

# **MANAGEMENT SUMMARY**

## **RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEST EXCAVATIONS**

### **NPW ACT AND HERITAGE ACT**

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**NeW Space**  
**University of Newcastle**  
**Corner of Hunter Street**  
**and Auckland Street**  
**Newcastle**



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**for**  
**University of Newcastle**

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**Cover Image**

*During Test Excavation, 17/03/2014, Image 0781, M.Carney*

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report is an interim summary of concurrent archaeological testing works under the NPW and Heritage Acts. This document broadly summarises results for management purposes and should not be interpreted as an archaeological report compliant with the guidelines of the Heritage Act or NPW Act.

## 1.1 SUMMARY

Fifteen test trenches (200x200cm) were laid out at the study site in March 2014 (see Figure 1.1). Under supervision, all existing concrete slabs were cut (10/3/14) in these locations and removed by machine (14/3/14). The bulk of the non-significant fills, in the way of bedding fills for slabs and demolition fills were removed following the slabs on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2014 and 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

Detailed archaeological test excavation commenced under the Heritage Act 1977 (Permit Application Number 2013/S140/34) and the NPW Act (1974) on March 17<sup>th</sup> 2014. The discovery of historical features within three trenches prevented further test excavation (50x 50cm sondage) for Aboriginal material under the NPW Act (see Table 1). In the remaining 12 trenches, adequate locations were found in order to excavate a 50x50cm trench for the purpose of locating Aboriginal material.

Natural soil profiles were reached by the combined testing regimes in seven trenches (see Table 2).

The trenches were backfilled on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014. The NPW sondage (50x 50 cm) and overall trench cut (200x200cm) were lined with semi permeable membrane and filled using the loose material taken from each trench. The cut pieces of the concrete slab were replaced where they could be admitted to the trench and maintain a level finish.

## 1.2 METHOD

The endorsed methodology set out in Section 6.0 of the “Permit Application: Archaeological Assessment, Research Design, Excavation Methodology & Permit Application”<sup>1</sup> as well as the guidelines set out in “The Code of Practice for the Archaeological Investigation of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales” (DECCW, 2010) were adhered to in conducting test excavation under both acts. The site was visited by the Heritage Division during testing works. OEH personnel were invited to attend but were unable to do so due to prior commitments.

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<sup>1</sup> AMAC (December 2013)

**Table 1 Trench Summary Hunter & Auckland Streets – NeW Space Archaeology.**

<b>Trench</b>	<b>Slab/fill removed</b>	<b>Evaluation &amp; recording</b>	<b>HA (1977) artefacts</b>	<b>HA (1977) Significance</b>	<b>NPWS (1974) artefacts</b>	<b>Completed &amp; backfilled</b>
1	yes	yes	yes	Local	yes	yes
2	yes	yes	yes	Local & Not Local or State	Not investigable	yes
3	yes	yes	yes	Local & Not Local or State	yes	yes
4	yes	yes	yes	Local & Not Local or State	yes	yes
5	yes	yes	yes	Local & Not Local or State	yes	n/a
6	yes	yes	yes	Local & Not Local or State	yes	yes
7	yes	yes	yes	Local & Not Local or State	Yes	yes
8	yes	yes	yes	Not Local or State	yes	yes
9	yes	yes	yes	Not Local or State	Not investigable	yes
10	yes	yes	yes	Local & Not Local or State	yes	yes
11	yes	yes	yes	Local	Yes	yes
12	yes	yes	yes	Not Local or State	yes	yes
13	yes	yes	yes	Local & Not Local or State	Not investigable	yes
14	yes	yes	yes	Local & Not Local or State	yes	yes
15	yes	yes	yes	Not Local or State	No	yes

**Table 2 Levels (AHD) of occurrence of materials subject to Statutory controls**

Trench	Location	Start	Base of European phase	Top of natural profile	Levels of in-situ Indigenous finds	Base of trench – extent of excavation
1	Western most	2.19m	1.62m	1.62m	1.3-1.62m	0.93m
2	Western most	2.48m	1.99m	n/a	n/a	1.99m
3	Western most	2.6m	1.85m	1.85m	1.85m	1.48m
4	Mid west	2.55m	1.59m	1.59m	1.59m	0.92m
5	Mid west	2.61m	1.53m	1.53m	1.8m	1.18m
6	Mid west	2.76m	2.29m	2.29m	1.76m	1.52m
7	Centre site	2.63m	1.95m	n/a	n/a	1.95m
8	Centre site	2.63m	1.65m	n/a	n/a	1.65m
9	Centre site	2.62m	2.28m	n/a	n/a	2.28m
10	Mid east	2.46m	1.74m	1.74m	1.59m	0.93m
11	Mid east	2.54m	1.66m	1.66m	1.66m	1.27m
12	Mid east	2.65m	1.75m	n/a	n/a	1.75m
13	Eastern most	2.51m	1.98m	n/a	n/a	1.98m
14	Eastern most	2.5m	2.02m	n/a	n/a	2.02m
15	Eastern most	2.62m	2.27m	2.27m	n/a	1.73m

**Table 3 Approximate density of Indigenous material – by trench**

<b>Trench</b>	<b>European Artefacts</b>	<b>Aboriginal Artefacts: Number per trench</b>	<b>Aboriginal Artefact Density (Maximum and Spit Number)</b>
1	Present	5	20/ sqm – Spit 3
2	Present	-	N/A
3	Present	241	808/sqm – Spit 8
4	Present	8	20/ sqm – Spit 3
5	Present	230	600/sqm – Spit 3
6	Present	2	8/sqm – Spit 7
7	Present	6	8/sqm – Spit 6
8	Present	1	4/sqm – Spit 2
9	Present	-	N/A
10	Present	1	4/sqm – Spit 3
11	Present	32	96/sqm – Spit 9
12	Present	3	8/ sqm – Spit 3
13	Present	-	N/A
14	Present	2	8/sqm – Spit 1
15	Present	Absent	N/A

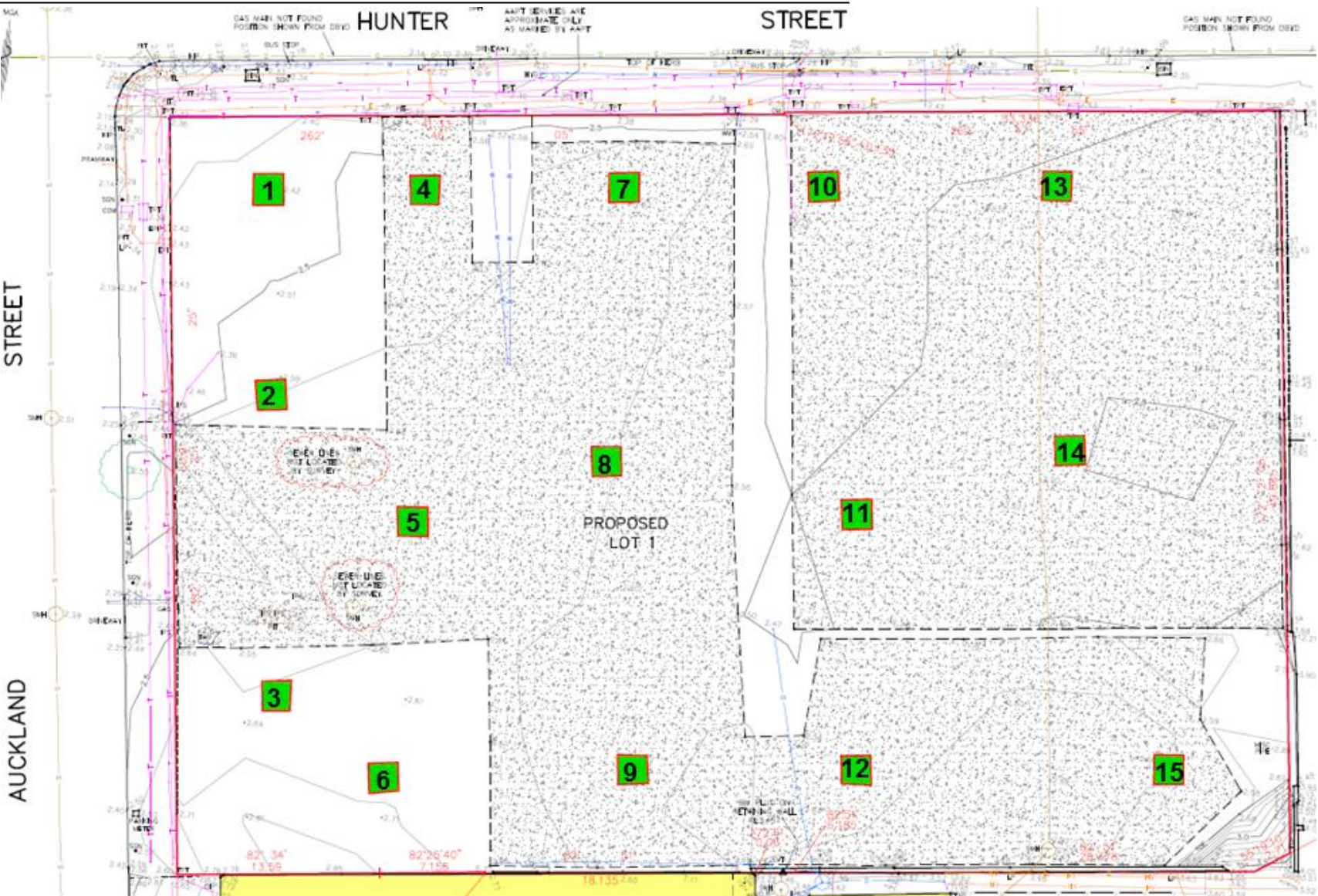


Figure 1.1 Test Trench Locations  
Surveyed by Monteath and Powys



**Figure 1.2 Trench 1 –  
before backfill**  
Facing east, 21.03.2014  
Image 7467



**Figure 1.3 Trench 2 – start  
up**  
Facing North, 19.03.2014  
Image 7301



**Figure 1.4 Trench 3 – start  
up**  
Facing North, 19.03.2014  
Image 7319



**Figure 1.5** Trench 3 – end  
of sondage  
Facing west, showing  
sandstone foundation  
21.03.2014 Image 7447



**Figure 1.6** Trench 4 – end  
Facing north, 19.03.2014  
Image 7289



**Figure 1.7** Trench 5 – start  
Facing east, 19.03.2014  
Image 7259



**Figure 1.8** Trench 6 – start  
Facing north, 18.03.2014  
Image 7249



**Figure 1.9** Trench 7 – end  
Facing north, 20.03.2014  
Image 7432



**Figure 1.10** Trench 8 – start  
Facing north, 18.03.2014  
Image 7215



**Figure 1.11 Trench 9 – start up**  
Facing South, 20.03.2014  
Image 7352



**Figure 1.12 Trench 10 – end of excavation**  
Facing south (wrong north arrow), 18.03.2014  
Image 7184



**Figure 1.13 Trench 10 – prior to backfilling**  
Facing north, 21.03.2014  
Image 7454



**Figure 1.14** Trench 12 – start up  
Facing North, 17.03.2014  
Image 7104



**Figure 1.15** Trench 13 – start up  
Facing North, 17.03.2014  
Image 7149



**Figure 1.16** Trench 14 – start up  
Facing East, 18.03.2014  
Image 7220



**Figure 1.17** Trench 15 – start  
up  
Facing East, 17.03.2014  
Image 7145

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## 2.0 RESULTS SUMMARY – HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

All 15 trenches revealed evidence of activity in the historical period (1788-2014). The majority contained a combination of material that can be evaluated as having either local significance, or as not having either local or state significance (i.e. not a relic under the Heritage Act 1977 Act).

Trenches 7, 8, 9, 12, and 15 provided no evidence of significant remains in terms of the Heritage Act 1977. However at the depths investigated only fill levels were examined, and historically these locations were not devoid of activity, on paper they indicate the potential for local significance in the vicinity of the trenches or at a lower level.

Of the remaining trenches, Trench 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11 and 13 contained an accumulation of evidence of post settlement activity, through construction and occupation in multiple phases. Trenches 1, 7, 12 and 14 fell in relatively open space (within or without identified historical structures), though also showed evidence of multiple phase activities since the 1850s (Table 4).

Evidence created during the historic period commenced at slab height (varying but generally 2.46-2.65m AHD), and ranged in depth to 2.28-1.53m AHD, although natural soil profiles were not reached at depths of 1.65m AHD in Trench 8.

All evidence collected indicates that excepting the effect of earlier developments the site has been continually built up indicating that the majority of archaeological evidence created during the period from the first development, up to the current time has been retained and covered over.

**Table 4 Historic Feature and Initial Interpretation and Phasing from available overlays**

Trench	Feature	AHD Level	Initial Interpretation	Potential Phase
1	Possible Historical Surface	1.67-1.7m	Historical surface	Phasing unknown
2	Riverpebble feature	2.02m	Early Foundation	Mid-19 <sup>th</sup> century
	Sandstock brick footing	2.06m	“Stores” additions to 1870s shop	1880s-1890s
	Brick pier	2.04m	“Stores” additions to 1870s shop	1880s-1890s
	Sandstock brick footing	2.06m	Foundation of terrace	c1890s
	Modern Foundations	2.1-2.29m	Foundations for most recent development	Late 20 <sup>th</sup> century
3	Sandstone foundation	1.85m	Sandstone foundation of shop fronting Auckland St	c1858
	Dry-press brick pier	2.41m	Foundations of “Oddfellows Hall”	c1920s
4	Sandstock brick pier	1.99m	Pub construction	c1870s
	Brick and cement strip footing	2.55m	Brick foundations of Federal hotel	Late 19 <sup>th</sup> – early 20 <sup>th</sup> century
5	Sandstock brick footing	2.01m	Structure unknown	Unknown – most likely 19 <sup>th</sup> century
	Brick Foundation	2.28m	Brick foundations of Federal hotel	Late 19 <sup>th</sup> – early 20 <sup>th</sup> century
6	Sandstock brick footing	1.64-1.74m	Possible outbuilding	c.1860-70s
	Brick piers	2.31-2.34m	Foundations of “Oddfellows Hall”	c1920s
7	Service pipe	1.95m	Unknown	Unknown
8	Historical Fill	2.4m	Unknown	Unknown
9	Service pipe	1.63m	Modern	Late 20 <sup>th</sup> century
10	Brick footing	2.07m	Foundation of Fuller and Rodgers building	c1890s
	Concrete strip footing	2.17m	Unknown	Late 20 <sup>th</sup> century
11	Yard deposit	2.01m	Yard surface	Possibly mid-late 19 <sup>th</sup> century
	Sandstone foundation	2.36m	Iron mongers warehouse	Late 19 <sup>th</sup> century – early 20 <sup>th</sup> century
	Working Surface	2.33-2.37m	Iron mongers warehouse	Late 19 <sup>th</sup> century – early 20 <sup>th</sup> century
12	Service pipe	1.75m	Unknown	Unknown
13	Stone foundations	2.07m	Shop fronts	c1870s
	Strip footing	2.34m	Shop front	1930s
14	Possible well or tank	2.30-2.33m	Not shown on historic plans	Unknown
	Secondary slab	2.02	Later shops	1930s
15	Historical fill	2.4m	Iron mongers yard	Late 19 <sup>th</sup> century



Figure 2.1 AA Co Subdivision c1858 with test trench locations  
State Library of NSW (Map F831)

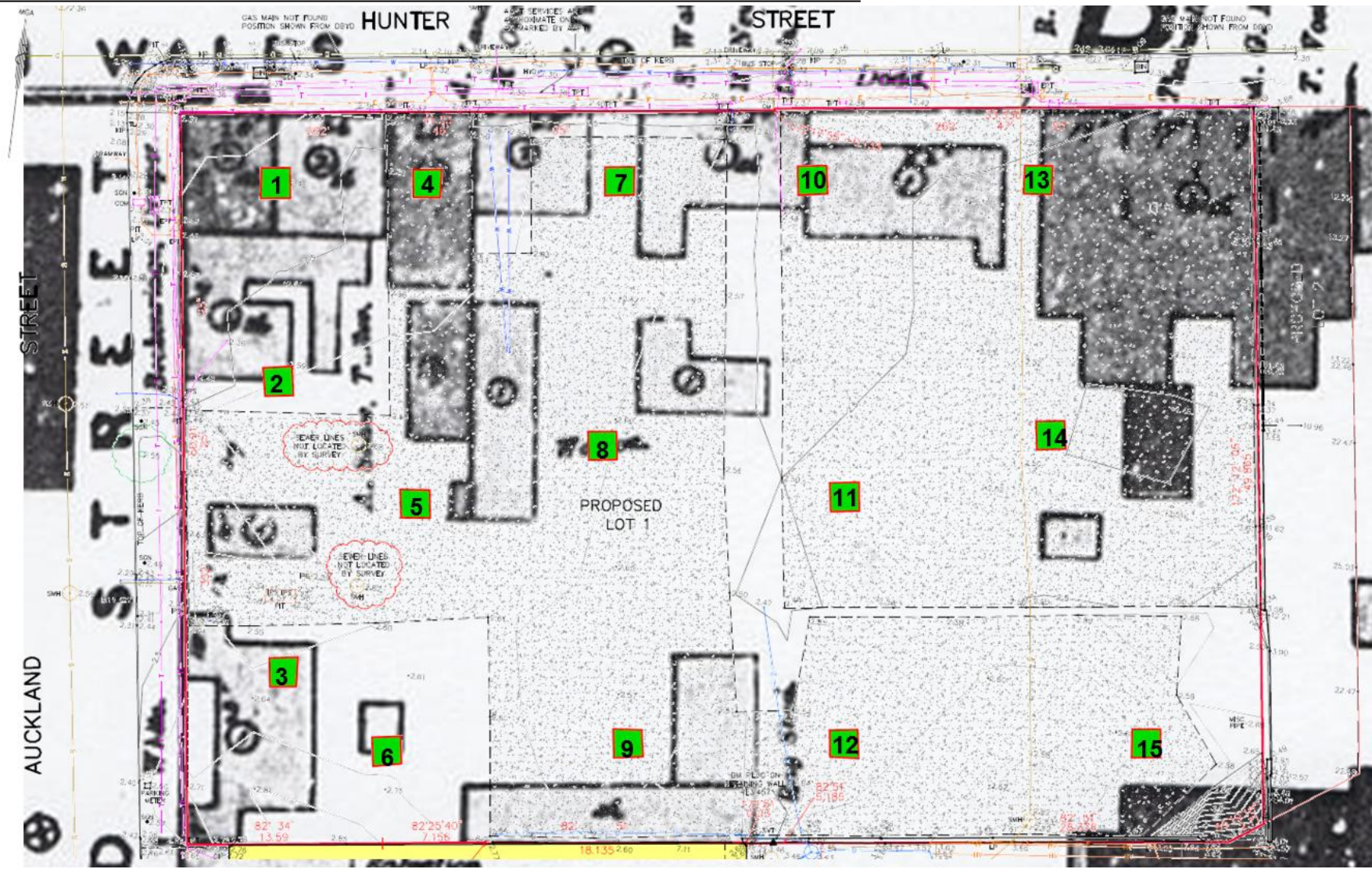


Figure 2.2 c1886 plan with overlay showing test trench locations  
Newcastle Plan Series 1886 (Sheet 1)

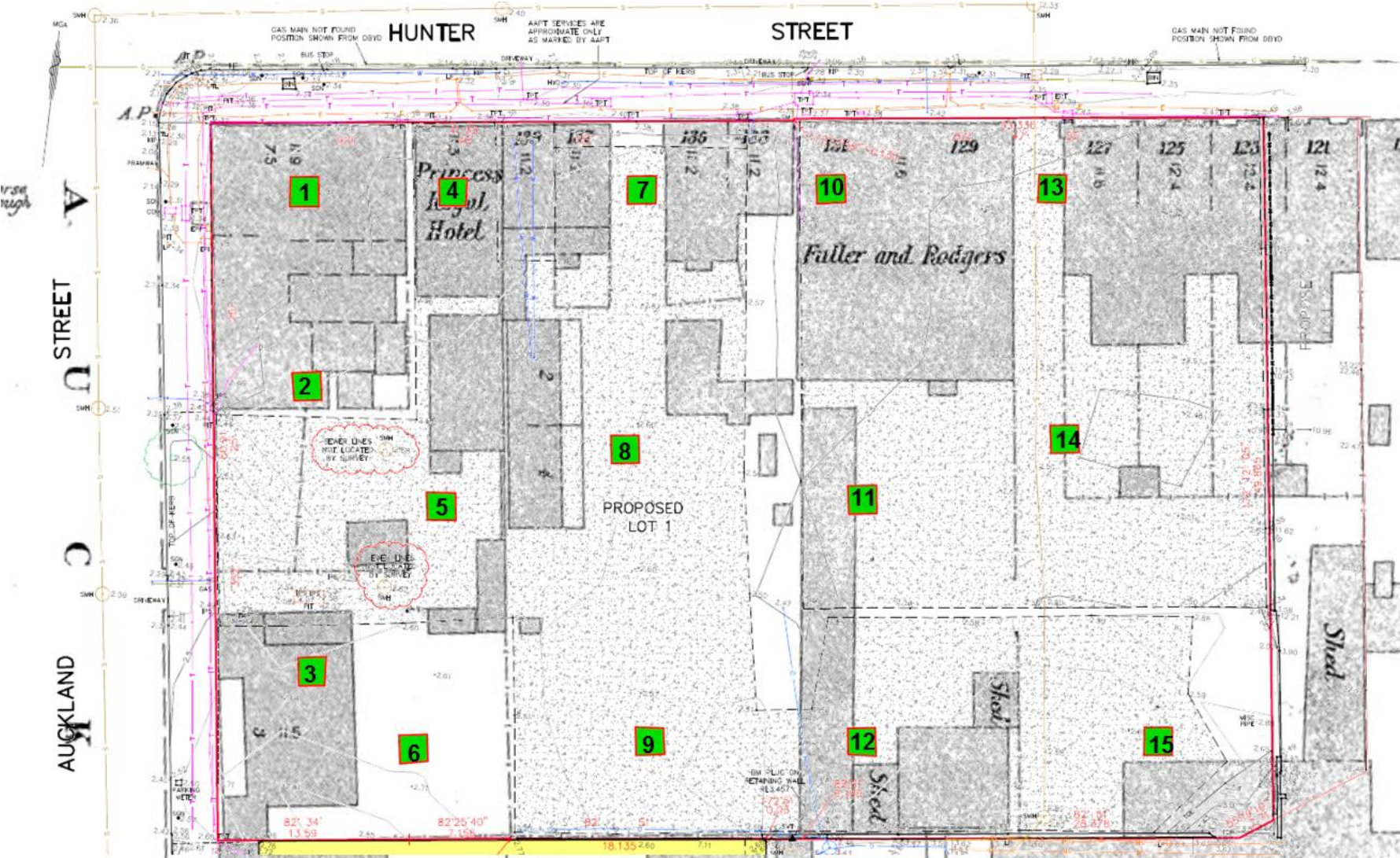


Figure 2.3 c1896 plan with overlay showing test trench locations  
Hunter District Water Board, Sheet 26 (Hunter Photobank 30600094)



Figure 2.4 c1922 plan with overlay showing test trench locations  
Detail Survey Map of the City of Newcastle (Sheet 20)

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## 3.0 RESULTS SUMMARY – ABORIGINAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Of the 15 trenches initially excavated 11 revealed evidence of activity in the Aboriginal period (pre 1788). Of the 11, two of these test trenches yielded such a number of artefacts that they potentially contain locally and regionally high artefact densities. One suggests locally and regionally moderate artefact density and the remainder suggest locally and regionally low artefact density. The information gathered in the test excavation suggests the presence of archaeological deposits of both local and regional significance. No information on the presence of rare or representative objects has at this point been evaluated however it is a distinct possibility.

Two trenches in the southwest corner of the site, Trenches 3 and 5, provided significant evidence of Aboriginal occupation of the site. This material, which occurred at densities of 808 artefacts per m<sup>2</sup> and 600 artefacts per m<sup>2</sup> respectively, was all recovered from the intact natural A1 soil of the local soil landscape. As previously stated these artefact densities are both locally and regionally very high. Of Trenches 3 and 5, A2 soil was only excavated from Trench 5 and no Aboriginal material was recovered.

Trenches 1, 6, 10 and 11 yielded Aboriginal artefacts from intact natural A1 soil horizon of the local soil landscape, three of these trenches (Trenches 1, 6 and 10) had these artefacts occurring at locally and regionally low densities – between 4 artefacts per m<sup>2</sup> and 20 artefacts per m<sup>2</sup> and one trench (Trench 11) had artefacts occurring at a locally and regionally moderate density of 96 per m<sup>2</sup>. Again no Aboriginal material was recovered from the A2 soil Horizon where it was encountered in Trenches 6 and 11.

Trenches 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, and 14 yielded Aboriginal artefacts from either a Post-European contact fill or from a disturbed Post European A1 soil horizon of the local soil landscape. Only Trench 15 of the 12 excavated trenches failed to yield any Aboriginal artefacts from any context.

In addition to these finds one artefact was located during the geotechnical works and one artefact was located on the concrete slab. Both these artefacts can be viewed as coming from a disturbed contexts.

All evidence collected, indicates that excepting the effect of earliest European developments, the site has continually been built up indicating that the majority of archaeological evidence including significant Aboriginal deposits has been retained and remains intact.

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## 4.0 RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the twin studies commissioned, as well as geotechnical monitoring, the subsequent test excavations confirms that:

- There is no evidence for wholesale destruction of archaeological material on the study site
- There is substantive evidence for historical archaeological sites of local significance, intertwined with archaeological remains that are not identifiable as being of local or state significance.
- There is evidence for archaeological material subject to the NPW Act, in both post European contexts (low density), and in the natural soil profiles (low to high density).

These factors are pertinent to any development proposal for the study site.

With this data in hand, it is evident that there is no foreseeable impediment to the future development of the study site occasioned by the presence of archaeology. The effect of any future development upon the archaeological resource will need to be assessed in full once the impact of the development is known. The removal of any of the archaeological resources present on the study site, subject to the NPW Act or the Heritage Act, can be managed by archaeological excavation permits (s140 heritage Act and AHIP NPW Act), encompassing monitoring and detailed archaeological excavation which will only be required in the location and to the extent of the proposed impacts.

There are no identifiable or foreseeable archaeological remains that would affect any proposed development by requiring retention in-situ (unforeseeable examples could include inhumations or unknown and unsuspected convict period relics). However that being the case there is significant potential for the retention (and interpretation) of archaeological material in portions of the site that will not be impacted by development.

The final reports outlining the detailed results of test excavation, in terms of the guidelines and permits issued, will be completed to a hold point that allows for the flexibility of the final design and form the basis for any future statutory permit application.