technological progress and political engagement in world affairs. This type of significance is not specifically embodied in the physical fabric of the site.

Criterion (b) - An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)

The land has some degree of association with the nineteenth century Astronomer Royal of NSW, James Dunlop. Subsequent ownership was associated with the Mobbs family, who had a high profile throughout the Epping, Carlingford and Parramatta communities for their orcharding commercial enterprise. Neither of these associations have any tangible connection with the property, as the site was vacant until ATN 7's development of the land.

The Seven Network has strong associations with Australian personalities and productions that were recorded and broadcast from the site from the late 1950s to the present day, and which have engendered fierce loyalty from their audience base. Audience identification with characters and individuals has continued unabated since the early years of broadcasting, such as Tommy Tycho, Johnny O'Keefe, Paul Hogan, Maggie Tabberer, Mike Willisee, and Andrew Denton. A complete list of those personalities associated with the station is too extensive to detail as part of this heritage assessment. In addition to characters and identities in productions for broadcasting, high profile persons such as Bruce Gyngell and Kerry Stokes have strong links with the site through their influence on the direction of the Seven Network.

This type of significance is not specifically embodied in the physical fabric of the site.

Criterion (c) - An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area))

The ATN 7 site at Epping was the base of operations for early Seven broadcasting throughout Sydney, and demonstrated a high level of technical achievement for seminal advances in communications and production equipment, all of which were later adopted and used by competing television interests. It has creative merit for the production of television programming, with its range of quiz shows, current affairs, dramas and situation comedies, commencing from late 1956 to the present day. The site itself was cleared in sporadic phases from the 1950s to late 1980s for pragmatic broadcasting purposes rather than attaining architectural or visual excellence.

This type of significance is not specifically embodied in the physical fabric of the site.

Criterion (d) - An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

The Epping site has some degree of association with the wider community through audience identification with, and involvement in, those programmes produced by the Seven Network on the property. This association is intangible, being linked to the television broadcasts rather than the specific site.

Criterion (e) - An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)

No evidence of previous use of the site has been found prior to this period. It is not expected to have potential information leading to a greater understanding of the local cultural or natural history.

Criterion (f) - An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)

This criterion has no relevance to the subject site.

Criterion (g) - An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's

- cultural or natural places; or
- cultural or natural environments.

(or a class of the local area's

- cultural or natural places; or
- cultural or natural environments)

The site is the point of origin from which more than forty years of Seven Network broadcasting has taken place. It has intangible social significance through audience engagement in productions filmed, edited and broadcast onsite. The property was the site of the first television station for the Seven Network in Sydney, with its construction following the initial Melbourne studio some months earlier.

4.2 Statement of Significance

The ATN 7 site at Mobbs Lane, Epping, has limited heritage significance at a local level. Its boundaries retain the original alignments of the land grant to Astronomer Dunlop in the early nineteenth century, and are representative of the later subdivision pattern of development that occurred across Epping and Carlingford in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The facility was the first television studio constructed in Sydney for ATN 7, but was neither the first studio for the Seven Network, nor was it the first television studio constructed or broadcasting in the Sydney area. Given its lack of development prior to occupation by ATN 7, it is not expected that the site would have any archaeological potential.

Of the activities carried out on the site, it is considered that these have creative and intangible social value to the wider Sydney region, for those productions broadcast from the site to television viewers. Whilst the various genres of television productions have had loyal audiences since 1956, this affiliation is not connected to the site itself, merely to the television personalities and characters represented onscreen. Many of the current affairs and news programmes have historical significance and value for their portrayal of key events in Australian history and society since 1956. Comedies and dramas demonstrate changing social attitudes and norms, ranging from fashion to cultural and linguistic change, from the early postwar period through to the twenty-first century.

The built features on the site have a strong visual presence within the community, with the tower highly prominent from some distance. Along Mobbs Lane, the satellite dishes comprise a distinctive landmark feature. In themselves, these built elements do not have particular heritage significance. The site has intangible socio-cultural values and associations, but these are not represented through the physical fabric of the site.

5.0 POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR REDEVELOPMENT

Existing urban design concepts for the site have broadly outlined options for redevelopment for greater viable use. Having evaluated the heritage significance of the site, it is possible to explore options for the potential site redevelopment.

The history of the site is predominantly that of an under-utilised portion of land in the Epping locality. From first grant, evidence indicates that the three parcels of land have effectively lain adjacent to each other, with open ground dotted by sporadic, unmanaged foliage. The essential alignment of the crown grant is still discernible, as is the remainder of Terry's Creek, at the western extent of the site.

Following the ATN purchase of the site, the land was partially developed to facilitate construction of the television station and outbuildings, as well as car parks, helipad and satellite dishes. The majority of the western half of the site is still undeveloped, but is not currently accessible to the public. The site as a whole has been secured through fencing around the perimeter and security patrols operating from the Mobbs Lane gatehouse. The visual presence of the television station is pronounced through the existence of the high-profile tower and the lower-scaled but distinctive satellite dishes along the Mobbs Lane streetscape.

The existing preliminary redevelopment scenarios for the site address the need for retention of open space and for appropriate residential facilities. The final design selected will need to be based on a consideration of the heritage issues. The key heritage concerns for the site relate to:

- The need to retain clear boundary and subdivision pattern
- The need to retain the natural topography
- The desirability of representing the crown grantee, Astronomer Dunlop
- The desirability of representing its association with the Mobbs orcharding enterprise
- The need to represent its period of use as a television studio.

Redevelopment will not unduly affect the heritage issues relative to the site, given that most values are intangible. Physical aspects to be considered – the topography and the property boundaries – appear to be considered in the preliminary scenarios and it will be relatively easy to incorporate heritage into the existing plans. The incorporation of heritage will be via interpretation, and a variety of strategies can be implemented to symbolically represent significant uses of the site.

It is not expected that Council will express an interest in the retention of the built fabric, given that the broadcasting studio was neither the first to operate in Sydney, nor the first ATN 7 studio constructed in Australia. It is, however, possible that Council may wish to commemorate the site as the original base of operations for ATN 7 in Sydney. In this instance, GBA is confident that this association can be satisfactorily made through implementation of an interpretation strategy, and through appropriate presentation of ATN 7 ephemera. From the site inspection, it is clear that there is a wealth of original articles and photographs that could be readily utilised in diverse interpretation strategies and incorporated into the final redevelopment scenario.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Historical research into the ownership and development of the subject site has revealed that it has diminished connections with prominent identities of Dunlop and the Mobbs family. While twentieth century subdivision has partially eroded the original parcels of land, the general formation of the crown grant is still discernible. The property remained undeveloped throughout the inter-war period, and upon acquisition by Amalgamated Television Services, was then occupied from 1956 by a television studio facility, which has since been repeatedly expanded and modified to accommodate changing technologies and station requirements.

GBA concludes that there is no physical fabric of substantial heritage significance on the site. The original studio core may be considered to have limited local heritage value as demonstrative of the growth of the western suburbs, but is not sufficiently significant as to require retention and can be readily addressed through interpretive strategies. Heritage significance of the property relates rather to intangible socio-cultural factors, which should nonetheless be addressed appropriately in any proposed redevelopment.

5.0 PROPOSAL

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

The following assessment of heritage impact has been prepared in accordance with the specific heritage objectives and consent requirements outlined in the Parramatta LEP and DCP and against the impact evolution criteria contained in the NSW Heritage Office Guidelines. The subject site is not a heritage item, nor is it within a Conservation Area. However, it is in close proximity to a Heritage Conservation Area, being the Epping/Eastwood Conservation Area. It is also in proximity to 4 Mobbs Lane, being a locally listed weatherboard cottage.

6.1 Parramatta City Council LEP

The subject site is within the Parramatta City Council boundaries and subject to regulations governing development within this jurisdiction. Clauses relevant to the proposed development have been selected for evaluation. The LEP identifies that:

Clause 4 *When determining a development application required by this clause, the consent authority must assess the extent to which the carrying out of the proposed development would affect the heritage significance of the heritage item or heritage conservation area concerned.*

It is considered that the proposed works to the site of ATN 7 will not have a detrimental impact on the heritage significance of the Epping/Eastwood Conservation Area, as this lies to the east (?) of the subject site and will maintain its heritage value and presentation for the benefit of the community. Similarly, the proposal will have no real impact on the weatherboard cottage at 4 Mobbs Lane, as the site is not immediately adjacent to the heritage item and will not negatively influence its contribution to the Mobbs Lane streetscape.

Clause 5 *This assessment is to include (but is not limited to) consideration of:*

- (a) for development that would affect a heritage item:*
 - (i) the heritage significance of the item as part of the environmental heritage of the City of Parramatta, and*

- (ii) the impact that the proposed development will have on the heritage significance of the item and its setting, including any landscape or horticultural features, and*
- (iii) the measures proposed to conserve the heritage significance of the item and its setting, and*
- (iv) whether any archaeological site or potential archaeological site would be adversely affected, and*
- (v) the extent, if any, to which the carrying out of the proposed development would affect the form of an historic subdivision, and*
- (vi) any submission received in relation to the proposed development in response to the notification or advertising of the application, and*

(b) or development that would be carried out in a heritage conservation area:

- (i) the heritage significance of the heritage conservation area and the contribution to which any building, work, relic, tree or place affected by the proposed development makes to this heritage significance, and*
- (ii) the impact that the proposed development would have on the heritage significance of the heritage conservation area, and*
- (iii) the compatibility of any proposed building or work with nearby original buildings and the character of the heritage conservation area, including compatibility with the existing size, form, scale, orientation, setbacks, materials and detailing, and*
- (iv) the measures proposed to conserve the significance of the heritage conservation area and its setting, and*
- (v) whether any landscape or horticultural features of heritage significance would be affected, and*
- (vi) whether any archaeological site or potential archaeological site would be affected, and*
- (vii) the extent, if any, to which the carrying out of the proposed development would affect an historic subdivision pattern, and*
- (viii) any submission received in relation to the proposed development in response to the notification or advertising of the application.*

Clause 14 (1) *Before granting consent for development that may undermine or otherwise damage a heritage item or a building, work, relic, tree or place within a heritage conservation area or will obscure, overshadow or otherwise have a substantial adverse effect on a view of a heritage item or of a building, work or tree*

within a heritage conservation area, or that will otherwise adversely affect the heritage significance of a heritage item or heritage conservation area (or that will have a substantial adverse effect on a view from any such item or from habitable places within any such area), the consent authority must assess the impact of the development:

- (a) on the heritage significance, curtilage and setting of the heritage item or the heritage significance of the heritage conservation area, and*
- (b) on any significant views to or from the heritage item or the heritage conservation area.*

Clause 14(2) *The consent authority may refuse to grant any such consent unless it has considered a heritage impact statement that will help it to assess the impact of the proposed development on the heritage significance, visual curtilage and setting of the heritage item or the heritage significance of the heritage conservation area.*

Clause 14(3) *The heritage impact statement should include details of the size, shape and scale of, setbacks for, and the materials to be used in, any proposed buildings or works and details of any modification that would reduce the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the heritage item or the heritage conservation area.*

Clause 15 (1) *Before granting consent for development that is likely to have an impact on an Aboriginal place, or that will be carried out on an archaeological site that has Aboriginal cultural heritage significance or a potential archaeological site that is reasonably likely to have Aboriginal cultural heritage significance, the consent authority must:*

- (a) consider a heritage impact statement explaining how the proposed development would affect the conservation of the site and any relic known or reasonably likely to be located at the site, and*
- (b) notify the local Aboriginal communities (in such a way as it thinks appropriate) and the Director-General of National Parks and Wildlife of its intention to do so and take into consideration any comments received in response within 28 days after the relevant notice is sent.*

Clause 16 (1) *Before granting consent for development that will be carried out on any other archaeological site or potential archaeological site, the consent authority must:*

- (a) consider a heritage impact statement explaining how the proposed development would affect the conservation of the site and any relic known or reasonably likely to be located at the site, and*
- (b) notify the Heritage Council of its intention to do so and taken into consideration any comments received in response within 28 days after the notice is sent.*

Clause 17 (1) *The consent authority may grant consent to the use for any purpose of a building that is a heritage item, or of the land on which a heritage item is erected, even though the use would otherwise not be allowed by an environmental planning instrument, if:*

- (a) it is satisfied that the retention of the building or item depends on the granting of consent, and*
- (b) the proposed use is in accordance with a conservation management plan which has been approved by the consent authority, and*
- (c) the granting of consent to the proposed use would ensure that all necessary conservation work identified in the conservation management plan is carried out, and*
- (d) the proposed use would not adversely affect the heritage significance of the heritage item or its setting, and*
- (e) the proposed use would not adversely affect the amenity of the surrounding area otherwise than to an insignificant extent.*

6.2 Parramatta Heritage Control Plan (DCP)

In the *Parramatta Heritage Control Plan* (2001) the Epping/Eastwood Conservation Area is described as:

[comprising] parts of two larger estates – the Eastwood House Estate and the Chesterfield Estate – and the corner of a third estate cut off by the railway. The area was subdivided in the second decade of the twentieth century in five auctions from 1910 to 1915.... The houses are predominantly single storey, built of brick, and range from modest bungalows to substantial houses and grounds... The houses have low brick fences and mature gardens with many plantings contemporary with the houses, and together they create a homogeneous area with attractive treed streetscapes. ...The quality of the houses the proximity to the railway has kept this area popular. Many houses now have extensions, with some people choosing to add rooms in the roof or a second storey.

Its statement of heritage significance is:

An intact residential suburban area in the first quarter of the twentieth century developed alongside the railway and from earlier villa estates. It includes a variety of houses in size and style, with Federation houses and 'between-the-wars' bungalows predominating. Mature trees, on private and public land (including remnant native trees), combine with the natural terrain to provide views, which are an integral part of the character of the area.

Comment

The proposed works to the site of ATN 7 do not specifically relate to the Epping/Eastwood Conservation Area, as the property is not within the boundaries of the Conservation Area. However, many of the houses surrounding the subject site are consistent with the residential forms outlined in the DCP. Immediately east of the site's boundaries are a row of interwar residences including bungalow styles, which appear to be relatively intact. These commenced construction from the late 1920s, based on evidence supplied by the 1930 aerial photograph and similar from 1951, showing the row of residences complete. The forms of housing within the general vicinity of the subject site contain mature foliage which screen the houses and provide amenity to the streetscape.

The proposed residential development of the site is not inconsistent with the attributes found in the wider vicinity. The parkland aspect retains the treed, open grounds relative to Terry's Creek, which will provide public space for residents and open up the area to other occupants in the neighbourhood, as to date the ATN7 occupation has prohibited public access to the remnant open space.

6.3 New South Wales Heritage Manual

This manual addresses a number of evaluation questions in relation to proposed works in the vicinity of a heritage conservation area.

10.0 SOURCES