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## **Auburn Hospital Re-Development**



### **Archaeological Monitoring of Area 1b.**

**Auburn, NSW**

***Prepared for:***

**Brookfield Multiplex Constructions Pty Ltd**

**November 2009**

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By:

Chris Lewczak

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## **Table of Contents**

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1	Background.....	4
1.2	Site Location.....	4
1.3	Current site formation .....	4
1.4	Potential Impact.....	4
2.0	MONITORING RESULTS .....	6
2.1	Methodology .....	6
2.2	Duration .....	6
2.3	Results .....	6
2.4	Interpretation .....	11
3.0	CONCLUSION .....	12
	REFERENCES .....	12

## **1.0 Introduction**

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### **1.1 Background**

Brookfield Multiplex Constructions Pty Ltd is in the process of re-developing Auburn Hospital as part of a State Government initiative to rationalise the provision of health care services. The redevelopment project is being undertaken on behalf of the South West Area Health Service, a division of NSW Health. An initial archaeological assessment was prepared for the Auburn Hospital project by Cosmos Archaeology in March 2007.<sup>1</sup> The assessment recommended that a combination of historical archaeological test excavation work and monitoring in areas where proposed construction work associated with the hospital was proposed. An archaeological test excavation and monitoring work has already been completed for a previous section of the project by Cosmos Archaeology in August 2008 - that part of the site associated with the former Arthur Stone House and Annex.<sup>2</sup>

Additional monitoring was undertaken in August 2009 on an area in the north-western corner of the hospital grounds near the corner of Hargrave and Norval Street for contaminated soil remediation (Areas 1a and 3).<sup>3</sup> This report details the findings of the additional monitoring undertaken in Area 1b.<sup>4</sup>

### **1.2 Site Location**

The site is part of the Auburn Hospital grounds located on Hargrave Road Auburn. The hospital grounds are defined by Hargrave Road to the west, Norval Street to the north, Hevington Road to the east and Water Street to the south (Figure 1). The area monitored was 50 m x 25 m across in the northwest corner of the study area adjacent to the corner of Hargrave and Norval Streets (Figure 1).

### **1.3 Current site formation**

The area where the remediation excavation works were undertaken was an open grassed area adjacent to the 1961 hospital complex. At the time of monitoring, no works had been done in this area due to soil contamination concerns and so was still mostly grassed.

### **1.4 Potential Impact**

The extent of the excavation required for the soil remediation included the removal of soil on the site down to the natural mottled clay strata present in the area approximately 1 m below the existing ground surface. The potential impact from these works was that they could remove archaeological relics associated with a wing of the first 1907 Cottage Hospital. The location of a wing of the hospital building, potentially the nurses quarters and dining room, was known to be located within this section of the

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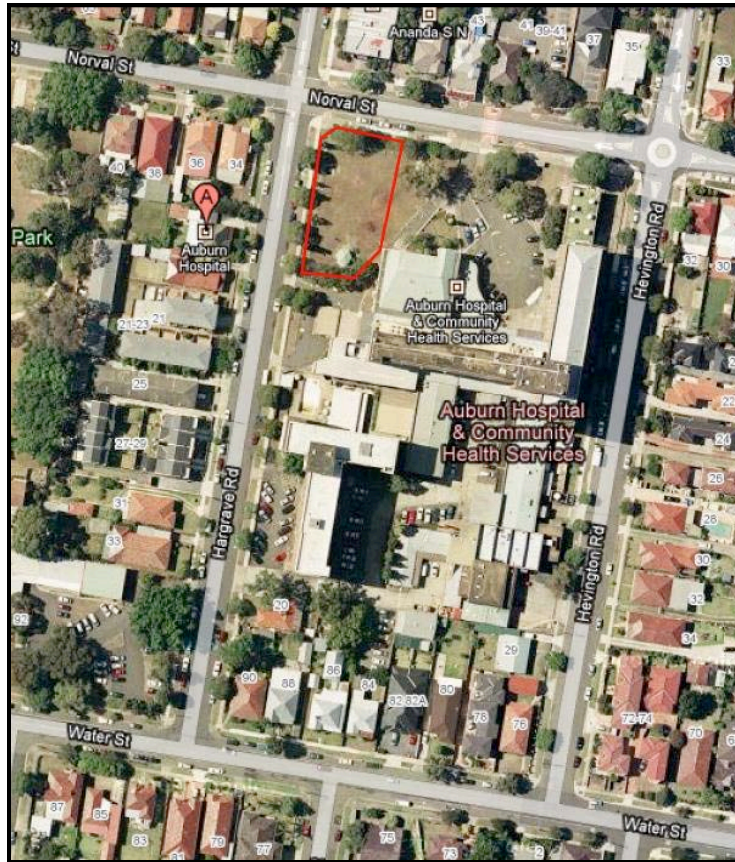
<sup>1</sup> **Cosmos Archaeology Pty Ltd , March 2007** Auburn Hospital Re-development: Archaeological Impact Assessment & Mitigation Strategy. Prepared for Multiplex Constructions Pty Ltd

<sup>2</sup> **Cosmos Archaeology Pty Ltd , August 2008** Auburn Hospital Redevelopment: Excavation of the Arthur Stone Annex and Monitoring of Areas 1a and 3. Prepared for Brookfield Multiplex Constructions Pty Ltd.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, Figure 2

hospital grounds, and the soil remediation works had the potential to removal any remaining *in situ* structure or archaeological deposits relating to the first 1907 to 1961 hospital (Figure 2).



**Figure 1: Site Location** (Study area in Red) (Source Google Maps)



**Figure 2: Aerial photograph of the study area (Red) in 1943.**

(From the Skies: Aerial Photographs of Sydney 1943. RTA 2005).

## **2.0 Monitoring Results**

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### **2.1 Methodology**

The methodology employed for this project was based on the potential for uncovering building remains of the 1907 Cottage Hospital in this area. As the soil was contaminated, it was determined to conduct the archaeological monitoring works concurrently with the bulk excavation works for the removal of the soil. The excavation was done with the use of a mechanical excavator with a flat edge batter bucket.

The excavation was initially carried out in a controlled manner; removing the topsoil and subsequent deposits in approximate 200 mm spits until the natural soil deposits were identified, where the excavation would then bulk excavate the soil to the required depth.

### **2.2 Duration**

The archaeological monitoring works commenced on 11th August 2009. Chris Lewczak, archaeologist with Cosmos Archaeology, undertook the monitoring and recording on the site.

### **2.3 Results**

*Stratigraphy:* The stratigraphic profile on the site appeared to be level across the site. There were three defined strata present in this area. The first, topsoil, stratum was a dark brown sandy loam, that is present uniformly across the site between a depth of 0.4 m to 0.5 m (Figure 3).

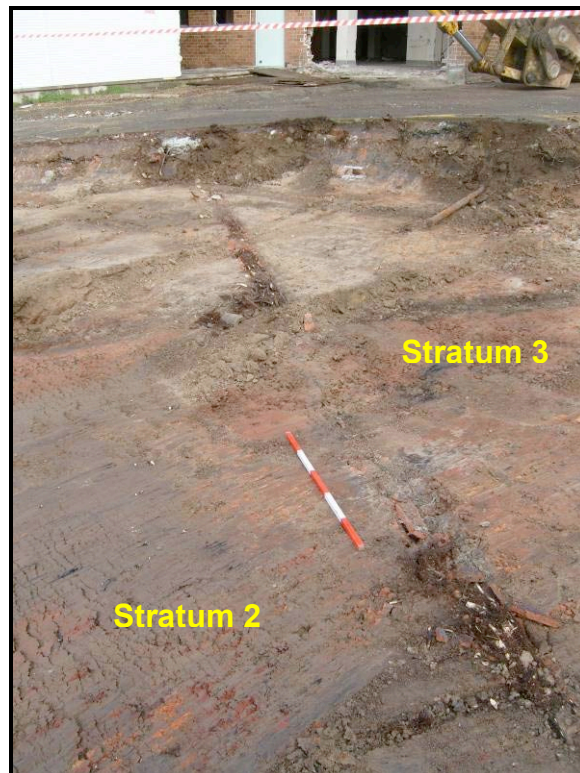
The second stratum was a thin demolition lens present within the southern half of the monitoring area. The thin lens, maximum depth of 0.02 m, consisted of small brick, charcoal plaster and other fibrous material spread out across the greater footprint of the hospital building that was present in this area. This appeared to be pressed into the natural mottled clay (third) stratum below (Figure 4).

Approximately 0.20 m below the top of mottled clay stratum formed the base of the excavation that was required for the remediation works (Figure 3). A small deep section cut was made at the start of the excavation in the southwest corner of the site that showed that the mottled clay continued to a depth of 1.3 m below the thin demolition lens (Figure 3).





**Figure 3: Photograph showing Stratigraphy within the site (Photograph Cosmos Archaeology).**



**Figure 4: Photograph showing thin demolition layer pressed into the natural mottled clay stratum (Photograph Cosmos Archaeology).**

**Finds:** The excavation uncovered the remains of concrete strip footings in the southern half of the remediation area. The footings were orientated north - south and east - west and were found at a depth of 0.4 m below the ground level (Figure 5). The strip footings were 0.5 m wide and 0.65 m deep, and were cut into the natural mottled clay stratum. The strip footing at the southern end of the excavation area was orientated east - west and was 7.0 m long (Figure 6). The footing had a small section of remaining *in situ* bricks cemented into it, however, much of the remaining strip footings uncovered in the area did not have any remains of brickwork or other building material.



**Figure 5: Depth of footings located within soil remediation area (Photograph Cosmos Archaeology).**

Two individual strip footings were also observed orientated north - south from the southern most, east - west, strip footing. The western most footing was only 9 m long and was located 4 m inside the property boundary. The second longitudinal footing was located 3.3 m to the east of the first and was 20 m long (Figure 7). The southern, east - west, strip footing continued eastwards past the location of the second longitudinal footing, however, no additional footings were located in this area. All footings were removed as part of the remediation works.

Three ceramic service pipes were also uncovered during the excavation. Two of the services were located to the east of the strip footings, and a third was located running along north - south on the western boundary of the property (Figure 8).

No other features or artefact remains were recorded around or to the north of the strip footings (Figure 9).





**Figure 6: A portion of the southern, east - west orientated, strip footing (Photograph Cosmos Archaeology)**



**Figure 7: One of the two north - south longitudinal strip footings. (Photograph Cosmos Archaeology)**





**Figure 8: Two ceramic services located in the south eastern corner of the remediation area.  
(Photograph Cosmos Archaeology)**



**Figure 9: View of the completed northern half of the remediation area (Photograph Cosmos  
Archaeology)**

## **2.4 Interpretation**

From the excavation that took place limited remains of the first Cottage Hospital were present in the form of large concrete strip footings. The building was constructed on large concrete strip footings that were cut into the natural mottled clay. Limited remains of brickwork on the footings indicate that the building – at least the lower portion - had brick walls. The demolition of this building in the early 1960s had not only removed most of the remains of the building down to its foundation, but also cut down the soil profile in the immediate area. This was evident by the presence of the sandy loam immediately above the mottled clay stratum, which was likely imported during the landscaping of the area after the building was demolished.

No artefacts or deposits were present between the strip footings within the building. This is likely due to the fact the building had wooden floorboards with 'tongue and groove' joints.

### **3.0 Conclusion**

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Based on the findings of the monitoring works for the remediation of contaminated soil, limited archaeological remains relating to the western wing of the 1907 Cottage Hospital were present. The extent of the post demolition cleanup prior to the construction of the replacement hospital led to the removal of almost all remains of the building. It is likely that a similar level of demolition and cleanup was conducted on the remaining sections of the remainder hospital building complex across the site and that a similar level of archaeological remains may exist.

### **References**

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**Cosmos Archaeology Pty Ltd , March 2007** *Auburn Hospital Re-development: Archaeological Impact Assessment & Mitigation Strategy*. Prepared for Multiplex Constructions Pty Ltd.

**Cosmos Archaeology Pty Ltd , August 2008** *Auburn Hospital Redevelopment: Excavation of the Arthur Stone Annex and Monitoring of Areas 1a and 3*. Prepared for Brookfield Multiplex Constructions Pty Ltd.