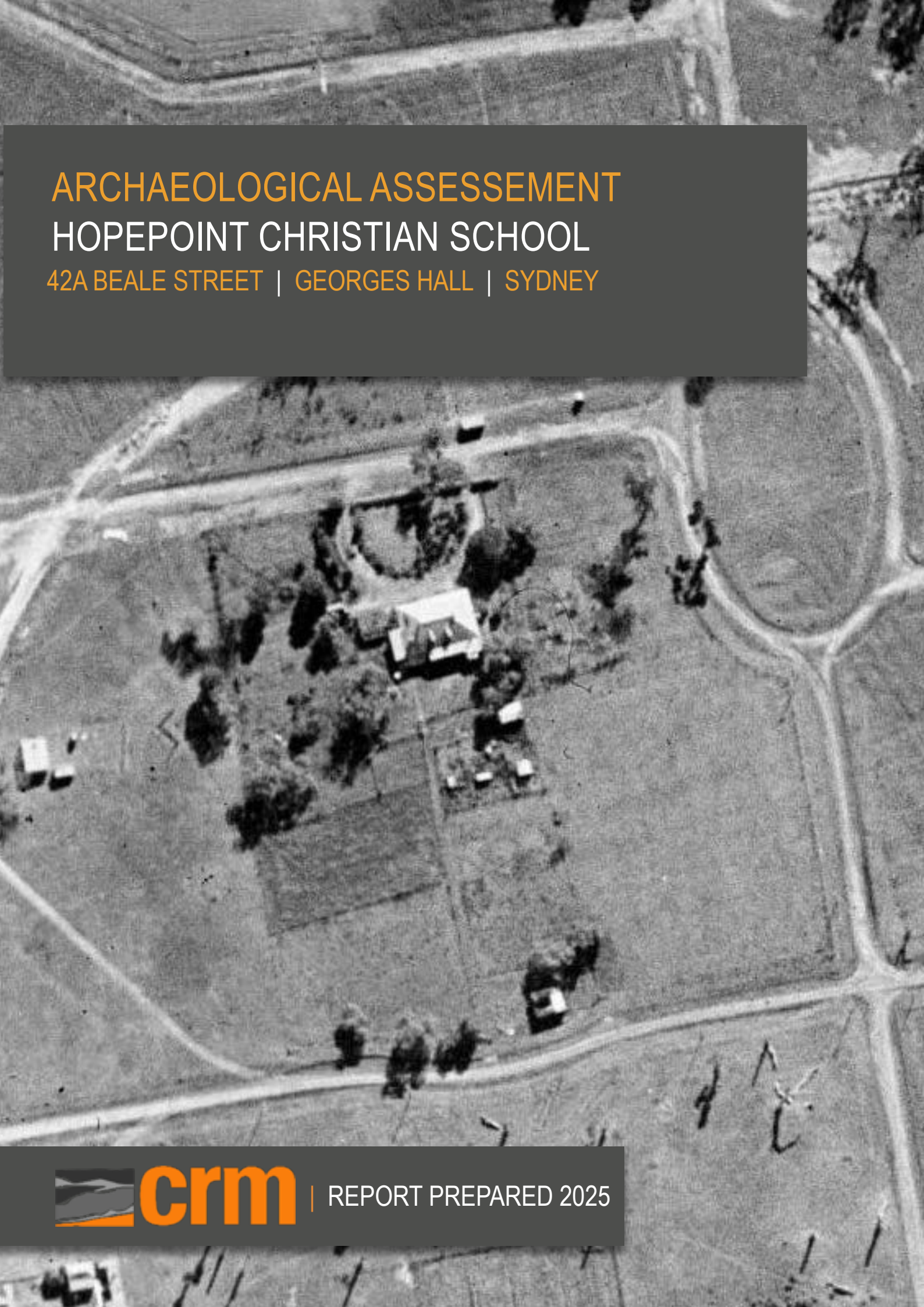




ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSEMENT

HOPEPOINT CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

42A BEALE STREET | GEORGES HALL | SYDNEY



crm

| REPORT PREPARED 2025

Report of Archaeological Assessment for New Work

Hopepoint Christian School

42a Beale Street

Georges Hall

SYDNEY

	DOCUMENT INFORMATION
Place	Hopepoint Christian School, 42a Beale Street, Georges Hall. 2198.
Project	Report of Archaeological Assessment for New Work
Issue Date	May 2025
Author	Wendy Thorp
Client	Leaf Architecture on Behalf of the Hopepoint Christian School
Disclaimer	This report expresses the professional opinion of the author based on the information that is cited and presented in this report and provided by the client and/or their representative
	© Cultural Resources Management This report remains the property of CRM and may be used only for the purpose for which it was produced. It is prohibited to use this document in any form other than for its stated purpose or for research unless written permission is obtained from CRM and the source is fully acknowledged. Reproduction of the report for commercial purposes is prohibited. Third-party material used in this report is the property of the specified copyright owner unless otherwise indicated and is used according to licencing condition.
	www.culturalresourcesmanagement.com.au enquiries@culturalresourcesmanagement.com.au 0411 500 484

Contents Of The Report

1	PRECIS OF THE REPORT	7
2	THE PROJECT	9
2.1	SITE LOCATION	9
2.2	THE PROJECT AREA	9
2.3	PROJECT CONTEXT	10
2.4	CONSERVATION POLICY	10
2.5	HERITAGE STATUS	11
2.6	CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE	11
2.7	UNDERSTANDING THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE: PRIOR STUDIES	13
2.8	OBJECTIVES	15
2.9	METHODOLOGY	15
2.10	STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT	16
2.11	AUTHORSHIP AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	16
2.12	ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS USED IN THE REPORT	16
3	THE SETTING: THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT	18
3.1	GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	18
3.2	SOILS	18
3.3	WATER.....	20
3.4	VEGETATION.....	20
3.5	THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE	22
4	DEVELOPMENT 1798 – 1837	25
4.1	EXPLORATION AND ASSESSMENT	25
4.2	GEORGE JOHNSTON ARRIVES	25
4.2.1	An Ambitious Man.....	25
4.2.2	The Johnston Family	25

4.3	ACQUIRING A LARGE ESTATE.....	26
4.4	JOHNSTON'S FIRST HOMESTEAD: THE DEFAULT MILITARY HEADQUARTERS	28
4.4.1	The First Homestead	28
4.4.2	Expanding the Estate.....	30
5	DEVELOPMENT: 1837 – 1866	31
5.1	DAVID JOHNSTON AND THE NEW HOUSE	31
5.2	MANAGING THE ESTATE: THE OUT-BUILDINGS.....	32
5.3	LIKE FATHER LIKE SON	34
6	DEVELOPMENT: 1866 – 1907	36
6.1	THE NEXT GENERATION	36
6.2	CHALLENGES, SUBDIVISION AND A CHANGING LANDSCAPE	37
6.2.1	First Subdivision	37
6.2.2	Application for Torrens Title.....	37
6.2.3	More Subdivision and New Industries	37
6.3	THE ORIGINAL HOME AND A NEW TENANT	38
7	DEVELOPMENT: 1907 – 1917	40
7.1	THE GEORGETOWN ESTATE IS CREATED	40
7.2	CHANGE AT THE HOUSE.....	41
7.3	COMPLICATIONS FROM A WILL.....	41
8	DEVELOPMENT: 1917- 1949	42
8.1	A NEW OWNER: HENRY CROSSING AND RAPID CHANGE	42
8.2	THE DEEPWATER ESTATE: GEORGES RIVER.....	42
8.3	MABEL AND MONTAGUE BEAN: 1924 - 1946	44
8.4	THE GLEN OCCUPATION: 1946 - 1949.....	45
9	DEVELOPMENT 1949 – 1989	49
9.1	SALE TO THE AFTER CARE ASSOCIATION:	49
9.2	THE WOMEN'S HOSTEL.....	49

9.3	THE MEN'S HOSTEL	50
9.4	GENTLE DECAY	53
10	DEVELOPMENT 1989 -2025	57
10.1	THE CHURCH OF THE FOURSQUARE GOSPEL.....	57
10.2	ESTABLISHMENT AND RESTORATION	57
11	THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF GEORGES HALL	58
11.1	FIRST SURVEY.....	58
11.2	THE FIRST ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION	59
11.2.1	Location of Investigation	59
11.2.2	Results of the Test Programme of 1991	61
11.3	CONCLUSIONS AND OUTCOMES	66
12	ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT	68
12.1	OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY	68
12.2	THE DEVELOPMENT AREA.....	68
12.2.1	Block D	70
12.2.2	Between Blocks A and D	71
12.2.3	Temporary Demountable Building	72
12.3	THE RESOURCE: ASSESSING THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROFILE	73
12.3.1	Comparable Sites	73
12.3.2	Burwood House	75
12.3.3	Annandale House	75
12.3.4	The Assessment: Overview	77
12.3.5	Assessment: The New Block F	79
12.3.6	The Temporary Demountable.....	79
12.4	IDENTIFIABLE IMPACTS.....	80
12.4.1	Existing Block D: Before the School	80
12.4.2	Existing Block D: The School.....	81
12.4.3	The Site of the Temporary Demountable.....	81

12.5	CONCLUSIONS	81
13	CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE	82
13.1	THE PLACE	82
13.2	RECOGNISING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE	82
13.3	ASSESSING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RELICS	83
13.4	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	83
13.5	RESEARCH POTENTIAL	84
13.6	ASSESSING THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA	85
13.6.1	Criterion (a): historical significance	85
13.6.2	Criterion (b): Historical Association	85
13.6.3	Criterion (c): Aesthetic Values	86
13.6.4	Criterion (d): Social Values	86
13.6.5	Criterion (e): Research Values	86
13.6.6	Criterion (f): Rarity	86
13.6.7	Criterion (g): Representativeness	86
13.6.8	Integrity	87
13.7	HISTORICAL THEMES	87
13.8	STATEMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE	88
13.9	GRADING OF SIGNIFICANCE	89
14	ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE ASSESSMENT	89
15	REFERENCES	90
15.1	TECHNICAL OR RESEARCH WORKS	90
15.2	PRIMARY REFERENCES	90
15.3	SECONDARY SOURCES: BOOKS, JOURNAL ARTICLES	90
15.4	NEWS ARTICLES	91
15.5	MAPS AND PLANS, LAND INFORMATION	91
15.6	IMAGES	92

1 PRECIS OF THE REPORT

This report has been prepared to meet the requirements of Item 8 of a letter concerning the proposed development discussed in this report sent by the Council of Canterbury- Bankstown in respect of archaeological issues pertaining to this development (DA-2/2025). It also meets the requirements and policies of the conservation management plan prepared for Georges Hall in 2024. The work has been commissioned by the Hopepoint Christian School which is intending to construct a new building in place of an existing structure in the north-eastern corner of the school precinct. Within this precinct is a state-heritage listed item, “The Homestead” alternatively known as “Georges Hall” (SHR Item No 00448) which encompasses the main nineteenth century home and two out-buildings. This item has statutory protection and the land surrounding it, on which the school is built, is also with the curtilage of the heritage listing. Included within the curtilage is an archaeological resource associated with “The Homestead”. It also, has protection under the relics’ provisions of the Heritage Act NSW (1977). This resource was identified and partly tested in 1990-1991. The documentation for this work informs the present assessment but no longer meets the requirements of Heritage NSW in terms of identifying its scope and the potential impacts to this resource that may be an outcome of the proposed works for the school. This assessment will accompany a statement of heritage impact for the project.

The purpose of the present document is to respond to a requirement of Heritage NSW to provide an archaeological assessment which is compliant with the current standards of evaluation and reporting. It takes into account the earlier archaeological works undertaken on this site as well as the development of the church and school buildings constructed after that programme was completed in 1991. The objectives of the project, therefore, may be summarised as follows:

- Amend the existing historical analysis of the site including new primary and secondary information now available and provide a comprehensive analysis of the development of the project area from its first alienation for British occupation as far as that is possible from primary records
- Review the archaeological site works undertaken in 1990-1991 to provide physical evidence that can amend or support the current assessment
- Review and, if necessary, amend the statement of significance in respect of the archaeology of the site
- Inspect the site for surface evidence and use historic and present-day aerial imagery to supplement this task
- Determine an archaeological profile for the project area
- Define the potential impacts to any archaeological evidence that may be identified here from the works required for the new school buildings, services and other improvements
- Determine strategies that may be used to reduce or minimise any impacts to that resource or, if necessary, test or salvage the evidence before works commence

The revised historical analysis in this report encompasses all the pre-existing work as well as new research to define a development history from 1797-2025 in seven phases. It discusses the specific works undertaken to create the estate and its evolution, as far as may be understood from primary resources as well as influences or events that were important to this development.

This assessment has concluded that the specific project areas of existing Block D (the site of the future Block F) and the temporary demountable classroom may encompass archaeological evidence that derives from the past development and occupation of this place by the historically significant Johnston family from 1838 –1917 and as part of an earlier pastoral property of the same family in use between 1789 -1837. It might also include evidence that derives from the twentieth century occupation of the place by several owners. Pre-and post-settlement environmental conditions might also be expected in this profile. The nature, integrity and associations of this evidence, if intact, could be both of state and local significance; this defines that evidence as “relics” which have protection under provisions of the NSW Heritage Act 1977.

The issue that arises from this assessment is that, because primary documentation is minimal, the conclusions are based on models of contemporary behavior and occupation as well as a small test excavation undertaken in 1991 which was not on this specific part of the Homestead site. To determine management of any intact archaeological evidence within the project area it is first necessary to establish the presence or absence of that resource as well as any impacts caused to it by the construction of a classroom on this site in the 1990s. The absence of a specific target for testing means that there is no particular focus for that work. For this reason, it is recommended that an entire site surface scrape and clean of the proposed area of the new building, Block F is undertaken, after the demolition of the present Building D to ground level. The site clean will be under the supervision and management of an archeologist. The site of the temporary demountable is not planned for any site disturbance and, therefore, does not require archaeological management.

The purpose of the programme recommended for the site of the new building Block F is to identify visible archaeological evidence, conditions which may have caused evidence of this type to have been removed or whether this part of the former house site has no indication of past use or occupation and that it is largely sterile of cultural material. If required, a test pit could be excavated to view the deeper soil profile to more accurately evaluate the surface evidence revealed by the scrape. This work will determine whether any additional work is required or if the proposed development may proceed with no further action required.

This work must be approved under Section 60 of the Heritage Act. An application for this permit will require a methodology to be documented with the objectives and proposed outcomes identified, how these are to be achieved, the methods for recording the work and managing any artefacts that come from the site. This is called a "Research Design" which should be submitted with the overall Section 60 application for approval for the new building. This assessment must also be appended to that application.

2 THE PROJECT

2.1 Site Location

The subject of this investigation is a portion of the campus of the Hopepoint Christian School at 42a Beale Street, Georges Hall NSW. The school property is bound by Beale Street to the south, Ashcroft Street to the east, Henry Lawson Drive to the north and residential development to the west. The school has the cadastral identification of Lot 101 DP 827530. It is located within the suburb of Georges Hall which is in the LGA of Canterbury-Bankstown. It is also within the County of Cumberland (Plan No. 1, end of section 2.0).

2.2 The Project Area

The school occupies part of an early nineteenth century property, "The Homestead" also known as "Georges Hall". It encompasses the principal area of occupation of that property including the house and some out-buildings. Not all remain from that domestic period of use. It has had several subsequent periods of occupation including for aged care. The specific area of development is the site of the current Block D within the school. This will be demolished and the new building, Block F, will be built on the site, linking it to the current Block A. At a future date temporary demountable classrooms to be used while Block F is under construction, will be located to the immediate south of Block A and adjoining the heritage-listed house and two other listed out-buildings.



The location of works required for the school addressed in this report being "Proposed Block F" and the temporary demountable building coloured blue [Leaf Architecture, Proposed Block F Notification Plan 2025]



2.3 Project Context

This work has been initiated by the statutory protection afforded a site of state significance which is the case for the project area (SHR Item No 00448). Heritage NSW has advised the proponent that it requires an historical archaeological assessment to be approved prior to the issue of any general terms of agreement for the project.¹ The requirements of that request were that the assessment “*should identify what relics, if any, are likely to be present (known as archaeological potential), assess their significance and consider the impacts from the proposal on this potential archaeological resource. Where harm is likely to occur, it is recommended that the significance of the relics be considered in determining an appropriate mitigation strategy*”. The present report satisfies this condition.

This report has been prepared to meet the requirements of Item 8 of a letter concerning the proposed development discussed in this report sent by the Council of Canterbury- Bankstown in respect of archaeological issues pertaining to this development (DA-2/2025). It also meets the requirements and policies of the conservation management plan prepared for Georges Hall in 2024.²

2.4 Conservation Policy

The most recent conservation management plan (CMP) prepared for the site in 2024 specifically refers to the management of archeological resources as follows:

Policy 26: Before any excavation is undertaken anywhere on the site an archeological assessment must be undertaken and if this concludes that there is evidence of potential archaeological sites then an archeological survey should be undertaken to determine whether an archeological excavation is recommended

Policy 30: Prior to any proposed future works involving excavation an archeological assessment is to be carried out to determine the potential discovery of artefacts and/or relics. In the even that such a discovery is plausible a Section 40 (Heritage Act 1977) Excavation Permit should be obtained from the Heritage Council prior to commencing any work. An archaeological investigation would then need to be carried out.

Policy 31: Mapping of the archaeology of the whole site should be undertaken to try and locate other earlier outbuildings such as the stables

Policy 32: If they have not already been implemented the recommendations from the 1989 and 1990 archeological works should be followed

Policy 33: The path referred to in the 1989 and 1990 archaeological work should be identified on site and left exposed and incorporated into the garden landscape

Policy 34: A plan of any archaeological remains of outbuildings should be outlined on the surface to become a landscape feature. In the event of changes to the landscape or excavation for service connections, the outline plan of archaeological remains should be avoided

Policy 35: That any further evidence of previous outbuildings or other structures be recorded by an archaeologist and interpreted in the ground surface if possible

Policy 36: That for any new works a watching brief is undertaken by the owners (similar to that recommended in Section 1 of the Archaeological Survey [Thorp 1990b] and that a professional

¹ Heritage NSW to S. Griffiths 20 March 2025 by email

² JPA&D (2024); [The Homestead Georges Hall Conservation Management Plan](#)

archaeologist be called in if building excavation reveals structural features or deposits containing artefacts in a quantity exceeding the yield of the site in general (i.e. a dump)

Policy 37: Objects that have been discovered during the 1990s excavations or any subsequent excavations should be researched, catalogued and displayed to the extent possible so as to inform the church and school community and the wider public where practicable.³

It is noted that in reference to Policy 36 that watching briefs are undertaken by professional archaeologists not owners. Also, in respect of Policy 30 any excavation permits for the site must be acquired under Section 60 of the Heritage Act because of the status of the site as a state-listed heritage item. If the archaeological evidence is uncovered as an unexpected find it will need to be managed as a notification to Heritage NSW under Section 146 of the Act.

2.5 Heritage Status

The site of the Homestead has been listed as a significant site of heritage value since 1978 when it was included in the Register of the National Estate. It was included in the Bankstown Heritage Study of 1987 as Item 37, as was the original homestead site, outside the project area (Item 6).

It was given a Permanent Conservation Order under the provisions of the NSW Heritage Act in 1999 (PCO No 0048). It was subsequently included in the State Heritage Register on 2 April 1999 (SHR ID 00448) as an item of state significance. The listing does not specifically reference the archaeology of the site.

It is a listed site of significance in the Canterbury-Bankston LEP (2023), being the Homestead building and site (Item 1143) identified as being of state significance. It is not separately listed as an archaeological site.

The site is also recognised by the National Trust (Australia) which has classified it as a place of significance. The National Trust listing does not carry any statutory authority, but it is accepted as an authoritative assessment.

Archaeological evidence does not need to be specifically addressed in statutory listings for a place of state significance as it has protection under the provisions of the NSW Heritage Act. However, earlier works have made clear that this resource is an integral component of the fabric of the place.

2.6 Cultural Significance

The Homestead has been assessed to be of significance for over thirty years. In the conservation study for the site prepared in 1990 the following conclusions were made:

“Georges Hall is the oldest remaining building in the Bankstown district having given its name to the surrounding locality. The building is a substantially intact, well-proportioned and finely detailed Georgian Colonial Homestead with strong links to important episodes in Australia’s early Colonial history through its original owners and occupiers, the Johnston family of Annandale. The building has national, regional and local significance”.⁴

The SHR boundary, the extent of which this listing applies to is shown on the following page, describes the significance of the place as follows:

“It is a fine example of Australian Georgian architecture and retains many of its former qualities and characteristics typical of its period and style. It has important associations with the renowned Johnston

³ JPA&D (2024); The Homestead Georges Hall Conservation Management Plan

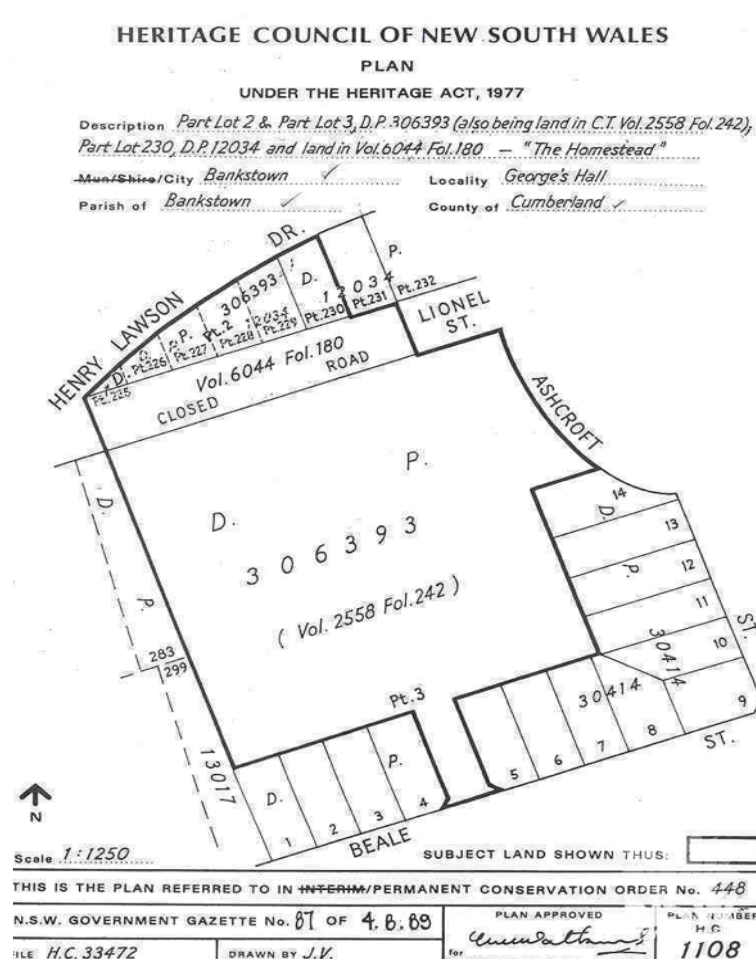
⁴ NBRSP (1990); Georges Hall Homestead Conservation Study; introduction

family. It was the second Johnston house built on this land with the first house being affected by flooding. Its location on the rise above the river and floodplains demonstrates the settlers' adaptation to their environment. The Homestead is the earliest remaining house in the Bankstown district. It is evidence of the earliest permanent settlement in the area."

This is taken from an earlier study of the site by Tropman and Associates undertaken in 1987.⁵ The principal aspects of significance addressed by all evaluations of the cultural value of the place including the most recent undertaken in 2024, may be summarised as follows:

- Historical Associations: with a prominent family (the Johnstons) and as an unofficial military out-post.
- Aesthetic values: a fine example of Australian Georgian architecture retaining many of its characteristics including the relationship to Prospect Creek and some of the cultural landscape components added to the site.
- Rarity and Representative: earliest remaining house in Bankstown and a representative example of early gentry estates in New South Wales

Essentially the listing encompasses the nineteenth century buildings, land within the precinct and the garden. The boundaries of the listing are shown on the following plan.



⁵ Lester Tropman and Associates 1987 Report on the Homestead formerly known as Georges Hall After Care Association

2.7 Understanding The Archaeological Resource: Prior Studies

The earliest primary archival study of the project area was undertaken in 1987 just prior to the heritage listing of this place. It was used to inform a proposed redevelopment of the site and identify conservation objectives that would be encapsulated in the heritage listing. The second archival analysis was undertaken in 1990, immediately after its listing on the State Heritage Register. This was intended to be used as the basis for defining the archaeological potential of this site it not having been addressed in any existing studies at that time.⁶ The electronic resources that are now available for archival research were not available and so, while the report provides a basis for understanding the evolution of the site and, thus, what might survive there, it is now possible to undertake a more in-depth search of primary archival records. The current report addresses that work.

As well as these documents several others specific to the site were prepared in the same period; these provide more archival material, architectural evidence and some limited archaeological profiles. These sources are all used in the present report along with new research. The principal documents are:

1987: *Report on the Homestead formerly known as Georges Hall* (Lester Tropman and Associates)

1990: *Archaeological Assessment Georges Hall* (Wendy Thorp)

1990: *Archaeological Survey "The Homestead" Georges Hall* (Wendy Thorp)

1990: *Georges Hall Homestead Conservation Study* (NPRSP)

1991: *The Homestead Georges Hall Archaeological Excavation Report* (D. Bairstow)

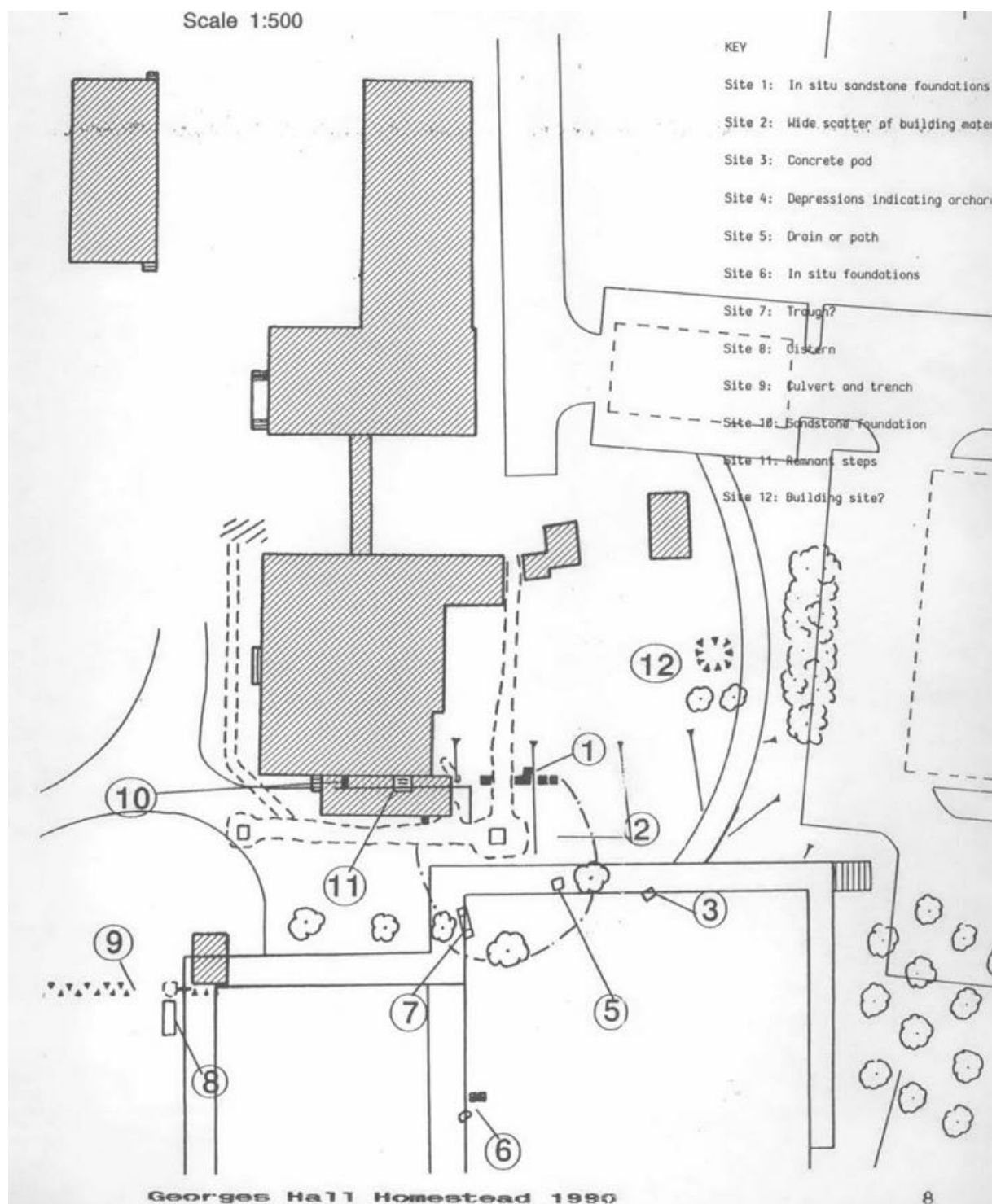
It was concluded in 1990 that the site had the potential for preserving a considerable resource of archaeological evidence particularly in close proximity to the house and specifically to the south-west of that building.⁷ A total of twelve sites were identified in this area that included scatters of material, foundations, trenches and drains or paths, possible building or garden sites. None were visible in the present study area, but it was not ruled out as a site of potential archaeological evidence.

The archaeological survey of the site undertaken in 1990 was based on visible surface evidence, no longer evident, and reference to the historical study to identify the potential for past areas of use or construction. It did not encompass any physical investigation. It was intended to guide the redevelopment of the site by the Church of the FourSquare Gospel in terms of avoiding impacts to those places that were highly likely to encompass archaeological evidence. Ground-truthing the assessment conclusions, that is, investigating surface indicators for underlying archaeological evidence was undertaken in 1991 in a very limited sample. This demonstrated that there was a complex resource of several phases of occupation in these areas. This is discussed in Section 11.0 of the present report.

The potential impact on these sites by the construction of the church and adjoining building (gymnasium) was to be addressed by locating those new building sites outside the identified archaeological places. This is shown in the following plan. However, it was recognised that because of the wealth of archaeological evidence identified in the very small sample excavation undertaken in 1991 the larger areas with no visible surface evidence could also contain sub-surface relics. Provisions were put in place to address this circumstance.

⁶ W. Thorp (1990); [Archaeological Assessment Georges Hall](#)

⁷ Ibid; 13



Plan of identified archaeological sites based on surface evidence in 1990 in relation to the proposed development at that time [W. Thorp]



Defining the archaeological resources of a site has advanced considerably since 1990 even to the extent of what we now consider to be a valuable source of information, beyond structures and artefacts, and what is capable of being acquired through archaeological means. This is now addressed in the present report.

2.8 OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the present report is to address the requirements of Heritage NSW regarding the preparation of an archaeological assessment for the works proposed for the school. This assessment is specific to the area that will be impacted by the new development, the future Block F. Reference is also made to the site of temporary demountable classrooms that will be in use while Block F is under construction. The report does not address the potential archaeological resource of the entire site. However, it has been thirty-five years since the first and only archaeological assessment was prepared for this place. Much has changed since that report was prepared in 1990 including the expectations and requirements of an archaeological assessment. Therefore, while the assessment's recommendations are specific to the current project this report revisits the evidence documented in 1990 and recovered in 1991 and what is now available from other sources. It is used to provide a more detailed archaeological assessment than would be produced if evidence was used that was only pertinent to the present project area. The report is consistent with the processes outlined in guideline documents referenced by Heritage NSW being:

Heritage Office (1996); *Archaeological Assessments*

Heritage Office (2006) *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and Relics*

To these ends the objectives of this project may be summarised as follows:

- To determine the presence or absence of an historical archaeological profile within the project area being the new classroom (Block F) and the site of the temporary demountable classrooms
- If present and possible, to define the scope and probable integrity of the archaeological resource within the specific project area
- To evaluate the cultural significance of this resource
- To determine strategies for managing archaeological evidence and at what time they should be initiated in the programme commensurate with its significance including the need for permits issued under the provisions of the Heritage Act. This defines the response to the outcomes of the assessment.

This report only addresses the potential for historic-period relics. It does not assess either archaeological or cultural values for potential Aboriginal archaeology.

2.9 Methodology

The following tasks have been undertaken to prepare this assessment:

- Identification and review of all reports of relevance to the archaeology of the project area and the larger context of Georges Hall, "The Homestead"
- Identification of statutory or other heritage listings
- Primary historical research to supplement the existing resources
- Preparation of a detailed site history relevant to the potential of the site to encompass archaeological evidence and identifying where possible the separate areas of occupation over time
- Use of this historical analysis to determine specific sites or areas, characteristic works or processes that have influenced the development and survival of an archaeological profile
- Determination of an historic-period archaeological profile that may be preserved within the project areas based on the evidence from the historical analysis, physical evidence and comparable sites
- Site inspection, visual only: no physical intervention had been made into the site for the purposes of this assessment
- A review of the existing assessment of the cultural significance of the archaeology for this site

- Preparation of a report that documents the work and defines strategies that should be implemented to manage or conserve the archaeological resource within the project area before, during or after the commencement of the construction programme.

2.10 Structure Of The Report

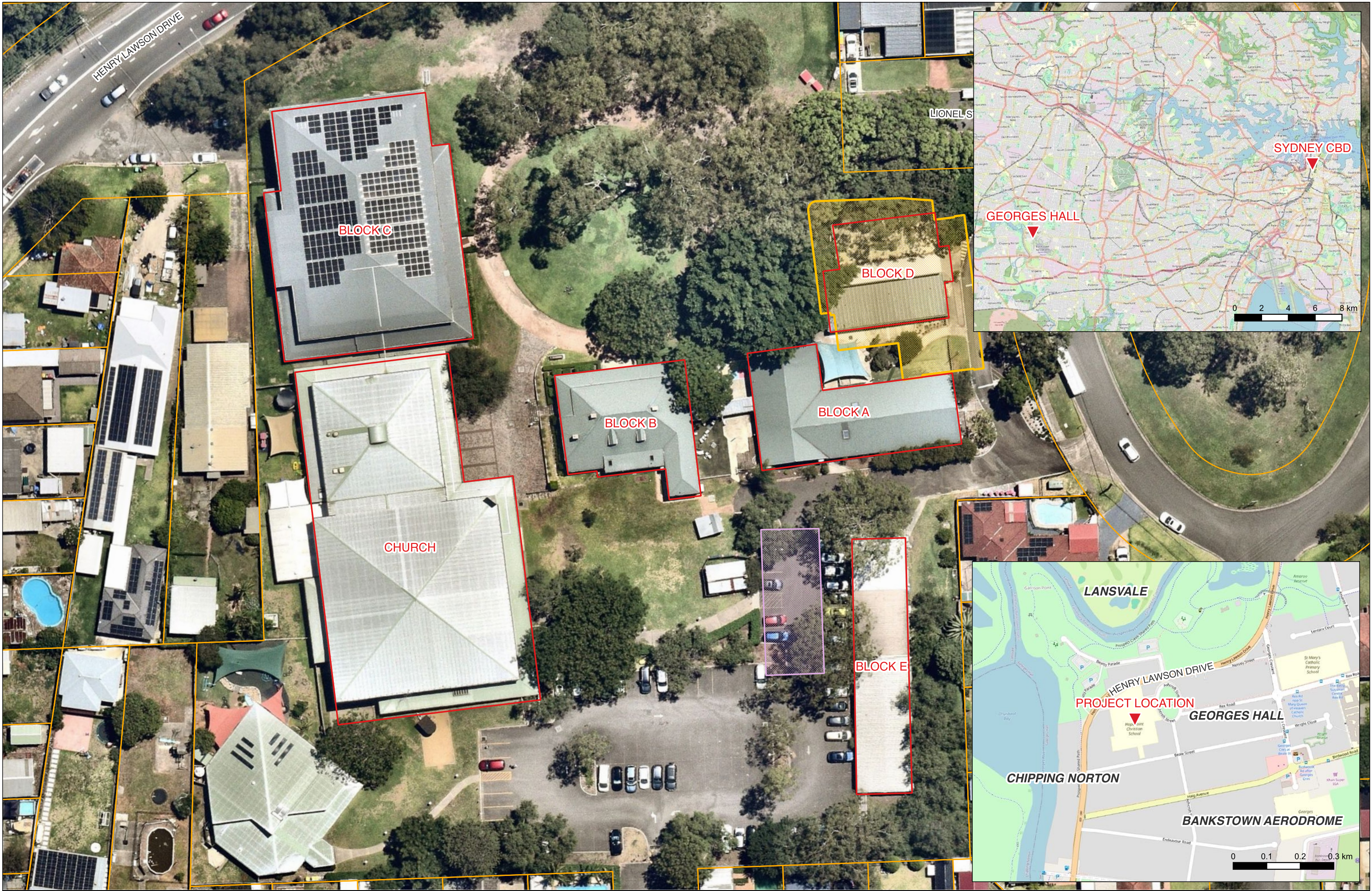
Section	Purpose	Content
1.0		Summary of the project
2.0	Describes parameters of the work	Scope of works, outcomes and the methodology used to achieve those outcomes
3.0	The environmental context	Describes the factors that influenced the development of the site in terms of its setting and landscape, topography, geology, soil, water and vegetation
4.0-11.0	Historical analysis of the development of the project area from 1790 to the present day.	Begins with the first British grant made in 1790 and examines the main periods of use and change from a nineteenth century estate, to a smaller twentieth century farm, hostel use and the present school with an emphasis on evidence that may remain from these improvements
12.0	The archaeological assessment	Discusses the evidence found in 1991 as a means of testing conclusions regarding the integrity and scope of archaeological evidence. Uses evidence from comparable sites as a means of defining areas and scope of potential evidence. Defines the profile that could exist within each development area
13.0	Cultural significance	Assesses the cultural values of potential archaeological evidence as a source of information and its ability to inform or expand or existing knowledge of the place.
14.0	Actions Arising from the Assessment	
		References

2.11 Authorship And Acknowledgements

This report has been written by Wendy Thorp (CRM), the author also of the 1990 archaeological assessment for this site and its initial survey. The work has been commissioned by Leaf Architecture on behalf of Hopepoint Christian School. Graphics have been prepared by Irek Golka (CRM). Thanks are due to Alex Chow for enabling our site inspection.

2.12 Abbreviations And Conventions Used In The Report

AHD	Australian Heritage Database
CMP	Conservation Management Plan
CRM	Cultural Resources Management
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
NLA	National Library Australia
SHR	State Heritage Register
SLNSW	State Library NSW
SRONSW	State Records Office



3 THE SETTING: THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT

The environmental conditions of a place define the type of settlement and activity initiated there by the first settlers and the success of that settlement. A better and informed understanding of the environment through these experiences can define the course and character of a place. Original or modified environmental conditions within a place can have significance in their own right through aspects such as rarity, evidence of pre-settlement habitat, illustrating the works, occupation and ambitions of the original or successive inhabitants and their purposes, food sources or gardens. It can also identify processes that may have influenced the survival or otherwise of archaeological evidence.

3.1 Geology And Topography

The project area is primarily formed on sandstone. The rivers that run through this area flow through gorges and fault lines in the sandstone. This geology produces a landscape that is gently undulating with little topographic diversity except where sandstone outcrops occur, usually in narrow ridges and rocky valleys near the Georges River. The project area has little topographic diversity; it is essentially flat with minor slopes, but it lies above the lower flood areas associated with the Georges River. This position and topography were certainly factors in the selection of the site for the earliest British occupation and its subsequent use. The earliest homestead associated with the occupants of the project area was located close to the river. It flooded on several occasions and these events led to both a change in the location of the house but also in the type of farming undertaken on the estate. While the landscape within the project area has been modified to some degree it still retains the characteristics of the parent land-form.

3.2 Soils

The project area is located within the Cumberland Plain where the Wianamatta Shale group, formed in the Triassic period, is the predominant soil type. On the upper slopes soils tend to be characterised by loamy topsoil and clay subsoil. On the lower portions of the landscape, particularly, in association with the waterways were fertile alluvial soils. The pattern of settlement within the project area and its immediate environs reflects the opportunities and constraints of these varied conditions and the assessment made of these factors by the earliest British surveyors, administrators and settlers. The owners of the estate undertook both agricultural and pastoral improvements but adjusted the scale and location of these works as the relationship became known of the land to the flood events. The project area is located on the high ground above the site of the first house providing views but more security from flooding. The pastoral and agricultural works were located away from the lower flood-prone areas and took advantage of the improved soils on the higher slopes.



An image of the Georges River near Liverpool in 1857 showing the topography of low river flats and the higher ground behind [Henry Grant Lloyd; On the Georges river near Liverpool from Sophienburg 21 November 1857 |SLNSW a5894082/DL PX 42|

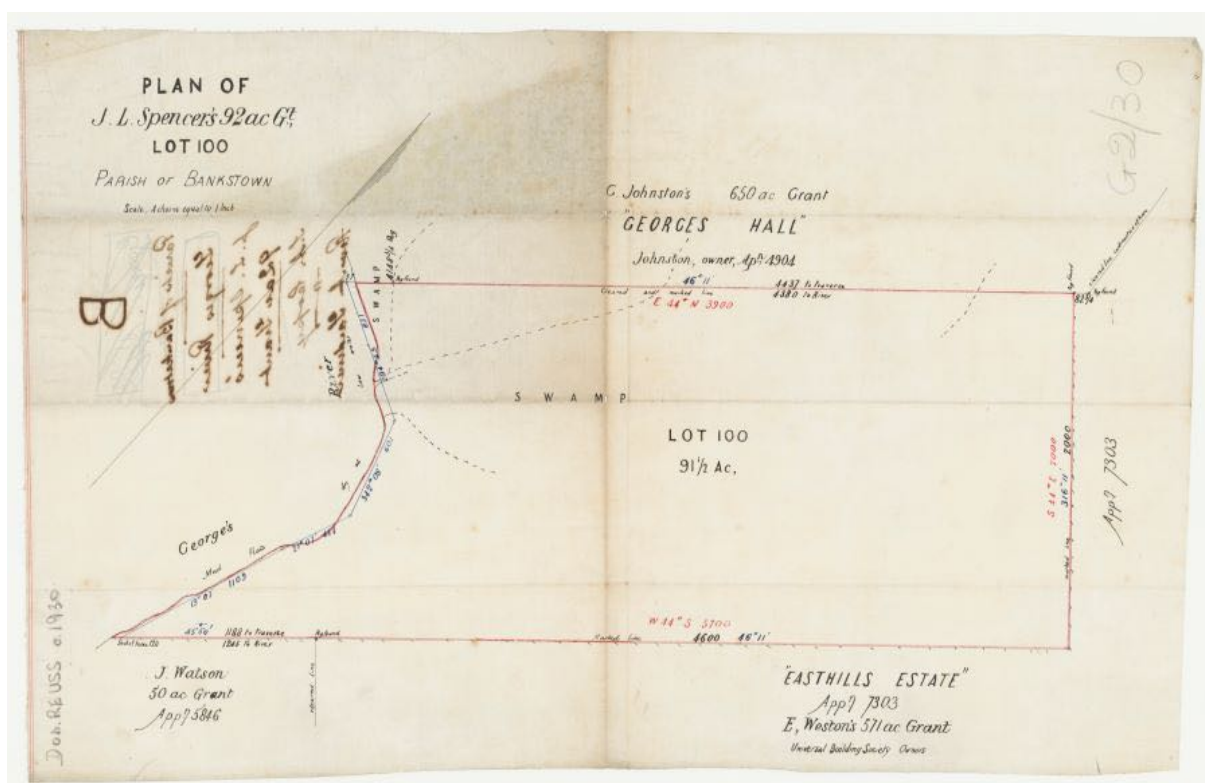


The topographic context of the project area showing the relatively flat contours above the river; Georges Hall house is indicated by the red arrow and the project area, Block F and the temporary demountable, by the yellow arrows |LPI NSW Image Viewer



3.3 Water

The area is defined by the Georges River and the project area is located on a rise just to the east of that waterway. The earliest house was poorly sited because of the propensity of the lower lands along the river to flood. Even away from the river frontage large areas were described on maps as swamp land including the frontage of the estate. Higher up the hill, the location of the second house, there are no known watercourses or swamp lands present here in the past although there must have been sources that supplied the house and immediate farm and yard buildings.



Plan of the adjoining estate to Georges Hall showing the swamp ground that surrounded the estate on the foreshore and to its immediate south (SLNSW FL89897, Subdivision Plans Bankstown)



3.4 Vegetation

Prior to British settlement the area was defined by Cumberland Plain Woodland. Accounts of the first settlers suggest there were open woodlands, free of shrubs but with occasional thickets dominated by blackthorn and a grassy ground cover. On the woodland plains Grey Box and Red River Gum dominated and on the higher ground were narrow-leaved ironbark, stringybark and woollybutt. Specific environmental conditions produced localised vegetation, for example, swamp oak and paperbark would be found on poorly drained areas such as those described in the preceding section. The project area is located in what was turpentine-ironbark forest. This was an open forest landscape but could have a dense understorey or thickets as well as grasslands.⁸ Reference is made in several contemporary accounts to the ironbark trees close to the project area.

⁸ Benson and Howell (1995); Taken for Granted the Bushland of Sydney and Its Suburbs: 17, 49

The earliest image of the original house on the Georges Hall Estate close to the river, dates from 1805 and shows the characteristics of the original environment of the forest and land immediately adjoining the river except where it had been cleared for the house.



George Johnston Junior, view of the original house on the river at Georges Hall. This also shows the characteristics of the forest and foreshore before any substantial impacts had been made by British settlement. A watercolour signed and dated 1805 labelled "Major Johnson's House, New South Wales. Drawn by his Son" | SLNSW SSV/65|

3.5 The Cultural Landscape

The landscape of the school is largely a created cultural landscape made for it. Before this redevelopment in the 1990s some components of the older estate landscape could be seen; the conservation plan of 1990 stated that the remnants of the nineteenth century circular drive could still be seen and some of the early twentieth century gardens.⁹ The circular drive/garden is still visible in part.

An aerial image of 1930 below shows the relationship between the house and the garden and a drive that came to the house from the oval park to the east on what is now Ashcroft Street. It also demonstrates that the lush gardens of the nineteenth century glimpsed on some images had been severely reduced by that time. The pastoral landscape which was the larger setting of the house in the nineteenth century had largely been subdivided but the nature of it as a grazed pasture is still evident. These changes commenced in the earliest years of the nineteenth century. By 1828 the muster of that year records that one hundred acres had been cleared and another thirty acres cleared and cultivated.¹⁰



Detail from 1930 aerial image showing the house (indicated by the arrow) and the circular garden in front with an entrance from the east [Spatial Collaboration Portal <https://portal.spatial.nsw.gov.au>]



The school landscape now is largely a cultural one of the twentieth century that contains both indigenous and introduced species. Specifically, around Block D and the site of the future temporary demountable, nothing remains of the older landscape. Eucalyptus, Camphor Laurels, Kurrajongs and Pepper Trees were maintained largely around the western side of the house from the older garden. In the larger perspective the relationship between the house and the river is now lost because of the subdivisions made between them as is the relationship of the house to a larger pastoral landscape. These subdivisions were made to ensure that some land would be retained as buffer zones to new development and, specifically on the

⁹ NBRSP (1990); *Gerges Hall Homestead Conservation Study*

¹⁰ 1828 Muster 1828 Muster SRONSW NRS 1272-1

eastern side, the connection of the house was maintained to the circular carriage drive and garden in front, to the north of the house¹¹.



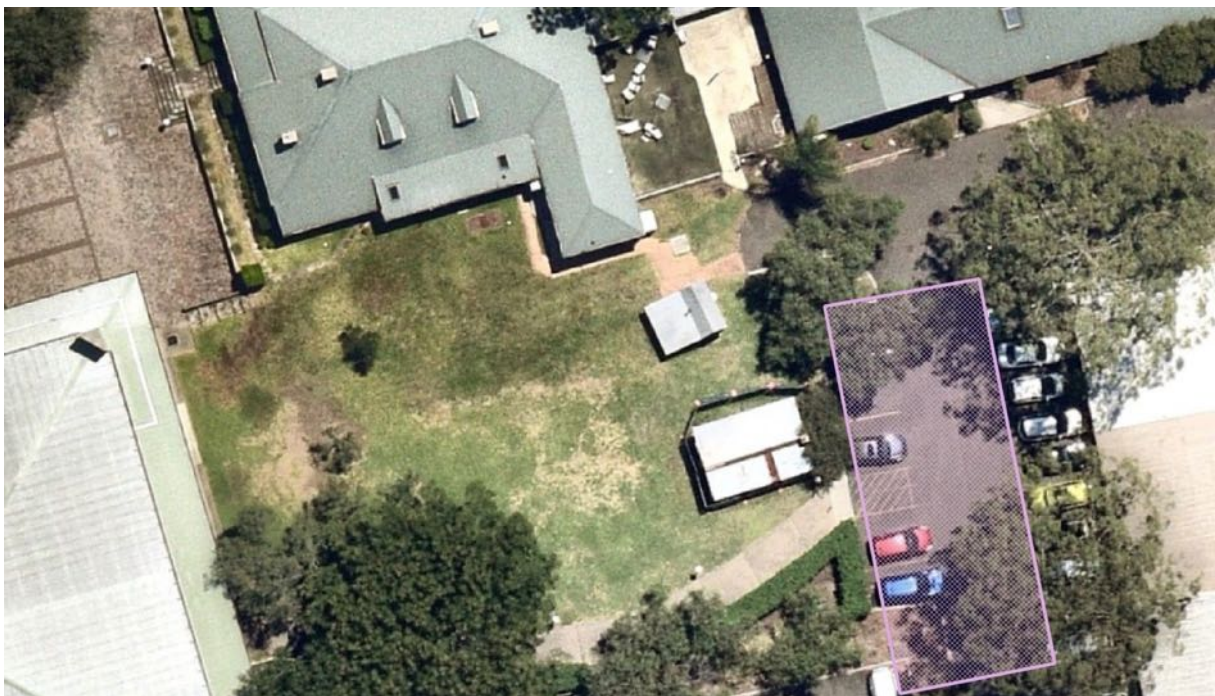
Above: View north on the western side of the existing Block D of mature trees surrounded by artificial grass, hard surfaces and playground equipment immediately adjoining the project area Below: View of the trees, shrubs and grass on the northern side of Block D; all are associated with the development of the school [CRM 2025]

¹¹ Lester Tropman and Associates (1987): Report on the Homestead Formerly Known as Georges Hall; 5 Conservation Policy; 5



View of the landscaped area between Block A and Block D which will be incorporated into the new building [CRM 2025]

The location for the temporary demountable classrooms is close to the two, heritage-listed out-buildings behind Georges Hall house and between them and Block E, currently part of the car park. The landscape here is entirely introduced for the school including a hard paved car park.



The position of the temporary demountable buildings close to the heritage-listed out-buildings and within a car park. [LPI NSW Image Viewer]



4 DEVELOPMENT 1798 – 1837

4.1 Exploration And Assessment

The Georges River was first explored by members of the French La Perouse expedition in 1788. It was traced in full by Bass and Flinders in 1795; they reported to Governor Hunter of the good alluvial lands along it, an overwhelming consideration in the early years of the settlement when it had urgently to achieve self-sufficiency. In 1797 Hunter accompanied an excursion to Botany Bay that had as its intention an exploration of the Georges River as far as practicable and to examine the soil on the banks to determine the fertility of the area for crops. He found the area to be favourable but, at that time, the propensity of the area for flooding was unknown. Hunter subsequently reported to the Imperial administration that a few settlers had made homes on the banks of the river and over the next few years more grants were made there. However, Bankstown remained minimally settled for a long time. Georges Hall was part of the area described as Bankstown.

4.2 George Johnston Arrives

4.2.1 An Ambitious Man

George Johnston was born in 1764 and came to Australia in 1788 with the First Fleet as a First Lieutenant in the Marines. He was appointed Brevet Major in 1800. He was a popular officer in what came to be known as the Rum Corp, notorious for their influence gained through the importation and sale of rum in the colony. Johnston had to return to England for a short time because of concerns about his involvement in the trade. He returned to Sydney and was one of the major figures instrumental in the suppression of the rebellion by Irish convicts at the Battle of Vinegar Hill. His single most significant impact was through his decision to take part in a coup to depose Governor Bligh as the Governor of the colony in 1808. He then assumed the Lieutenant Governorship of the colony. He was court-martialled in 1811 for these actions. Arriving back in Sydney he then became one of the largest and most influential private landowners through his accumulated estates.¹² His properties at Annandale and Georges Hall demonstrate his wealth, influence and connections.

4.2.2 The Johnston Family

In the voyage to Australia Johnston met a convict woman, Esther Abrahams. They would eventually marry in Australia and have seven children born between 1790 and 1804 and another in 1809. In 1800 Johnston returned to England to be tried for insubordination after the mutiny that ousted Governor Bligh. During the time he was absent Esther managed the Georges Hall and Annandale estates, the latter being a substantial land holding (and principal place of residence) acquired by Johnston near to the settlement at Sydney.

George Johnston Senior died in 1823. His death was preceded by that of his first son George Junior. The latter died as the result of a riding accident in 1820, and his brother David inherited the Georges Hall properties on the death of this father. Esther inherited the Annandale estate and resided there with a third son Robert. After a legal disagreement with Robert, she moved to Georges Hall to live with David. David married Selina Willey in 1836, and they lived at Georges Hall.

¹² D. Pike (1967); Australian Dictionary of Biography

4.3 Acquiring A Large Estate

The first land grant at Bankstown was made to George Bass in 1798. Bass's property was partly in what is now the suburb of Georges Hall. His land was to the north of Johnstons, with a river frontage. Ultimately it would be included in the Johnston family estate as would the property of Matthew Flinders named "The Wolds". After Bass and Flinders George Johnston was next to receive land there. Johnston, a Captain in the NSW Corps at this time had already received a generous land grant at Annandale close to Sydney; it was to become his primary place of residence as well as having a farm attached to it. He also went on to be granted land at Cabramatta and Lake Illawarra amongst others.

He was first given the land that encompasses the project area in April 1798, being 172 acres, as one of three separate portions. These parcels of land were as follows:

- Marquee Point (12 acres), this is in the Parish of Bankstown (Georges Hall) and the site of the first homestead built for the family and the subsequent house within the school grounds
- 70 acres in the Parish of St Luke (Lansvale East) called Johnston Flats
- 90 acres in the Parish of Holsworthy (Chipping Norton) called David Banks

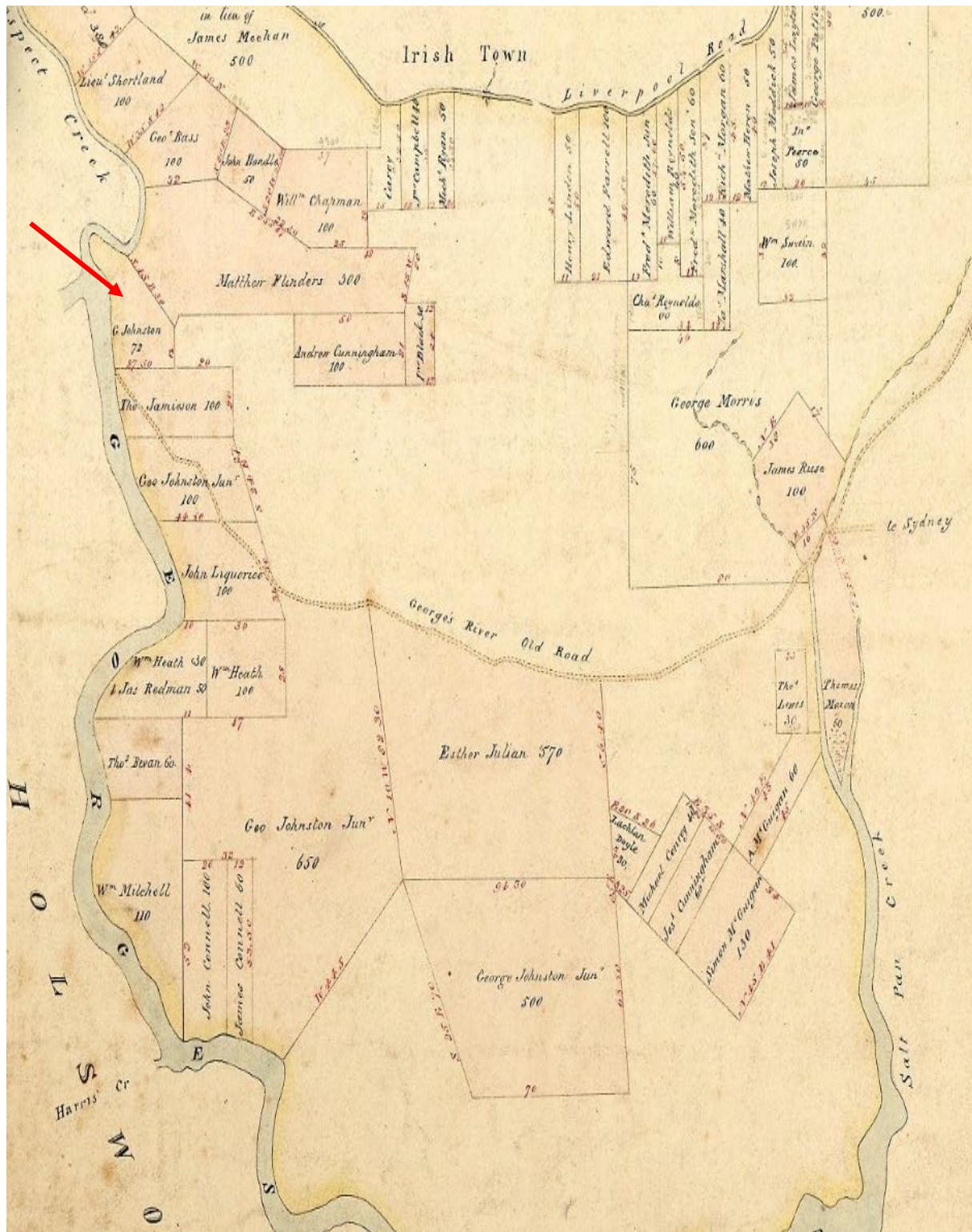
Johnston continued to acquire land in this area separate from his other large estates. Some of his local acquisitions were earlier grants to settlers that had been cancelled. For example, in 1799 Governor Hunter had granted sixty acres to Obadiah Ilkin a non-commissioned officer in the NSW Corps. He illegally sold this land in 1800 and Governor King cancelled the grant. It was reissued to George Johnston in 1804.¹³ This was added to the 12 acres at Marquee Point giving that property a total of 72 acres. This is the acreage shown on the 1838 parish map reproduced on the following page and includes the site of the present-day Georges Hall house.

By September 1800 a total of 3247 acres had been granted by Hunter at Bankstown to several settlers in this district. Most were large grants to officers in the military; Johnston's property or at least this portion on Marquee Point was amongst the smallest. It grew over the following years by grants to family members including 100 acres to George Johnstone Junior (1809, cancelled and then regranted in 1813 including an old road leading to the estate). The 100 acres were called "Foveaux's Gift". Esther Johnston was granted 570 acres in 1813, which was added to the Georges River Estate.¹⁴ Later George Johnston Junior would be given another 650 acres. By 1828 the family owned 372 acres in the location most closely associated with the project area. Approximately one third was cleared and in cultivation.

It is unknown if the project area was cleared in this period.

¹³ S. Rosen (1996); *Bankstown A Sense of Identity*; 24

¹⁴ NBRSP (1990); *Conservation Plan Georges Hall*; unpaginated



George Johnston's original 72-acre grant at the junction of Prospect Creek and the Georges River, the site of the study area. Other grants made to him or his family members are also recorded on this plan [SRONSW AO Map187 Parish Map Bankstown, C. Stewart 1838]



4.4 Johnston's First Homestead: The Default Military Headquarters

4.4.1 The First Homestead

The first homestead built for the Johnston family on their Georges River land was on the river frontage on the Marquee Point grant of 72 acres. It had certainly been built by 1803 when it was mentioned in the Sydney Gazette; a reward was offered for the return of two horses "*stolen or strayed from Major Johnston's Farm at Georges River*".¹⁵ The property was given the name Georges Hall by George Senior; he referred to it by this name in his will of 1821.

The site of the house is in question. It was described in 1836 as being "*about two miles from the road, the approach to which, through the bush*".¹⁶ The reference also makes clear that a substantial amount of the indigenous landscape still remained at that time. Although the site of this first house is described as "well known" in the original heritage study for Bankstown and was included as an item of environmental heritage in the Bankstown Heritage Study of 1988 (Item 6) several potential places have been ascribed to it. However, the most widely accepted is for a site in Beatty Parade, north of the project area and overlooking Prospect creek.¹⁷ In Section 6.3 of the current report a more precise location for the house may have been identified from a subdivision plan of 1887 which shows a house likely to have been the original Georges Hall house overlooking the junction of the Georges River and Prospect Creek. It appears to accord with the contemporary images of the house.

There are two images of the house, the better-known by Joseph Lycett made in 1819. It appears to have been relatively simple, adequate for the purpose but low-key for a man of this influence and wealth. It was clearly not the main residence of the family; the principal seat was at Annandale. Lycett's drawing shows a single-storey building, possibly brick-built with stone quoins and a shingled roof. It was asymmetrical around a central front door and may have been two rooms deep. There were a substantial number of windows in the front elevation and two larger windows in the end elevation. Chimneys indicate the presence of fireplaces at either end of the house. There were no verandahs or skillions.

The earlier image of the house made in 1805 by George Johnston Junior has been referenced earlier in regard to the landscape that surrounded it. This watercolour shows a similar view of the house looking from the opposite bank of the river towards it. The picture shows that building with somewhat more detail and a fence running down the side of the building to the water line and what appears to be a path from the front door to the river. The ground has been cleared in front except for some scattered shrubs. The evidence of the two images suggests that the site of this first house was located north-west of the existing house close to the junction of Georges River and Prospect Creek.

No physical evidence of the building is known to survive to determine the construction details. It was visited by The Reverend Taylor in January 1837 when it was described as "*a neat house having an excellent garden coming down to the river*".¹⁸ The garden must have been added after the 1805 watercolour was completed. The land was improved for both agricultural and pastoral purposes but the location so close to the river led to serious losses. It was first farmed for wheat but the crop was lost in the Georges River flood of 1800. The family then turned to sheep farming for meat. Four hundred sheep were lost in the flood of 1809.¹⁹ It was these ongoing losses and damage that influenced the decision to move the home to a new location.

¹⁵ Sydney Gazette 11 December 1803; 04

¹⁶ Reverend Richard Taylor: Diary of residence in New South Wales 1836-1839 SLNSW A 3816

¹⁷ Kass and Walker (1988); Bankstown Heritage Study Inventory Sheet Item 6

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ M. Peters (1966); The Bankstown Story; 10



George Johnston Junior, view of the original house on the river at Georges Hall. A watercolour signed and dated 1805 labelled "Major Johnson's House, New South Wales. Drawn by his Son" | SLNSW SSV/65]



View of Johnstone's Homestead in 1819, the original house for the family close to the river [J. Lycett, *View of Georges River Near Liverpool NSW* in A.W. Fuller Collection of Views Predominantly of Sydney, Liverpool and the Sundra Straits ML PX*D 41 No 7]

The occupation by the British settlers in the district was slow but by 1808 it had reached a sufficient number to justify the establishment of a mustering point. This was a place used by the local population to assemble at the annual muster, a head count essentially of the numbers then living in each muster area, or for

emergencies. Prior to 1808 they had mustered at Parramatta.²⁰ By this date Aboriginal resistance and hostility to the newcomers was increasing and a military presence was considered an essential component for the protection of the settlers. The military was maintained as needed throughout the rest of this decade.

In later 1801 a Georges River Detachment of soldiers was appointed; it comprised one sergeant and four privates. These men were to be quartered at Johnston's house. A corporal and two privates were also stationed at another property. These arrangements were necessary because there was no purpose-built establishment in this district. It was made possible because Johnston spent most of his time at Annandale rather than at his Georges Hall property.²¹ Any evidence of this association would be with the site of the first house, discussed in the preceding section.

4.4.2 Expanding the Estate

Additional grants were made in the area to various members of the Johnston family in 1804, 1809, 1813 and 1819 and several purchases in 1818 and in the 1820s. George Johnston Junior was granted 650 acres in 1819 which, on his death, passed to his father in 1820. By this time the estate contained the land now developed as Chipping Norton, Georges Hall, Lansvale East and Milperra. It was the most substantial landholding in the area. The extent of the family holdings at Georges Hall is recorded on the 1838 parish map in the preceding section.

In 1820 George Johnston (Junior) was killed in an accident and his lands reverted to the Crown. Subsequently, the property was released to his father. The 1822 muster records that Johnston had 6754 acres and his second son David had 600 acres. The Muster also recorded that at that time twenty acres were farmed for wheat, there were another forty acres cleared, he had seventy cattle and employed fifteen convicts. The estate was then enlarged by another grant made in 1823. In 1828 the Marquee Point property consisted of 372 acres of which 100 were cleared and 30 acres were cultivated; it had an overseer and ten servants²².

In that year David Johnston made an application to the Colonial Secretary to request permission to rent approximately 200 acres of land with a view, later, to purchase it. The land in question was described as; *"between the southern boundary of the farm of my late brother Mr George Johnston and the Georges River"*.²³ He made a formal application for the land on 1 June 1828 at which time he noted that he was in possession of 2000 acres of land, twenty horses, 300 cattle, 800 sheep and £500 in cash. He was a wealthy man.²⁴ The figures also make clear that, for the present-day, the evidence that remains from this period of occupation in the broadest sense of the word, including the remaining Georges Hall house, was the focus of a much larger landscape of occupation and use. The house (the first and second) was not just a place to live, it was the centre of a large commercial industry and the focus of a small community of family, estate workers, servants and convicts.

²⁰ S. Rosen (1996); *Bankstown A Sense of Identity*; 25 and *Sydney Gazette* 28 May 1809; 01

²¹ *Ibid*; 23

²² 1828 Muster SRONSW NRS 1272-1

²³ Johnston to Colonial Secretary 31 May 1828. SRONSW Col. Sec re. Land 2/27893 Reel 1146

²⁴ Application of David Johnston for Permission to rent land 1 June 1828. SRONSW Col. Sec re. Land 2/27893 Reel 1146

5 DEVELOPMENT: 1837 – 1866

5.1 David Johnston And The New House

The Reverend Taylor's diary, which references the original Johnston homestead, (Section 4.1.1) noted on 26 January 1837 in regard to the Johnston's property that David Johnston was "*erecting a new house on a more commodious site.*" ²⁵ It is believed to have been completed in the same year, 1837, the year in which David married. After the move to the new house the old house was leased to a tenant. It is generally taken to mean that the "new house" was the current Georges Hall homestead.

The commodious site was located on a hill above the flood-line a clear indication of the lessons learned in the earlier home. The architect and builder are unknown. It is of a plan and style typical of the period. It had four large rooms, a hall and pantry and generous cellars. In the attic were four rooms lit by dormer windows. It had a low-pitched roof extending over the verandah. It was built on a sandstone foundation using stuccoed brick. The floors and roof are made of pit-sawn timber.



View of the "new" house at Georges Hall built for David Johnston in 183-1837 restored in 1991; view west [CRM 2025]

²⁵ Cited in B. Goodger; *Cattle Duffing in Bankstown* BHS Newsletter Volume 8 No. 4

5.2 Managing The Estate: The Out-Buildings

While the house built in 1837 is still standing and has been studied on several occasions, little has been written about the out-buildings, those that were in immediate association with the house and those used to manage the works and activities of the estate. There are no detailed plans of the nineteenth century that define any out-buildings either close to the house or beyond it. One undated sketch plan, likely to be drawn in the later part of the nineteenth century, only shows the position of the house in a landscape of fenced paddocks.



An undated sketch plan, probably from the later part of the nineteenth century showing the position of the house and fenced paddocks surrounding it; the position of the house is shown by the arrow [SLNSW Subdivision Plans Georges Hall FL914480 – detail]



A house of this date, and for a family of this affluence, would have had several ancillary buildings to support the function of the house and the needs of those living there and the latter included not just the family but convicts and overseers, household servants and craftsmen. There are no records to account in detail for the size of the community and family living at the house.

In a study of homestead complexes built before 1850 in the Hunter Valley the out-buildings identified as typical included a kitchen, convict barracks, servant's quarters, carriage house, stables and granary, butcher's hut, slab horse boxes, stud master's cottage, mounting yard and horse arenas, stud yards, barns,

blacksmith's shop, bullock boxes, stockyards and underground silos amongst others.²⁶ There are no images of Georges Hall at this time but the image below of the property named Bungarabee in 1858 shows the small village of out-buildings that clustered around an estate house. Bungarabee is located at Doonside in the City of Blacktown. It was built before Georges Hall, in 1822, for another wealthy man, John Campbell. It was built to demonstrate the prestige and wealth of the owner; in the case of the Johnston family this was the house at Annandale. However, the image of Bungarabee demonstrates the numerous out-buildings required to support the house and workers; a smaller version of this establishment would have been associated with the Georges Hall house. There are no plans or images of the house and its environs to identify specific sites that relate to this domestic phase of use and occupation.



Bungarabee Estate at Doonside in 1858 showing the main house and a large number of out-buildings
[J. Fowles 1858 SLNSW 1193]

It was concluded in 1987 that *“the known out-buildings have always been located to the rear and very close to the sides of the building. With this in mind we have established the immediate curtilage to the front and rear of the house”*.²⁷ This formed the basis for the heritage curtilage applied to the house. It is a reasonable conclusion except that the evidence for any of those buildings is associated with the twentieth century disposition both in terms of what remained and archival evidence.

While the two current heritage-listed out-buildings are of the earlier-middle part of the nineteenth century there is no primary evidence for any others or the locations of others and no physical evidence. That there were more than those two remaining can be assumed on the basis of comparable sites, the absence of certain structures that must have existed such as cess-pits, and the evidence of the 1991 excavation which revealed parts of foundations of several buildings. This is discussed in Section 11.0 of this report.

²⁶ Clive Lucas Stapleton and Partners for the Office of Environment and Heritage (2013); *Hunter Estates A Comparative Heritage Study of pre-1805s Homestead Complexes in the Hunter Region*

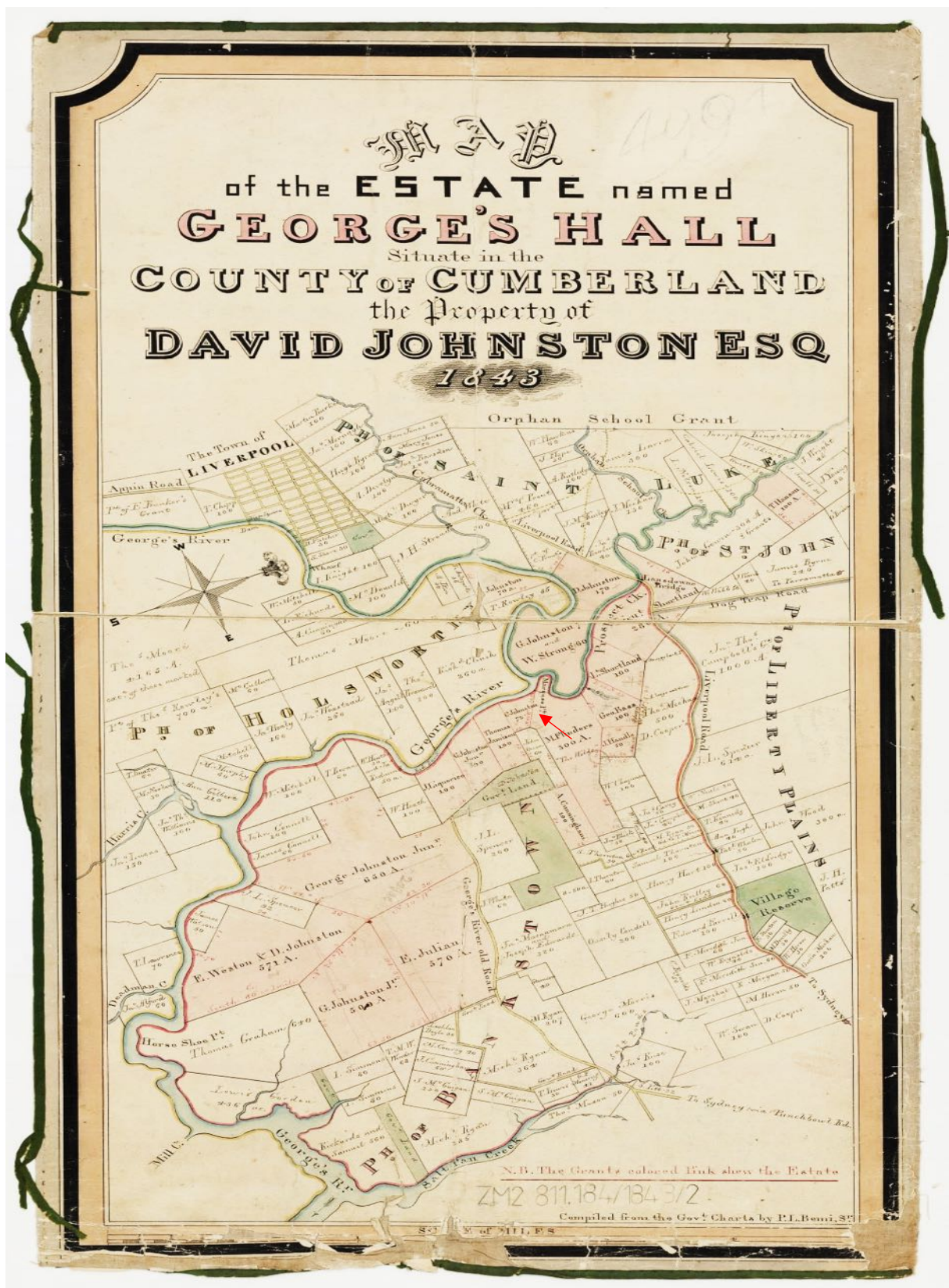
²⁷ Lester Tropman and Associates (1987); *Report on the Homestead (formerly known as Georges Hall): 5*

5.3 Like Father Like Son

David Johnston managed this estate as well as those in the Illawarra, Adelong and the Bedellock district with the base for the family, his wife and eight children, being the house at Georges Hall. David continued the family interest of acquiring more land. In 1842 he applied to a special board of inquiry in regard to 170 acres that had been promised to his father by Governor Macquarie but which had never been fulfilled. Records of the time demonstrated that it had been legally transferred and David took possession of what was called Georges Flats at Lansvale. He also purchased 100 acres at Bankstown, outside the project area. There is an estate plan of 1843 that records the full extent of the Georges Hall Estate at that time. It shows the largest extent of the property but does not detail the improvements upon it.

David Johnston's wife died in 1863 and he died in 1866. In his will his land was left to his children. The two oldest sons, George Robert and Arthur Alfred inherited Georges Hall and the estate of 1064 acres as joint tenants. Arthur was twelve years of age and George twenty-three.²⁸ The family continued to reside at the Hall.

²⁸ LPI NSW Primary Application 4904



The full extent of the Georges Hall Estate in 1843 shown coloured pink; the arrow indicates the site of the house [SLNSW FL3378891.5]



6 DEVELOPMENT: 1866 – 1907

6.1 The Next Generation

In 1876 an agreement was made between the brothers, George and Arthur, that should either of the two pass away the surviving party had the option to buy the other party's share at current market values.²⁹ Following the death of George, Arthur purchased his share. He continued to reside there with his wife Maria. He died in 1907. His wife inherited the George's Hall property and remained in residence there. However, in this period before Arthur's death the property began to be subdivided, and changes were made to the house. This is evident from the fabric of the house but there is very little written documentation, at least available in public archives.

There are two images of the estate from this period; both only show the front of the house and its immediate environs. The first is from c. 1866 and has a view of the house from the north-east. The second image is from the c. 1880s – 1900 and also shows the front of the house but here with a very clear view of a circular garden established on the central axis to the house in this period. References in family correspondence to the garden in the ring in front of the house indicate that it was fenced around in the 1880s to protect the garden from rabbits and other animals.



Georges Hall in c. 1866 showing the front of the house and several family members |NBRSP (1990); Conservation Plan Georges Hall Appendix.

²⁹ LPI Primary Application 4904

6.2 Challenges, Subdivision And A Changing Landscape

6.2.1 First Subdivision

The Johnston family's official and unofficial occupation of much of the area bordering the river was challenged in the later 1870s and 1880s as the potential value of the area emerged. There is a plan prepared by the Surveyor General in 1879 with annotations that shows him trying to reconcile the complexities of the boundaries of the Georges Hall Estate. The family campaigned strongly for compensation in cases such as where they had to give back land that had been reserved for a road.

It is important to remember that the subdivision of this estate resulted in a huge change to the appearance, use and occupation of a large swathe of land encompassing substantial portions of at least three present-day suburbs. The pastoral landscape underwent equally massive change from open fields, forests and pastures to, at first, smaller subdivisions for farms and horticultural works and, ultimately for suburbs. It was a period of fundamental change in the district.

As early as 1868 some of the assets of the estate were advertised for sale:

*"For sale by tender Timber Forests. The timber of two blocks of land, part of the Georges Hall Estate on the banks of the Georges River comprising about 600 acres and 400 acres. The timber on the land has been carefully preserved and consists primarily of the finest description of ironbark".*³⁰

This is, as well, a clue to the setting of the house in this period.

6.2.2 Application for Torrens Title

In 1879 George Johnston applied for his property to be brought under Torrens Title. The application addressed an estate of 2380 acres and 20 perches including twelve separate grants which had a total value of £6000.³¹ It included the land on which the house was constructed and its other improvements. This was the first time that the term the "Georges Hall Estate" was used officially in connection with the property.

6.2.3 More Subdivision and New Industries

The greatest impact from subdivisions of the estate commenced in the 1880s after the completion of the change in title. From the later part of that decade the NSW Realty Company advertised the land as suitable for weekend homes and poultry farms; lots ranged in size from 100 to 200 acres. An advertisement for land sales on the estate, five hundred acres in total, appeared in 1887:

*"The Georges Hall Estate a most eligible and highly valuable freehold property which has been liberally subdivided into cultivation and building blocks of about 2 ½ acres each... The property has a long frontage to the main Liverpool Road and the immense frontage of 4 ½ miles to the Georges River and the Prospect Creek. ... And is for the most part cleared, stumped and cultivated."*³²

The latter suggests that the timber advertised in 1868 had been removed by the 1880s.

³⁰ Sydney Morning Herald 20 July 1868; 06

³¹ LPI NSW: Primary Application 4904

³² Daily Telegraph 20 April 1887; 02

It was about this time that Robert Newell purchased 570 acres from Johnston. This later became the Beaconsfield Estate. Another round of lots were offered in 1889. *“Georges Hall Estate Choice orchard lots a few with frontages to the Georges River. 16 buildings sites fronting the Liverpool Road.”*³³ .

Lessons from the early years of occupation of this property were not learnt. In 1898 the area suffered a large flood: *“The recent flood caused considerable damage to the vineyards on the Georges Hall Estate. Messrs Hoy, Edwards, Howard and Asimus Bros having suffered the greatest loss – although the latter were fortunate in having commenced to cut their grapes just prior to the flood”*.³⁴



The front of the house seen from within the circular garden bed c. 1890-1900 (SLNSW Image a089398h)

6.3 The Original Home And A New Tenant

While the “new” home at Georges Hall continued to be the base for the Johnston family the original house was still in use as a residence. It appears from the sparse documentation available that it had been left to fall into disrepair for at least a little while but in 1868 a tenant took over the property. It is unknown if this was the first time it was leased; there are no advertisements for the house prior to this time. On 17 April 1868 the following advertisement appeared: *“To Let Georges Hall distant about four miles from the Fairfield Station. The House is spacious and convenient, good garden and about 1850 acres of land.”*³⁵

The new tenant was Mr Cox, it is unknown if Mr Cox was part of the famous Cox family of New South Wales based at Mulgoa. A letter from George Robert to David Frederick Johnston written on 8 October 1868 stated that *“Mr Cox is living in the old house now. He came last Monday and has already got the old place*

³³ [Sydney Morning Herald 13 April 1889; 06](#)

³⁴ [Liverpool Herald 10 March 1898; 8](#)

³⁵ [Sydney Morning Herald 17 April 1868; 08](#)

in very good order and from what I can judge the old place will never be any the worse for his occupying it..."³⁶. In 1878 another tenant is claimed to have leased the house, a Captain Airily, a stock owner.³⁷

There is a subdivision plan of 1887 for land on the opposite side of the Georges River which does show the land at Marquee Point. On this is a house called "Murrenderra" owned or occupied by C.T. Sandon.³⁸ It is approximately in the area thought to be the site of the original Homestead. Sandon may have been a successful publisher and bookseller operating in Sydney in this period but there are several other men of considerable means in the same period with the same name making it difficult to make the correct attribution.

No other reference to a house of this name has been found and the house had certainly gone by 1922 when a subdivision plan of that date showed the site to be unoccupied (Section 8.2). The house shown on the 1887 plan was within the land then owned by the Johnston family and it seems likely that this was the original homestead site with a new tenant in the later years of the nineteenth century.



Detail from subdivision plan of 1887 showing "Murrenderra" house, which might be the site of the original Georges Hall house | Subdivision Plan Georges Hall NLA Map LFSP 426 Folder 33



³⁶ Quoted in NBRSP (1990): Conservation Plan for Georges Hall Appendix

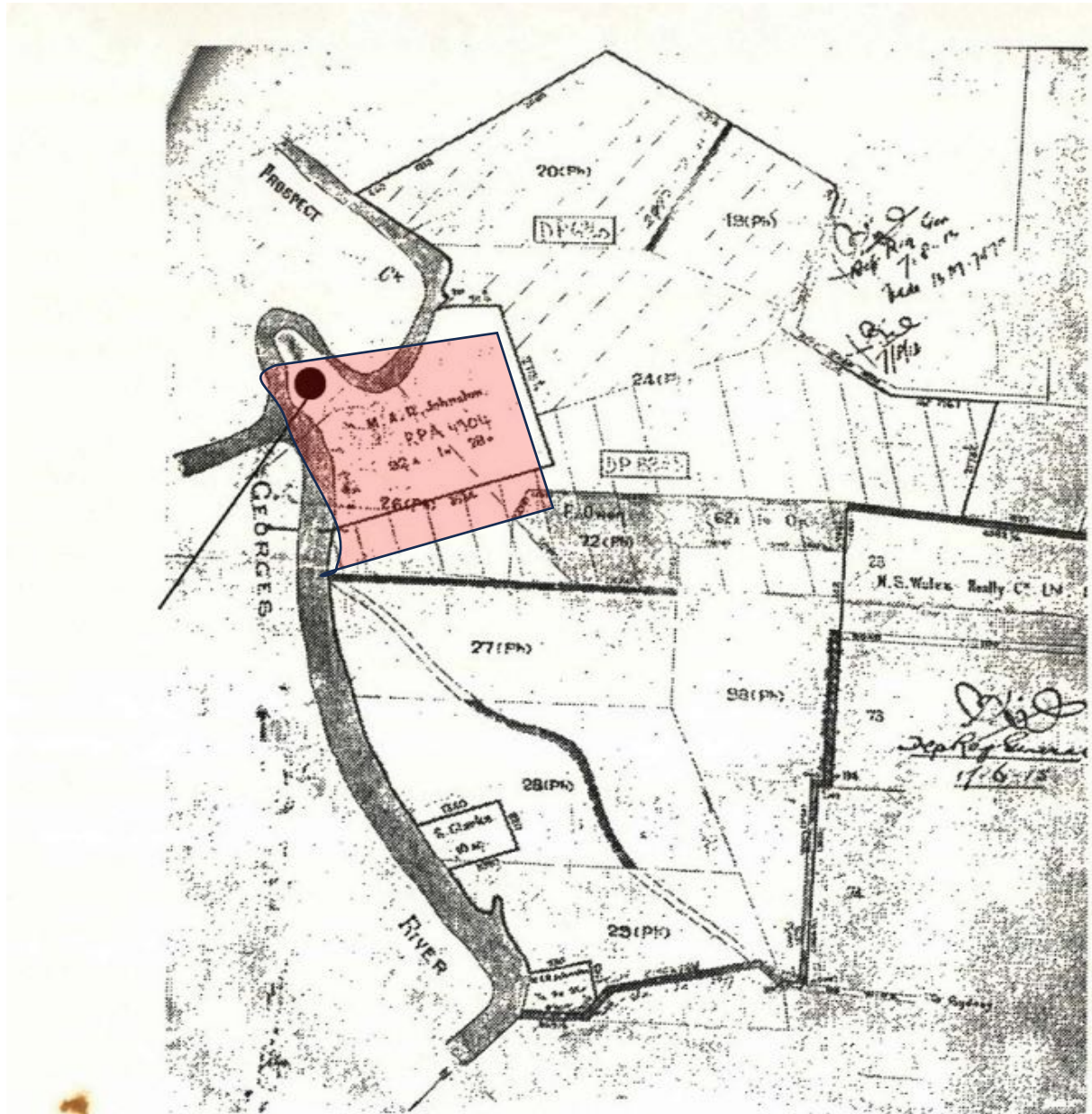
³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ Georges Hall NLA Map LFSP 426 Folder 33

7 DEVELOPMENT: 1907 – 1917

7.1 The Georgetown Estate Is Created

In 1894 Arthur Johnston transferred his interest in the property to his wife Maria Rossi. Arthur died in 1907 and Maria inherited the estate and began another round of subdivision. The house was retained and thirty-two acres around it. The land outside the house and the land retained with it was sold and became the Georgetown Estate.



The land retained by Maria Johnston the rest becoming the Georgetown Estate LTO CT 2383 Volume 142



7.2 Change At The House

In 1912, two additional rooms were added at the south-west corner and other external alterations were made to the house. Around 1912 changes were made to the verandah and the roof was renewed. The front steps were concreted. Generally, the archival evidence indicates that very little change occurred at the house or its immediate environs in this period. Archaeological evidence, however, uncovered in 1991 indicates that some substantial changes were made in this period, in the war years, behind the house. This is discussed in Section 11.0



The front of the house in 1915

https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q55635291#/media/File:The_Homestead_Georges_Hall-1915.JPG

7.3 Complications From A Will

Maria Johnston died in 1913 and in her will she left the house “known as Georges Hall” and the ninety acres of land around it which she had separated from the larger Georgetown Estate in 1912. The will was disputed by several people to whom Maria had left gifts. The dispute arose over the wording in the will of the legacy of these gifts.³⁹ Ralph Johnston (her nephew) controlled the house and its acreage until its sale in 1917.

³⁹ [The Sun 6 March 1914:11](#)

8 DEVELOPMENT: 1917- 1949

8.1 A New Owner: Henry Crossing And Rapid Change

The 92 acres remaining of the original estate with the house was sold in 1917 to Henry Crossing, a grazier. He retained the estate for only three years. In 1920 James William Ashcroft and his wife Amelia purchased the property. They lived there for only two years until James' death in 1922. In his obituary James Ashcroft was described as having been born in London coming to Australia in 1885. He was the manager of several mines in Queensland and NSW. Ashcroft died at his home at Georges Hall.⁴⁰ The property was sold to Robert Harvey Leyton.⁴¹ Based on the evidence of the 1922 plan, which shows the site of the original homestead to the north without a building, it is possible that it was in this period that the first homestead was finally demolished by one of the new owners possibly Leyton to accommodate his new subdivision.

8.2 The Deepwater Estate: Georges River

Leyton was responsible for subdividing the remaining 100 acres of the original Johnston estate that had been retained by Maria Johnston on the death of her husband. The subdivision was called the Deepwater Estate. Deepwater Estate was a public company with pastoral holdings throughout New South Wales. The estate subdivision was advertised in April 1917: *"Georges Hall Estate Georges River: 2nd subdivision of this Famous and Historic Estate. Absolute water frontage allotments, choice residential sites also two acre farmlets. All highly improved no clearing required. Also note that the Government has purchased a large area adjoining Georges Hall for a returned soldier settlement"*.⁴²

The brochure issued for the estate described it as a paradise for the kiddies today and a sure investment for them for the future. Land from the estate continued to be sold throughout the 1920s. The advertisements indicate the extent and advantages of the subdivision.

*"Land in the South Fairfield district to be offered for sale shortly will be the Deepwater Estate on the Georges River. It comprises 20 lots with deepwater frontages and 27 rear lots with access to the river. This subdivision is situated close to the main southern road within walking distance of both South Fairfield and Canley Vale stations."*⁴³

Layton sold off much of the Deepwater Estate, including the lot on which Georges Hall stood, in 1924. This encompassed a little over six acres. A subdivision plan of the estate made in 1922 shows the main house, two smaller buildings immediately behind and to the south-east of the house, one directly south-east and close to the house and at least two west of the house. There was a large group of buildings at some distance to the south. The majority of the buildings were brick-built. The plan shows approximate positions of these structures but probably did not record all the improvements that occupied the site. One of the earliest studies of the house, made in 1987, stated that at the time of the subdivision the property had apart from the homestead, a "well-built" brick servant's quarters, large stables, a coach house and a harness room.⁴⁴ The source of the information is not known.

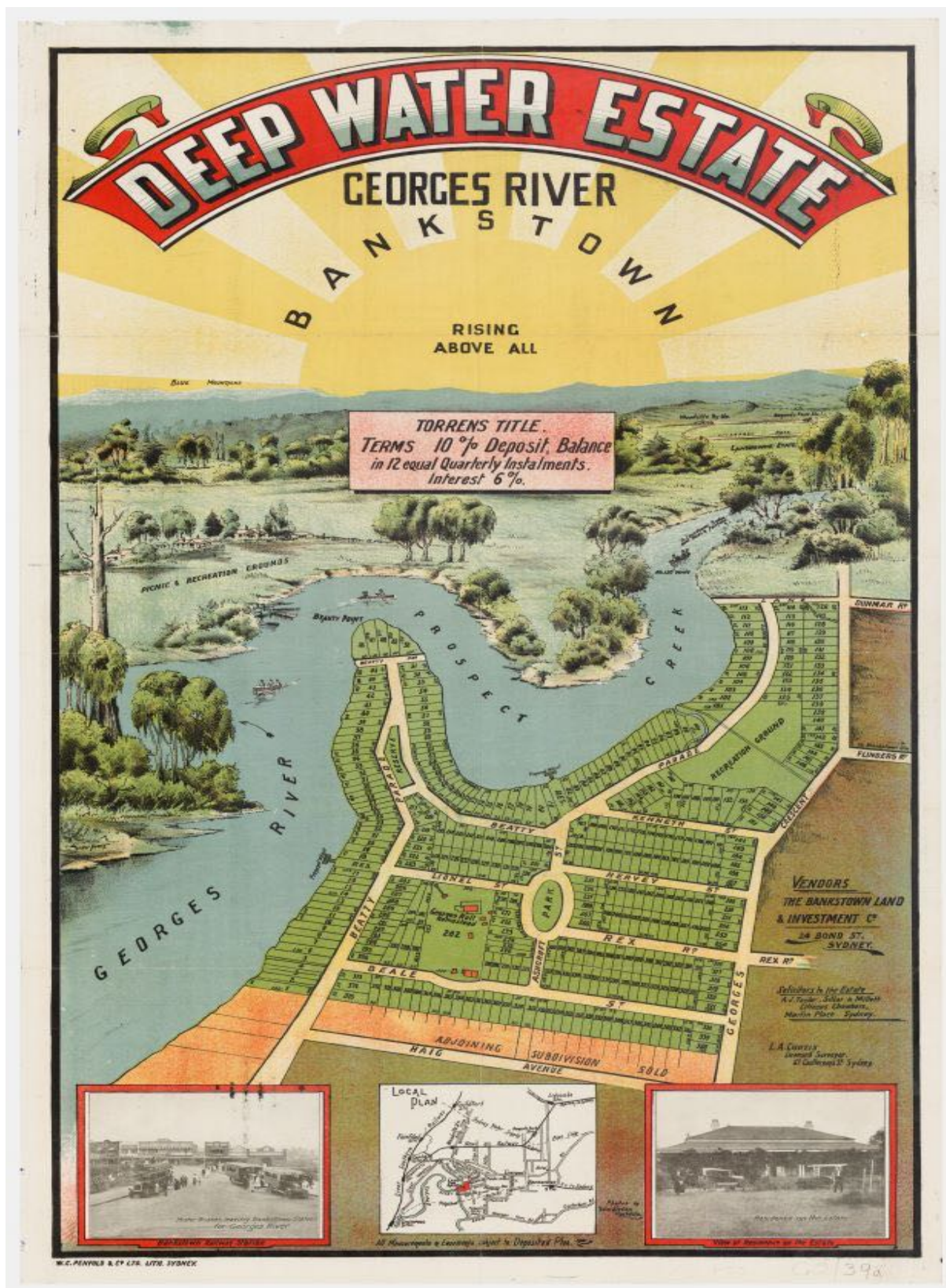
⁴⁰ [Daily Telegraph 10 January 1922; 6](#)

⁴¹ [NBRSP \(1990\): Conservation Management Plan Georges Hall](#)

⁴² [Cumberland Argus and Fruit Growers Advocate 14 April 1917; 2](#)

⁴³ [Labor Daily 30 April 1926; 03](#)

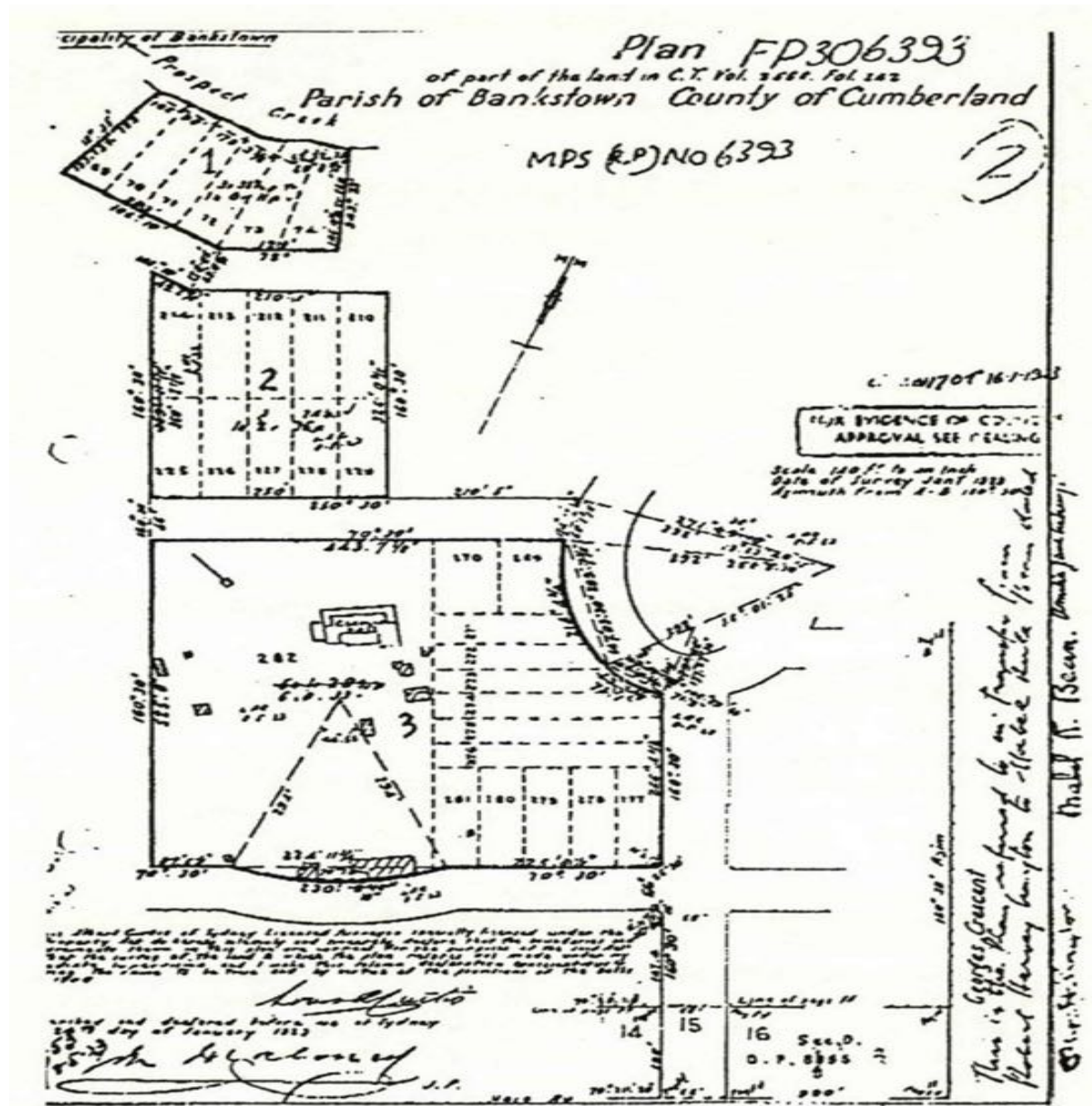
⁴⁴ [Lester Tropman and Associates: Georges Hall Appendix.](#)



Advertising poster for the sale of the Deepwater Estate at Georges River in 1922; it shows Georges Hall and several out-buildings. The original homestead site to the north is vacant of any buildings [SLNSW FL898846]

8.3 Mabel And Montague Bean: 1924 - 1946

The Georges Hall Homestead lot was purchased by Mabel Rule Bean in 1924. The Bean family occupied the house and ran a stud pig farm a short distance from it. They were featured in an article about the house in 1935. The house was then noted for the impressive display of wistaria which covered the front and the family were said to have respected the age of the house by using period furniture and decoration. It was stated that the Bean family home encompassed forty acres and Mr Bean was farming the ten acres immediately around the house.⁴⁵ The son, Mr Bob Bean, took a number of photographs of the property at this time and this is one of the most extensive collections now available.



Survey of the property in 1923 with the improvements purchased by Mabel Bean [LPI FP306393]

⁴⁵ The Sun 18 September 1935: 23

The folio plan that accompanied the purchase records a similar set of buildings behind and around the house with an additional two or three on the western boundary of the property that were recorded in 1922.

An aerial image, the earliest available, from 1930 also shows essentially the same improvements on the site as those in the 1922 plan with the exception of landscape works including the drive to the house from the east that connected to a circular road around a path formed in the 1922 subdivision, the ring garden in front of the house and distinctive planting patterns to the west and south-east of the house. The farming that the Bean family were described as undertaking around the house in 1935 is not particularly evident other than, perhaps the darker colours of the ground on the eastern side and part of the western side which might indicate some form of cultivation or earth movement. Buildings for the stud farm are also not evident unless it is the few on the western boundary of the property. An aerial view of 1943 shows the project area to be largely a grassed area but possibly with a fenced enclosure or structure in the north-western corner, outside the proposed area of redevelopment.



1930 aerial image showing the project area
||LPI NSW Image Viewer, Historical Imagery



8.4 The Glen Occupation: 1946 - 1949

The house was sold in 1946 to Ruth Glen. Very little is known of this period of occupation. It was used as a privately occupied residence and remained so until 1949 when it was sold; Lionel Street was closed off during this phase. A valuation carried out in 1946 prior to the sale provides a basic itemisation of the improvements to the site at that time. *“The property consists of a large area of land upon which is erected*

a gentleman's residence in very good order and condition with modern conveniences such as electric light, electric style city water and septic sewerage..." The valuer described the grounds as "well laid out with gardens, orchard, lawns and paths with a large semi-circular vehicle drive 12 feet wide, gravel from street to front steps with entrance and exit iron gates".⁴⁶

Also mentioned were feed gardens and paddocks. The outbuildings included an employee's cottage being a two-room brick cottage, a brick garage, three fowl sheds and runs, a weatherboard dairy, a yard shed, cow bail and unroofed brick building. The latter was about to be demolished at the time of the valuation to straighten the alignment of Beale street. There was also a fernery with concrete fish-ponds and flagged paths. This is the most detailed statement of improvements for the property at any time in its history. It was in this period that the coach house and stables were demolished.

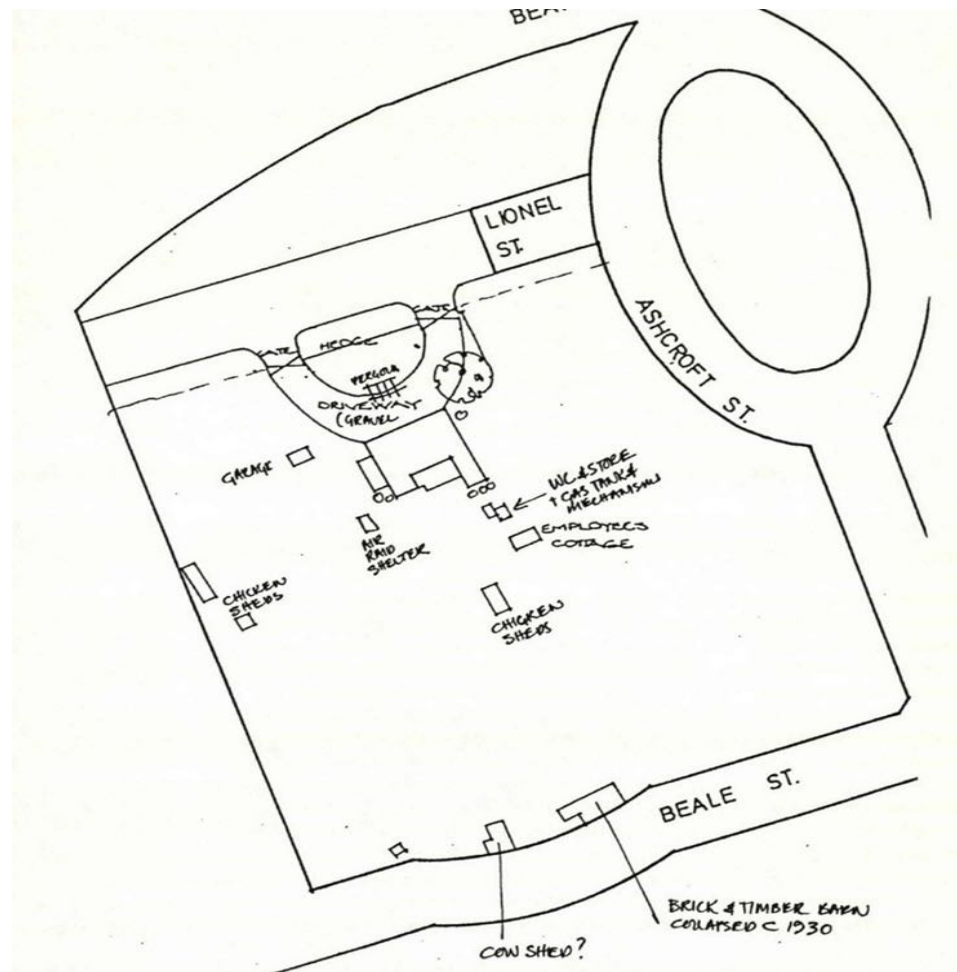
The conservation plan prepared in 1990 identified several of these sites and an air-raid shelter located at the southwestern corner of the house. The source of information for the shelter is unknown.



1943 aerial view of the site, project area |Sydney 1943.com.au|



⁴⁶ Quoted in Tropman and Associates (1987): source not noted.



Plan of the site in c. 1949 showing identified out-buildings [NBRSP, Conservation Plan Georges Hall 1990]



Apart from the earlier 1943 aerial image there is one dated to just after this period of occupation from 1951. This shows the works that must have been undertaken by the Rule and Glen families while they occupied the house. This is shown on the following page. Of particular note:

- the absence of the barn or stables and cow shed on the southern boundary (outside the project area)
- Three yards with sheds that might be chicken sheds behind the house at some distance
- Possibly some division of the yard immediately behind the house into two with unidentifiable structures in the eastern half
- Formalised planting and renewal of the ring garden and semi-circular path in front of the house which has been made wider
- A formal garden on the eastern side of the house
- Possibly some structures on the western side of the house (the fernery and garage?)
- The loss of the path or drive from the eastern side of the site across the front of the house
- The path to the back of the property has been renewed or reformed



Aerial image of 1951 that shows considerable works undertaken likely by both the Rule and Glen families.
||LPI NSW Image Viewer, Historical Imagery



9 DEVELOPMENT 1949 – 1989

9.1 Sale To The After Care Association:

Ruth Glen sold the property to the Aftercare Association in 1949.⁴⁷ This association had been founded in 1907 with the object of providing assistance for people who had been discharged as cured from hospitals for the insane but who had no home or employment after that discharge.⁴⁸ This was the first organisation of its kind begun in Australia. The idea of funding a purpose-built home had to be abandoned at first for lack of funds and the work was undertaken in association with Gladesville Hospital.⁴⁹ The first dedicated hostel was for women at Fivedock constructed in 1925.⁵⁰ The need for a men's hostel was still outstanding.

9.2 The Women's Hostel

The purchase of the site at Georges Hall for the women's hostel was enabled by a state government grant of £2500 in 1948. The purchase price included The Homestead and seven acres of ground. It was initially intended to house seventeen women on the site.⁵¹ By 1949 though, there was a danger that the hostel would close through lack of funds.⁵² The new owner of the project area was a private company. It was after this purchase that most of the substantial changes were made to the site. The Association spent £2000 on renovations and other necessary alterations including additional bathing facilities.



Halfway House in 1957, the former Georges Hall estate house with the ring garden in front |SLNSW d2-08719|

⁴⁷ [Daily Telegraph 16 December 1949: 21](#)

⁴⁸ [The Australian Star 23 October 1907: 5](#)

⁴⁹ [The Australian Star 27 January 1909: 02](#)

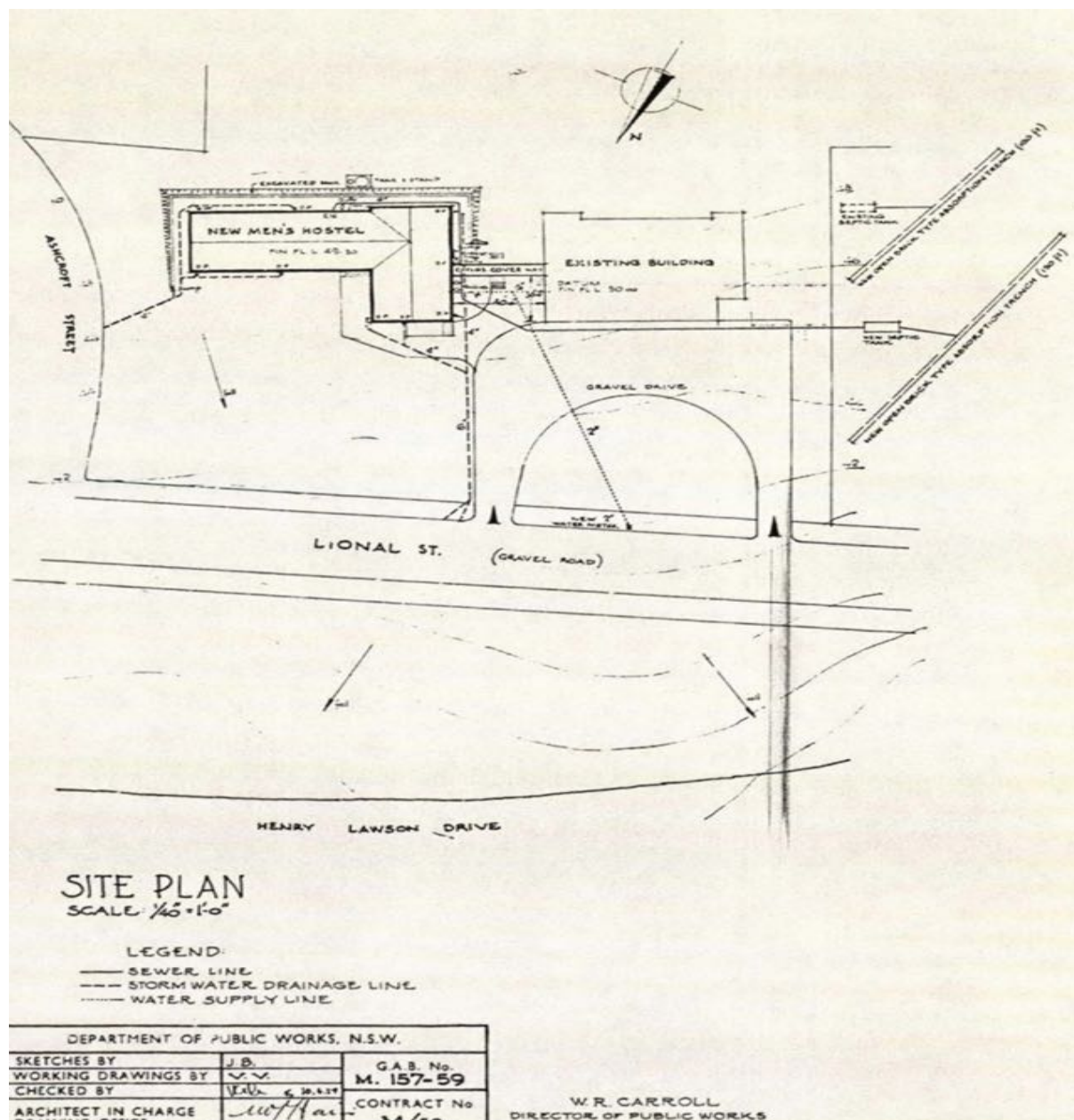
⁵⁰ [The Sydney Morning Herald 20 December 1939: 4](#)

⁵¹ [The Sydney Morning Herald 17 December 1948: 7](#)

⁵² [The Sun 25 August 1949: 21](#)

9.3 The Men's Hostel

In the 1950s it was decided to build a men's hostel. In September 1950 it was announced that "the State Government will make an immediate grant of £5000 to the After Care Association of NSW to help build a male after-care hostel for the mentally ill".⁵³ In the 1959 annual report of the company, it was stated that "the Government Architect was about to commence work on the men's hostel at a projected cost of £35,000. To finance the project the land was subdivided around the homestead".⁵⁴



Site plan of the new men's hostel designed by the Department of Public Works in 1959.

⁵³ Daily Mirror 6 September 1950; 09

⁵⁴ NBRSP (1990): Conservation Management Plan Georges Hall House

The first auction of the land surrounding the house was held on 10 September 1960 with a reserve price on each lot of £1050 pounds. By the end of October 1960 all fourteen lots had been sold. The new hostel was opened in October 1960; it was named Ebsworth to honour one of the association's members. The new building was located east of Georges Hall and was connected to it by a covered way. This building still remains on site renovated and used by the school (Block A) The building is located immediately adjacent to Block D, the structure planned for demolition. In the image below the ground between the two buildings is shown; Block D has not yet been built. The path that runs across the site from Ashcroft Road is visible and new plantings. Nothing else is visible on the surface of the project area.



This was the half-way house built for men as it was in 1957; the area in the foreground encompasses part of the project area [SLNSAW d2-10514h]

The earliest aerial image of the new work is from 1960 which shows the connection from the house to the circular road around the park to the east had been remade after it appears to have been lost in earlier images.

Elements of the Bean/Glen period remained but many had been removed by this date. However, the image is particularly notable for the growth of vegetation and trees in front of and to the western side of the buildings. It also shows the increasing subdivision and construction all around those buildings on what had been formerly estate land. The next available aerial view from 1964 shows the creation of a formally planted garden or landscape in front of Ebsworth on the site of present-day Block D. Vegetation has been thinned on the western side and the hostel was by that date fully surrounded on three sides by subdivided domestic lots.



Aerial views of Georges Hall in 1960 above and 1964 below; then in use for a male and female hostel managed by the After Care Association [LPI NSW Image Viewer, Historical Imagery]



9.4 Gentle Decay

After the establishment of the hostels in the 1950s and 1960s there is little evidence of change within the site. An aerial view of it in 1977 largely shows a maturing of the planting made in the earlier period.



Aerial view of the hostels at Georges Hall in 1977 [LPI NSW Image Viewer, Historical Imagery]



However, by the late 1980s the buildings and site of the hostel were in a very poor state. A survey of the place was undertaken in 1987 and the images of the buildings show them to be in poor condition and the grounds becoming overgrown.



1987 looking south from the circular garden ||Lester Tropman and Associates, [Report on the Homestead formerly known as Georges Hall](#)||



1987 Looking south-west from the drive to front of the house ||Lester Tropman and Associates, [Report on the Homestead formerly known as Georges Hall](#)||



1987 Looking north-east across the drive |Lester Tropman and Associates, Report on the Homestead formerly known as Georges Hall|



1987 Rear, south elevation showing dormer windows and later additions and overgrown yard |Lester Tropman and Associates, Report on the Homestead formerly known as Georges Hall|



1987 The Ebsworth hostel |Lester Tropman and Associates, [Report on the Homestead formerly known as Georges Hall](#)|



1987: Looking north to the homestead showing the southern yard hostel |Lester Tropman and Associates, [Report on the Homestead formerly known as Georges Hall](#)|

10 DEVELOPMENT 1989 -2025

10.1 The Church Of The Foursquare Gospel

In 1989 the Homestead block was transferred to the Church of the Foursquare Gospel. The church is an international Pentecostal Christian denomination founded in 1923. It was introduced to Australia by the arrival of Frederick Van Eyk from South Africa. His first meetings were in Perth, Adelaide and Melbourne in 1926. The first church was established in Cessnock and there are now churches in most states of Australia⁵⁵.

10.2 Establishment And Restoration

In 1991, the Church moved their school onto the site's northern side. Through funding from the Heritage Assistance Program, restoration and archaeological work was undertaken during 1991- 1993. The restoration of the house was based on policies determined in a conservation management plan prepared in 1990.⁵⁶ The intention cited in the CMP was to *"restore the outside and as much of the inside as funds allowed of the early Georgian homestead building known alternatively as The Homestead or Georges Hall."*

School buildings were added to the site soon afterwards including Block D, the subject of the present report, and Building E, a gymnasium. Adjoining the latter is a large church built at the same time. The grounds were cleared and landscaped and a parking area was established on the southern side of the property with access from the street through a former subdivision. The works may be seen in the 1993 aerial image below. The former Georges Hall house was added to the NSW State Heritage Register on 2 April 1999.



Aerial image of 1993 showing the new buildings and landscape for the Hopepoint School
[LPI Image Viewer Historical Imagery]



⁵⁵ [Foursquareaustralia.org/heritage#:~:text=HERITAGE-.History,US%20evangelist%20John%20G%20Lake.](https://foursquareaustralia.org/heritage#:~:text=HERITAGE-.History,US%20evangelist%20John%20G%20Lake.)

⁵⁶ NBRSP (1990): Conservation Management Plan Georges Hall Homestead

11 THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF GEORGES HALL

11.1 First Survey

In 1990 archaeology as a discipline and one associated with the restoration of historic places was only ten years old. It was still a relatively new procedure to be integrated into programmes of this type in any part of Australia and the processes and methodology we currently use were in their infancy. If the work of developing the site to the extent it was in 1990 was undertaken now an archaeological programme associated with it would be of a different and larger scale than that which was undertaken in 1991. It was noted at the time, and is still true, that constrained archival resources limit the depth and reliability of an assessment of what may remain within the ground as a resource of information. At the time the ability to research a place from archival sources was also constrained by access and time and the need to largely consult original sources with no tools to aid that search.

Even with these constraints, in 1990 it was concluded that the site had the potential for preserving a considerable archaeological resource.⁵⁷ This was particularly true of the area in the immediate environs of the house *“where surface indications would seem to suggest the presence of at least one building and possibly more on a diagonal line south-west of the main house. Lesser features are visible directly behind the house and extend at least as far as the line of trees running parallel east-west to the house. This possibility appears to be strengthened by the planting pattern which presents what may be a deliberate enclosure around the house and its immediate surrounds.”*⁵⁸

The current report has addressed the issue of limited archival evidence to some degree, but the site still remains largely invisible in public records. The original assessment was used in 1991 as the basis for a very limited archaeological investigation focussed on the places of visible surface evidence. The intention was, first, to determine the integrity, scope and potential of what remained in the ground and how this information could be used to assist in the restoration process. Second, the evidence and information documented by this work was to provide guidelines for managing the ground disturbance throughout the site required for constructing the church and gymnasium amongst other works to ensure that intact evidence was identified, investigated and documented. This information would add to the relative paucity of other information about the site, and inform how it was developed and used, the people who lived there and the changes and additions made to the landscape through remodelling and planting. It was also intended to guide development to ensure that significant areas of the site could be left undisturbed as a resource for the future.

⁵⁷ W. Thorp (1990); Archaeological Assessment Georges Hall; 13

⁵⁸ Ibid

11.2 The First Archaeological Investigation

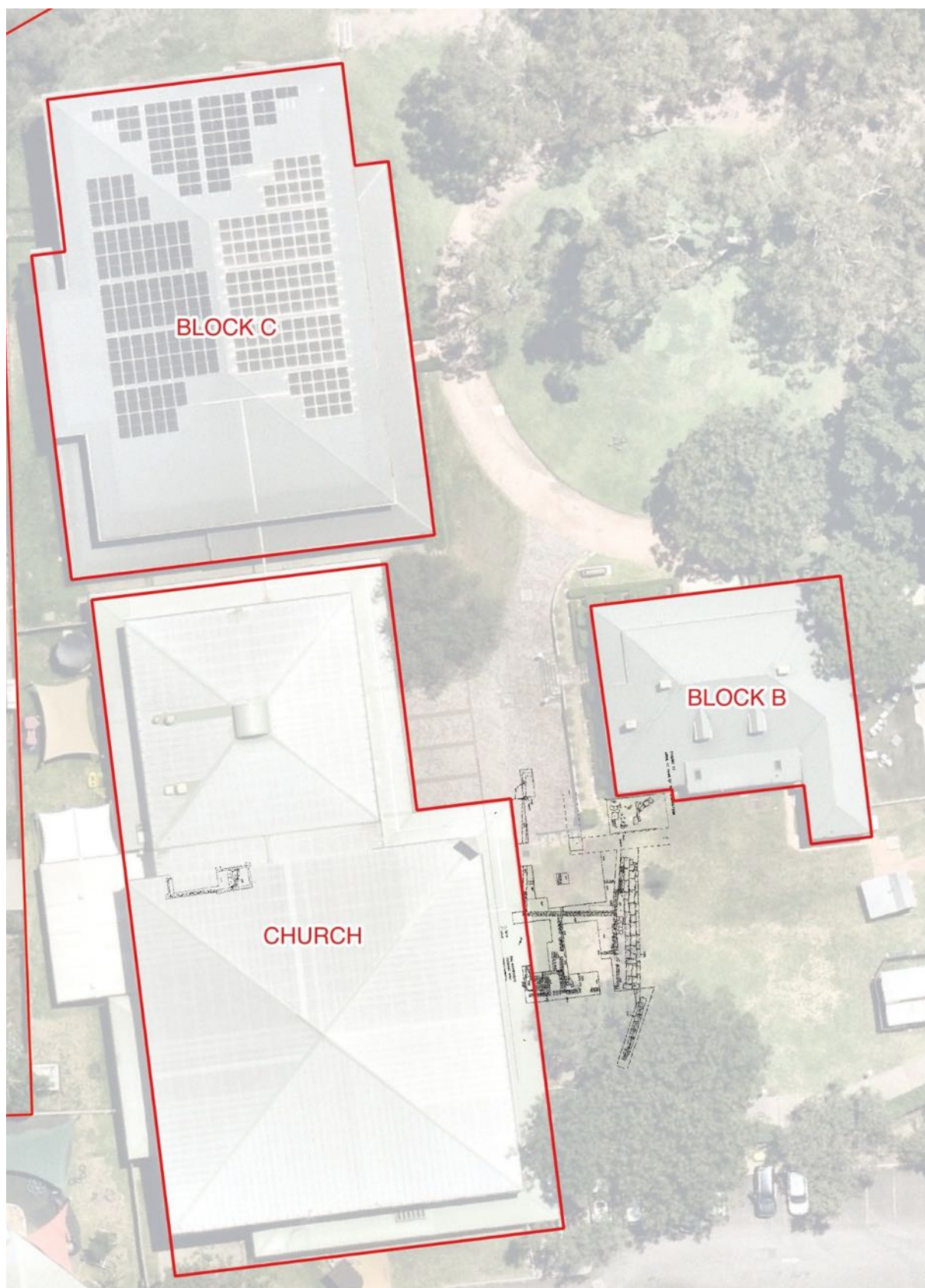
11.2.1 Location of Investigation

The first and only archaeological investigation at The Homestead was undertaken in 1991 following the recommendations of the 1990 assessment. A very limited test excavation was undertaken at the south-western corner of the house using the surface evidence documented in 1990 as a guide to investigating sub-surface information. Initially two areas were excavated, both extended in smaller trenches to pursue evidence uncovered in the first trenches.

- The larger area (Area 1) was located at the south-western corner of the house encompassing the surface sites of 1, 2 and 5. It measured approximately 22 x 10 metres. and had some extensions made to it to trace the extent of features found in the main area.
- A second trench (Area 2) was excavated to the west of Area 1 in what is now land beneath the church. It included surface site No 6 an unidentified foundation. It was a smaller excavation measuring approximately 4 x 16 metres. This was further away from the surface indications that had guided the location of Area 1 but a small foundation was identified here in 1990.

No testing was undertaken in or near the present project area because there was no intention to build on or disturb this ground in 1991.

The following plan shows the location of the 1991 trenches in relation to the house and the present-day church and Block C.



Current aerial view of the church and two other buildings with the archaeological evidence recorded in 1991 showing the relative positions to the new structures of the former buildings and works [NSW LPI Imagery and D. Bairstow 1991, CRM additions]



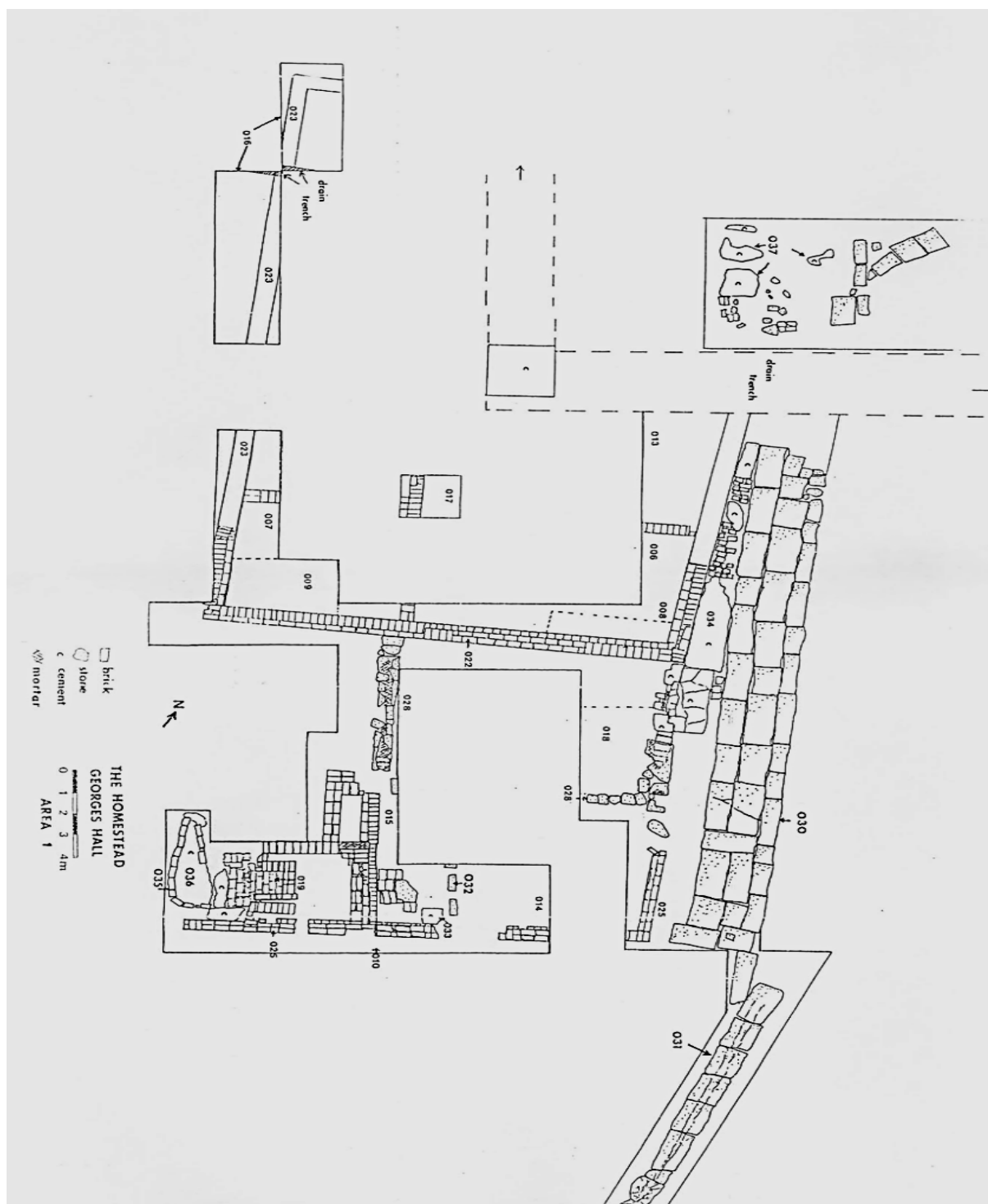
11.2.2 Results of the Test Programme of 1991

The investigation demonstrated that there was an extensive, intact and multi-phased archaeological resource behind the house. It was revealed to have a high degree of integrity and encompassed multiple phases of construction and use likely commencing with some out-buildings of the mid-nineteenth century although a more recent view of the evidence suggests they may have been earlier. There was also evidence of services and landscape improvements and extensive artefact deposits. The results of the work may be summarised as follows:

11.2.2.1 Area 1 Behind the House

- Sandstone flagged path, probably mid-later nineteenth century, c. 1850-1866 or earlier
- Footings of an unknown building dated to the mid-later nineteenth century. c 1850-1866, or earlier located close to the house and divided into at least three rooms
- Footings of another unknown building c. 1850-1866 or earlier, possibly a kitchen with a bakery oven
- The original dating was based on a distinctive brick type with frogs probably made at Parramatta in this period.
- North-west of the buildings was an artefact assemblage, possibly a rubbish dump
- Around c. 1866 the two buildings were joined to create an additional room with a floor and brick structure above
- At the same time a sandstone flagged path was laid to the north of the conjoined buildings and a spoon drain was laid on the eastern side of the path
- More alterations were made to the buildings in the later years of the nineteenth century c. 1890. Part of the northern room floor was raised by fill and stone piers were used to support the new height of the floor. Other changes were made to the other part of the building at the entrance. Cement slab floors were laid. There were artefacts in some of the fill to provide the date; they were all domestic in origin. Outside a brick garden edge was made and the area between this and the building was cement paved
- C. 1915 the buildings were demolished and the demolition rubble was thrown into the interiors including a very large quantity of domestic artefacts that provided the date for the work.
- The area was turfed after this work.
- Some of the demolition material appears to have been used to create a footing for a tank stand in the south-eastern corner of the house
- The tank stands at the south-eastern corner of the house were pulled down in the c. 1980s

The overlay of the test area shown on the previous page demonstrates that the large nineteenth century building or complex of buildings extended west under the site of the present-day church as well as south into the lawn.



Archaeological investigation Georges Hall 1991: Area 1 excavated features
[D. Bairstow]

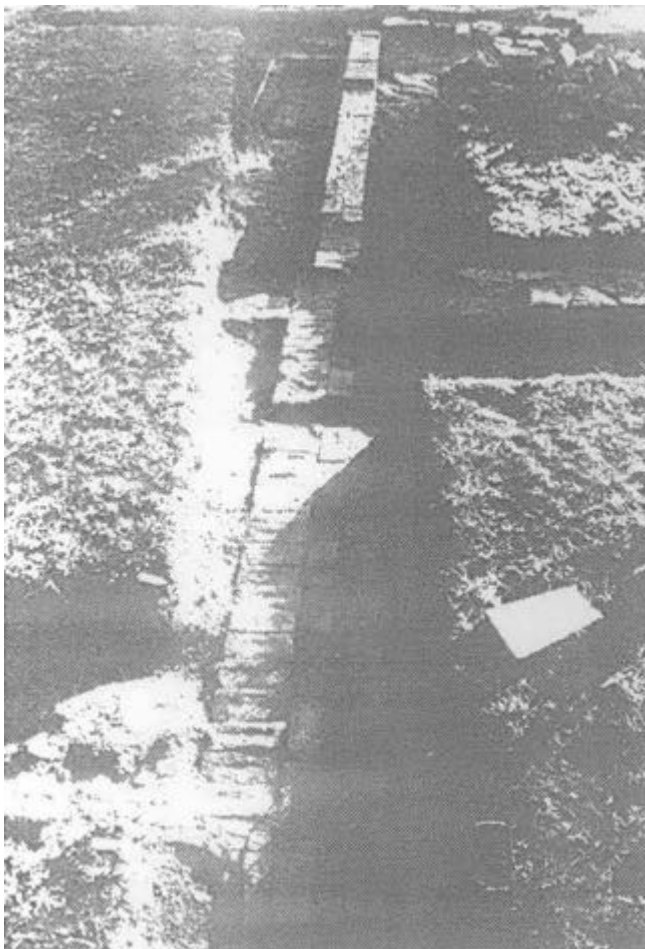




Above left; what may have been the kitchen or part of it including a large oven close to the house.

Below left; foundations of an external wall and internal divisions of what may have been the servants' quarters behind the house.

From the excavation undertaken in 1991 [D. Bairstow]

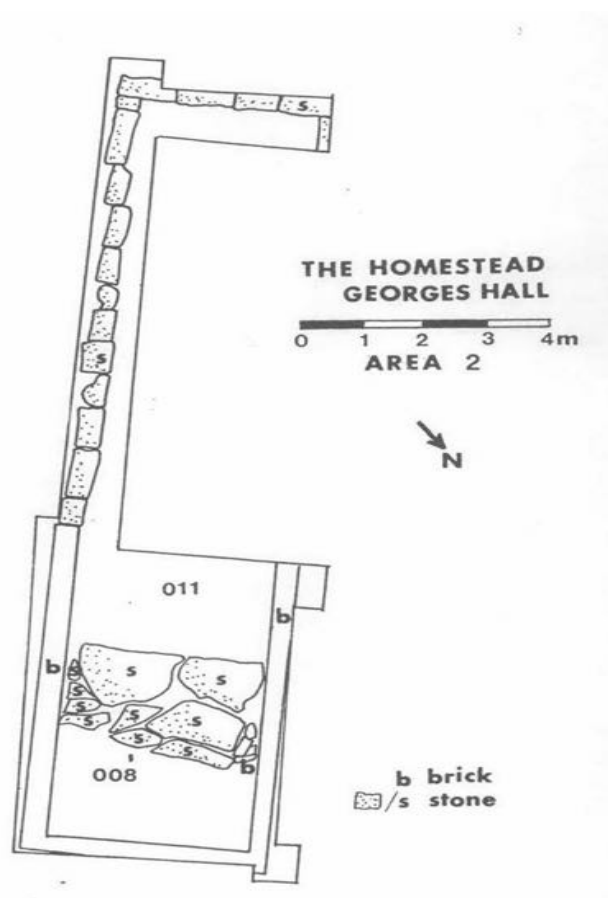


11.2.2.2 Area 2 Beneath the Church

The evidence recovered here encompassed the following:

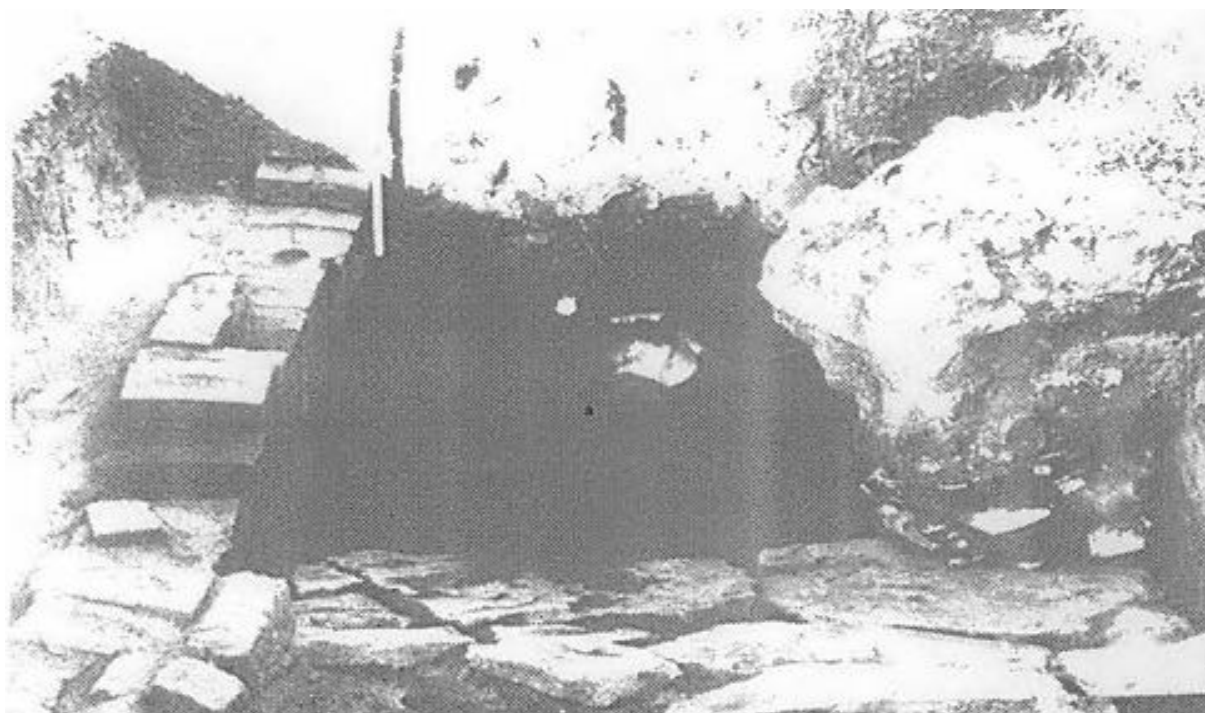
- An unidentified building of both stone and brick c. 1850-1866 about forty metres west of the house measuring approximately 2 x 3 metres. The materials and construction suggest that it may have been earlier than this date.
- Provisionally identified at the time as an unused privy but more likely a dairy or cool room with a sunken stone floor and a ramp to the outside. Similar buildings of this date have been excavated elsewhere in entirety enabling the identification
- c. 1860s the southern wall was demolished and the building was extended four metres using stone footings. The new room measured 2 x 8 metres. It had a metre-wide entrance that sloped down and was partly built over the older space. It suggests an extension of a dairy or cool room.
- Survived until c. 1915 when it was demolished and appears to have been left as a ruin for some time.
- Used to dump rubbish at least up to the 1960s, evidenced by artefacts
- The foundation (site 6) from the initial survey lay over this and a provisional use as a tennis court has been suggested
- In 1989 a two metres deep trench was excavated through Area 2 to form a storm water channel; it destroyed part of a drain

The condition of the foundations and deposits above indicate that this building or its foundations and the evidence of its later history was likely to have been largely intact. This site was comprehensively removed by the construction of the church and was not subject to any investigation or documentation.



Features recorded in the 1991 excavation in Areas 2 |D. Bairstow|





Part of the walls and floor of what is likely to have been a dairy or cool room in Area 2 [D. Bairstow 1991]



A view of the foundations and floor found in Area 2 possibly from a dairy or cool-room showing the western side of the excavation. The image shows the sloping entrance to a lower stone floor. Above this is turf on the surface with soil below encompassing artefacts from the 1960s. There is a concrete and brick floor that has intruded into the older structure in one corner and below it remnants of a large dump of soil and artefacts likely to have been associated with the demolition of the building in c. 1915 [D. Bairstow 1991]

11.3 Conclusions And Outcomes

It was noted in the original assessment for this property prepared in 1990 that *“the pre-development investigation may require archaeological investigation by excavation of identified sites which are likely to be impacted upon by the proposed development. This work is for the purpose of assessing the depth, extent, integrity and significance of the material. This will have a direct bearing on the development proposal in terms of further work or an alteration in the approach. A watching brief is a standard action whereby an archaeologist is on call or present on-site during surface disturbance works. If on call the archaeologist must be notified of the discovery of any unusual features during the excavation. The feature must be left intact until inspected by the archaeologist. If the evidence is found to be substantial sufficient time must be allowed for the appropriate level of investigation and recording to take place.”*⁵⁹

It was a recommendation of the assessment that a limited archaeological investigation be undertaken to test the conclusions of the assessment and then that a watching brief be established for the duration of the site disturbance works. The testing programme was undertaken, described in the current report, but the recommendation for a watching brief was not undertaken.

The small test programme of 1991 demonstrated that there was an extensive and intact archaeological resource across a wide area that encompassed a long chronological period of occupation and provided information about the house, its use and development as well as the landscape. The work demonstrated that evidence could be found on any part of the property even where no surface indication highlighted a potential site. The importance of this resource was recognised because the archival sources for this site of state significance were and are very limited and physical evidence was and is likely to play a critical role in adding to what is known about the place.

A number of recommendations were made on the basis of this work by the archaeologist for the excavation and confirmed by the archaeologist who undertook the assessment. They were as follows:

- Foundations that were exposed immediately in association with the house should be stabilised, protected and remain on view to add to the visible history of the house
- The path uncovered in the excavation should be exposed and included in the landscape design
- Any foundations of buildings that could not be exposed should be interpreted by using paving or brickwork above to outline the underlying structure
- That a watching brief be initiated for all future work to enable any evidence that may be exposed by development to be identified, investigated and documented

The recommendation for a “watching brief” was reiterated because the testing programme confirmed the presence of a large, undocumented and important resource. There was evidence to indicate a high probability for archaeological evidence being preserved within the place but lacked a focus for undertaking an investigation prior to construction. This is still a course of action employed today although it may be preceded by more test excavations as a sample of conditions across a larger area.

The conservation plan prepared for the house and site in 1990 had as a policy the following:

- *The archaeological resources of the place should be conserved and no major work should be undertaken on the site of previous structures without proper investigation of subsurface remains.*

In the subsequent work undertaken to restore the house and construct the church, gymnasium and other structures none of these policies were acted upon and no archaeological work has been undertaken on the

⁵⁹ W. Thorp (1990): *Archaeological Assessment Georges Hall*: 15

site since the test excavation of 1991. There is no doubt that these works have led to the loss of important archaeological evidence that had protection under provisions of the NSW Heritage Act.



View of brick-lined sandstone path behind the house that extends south into the lawn area [D. Bairstow 1991]

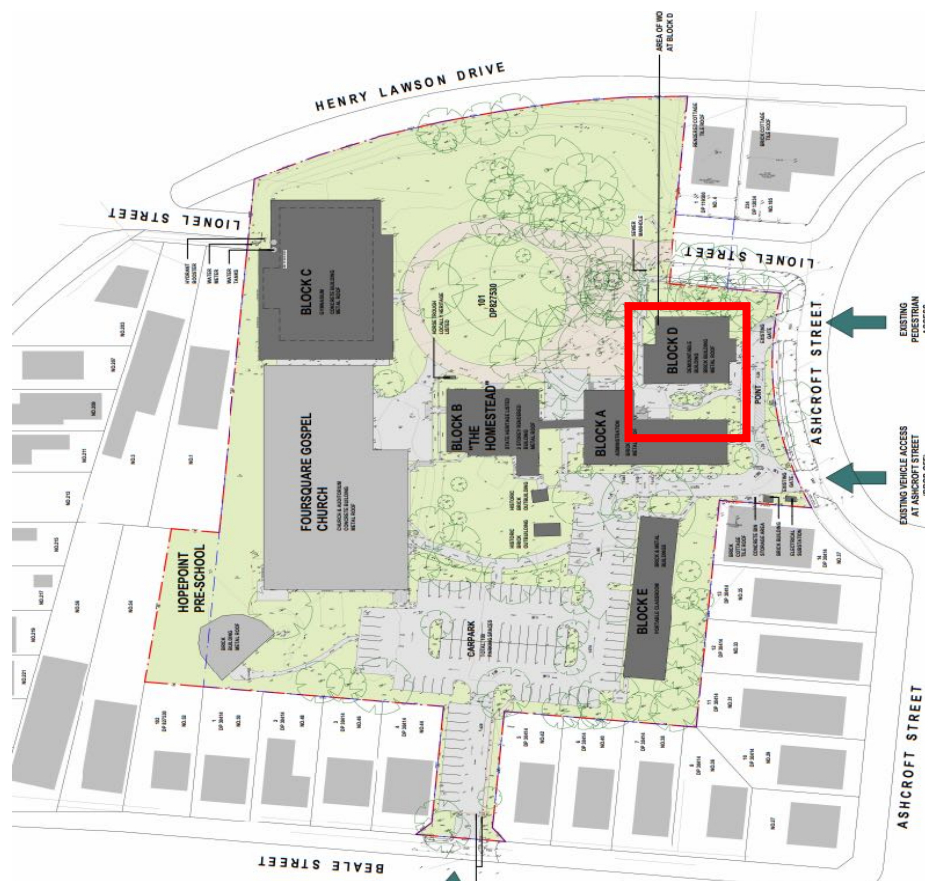
12 ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

12.1 Objectives And Methodology

The objective of this report is to address the requirements of Heritage NSW in respect of preparing an archaeological assessment for the area currently proposed for development at the Hopepoint School discussed in Section 2.3 of this report. The preceding sections of the report provide the background for the development of the school to date, the occupation and use of the site for 188 years as well as the archaeological context of assessment and investigation undertaken in 1990-1991. The specific objectives and methodology for this report are described in Section 2.7 and 2.8 of this report.

12.2 The Development Area

The specific area that is the subject of this application is land in the north-eastern corner of the school grounds. This is now occupied by a building constructed in the 1990s (Block D). To the south of this building is Block A constructed for the After Care Association in 1959-1960 as a men's hostel, the Ebsworth Hostel discussed in Section 9.3 of this report. The latter will not be changed for the present development but the land between it and the school buildings, except for an existing playground will be included in the new development.



The location of the proposed new school building over the site of the existing Block D [Leaf Architecture]





The proposed new development area: the green coloured area is the location of the new building that will take the place of the existing Block D; this is the new Block F

The building coloured grey and labelled Block A is the former Ebsworth Hostel now school rooms which will remain

The area between Block A and the new building F is currently landscaped and will largely be included in the footprint of the new building

The area coloured purple is the site of a demountable to be used for temporary classrooms during the construction of Block F

[Leaf Architecture]



12.2.1 Block D

This building which will be demolished to make way for the new Block F is a small single-storey building that was a demountable which was then encased by brick walls. It is surrounded by planting on the northern side, hard paving and play equipment on the western side and hard paving on both the eastern and southern sides. On the southern side of Block D and separated by planting and hard paving is the former Ebsworth Hostel remodelled and adapted for school uses (Block A). There appear to be minimal services.



View of the southern side of Block D, looking west with the hard paving and landscaping between it and Block A, the former Ebsworth Hostel



View of the southern side of Block D looking east



View of the eastern end of Block D and the planting and vegetation on its northern side.



View of the western end of Building D with the play area adjoining the vegetation along the northern side



View of the northern side of Block D with introduced plantings for the school

12.2.2 Between Blocks A and D

The ground between Block D, which is to be demolished and Block A, which will remain was landscaped for the school in the 1990s. It is a mixture of soft and hard landscape elements which are at the same level as the base of the buildings.

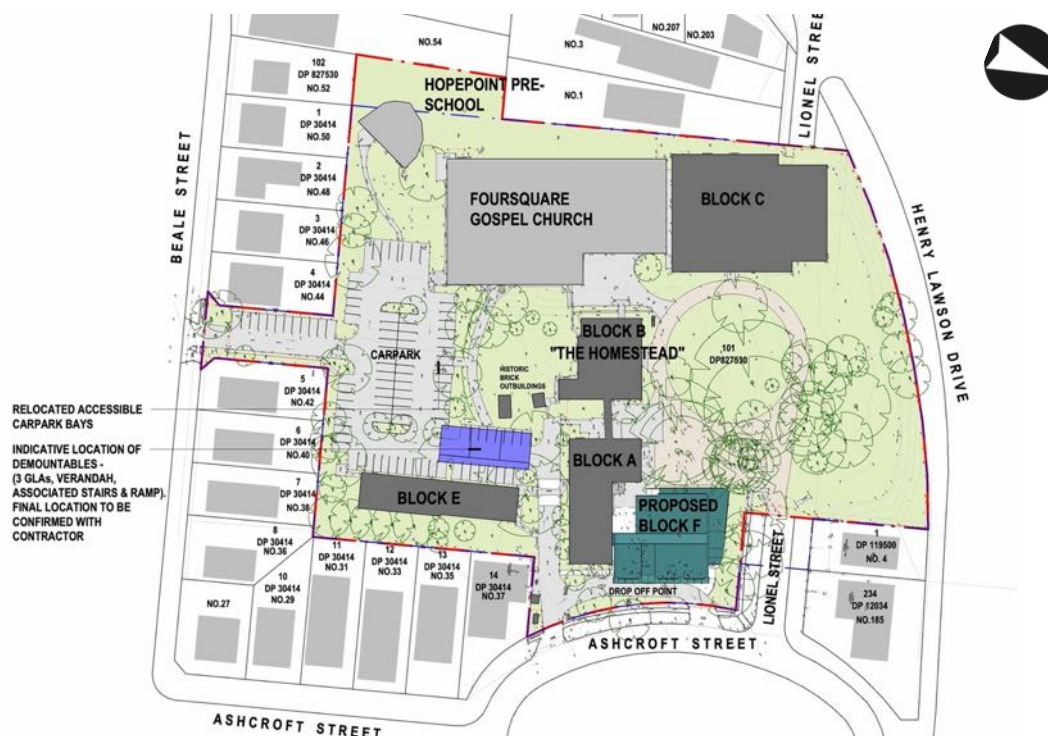


Block A, viewed to the south-west with the landscaping between it and Block D

There is no visible surface evidence in any part of the development area of past use prior to the construction of the school buildings in the 1990s other than the Ebsworth Hostel.

12.2.3 Temporary Demountable Building

It is proposed that a temporary demountable building will be added to the site. This will provide classroom space while the new building is being constructed. It is intended to locate the temporary demountable on the western side of Block A and between the heritage-listed out-buildings associated with the Georges Hall house and the school Block E, in a car park. While the focus of the current work is that associated with Block D, this assessment has considered the probable archaeological profile in this area as a guide for future actions.



The location of the temporary demountable building (coloured purple) [Leaf Architecture]

A view of the two-heritage listed out-buildings of Georges Hall through to the school building beyond where the temporary demountable is planned [CRM 2025]

12.3 The Resource: Assessing The Archaeological Profile

12.3.1 Comparable Sites

Georges Hall is part of an elite group of settlement sites founded in the eighteenth century or early years of the nineteenth century for the wealthiest members of society. Few survive, including Johnstons' main house at Annandale. However, archival records of those no longer standing as well as those that survive demonstrate that Georges Hall conformed to a "type" of development. The most recent Conservation Management Plan for the site (2024) references Berry House (1835), Yasmar at Haberfield (1856-1858), Rose Farm at Ermington (c. 1820) and Macquarie Fields House (1841-1843) as comparative types for the estate house.

Reference to others of this type helps to define the likely extent and improvements that would have been associated with Georges Hall and which are no longer standing; it defines parameters for a possible archaeological resource that may be associated with the house. The images of these properties show the same design in terms of the central house set in a cleared ground with the out-buildings this being the type or pattern of this period of development for a particular wealthy class of settler.

12.3.1.1 Elizabeth Farm Parramatta

Elizabeth farm is the oldest surviving colonial homestead in Australia. It was built in 1793 for John Macarthur and his family. It remained in private hands until the late 1970s when it was acquired by the NSW Government. It is now a public museum. In scale it is the most like Georges Hall, even with the latter having a similarity in form and appearance. It too, was located on a prominent site, in this case above the Parramatta River. Apart from the house there were separate servant's apartments, a kitchen and other buildings. There were extensive pleasure gardens and a working farm.



Elizabeth Farm at Parramatta in 1822 [Joseph Lycett, The Residence of John Macarthur Esq Near Parramatta New South Wales [NLA PIC Volume 1103#S432]

12.3.1.2 Rouse Hill House

This was another country estate built for a prominent and wealthy early nineteenth century man, Richard Rouse. Built on a hill, construction on the house commenced in 1813 and works continued until the family moved in during 1825. Apart from the house there were separate servants' wings, numerous out-buildings including a large stables, butchery, barn, laundry wing, cottage and woolshed. Several were added later in the nineteenth century including a schoolroom and a summerhouse. There were extensive gardens. The house remained in the hands of the same family until 1978 when it was purchased by the state government,



Rouse Hill House and some out-buildings in the later nineteenth century
<https://mhns.wa.gov.au/stories/general/nailing-history-rouse-hill-house/>

Nineteenth century sheds at Rouse Hill House in 1990, below [Blacktown Library 4807-max]

12.3.2 Burwood House

The house was established on the Parramatta Road in 1814 for the owner, Alexander Riley. It stood in a large, cleared area with a view to the Parramatta River. It had one very substantial out-building, a detached kitchen and miscellaneous smaller out-buildings. It was renowned for its extensive fruit garden. The house survived until 1974.



Burwood House in 1825 |Joseph Lycett, "Burwood Villa NSW" NGA 84.125.6|

12.3.3 Annandale House

This was George Johnston's main place of residence at Annandale, near the current intersection of Parramatta Road and Johnston Street in Sydney. It was built in 1799 and was demolished in the 1920s. Like Georges Hall the house was situated on a rise and had a cluster of buildings and yards surrounding it. These included a bakery, smithy, slaughterhouse, butchery, stores, stables, there was a barrack for a small number of soldiers, an orangery and a gatehouse. Similar, if not all those works would have existed at Georges Hall. This cluster of buildings is highly visible in contemporary images. On the following page is an image of the house as it was in 1877 surrounded by these works. The country estate at Georges Hall may have had less buildings and less substantial buildings surrounding it but the relationship between the main house and secondary buildings can be shown to be similar.



Annandale Farm near Sydney |Samuel Elyard, 1877 SLNSW DG XV*/Sp Coll/Elyard/21|

Below is a detail of the image showing the large number of out-buildings and yards clustered around the main house.



12.3.4 The Assessment: Overview

The minimal primary documentation for this site means that any assessment cannot be a statement of the full or even likely extent of occupation, use or change. The assessment can only be based on the few specific pieces of evidence for the place and comparison to other comparable places. The evidence for the place has been presented in the historical analysis in this report (Sections 4.0-10.0). Similarly, because of the constrained nature of the primary resources an assessment for the proposed work at Block D (the site of the future Block F) cannot be specific. There is insufficient information, either archival or from other archaeological works on the site, to narrow down the perspective to this small area. The assessment, therefore, must be generic to some degree but drawn from the small data set for the site, an even smaller sample of physical evidence within the site and evidence from comparable sites both in terms of economic status and longevity of occupation. In respect of the latter the Johnston family were amongst the wealthiest in the early settlement and continued to be affluent throughout the majority of the nineteenth century. Their ownership and occupation of this land from 1797 to the early years of the twentieth century is exceptional.

The conclusions that may be drawn from this combination of evidence in respect of an archaeological profile may be summarised as follows:

- Pre-1788 and First associations: Soil and palynological evidence may provide evidence of the pre-settlement environment and the impacts of British occupation on that place in terms of deforestation, burning and stumping and consequent environmental outcomes such as erosion or soil depletion. The use of the site before the development of Georges Hall is unknown but its location suggests that it may have been part of the pastoral or agricultural landscape established by the Johnston family since their occupation at the end of the eighteenth century in their first house to the north of this site. This could also be identified in the soil profiles from introduced species, specifically grain types, or increased levels of enriched soil from the addition of manure from cattle or sheep.
- Establishing Georges Hall: there is no primary or secondary archival evidence that defines how the house and farm were established on this location but based on comparable examples, it would be expected that if it had not already taken place, substantial alterations to the environment would have been undertaken in terms of clearing and possibly alterations to the topography. This would have left some evidence within the soil profile through additions or excisions from the natural ecology. Drainage works or land-forming may have been works of this period.
- The Homestead, out-buildings and landscape in the first half of the nineteenth century: Archival evidence for the built or landscape improvements for the home constructed in 1837 is minimal. Physical evidence is also minimal. Archaeological test trenches excavated in 1991 uncovered evidence of substantial out-buildings that derive in part from this phase to the immediate south-western corner of the house and to the west of it in the area of the present church but the full scope of this evidence was removed by the construction of that building. The close proximity to the house would suggest that these may have been a kitchen and servant's quarters and, further to the west, a cool room or dairy. The physical evidence from the excavation demonstrates that at Georges Hall these structures were substantial and well-built. The evidence presented in this report of comparable homesteads in this period, before 1850, illustrates that numerous out-buildings were required for specific aspects of life and work all in close proximity to the house. These buildings could include all or some of the following: privies, housing for convicts and estate workers, barns, stables, granaries, a dairy and enclosures as well as gardens, water supply and storage amongst others. Georges Hall would certainly have a full complement of similar buildings and works given the status and financial standing of the owners and the scale of agriculture and pastoral activities undertaken here. The documentary evidence for the house that is now available does not define any place or places that may have served the family and there is now no visible surface physical evidence. All areas within close proximity to the house must be considered as possible sites of these works. The evidence could encompass structural elements, landscape components, changes and additions to the ecology, drainage works or services and artefacts of occupation and use.

- The second half of the nineteenth century: It can be shown that out-buildings continued to be added to the site in the later years of the Johnston family period of occupation; the two extant buildings behind the house may date from the mid-later part of the nineteenth century. The archeological evidence in the test trenches located immediately adjoining the house also demonstrated periods of change and the addition of new works in this period. Archival evidence again does not exist to aid the specific identification of potential sites. Landscape improvements were also a feature of this period either new or additions to existing works. There are references to fishponds, ferneries and paths, enclosures and fences. Apart from the circular garden bed in front of the house the location of these other works is unknown. All would have left traces in the ground when built and demolished including structural components, earth works, fence lines, palynological evidence, planting patterns and artefacts.
- The early twentieth century; the final years of the Johnston family; evidence from this period places some buildings to the south, now outside the project area including a coach house and stables. They confirm an established pattern of spatial distribution but in these last years it is unlikely that the family made any major additions to the place based on archival evidence; the emphasis was on reducing the estate. However, this can also leave impacts on the archaeological profile. The 1991 excavation found evidence of minor changes to existing buildings in this period and then evidence of demolition in c. 1915 and what appears to have been a clean-up at the same time, possibly for the sale of the property. Similar evidence to this is likely to have been left in other places across the site.
- Georges Hall in the Later Twentieth Century: The site was sold in 1917 and the families who subsequently lived there added a layer of occupation and use that was largely different to that which preceded them. Plans and aerial images show numbers of buildings, yards and enclosures behind the house (some now outside the property boundaries) that were present in 1930 and could have been built at the end of the Johnston occupation or more likely by the new owners. They were small sheds or enclosures suited to the new uses of the place. The path or road into the site from Ashcroft Street leading in front of the Ebsworth Hostel and on the boundary of the new school building site is very prominent and well formed by 1951 but was already present in 1930 looking at that time as if it had been in use for some period. There is some indication within the same aerial image that the site now proposed for the new school building (Block F) had some internal divisions, perhaps for a garden. They are very faint and could indicate that these works dated from an earlier period and had been removed by 1930. By 1951 there are no traces of these earlier works or trenches. The progression of aerial imagery for the site from 1930 onwards shows the development of more paths and enclosures in close proximity to the house evidence of which should be retained in places within the site.

The conclusions that may be made from the combination of both limited archival and physical evidence are, firstly, that the entire site encompassed within the school property must be considered as one of potential for archeology that could define or describe works from the earliest occupation in the 1830s up to the 1920s and beyond as well as landscape changes made by the original use of the land from 1798 to 1837.

This evidence is likely to be diverse and include structures, artefacts, changes to the landform and environmental evidence, service works (such as wells and cess pits), landscape improvements including former garden areas, paths, fence lines, features such as the ponds and fernery and the drive into the house. It will largely relate to the occupation of the estate by the Johnston family and their servants and staff. Evidence of change or the passage of time, events and processes could be discerned in additions or alterations to structures or demolition materials. Evidence of occupation and use certainly would encompass artefact assemblages either as discrete units or scatters. Until the construction of the school there is no evidence of any substantial impacts made to the site by the occupants except for the demolition of the outbuildings behind the house in c. 1915; and this was surface removal only evidenced by the 1991 archaeological program.

The significance of individual components, including those which may remain within the project area, derives from the overall evaluation of cultural values and how they may demonstrate or embody aspects of that place.

12.3.5 Assessment: The New Block F

In relation to the site of the proposed new building, Block F, there is no specific evidence for use or occupation of it in the nineteenth century but that is more likely an outcome of the extremely limited archival resource rather than an absence of use. Proximity to the house would increase the likelihood of some use for buildings or landscape works in the nineteenth century and possibly early twentieth century. A drive or path that led from Ashcroft Street is visible within the specific area of the present Block D in a 1930 aerial image and is likely to have evidence of it retained within the site. The majority of evidence from the twentieth century from 1930 until the construction of the current building on this site shows this area of land to have been grass-covered with some landscaping around the perimeter. There is no visible surface evidence of anything below the ground; there was none here in 1990.

12.3.6 The Temporary Demountable

The site that is intended to be used as a temporary demountable while Block F is being constructed will be located close to the existing heritage-listed out-buildings and close to the back of the house. The sequence of twentieth century aerial images show this to be grassed and associated with yards and fences probably constructed in this period. As for the rest of the site this portion has no specific primary archival records associated with it throughout the nineteenth century. The 1922 real estate poster does show a small building on or close to this area, its purpose is unknown. However, the proximity of the proposed site to the existing nineteenth century out-buildings and the house makes this site one of high probability for some use in the nineteenth century. This site will not be excavated for the temporary demountable; the building will be erected on the existing hard paved ground surface.



1922 real estate poster showing an outbuilding in proximity to the proposed site for the temporary demountable [SLNSAW FL8988460]

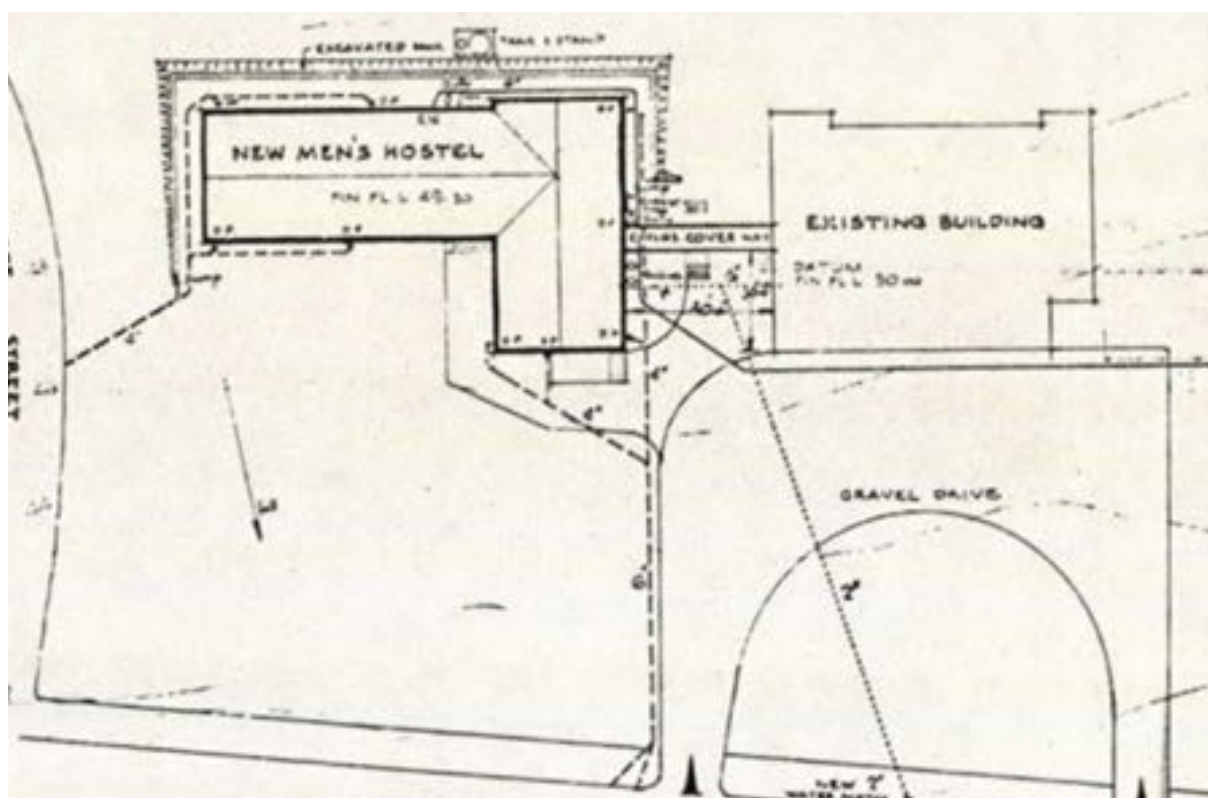


12.4 Identifiable Impacts

12.4.1 Existing Block D: Before the School

The absence of primary archival evidence for almost the entire period of eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth century history makes it difficult to define works or processes that may have acted to remove older evidence from the project area or to preserve it. Evidence from aerial images from the 1930s onwards does not record any substantial land-forming or excavation on any part of the site in that period. The limited archaeological evidence available from the 1991 investigation indicates that rather than remove older works, if required, they were reduced and the rubble from the work was used to level the sites. It infers that because of the extent of works that might have been built around the house, based on examples from comparable sites, and the limited known impacts predating the construction of the church and school, an extensive resource of information and evidence could remain within the ground.

The principal work on the site from the twentieth century that pre-dates the construction of the school and after it had ceased to be used for private residential purposes was the construction of Ebsworth House in 1959. This immediately adjoins the site of the existing Block D and the new Block F. The plan for the 1959 building defines drainage trenches that were excavated on three sides of it, being the southern, eastern and western alignments. Another drain was laid from the northern end of the western wing to the primary drain on the western side of the new work, running down the side of the gravel drive. While these works would have impacted the ground in those specific areas of trenches there is no evidence to indicate that any excavation was undertaken to the north in the principal area of the new Block F. The landscaping work associated with Ebsworth House when it was first built, based on archival images, was minimal: grass, a path and some shrubs. This work could have localised impacts on any sub-surface features.



Ebsworth House design plan of 1959 showing drainage works around the buildings and adjoining the current project area, the site of the proposed Block F



12.4.2 Existing Block D: The School

The biggest impact to the survival of archaeological evidence on the site has been the works undertaken to create buildings, yards, services and landscaping for the school in the 1990s. As discussed earlier in this report there was no archaeological work undertaken during the construction of the church, the gymnasium and other school buildings on any part of the site. Without any doubt this work has removed intact and substantial evidence of older phases of occupation and use, evidenced by the results of the 1991 test excavation. The introduction of services and landscape works is also likely to have had a substantial impact on archaeological resources across the rest of the site; there were no archaeological programmes in place for this work.

Block D was a demountable that has been surrounded by a brick shell. It must be assumed that some disturbance at least of the surface deposits would have been made for levelling and constructing the base of the walls and the demountable. Services would also have been introduced in trenches and landscaping. A search of utility locations only shows connections on the street frontages but it is assumed that service lines have been connected to the building although the locations are unknown. The excavations would have caused localised impacts. It suggests a profile that is disturbed across the surface with isolated deeper works but possibly not complete removal or disturbance of the underlying existing profile.

12.4.3 The Site of the Temporary Demountable

The site of the new temporary demountable is within the car park adjoining the heritage-listed out-buildings. It is a hard paved surface which must have had site preparation prior to it being laid. No archaeological inspection or work was undertaken here. As for Block D it is assumed services run through this ground but their locations are unknown. This site will not be disturbed for the installation of the temporary demountable building.

12.5 Conclusions

The portion of the early nineteenth century estate of Georges Hall that is encompassed within the school contains the nucleus of that property being the estate house and the remaining two out-buildings. Reference to comparable examples of other estates demonstrates that it was likely surrounded by numerous out-buildings, service works and landscaping of which only the three structures remain. Limited archaeological testing in 1991 demonstrated the presence of a substantial, multi-phased and well-preserved resource close to the house and extending west. This has largely been lost through the construction of the church and school buildings. None of these works or any others on the site have been accompanied by an archaeological programme.

The specific site of the new class-room in the north-eastern corner of the school (Block F) has no known specific improvements associated with the estate; this is a common situation for the entire property. This does not indicate an absence of use only an absence of primary documentation. By the 1930s it appears to have been made into a lawn with some shrubs. There was no visible surface evidence of any preceding work identified in 1990 and none remains now. Although the construction of the classroom on this site and the associated landscaping and the installation of services has certainly impacted on the surface of the project area it is unlikely to have removed all of the profile below. The site must be considered one of having the potential to contain archaeological evidence relevant to the estate of Georges Hall although the precise nature or composition of that resource cannot be determined.

The site of the temporary demountable also has a high probability for containing an archaeological profile from the estate, although it also is likely to be damaged from surface works and the installation of services. It will not be impacted by the current work.

13 CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

13.1 The Place

The cultural significance of Georges Hall has been recognised in several statutory listings (Section 2.5 and 2.6). The most recent assessment prepared in 2024 for the Homestead (the house built in 1837) confirmed the status of the site as one of state significance.⁶⁰ The statement of significance prepared at that time is as follows:

“The Homestead at Georges Hall is important in the cultural history of NSW as being part of the lands once owned by Colonel George Johnston. It has a strong association with the Johnston family of Annadale and is a substantially intact, well-proportioned and finely detailed colonial Georgian building which retains characteristics typical of its period and style. It was the second Johnston house built in this area with the first house being affected by flooding. The location of the Homestead on the rise above the river and floodplain demonstrates the settlers’ adjustment to their environment. The Homestead is evidence of the earliest permanent settlement in the area and is the oldest remaining house in the Bankstown district. It is one of only a few houses of this type remaining in NSW”.

The archaeological resource assessed in this report is likely to be found across the site with the exception of the large buildings constructed for the school in the 1990s. The present project area occupies one small portion of the land that was in immediate proximity to the house. If archaeological evidence survives there its significance will derive from its association with this place and the values for which it has been recognised. Specifically, this evidence may be able to describe or define what is not available from other sources; the landscape and the human interaction with it. In the case of the project area this is likely to be associated with out-buildings, yards or landscape works as well as evidence of human occupation through artefact assemblages. Palynological and soil evidence could define even earlier associations of the Johnston estate.

In this place archeology has heightened importance because documentary evidence for the estate is minimal. Alternative sources of information are the only possible means of better understanding and documenting the use and history of Georges Hall and its occupants.

13.2 Recognising The Importance Of The Archaeological Resource

The importance of archaeology to the cultural values of Georges Hall was recognised as early as 1988. In the Heritage Study for the LGA of Bankstown prepared in that year it was concluded that both the above ground elements and the evidence which was contained in the ground as archaeology were of importance.

*“Georges Hall comprising both the site of the early farm on the bank of the Georges River and the 1837 “Homestead” is significant because it represents a classic example of the evolution of a farming establishment located close to a watercourse. The homestead is the earliest standing building in the Bankstown area and both sites have great archaeological potential to reveal aspects of the way of life and occupations of the early population in the early penal colony.”*⁶¹

In the archaeological assessment prepared for the site in 1990, prior to the current system of evaluating heritage values, it was stated:

“The cultural significance of any such material (archaeological evidence), therefore, must be considered to be high. It is likely to provide the only detailed evidence for the use, occupation, appearance and

⁶⁰ JPA&D Australia Pty Ltd (2024); Conservation Management Plan Georges Hall; 80

⁶¹ Kass et al (1988); Bankstown Heritage Study Appendix Historical Archaeology Report: 09

*management of the site and its component features throughout most of its history. For this reason, the historic resource must be managed responsibly during any future redevelopment to ensure that any information which may be retrieved is recorded and used in the future interpretation of the site".*⁶²

13.3 Assessing The Significance Of Archaeological Relics

Heritage significance is a different value to archaeological potential. The potential for archaeology to remain within the ground determines the probability of physical evidence remaining from past occupation and use of a place. Cultural significance then determines the values that may derive from that resource and how this material may add to, amend or more completely describe the human association and occupation of a place. Archaeological significance derives from the overarching cultural value of the place. The assessment of heritage significance is enshrined in legislation, the NSW Heritage Act 1977. It is implemented through the NSW Heritage manual and guidelines including “*Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and Relics*”. To be assessed as having heritage significance an item must achieve the following:

- Meet at least one of seven selection criteria
- Retain the integrity of its key attributes

If an archaeological item meets the criteria it is defined as a “relic”. If a relic is to be considered of state significance it needs to meet more than one criterion; in the case of relics, this is “research potential”. This is the ability of the physical evidence to address questions or provide information that cannot be found from other sources. Archaeological significance may be linked to other significance categories as a result of, for example, a specific event or occupation.

Relics must also be ranked according to their level of significance being:

- State significance: in relation to a place, building, work, relic, moveable object or present; state significance means it is important to the state according to the established seven heritage criteria (historic, scientific, cultural, social, archeological, architecture, natural or aesthetic value of the item).
- Local significance: uses the same criteria as those described above but is found to relate most directly to the local community rather than have value beyond this area.

If an archaeological site or item, a potential relic, does not reach the level of local or state significance through these thresholds then it is not a relic under the provisions of the Heritage Act,

13.4 Assessment Criteria

Managing cultural heritage assets in NSW is undertaken on a clearly stated understanding of the values or cultural significance of a place, its elements and, where present archaeology. Seven criteria have been developed that are applied to the item. These criteria are:

Criterion A	Importance in the course of pattern of the state’s cultural or natural history or for a local area
Criterion B	A strong or special association with the life or work of a person, a group of persons of importance to the cultural or natural history of the state or local area
Criterion C	Importance in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical accomplishment in the state or local area

⁶² W. Thorp (1990): *Archaeological Assessment Georges Hall*: 13

Criterion D	Strong or special associations with a particular community or cultural group
Criterion E	The potential to yield information that will contribute an understanding to the state or a local item
Criterion F	An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects relevant to the state or local areas cultural or natural history
Criterion G	Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural environments in the state or local area. ⁶³

Archaeological evidence can contribute or exhibit values that can relate to any of the seven criteria but the principal value that is most often attributed to archaeological evidence is Criterion E, described as “research potential”. The *Archaeological Assessment Guidelines* (1996) state that:

*“Research potential is the most relevant criterion for assessing archaeological sites. However, assessing research potential for archeological sites can be difficult as the nature or extent of features is sometimes unknown, therefore, judgements must be formed on the basis of expected or potential attributes. One benefit of a detailed archeological assessment is that the element of judgement can be made more rigorous by historical or other research”.*⁶⁴

This has particular relevance to the project area; the site is identified as one of archeological potential largely on the basis of its proximity to the house and the evidence from comparable sites that this is a position generally occupied by a variety of out-buildings or other works. There is no specific archival evidence or visible traces that defines extant physical evidence within the project area relevant to the past history and use of this place either in the Johnston period of occupation or later. These circumstances are likely to be outcomes of the extremely limited archival resource for the entire site as well as possible impacts from the construction of the school or even from the early twentieth century use of the place.

13.5 Research Potential

Specific guidelines have been developed to address the criteria in relation to archaeological evidence specifically Criterion E of the guidelines.⁶⁵ These questions are different from the principal criteria but reference them considering the unique qualities of a sub-surface deposit that requires investigation to define its full significance and potential. Once the archeological potential of a site has been determined research themes and questions are identified that may be addressed through archaeological investigation and analysis. There are inclusion guidelines for this process as follows:

Does the site:

- (a) Contribute knowledge which no other resource can?
- (b) Contribute knowledge which no other site can?
- (c) Is the knowledge relevant to general questions about human history or other substantive problems relating to Australian history or does it contribute to other major research questions?

If the answer to these questions is yes then the site will have research potential.

In short, therefore, the values on which we define potential archaeological evidence (relics) as significant or having the potential to be significant are:

⁶³ NSW heritage Office (1996); *Archaeological Assessments, Archaeological Assessment Guidelines*: 26

⁶⁴ *Ibid*

⁶⁵ *NSW Heritage Council (2009): Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and Relics*

- Whether it can meet at least one of the assessment criteria, generally E but can also include other attributes
- The integrity of the resource
- Whether it can address substantive research questions
- Whether it meets the criteria for being of state or local significance

In relation to these questions, it may be concluded that the project area has the potential to provide knowledge unavailable through other means; that it could provide evidence that would compliment a relatively small resource of comparable sites and this information could contribute to a better understanding of this period and class of settlers. This would be of relevance to both state and local values. If evidence is found within the project area it would be classified as a relic or relics. The specific associations with the assessment criteria are discussed in the following section.

13.6 Assessing The Archaeological Resource Within The Project Area

The following sections address the significance of the archaeological resource at Georges Hall, noting that large areas of this resource have already been removed without archaeological input. It is also noted that the specific area of works addressed in this report has not been identified with a specific use or structure or activity from the past. The assessment is based on the location of the site in relation to the main house and the evidence from comparable sites which defines this proximity as one of substantial probability for being a place of past use in relation to a homestead and its family. Confirmation of the significance of this site requires identification of intact archaeological evidence, its purpose and relationship to the estate and the family that occupied it. This is the subject of the proposed work. The assessment that follows defines the scope of significance for a resource in this location if it is found to survive within the ground

13.6.1 Criterion (a): historical significance

The project area is located within the boundaries of one of the earliest and eventually largest landholdings in this area. The historical development of the estate throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries exemplifies the transition of settlement and commerce in the area throughout this long period, from agricultural beginnings to a pastoral economy and then a small rural landscape in transition in the twentieth century. The family that first owned the property and lived here from 1838 to 1917 were the Johnston family one of the early colonial elite and important in both local and state events. It is this history and associations that contribute towards making the place of state significance as well as its values for the local community.

The project area is in close proximity to the 1837 estate house which was the focus of this large pastoral estate. Apart from this house almost nothing is known of the principal residential area surrounding it. If archaeological evidence is found within the project area it is unlikely to have state significance in its own right although it would contribute to this significance of the house and estate by providing more evidence for the use and occupation of the place. The twentieth century history of the site exemplifies the patterns and influences that characterized the community in this period with the gradual reduction and break-up of the nineteenth century estates and diversification of the economy.

Under this criterion, evidence within the project area could meet the criteria for local significance in its own right and contribute towards the larger themes of state significance because of its possible ability to more accurately document the use of this property.

13.6.2 Criterion (b): Historical Association

Georges Hall was the country estate of one of the most significant figures in early colonial history, George Johnston although the current house was built and occupied by his son David and later descendants and

relatives. This site was part of the larger pastoral estate established by George Johnston. It is now the only property which retains physical evidence of the Johnston family's occupation, the principal residence at Annandale have been demolished in the early years of the twentieth century. The house and estate were owned and occupied by the Johnston family for over eighty years. Archaeological evidence uncovered that could be attributed to the period of occupation by the Johnston family could meet the threshold for state significance because of this association with them and the direct connection made by construction and occupation and use by the family.

13.6.3 Criterion (c): Aesthetic Values

Until and if archaeological evidence is located within the project area the scope of that evidence or potential for aesthetic values cannot be assessed, however, it is very unlikely that any in this location would be important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics or a high degree of creative or technical achievement. It is unlikely that this criterion will be met within the project area.

13.6.4 Criterion (d): Social Values

It is unlikely that archaeological evidence that may be found within the project area will have strong or special associations for any particular or community group other than for those who value the historical associations of the district, such as local historical groups, or perhaps members of the families who have lived here. Using this criterion any archaeological evidence within the project area would likely be of local significance.

13.6.5 Criterion (e): Research Values

Any archaeological evidence located within the project area would have research values through its ability to provide information or evidence for the development and use of the house through yard or out-buildings, landscape improvements or alterations and evidence of occupation possibly over a long period. This information is unavailable through any other means. As well, an untouched profile could also address evidence of the pre-settlement environment, early British uses and adaptation for those uses as well as the impacts of occupation on the landscape. Archaeological evidence is now the only means available to address this site. This evidence would be of state significance for its ability to better document a place of this importance and associations; it derives its importance from these connections.

13.6.6 Criterion (f): Rarity

The larger project area comprises the core residential area of the Johnston estate, a place of state significance. Any archaeological evidence that now survives has value because it remains the only means of better documenting the development, growth and use of the place. The impacts of earlier work at this site to develop the school have substantially reduced this resource; anything that now remains has importance because of its rarity. Also, the place has value as an example of a particular type of high status rural property of which few now remain and particularly the supporting infrastructure that surrounded them.

13.6.7 Criterion (g): Representativeness

In the absence of any substantial documentation for this property evidence beyond that of the house has importance as discussed in Section 13.6.6. The nature of the evidence may be representative of the status of the several families that occupied the place and the specific types of needs for them dictated by the type

of occupation and activities undertaken there and the period in which these works were added to the property.

13.6.8 Integrity

If anything remains within the specific part of the project area that will be disturbed by the construction of the new classroom it is likely to have been disturbed to some degree by past works including and specifically the construction of the present classroom on the site of Block D and landscaping works associated with both this and Block A adjoining it. Unmarked services might also be located within this site. In respect of the site of the proposed temporary demountable it is likely that this site has already been disturbed to some degree by the surface preparation required to create the current car park as well as possible services. In this case the temporary demountable will not disturb this surface.

In both cases, however, if the site disturbance has largely been confined to the upper parts of the profile and has not required extensive excavation any older works or remnant works are likely to still be identified and with some integrity. The extent of the disturbance cannot be determined until a site investigation is undertaken. The conclusion from this analysis is that if an archaeological resource remains within the project area it is a potential relic and may have both state and local significance

13.7 Historical Themes

This assessment has concluded that the area of proposed works may be associated with service areas or landscape works, based on the evidence of comparable sites, and possibly yards and landscapes of both the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Work is required to determine presence or absence of that evidence and then its purpose and association. On the basis of current knowledge, the following themes may be of relevance:

NSW Theme	Local Themes
Environment naturally evolved	Elements of the natural environment that have shaped or influenced human life
Environment -cultural landscape	Activities associated with humans shaping their environment
Persons	Activities of and association with identifiable individuals, families and communal groups
Convict	Activities relating to incarceration, transport, reform, accommodation and work
Agriculture	Activities relating to the cultivation and rearing of plant and animal species
Pastoralism	Activities associated with the breeding, raising, processing and distribution of livestock for human use
Developing Cultural Institutions and Ways of Life	Activities associated with creating, maintain, living in and working around houses and institutions
Accommodation	Activities associated with the provision of accommodation and particular types of accommodation
Domestic Life	Activities associated with creating, maintaining, living in and working around houses and institutions

Labour	Activities associated with work practices
Marking the Phases of Life	Activities of and associations with identifiable individuals, families and communal groups. A place of residence

13.8 Statement Of Cultural Significance

Georges Hall is a state heritage-listed property which is also recognised at local level being the oldest house in the LGA. It is representative of a class of properties and landowners that were at the foundation of settlement here and across the state. The estate houses, out-buildings and other works actively changed the landscape and formed the nuclei for settlement that spread out from them. The project area within the Georges Hall site is a small component of a much larger nineteenth century landscape associated with it of which only the portion around The Homestead survives. Both the house and the land around it are within the curtilage of the listed site, including the project area.

The house is valued for its aesthetic values, for its association with a prominent early-settlement family and its relationship to the landscape describing what was valued and learnt by early settlers about their new environment. Archaeological evidence and its relationship to the house could inform about the management and use of the place and the relationship of the people living there to this domestic landscape. In this it may relate to all periods of occupation including those that succeeded the occupation by the Johnston family.

The identification of the project area as one of potential archaeology relevant to the management and work of the estate is based on its relation to the estate house and how this may be demonstrated from comparable sites to be a place of high probability for these associated secondary uses. The limited excavation that took place in 1991 at Georges Hall demonstrated that this model of occupation appears to have been the same at this site with what is likely to have been a kitchen, dairy and servant's quarters all located close to the south-western corner of the house. The scope of evidence elsewhere, if present, could encompass elements of services, out-buildings, landscape, evidence of occupation and use and change over time but there is no physical evidence to confirm or alter this conclusion. The project area that is to be developed has already been disturbed by the construction of a school building but this might not have had more than a surface impact.

The significance of an archaeological resource at this site is its potential to more extensively document a site of state and local importance which lacks almost any archival evidence for the length of its history as a rural estate and farm of the highly influential Johnston family from 1837 to 1918 and as part of the earlier and first estate property from 1788-1837. Any intact evidence would make a contribution beyond what is now available either to identify a past area of use either for an active function or landscape improvement or some other component of human activity. It is particularly important as a large component of the site has already been lost to this purpose.

This type of site is representative of an elite strata of society in the early colonial period as well as the subsequent history of the same family showing their changing circumstances. This type of settlement was defined by wealth and privilege and was found across all the settled areas. Only a few examples such as Rouse Hill House have retained a substantial assemblage of the buildings that supported the estate house. Specifically in relation to Georges Hall where almost nothing is known of the buildings and works that were there archaeological evidence may add information that is the only viable means of extending and expanding our knowledge of this place.

The significance of this resource if it exists is contributory and derives from the significance of the place, both for local and state importance, specifically it being the oldest house in the area, its associations with significant figures and events and its evolution over time reflecting the changing circumstances of the owners and regional influences.

13.9 Grading Of Significance

A significant relic may be graded on the basis of several factors including intactness, age and quantity of original material, and associations with important people amongst others. Until the extent, if any, of archaeological evidence is defined and that of its component parts it is impossible to make a more precise grading other than that of potential state and local significance expressed in the preceding section.

14 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE ASSESSMENT

This assessment has concluded that the specific project areas of Building F and the temporary demountable classroom may encompass archaeological evidence that derives from the past development and occupation of this place by the historically significant Johnston family from 1838 – 1917 and as part of an earlier pastoral property of the same family in use between 1789 -1837. It might also include evidence that derives from the twentieth century occupation of the place. The nature, integrity and associations of this evidence, if it existed and is intact, could be of both state and local significance. This evidence may, on this basis, be defined as relics which have protection under the provisions of the NSW Heritage Act 1977.

The issue that arises from this assessment is that the conclusions are based on models of contemporary behavior, some extant sites as well as minimal test excavation on the subject site undertaken in 1991. To determine management of any intact evidence it is first necessary to establish the presence or absence of that resource as well as any impacts caused to it, in this case, by the construction of a classroom on this site in the 1990s (Building D) and landscaping between this and the earlier Ebsworth House (Building A).

As there is no particular focus for testing it is recommended that an entire site surface scrape and clean of the proposed area of the new building (Building F) is undertaken under the supervision and management of an archeologist and one test pit as a minimum to determine the deeper soil profile. The purpose is to identify any remnant physical evidence that indicates an area of occupation, the removal of that evidence by the 1990s work or that the site was not used by any of the occupants of the property and is largely sterile of cultural material. This work will determine whether any additional work is required or if the proposed development may proceed with no necessary further action. This work is not required in the area of the temporary demountable as the ground surface will be retained intact.

This work will require approval and granting of a permit under Section 60 of the Heritage Act. An application for this permit will require a methodology to be documented with the objectives and proposed outcomes identified, how these are to be achieved, the methods for recording the work and managing any artefacts that come from the site. This is called a “Research Design” which should be submitted with the overall Section 60 application for approval for the new building. This assessment must also be appended to that application.

15 REFERENCES

15.1 Technical Or Research Works

D. Bairstow (1991); *Georges Hall Excavation Report* (Church of the Foursquare Gospel)

Benson and Howell (1990): *Taken for Granted the Bushland of Sydney and Its Suburbs* Kangaroo Press

Heritage Office (1996); *Archaeological Assessments*

Heritage Office (2006); *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and Relics*

JPA&D (2024); [The Homestead Georges Hall Conservation Management Plan](#)

Clive Lucas Stapleton and Partners (ND); *The Hunter Estates A comparative Heritage Study of pre-1850s Homestead Complexes in the Hunter Region*. Office of Environment and Heritage

Terry Kass (1987); *Bankstown Heritage Study*. Bankstown City Council

J. Lawrence, B. Madden and L. Muir (1999); *A Pictorial History of Canterbury Bankstown*. Kingsclear Books

NBRSP (1990); *Georges Hall Homestead Conservation Study*

Sue Rosen; *Bankstown A Sense of Identity*

W. Thorp (1990); *Archaeological Assessment George Hall* (for Meldrum Burrows)

Lester Tropman and Associates (1987); *Report on the Homestead formerly known as Georges Hall* (For the After Care Association)

15.2 Primary References

Reverend Richard Taylor; *Diary of Residence in New South Wales 1836-1839* SLNSW A 3816

Johnston to Colonial Secretary 31 May 1828. SRONSW Col. Sec re. Land 2/27893 Reel 1146

Application of David Johnston for Permission to rent land 1 June 1828. SRONSW Col. Sec re. Land 2/27893 Reel 1146

15.3 Secondary Sources: Books, JOurnal Articles

B. Goodge (1977); "the Homestead" [Bankstown Historical Society](#) 1977

B. Goodger; *Cattle Duffing in Bankstown* "BHS Newsletter" Volume 8 No. 4

Merle Peters (1966); *The Bankstown Story*. Private Print

D. Pike (1967); *Australian Dictionary of Biography*

Sue Rosen (1996); *Bankstown A Sense of Identity* Hale and Iremonger

Heritage Properties Restoration Programme for NSW 1992-1993 *Homestead Building Gerges Hall Project Number 67*

Heritage NSW to S. Griffiths 20 March 2025 by email

15.4 News Articles

"Historic Georges Hall" The Sun 18 September 1935
Sydney Gazette 11 December 1803; 04
Sydney Gazette 28 May 1809; 01
Sydney Morning Herald 20 July 1868; 06
Sydney Morning Herald 20 July 1868; 06
Sydney Morning Herald 17 April 1868; 08
Sydney Morning Herald 13 April 1889; 06
Sydney Morning Herald 20 December 1939; 4
Daily Telegraph 20 April 1887; 02
Daily Telegraph 10 January 1922; 6
Daily Telegraph 16 December 1949; 21
The Australian Star 23 October 1907; 5
Liverpool Herald 10 March 1898; 8
The Sun 6 March 1914; 11
The Sun 25 August 1949; 21
Cumberland Argus and Fruit Growers Advocate 14 April 1917; 2
Labor Daily 30 April 1926; 03

15.5 Maps And Plans, Land Information

Bankstown c. 1835 SRONSW AO Map 187
Georges River ND SRONSW AO Map 2735
Parish Map Bankstown, C. Stewart 1838 SRONSW AO Map 187
Plan of the Estate named Georges Hall the Property of David Johnstone Esq 1843 (SLNSAW FL3788915)
Georges Hall NLA Map LFSP 426 Folder 33
An undated sketch plan, probably from the later part of the nineteenth century showing the position of the house and fenced paddocks surrounding it; the position of the house is shown by the arrow [SLNSW Subdivision Plans Georges Hall FL914480]
Subdivision plan showing the occupation of the ground along the Georges River at Bankstown SLNSW FL9144805
"Murrumbidgee" house, which might be the site of the original Georges Hall house [Subdivision Plan Georges Hall NLA Map LFSP 426 Folder 33]
Plan of the adjoining estate to Georges Hall showing the swamp ground that surrounded the estate on the foreshore and to its immediate south [SLNSW FL89897, Subdivision Plans Bankstown]
Plan of Deepwater Estate Georges River Bankstown 1923 SL SLNSW FL8988460

Estate brochure for Deepwater Estate SLNSW FL8988474

Subdivision Plan 16 January 1923 LPI NSW Plan FP 306393

Plan of Allotments 6 January 1941 LPI NSW Plan 10868-3000

Survey of the property in 1923 with the improvements purchased by Mabel Bean [LPI FP306393]

LPI Old Roll G286 R160211

Plan of Lands Acquired in Connection with Georges River Feeder Road 19 November 1940 LPI NSW 10865-3000

Plan of Road to be Close 16 July 1949 LPI NSW R 23655-1603

Certificates of Title LPI NSW: 6896/35; 5712/118; w3503/226; 2558/242; 2383/142; 2383/151; 1126/46; 1117/12; 1096/75; 650/131; 96044/180

LPI NSW; Primary Application 4904

Colonial Secretary re land SRONSW 2/7983 Reel 1146

15.6 Images

" Major Johnson's House, New South Wales. Drawn by his Son" 1805 | SLNSW SSV/65]

J. Lycett, View of Georges River Near Liverpool NSW in A.W. Fuller Collection of Views Predominantly of Sydney, Liverpool and the Sundra Straits ML PX*D 41 No 7]

J. Lycett; Burwood Villa in NSW 1825 [NGA 84.125.6]

Samuel Elyard, Annandale Farm near Sydney, 1877 SLNSW DG XV*/Sp Coll/Elyard/21

Henry Grant Lloyd (1857); On the Georges River Near Liverpool from Sophienburg 21 November 1857; SLNSW A5894082/DL

Rouse Hill House and some out-buildings in the later nineteenth century

[<https://mhnsww.au/stories/general/nailing-history-rouse-hill-house/>]

Nineteenth century sheds at Rouse Hill House in 1990, below [Blacktown Library 4807-max]

J. Fowles, Bungarabee Estate at Doonside 1858 SLNSW 1193

The front of the house seen from within the circular garden bed c. 1890-1900 (SLNSW Image a089398h)

Advertising poster for the sale of the Deepwater Estate at Georges River in 1922[SLNSW FL898846]

Image Georges Hall c. 1950 SLNSW Image d2-10514h

LPI NSW Historical Imagery Aerial views of 1930, 1943, 1949, 1951, 1960, 1964, 1969, 1977, 1985, 1993, 2004

The front of the house and within the carriage circle in c. 1900 (SLNSAW a089398h)

Halfway House in 1957, the former Georges Hall estate house with the ring garden in front [SLNSW d2-08719]

The front of the house in 1915

https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q55635291#/media/File:The_Homestead_Georges_Hall-1915.JPG

The Halfway House in 1957 (SLNSW d2-08719h)
