BOVIS LEND LEASE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS
AT
SITE OF 1a HIGH ST MILLERS POINT

PART OF
FORMER AGL SITE
30-38 HICKSON ROAD SYDNEY

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this Report

This is a Report about the site of 1a High Street Millers Point. The site is the size of one two storey flat with a small backyard and once had on it a two storey flat which was one of a row of flats in High St. Millers Point. The Subject Site is land which is part of a larger project by Bovis Lend Lease to redevelop the large site facing 30-38 Hickson Road.

An Archaeological Excavation Permit from the NSW Heritage Office with Anne Bickford as archaeologist for this redevelopment includes this 1a High St. site. As clearing and resurfacing of the ground was necessary and it was considered that archaeological remains might be found archaeological monitoring and an archaeological survey of the site took place. As the Excavation Permit requires this Report documents the archaeological work and reports on its outcomes.

1.2 Background

This whole development area is part of the former Australian Gas Light Company works where gas was first made in Sydney in the 1840s.

Bovis Lend Lease intends to construct a commercial building directly to the south of the Subject Site at 30-34 Hickson Road; conserve the historic buildings to the south of it; and at 38 Hickson Road to construct a residential complex.

The proposal in Bovis Lend Lease's plans for the 1a High Street Site is for a landscaped open public space.

1.3 The Subject Site

The Subject Site consists of an open rectangular area, with a two storey flat at one side, and the high sandstone steps leading between High Street and Hickson Road at the other. Directly to the north is High Street, and to the south the edge of number 30 Hickson Road. The location of the site in its larger context is shown on the Location Map Figure 1.1. A 1986 plan of the site and photographs of it when it was surveyed and the surface collection of artefacts made follow (Figures 1.2, 1.3, 1.4).
1.4 Authorship and Research

This Report is written by Anne Bickford, Director of Archaeology And Heritage Pty Ltd. Research about the site was carried out consulting several sources, and these are listed and discussed in section 2.0 below.

1.5 Liaison

The liaison officer for Bovis Lend Lease for this part of the Hickson Road Project is Project Manager Emma Malherbe. The Bovis Lend Lease head office address is Tower Building, Australia Square, Sydney 2000 Phone: 92366194. The site address for the Hickson Road Project is Bovis Lend Lease Level 4, Moreton's Hotel, 20 Sussex Street. Emma Malherbe's Phone number at the site is: 82973607.

1.6 Form of This Report

The Figures referred to in the text are placed at the end of each chapter where they are first referred to. eg. Figure 1.1 Location Map and 1.2 Site Plan follow Chapter 1: 'Introduction'.

FIGURE 1.1 Location Map
FIGURE 1.2 Location of 1a High Street Site
FIGURE 1.3 Looking Towards 1a High Street Site showing flats No. 3 High Street to the left, and the sandstone pillars at the top of the steps between High Street and Hickson Road to the right of the Site.

FIGURE 1.4 Looking south at the Site through the construction site fence. Parallel concrete footings of flats running east-west.
2.0 PREVIOUS REPORTS AND STATUTORY LISTINGS OF THE SITE

2.1 There have been several reports which discuss 1a High Street. Some are in relation to its location at Millers Point, and some as part of its inclusion in the 30-38 Hickson Road development site. These reports, all of which have been consulted, are listed and analysed below in chronological order:


2.2.1 The row of flats 1-9 High Street is Inventory Number 137 (See Figures 2.1 and 2.2 for Inventory Sheet and Basemap).
It is listed in the Inventory Sheet that number 1 is demolished. In the Historic sequence of development section it states that there were buildings there by the 1820s. This is contradicted by the later 1880 Percy Dove Plan (See Figure 4.2) which shows the site to be "Vacant Land", and to the east of it "Vacant Ground."
A later report by Godden Mackay Logan has research which shows that there were no buildings on or near the 1a High Street site until the Sydney Harbour Trust flats were constructed in 1917.
During the archaeological survey of 1a High Street for this Report no remains of 1820s buildings were observed on the ground, or artifacts of that period found.


2.3.1 No mention of 1a High Street.


2.4.1 This report states that Number 1a High Street was demolished in 1966 and has remained as a vacant block.\(^{1}\)

2.4.2 At the time of writing this Conservation Plan (early 2000) under the heading 4.1.5 Sydney Harbour Trust/MSB, 1921 - Present\(^{2}\) it states that the site of the Sydney Harbour Trust terrace\(^{3}\) at 1a High Street was absorbed into the MSB

\(^{1}\) p. 15.
\(^{2}\) p. 45
\(^{3}\) The Godden Mackay Logan reports call the building formerly on the Subject Site a terrace, while the Heritage Design Services Report of 2002 refers to it as two storey flats. The term flats has been used in this Report.
site 30-38 Hickson Road. This explains why 1a High Street, which appears out on its own and unrelated to the former Gasworks Site, is part of this 30-38 Hickson Road project, and has to be analysed and assessed just as the Hickson Road sites do (See Figure 2.3).

2.4.3 In the discussion on the archaeological significance of the site it is stated that evidence of features and deposits may survive as subsurface remains providing evidence of structures and occupation deposits of 1a High Street4.

2.4.4 In the following section on the Assessment of Significance 1a High Street is assessed as being of Negligible Significance5. This indicates that there is no constraint on keeping the site or the in situ remains of it.

2.4.5 In the section on the conservation basis for conserving significant site components it states that:

Elements of 'Negligible' significance shall be kept or demolished (if intrusive) and replaced by more sympathetic development.

This is the proposal for the 1a High Street site. It will develop a vacant allotment into a more sympathetic development - a public park.

2.5 Godden Mackay Logan. October 2000. 30-38 Hickson Road, Sydney (Former AGL Site) Archaeological Research Design. Report for Delmo Pty Ltd.

2.5.1 In the discussion of archaeological potential the report states that there may be potential archaeological remains, being deposits associated with the former occupation of 1a High Street. Such remains were not observed during the surface collection on the site. This is probably because all of the deposits associated with the occupation of the flats were removed when the building was demolished and the site levelled and cleared.


2.6.1 The stairs at the northern end of the site which provide access from Hickson Road to High Street are not included within the site boundary8.

2.6.2 Deposits and/or features which may survive include evidence of structures and occupation of 1a High Street9.

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4 p. 70
5 p. 75
6 p. 94
7 p. 9
8 p. 6

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2.6.3 The report recommends that development of the site at 1a High Street as a landscaped open public space should be preceded by archaeological recording of significant features remaining on the site\(^\text{10}\).

When the site was surveyed for archaeological remains the concrete and brick footings of the former building were considered significant enough to be recorded in photographs (See Figure 1.4). The artefacts visible were sampled as a surface collection. Hand excavation below the surface was not attempted as the soil deposits were contaminated from the prior use of the area as part of the Gas Manufacturing site.

2.7 Statutory Listings There are no Statutory Listings of the subject site. The flats 3-9 High Street have been listed, but because the 1a flats have been demolished the vacant block is not significant and has not been listed.

2.8 Heritage Design Services DPWS. November 2002. *Conservation Management Guidelines for Department of Housing Properties at Millers Point. Volume Two. History and Inventory.* For Department of Housing NSW.

This report deals in detail with the history of the conception for, and construction of, the flats at 3-9 High Street. All of this information applies to the flats which were at 1a High Street and has been discussed in Section 4.0 below, *History of the Site.*

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\(^{9}\) p. 16  
\(^{10}\) p. 46
### Location details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inventory</th>
<th>137</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land category</td>
<td>Allotment of land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allotment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>MSB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street no</td>
<td>3-9.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>High Street.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suburb</td>
<td>Millers Point.</td>
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</table>

### Historic sequence of development.

**Buildings by 1820s**

**Historical notes**

Located on lot 4 Sec 93 granted to Thomas Agars.

### Above ground archaeological remains.

**Site category**

- Original use: Sydney Harbour Trust terraced housing.
- Description: Number 1 demolished.
- "1911. Sydney Harbour Trust terraced housing.

**References**


### Management plan.

**Above ground archaeological remains.**

- An archaeological watching brief or monitoring programme is recommended.

**Below ground archaeological remains.**

- An historical and archaeological assessment prior to archaeological investigation is recommended.

**References**

Refer to the 'Basemap', to locate any site included in this inventory. This plan is included in the Archaeological Management Plan, Volume 1.

A recommendation for an archaeological watching brief or monitoring programme is made for all streets not included in the inventory.

Refer to the Archaeological Management Plan, Volume 1, for:

1. Legal obligations for the protection of archaeological resources (Chapter 6).
2. Circumstances in which archaeological investigations are required (Chapter 7).
3. The types of archaeological investigations and the procedures associated with them (Chapter 8).
4. Permits and other approvals (Chapter 9).

The Archaeological Management Plan does not affect, or remove any obligations or requirements that apply by way of legislation to The Rocks and Millers Point.

### Archaeological Investigations.

**Type of investigation**

**References**
FIGURE 2.2 Location of Subject Site - Inventory No. M137 on base map

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FIGURE 2.3 Plan of Bovis Lend Lease development site showing Subject Site, out by itself, included in development
From: Godden Mackay Logan. October 2000. 30-38 Hickson Road, Sydney (Former AGL Site)
Archaeological Research Design. p.4
3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Cultural Significance

This Report has been produced in accordance with the principles set out in the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter (The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance) 1999 including Guidelines to the Burra Charter: Cultural Significance, and the NSW Heritage Manual produced by the NSW Heritage Office and the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, 1996.

3.2 Archaeological Surface Collection

The artefacts were collected from the exposed surface of the site. Protective gloves were worn as the soil of the site is contaminated. A surface collection was made to represent the types of artefacts on the site. A sample was selected; not all artefacts seen were collected. The collection was made with the assistance of the archaeologist Siobhan Lavelle. The collection was made under the Archaeological Excavation Permit received from the NSW Heritage Office.
4.0 HISTORY OF THE SITE

4.1 Workmen's Flats 1-9 High Street Millers Point. Constructed 1917.

The Subject Site was the most westerly of a row of five pairs of two storey flat buildings designed in 1915 as part of a major public housing redevelopment by the Sydney Harbour Trust. The flats were constructed in 1917 by the Maritime Services Board. The western pair was demolished in 1966. A 1975 Plan shows the site as vacant (Figure 4.1). A small public reserve was expected to be built in its place. The work was associated with the construction of new wharves and associated port facilities from Darling Harbour around to Dawes Point. A major feature of the new work was the construction of Hickson Road connecting the whole of the waterfront with access on two levels - on the waterfront and from the cliffs above, thus overcoming the problem of the topography of the area. Existing private wharves on the shoreline and whole streets of houses were demolished as the whole of the area to the west of Kent Street was remodelled and the cliff face cut back to form Hickson Road. The new high level road was eventually named High Street.

It was not the Sydney Harbour Trust's initial intention to build workers' housing but by 1909 the Trust reported that it had a policy to provide dwellings for waterside workers 'on the limited area available for the purpose'.

The flats were built specifically as "Workmen's Flats."

4.2 The Site in 1880

The Heritage Design Services inventory form on these flats states that it has no information on the earlier occupation of the site. The plans in their Report illustrating the High Street flats show a current plan of 1975 and the famous Percy Dove plan of Sydney in 1880. Figure 4.1 shows these two plans side by side. The heavy line I have added to their plan shows the same block of terraces. That plan on the right is an extract from the 1880 plan of the area. The 1880 plan could not be photocopied, but I have added in black pen the information on it in the area if the Subject Site is "Vacant Land" and Vacant Ground" (Figure 4.2). The site was vacant at that time. It probably remained vacant until the Sydney Harbour Trust carried out its comprehensive public housing construction of flats around 1917. These are the flats that can be seen lining High Street on the 1975 Plan.

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12 As above. p.224.
13 Listed as such on the architectural drawings 1915. As above.
14 As above. p.223.
4.3 Demolition and Future Plans

The Conservation Management Plan for 30-38 Hickson Road (Section 2.4 above) states that the flats at 1a High Street were demolished in 1966\(^\text{15}\). Since that time the site has remained a vacant allotment. Plans for a landscaped open public space were mooted but they were not taken any further. This current development project by Bovis Lend Lease will see the landscaped park finally constructed.

\(^{15}\) p. 15
FIGURE 4.1 Plans of Site, 1975 and 1880. The black lines join the same group of terraces
FIGURE 4.2 1880 Plan showing area of Subject Site as Vacant Ground
5.0 PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

Photographs of the site can be seen in Figures 1.3 and 1.4. Figure 1.3 is looking south at the site from the High Street road. It would have been the same width and depth as Flat No. 3. to its left. On the eastern side of the site are the sandstone pillars marking the top of the stairs between High Street and Hickson Road.

Figure 1.4 is a close-up of the site through the construction site wire front fence. The parallel concrete footings of the flats building can be seen running east-west. Also the sandstone block rubble from the demolition of the flats in 1966.

The soil of the site had been tested and assessed as contaminated, and it was removed and taken to a designated contamination waste deposit area. The contamination is similar to that over much of the former AGL site and is produced as waste products of the gas-making process such as tar, ammonia, phenol, and sulphuretted hydrogen. Once the building's footings were revealed I was contacted to assess them and the artefacts visible on the surface of the site.

The assessment was that the footings were not significant and could be removed, but before that, a surface collection of a sample of the ceramic and glass artefacts would be made.

6.0 SURFACE COLLECTION OF ARTEFACTS

A sample of ceramics, glass and clay smoking pipe fragments was collected from the surface of the site. Most of the artefacts visible were collected, so that there was no bias towards finds considered to be of an earlier or later date. Only small finds such as ceramic sherds, fragments of glass, and clay pipes were collected. Bricks, blocks of concrete, and pieces of saltglazed stoneware sewer pipe were not sampled.

The site was not excavated any further because of the contaminated soil.
7.0 ANALYSIS OF ARTEFACTS

The majority of the ceramics and glass collected is from the second half of the 19th century, from about 1850 to 1900.

7.1 Ceramics

The large willow-pattern sherd was made in Staffordshire between 1851 and January 1862. This is the only piece that can be dated from its maker's mark transfer printed on the back (Figures 7.1, 7.3, and 7.4). The rest of the ceramics can be placed in the date range of c.1850-1900 by style of decoration and colour (Figures 7.2 and 7.5).

7.2 Clay Pipe Stems

The pipes were not able to be dated, but such short-stemmed pipes as these were very common in the mid to late 19th century before cigarettes became the fashion. They were known as cutties, and were primarily working men's pipes, because they could be held between the teeth while continuing to work at shovelling, digging, and other labouring tasks.

7.3 Glass

The fragments of glass (Figure 7.6) are from bottles which held wine or beer. All wine and beer bottles of the second half of the 19th century were the same colour and shape. Some bottle necks and bases were found, as well as the more common body fragments.

The square-shaped black glass is from a gin bottle. This is a very old shape being used over hundreds of years, and gin bottles are still square today.

The clear semicircular base is obviously from a wine glass, and the pale green glass stopper from a sauce bottle. The cobalt blue glass from a narrow necked and bodied bottle probably held castor oil. Medicine bottles at that time were blue to distinguish them as having contents which were dangerous if taken in large quantities.

The fragment of green and yellow/brownish glass next to the shells in the photograph is probably from a French wine bottle. The brown material is a surface coating called a patina which forms as the chemicals which make up the glass break down in the elements. This flaky coating is formed and gradually flakes off revealing the green glass beneath. It has been found on other archaeological sites in Sydney, such as the First Government House Site, that this sort of glass was imported as French wine bottles.
7.4 Shells

Fragments of shell (Figure 7.6) on site sometimes indicate that the building is early as shell was used as lime in the mortar. In this case it is clear that this clump and two separate oyster shells are the refuse of a meal of oysters. If the shore was rocky to the west then they could have come from close by. The cockle shell would also have been discarded on the site after eating the shellfish meat.

7.5 Site Formation Processes

The history of the site (Section 4.0 above) shows that in 1880 the area was vacant land. This was before the Sydney City Council had organized a regular garbage collection in the inner city. The 1880 Map shows that there were several long rows of terraces to the north of the vacant land. The artefacts found in 1a High Street are consistent with the area being used as a dumping ground for rubbish before the rows of Millers Point Flats were constructed about 1917. All of the vegetable and paper rubbish has broken down, leaving only the almost indestructible solid refuse such as pottery and glass.

The evidence of the occupation of the number 1a flats from 1917 to 1966 has been cleared away, either because it was removed when the flats were demolished and the site bulldozed flat, or when the site was bulldozed during this 2003 demolition when the contaminated soil was being taken away and before the concrete footings were revealed. It is probable that the artefacts were bulldozed away when the site was demolished and cleared flat when building materials and refuse were removed in 1966.
FIGURE 7.1 Sherd of Willow Pattern plate

FIGURE 7.2 Sherds of sponged decoration, Chinese porcelain, lustre, rope border, and Bear Grease jar lid
FIGURE 7.3 Base of Willow Pattern plate showing maker's mark

FIGURE 7.4 Details of P. B. & H. manufactures of Willow 7.1 & 7.3 above
From: GA Godden *Encyclopaedia of British Pottery and Porcelain Marks*, p.495


Distinguishing details of several printed marks of differing design: name of the individual pattern is often included, 1851 to January 1862.
FIGURE 7.5 Photograph of all Ceramics and Clay Pipe Stems collected

FIGURE 7.6 Photograph of all Glass and Shells collected
FIGURE 7.7 Obverse of Clay pipe Stems stamped with LACHLANDER and SAYWE...

FIGURE 7.8 Reverse of Clay Pipe Stems stamped with PENFOLD. SYDNEY and SYDNEY
8.0 CATALOGUE OF ARTEFACTS
(See photographs Figures 7.1-7.8 above)

8.1 Clay pipe Stems
5 pipe stem fragments.

1 = obverse LACHLANDER reverse PENFOLD SYDNEY
1 = obverse SAYWE... reverse SYDNEY
3 fragments of stem with no names or makers marks on them.

8.2 Chinese Porcelain
1 sherd of hand painted Chinese porcelain. Cobalt blue paint on white body.

8.3 Blue and White transfer Printed Pottery
All made in Staffordshire England
All blue transfer printed on white earthenware body

1 sherd of willow pattern showing trees and buildings, part of the well of a plate
(See 7.7). On the base of the plate (underneath it) is the maker's mark, A small
Chinese building with ferns above WILLOW in a ribbon with P.B.&H.
underneath it. (See Figure 7.3) Because of this maker's mark the sherd can be
dated as to when and where it was made and by whom. The major reference on
British ceramic marks - *Encyclopaedia of British Pottery and Porcelain Marks*\(^{16}\)
dates this sherd to being made between 1851 and January 1862 (See Figure 7.4).

3 sherds of willow pattern. All fragments of bases.
1 seaweed pattern. Teacup rim.
1 floral pattern. Teacup rim with handle.
3 sherds of exotic scenes:
   1 Exotic scenes - buildings and trees. Base with part of wreath mark.
   1 Exotic scenes - mosque, sailing boat, trees, mountains. 1 rim.
   1 Exotic scenes - men punting prow of boat on lake.
Exotic scenes became very popular on British transfer printed wares in the 1830s
and 1840s.
14 sherds of floral pattern. Fragments of rims and bases.
8 decorative borders
1 floral teapot spout

8.4 Flow Blue Transfer Printed Pottery
All made in Staffordshire England
1 base of plate
1 cross hatched rim
1 floral rim

\(^{16}\) GA Godden Bonanza Books New York 1964
8.5 Purple Transfer Printed Pottery
All made in Staffordshire England
2 sponged rims of bowls with decorative borders
1 tile with Grecian urns and flowers
1 rim of cup with remains of the handle
3 rims with border patterns
1 sherd with floral decoration
1 base sherd of sky and a border

8.6 Blue-black Transfer Printed Pottery
All made in Staffordshire England
3 decorative rims with border decoration
1 patterned body sherd

8.7 Brown Transfer Printed Pottery
All made in Staffordshire England
1 rim sherd with decorative border
1 body sherd with geometric pattern

8.8 Grey Transfer Printed Pottery
All made in Staffordshire England
1 rim of large bowl with floral border decoration
1 plate rim with floral border decoration
1 grey base fragment
1 grey base sherd decorated with pointed roof houses

8.9 Green Transfer Printed Pottery
All made in Staffordshire England
1 sherd with spots on the base and part of the body
1 sponged cup rim
1 floral body sherd

8.10 Other Pottery
All made in Staffordshire England

8.10.1 Plain White
1 cup rim
1 jar base
1 body sherd

8.10.2 Annular
1 rim with 2 blue and 1 green bands
8.10.3 Sprigged
1 purple sprigged floral spriggs on white

8.10.4 Lustre
1 lustre floral pattern on a buff painted exterior on a rim

8.10.5 Rope Border
1 white rim of plate with bluish white glaze. Rope border. Inside letters in relief ....P O...

8.10.6 Bear Grease Jar
1 sherd of lid of a bear grease jar. Sky blue colour with black banded border decoration. Letters - BREI....

8.11 Saltglazed Stoneware
All made in Staffordshire England
1 body sherd with incised bands - glazed outside and in
3 wheel thrown body sherds of ginger beer bottle shape. Saltglaze only on the outside.

8.12 Glass
All made in England

Dark Green Glass (also known as black glass)
8.12.1 Gin Bottle
1 fragment of square gin bottle base
1 fragment of body with corner of square gin bottle base

8.12.2 Wine/beer bottles
4 neck fragments
3 base fragments
15 body fragments

Clear Glass
1 fragment of wind glass base

Cobalt blue Glass
1 neck and body of a medicine bottle
2 cobalt blue body fragments

Light Green Glass
1 light green sauce bottle stopper (like Worcestershire sauce bottle stopper).
8.13 Shells
6 oyster shells
1 cockle
1 pippi

9.0 OPPORTUNITY FOR DISPLAY OF ARTEFACTS IN NEW HICKSON ROAD BUILDING ADJACENT TO 1a HIGH STREET

9.1 These artefacts could be displayed in a display case in the foyer of the new building which will be adjacent. The display could include information about the artefacts and the site they came from, which was vacant land when they were deposited in the mid to late 19th century. The 1a High Street site will be a landscaped park by the time the new building is ready for occupation.

9.2 To facilitate the interpretation an interpretation specialist should be engaged to work with Archaeology and Heritage and Tanner and Associates to produce an interpretation plan for review by the client before it is executed and put in place.