

Oxford 160, Paddington

Historical Archaeological Assessment

Prepared for Toohey Miller

December 2025 – V03



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Executive Summary

This Historical (non- Indigenous) Archaeological Assessment (HAA) has been prepared by Extent Heritage Pty Ltd to accompany a detailed State Significant Development Application (SSDA) for the proposed mixed use residential flat building and shop development proposal at 142-160 Oxford Street, 13 Gipps Street and 6 Shadforth Street, Paddington. The site is legally described as Lot 1 DP26385, Lot 2 DP26385, Lot 3 DP26385, Lot 4 DP26385, Lot 1 DP70235, Lot 5 DP26385 and SP13018.

This report has been prepared to accompany the EIS submitted for SSD DA, SSD-97528708.

This assessment has found that the study area has the potential to contain archaeological material from the following phases in discrete areas:

- Phase 1 - Early subdivision and the establishment of Paddington village (1840-1860): There is low and low-moderate archaeological potential for this phase. Archaeological features and structural material of local significance may survive in pockets where existing impacts are minimal. Archaeological material from this phase may not meet the threshold for significance if it is heavily decontextualised and lacks intra-site coherence.
- Phase 2 - Municipality of Paddington and intensification (1860-1900): There is low and moderate potential for archaeology of local significance to survive from this phase which may survive in small areas where historical impacts have been minimal. Typically, the complexity of the archaeology from this period in high density urban environments can elevate its research potential despite some disturbance and decontextualization. However, archaeological material from this phase may not meet the threshold for significance if it is heavily decontextualised and lacks intra-site coherence.
- Phase 3 - Commercial and industrial use (1900-1960): There is moderate-high potential for remains from this phase to survive in the lane off Gipps Street because of the robust nature of the structures from this period. Elsewhere, the archaeological potential for this phase is Low-Moderate. However, standardisation of construction methods and improvements in sanitation during this period typically negatively select against the creation of archaeology with research potential. Archaeological material from this period is unlikely to meet the threshold for significance despite its high chance of survival.

Recommendations

Prior to construction, an archaeological impact statement should be prepared for the site.

If impacts to potential archaeology cannot be avoided, an archaeological research design (ARD) should be prepared that maximises the research potential of the archaeological resource, which is likely fragmented and lacks unifying stratigraphic relationships across the site. The ARD should provide a research framework that allows for comparative analysis of the archaeology with better-preserved sites in the local area. Such an approach would be considered appropriate to properly mitigate against its removal and ensure that the recovered archaeology feeds back into the significance values of the local area

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project initiation

This Historical Archaeological Assessment (HAA) has been prepared by Extent Heritage Pty Ltd to accompany a detailed SSDA for the proposed mixed use residential flat building and shop development proposal at for the proposed mixed use residential flat building and shop development proposal at 142-160 Oxford Street, 13 Gipps Street and 6 Shadforth Street, Paddington.

The SSDA seeks development consent for:

- Demolition of all structures and buildings on the site, except for the dwelling on 13 Gipps Street, and removal of vegetation on the site excluding vegetation on 13 Gipps Street.
- Site works comprising excavation and ground works including bulk excavation and in ground services works.
- A four (4) storey basement, with vehicular access from Shadforth Street, comprising:
 - Car parking spaces;
 - Motorcycle spaces;
 - Bicycle spaces;
 - Garbage storage;
 - Loading space;
 - Plant rooms; and
 - Apartment storage.
- Ground floor shops;
- A total of approximately 40 dwellings, comprised of:
 - Affordable housing dwellings to be managed by a community housing provider for a period of at least 15 years.
 - Market build-to-sell dwellings
- Landscaping works and extension and augmentation of services and infrastructure as required, including landscaping works on 13 Gipps Street.
- Provision of pedestrian access to the development will be provided from Bethel Lane.

This report has been prepared in response to the requirements contained within the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for In-fill Affordable Housing

dated 28 November 2025 for the SSD DA (SSD-97528708). Specifically, this report has been prepared to respond to the SEARs requirement issued below.

22. Environmental Heritage

Where there is potential for direct or indirect impacts on environmental heritage, provide a Statement of Heritage Impact and Archaeological Assessment (where required), in accordance with the relevant guidelines.

This report is a non-Indigenous (historical) archaeological assessment, which contributes to the fulfilment of requirement 22.

1.2 Site Description

The site is irregular in shape and situated at 13 Gipps Street, 6 Shadforth Street and 142-148, 160 Oxford Street, Paddington within the Woollahra Local Government Area (LGA). It has a site area of 2,172.4m². The site is legally described as Lot 1 DP26385, Lot 2 DP26385, Lot 3 DP26385, Lot 4 DP26385, Lot 1 DP70235, Lot 5 DP26385 and SP13018.

The site is well located with a bus station directly in front of the site on Oxford Street which provides services to Bondi Junction, Rozelle and Marrickville Metro Station and less than 600m away further east of Oxford street, bus services are provided to the Sydney CBD. The broader context includes a mix of uses of various heights, form and age. The site comprises of three (3) street frontages, including a northern frontage to Gipps Street, eastern frontage to Shadforth Street and southern frontage to Oxford Street.

Existing development on the site currently comprises of a detached two (2) storey rendered residential dwelling at 13 Gipps Street, a three (3) storey brick and rendered residential flat building at 160 Oxford Street with 27 studio dwellings, a row of two (2) storey terrace houses between 142-148 Oxford Street and a two (2) storey brick cottage at 6 Shadforth Street. Notably, there are two vehicular accessways to Gipps Street.

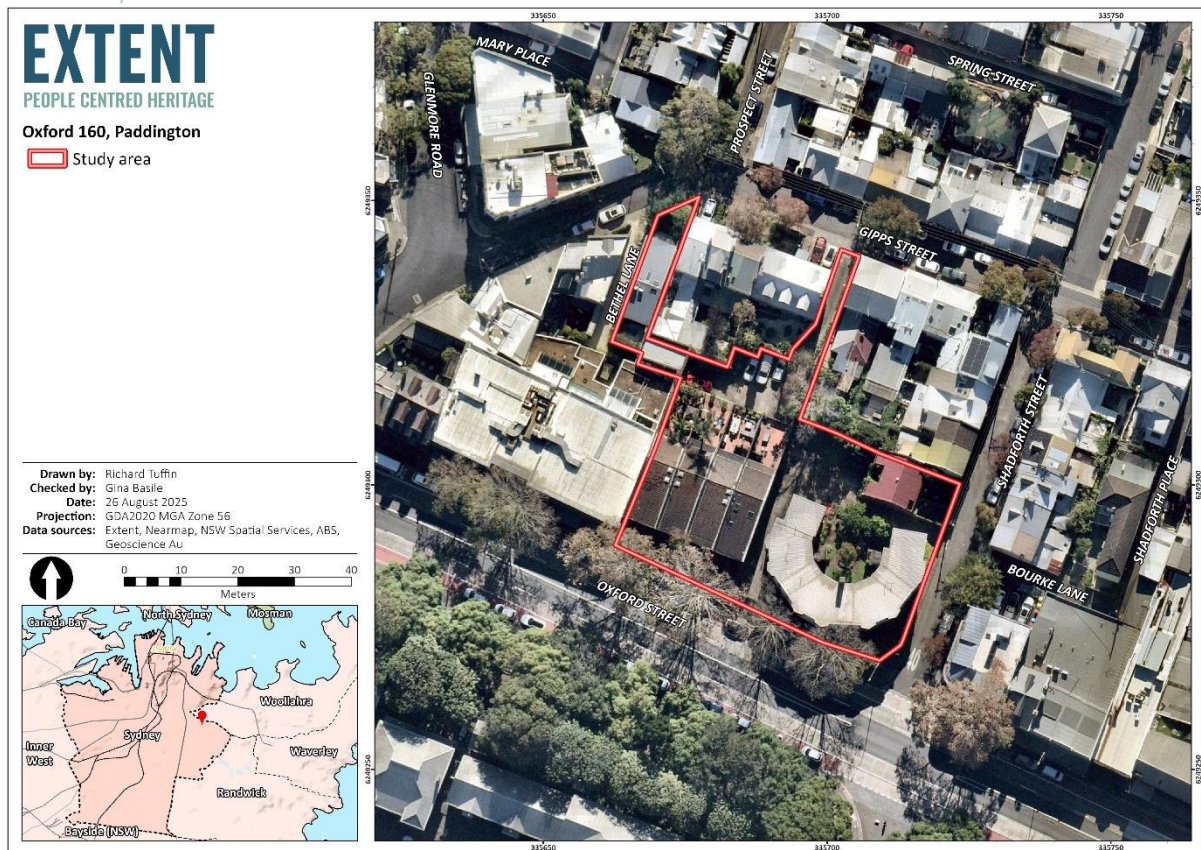


Figure 1. Location of the study area

1.3 Statutory context

Historical archaeological relics in NSW are protected by state legislation and environmental planning instruments provided by local government.

Extent understands that the Oxford 160 project is seeking SSD determination. The *Heritage Act 1977* is turned off during the assessment of State significant projects. Instead, the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) are issued, which identify what information needs to be included in an environmental impact statement. These may include requirements to investigate environmental heritage.

The required supporting information may include:

- statement of heritage impact
- existing and proposed drawings and drawing schedule.

When there is known or suspected historical archaeology to manage, this documentation may also be required:

- archaeological assessment report
- archaeological research design and excavation methodology.

Prior to, or in the absence of that determination, the specific legislation relevant to this project includes:

- *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW) (the Heritage Act)
- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW) (EPA Act)
- *Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 2014* (Woollahra LEP 2014)

NSW Heritage Act 1977

The Heritage Act is designed to conserve the environmental heritage of New South Wales (NSW) and regulate development impacts on the state's heritage assets. Significant historical archaeological features are afforded automatic statutory protection by the 'relics' provisions of the Act. A 'relic' is defined in the Act as:

any deposit, artefact, object or material evidence that:

- a) relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement, and
- b) is of State or local heritage significance.

In accordance with section 139(1) of the Heritage Act, it is an offence to disturb or excavate land, where this may affect a relic, without an approval or excavation permit issued by the Heritage Council of NSW, or an endorsed 'exemption' or 'exception' to disturb or expose and destroy a relic. Sites that may contain archaeological relics are usually managed under sections 140 (application) and 141 (approval) of the Heritage Act. Sites with potential archaeology that are listed on the State Heritage Register (SHR) are managed under sections 60 (application) and 63 (approval) of the Heritage Act.

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Environmental planning instruments made under the EPA Act include Local Environmental Plans (LEPs), that guide planning decisions for local government areas. The relevant environmental planning instrument is the *Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 2014* (Woollahra LEP 2014). The following subsections highlight key information within these environmental planning instruments that pertain to heritage conservation.

Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 2014

The objectives of the Woollahra LEP 2014 with respect to environment and heritage are provided in the following clauses:

5.10 Heritage conservation

(1) Objectives The objectives of this clause are as follows—

- (a) to conserve the environmental heritage of Woollahra,
- (b) to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views,

- (c) to conserve archaeological sites,
- (d) to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.
- (2) Requirement for consent Development consent is required for any of the following—
 - (a) demolishing or moving any of the following or altering the exterior of any of the following (including, in the case of a building, making changes to its detail, fabric, finish or appearance)—
 - (i) a heritage item,
 - (ii) an Aboriginal object,
 - (iii) a building, work, relic or tree within a heritage conservation area,
 - (b) altering a heritage item that is a building by making structural changes to its interior or by making changes to anything inside the item that is specified in Schedule 5 in relation to the item,
 - (c) disturbing or excavating an archaeological site while knowing, or having reasonable cause to suspect, that the disturbance or excavation will or is likely to result in a relic being discovered, exposed, moved, damaged or destroyed,
 - (d) disturbing or excavating an Aboriginal place of heritage significance,
 - (e) erecting a building on land—
 - (i) on which a heritage item is located or that is within a heritage conservation area, or
 - (ii) on which an Aboriginal object is located or that is within an Aboriginal place of heritage significance,
 - (f) subdividing land—
 - (i) on which a heritage item is located or that is within a heritage conservation area, or
 - (ii) on which an Aboriginal object is located or that is within an Aboriginal place of heritage significance.
- (3) When consent not required However, development consent under this clause is not required if—
 - (a) the applicant has notified the consent authority of the proposed development and the consent authority has advised the applicant in writing before any work is carried out that it is satisfied that the proposed development—
 - (i) is of a minor nature or is for the maintenance of the heritage item, Aboriginal object, Aboriginal place of heritage significance or archaeological site or a building, work, relic, tree or place within the heritage conservation area, and
 - (ii) would not adversely affect the heritage significance of the heritage item, Aboriginal object, Aboriginal place, archaeological site or heritage conservation area, or
 - (b) the development is in a cemetery or burial ground and the proposed development—
 - (i) is the creation of a new grave or monument, or excavation or disturbance of land for the purpose of conserving or repairing monuments or grave markers, and
 - (ii) would not cause disturbance to human remains, relics, Aboriginal objects in the form of grave goods, or to an Aboriginal place of heritage significance, or

(c) the development is limited to the removal of a tree or other vegetation that the Council is satisfied is a risk to human life or property, or

(d) the development is exempt development.

(4) Effect of proposed development on heritage significance. The consent authority must, before granting consent under this clause in respect of a heritage item or heritage conservation area, consider the effect of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the item or area concerned. This subclause applies regardless of whether a heritage management document is prepared under subclause (5) or a heritage conservation management plan is submitted under subclause (6).

(5) Heritage assessment. The consent authority may, before granting consent to any development—

(a) on land on which a heritage item is located, or

(b) on land that is within a heritage conservation area, or

(c) on land that is within the vicinity of land referred to in paragraph (a) or (b),

require a heritage management document to be prepared that assesses 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.

(6) Heritage conservation management plans The consent authority may require, after considering the heritage significance of a heritage item and the extent of change proposed to it, the submission of a heritage conservation management plan before granting consent under this clause.

(7) Archaeological sites The consent authority must, before granting consent under this clause to the carrying out of development on an archaeological site (other than land listed on the State Heritage Register or to which an interim heritage order under the Heritage Act 1977 applies)—

(a) notify the Heritage Council of its intention to grant consent, and

(b) take into consideration any response received from the Heritage Council within 28 days after the notice is sent.

(8) Aboriginal places of heritage significance The consent authority must, before granting consent under this clause to the carrying out of development in an Aboriginal place of heritage significance—

(a) consider the effect of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the place and any Aboriginal object known or reasonably likely to be located at the place by means of an adequate investigation and assessment (which may involve consideration of a heritage impact statement), and

(b) notify the local Aboriginal communities, in writing or in such other manner as may be appropriate, about the application and take into consideration any response received within 28 days after the notice is sent.

Listings

Extent Heritage undertook a review of all available heritage databases including the NSW State Heritage Register (SHR), NSW State Heritage Inventory (SHI), Woollahra LEP 2014, Sydney LEP 2012, Section 170 Register (S170), National Heritage List, Commonwealth Heritage List, and National Trust Heritage List (NT).

The search revealed no statutory or non-statutory listed heritage items, heritage conservations areas or archaeological sites within the study area. There are several heritage items in the vicinity of the study area (shown in Figure 2).

There are three heritage items within 50m of the study area:

Item	Instrument	Significance	Item No.
Victoria Barracks Group	Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012	Local	I1086
Victoria Barracks Heritage Conservation Area	Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012	State	C49
Rose and Crown Hotel and Interiors	Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 2014	Local	I256

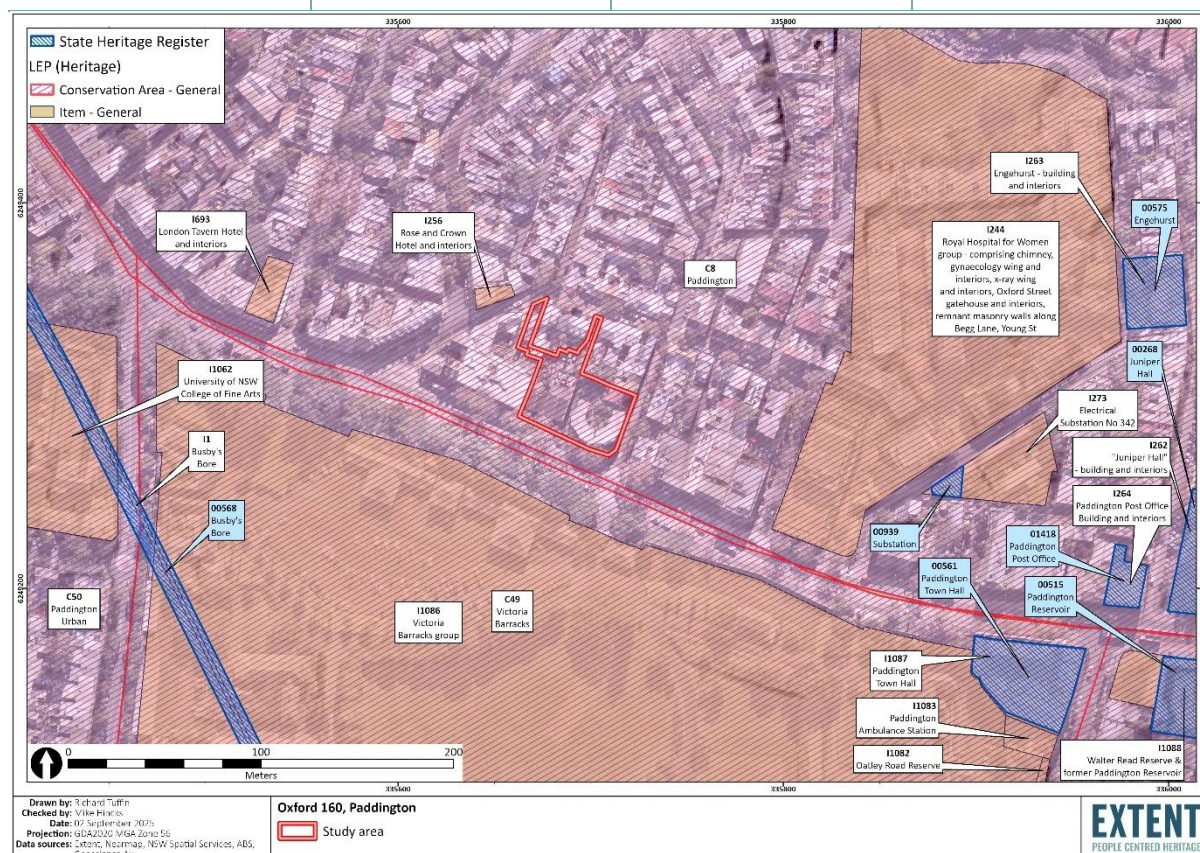


Figure 2. Heritage items in the vicinity of the study area.

1.4 Approach and methodology

This report was prepared in accordance with the principles and procedures established by the following documents:

- The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013 (the Burra Charter) (Australia ICOMOS 2013); and
- 'Historical Archaeology Code of Practice' (Heritage Council 2006).

1.5 Limitations

This report uses historical documentation and previously established significance assessments prepared by third party heritage consultants to describe and assess the heritage significance of land that would be affected by the proposal.

This report does not review the Indigenous cultural heritage values of the subject area.

1.6 Author identification

This report was prepared by Mike Hincks, Principal Heritage Advisor.

It was reviewed by Graham Wilson, principal heritage advisor.

2. Historical context

2.1 Introduction

The historical overview provides sufficient historical background to provide an understanding of the place in order to assess the significance and provide relevant recommendations, however, it is not intended as an exhaustive history of the site.

A detailed history of the Paddington area has been produced in *Paddington: A History* (Young 2019). Section 2.3 summarises the interpretation of the area's history as presented in Young's work, particularly Chapter 2, authored by Bill Morrison, and Chapter 3 by Garry Wotherspoon and Paul Ashton.

2.2 Aboriginal occupation

The study area lies within Gadigal Country, stretching along the southern shore of the harbour from Darling Harbour eastward to the traditional lands of the Birrabirragal people near the harbour entrance (Coast History and Heritage 2021). These clans were interconnected through marriage, and individuals held spiritual and family ties to areas beyond their immediate clan estates, travelling widely for cultural obligations. Trade networks extended vast distances, evidenced by a stone axe found in Vaucluse originating from west of the Blue Mountains. Coastal people developed unique implements, favouring local quartz pebbles, bone, and shell for tools. Archaeological evidence, such as a rockshelter in Nielsen Park used from about 1,300 years ago, reveals a diet of shellfish, mammal, and fish, along with stone artefacts. Rose Bay also was the location of a significant campsite and a traditional tribal punishment ground where disputes were settled through ritual combat (Attenbrow 2010, 137).

Violence, disease and dispossession resulted from the invasion by Europeans in 1788 and drastically impacted the traditional way of life for Aboriginal people. However, they did not disappear, historical records and documentation provide insight into the continued presence and lifestyles of Aboriginal people in and around the city throughout the nineteenth century onwards. From the establishment of a fishing town in Elizabeth Bay, known as Elizabeth Town, to buying and selling goods at the Circular Quay Boatsheds, Aboriginal people continued to camp around the harbour bays and surrounding areas (Coast History and Heritage 2024; Irish 2017). For example, during the mid to late nineteenth century, three main camps were known to have been used regularly by Aboriginal people around the area (Coast History and Heritage 2024; Irish 2017):

West Bush - This camp was situated within remnant forest at Darlinghurst prior to the area becoming dense housing.

Upper Ocean Street - This camp was located at a natural highpoint in the landform and was situated within the rough footprint of the present Edgecliff Station; and

Mona - The Mona property was located at Darling Point consisting of the ruins of a former chapel, the privately owned Mona Estate. Records from the Minutes of the Aboriginal

Protection Board detail police attempt to persuade Aboriginal people within the Estate to 'move-on' only for them to return later in the evening (Irish 2017: 127).

Early European colonists also noted the network of Aboriginal pathways through the bush, some of which were likely incorporated into some early colonial roads. In the 1830s, a walking track that went from the ridge of Oxford Street at Darlinghurst Gaol down to Rushcutters Bay via Darlinghurst and around Bayswater Road was still referred to as the 'maroo', meaning path (Coast History and Heritage 2021, 37). Oxford Street itself likely developed from an Aboriginal track that followed the ridgeline eastward, toward the southern headland of Sydney Harbour. In 1803, this path was cleared by convicts to establish access to the South Head signal station, which had been constructed more than a decade earlier (Curio 2020, 10).

These stories help situate the ongoing presence of Aboriginal people within the city and Woollahra area. Paddington would have been located within the wider landscape and traversed between well-known areas, such as fishing spots in Vaucluse down to the Shoalhaven.

2.3 The development of Paddington

Old South Head Road (later Oxford Street) was first shown as a track on Captain John Hunter's 1791 map, and it had long been used by Aboriginal people. It became a vital link both for defence and for access to the first grants in the area. Between 1810 and 1822, over 200 acres were granted in the Paddington basin for service industries, each chosen to exploit local resources. Thomas West established a watermill on Rushcutters Creek, William Thomas harvested swamp grasses for thatch, and Cooper, Underwood and Forbes built a distillery drawing on nearby streams. Charles Gordon had also received land south of Old South Head Road.

These grants were irregular, often marked by natural features rather than precise surveys, which had lasting effects on the suburb's form. West's Barcom Glen, for example, was defined by a swamp mahogany tree, a boundary that was long contested in the courts. A significant outcome of the Cooper, Underwood and Forbes grant was the creation of Glenmore Road, linking Old South Head and Point Piper Roads to their distillery. From the 1830s smaller grants appeared along this twisting road, where villas and estates were built by colonial gentry, among them Juniper Hall, Goodhope, Elfred and Deep Dene. Institutions such as churches, schools, and a reservoir also began to cluster along Old South Head Road.

The first use of the name "Paddington" came in 1839, when Underwood subdivided 50 acres of his estate as the "Paddington Estate," after the London borough. Around the same time the Post Mill, operated by the Gordon family, became a local landmark. In the early 1840s economic depression slowed growth in the colony, but Governor Bourke's decision to relocate the military barracks from Wynyard Square to South Head Road spurred new development. The chosen site, two miles from Hyde Park, was strategically placed with views towards Botany Bay and the entrance to Port Jackson. Designed by Lieutenant-Colonel George Barney, construction commenced in 1841, employing stonemasons, quarrymen, carpenters and labourers, including skilled Quebecois political prisoners transported from Canada. A village quickly formed around the barracks as cottages were erected for the workers and tradespeople, and services grew to supply both the civilian population and the military. The

barracks fundamentally altered the character of the area, transforming it from a semi-rural landscape into an emerging urban settlement.

An early and influential subdivision that included the land within the study area took place before the barracks were constructed. The Australian Subscription Library was granted eight acres along South Head Road. With the barracks being built opposite, the land's value rose sharply. In 1840 the Library committee subdivided the estate and sold allotments at auction under the name "Australian Subscription Library Estate." The sale realised £3384, a significant return, and set a precedent for later speculative development. Its subdivision formed the core of the first Paddington village, centred on Gipps Street and bounded by Spring and Prospect streets. This initial village contained cottages and terraces, some of which still survive. The subdivision not only demonstrated the profitability of breaking up larger grants but also provided housing for artisans and small traders whose presence was tied to the barracks. It marked the beginning of a sustained process of subdivision that, by the end of the century, had reshaped the district into a dense urban suburb.

The gold rushes of the 1850s brought a surge of immigration and rapid population growth in Sydney, which rose from 39,000 in 1851 to over 275,000 by 1891. Paddington's population expanded in parallel, from only a few hundred in 1840 to nearly 19,000 by 1891. This growth created demand for housing, services, and infrastructure, and between 1860 and 1890 an average of five houses were built every fortnight. By the 1870s, subdivision of these estates had begun in earnest. Large estate owners, moving on or seeking profit, broke up their holdings into smaller allotments. The irregularity of the original grants meant that new subdivisions produced an equally irregular street pattern. To the east, the Underwood Estate, lying on flatter land, developed in a more regular form, and south of Old South Head Road, parts of the Sydney Common were also laid out systematically. Between the 1870s and 1900s, successive subdivisions—such as the Goodhope, Elfred, Duxford and Broughton estates—completed the transformation of villas into dense rows of terraces. Few of the original villas survived; most gave way to urban housing. Despite the changes, the imprint of the earliest land grants continued to shape the suburb.

The suburb developed a strong commercial presence along Old South Head Road (renamed Oxford Street in 1885), with shops, industries, taverns, schools and churches. Public facilities included Paddington Public School (1856), Glenmore Road Public School (1883), and churches such as St John's Presbyterian (1859), St Matthias' Anglican (1861), and St Francis of Assisi Catholic (1890). Transport improvements, from horse-buses in the 1850s to steam trams in the 1880s, reinforced Paddington's role as Sydney's first commuter suburb.

Paddington was incorporated as a municipality in April 1860 after residents petitioned for local control under the 1858 Municipalities Act. The first council met at the Paddington Inn; with William Perry elected as chairman. Attempts to amalgamate with the City of Sydney in 1869 were resisted. By the late nineteenth century, ongoing subdivision of the remaining gentry estates filled the slopes with terrace housing, built largely by speculative builders. The council borrowed heavily to provide basic infrastructure such as roads, and by 1900 Paddington had become one of Sydney's largest and most prosperous municipalities.

During the first half of the twentieth century, Paddington entered a period of gradual decline. The suburb, once a prosperous municipality filled with terraces for the working and lower-

middle classes, faced overcrowding and a deteriorating housing stock. By the 1920s and 1930s, many houses were in poor condition, with inadequate sanitation and little modernisation. The economic depression of the 1930s further intensified hardship, and unemployment was widespread among residents. The Second World War brought some renewed activity, particularly through the presence of Victoria Barracks and associated military functions, but the underlying issues of poverty and poor housing remained unresolved. By the 1940s, Paddington was widely regarded as a slum area, its earlier Victorian prosperity long faded.

In the postwar decades, attitudes towards Paddington began to shift. By the 1950s, the suburb was seen by planners and governments as a candidate for redevelopment, with proposals to clear large sections for high-rise housing. However, these plans were increasingly contested by residents and heritage advocates. From the 1960s onwards, a wave of middle-class professionals and artists began moving into the area, attracted by its proximity to the city and the distinctive character of its Victorian terraces. This process of gentrification gradually transformed Paddington, bringing rising property values, the restoration of housing, and the displacement of many long-term working-class residents. At the same time, heritage movements gained strength, culminating in Paddington's recognition as one of Australia's most important urban conservation areas. By the end of the twentieth century, the suburb had been reshaped once more, this time as a symbol of heritage preservation and gentrified urban living, a marked contrast to its earlier reputation as a declining working-class district.

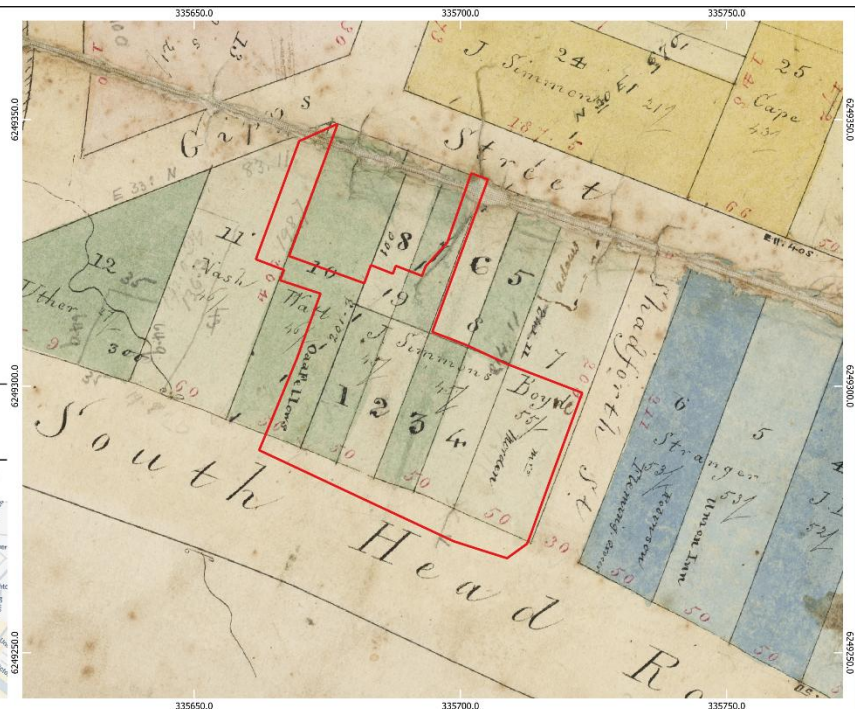
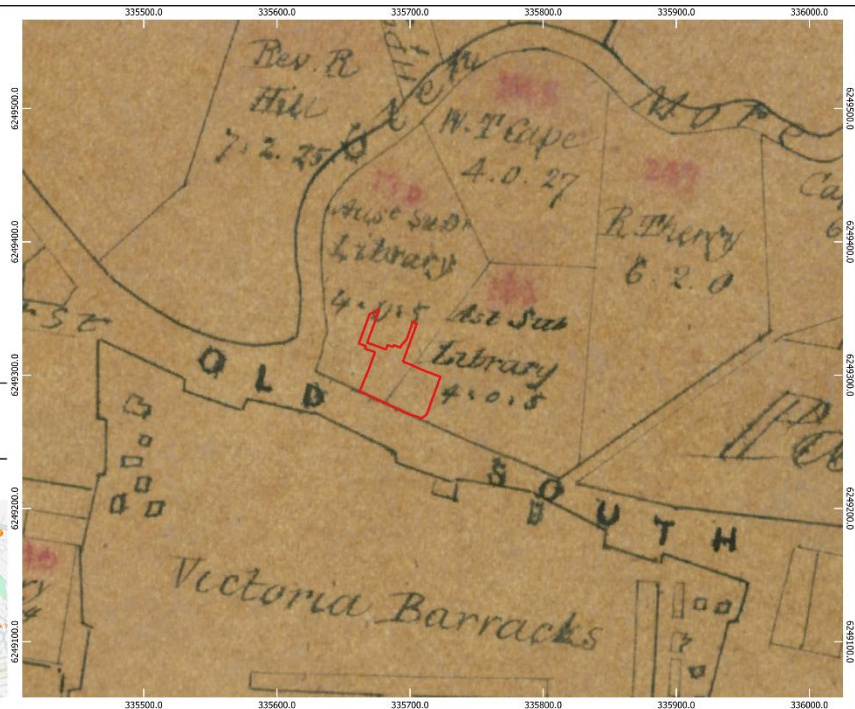
2.4 Development of the study area

The study area is bounded by Oxford Street, Shadforth Street and Gipps Street, Paddington. It was originally part of the 8-acre grant to the Australian Subscription Library and was located on the old road to South Head, across from the site of Victoria Barracks. The land was officially granted on 24 July 1840, fulfilling a promise made by Governor Darling 'before 1831' (Series 35 Vol. 249 HLRV). It was subdivided that same year to generate funds for a library building on Macquarie Street.

The study area contains parts of Lots 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the subdivision. Many of the lots within the study area were subsequently subdivided themselves, creating a congested patchwork of properties by the late 1840s. The rapid shift to a more urban density was accelerated by the construction of the barracks. Labourers and artisans took up residence on the new lots which became the core of the Paddington village. An 1853 map of the block, although not detailed, shows that Lot 7 alone had buildings fronting Oxford, Shadforth and Gipps Streets, and that other lots within the subdivision that were outside the study area had followed the same pattern, creating a tight neighbourhood within the original 8-acre grant.

Lot sizes very quickly lost their uniformity, as did the patterning of space within them. Lanes developed to access buildings and parts of properties that were set back from the street, 'landlocked' lots that were islands in the centre of the new, crowded blocks.

By the 1880s, the study area contained all these elements. Lot 7 was heavily subdivided. With frontages to Shadforth, Gipps and Oxford Streets, this lot was able to maximise its buildable space.



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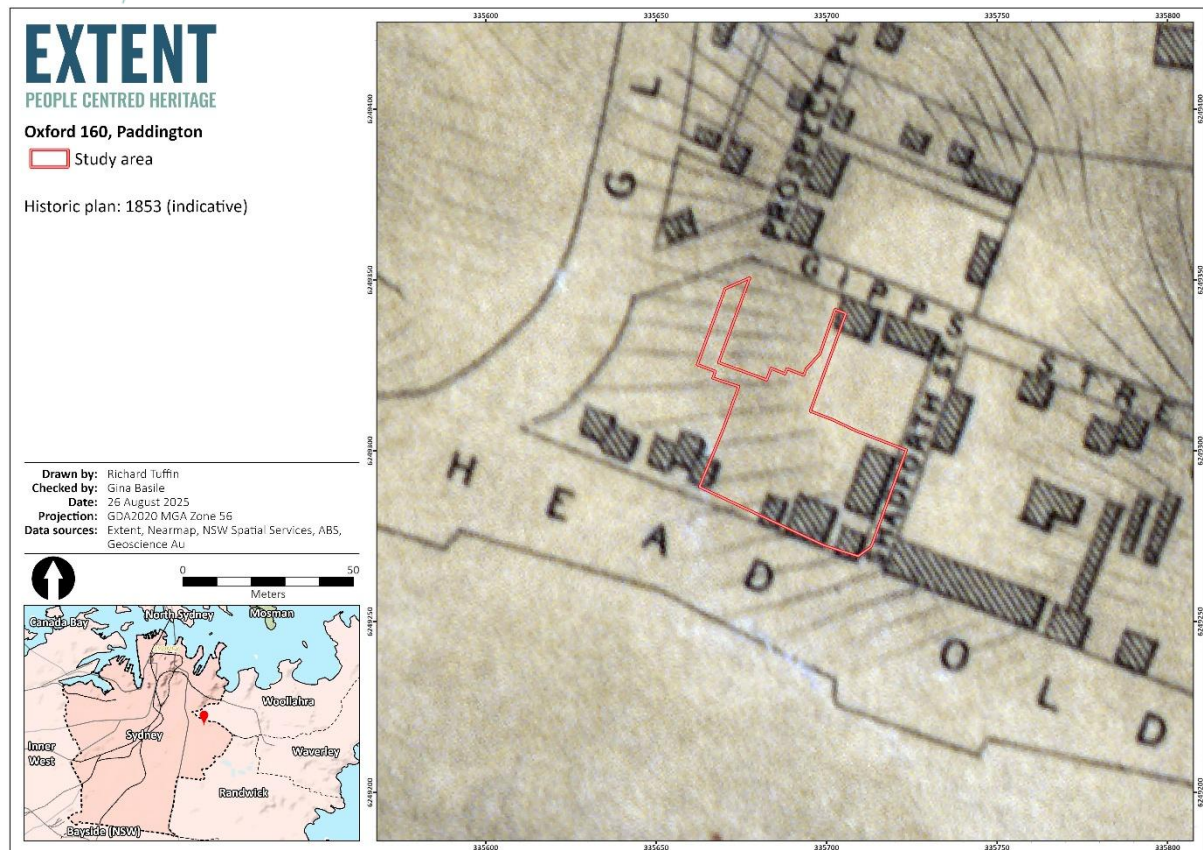


Figure 5. An 1853 plan of the site showing the indicative location of structures (City of Sydney Archives).



Figure 6. Images from primary application sketches 13360 (left) and 18481 (right) showing internal subdivisions of Lots 7, 8, 9 (right) and 11 (left) (NSW HLRV).



Figure 7. The study area in 1886 relative to the original subdivision lots (SLNSW).

By 1886 the part of Lot 7 that was within the study area contained a number of different buildings across four lots. In the southeast corner, with frontages to Oxford Street and Shadforth Street stood a large building with a footprint of 10m x 7.5m. It was still standing in 1930, and the shadow on the aerial imagery shows that it was at least two storeys high. Built up against the back wall was a cottage-like building with verandah, in a yard with sheds flanking the northern boundary. Bordering this lot to the west along Oxford Street was a dwelling-sized structure with an add-on at the rear, a small front yard and an outhouse along its rear (northern) boundary. North along Shadforth Street were two small cottages opposite Bourke Lane, each having a small yard with outhouse at the rear. Further along towards Gipps Street was a small rectangular structure with a footprint of just 5m x 3.5m, set back from the street by about 12m in an enclosed yard.

In Lots 8, 9, and 10 seven terraced residences with elongated yards at the rear were built along the Oxford Street frontage. Each of the yards contained an outhouse and sheds of varying size. Access to the rear of these properties was via a lane off Gipps Street. Presumably this would have been necessary to empty cesspits that were otherwise inaccessible from the crowded Oxford Street side of the lots. The lane was located in the northern half of Lot 9, which notably among the other lots on the block was not formally subdivided until 1958 (Vol. 7524 Fol. 58 NSW HLRV).

The part of the study area in Lot 11 was on the eastern side of Bethel Lane. Two residences had been squeezed into this narrow lot, with the lane off Gipps Street being the only access to the property at the rear. Both properties contained very small yards with an outhouse in each.



Figure 8. 1886 Metropolitan Detail Series showing development within the study area (SLNSW).

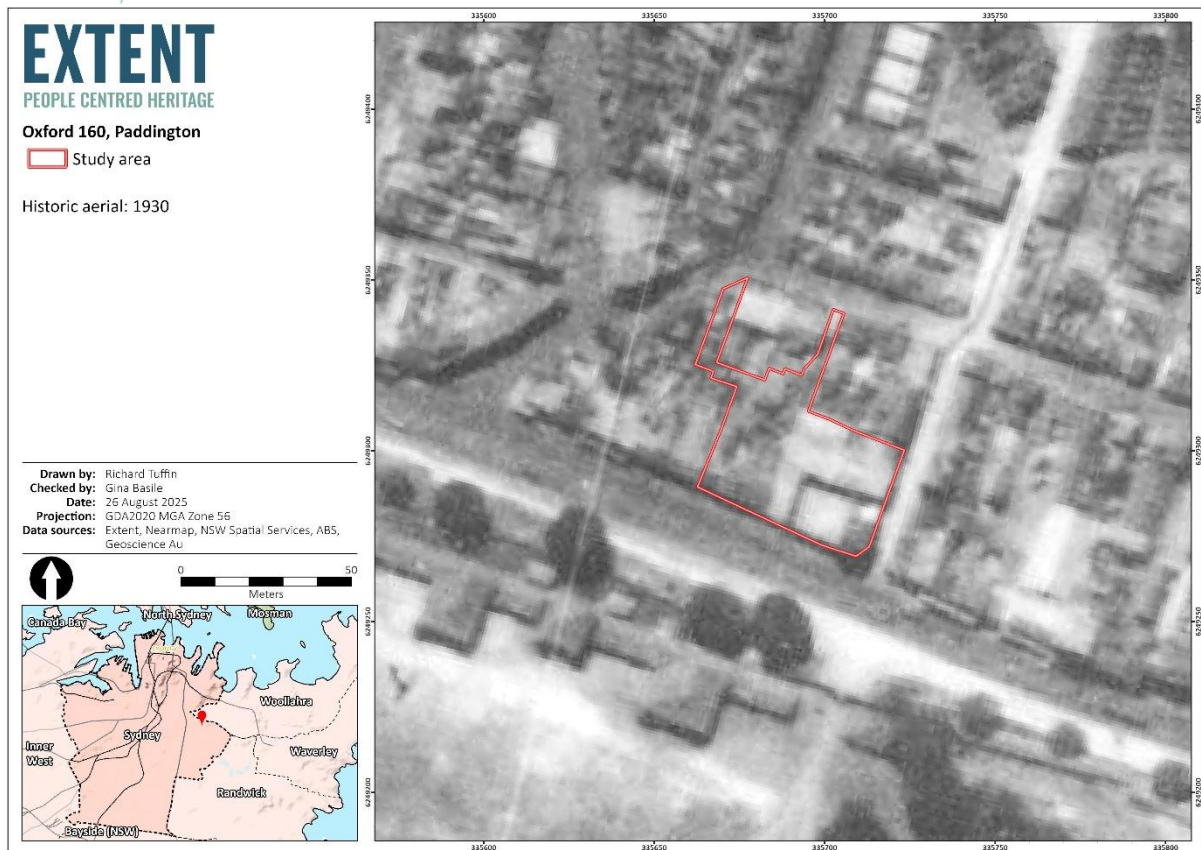


Figure 9. 1930 aerial imagery showing a shift towards larger commercial premises in the study area (NSW HLRV).

Over the next half century, the lots expanded once more. Despite the years of depression and stagnation, larger commercial and industrial buildings began to occupy the Oxford Street frontage, with residences now confined to Gipps and Shadforth Streets. A large 2-storey L-shaped building occupied the southern half of Lots 7 and 8. By 1947 a substantial meat-packing plant had been constructed on lot 9 by Thomas O'Sullivan, which was expanded to Lot 10 in 1958 by Anderson's Sausages (Vol. 5755 Fol. 136 and Vol. 7524 Fol. 58 NSW HLRV).

In the second half of the twentieth century the study area was transformed once more, with terraced housing replacing the meat packing plant and a 3-storey apartment block constructed at the corner of Shadforth and Oxford Streets. At 13 Gipps Street (Lot 11), the two residences on this narrow lot were demolished for a large house occupying most of the Bethel Lane frontage.

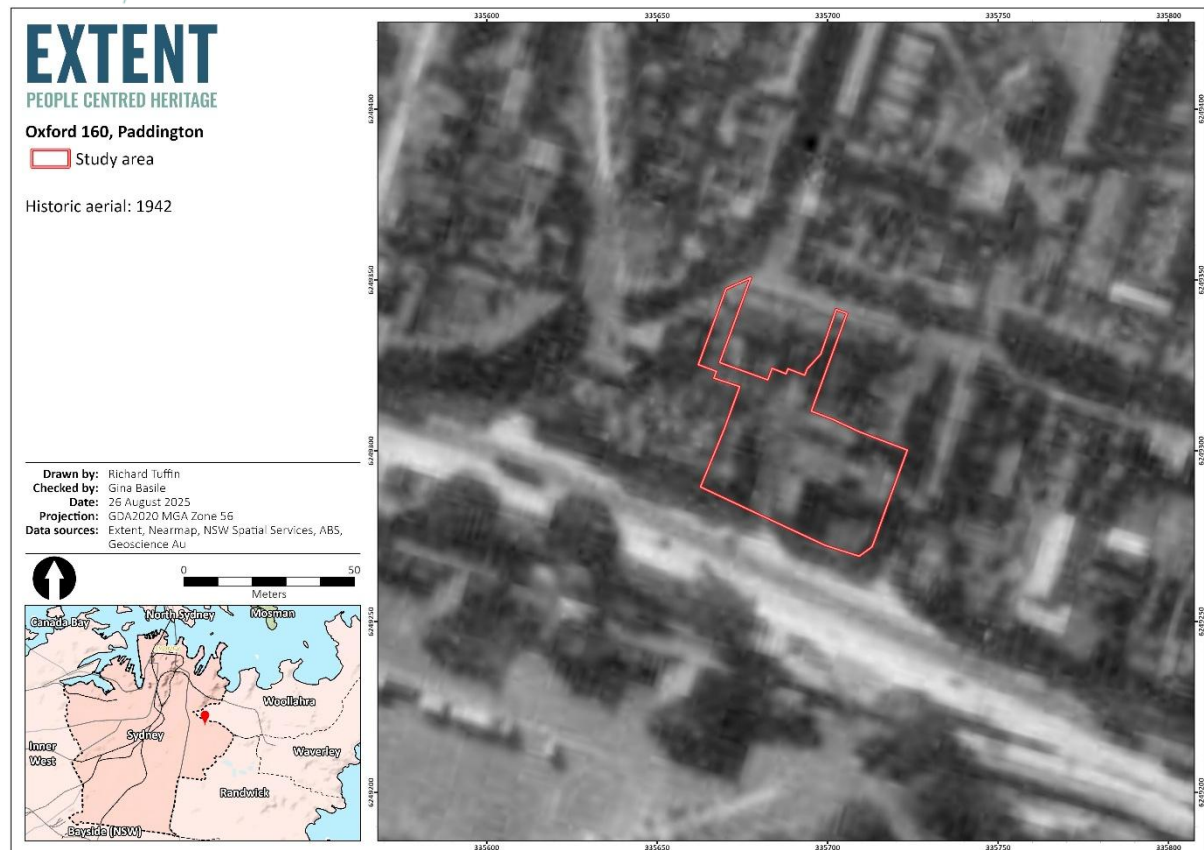


Figure 10. 1942 aerial imagery showing development within the study area (NSW HLRV).



Figure 11. 1950 City Detail Series showing O'Sullivan's meat packing plant in the centre of the study area (City of Sydney Archives).

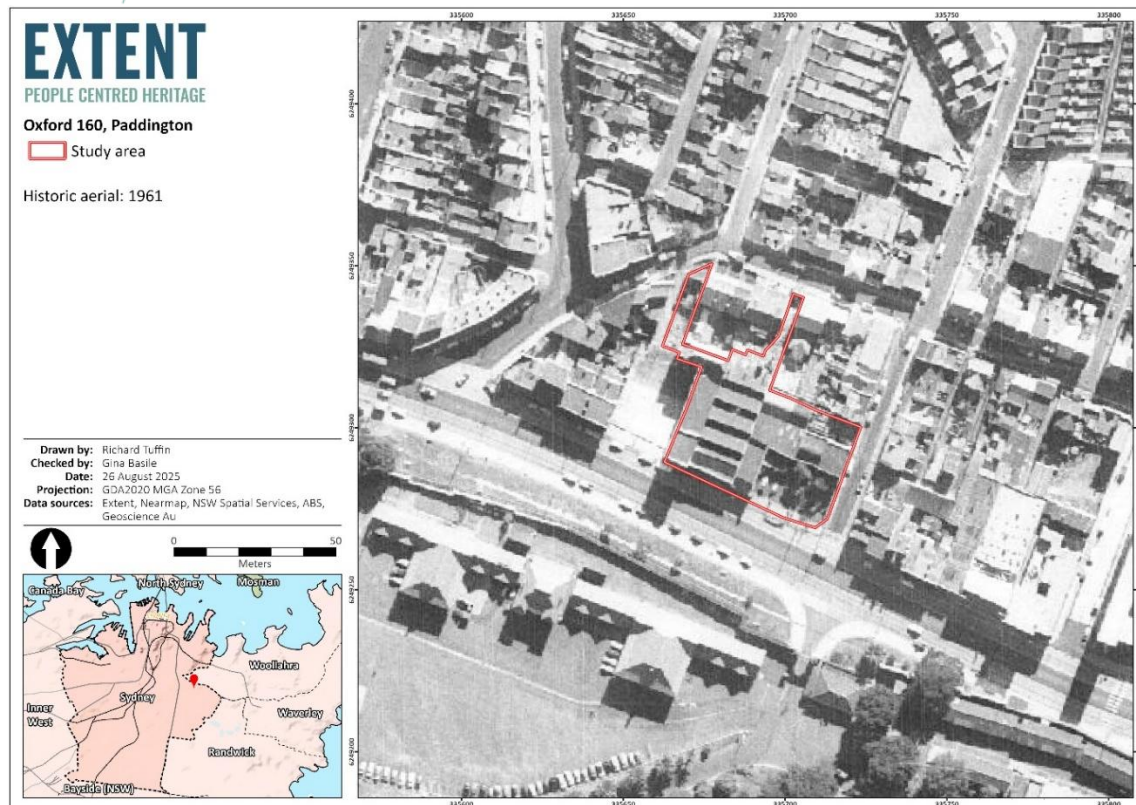


Figure 12. 1961 aerial imagery showing large industrial buildings within the study area (NSW HLRV).

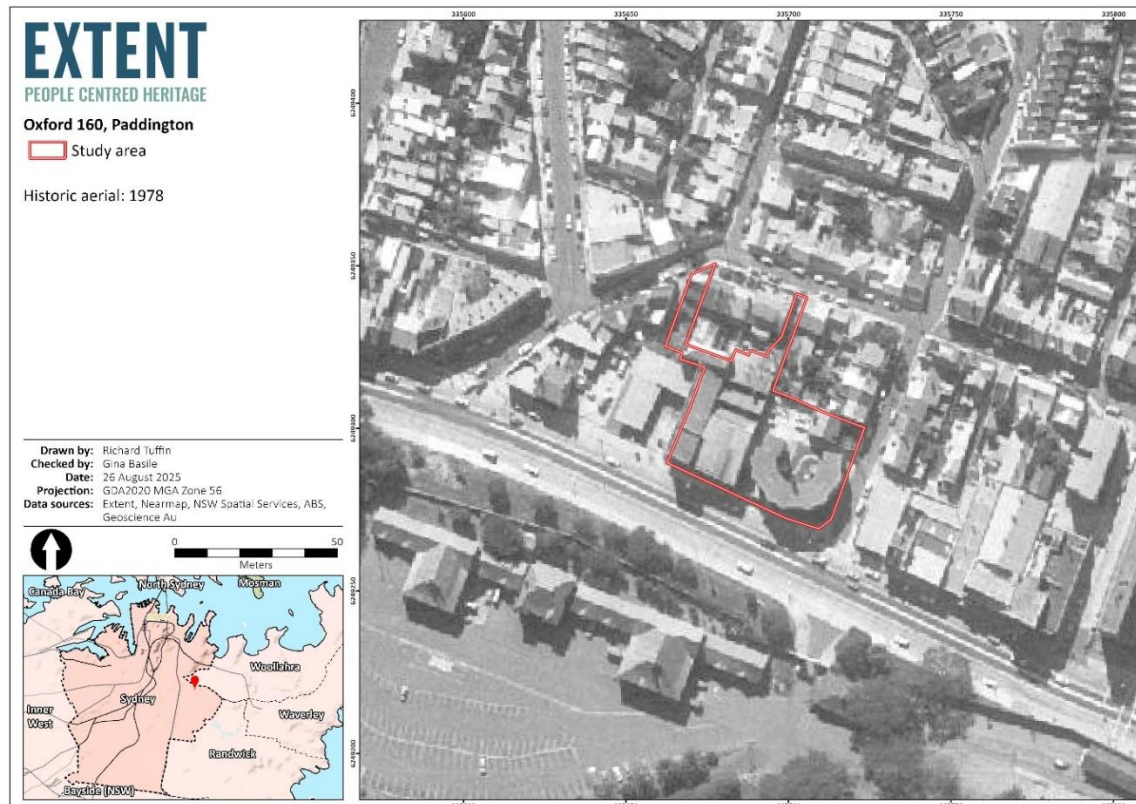


Figure 13. 1978 aerial imagery showing a shift back to residential occupation (NSW HLRV).



Figure 14. Construction of 142-148 Oxford Street in 1982 (National Trust).



Figure 15. Construction of 13 Gipps Street in 1982 (National Trust).

The study area has undergone several phases of demolition and reconstruction across all lots. The standing structures on the site as well as associated landscaping and surfacing were all built between 1961 and 1986. The construction and demolition techniques, modern machinery, and methods of off-site disposal employed during this period typically have a destructive effect on any archaeological remains that have otherwise survived. For this reason, the most recent developments of the site are likely to have caused the greatest impacts despite their relatively modest construction footprints.

3. Physical description

3.1 Site Inspection

The site was inspected and photographed by Mike Hincks on 3 September 2025. Only publicly accessible places were inspected. The site inspection focussed on ground conditions in the observable open spaces.

3.1.1 160 Oxford Street

160 Oxford Street is a 3-storey apartment building constructed at the highest point on the sloping block. It is a semi-circular structure with its eastern arc built on the high ground at the corner of Shadforth and Oxford Streets, and its western arc suspended on piles, accommodating a carpark under part of the building. The interior courtyard is built up to create a level surface at the ground floor. Across the lot, the ground level slopes from roughly east to west, from RL 54.70m on Shadforth Street to RL 52.70m at the boundary with 142-148 Oxford Street. The courtyard level is RL 55.36m. A ramp descends to the carpark level from Shadforth Street. The carpark is a roughly level concrete surface, with a maximum of 300mm difference in height from north to south.

The building does not have an in-ground basement, although utility or service rooms appear to be built below the courtyard and accessed from the carpark level. The slope of the landform has been modified across the lot to create a stepped rather than sloping environment. The ramp from Shadforth Street appears to be steeper than the slope of the original landform observable at the Oxford Street side of the building.

The impacts of the building foundations on earlier archaeology are probably relatively moderate, with piles in the west and no basement level in the east. However, the modification of the landform to create a more stepped environment has probably had a major impact on the remains of previous activities at the site, and while pockets may survive in built-up parts, a substantial amount of the slope appears to have been removed from some sections of the lot.



Figure 16. View west on Oxford St.



Figure 17. Entrance on Shadforth St.

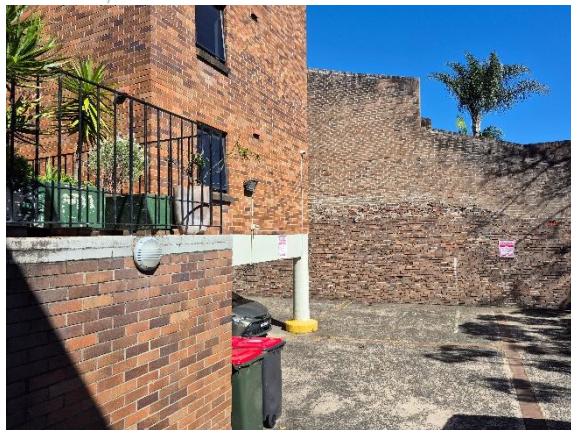


Figure 18. Carpark with elevated courtyard to the left.



Figure 19. Raised courtyard.



Figure 20. Carpark. View to the north.

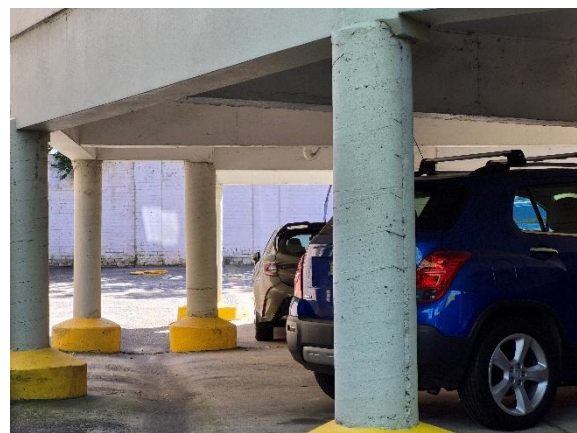


Figure 21. Detail of piles. View to the northeast.

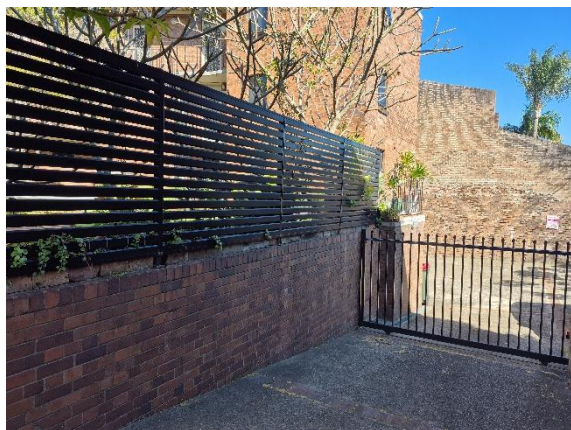


Figure 22. Bottom of the ramp with elevated courtyard at the left.



Figure 23. Carpark view west from the ramp.

3.1.2 Rear of 142-148 Oxford Street

The rear of 142-148 Oxford Street is accessed by a lane off Gipps Street. The rear of the terraces is marked by garage doors opening onto a flat concreted driveway. Stormwater and other service pits are visible at the ground surface. Overall, there appears to be relatively little recent disturbance to this part of the site, with no obvious signs of ground level alterations or major foundations associated with the terrace constructions.



Figure 24. Lane Access from Gipps St Looking south.



Figure 25. Looking south towards the rear of the terraces.

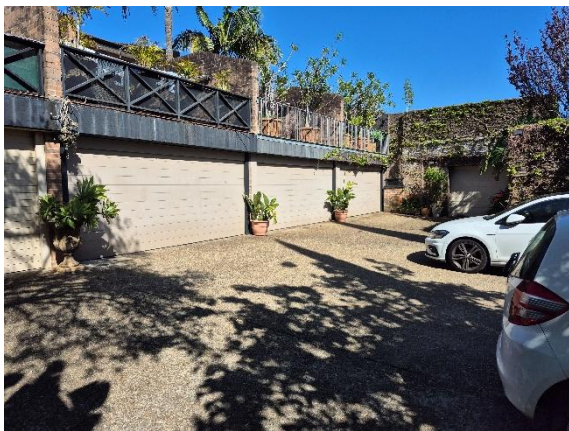


Figure 26. View to the southwest across the driveways.



Figure 27. View to the west.

3.1.3 13 Gipps Street

Bethel lane runs off Gipps Street at number 13. This lane appears to have altered little since the nineteenth century, with only upgrades to surfacing. The house at 13 Gipps Street has a substantial footprint and was constructed in the early 1980s. The late construction and demolition date suggests there would be substantial disturbance in this area.



Figure 28. Bethel Lane on the western side of No. 13 Gipps Street. View to the south.

3.2 Geotechnical and environmental investigations

Geotechnical investigations were carried out at eight locations at 160 Oxford Street by Morrow Geotechnics in 2025. At 160 Oxford Street, the locations corresponded to a driveway ramp from Shadforth Street (BH104), two locations in the concrete-surfaced carpark in the north (BH101) and west (BH102), and one location in the raised courtyard (BH103). Across the rest of the study area, Locations BH203 and BH204 were in the front courtyards of 142-148 Oxford Street, and Locations BH201 and BH202 were at the rear, with BH202 being located in the lane off Gipps Street.



Figure 29. Geotechnical investigation locations.

3.2.1 160 Oxford Street

Boreholes at BH101 and BH102 encountered bedrock at 300mm below the concrete slab. The unit between the slab and the bedrock was described as a fill of gravelly sandy clay in both instances.

Borehole BH103 in the courtyard was excavated within a raised garden that is around 3m higher than the carpark surface below. In this location bedrock was encountered at 1.4m below

the surface, beneath a uniform fill of gravelly sandy clay containing 'cobble sized gravel' (>70mm in size).

Borehole BH104 was excavated in the driveway ramp leading from the higher ground on Shadforth Street (RL 54.70m) to the carpark level (RL53.35m). In this location sandstone bedrock was encountered at 800mm below the concrete slab. The unit between the slab and the bedrock was described as a fill of gravelly sandy clay, similar to all other locations.

The geotechnical investigations show that bedrock is very close to the surface where the natural ground levels have been maintained (the carpark surface is around 400mm higher than the footpath on Oxford Street that follows the slope of the hill). The bulk of the units encountered in the driveway and the courtyard may have been introduced during construction to create artificial levels within the sloping block. The lack of variation in the fills and the absence of naturally developed soils suggests that discrete archaeological units are unlikely to be present. While geotechnical interpretation can often fail to detect archaeological contexts, the yard surfaces that would have been established or developed in the vacant spaces, as well as demolition material from the different phases should have been detectable even at borehole resolution.

3.2.2 142-148 Oxford Street

Boreholes at BH203 and BH204 were located in the front courtyards at 142-148 Oxford Street. Both boreholes encountered 500mm-600mm of topsoil and gravelly fill above a 500mm-thick concrete slab or footing. The concrete sat directly on top of the sandstone bedrock.

Borehole BH201 was located on the eastern side of the carpark at the rear of 142-148 Oxford Street. A 200mm-thick concrete slab capped over 2m of gravelly sand. 100mm of residual sandy clay was encountered at -2.6m above the sandstone bedrock.

At Borehole BH202, located in the lane off Gipps Street at the rear of 142-148 Oxford Street, there was some suggestion of the presence of archaeological material. Below the 110mm concrete slab was a 1.2m thick deposit of 'gravel' and brick construction waste. It is possible that this material represents a damaged footing or archaeological demolition material associated with the mid-nineteenth century occupation of the site. Up to 1m of residual clayey sand was present below this unit and above the degraded sandstone bedrock at -2.3m.

The geotechnical investigations at 142-148 Oxford Street demonstrate that there is little potential for surviving archaeological remains across most of the lot. The exception may be in the lane off Gipps Street where brick construction waste may represent archaeological material. Other areas of the carpark may also contain pockets of surviving archaeology.

4. Historical archaeological potential

4.1 Introduction

This section of the report discusses the site's potential to contain archaeological evidence of the previous phases of occupation. The potential for the archaeological resource to reveal useful information about the previous uses or activities that shaped its history depends on its extent, nature and level of intactness. Disturbed archaeological features and deposits in the form of fragmentary structural remains and random artefacts may be evidence of previous occupation, but their use or value in reconstructing the past though providing meaningful information is limited. This is because such features and deposits are disassociated from the stratigraphic sequence that establishes their provenance and secured date of deposition.

This section identifies where intact archaeological evidence is likely to be found at the site, and to what extent it may be preserved. The level of significance of archaeological evidence (known or potential) is discussed in Section 5.

4.2 Phases of development

Based on the historical research undertaken to date the following broad historical phases of site development could be identified:

Phase1: Early subdivision and the establishment of Paddington village (1840-1860)

Phase 2: Municipality of Paddington and intensification (1860-1900)

Phase 3: Commercial and industrial use (1900-1960)

Phase 4: Late twentieth century residences (1960-present)

4.3 Evaluation of potential

A breakdown of archaeological potential by phase is provided in the table below. Archaeological potential is mapped relative to the current site layout in Figure 30.

Table 1. Archaeological potential by phase.

Phase	Events	Significance	Potential
1. 1840-1860	Moderate density cottages and yards	Local	Mapping from this period overlays poorly with current cadastral data, and depictions of buildings are generally indicative. The only mapped structures in the study area from this phase are located in the east, with four buildings located within the current lot at 160 Oxford Street. Archaeological potential for this area is low for all phases, with geotechnical investigations indicating that the site of 160 Oxford Street has been graded to bedrock and infilled prior to the most recent phase of construction. At 6 Shadforth Street, the levels appear built up and despite the late construction date for the standing building, pockets of intact material from this phase may survive with low-moderate potential at the rear of the property. Although there are no mapped structures in the centre of the study area or in the current location of Bethel Lane, it is possible that unmapped features or buildings may survive from this phase. At the rear of 142-148 Oxford Street archaeological potential for this period has been compromised by the construction of the large meat works building in the 1940s, whose foundations are likely to have caused considerable disturbance to this area. Archaeological potential for this phase in that location would therefore be low-moderate . Within the lane off Gipps Street, geotech shows that there may be surviving archaeology beneath the existing slab. As the configuration of the block is poorly understood during this period, it is possible that the land within the laneway was built on at this time. Should that be the case, archaeological potential for this period would be moderate in that location.
2. 1860-1900	Intensification of residences across the block	Local	During this phase the archaeological record increases in complexity as the land surrounding the original cottages is infilled, space becomes tighter and new buildings are constructed directly over the foundations of old ones. This part of the nineteenth century across Sydney is characterised in the archaeological record as one of resourcefulness and innovation as old materials and structures are recycled, density of buildings and people increases, cesspits, cisterns and wells are pushed to their capacities and individual houses accommodate multiple families. Within the study area the potential for this phase increases as almost all spaces are utilised. Despite the construction of the meat packing plant across historical Lot 9, archaeological potential for this phase at the rear of 142-148 Oxford Street is low-moderate , as pockets of intact material have the potential to retain evidence of this intensive use. However, it should be noted that no known structures from this phase are located within the least disturbed areas, and geotech at the east of the carpark shows over 2m of undifferentiated fill. If archaeological material survives from this

Phase	Events	Significance	Potential
			phase in this area it would likely be in isolated pockets or islands. Within the footprint of the terraces, archaeological potential is low , as the comprehensive demolition of the meat packing works for the terrace foundations is likely to have removed or considerably disturbed any remaining archaeology in the early 1980s. Similarly, the archaeological potential for this phase is low within the lot occupied by 160 Oxford Street, as the geotechnical results show considerable disturbance across this property. At 6 Shadforth Street, the levels appear built up and despite the late construction date for the standing building, pockets of intact material from this phase may survive with moderate potential at the rear of the property.
3. 1900-1960	Establishment and occupation of O'Sullivan's meat packing plant and other commercial enterprises	Local/may not meet threshold	The archaeological potential of the meat packing building on historical Lot 9, and the other large structures at the corner of Shadforth Street and Oxford Street is likely to be varied, with pockets of moderate to high potential occurring in the rear lane access to 142-148 Oxford Street, and low-moderate or low potential elsewhere. Remains at the rear of the terraces may include the robust foundations of the large meat works, as well as ancillary structures and possibly yard surfaces. Improvements in sanitation, municipal rubbish collection and construction methods and materials in the twentieth century are likely to have had a negative effect on the archaeological potential for occupation deposits that might tell us about the activities and conditions at the factory, even in spaces that have seen very little impact since. Archaeological potential for this phase beneath the terraces themselves is low, considering the late date of construction of the terraces and the ease with which even large footings could be removed to provide an adequate foundation for the new buildings. At 160 Oxford Street, the geotechnical investigations appear to indicate that most archaeological material has been removed from the site. However, pockets may survive where the ground has been built up or is similar to its original level near Shadforth Street.
4. 1960-present	Construction of new residences across the study area	Would not meet threshold	Standardised construction methodologies and materials do not generally lend themselves to the creation of meaningful archaeological deposits, negatively selecting against the accumulation of archaeological occupation material. No potential.



Figure 30. Archaeological potential across the study area.

5. Assessment of historical archaeological significance

5.1 Basis for assessment

Archaeological significance refers to the heritage significance of known or potential archaeological remains. While they remain an integral component of the overall significance of a place, it is necessary to assess the archaeological resources of a site independently from aboveground and other heritage elements. Assessment of archaeological significance is more challenging as the extent and nature of the archaeological features is often unknown and judgment is usually formulated on the basis of expected or potential attributes.

The following significance assessment of the subject area's archaeological resource is carried out by applying criteria expressed in the publication 'Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and 'Relics', prepared by the Heritage Branch, formerly Department of Planning (NSW) (now the Heritage Division, Office of Heritage and Environment) in December 2009.

5.2 NSW heritage criteria for assessing significance

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

The archaeological record at the site, if intact and readable, has the potential to demonstrate the changing phases of Paddington's history, from a village centred around the construction of the barracks, through periods of intensification and depression, and would be representative of commercial and residential spaces throughout the history of the suburb. If pockets of archaeology across the site can be linked spatially and temporally, they would meet the threshold for local significance under criterion (a) despite the disturbance and decontextualisation that has occurred in the late twentieth century.

The threshold for local significance would be met if there was interpretable evidence of the intensification that took place from the middle to the end of the nineteenth century, showing the adaptation and succession of buildings, the resourceful use of space, and the conditions created by the increase in refuse and population density. Such evidence may be intact enough to make intra-site comparisons, as well as contributing to a wider assemblage from the eastern suburbs of the city that can be meaningfully compared to similar periods from elsewhere in the colony.

The archaeological resource of the study area has local significance under criterion (a).

EXTENT

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

The nineteenth and early twentieth century archaeology of the study area is associated with the working-class poor. However, this association is not strong or special when compared to similar contemporary environments across the city. The threshold for significance under criterion (b) has not been met at this time.

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 area.

The archaeological remains would not meet the threshold for significance under criterion (c).

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 archaeological remains would not meet the threshold for significance under criterion (d).

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

The archaeology of the study area is primarily residential and associated with the increasing working-class population of Paddington across the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Structural remains, such as walls or footings, associated with the commercial and residential buildings are unlikely to be significant under this criterion on their own. However, should associated artefactual evidence be found in the form of occupation deposits these would provide information concerning the use of space, the people who lived there and the changing patterns of activity and behaviour through the lifetime of the structures.

Secondary deposits within cesspits, cisterns, wells and other subsurface features may provide us with information on clearing out events within the area and households but is unlikely to tell us about the day-to-day life of the occupants of the study area in the same way that occupation deposits might. Such secondary deposits may contribute to an overall understanding of the socioeconomic status of the neighbourhood but may not meet the threshold for significance under the criterion if they are insubstantial, compromised or contain only general information about nineteenth century life that doesn't specifically represent the occupants of this site, or this part of Paddington.

However, combinations of compromised or fragmentary evidence may together reach the threshold for local significance. Such assemblages may form a collection of contexts that are whole enough to be comparable to other sites in the Paddington area even though they may lack coherence or completeness.

It should be noted that due to the late twentieth century construction that has taken place across the street frontages of the study area, the locations of highest archaeological potential are largely peripheral. As such, the data from these structures may be skewed towards certain

activities that only took place at the rear of the properties, and intra-site research potential may be compromised.

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

The archaeological remains are unlikely to meet the threshold for significance under criterion (f).

Criterion (G) An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's (or the local area's) cultural or natural places, or cultural or natural environments.

While the remains would be representative of the changing nature of residential neighbourhoods in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they are unlikely to be intact enough to represent the place type wholly or with the intra-site coherence that is present at other, better-preserved sites. The archaeological remains are unlikely to meet the threshold for significance under criterion (g).

5.3 Summary statement of significance

The study area has the potential to archaeologically represent the broader development of Paddington, particularly the transition from its early village beginnings through the rapid growth and challenges of the nineteenth century. If intact deposits or features are present, they may contribute meaningfully to an understanding of daily life and neighbourhood conditions within Paddington and offer a comparative dataset alongside other sites from the eastern suburbs and wider Sydney.

Although the archaeological record has been affected by later disturbance, surviving pockets of archaeology have the potential to yield valuable information about working-class households in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Collectively, these materials may illustrate the conditions of domestic life, the strategies of adaptation in a dense urban environment, and the broader social and economic history of the suburb. While not rare in a wider metropolitan context, the remains represent a locally significant resource that has the potential to contribute to an understanding of Paddington's growth and transformation.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Key findings and conclusions

This assessment has found that the study area has the potential to contain archaeological material from the following phases in discrete areas:

- Phase 1 - Early subdivision and the establishment of Paddington village (1840-1860): There is low and low-moderate archaeological potential for this phase. Archaeological features and structural material of local significance may survive in pockets where existing impacts are minimal. Archaeological material from this phase may not meet the threshold for significance if it is heavily decontextualised and lacks intra-site coherence.
- Phase 2 - Municipality of Paddington and intensification (1860-1900): There is low and moderate potential for archaeology of local significance to survive from this phase which may survive in small areas where historical impacts have been minimal. Typically, the complexity of the archaeology from this period in high density urban environments can elevate its research potential despite some disturbance and decontextualization. However, archaeological material from this phase may not meet the threshold for significance if it is heavily decontextualised and lacks intra-site coherence.
- Phase 3 - Commercial and industrial use (1900-1960): There is moderate-high potential for remains from this phase to survive in the lane off Gipps Street because of the robust nature of the structures from this period. Elsewhere, the archaeological potential for this phase is Low-Moderate. However, standardisation of construction methods and improvements in sanitation during this period typically negatively select against the creation of archaeology with research potential. Archaeological material from this period is unlikely to meet the threshold for significance despite its high chance of survival.

6.2 Recommendations

Prior to construction, an archaeological impact statement should be prepared for the site.

If impacts to potential archaeology cannot be avoided, an archaeological research design (ARD) should be prepared that maximises the research potential of the archaeological resource, which is likely fragmented and lacks unifying stratigraphic relationships across the site. The ARD should provide a research framework that allows for comparative analysis of the archaeology with better-preserved sites in the local area. Such an approach would be considered appropriate to properly mitigate against its removal and ensure that the recovered archaeology feeds back into the significance values of the local area.

7. References

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