STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The site derives its principal historical significance from having been part of Campbell’s Wharf lease and grant. The significance is somewhat diminished in that the site formed a marginal part of the Campbell’s wharf complex being in a scrub ‘garden’ area which was dominated by and was part of a steep rocky ridge along the George Street side of the study area.

The site is significant in that it has potential to reveal details of the appearance of the west side of Sydney Cove and backdrop to Campbell’s Wharf. This significance is somewhat diminished in that the rocky west half was excavated to Hickson Road level between 1908 and 1912.

The site has moderate early twentieth century historical significance as site of Argyle’s Garage and in 1935 as the Government Motor Garage. The remains from the 1908 - 1912 period are of aesthetic value as part of the George Street and Hickson Road streetscapes.

CONSTRAINTS ARISING OUT OF THE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Above ground remains of cultural and aesthetic significance are to be preserved in the proposed development of the site as outlined in the Architectural Projects Pty Ltd report of 27 Feb 1998).

Below ground remains must be subject to archaeological investigation and supervision in order to record surviving elements as outlined in the Methodology section of this report.
HISTORICAL OUTLINE

The 1998 Architectural Projects Pty Ltd report was used to cull out direct historical references to the study site. Tim McCormick's 'First Views of Australia 1788 - 1825', David Ell Press, 1987, was used for pictorial evidence regarding the early phasing of the site.

Pre - 1788

Aboriginal occupation relating to the Cadigal and Eora tribal groups by the beginning of European occupation. The general area would have been used for hunting, fishing and shelter.

1788 - 1802

This period overlaps with the Aboriginal occupation and could be referred to as a period of 'Contact'. A Contact deposit may contain the remains of items traded with Europeans and traditional tools made from broken glass or ceramics instead of stone. An anonymous sketch dated to 1793/1794 shows the study area as part of scrub land with Aborigines in the foreground. Many of the surviving illustrations of Sydney up to the 1820s show Aborigines standing with spears in groups along the shores of Sydney Cove or fishing from their canoes.

This period saw some minor building (huts) and waterfront activities in the general area. The area was transformed when Robert Campbell began building his wharves and store between 1801 and 1803 on land first leased to Captain Waterhouse (See Grimes' Plan of Sydney, 1800).

1803 - 1876

This period is dominated by Campbell's wharf, warehouses and maritime activities, starting with Campbell's first construction period between 1801 and 1803. An 1802 drawing of the Campbell's wharf area shows the first part of the storehouse (present north end) without a roof. Other illustrations show that the storehouse was expanded southwards by 1804 and again by 1808. A view published in 1821 but based on a sketch of around 1815 - 1817 shows the warehouses much as they are today apart from the upper storey. These illustrations provide glimpses of the study site. The 1815-1817 view shows rising scrub land above a series of skillion sheds.

The warehouses and facilities were extended as late as 1859-1861, testimony to continued, intensive waterfront activities. No evidence has emerged that the study area was ever built upon.

Campbell's Wharf facilities were sold in 1876 to the Australian Steam Navigation Company but the wharfage site remained intact until the years 1879 to 1884.
Above: Grime's Plan of Sydney, 1800. Numbers 26 and 27 were taken over by Robert Campbell in 1800. 27 had been leased by Captain Waterhouse and 26 by J. Baughan. The shape of these leases have left a legacy to this day.

Below: Campbell's land grant, 1814. Campbell's lease was converted to a grant.
Above: Sketch by C. A. Lesueur, 'Partie de la baie de Port Jackson', 1802. In Tim McCormick's 'First Views of Australia 1788 - 1825', David Ell Press, 1987, plate 68. Showing Aboriginees in the foreground, the block shape on the water edge is the first stage of Campbell's store before the roof was added. The higher area to the right is the approximate location of the study area.

Left: Detail of, 'View of Part of Sydney', ca 1804. In McCormick, plate 81. Campbell's store has been added to and within four years would be added to again. The rise behind the store is the approximate location of the study site.