

# **ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

**1-9 ALBION PLACE  
518-534 KENT STREET  
531-551 GEORGE STREET**

**SYDNEY**



**July 2001**

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**Cultural Resources Management  
For Centaran Holdings Pty Ltd**

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## SECTION 1.0

### PRECIS OF THE REPORT

#### 1.1 The Work

The subject of this report is the sub-surface archaeological resource that may be contained within the land bound by 1-9 Albion Place, 531-551 George Street and 518-536 Kent Street, Sydney. This site is occupied by nineteenth and twentieth century buildings. There is very little unoccupied space. The objective of the work has been to determine the probability of finding archaeological evidence here and, if so, its extent, nature, integrity and significance. The report provides recommendations for its management during the course of redevelopment and adaptive re-use.

#### 1.2 The History

The study area is part of the Aboriginal tribal grounds of the Cadigal people. No specific evidence has been found to associate Aboriginal people with this site. Their landscape would have been characterised by tall stands of Eucalypts, Angophoras and Ironbarks. This was supported in deep deposits of clay. This resource was exploited early in the settlement for brick and pottery making and gave the area its name of Brickfield Hill. It is possible that the study area was the site of small huts or activities associated with this industry.

A wheelwright's establishment had been formed on part of the study area by c.1810 and by 1822 there were several small buildings as well as one within Albion Lane. Formal land grants were made in the 1830s and George Street was levelled and widened in the same period. The study area became more closely occupied for both residential and commercial purposes, except the Kent Street frontage, and Albion Place was formed around this time.

By the later part of the nineteenth century the area was a densely occupied commercial precinct. During the twentieth century this profile changed so that the principal use was related to office space. Most lately a large portion of the study area became part of an entertainment precinct.

##### 1.2.1 Albion Place/Lane

This thoroughfare was probably formed in the later 1830s. It was built on land originally granted to William Dawes and which had been partly occupied by one building by 1822. It retains its original alignment and grade.

##### 1.2.2 1-7 Albion Place

1-7 Albion Place had already been developed with a large building by 1822. By 1848 either these or newly built brick houses and other out-buildings occupied the site. These buildings were occupied as residences or mixed commercial and residential properties. The buildings that now occupy 1-7 Albion were constructed during 1876/77 as warehouses. By the turn of the century they were mainly used as places of manufacture. There appears to have been little change made to these buildings during the later part of the nineteenth century. Some alterations were made to the buildings in the twentieth century for the various tenants and improved access and amenities. Since 1969 at least part of the group has provided some form of restaurant service.

### **1.2.3 9 Albion Place**

There is no evidence of any development here until the mid-nineteenth century. Until the early 1890s this site was occupied by several buildings and yards that probably were associated with the George Street buildings abutting it. They were separated from 1-7 Albion Place by a lane. The present building was constructed in 1893. It was attached to the side of 1-7 Albion Place and a new lane was formed separating it from the George Street buildings. Until the middle years of the twentieth century the building has largely been used as workshops and stores. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s it was occupied by a variety of tenants including several office and showroom spaces and a photographic printing and processing business. Each required alterations to suit their particular needs.

### **1.2.4 518-520 Kent Street**

There is little evidence of any development of this site until 1870. It was then occupied by three, two-storey brick houses with out-buildings and sheds backing onto a passage that separated the houses from the Albion Lane buildings. The houses were demolished in 1910 or, perhaps, progressively between 1910 and 1912. By 1913 they had been replaced by a three-storey office building that included a basement. It has served as a warehouse, shop, show and workrooms.

### **1.2.5 522-524 Kent Street**

There is no evidence of any development until the middle years of the nineteenth century. By 1856 a large shed had been built on part of the block. This had been removed by 1865 and the block was entirely vacant until wooden and iron-roofed stables was built there between 1867 and 1871. By 1877 it had been joined by another building, a steam bed factory. These buildings were demolished in 1891 and the site remained vacant for several years. A new five-storey building, Cresta House, was constructed on the site in 1896. A similar building was built on the back of the block. Both were mainly used as storehouses. By the mid-1920s the two separate buildings were joined to form one structure. During the mid-later years of the twentieth century the building was used by a variety of trades and offices including printers, men's and boys' manufacturers. During the 1980s the building was extensively remodelled; all that now remains of the former Cresta House is its façade.

### **1.2.6 536-534 Kent Street**

This land was part of a wheelwright's establishment during the 1810s but was vacant by 1822. It may have been developed by the 1840s for residential purposes. By the mid-1850s it was occupied by several small houses with out-buildings and a variety of weatherboard buildings arranged around an open yard. The entire group was demolished between 1882 and 1884 to make way for the construction of an arcade that ran from George to Kent Street. This was demolished in 1913/14 or a short time later. By 1926 the site had been developed with several factory flats with a yard separating these from the George Street buildings. In the 1940s the building on Kent Street was considered to be part of the showrooms, shops and offices that occupied the land between George and Kent Street. The building was substantially damaged by fire in c. 1943 and was probably little used after that time. It was demolished in 1973 to make way for the cinema centre.

### **1.2.7 531-535 George Street**

There is no evidence of occupation here until the mid-1850s although the buildings were probably constructed during the 1830s or 1840s. They comprised a hotel at the corner of George Street and Albion Place and a row of terrace shops next to it. All had

out-buildings behind, some occupying part of the present 9 Albion Place site. These buildings were continuously occupied until their demolition in 1891. The present building appears to have been constructed soon after, certainly by 1893. The building has been refitted on many occasions to suit its various tenants which have included a milk bar, offices, clothing manufacturer and public entertainment venues as well as providing offices for some time for the BWU.

#### **1.2.8 537-543 George Street**

This land was part of an 1810s wheelwright's establishment. There were buildings here in 1822 set well back from the street frontage. By 1856 the site was occupied by three large, two-storey brick terraces with brick out-buildings. These or similar buildings remained on the site until the 1920s. In 1923 plans were lodged for a new building to be known as Roma House. It was constructed soon after and has been refitted many times.

#### **1.2.9 545-549 George Street**

This land part of a wheelwrights' establishment of the 1810s. There are buildings shown on this land, set well back from the street frontage, in 1822. The few buildings that did occupy this site at that time had been replaced by the mid-1850s. By then the land was occupied by approximately twelve mixed commercial/residential properties and one house with out-buildings and yards. By 1885 all except one large brick terrace had been demolished as had all the buildings in the centre of the site through to Kent Street. In their place was built a commercial arcade that ran through from George Street to Kent Street. The arcade was demolished in 1913/14. In its place was constructed a multi-storey retail complex known as Binnies Chambers. By 1943 this and buildings behind and to one side were all linked and used by Bryants Furniture Warehouse. The entire building was demolished in 1974 and the Village Cinema Complex was built in its place.

#### **1.2.10 549 – 551 George Street**

In 1822 this site was partly occupied by a building set well back from the street frontage. This had been replaced by two commercial terraces by the mid-1850s. These buildings were demolished in 1882 and replaced by similar scale terrace shops. These buildings were probably demolished in c. 1913/14 at the same time that the Central Arcade was removed from the site. This site was then redeveloped with a seven storey building that had a bulk store behind it. This was the business premises of Bryants' Furniture Warehouse. By the 1940s the company had taken over all of the buildings adjoining it to the north. It was demolished to make way for the Village Cinema Complex which was completed in 1976.

### **1.3 The Archaeological Resource**

The archaeological profile is likely to contain some or all of the following:

- Intact evidence of the pre-existing environment in the form of residual soils and micro-flora. Evidence of introduced species through the impact of European occupation, weed growth on neglected or disused land and pollens distributed from passing traffic.
- There is no direct evidence for the existence of eighteenth century huts or early brick-making activities on this site, however, its location would be compatible with these activities. If archaeological evidence of this type is contained within the site it would be at great depth, is probably confined to alterations or additions to the soil

profile (evidence for clay excavation, post holes etc) and it is likely to be greatly disturbed through the impact of subsequent works.

- It is impossible to evaluate the probability of locating evidence of Bowman's wheelwrights' establishment due to the lack of information with respect to its extent and nature.
- Any intact evidence of the buildings shown on the 1822 survey would be found at depth in the centre of the site under Albion Lane, 9 Albion Place or Roma House.
- Some evidence of mid-nineteenth century buildings, yards and deposits is likely to be preserved under and around most of the nineteenth century buildings (1-7 Albion Place, 9 Albion Place and Taito House) and Albion Lane and the alleys off it and, to a lesser extent, the early twentieth century works (Roma House, 518-20 Kent Street). This may encompass building foundations (probably greatly disturbed) and particularly, deeper features such as wells, cisterns and cess pits. Portable relics may also be unearthed in association with some of these features. Artefacts may also be encountered in fill as introduced material.
- It is unlikely that any archaeological evidence survives in the area of the Village Cinema Centre or Cresta House.
- Deep levels of accumulated and introduced fill are expected over most parts of the site.

#### **1.4 Cultural Significance**

The historical associations of this site probably begin with the earliest European settlement in the district during the later years of the eighteenth century. From then to the present day it has been a busy and continuously occupied commercial precinct. Initially on the fringe of settlement it evolved as part of a well-known and very busy part of Sydney described as "bazaar" – like in the later part of the nineteenth century. The buildings within the study area illustrate this later nineteenth and twentieth century history. Archaeological evidence contained within this site would provide substance for the eighteenth and early-mid nineteenth century history that, at this time, is only known from several surveys and official records. It could provide greater evidence of the occupants and activities associated with this place. Any evidence of eighteenth century activity in this area would be rare. However, archaeological evidence contained within this site is likely to be disturbed and fragmentary and, thus, compromised in its ability to address these issues. The research value of this site is assessed to have medium or middle level cultural significance.

#### **1.5 The Development**

The proposed redevelopment of the site entails:

- Demolition of Roma House and excavation beneath this site
- Demolition of 9 Albion Place and the construction of new building adjoining 1-7 Albion Place, an entrance foyer through to the new commercial building behind and a basement retail area. This requires comprehensive excavation beneath this site and the alley adjoining it
- Retention and refurbishment of Taito House

- Retention and refurbishment of 1-7 Albion Place. Some excavation required behind these buildings to create a paved courtyard
- Retention and refurbishment of 518-520 Kent street
- Excavation over area of Cresta House and the Village Cinema site and the construction of the new building with multiple levels of below-ground car-parking.
- Retention of Cresta House façade.

## **1.6 Impact Assessment**

The excavation required by the new development is likely to reveal and disturb archaeological evidence. In most cases this resource is likely to have already been impacted upon to varying degrees by past work. Deeply excavated features such as wells or cess-pits are likely to survive with a greater degree of integrity. It is impossible to identify specific sites or places that are more likely to contain these or any other relics. The extent of disturbance and fragmentation caused by earlier works will only become apparent when the new work commences on site.

## **1.7 Management**

The owners/managers of the site will need to apply for an Excavation Permit from the Heritage Council of NSW. The permit should describe a strategy of monitoring and recording during bulk excavation. Provision could be made for some early sample trenching in the area of the courtyard for 1-7 Albion Place and 9 Albion Place to test the profile. Any artefacts retrieved from the site will need to be curated and stored in a long term repository along with copies of the final report.

The identification at any time during the excavation of evidence of Aboriginal occupation will require notification to be made to the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The relics must be made safe and retained in situ until advice for their proper management is provided by the NPWS.

## SECTION 2.0

### THE INVESTIGATION

#### 2.1 Context

This report provides an archaeological assessment of land and buildings within the Sydney CBD that are to be the subject of redevelopment and refurbishment. The excavation associated with this work may entail the removal of archaeological relics. This document has been written to provide information and analysis that will determine the necessity or otherwise for an excavation permit application under Section 140 of the Heritage Act of NSW.

#### 2.2 The Study Area and Subject

The subject of this investigation, the "study area", is a portion of the land contained within the block bound by Kent, George, Bathurst and Liverpool Streets, Sydney. The street addresses for the study area are 1-9 Albion Place (which is the northern boundary of the study area), 531-551 George Street (which defines the eastern boundary) and 518-536 Kent Street (the western boundary). To the south of the study area are commercial buildings with their frontages to Liverpool Street.

This site is located in the Parish of St Andrew, County of Cumberland and is within the Local Government area of the City of Sydney.

The study area is occupied by commercial buildings. These range in date from the second half of the nineteenth century to the later twentieth century. There is very little unoccupied land within this site primarily small courtyards or light-wells and alleys or passages between buildings.

This report broadly encompasses the European "heritage" values of the study area with respect to a possible archaeological resource. Heritage values are understood to mean the appreciation and value placed upon the resource by contemporary society in terms of the criteria expressed in the Burra Charter and formalised by the Heritage Office of NSW. Archaeological evidence, "relics", is defined by the Heritage Act of NSW to be physical evidence (structures, features, soils, deposits and portable artefacts) that provide evidence of the development of NSW, of non-Aboriginal origin and fifty or more years in age. Aboriginal relics are provided protection by the National Parks and Wildlife Act of NSW.

#### 2.3 Status of the Site

Several allotments contained within the study area have been classified in the *Archaeological Zoning Plan for Central Sydney*<sup>1</sup>. The categories of assessment are as follows:

1-7 Albion Place: AAP  
531-535 George Street: AAP  
518-520 Kent Street: AAP-DSF

9 Albion Place: AAP  
537 - 543 George Street: AAP-DSF  
522-524 Kent Street: AAP-DSF

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<sup>1</sup> Lavelle and Mider, *The Archaeological Zoning Plan for Central Sydney*, 1992.

This category, "AAP", is defined as "an area of high archaeological potential due to limited physical disturbance"<sup>2</sup>. This means that the assessors considered this site to almost certainly contain intact archaeological evidence.

The category "AAP-DSF" is defined as one "of some archaeological potential where the most recent building development would have significantly disturbed or destroyed shallow sub-surface remains but where there still exists the potential for deeper sub-surface features (such as) wells, cisterns, former watercourses and their associated historic land fill, drains, sewers and other services"<sup>3</sup>.

The Zoning Plan recommends the preparation of a site specific assessment in these cases to more accurately define the nature and integrity of archaeological evidence. This report fulfils that recommendation.

This site has been the subject of historical analysis in 1998<sup>4</sup>. This material forms the basis of this assessment which is the first archaeological assessment prepared for the site. It has not been the subject of any physical investigation. Conservation plans are being prepared for several buildings within the study area concurrent within this report.

## 2.4 Methodology

This report has been prepared in accordance with the principles expressed by the Heritage Office of NSW in its publication "Archaeological Assessment Guidelines". It also draws on the methods and procedures presented in the NSW Heritage Manual, Historical Archaeological Sites Investigation and Conservation Guidelines and the Burra Charter.

## 2.5 Objectives and Tasks

The principal objectives of the work have been to determine the development of the built environment and landscape and, secondly, to identify whether there is an archaeological issue to be addressed prior to and/or during the work proposed for the study area. The report identifies what may be retained in the ground as an archaeological resource, the significance of that material and the most appropriate means of managing it. To this end the following tasks have been undertaken:

- primary and secondary historical research sufficient to determine the physical development of the site and its principal associations;
- site survey (visual inspection only) and an assessment of physical evidence taking into account those factors which are likely to have impacted on the retention of archaeological evidence;
- a determination of the probable archaeological profile;
- an evaluation of the cultural significance of this resource with reference to standard criteria;
- identification of management strategies;
- complete documentation of the programme to standards acceptable to Sydney City Council and the Heritage Office of NSW.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 2.

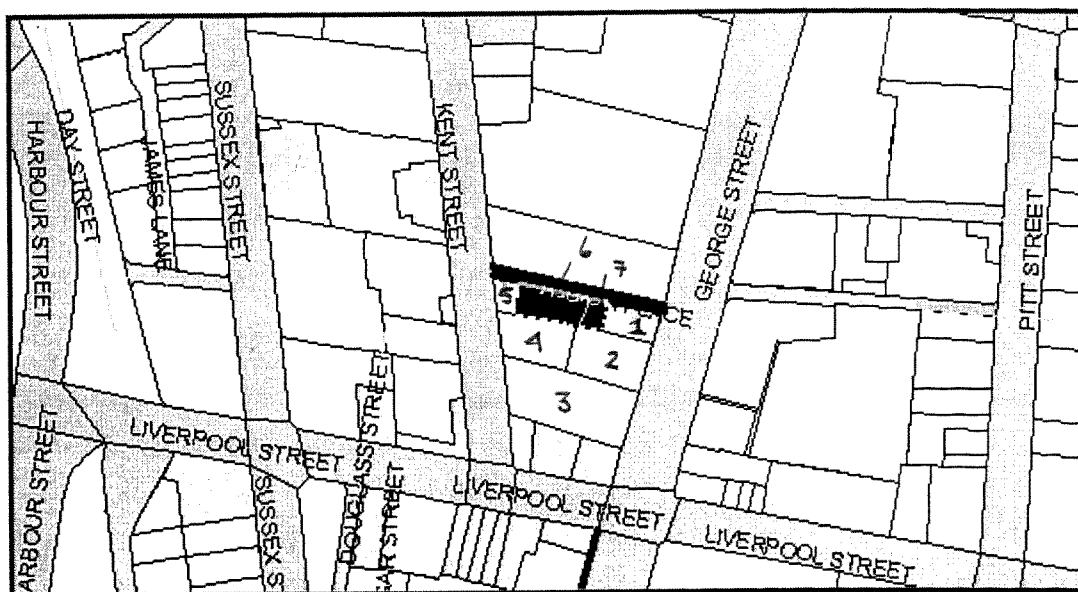
<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>4</sup> W. Thorp, Historical Analysis Albion Place.



## 2.6 Authorship, Client and Acknowledgements

This report has been written and researched by Wendy Thorp (Cultural Resources Management) to meet the requirements of Sydney City Council and the NSW Heritage Office. It has been commissioned by Centaran Holdings Pty Ltd. The work draws on both primary and secondary sources. A complete bibliography is included at Section 7.0 of this report.



1. 531-535 George Street, "Taito House"
2. 537-543 George Street, "Roma House"
3. Village Cinema
4. 522-524 Kent Street, "Cresta House"
5. 518-520 Kent Street
6. 1-7 Albion Place
7. 9 Albion Place

Location of the study area

## **SECTION 3.0**

### **HISTORICAL PROFILE**

The study area occupies land that was formally granted for European occupation in the early 1830s but has probably been occupied, at least in part, from a much earlier period. Throughout most of the nineteenth century it was occupied by both residential and commercial premises. From the later part of the nineteenth century this site had been devoted only to commercial occupation, a mixture of offices, small shops and manufactories as well as some warehousing.

This section presents evidence derived from both primary and secondary archival sources. It is used to describe the evolution and occupation of the study area and its principal associations. This narrative provides the basis for assessing what may be retained in the ground as archaeological evidence of that development as well as providing a context for determining the significance of this resource.

The evidence is presented in sections that provide a general assessment of the character of this place and of each allotment within it. These sections are:

- The Pre-Settlement Environment and Aboriginal Occupation
- European Grants and Urban Development
- 1-7 Albion Place
- 9 Albion Place
- 518 – 520 Kent Street
- 522 – 524 Kent Street
- 526 – 536 Kent Street
- 531 – 535 George Street
- 537 – 543 George Street
- 545 – 549 George Street
- 549 – 551 George Street

### 3.1 The Pre-Settlement Environment and Aboriginal Occupation

The original occupants of the study area and its environs are likely to have been members of the Aboriginal tribal family of the Cadigal belonging to the larger Guringai group<sup>5</sup>. In 1789 a severe disease, most likely small pox, killed at least fifty per cent of Kooris living in the vicinity of the settlement at Sydney Cove. The impact of this disaster was to dislocate or destroy much of the traditional life of those who survived the epidemic. Aboriginal people moved away from the main town for several years and less settled areas like Ultimo appear to have provided a refuge. It is very likely that the study area was occupied or intermittently visited by Aboriginal people in the pre-settlement period and possibly afterwards although no specific evidence has been found to associate Aboriginal people with this site.

The study area is located at what was once the intersection of two environmental systems. Extending to just north of Liverpool Street were the Hawkesbury Sandstone Slopes. These supported a wood-land of *Eucalyptus pilularis*, *Eucalyptus gummifera*, *Eucalyptus piperita* and *Angophora costata*. Adjoining this system was the eastern limit of the Turpentine ironbark forest<sup>6</sup>.

In this area, later named Brickfield Hill, were the deep deposits of clay used to provide raw materials for the early brick and pottery works of the colony. The development of the area for the Brickfield settlers, the exploitation of raw materials for their industry and for building supplies and the location of the site so near to the main settlement led to early and heavy impacts upon the pre-existing landscape. A painting completed in 1796 by Edward Dayes of the Brickfield Hill area shows an unmistakable Angophora together with a few stumps of Eucalyptus trees. Already, in less than ten years of settlement, the forests which had covered this area had been removed leaving only a few dying remnants<sup>7</sup>.

This painting also shows the steep incline that once characterised George Street from the lower reaches near the present Central Station to the area of St Andrews Cathedral. Later this would be described as difficult and dangerous to ascend<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Ann Ross, "Tribal and Linguistic Boundaries: A Reassessment of the Evidence", *Sydney Before Macquarie A Difficult Infant*, 42-53

<sup>6</sup> Benson and Howell, *Taken for Granted the Bushland of Sydney and Its Suburbs*, 42.

<sup>7</sup> Edward Dayes, *View of Brickfield Hill 1796*. Tim McComack, *First Views of Australia*, 81.

<sup>8</sup> James Maclehole, *Strangers Guide to NSW 1839*, 69.

## 3.2 European Grants and Urban Development

### 3.2.1 First Settlement

When Sydney was first settled by Europeans the cove was the focus of occupation. The study area, on the slope of the steep hill leading out of Sydney to the second settlement at Parramatta, was well beyond the centre of the town. This was the area of the Brickfields, that small industrial settlement on the fringe of the town where the colony's potteries and brick kilns were first established to take advantage of the plentiful supplies of timber and clay that occurred here. There is no specific evidence to show that the study area may have been part of the Brickfields industrial activity but its proximity to known sites would indicate the potential for this association. This could encompass evidence of excavation for brick-clay or aspects of the industry such as puddling areas or kilns.

Neither Lesueur's plan of Sydney in 1802<sup>9</sup> or Meehan's plan of 1807<sup>10</sup> show any improvements within the study area. This might not accurately reflect its circumstances. Particularly on the George Street frontage, along the main road in the colony, it is likely that some allotments had been formed and huts built as both home and workplace. Dayes 1796 view of George Street in approximately this area certainly indicates small huts within the close environs of the study area. Certainly the much later "View of Sydney Taken from Grose's Farm" painted by Joseph Lycett in 1819 shows a well developed line of small buildings flanking the main road from Sydney. It is less likely that Kent Street was anywhere near so well developed; even much later in the century it was described as a back street.

By the period of 1810 – 1820 George Street in this area had become the preserve of scattered small businesses and an occasional house. The block bound by Kent, Liverpool, George and Bathurst Streets was described at that time from the vantage point of the George Street frontage:

*"...starting from Bathurst Street was another manufactory, though a small one – that of clay pipes by a Mr Clewitt. Next to this and running about half way to Liverpool Street was one block in which stood a small cottage surrounded by a fine fruit garden, and a painter's named Noble. At the back of this place was a large bakehouse and granary which served two purposes, being used both in connection with baking and as a theatre. Many were the blood and thunder tragedies enacted there with the price of admission only a dump cut from a holey dollar. Just beyond this was Mr Bowman's large wheelwright's establishment and on the corner, a blacksmith named Wilkinson"*<sup>11</sup>.

The study area would perhaps have encompassed some of the grounds associated with the garden and small cottage and most certainly Bowman's establishment. This description is also valuable for establishing that Albion Place (Street or Lane which names have all been applied to this thoroughfare) did not, at that time, exist within the block. The sparsity of settlement on this block is reflected in plans of Sydney in the early 1820s. Harper's plan of the city in 1822 does show buildings in the centre of each of the allotments that are now included within the study area including a long, narrow building that occupied part of the centre of what is now Albion Lane<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> *Plan de la Ville de Sydney 1802*. Kelly and Croker, *Sydney Takes Shape*, 10.

<sup>10</sup> James Meehan, *Plan of the Town of Sydney in NSW 1807* in Kelly and Croker, *Sydney Takes Shape*, 16

<sup>11</sup> Edward West Marriott, *The Memoirs of Obed West*, 17.

<sup>12</sup> *Harper's Plan of Sydney 1822*: SAONSW AO Map SZ 435



Edward Dayes: *George Street on Brickfield Hill*, 1796.

This shows the street at approximately the Bathurst Street intersection viewed to the west. Some of the huts shown may have been within the study area.

(Source: ML SPF Sydney Streets – George Street)

### 3.2.2 Land Grants

By 1831 the study area was divided between three principal grantees. The lane occupied land that was part of a fourth grant. This is likely to be the formalisation of circumstances that had existed for some time before. For example, one of the owners, William Bowman, is seen to be in occupation for at least ten years before his formal grant. The date of the grants reflects an administrative initiative to bring order to the chaotic and often unrecorded system of land transactions that had characterised most of the early settlement years. Pressured to regularise this situation the Governor caused the city to be divided into sections and allotments and the owners of each, who could provide proof of ownership, were recorded at the time. The study area was included in Section 12 of the city.

The thoroughfare of Albion Place was formed from land that marked the southern boundary of a grant originally made to William Dawes but, by 1831, was in the hands of the executors of Mrs. How<sup>13</sup>. The lane was formed after the grant was awarded to Dawes, probably in the later 1830s or 1840s. Prior to its formation Dawes had constructed at least one building on his land. This structure in part occupied the central part of the present-day lane. The sites now occupied by Taito House and Roma House on George Street, running through to Kent Street and Cresta House and the warehouse at 518 Kent Street along with the sites of the Albion Place buildings were all included within a grant made to William Bowman. The Village Cinema site is primarily contained within the Bowman grant but it also contains a small, truncated triangular slice on George Street which was owned by Catherine Mitchell<sup>14</sup>.

An undated subdivision plan, most likely of the 1830s or 1840s, shows part of the study area (the Albion Place land and the George and Kent Street frontages abutting it) divided into several allotments<sup>15</sup>. It is most likely that this shows the first subdivision of the 1830s land grants. If the plan can be dated to this period it would show that the development of the study area was consistent with the general trend of real estate development in Sydney. This experienced a massive boom up to the recession of the 1840s. It was characterised by a massive increase in building stock which was erected on the smaller allotments created out of the sub-divided grants.

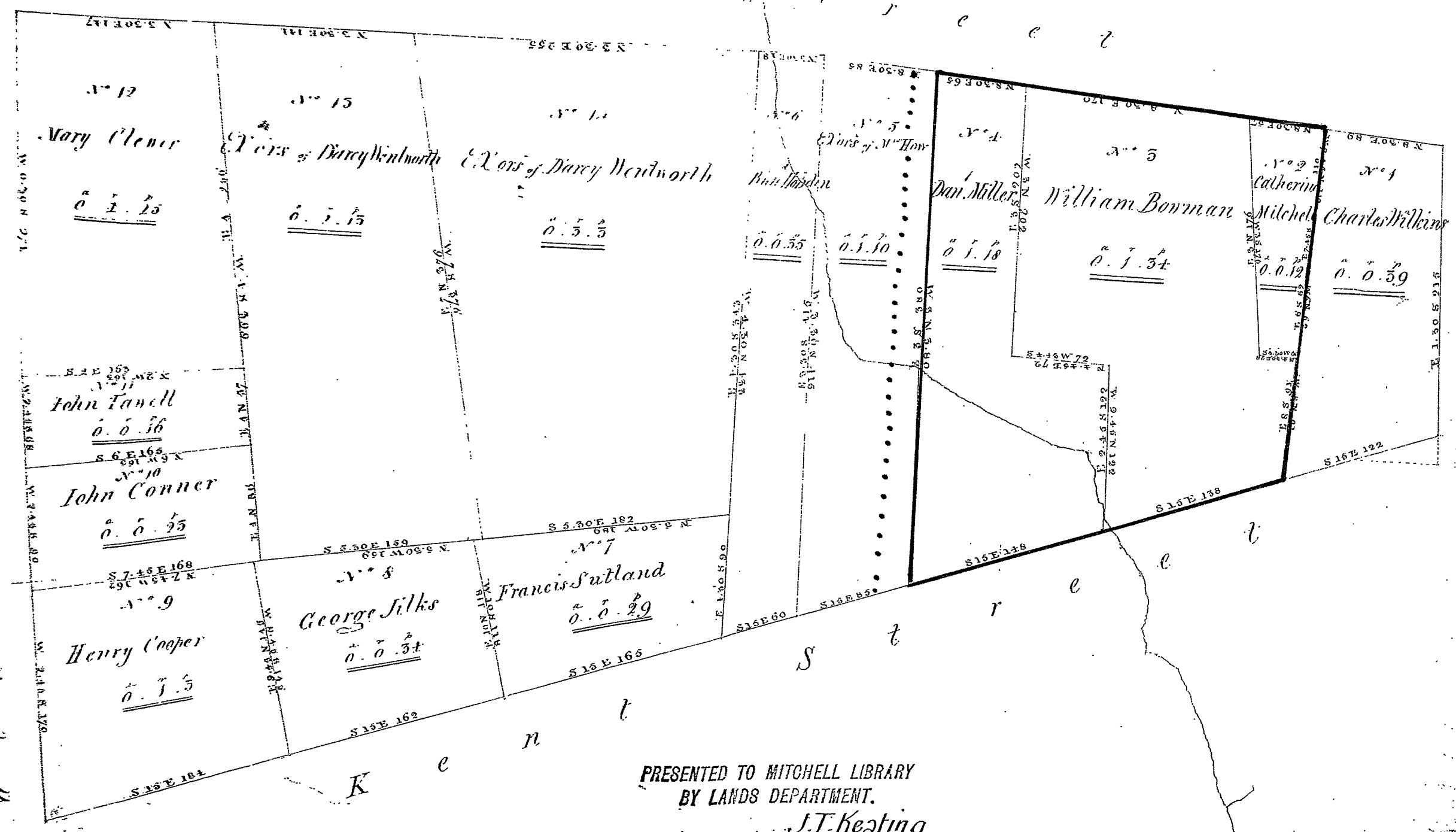
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<sup>13</sup> Ambrose Hallen, *Section 12 City of Sydney 1831*. SAONSW [AO Map 5403](#)

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Untitled subdivision plan ML SP 881.132/2

NLD S.10. 684



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PO MAP NO. 5402

Section 12 of the City of Sydney, 1831

The study area is shown encompassing the grants of Miller, Bowman and Mitchell and the line of Albion Lane (created several years after this plan was drawn) is shown as a dotted line.  
(Source: SAONSW AO Map 5402)

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### 3.2.3 George Street Redevelopment and Mid-century Profile

During the later 1830s the steep incline of George Street, then almost impossible to bring wheeled vehicles up or down, was improved by a massive public works programme. This entailed cutting back the top of the hill and removing the spoil to the bottom thus reducing and levelling the hill<sup>16</sup>. This certainly encouraged more development along the more accessible George Street frontage. A comparison between street plans of 1831 and 1836 shows the almost vacant frontage to be fully occupied by the later date<sup>17</sup>. Kent Street, however, remained a backwater. The houses that existed here were mostly humble wooden dwellings<sup>18</sup>. The 1836 plan of the town shows the Kent Street frontage within the study area to be undeveloped at that time.

When evidence from Council Rate Books becomes available in the 1840s the majority of the study area was developed including the formation of Albion Place and the construction of buildings along it. Only the Kent Street frontage remained sparsely settled at that time as well as large areas of yard space in the centre of the block. By the mid-1860s only the land at 522-524 Kent Street remained largely vacant.

### 3.2.4 The Later Nineteenth Century Townscape

By the 1880s this block, like the rest of Sydney, was densely occupied and more buildings were added as a result of another building boom. The earliest indicator of the big changes to come, largely initiated by the wealth and soaring population attendant on the gold rushes, was the rebuilding of the Albion Place group in the later 1870s.

The character of the area had been firmly established by the early 1880s. In 1882 it was said of this part of George Street that,

*"Brickfield Hill is almost like a bazaar; there is hardly an article in common or occasional use that cannot be purchased. In this respect it is distinct from many other parts of Sydney where one class of retailers nearly exclude all others"*<sup>19</sup>.

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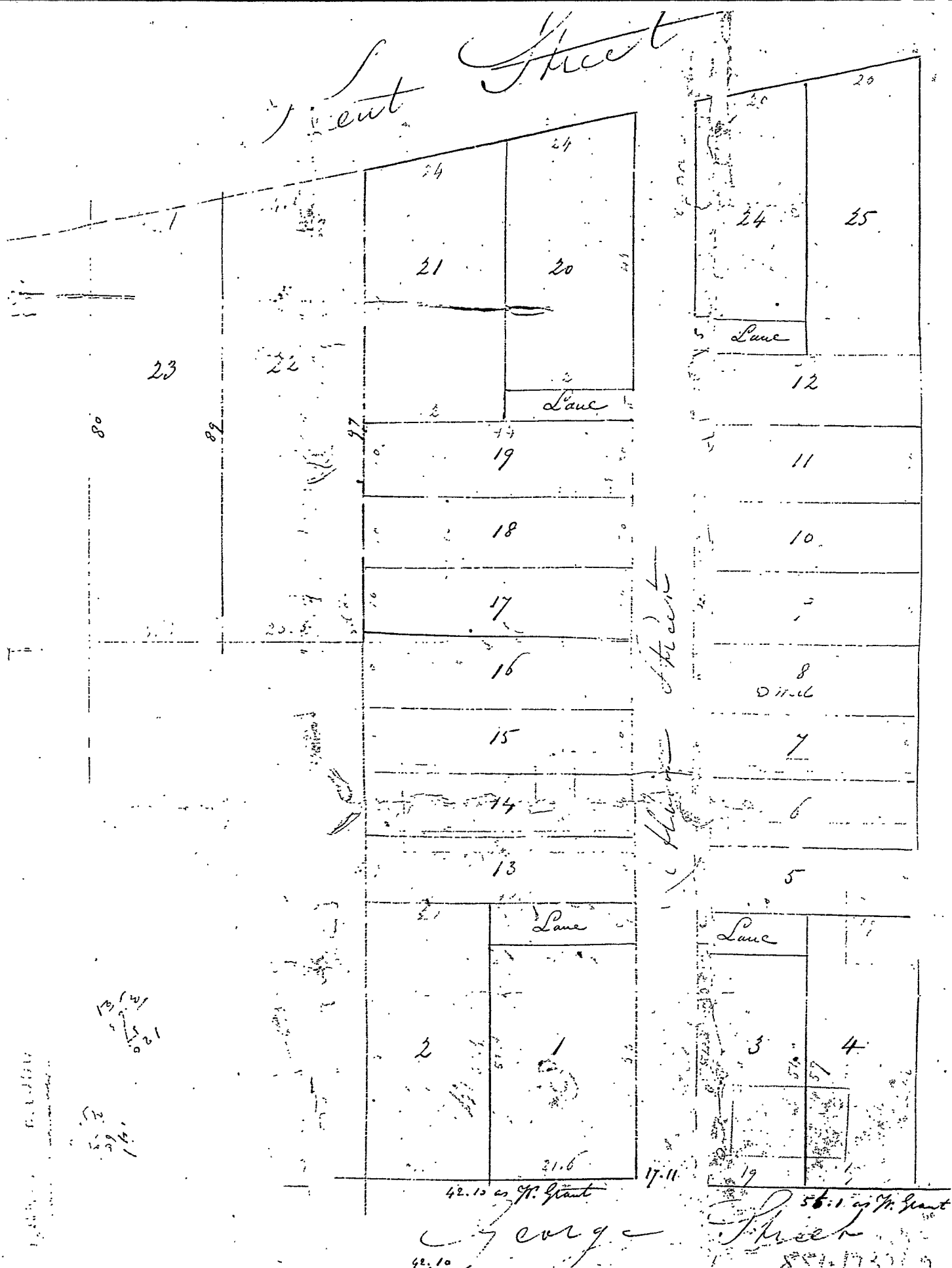
<sup>16</sup> James Maclehole, *Picture of Sydney and Strangers Guide to NSW 1839*, 69.

<sup>17</sup> Hoddle, Lamer and Mitchell, *Map of the Town of Sydney 1831* and J. Basire, *Plan of Sydney with Pyrmont, 1836* in Kelly and Croker, *Sydney Takes Shape*, 21 - 23

<sup>18</sup> James Maclehole, *Op Cit.*, 64

<sup>19</sup> Gibbs and Shallard and Co., *An Illustrated Guide to Sydney in 1882*, 33.





Undated subdivision plan of Albion Lane and the George and Kent Street frontages abutting it. This may date from the later 1830s or 1840s and show the first division of the old land grants.  
(Source: ML Subdivision Plans SP 881.1732/2)

### **3.2.5 The Occupants**

From the early decades of the nineteenth century the land encompassed by the study area has been home to a large number of people and families but it has been owned by a very few people. Most of the street frontages have been in the possession of only one or two people. For example, almost all of Albion Place has been the property of a single person or a single company from the first days of recorded land transactions. The land on both George and Kent Streets followed a similar pattern. At the very least one person would have been the owner of two or three dwellings, for example, the group of three terraces at 518-520 Kent Street.

George Street was primarily a commercial street frontage although many of the small shops also served as houses for the shop-keepers. Rate Books occasionally record the presence of kitchens behind the George Street shops as well as stables and sheds. Kent Street, at the same time, was described as a "bye-street" and most of its private residential buildings were of "mean appearance"<sup>20</sup>. This street frontage remained predominantly residential until the end of the nineteenth century.

### **3.2.6 A Change in Character**

The character of the area began to change towards the end of the nineteenth century and in the early years of the twentieth century. Several of the smaller, earlier nineteenth century commercial/residential premises were replaced by multi-storey offices or emporia. Taito House appears to have been built in 1893 and Cresta House in 1896. Central Arcade, which ran from George Street to Kent Street in the southern part of the study area, was built in this period. Several more buildings of this type were erected in the early decades of the new century, for example, the warehouse at 518 Kent Street was built in 1913 and Roma House was completed in 1926.

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<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, 45

### 3.3 1-7 Albion Place

#### 3.3.1 Creation of the Lane

Albion Place is formed from land that was first awarded in a grant to William Dawes<sup>21</sup>. Prior to the formation of the lane the land, which formed the southern boundary of this property, had been partly developed; a long narrow building occupied the centre of the grant with part of the structure standing in what is now approximately the centre of the lane<sup>22</sup>. The lane is likely to have been built in the later 1830s or early 1840s. A map of the town in 1836 records buildings along what may be a lane at this location<sup>23</sup>. It is shown on an undated subdivision plan that appears to show the first or an early division of the land immediately adjacent to the lane into allotments. The latter generally survived for most of the nineteenth century<sup>24</sup>.

#### 3.3.2 Residential Development

1-7 Albion Place occupied land first granted to Daniel Miller in October 1831<sup>25</sup>. Prior to the formal grant the land in this area, before the creation of the lane, was shown in 1822 to have been occupied by a long, narrow L-shaped building with another smaller building behind<sup>26</sup>. The function of these buildings is unknown. In January 1835 Miller sold his land to Jean Baptist Charles Landrie Dictus Tattorini<sup>27</sup>. Part of the Miller grant (being the Albion Place land) was sold by Tattorini to John Jones in February 1835<sup>28</sup>. Jones mortgaged his land to Samuel Terry in September of that year. Jones died and his wife remarried Mark Blanchard

By 1848 this site was occupied by ten, two-storey houses and one single-storey brick house. All were brick-built with shingle roofs. Four had workshops detached in the yard that ran behind the buildings. All were owned by Mark Blanchard<sup>29</sup>. These may have been the buildings shown on Harper's 1822 survey or may have been newly built by Blanchard on his wife's property.

By 1856 the number of structures had been reduced to nine. The three easternmost of the group were recorded as being smaller than the rest. Behind them, and separated by a yard, were the workshops recorded on the city survey of that date as being of brick or weatherboard and brick construction. A few minor sheds or out-houses occupied the south-eastern corner of the allotment. On the western side the group lay exposed to Kent Street; this intersection of Albion Place and Kent Street was at that time unoccupied. The plan labels the group as "Blanchards"<sup>30</sup>.

In fact the owner of the group had changed by this date. In 1855 Numbers 1-9 Albion Lane (No. 9 not being the present-day building of this number) were all owned by a Mr Greer. They were still described as two-storey brick and shingled houses<sup>31</sup>. By 1861 they were in the possession of Robert Buning who retained ownership into the 1870s<sup>32</sup>. By

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<sup>21</sup> Section 12 City of Sydney: SAONSW AO Map 5403.

<sup>22</sup> Harpers Plan of Sydney 1822: SAONSW AO Map SZ435

<sup>23</sup> Map of the Town of Sydney 1836: ML M2811.16/1836/1

<sup>24</sup> Untitled subdivision plan, Albion Place and environs: ML SP 881.1732/2

<sup>25</sup> LTO Primary Application 10642

<sup>26</sup> Harpers Plan of Sydney 1822: SAONSW AO Map SZ435

<sup>27</sup> LTO Old Systems Book 133 Folio 116

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment Book: Albion Place 1848

<sup>30</sup> City of Sydney Survey 1856: Sydney City Archives CRS 502/17

<sup>31</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment Book: Albion Place 1856.

<sup>32</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment Books: Albion Place 1861 - 1870

1871 Bunting had added, at the end of the group after No. 9, a single storey timber house with an iron roof<sup>33</sup>.

For most of the time these buildings were occupied as residences or mixed commercial and residential properties. In 1861, for example, a blacksmith, boot-maker, dealer and others similar occupied these buildings<sup>34</sup>.

By the later 1860s it is possible that the condition of the at least thirty year old houses was such that they were uninhabitable. They are listed as completely vacant for both 1867 and 1868. From 1869 to 1871 only one occupant, N. and J. Crocker Wholesale Grocers, was listed as the tenant of this row. By 1873, though, they had reverted to residential occupation with tenants including an engineer and mariner. Several houses were vacant<sup>35</sup>.

The property was sold in November 1872 to William Long<sup>36</sup>. In May 1873 Long sold it to Joseph Shipwood<sup>37</sup>. In March 1874 Shipwood sold this site to Joseph Lawlor<sup>38</sup>.

### 3.3.3 Redevelopment

Within two years of purchasing this property Lawlor commenced work on redeveloping the site. There is no listing for any property at this address in 1876. By 1877/78 the buildings that now occupy 1-7 Albion Place had been constructed there and appear in Council Rate Books. The construction date for these buildings, therefore, is most likely to be 1876/77. They were first numbered 1,2,3 and 4 Albion Place<sup>39</sup> and were described as three-storey brick stores with shingled roofs. The buildings had their frontage to Albion Place and a shed ran along the full length of the southern boundary of the property.

The first occupants of the new buildings were Myers and Solomon in Numbers 1 and 2, George Risley in Number 3 and McLleland and Roach, a grocery firm, in Number 4<sup>40</sup>. By 1880 Lawlor occupied one of his own buildings (No.3). This he used as a place of business for his bedding and upholstery business. His bedding factory was on land he owned on the Kent Street frontage at 522-524. At that time No. 1 Albion Place (the building numbers had been changed to odd numerals in the intervening years) was occupied by McLleland and Roach (stores) and No. 7 by the Davenport Brothers, boot and shoe manufacturers<sup>41</sup>. By this time also, the land on Kent Street at its intersection with Albion Lane had been developed and the Albion Place group were separated from it by a small lane.

Throughout the 1880s the buildings were occupied principally by companies which dealt in stores and there appears to have been a certain rate of vacancy. In 1891, for example, only Numbers 5 and 7 were occupied by the Griffiths Brothers<sup>42</sup>. The owner, however, did change in this period. Lawlor sold the property in 1882 to Sir Joseph George Long

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<sup>33</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment Book: Albion Place 1871.

<sup>34</sup> Sands Directory: Albion Place, 1861

<sup>35</sup> Ibid: 1867 - 1873

<sup>36</sup> LTO Primary Application 10642

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment Book: Albion Place 1876 - 1878

<sup>40</sup> Ibid: 1877-1879

<sup>41</sup> Percy Dove, New and Complete Street Directory, Sydney 1880: Block 93

<sup>42</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment: Albion Lane 1891

James<sup>43</sup>. In March 1898 James sold the Albion Place buildings to David Monk<sup>44</sup>. The Monk family were to remain the owners until 1972<sup>45</sup>.

There appears to have been little change made to these buildings during the later part of the nineteenth century. Surveys in both 1887 and 1895 show no apparent change to the plan and rate assessments only record the replacement of the shingle roof with iron later in the century.

### 3.3.4 Twentieth Century Manufacturers

By the turn of the century the predominant use of the buildings had changed from storage or warehouses to factories or places of manufacture. In 1902 the group of buildings at 1-7 Albion Place was described as "workshops"<sup>46</sup>.

The longest term of tenancy was held by Sing War and Son, Cabinet Makers. The company signed a lease for apparently the whole row of 1-7 Albion Place in 1896<sup>47</sup>. This company remained there at least until 1926. The sign advertising their business is on the western side of the group. By 1926 the premises were described as those of Bassett's Welding and Manufacturing<sup>48</sup> which also occupied all of No. 1-7 Albion Place. By the 1930s the tenants included a leadlight manufacturer, the welding company, a shop fitter and wood workers<sup>49</sup>.

The change in tenants with their different needs required some alterations to the premises but the records of these works are few. In 1912 plans were lodged by Eaton and Bates for unspecified works on some part of the buildings<sup>50</sup>. In 1922 F. Steer lodged an application to build toilets at 7 Albion Place<sup>51</sup>. In 1932 the roof was reinstated over 1 Albion Place<sup>52</sup> and in 1946 stairs were added to the same building<sup>53</sup>. Partitions were added to 7 Albion Place in the following year<sup>54</sup>.

### 3.3.5 Restaurants and Commercial Occupants

In 1969 application was made to use part of the premises as a restaurant<sup>55</sup>. At least part of the group has continued to provide some form of this service to the present day.

The group was sold in 1972 for \$170,000 and some alterations were undertaken in the following year<sup>56</sup>. It was auctioned in April 1978 and passed in at \$290,000. It was sold later in the year for \$260,000. The group was again sold in August 1981 for \$540,000 and in July 1984 for \$518,000. 1-7 Albion Place was acquired with 518-520 Kent Street by Greater Union in April 1987 through purchase of the company that owned these properties<sup>57</sup>. The buildings are presently used primarily for a restaurant and commercial purposes.

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<sup>43</sup> LTO Primary Application 10642

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> Sydney Cityscope 8 May 1997

<sup>46</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment Book: Albion Place 1902

<sup>47</sup> LTO Primary Application 10642

<sup>48</sup> NSW Fire Assurance Plans Sydney Block 173: 1926

<sup>49</sup> Sands Directory: Albion Place 1932

<sup>50</sup> Sydney City Archives: Street Cards Albion Place 1912

<sup>51</sup> Sydney City Archives: Building Application 698/22

<sup>52</sup> Sydney City Archives: Building Application 273/32

<sup>53</sup> Sydney City Archives: Building Application 50/46

<sup>54</sup> Sydney City Archives: Building Application 804/47

<sup>55</sup> Sydney City Archives Development Application 200/69

<sup>56</sup> Sydney Cityscope 8 May 1997

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

### 3.4 9 Albion Place

#### 3.4.1 A Late Beginning

This land was also part of Daniel Miller's grant of 1831<sup>58</sup>. Unlike the neighbouring site of 1-7 Albion Place there is no evidence that this site was developed prior to the mid-nineteenth century. There are no structures shown on this site on Harper's survey of 1822 and there is no reference to this property in the 1848 Rate Assessment Book. It is likely, based on later evidence, that this land was initially developed as part of the rear yard of the adjoining George Street block but the Rate Books are ambiguous in this matter.

#### 3.4.2 Behind the Eagle Hotel

The earliest evidence for the development of this land is provided by the 1856 town survey. This plan shows the site to be occupied by three brick buildings. A long, narrow building faces Albion Lane and the others are behind it as well as two small yards. Between these improvements and the property on George Street was a long narrow shed. This is the site of the lane that now separates 9 Albion Place from Taito House. The principal George Street building was the Eagle Hotel. It is possible that all these buildings behind provided services such as kitchens and stables for this establishment. They are not referred to in Council Rate Assessments as a separate address in Albion Place. There appears to have been no change to these buildings at least until 1865 when they are shown in the same configuration on the city survey of that date. The association of the improvements on 9 Albion Place with the development of the property on the corner of George and Albion Street is certainly confirmed in 1872 when the owner, at that time Richard Binnie, sought to bring his property under Torrens Title. His description includes the George Street premises and those of 9 Albion Place at that time collectively valued at £4260<sup>59</sup>.

#### 3.4.3 Yards and Sheds

By 1880 most of the structures had been removed from the site of 9 Albion Place. At that time it was largely occupied by a yard that opened off Albion Place. Set back on this space was a single-storey building with a narrow yard behind it. These were separated from 7 Albion Place by a narrow passage that ran between the building and the fence around the yard. There was a small bath at the end of the passage attached to the side of 7 Albion Place<sup>60</sup>. By 1887 these too had been removed from the site and it was occupied by a small building attached to 7 Albion Place, a service wing attached to one of the George Street buildings and another minor out-building. It was still separated by a passage from 1-7 Albion Place<sup>61</sup>.

#### 3.4.4 Redevelopment

The first reference to the building which presently occupies the site of 9 Albion Place is in the Council Rate Assessment of 1897. At that time the building was described as a three-storey brick and iron store. It was occupied by the Davenport Brothers and was still owned by the Binnie family. There is no reference to this building in the 1891 assessment but it is shown on an 1895 survey. The building must have been constructed between 1891 and 1895. Sands Directory listings suggest a date in 1893. In that year 529a George Street is first listed and this appears, by comparison with later directory listings, to be the building in Albion Place. This is confirmed by a Water Board survey of that year which shows the

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<sup>58</sup> LTO Primary Application 3286

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Percy Dove, *New and Improved Street and Wharf Directory for Sydney 1880*

<sup>61</sup> NSW Department of Lands, *Metropolitan Detail Series Sections 9, 11, 12: 1887*

new building super-imposed over the old buildings on this site<sup>62</sup>. The footprint of the new building encompassed the entire allotment.

Binnie owned almost all of the George Street frontage and it seems most likely that an arrangement was made by him to lease the back part of his George Street frontage at the intersection of it with Albion Place for the new enterprise. To separate it from the building that occupied that place the lane was moved from next to 7 Albion Place to the other side of the new building at 9 Albion Place.

Until the middle years of the twentieth century the building has largely been used as workshops and stores. For example, in 1926, it was the premises of the Reliance Electrical and Engineering Company<sup>63</sup>. There are few records of the changes that have been made to this building in the twentieth century. The earliest reference is to work undertaken in 1945<sup>64</sup>. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s a variety of tenants occupied this building including several office and showroom spaces and a photographic printing and processing business. Each required alterations to suit their particular needs.

The building was sold in 1979 for \$150,000 and was again sold, prior to auction, in 1985 for \$520,000. The company which purchased the building came under the control of Greater Union in 1986<sup>65</sup>.

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<sup>62</sup> Sydney Water Survey: PWD 223-1544

<sup>63</sup> NSW Fire Assurance Plans Block 173: 1926

<sup>64</sup> Sydney City Archives: Building Application 629/45

<sup>65</sup> Sydney Cityscope 8 May 1997

### 3.5 518-520 Kent Street

#### 3.5.1 Vacant Land

518-520 Kent Street also occupied part of that Crown grant made to Daniel Miller in October 1831<sup>66</sup>. There is no evidence of any development of this site prior to that date. Harper's survey of 1822 shows the land to be vacant. By 1835 the site was in the possession of Jean Baptiste Lamarnie Dictus Tattorini<sup>67</sup>. In February of that year Tattorini sold the site to John Hosking and John Terry Hughes for £500<sup>68</sup>. The title describing this transaction refers to the sale including "certain premises" which suggests that something had been built on this site. However, until the later 1860s, all city surveys and Council Rate Assessment Books describe this as "vacant land". The property changed hands at least three times during this period<sup>69</sup>. In July 1869 it was sold to James Yeend<sup>70</sup>.

#### 3.5.2 First Development - Residential

Between 1867 and 1871 three, two-storey brick houses with slate roofs were erected on this block. Their frontages were to Kent Street and they were placed at an angle to the Albion Place buildings from which they were separated by a narrow passage. The out-buildings and sheds backed onto this passage and were separated from the houses by narrow yards. The owner of the land and houses was identified in Rates to be James Yeend. This suggests that the buildings were constructed in 1869/1870 immediately after his purchase of the site. There is little evidence of any change to the buildings, except the slate roof was changed to iron, up to the period of their demolition.

Yeend remained the owner of these houses until his death in 1893<sup>71</sup>. His estate was sold to the Perpetual Trustee Company<sup>72</sup>. In 1900 the Perpetual Trustee Company sold the Kent Street properties to James Channon. They were valued at £950<sup>73</sup>.

#### 3.5.3 Redevelopment – Warehouse and Offices

The houses were demolished in 1910 or, perhaps, progressively between 1910 and 1912. By 1913 they had been replaced by a three-storey office building that included a basement. This was at first occupied by tea merchants and a saddler<sup>74</sup>. In 1926 this building served as the business premises of the Imperial Printing Company and others and was used as a shop, work and showrooms<sup>75</sup>. In this year a building application was made to Council for alterations to what was described as "the warehouse"<sup>76</sup>. During the 1950s applications were made to use the premises for a variety of purposes including the servicing of cash registers.

The building was sold in 1969 for \$30,000. At auction in 1980 it was sold for \$250,000 and again for the same price in 1981<sup>77</sup>. During the early 1980s several applications were made to Council for refurbishment of the place for a variety of offices and a restaurant. A development application was submitted in 1984 for the use of the basement and ground

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<sup>66</sup> LTO Primary Application 11463

<sup>67</sup> LTO Old Systems Book H Folio 144b

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> LTO Old Systems Book 90 Folio 706, Book 105 Folio 857 and Book 16 Folio 232

<sup>70</sup> LTO Old Systems Book 116 Folio 232

<sup>71</sup> LTO Primary Application 11463

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> LTO Old Systems Book 660 Folio 862

<sup>74</sup> Sands Directory: Kent Street 1910-1913

<sup>75</sup> NSW Fire Assurance Plans Block 173: 1926

<sup>76</sup> Sydney City Archives: Building Application 255/26

<sup>77</sup> Sydney Cityscope 8 May 1997



floor as an office. 518-520 Kent Street was purchased with 1-7 Albion Place in 1987 by Greater Union. It has since been extensively renovated and adapted for new uses.



*View of 518-520 Kent Street*

### 3.6 522-524 Kent Street

#### 3.6.1 Vacant Ground

This site was part of Daniel Miller's grant of 1831<sup>78</sup>. There is no evidence of any development of this site until the middle years of the nineteenth century. The 1822 survey of the city shows the land to be vacant and it appears to have remained so until c. 1856. By that year a large shed had been constructed on the site. It was set well back from the street and adjoined the southern boundary of 518-520 Kent Street. This shed had been removed by 1865 and the block was entirely vacant at that time<sup>79</sup>. Until the later 1860s Council Rate Books continue to record the site as "vacant ground".

#### 3.6.2 Stables, Stores and Factories

Between 1867 and 1871 the owner of the land, Richard Binnie, constructed on this site a single wooden and iron-roofed stables. It was unoccupied in 1871<sup>80</sup>. By 1877 the occupant, George Risely, used what was now described as a shed with a yard as "an old rag store"<sup>81</sup>. By this date, however, the stables/store had been joined by another building owned and occupied by John Lawler. He was, at that time, constructing new buildings in Albion Place.

By 1880 the old rag store had been removed from the site but Lawler's "steam bed factory" occupied a substantial part of the block. Its wall ran along the fence that separated this land from the sheds along the back of 1-7 Albion Place. It was set back from the Kent Street frontage but a small stable did occupy part of that street frontage. Several smaller sheds occupied the back of the block but the remainder was mostly yard space<sup>82</sup>. By this time Lawlor also occupied 3 Albion Place as business premises.

There is very little evidence of change to this site until 1887. Only a few of the lesser sheds had been removed by that date<sup>83</sup>. By 1891 the site was owned by James Leicester and in that year Council records state that the old building was pulled down<sup>84</sup>. The site remained completely vacant four years later<sup>85</sup>.

#### 3.6.3 Redevelopment – Cresta House

A new building, Cresta House, was constructed on the site in 1896. It was described as being a five-storey, stone and brick structure with an iron roof<sup>86</sup>. It was owned by Richard Binnie but there is no evidence of any occupant at that time. A similar five-storey building is described as being off the street at this point, presumably behind the Kent Street structure. The street directory listings for these buildings suggest that the new building next to Yeend's houses was not occupied until c. 1898 at which time it was used by Binnie as a storehouse. The other five-storey building behind was used mainly by tea merchants as a store. By the turn of the century the Kent Street building was used by carriers and by a wholesale grocer. Binnie's stores had relocated to the building behind<sup>87</sup>.

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<sup>78</sup> LTO Primary Application 7857

<sup>79</sup> Trigonometrical Survey of Sydney 1865

<sup>80</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment: Kent Street 1871

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. 1877

<sup>82</sup> Percy Dove, New and Complete Street and Wharf Directory for Sydney 1880.

<sup>83</sup> NSW Department of Lands: Metropolitan Detail Series Sections 9, 11, 12: 1887.

<sup>84</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment: Kent Street 1891

<sup>85</sup> NSW Department of Lands, Metropolitan Detail Series Sections 9, 11, 12: 1897

<sup>86</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment: Kent Street 1897

<sup>87</sup> Sands Directory: Kent Street 1890 - 1900

From 1907 to 1925 the building on Kent Street was the subject of numerous applications to Council for alterations and additions<sup>88</sup>. The outcome of these works, by the mid-1920s, appears to have been the conversion of the stores building off Kent Street to a small factory. As part of this work it seems that the two formerly separate buildings were joined to form one structure.

In 1926 the Kent Street building was described as a six-storey structure with wooden floors and stairs, columns and girders and wooden framed windows. It was at that time occupied by Pellegrini and Co. Behind this building, but joined to it with a small passage separating it from the properties on George Street, were warehouse flats<sup>89</sup>. A covered way led from Kent Street to the lane in the centre of the block. In 1935 Pellegrini submitted an application to build bridges between this building and the one at 533 George Street<sup>90</sup>. During the 1950s the building was used by a variety of trades and offices including printers, men's and boys' manufacturers.

In 1973 alterations and additions were undertaken to accommodate new offices and shops including those for the storage and wholesale of records<sup>91</sup>. The fifth floor was altered to serve as a photographic studio in 1977.

The building was traded at auction with Roma House for \$1.5 million in June 1980. In 1985 the two were purchased for \$7.5 million by Ancona Investments. In the following year an application was submitted to Council to gut and rebuild both the Kent and George Street buildings for use as cinema offices<sup>92</sup>). A building application for the work was entered in 1987. All that now remains of the former Cresta House is its façade.

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<sup>88</sup> Sydney City Archives: Street cards Kent Street 1909 - 1929

<sup>89</sup> NSW Fire Assurance Plans: 1926

<sup>90</sup> Sydney City Archives: [Building application 767/35](#)

<sup>91</sup> Sydney City Archives: [Development applications 277/d2/73, 675/d2/73](#)

<sup>92</sup> Sydney City Archives: [Building Application 4486/1407](#)

### 3.7 526-534 Kent Street

#### 3.7.1 Bowman's Land

This land was granted to William Bowman in October 1831 as part of a large allotment that had frontages to both George and Kent Streets although it followed an L-shaped alignment on the northern boundary<sup>93</sup>. Primary evidence indicates that Bowman had a substantial wheelwright's establishment on his land during the 1810s although the extent and form of the improvements are unknown. The land was vacant in 1822<sup>94</sup> and there is no evidence to suggest that this part of the Kent Street frontage was developed in any way during the 1830s. It probably had been by the 1840s for residential purposes. Bowman leased his land in 1844 to William Bruerly and again in 1846 to C. Woods. In 1851 the land was sold to J. R. Holden and he sold it almost immediately to Richard Binnie<sup>95</sup>.

#### 3.7.2 Residential Development

By the mid-1850s this land was occupied by several small houses with out-buildings and a variety of weatherboard buildings arranged around an open yard. In 1855 the houses were described as four, two-storey brick houses<sup>96</sup>. The city survey of the following year shows that these buildings were fenced off from the majority of land contained in the original grant that ran through to George Street.

The 1865 civic survey suggests that there had been considerable change to this site in the preceding years with the demolition of some structures and rebuilding of others. The rate assessments, however, suggest that there were no major changes or additions to these buildings until the later 1870s. The value of the property (which did include the improvements at the George Street frontage) in 1868 was £10,000<sup>97</sup>. Whatever the case, the entire group was demolished between 1882 and 1884 to make way for the construction of an arcade which ran from George to Kent Street<sup>98</sup>.

#### 3.7.3 The Central Arcade

The arcade is discussed in Section 3.9.3. It ran from George Street to Kent Street with shops either side of a central aisle. Directory listings for the arcade in Kent Street at this address cease in 1907. Surveys suggest that the central part of the arcade was closed off before this time leaving only a few of the shops operating at the very end of the arcade<sup>99</sup>. These appear to have been demolished in 1913/14 or a short time later<sup>100</sup>.

#### 3.7.4 Factory Flats

By 1926 the Kent Street site had been developed with several factory flats with a yard separating these from the George Street buildings. Separated by a central cart-way the northern half was seven storeys in height and the southern half was five storeys. A corridor linked the southern portion to the George Street building known as Binnie's Chambers<sup>101</sup>.

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<sup>93</sup> Ambrose Hallen, City Section 12, 1836: SAONSW AO Map 5402

<sup>94</sup> Harper's Plan of Sydney 1822: SAONSW AO Map SZ435

<sup>95</sup> LTO Primary Application 2735

<sup>96</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment: Kent Street, 1855

<sup>97</sup> LTO Primary Application 2735

<sup>98</sup> Sands Directory listings: Kent Street 1882-1886

<sup>99</sup> Sydney Water: Survey DS 575 - 7

<sup>100</sup> Sands Directory listings: Kent Street

<sup>101</sup> NSW Fire Assurance Plans Block 173: 1926

In the 1940s the building on Kent Street was considered to be part of the showrooms, shops and offices that occupied the land between George and Kent Street. The City Architect described the Kent Street building in 1943 as Block C of that group being a four-storey, saw-toothed roof building. It was also noted that the section on Kent Street was, at that time, defective as the result of a fire. The wall on Kent Street needed to be demolished due to its instability and the roof had partially caved in at this point. It was occupied by Bryants and Thompson, French polishers and sewing machine repairers and J. Sydney Horton, a lynotyper<sup>102</sup>.

The only reference to construction after this fire was a building application submitted in 1955 for "reinstatement after fire", the work to cost fifteen thousand pounds<sup>103</sup>. The date suggests that the building may have been left vacant or was little used for some time after the fire. There is no reference to further works until 1973 when Council was provided with demolition information prior to the construction of the Cinema Centre. This building was completed in 1976.



This survey of 1887 shows the extent of the Central Arcade  
(Source: NSW Dept of Lands, Metropolitan Detail Series M Ser4 811.17/1 Section 12:1887 ML)

<sup>102</sup> Sydney City Archives: City Architect and Building Surveyors Department: Inspection Report for 536-534 Kent Street.  
<sup>103</sup> Sydney City Archives: Building Application 224/55b2

### 3.8 531-535 George Street

#### 3.8.1 Unclear Origins

This land was first granted to Daniel Miller in October 1831<sup>104</sup>. The earlier history of this site is unknown; the relevant documents are not lodged with the Land Titles Office. It is known, from Harper's plan of the town, that this land was unoccupied in 1822. It is not until the mid-1850s that there is evidence for occupation. These works were probably constructed during the 1830s or 1840s.

#### 3.8.2 Commercial Development

By 1855 the land at the intersection of Albion Lane and George Street was occupied by a two-storey brick-built hotel. Next to it was a single-storey wooden shop. Both properties were owned by James McWade<sup>105</sup>. The City survey of 1856 identifies the hotel as the Eagle Hotel and, by that time, the back of this allotment was occupied by a large weatherboard building that extended over the part of the site of the present-day 9 Albion Place. Next to the hotel was a large brick-built shop, one of a row of similar shops. It had several smaller out-buildings behind it that also occupied part of the 9 Albion Place site. These properties were owned by Mark Blanchard who, for some time, had been the landlord of 1-7 Albion Place<sup>106</sup>. These buildings were still present, with some additions, in 1865<sup>107</sup>.

By 1872 the property had been purchased by Richard Binnie<sup>108</sup>. It was then valued at £4260. By 1880 the corner hotel had been superseded by Rose's chemist shop which was housed in the same old building. The shops next to it were occupied by Thompsons, a tobacconist, and a jeweller's shop<sup>109</sup>. The shops were continuously occupied by a variety of tenants until they were demolished in 1891. Rose's chemist remained there the entire time<sup>110</sup>.

#### 3.8.3 Redevelopment – Taito House

The 1895 city survey shows this site to have been redeveloped by that year<sup>111</sup>. A Sydney Water survey of 1893 shows the new building super-imposed over the old hotel and shops as well as the new building at 9 Albion Place and the lane between the two<sup>112</sup>. Despite this evidence Council rate assessments continue to describe the building on this site as a single-storey brick shop and continue to do so until the early 1900s. Unless the assessors described the wrong site (unlikely), a possible explanation for the difference between this and the building that now exists there might be found in the period when it was built; this was the middle of a severe economic recession. The owner, Richard Binnie, may have elected to construct Taito House in two or more stages with the upper floors being added after. The earliest evidence for work on this site dates from 1923 when plans were lodged for the construction of an awning<sup>113</sup>.

The new building was occupied by several small shops and businesses. Rose's Chemist even returned to its old address for some years. By 1926 the building was described as

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<sup>104</sup> LTO Primary Application 3286

<sup>105</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment: George Street 1855

<sup>106</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment: George Street 1857

<sup>107</sup> Trigonometrical Survey of Sydney 1865

<sup>108</sup> LTO Primary Application 3286

<sup>109</sup> Percy Dove, *New and Complete Street and Wharf Directory for Sydney: 1880*

<sup>110</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment: George Street 1891

<sup>111</sup> NSW Department of Lands, *Metropolitan Detail Series Sections 9.11.12: 1895*

<sup>112</sup> Sydney Water: Survey PWD 223-1544

<sup>113</sup> Sydney City Archives: *Street Cards 531-535 George Street, 1923*

having four storeys and was occupied, amongst other businesses, by a dance hall<sup>114</sup>. An unsuccessful application was made to demolish the building in the following year. From this period through to the 1940s many applications were made to alter or add to the building to suit the variety of tenants who occupied it. They included a milk bar, offices, clothing manufacturer and public entertainment venues.

In 1943 the building was described as being of four storeys with a timber roof and floors throughout except for a small portion in the ground floor café. The ground floor was occupied by this café and two shops. On the first floor was a factory, the second floor had a clubroom and there was a dance hall on the top floor. It had internal timber stairs to the roof and external fire stairs<sup>115</sup>.

#### **3.8.4 Later History**

From the 1960s the Builders' Workers Union had offices in this building. Later occupants have included a leisure centre, a repair centre for amusement machines and a skin care school. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s applications were made for a variety of alterations mainly concerned with the introduction of partitions, air conditioning and a new internal stair.

The building was auctioned in March 1983 but was passed in at that time. It was traded after auction for \$1,725,000. In 1987 it was purchased for five million dollars by Greater Union. Throughout the 1990s the building has been the subject of a continuing programme of renovations. In 1997 an application was made for a new ground floor fit-out.

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<sup>114</sup> NSW Fire Assurance Plans: Block 173, 1926

<sup>115</sup> City Architect and Building Surveyors Department: Inspection Report for 531-535 George Street, 1943

### 3.9 537-543 George Street

#### 3.9.1 Early History

This land was granted to William Bowman in 1831<sup>116</sup> and must have been part of the 1810s wheelwright's establishment described by Obed West. Harper's plan of 1822 shows some buildings occupying part of this site, set well back from the street frontage. Bowman leased the property out twice during the 1840s and finally sold it in 1849 to J. R. Holden<sup>117</sup>. Holden sold the property in 1851 to Richard Binne<sup>118</sup>.

#### 3.9.2 Commercial Development

By 1856 the site was occupied by three large brick terraces with brick out-buildings and other out-houses in the yards behind. The properties were fenced from the yard in the centre of the site that backed onto Lawler's bed factory on Kent Street. The 1857 rates describe these buildings as two-storey, stone-built and slate-roofed shops and houses. One had a detached kitchen and another stables and sheds. There is no appreciable change in these buildings between the mid-1850s and the mid-1860s. Until the later 1870s the assessment descriptions of these two-storey stone buildings remain consistent. In 1880 the buildings were occupied by a draper, a boot manufacturer and a grocer<sup>119</sup>.

There is some evidence to suggest that Binnie may have redeveloped the site or part of it in 1880 but surveys of both the later 1880s and mid-1890s indicate that if new buildings did occupy the site they had changed in area and form very little from their predecessors. Numerous works appear to have been carried out on these buildings during the early decades of the twentieth century. Council records indicate that applications were made in 1907, 1914, 1917 and 1922<sup>120</sup>.

#### 3.9.3 Roma House

In 1923 plans were lodged for a new building to be known as Roma House<sup>121</sup>. It was constructed soon after and was described as being principally of concrete construction and occupied by shops, showrooms and offices<sup>122</sup>. There is little evidence of any work being undertaken in this building until the 1950s with the exception of a steel bridge constructed in 1936<sup>123</sup>. From the 1950s to the 1970s, though, it was subject to an almost constant programme of change.

Roma House was auctioned with Cresta House in 1980 and they sold for \$1.5 million. In 1985 the two were purchased for \$7.5 million. Throughout the 1980s many changes have been made to the interiors to provide for tenants who have included an amusement centre and restaurant.

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<sup>116</sup> LTO Primary Application 2135

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>119</sup> Percy Dove, *New and Complete Street and Wharf Directory for Sydney*, 1880

<sup>120</sup> Sydney City Archives: *Street Cards George Street 1907, 1914, 1917, 1922*

<sup>121</sup> Sydney City Archives: *Building Application 543/23*

<sup>122</sup> NSW Fire Assurance Plans, Block 173: 1926

<sup>123</sup> Sydney City Archives: *Building Application 868/36*



### **3.10 545-549 George Street**

#### **3.10.1 Early History**

This land was granted to William Bowman in 1831<sup>124</sup>. It must have been part of Bowman's wheelwrights' establishment of the 1810s but there is no evidence for the improvements associated with this place. There are buildings shown on this land, set well back from the street frontage, on Harper's plan of 1822. The few buildings that did occupy this site at that time had been replaced by the mid-1850s.

#### **3.10.2 Commercial and Residential Occupation**

By 1856 Bowman's land was owned by Richard Binne and was occupied by approximately twelve brick buildings, weatherboard sheds and other structures. These extended back into the centre of the site and opened onto yard space. Access was from an alley off George Street<sup>125</sup>. These buildings comprised a collection of mixed commercial/residential properties and one house. Most were of two storeys and one had a kitchen detached and another stables and a shed<sup>126</sup>.

There is no evidence of any substantial change to these buildings, apart from tenancies, through to the mid-1860s although the stables at the back of the block were said to be in bad repair<sup>127</sup>. In 1880 the buildings were occupied by a tailor, barber, saddler and the stables occupied the back of the block.

#### **3.10.3 Central Arcade**

The first substantial change to these more than fifty year old buildings occurred in 1882. One of the shops was demolished in that year<sup>128</sup>. By 1885 all except one large brick terrace adjoining the shops on what is now the site of Roma House had been demolished as had all the buildings in the centre of the site through to Kent Street. In their place was built a commercial arcade that ran through from George Street to Kent Street. It was called the Central Arcade and it housed sixteen single-storey shops<sup>129</sup>. It had changed its name to Liverpool Close by the time it was demolished in the early years of the twentieth century.

#### **3.10.4 Binnies Chambers and the Village Cinema**

The arcade was demolished in 1913/14. In its place was constructed a multi-storey retail complex known as Binnies Chambers. By 1943 this and buildings behind and to one side were all linked and used by Bryants Furniture Warehouse<sup>130</sup>. The entire building was demolished in 1974 and the Village Cinema Complex was built in its place.

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<sup>124</sup> LTO Primary Application 2135

<sup>125</sup> Sydney City Archives, 1856 Town Survey CRS 502/17

<sup>126</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment: George Street 1857

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*: 1867

<sup>128</sup> Sydney Rate Assessment: George Street 1882

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*: 1891

<sup>130</sup> Sydney City Archives: *City Architect and Building Surveyors Department Inspection Reports for 545-551 George Street, 1943.*

### **3.11 549 – 551 George Street**

#### **3.11.1 Early History**

This land was part of a narrow, triangular block that extended half way across from George Street to the Kent Street frontage. By 1831 it was the property of Catherine Mitchell<sup>131</sup>. In 1822 it was part occupied by a building set well back from the street frontage. This had been replaced by terraces by the mid-1850s.

#### **3.11.2 Commercial Development**

By 1856 the site was occupied by two terraces separated from each other by a narrow passage. There were out-buildings behind the terraces in the yards of each separated by a central fence. These two-storey brick-built shops are identified in Council records as being demolished in 1882 and there is some evidence from surveys to suggest that this work was carried out. If so, the shops which replaced them were almost identical in form and footprint as recorded on later nineteenth century surveys. These buildings were probably demolished in c. 1913/14 at the same time that the Central Arcade was removed from the site.

#### **3.11.3 Bryant's Warehouse**

This site was redeveloped with a seven storey building that had a bulk store behind it. This was the business premises of Bryants' Warehouse, a furniture shop. During the 1920s-30s many alterations were made to these premises. By the 1940s the company had taken over all of the buildings adjoining it to the north. By the 1960s complaints were made of the condition of the building. It was demolished to make way for the Village Cinema Complex which was completed in 1976.

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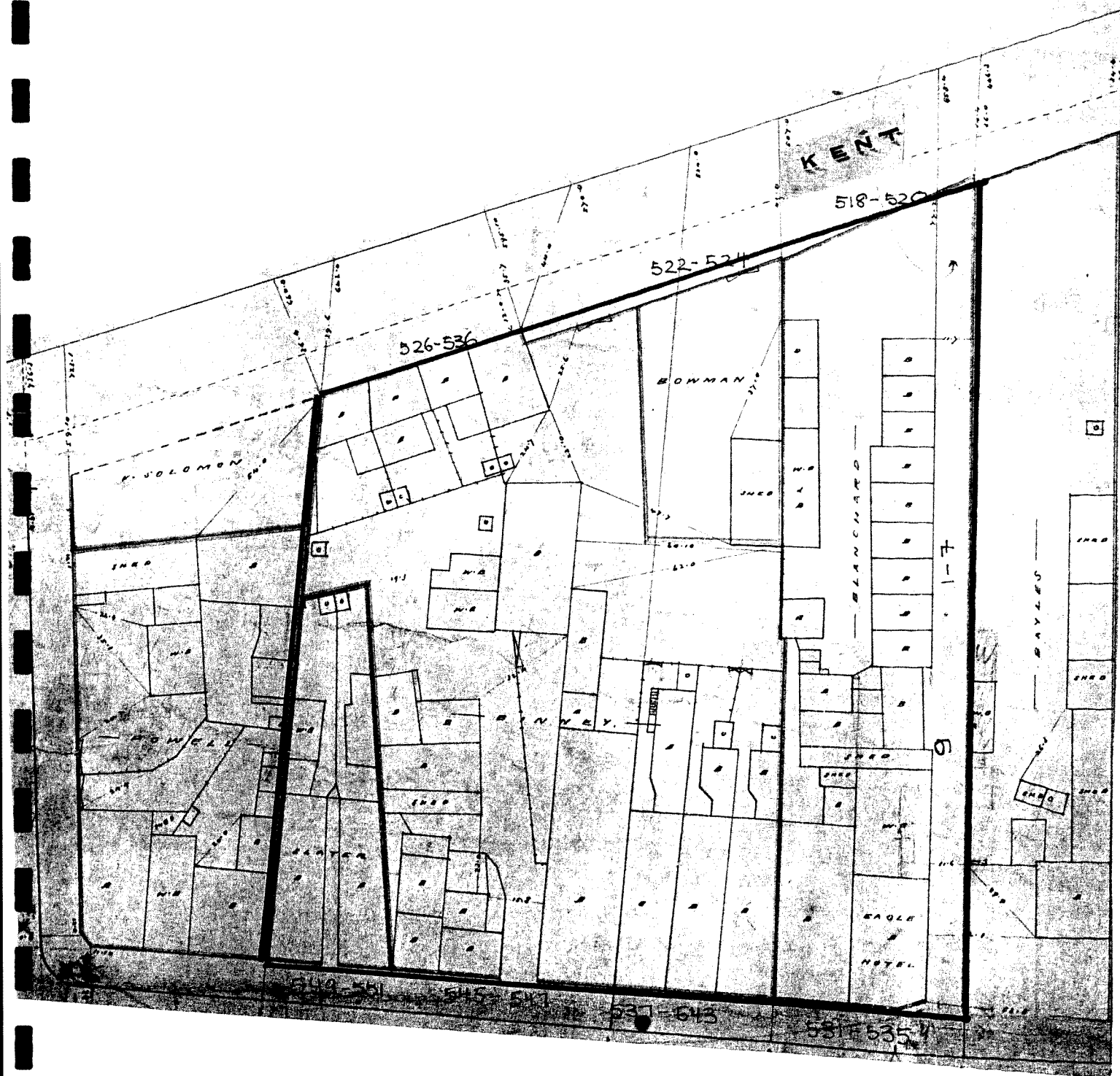
<sup>131</sup> Sydney Section Plan 1836, Section 12. SAONSW AO Map 5402



Harper's Plan of the Town of Sydney, 1822

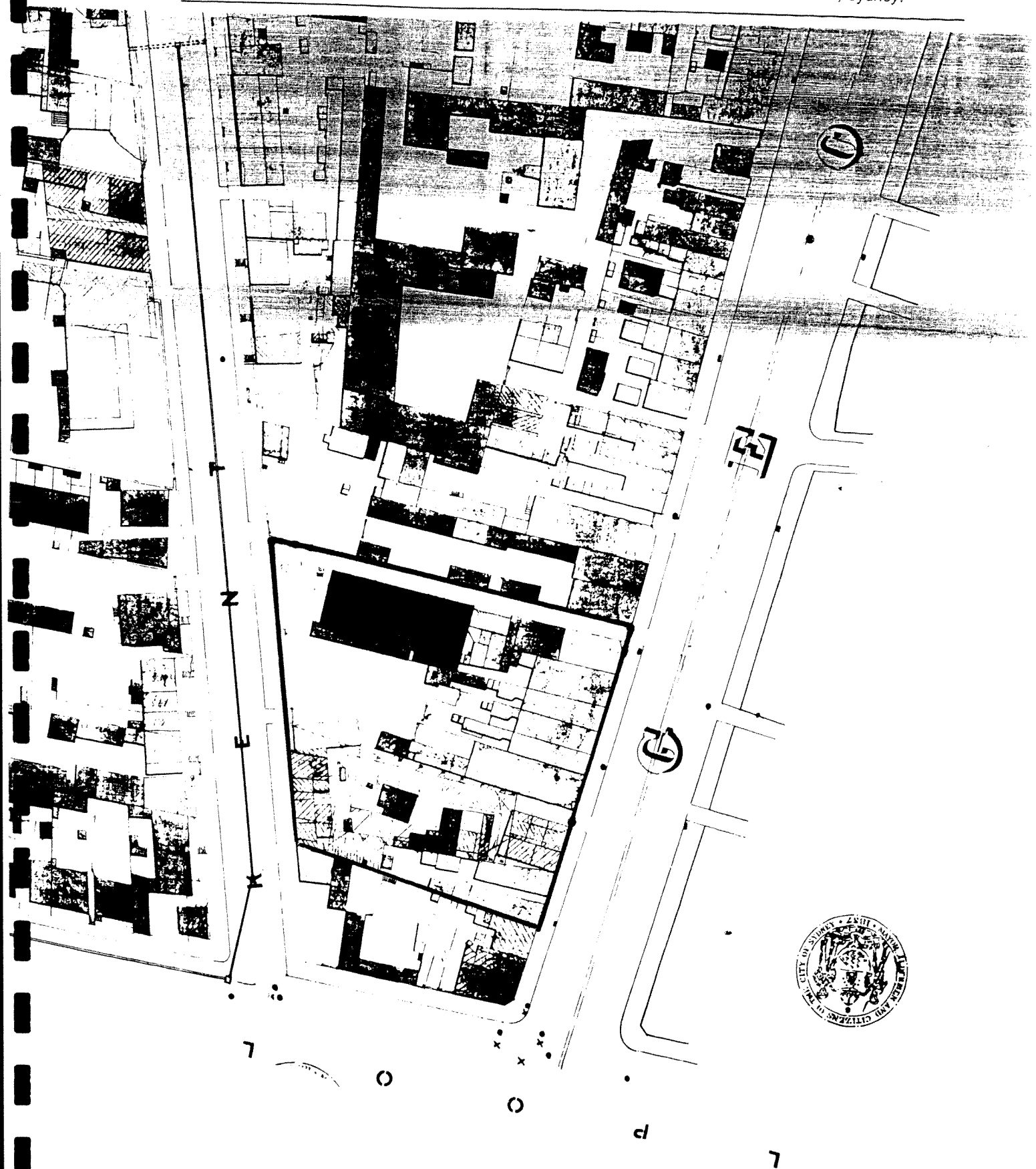
(Source: SAONSW AO Map SZ435)





Plan of the study area in 1856

(Source: Sydney City Archives: CRS 502/17)

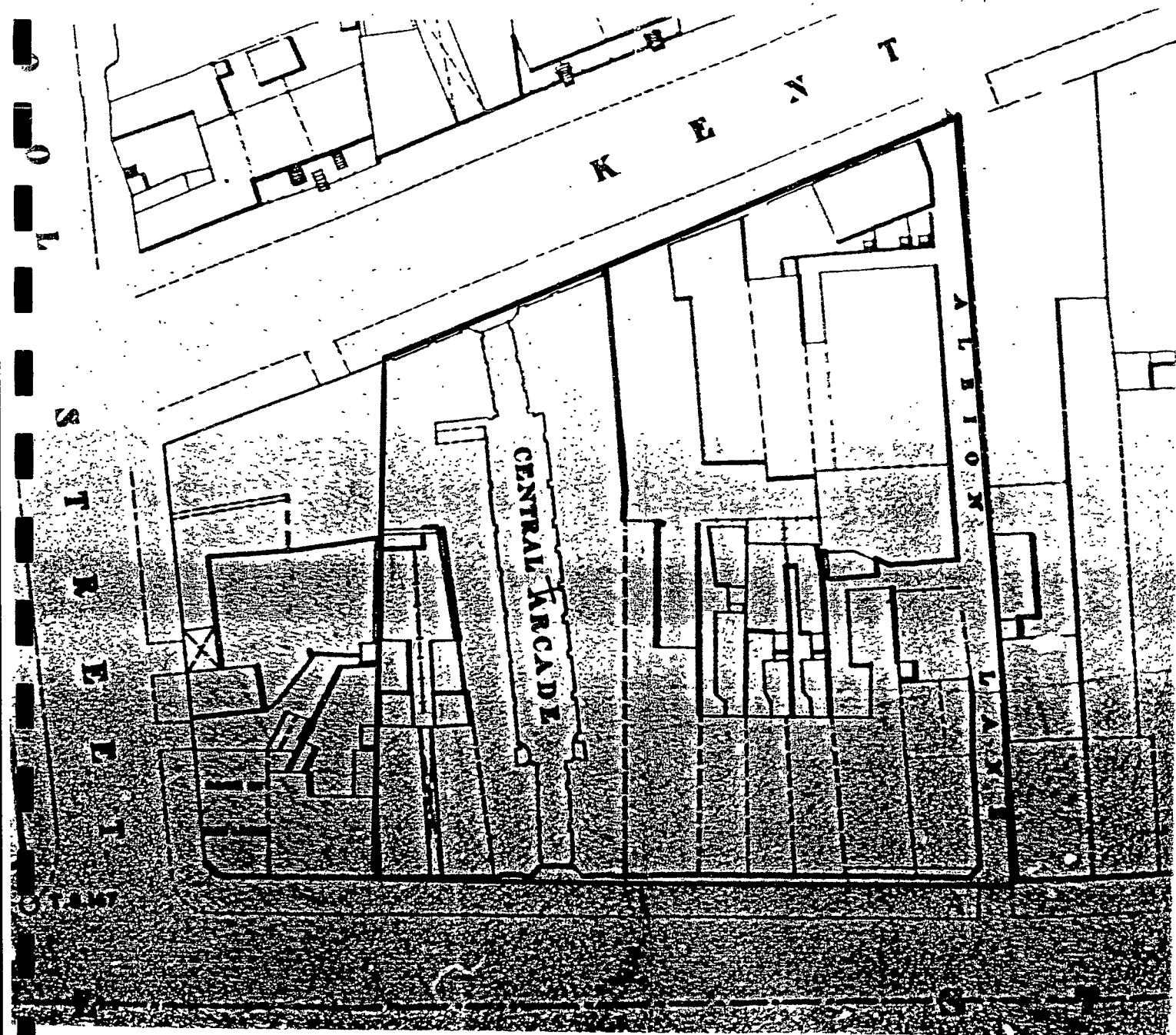


*Plan of the study area in 1865; the solid and hatched areas indicate proposed and actual later works on this site after the original drafting of this plan.*

*(Source: Sydney City Archives)*

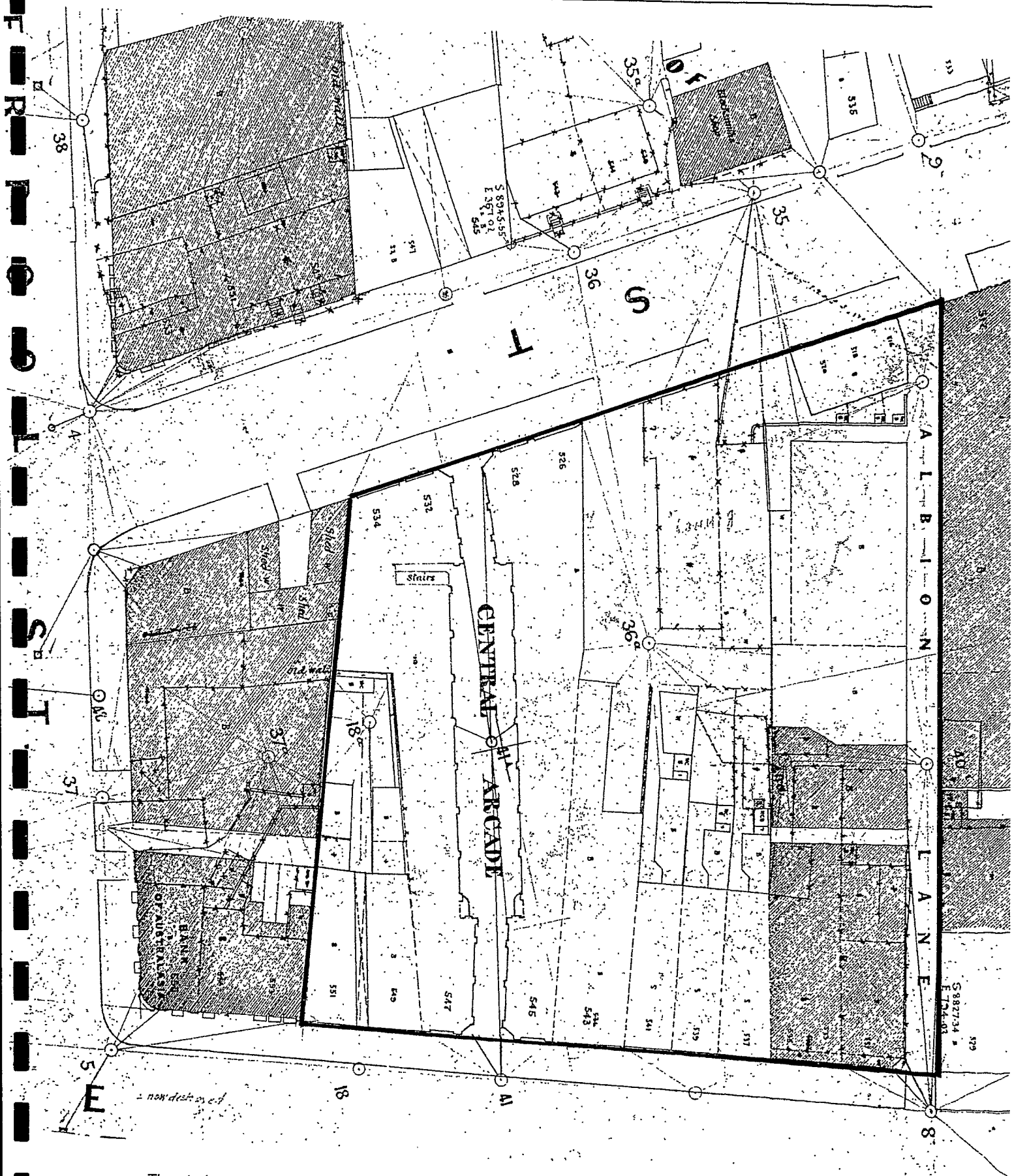
(Source: Percy Dove, *New and Complete Street and Wharf Directory for Sydney*)





*The study area in 1887 with the newly constructed Central Arcade*

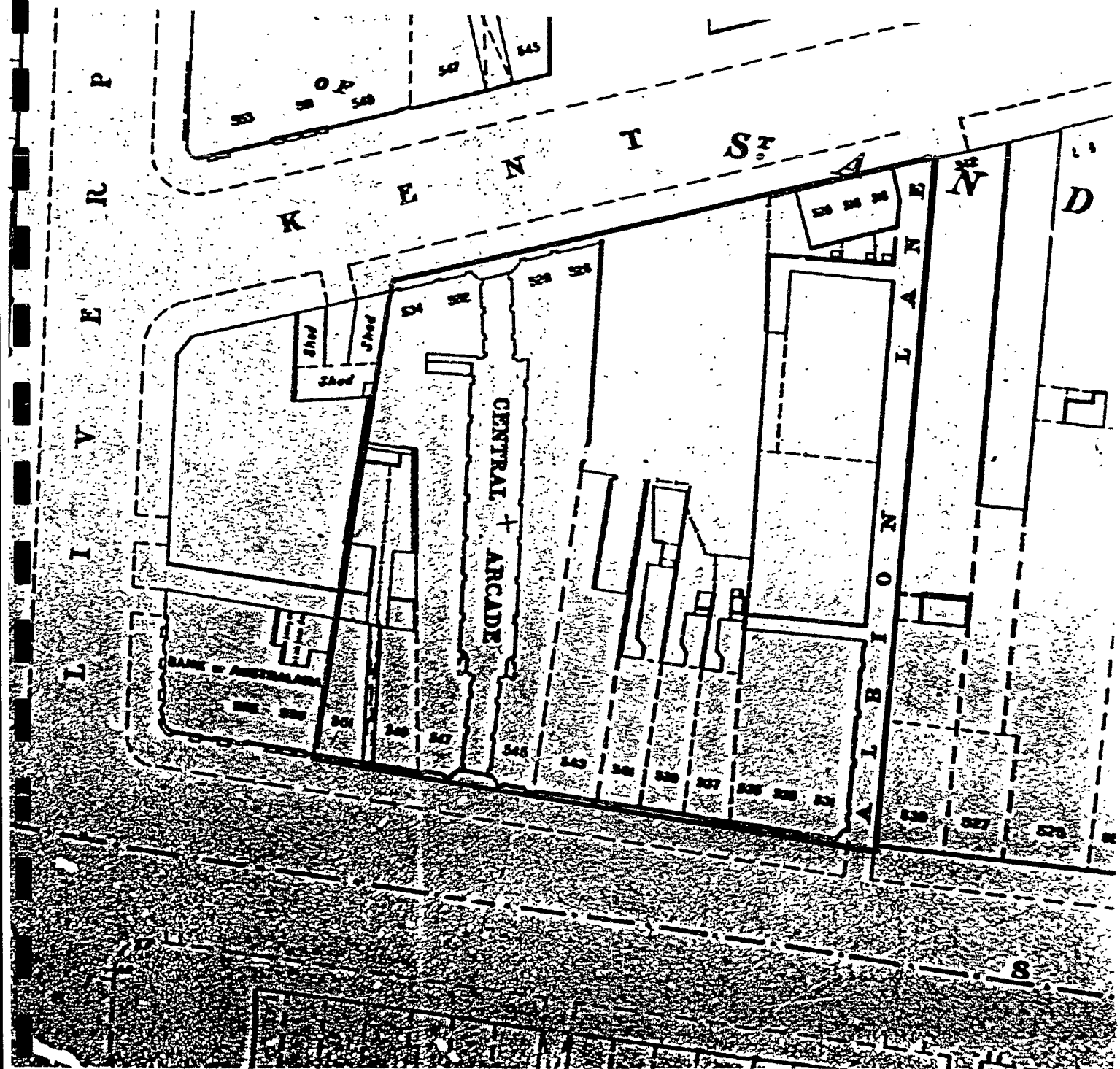
(Source: NSW Department of Lands Metropolitan Detail Series M Ser 4 811.17/1 Section 12 ML)



The study area in 1893 showing the newly constructed Taito House and 9 Albion Place

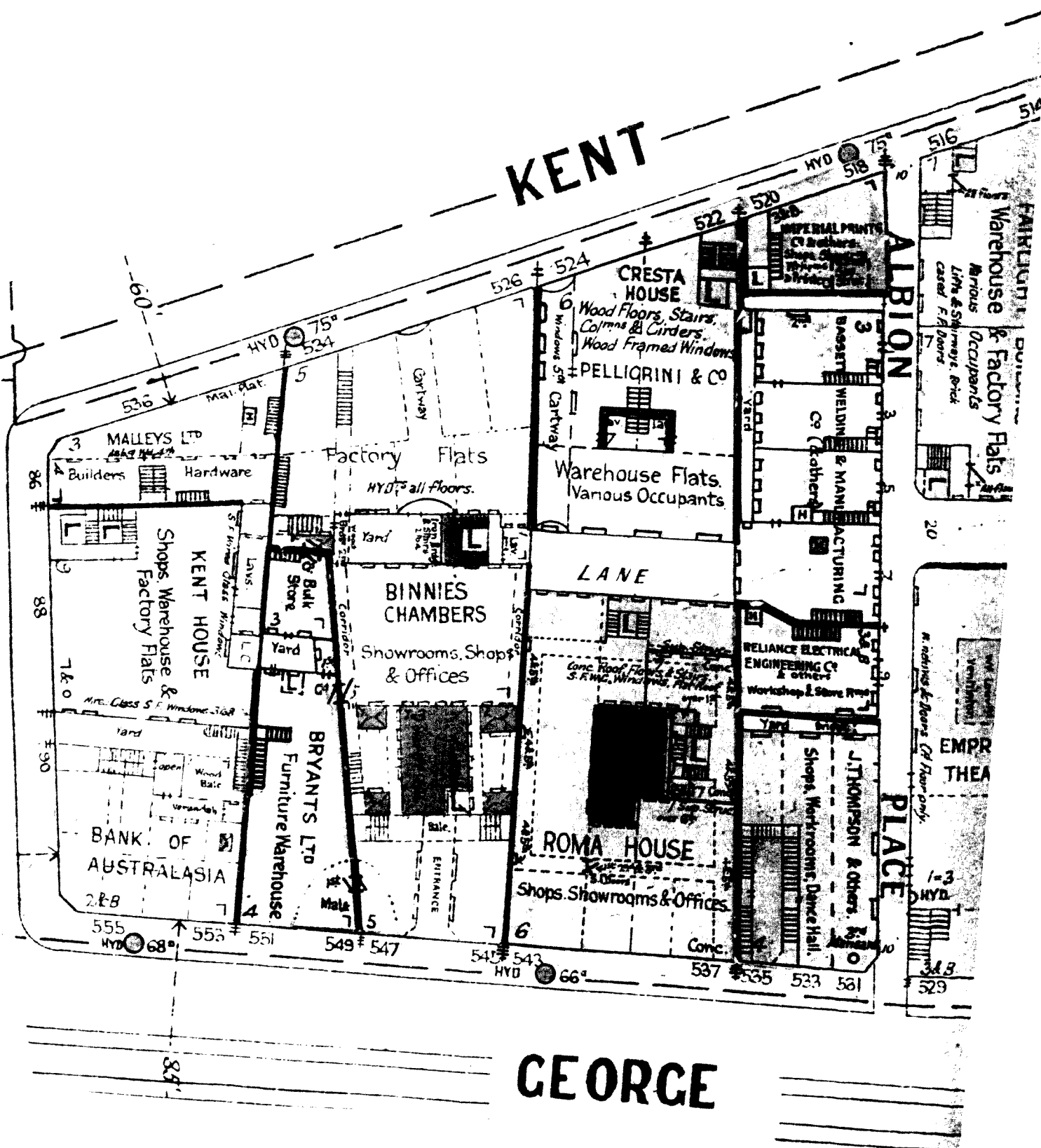
(Source: Sydney Water PWD 223-1544)





The study area in 1897

(Source: NSW Department of Lands Metropolitan Detail Series Section 12, M Ser4 811.17/1 ML)



The study area in 1926 with Roma House now built on George Street

(Source: Sydney Fire Assurance Plans, Sydney City Archives)

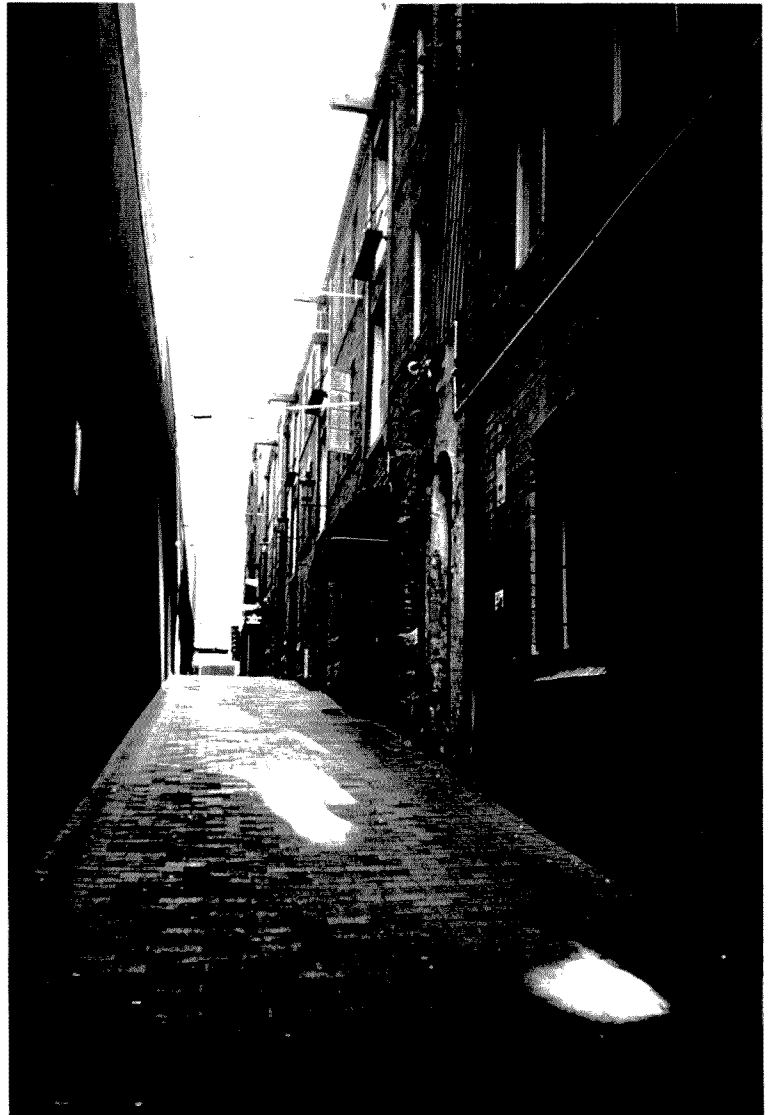
## SECTION 4.0

### THE RESOURCE

#### 4.1 Topography and Albion Lane

The study area slopes down steeply from east to west. There is also a slight slope from north to south. This topography preserves, to some degree, the original landform that is noted on several surveys to be considerably lower at Kent Street. The slope at George Street has been modified several times in the past. The levels within the site are also certain to have been altered from the original landform. The construction of the twentieth century buildings, in particular, has altered the relationship of this site to the streets around it.

Albion Lane maintains the same alignment and width as it did in the nineteenth century although it has certainly been repaved and levelled several times in the past. It also contains service lines (refer Section 4.3)



*Looking east from Kent Street to George Street up the slope of Albion Lane*

## **4.2 Structures**

The study area is completely built over with the only open spaces being Albion Lane, some small yard or service areas between and behind the principal buildings and alleys between buildings. The principal components are as follows:

- Albion Lane: probably formed later 1830s or 1840s it retains the original alignment but has been resurfaced on several occasions and has been excavated for services.
- 1-7 Albion Place: constructed 1877/78 this is a three –storey building which covers the entire envelope of the site except for very small service areas. There is a narrow alley between this building and the building at 518-520 George Street. It is closed off from Albion Place behind a wall with access from a door let into it. There are some small, unoccupied spaces at the back of the buildings in an area that previously was an open, narrow yard.
- 9 Albion Place: constructed in 1893 it is a three-storey building with a basement. There is a narrow alley between this building and Taito House. This alley is below the level of Albion Place and is closed off from the latter by wrought iron gates.
- 518-520 Kent Street: constructed in c.1913 this is a three storey-former warehouse with basement. It has been extensively refurbished and adapted for new uses.
- 522-524 Kent Street: Cresta House built in 1896 but now redeveloped leaving only the façade. Sub-surface levels have been excavated.
- 526-536 Kent Street: Village Cinema complex completed in 1976
- 531-535 George Street: Taito House constructed in c. 1893 is a four-storey warehouse building
- 537 – 543 George Street: Roma House constructed in 1926 entailed excavation of some of the sub-profile.
- 545 – 551 George Street: Village Cinema complex completed in 1976.

## **4.3 Services**

There is little documentary evidence for the extent of services. No major service lines are shown on the 1865 trigonometrical survey. One plan of 1926 shows major sewer lines in Albion Lane and all other spaces between the principal buildings. Inspection of the buildings indicates that there has been considerable disturbance made to the sub-profile through the excavation for drainage, grease pits and the like. It may be assumed that further damage has been caused by excavations for electricity, telecommunications and gas.



*View to the west past 1-7 Albion Place and the wall and door which has been introduced between these buildings and 518-520 Kent Street to limit access to the service lane*



*Inside 1-7 Albion Place and an area at the back, formerly open, showing the disturbance to the sub-profile through excavations for services*



9 Albion Place and a view of the alley which separates it from 531 George Street, now closed off behind wrought iron gates. This view also shows the extent of disturbance to the sub-profile through excavations for services and grease pits.





518-520 Kent Street, Cresta House and the Village Cinema Centre (above) and the cinema centre on George Street next to Roma House (below)





*Taito House from George Street and Albion Place*

#### **4.4 Comparative Archaeological Evidence**

The study area has not been physically investigated or tested for this assessment. Several sites in the close environs of this place have been investigated or tested and this can provide some indication of the sub-profile and the processes that have influenced its formation.

##### **4.4.1 The Judges House, Kent Street**

The sub-floor areas of this 1820s residence were excavated to reveal in the basement level extensive working of the underlying sandstone to provide a level building platform. It also appeared that some drainage channels had been cut through this surface. This suggests that the site may have been particularly wet, no doubt from water draining down the slope from George Street. Top-soils and other natural soil deposits had been removed above the stone.

##### **4.4.2 St Andrews Square and the Town Hall**

The excavation for the formation of St Andrew's Square during the later 1970s revealed extensive evidence of the burial ground that had been located on this site and in use from 1793 to 1820. Several vaults and coffins were recorded as well as the soil profile. The latter was found to have an intact remnant top-soil over one metre below the present ground surface. Above were layers of fill and other introduced material that represented historical events or processes associated with the later history of the site. The recent refurbishment of the Town Hall also revealed intact evidence of burials deep in the foundations of the building.

##### **4.4.3 World Square**

Virtually no archaeological evidence was retrieved from World Square. Erosion and street modifications, as well as the impact of the construction of the former Hordens building, were suggested as the reasons for this circumstance.

##### **4.4.4 589 – 593 George Street**

This site has not been archaeologically investigated to date, however, there is a substantial geo-technical profile available for it. This testing revealed underlying sandstone bedrock with the residual soils above being silty, sandy clays. Above this is a depth of fill that ranges from one to four metres, this apparently deposited as a result of demolition and levelling actions.

Tentative observations only may be drawn from this sample of sites:

- That the original ground surface in most cases appears to have been more than a metre below the present ground surface. This means that early-mid nineteenth century relics especially are likely to be contained at some depth in the soil profile.
- That the present topography is largely a product of the introduction of extensive levels of fill above the original ground surface. The fill has derived from both the construction and destruction processes associated with buildings works as well as the intentional introduction of externally sourced material to create level building sites.
- That, despite the precipitous topography, there is relatively little evidence of soil erosion. Soil on the Judges House site appears to have been deliberately removed

to expose the sandstone as part of the building process. The absence of natural soil profiles on the World Square site, despite being attributed in part to erosion, appears not to have been adequately explained and seems more likely to have been a product of the excavation associated with the construction of the Hordens building.

- That, because of the deep levels of fill above early features even deep excavations such as those for the construction of Town Hall House have not automatically removed all underlying archaeological material from the site.

#### **4.5 Site Formation**

These are the processes, conditions and uses that are likely to have influenced the formation of the study area:

- The study area, or its component parts, has been the subject of at least three periods of rebuilding and in some cases, more than three. This is likely to have created a substantial archaeological profile.
- The impact of each period of construction and destruction is likely to have impacted on the remnant evidence from the preceding works. However, it is very unlikely that the remnant evidence from each phase of occupation was comprehensively removed each time the site was redeveloped; demolition in the nineteenth century routinely only was taken to the foundation level with the debris heaped over these elements to level the site.
- These same processes are likely to have contributed to the accumulation of a deep profile. This also is likely to have preserved evidence of earlier periods of occupation within the soil by acting as a buffer between these relics and the impact of later excavation and construction.
- Only the excavation associated with the construction of the Village Cinema Centre is likely to have removed all archaeological evidence from the site because of the depth and extent of excavation. Most of the later nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings are likely to be supported on column footings rather than slabs. This method usually entails localised disturbance with intact archaeological evidence retained between these points.
- The excavation of basements for buildings such as 9 Albion Place is likely to have removed a substantial portion of the profile but deeper features such as wells, cisterns or cess pits may survive intact.
- The excavation for grease traps, services and sumps is likely to have disturbed only the upper levels of the archaeological profile in areas such as Albion Lane.

#### 4.6 Archaeological Profile

On the basis of the evidence provided by archival and physical sources it has been concluded that the potential sub-surface archaeological resource of this site is likely to have the following profile or contain elements of it:

- Intact evidence of the pre-existing environment in the form of residual soils and micro-flora. Evidence of introduced species through the impact of European occupation, weed growth on neglected or disused land and pollens distributed from passing traffic.
- There is no direct evidence for the existence of eighteenth century huts or early brick-making activities on this site, however, its location would be compatible with these activities. If archaeological evidence of this type is contained within the site it would be at great depth, is probably confined to alterations or additions to the soil profile (evidence for clay excavation, post holes etc) and it is likely to be greatly disturbed through the impact of subsequent works.
- It is impossible to evaluate the probability of locating evidence of Bowman's wheelwrights' establishment due to the lack of information with respect to its extent and nature.
- Any intact evidence of the buildings shown on the 1822 survey would be found at depth in the centre of the site under Albion Lane, 9 Albion Place or Roma House.
- Some evidence of mid-nineteenth century buildings, yards and deposits is likely to be preserved under and around most of the nineteenth century buildings (1-7 Albion Place, 9 Albion Place and Taito House) and Albion Lane and the alleys off it and, to a lesser extent, the early twentieth century works (Roma House, 518-20 Kent Street). This may encompass building foundations (probably greatly disturbed) and particularly, deeper features such as wells, cisterns and cess pits. Portable relics may also be unearthed in association with some of these features. Artefacts may also be encountered in fill as introduced material.
- It is unlikely that any archaeological evidence survives in the area of the Village Cinema Centre or Cresta House.
- Deep levels of accumulated and introduced fill are expected over most parts of the site.
- Some evidence may be revealed of nineteenth century services.

## SECTION 5.0

### CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

#### 5.1 Evaluation Criteria

"Heritage significance", "cultural significance" and "cultural value" are all terms used to describe an item's value or importance to our own society. This value may be contained in the fabric of the item, its setting and relationship to other items, the response that the item stimulates in those who value it now and in the historical records which allow us to understand it in its own context. An assessment of what is significant is not static. Significance may increase as more is learnt about the past and as items become rare, endangered or are found to document and illustrate aspects that have acquired a new recognition of importance.

Determining cultural value is at the basis of all planning for places of historic value. A clear determination of significance permits informed decisions for future planning that will ensure that the expressions of significance are retained, enhanced or at least are minimally impacted upon. A clear understanding of the nature and degree of significance will determine the parameters for and flexibility of any development.

An analysis of archival evidence provides the context for assessing significance. This analysis is presented in Section 3.0. An assessment of significance is made by applying standard evaluation criteria to the what is known of the item's development and associations. These criteria are divided into two categories:

- Nature of Significance
- Comparative Significance

The four basic criteria used to assess the nature of an item's significance, for what reason it is significant, are those of Evolution and Associations (Historic), Creative and Technical Accomplishment (Aesthetic), Community Esteem (Social) and Research Potential (Scientific). Comparative significance, or the degree to which an item is significant, is assessed according to its value as a rare or representative element.

Items have value if they meet at least one of the nature of significance criteria and are good examples of either of the comparative criteria.

## **5.2 Assessment of Significance**

Assessments of significance are being prepared for the buildings within the study area as part of the conservation plans prepared separately from this report. This assessment addresses only the archaeological or scientific/research significance of this site.

### **5.2.1 Historic Associations**

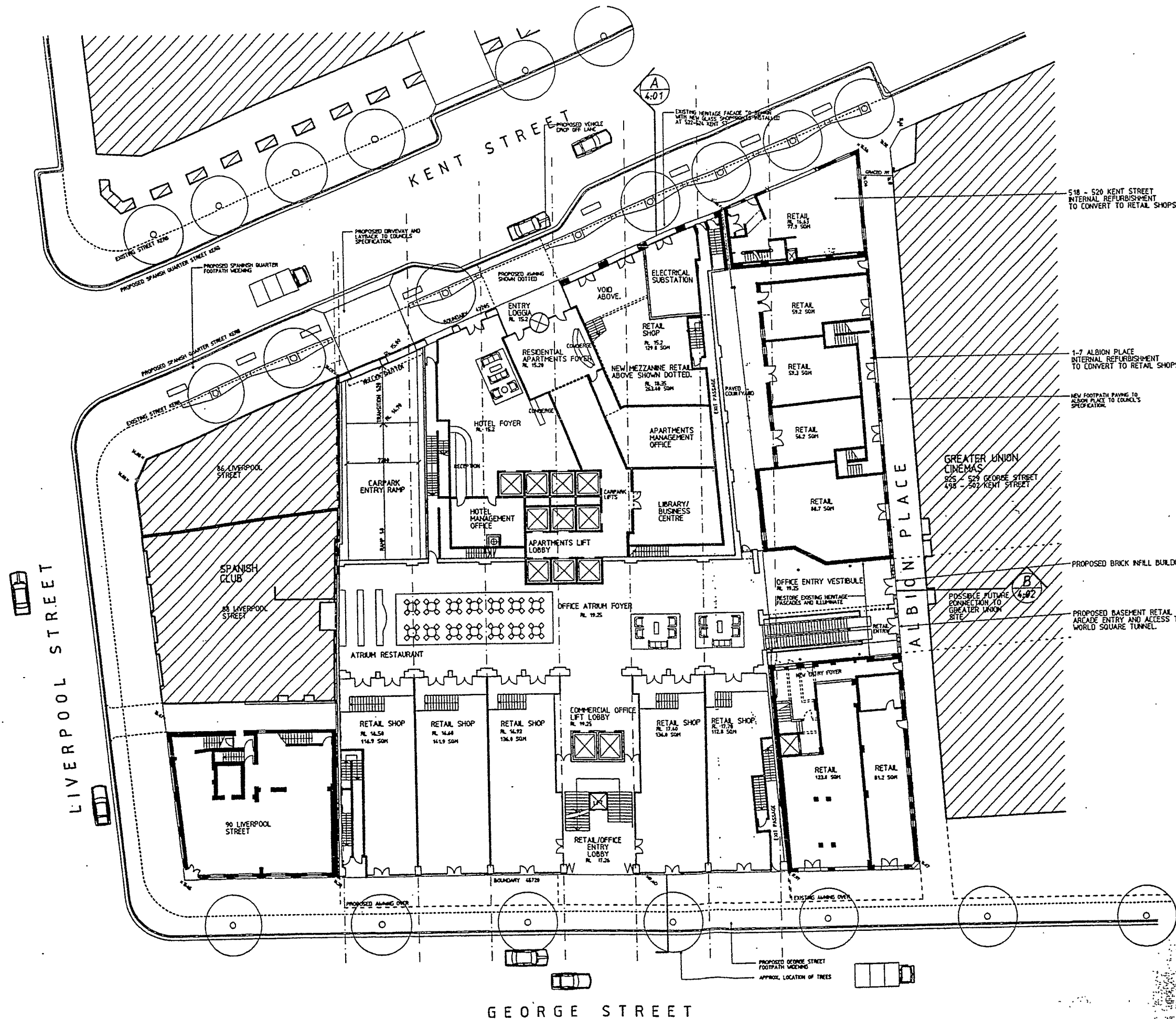
The historical associations of this site probably begin with the earliest European settlement in the district during the later years of the eighteenth century although firm evidence for occupation begins in the early years of the nineteenth century. From then to the present day it has been a busy and continuously occupied commercial precinct. Initially on the fringe of settlement it evolved as part of a well-known and very busy part of Sydney described as "bazaar" – like in the later part of the nineteenth century. It retains rare elements of this period of it's history in 1-7 Albion Place while the remainder of the above-ground elements reflect the change in character, in common with much of Sydney at the turn of the twentieth century, to multi-storey buildings used for multiple purposes of offices, shops and small manufactories.

### **5.2.2 Scientific/Research Potential**

The buildings within the study area illustrate the later nineteenth and twentieth century history of this site. Archaeological evidence contained within this site would provide substance for the eighteenth and early-mid nineteenth century history that, at this time, is only known from several surveys and official records. It could provide greater evidence of the occupants and activities associated with this place. Any evidence of eighteenth century activity in this area would be rare. However, archaeological evidence contained within this site is likely to be disturbed and fragmentary and, thus, compromised in its ability to address these issues.

### **5.2.3 Degree of Significance**

The archaeological evidence contained within the study area would be representative of its type and of the time and area from which it derives. However, survival of a sample of urban life in this area of the city pre-dating the mid-nineteenth century would be rare. The ability of the resource to realise this potential has certainly been compromised by its fragmentation and disturbance as a result of the impact of later nineteenth and twentieth century works.



CITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

*Devised Consent APPROVAL*

Development drawings approved subject to conditions by delegation of Council Central Sydney Planning Committee pursuant to Section 92 of Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979

dated 4/12/98 signature *[Signature]*

B	14.8.98	NEW FIRE EXIT ADDED TO GEORGE ST SOUTHERN CORNER. NEW TAXI DROP OFF RELOCATED ON KENT ST ENTRY TO HOTEL RELOCATED TO GEORGE ST. STAIRS ADDED FROM GROUND FLOOR TO BASEMENT LEVEL. NEW MEZZANINE LEVEL ADDED DRIVEWAY WIDTH AMENDED.
A	29.05.98	HOTEL TAXI DROP OFF & GEORGE ST FOOTPATH WIDENING ADDED. SECONDARY HOTEL ACCESS FROM GEORGE ST WIDENED.
-	23.3.98	DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION
ISSUE	DATE	AMENDMENT
<b>MARCHESE</b> <b>+PARTNERS</b> (02) 922 4170 ARCHITECTS - DRAFTING - INTERIOR DESIGN - LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS LEVEL 7, 80 MARKET STREET SYDNEY NSW 2000 AUSTRALIA. MOB 021 127 114 FX 021 922 4171 FAX 021 922 1116		

CLIENT  
LILAC PTY. LTD

DESCRIPTION  
PROPOSED RETAIL, COMMERCIAL/ RESIDENTIAL & HOTEL DEVELOPMENT AT 531 - 551 GEORGE ST. SYDNEY

DRAWING TITLE  
GROUND FLOOR PLAN  
FSR 2639.25m2

do not scale from drawing  
all alterations to be checked on site before commencement of work.  
all discrepancies to be brought to attention of the Author.  
larger scale drawings and written documents take precedence.  
this drawing is copyright and the property of the Author, and must not be retained, copied or used without the express authority of MARCHESE PARTNERS ARCHITECTS PTY LTD

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### 5.3 Statement of Significance

The historical associations of this site probably begin with the earliest European settlement in the district during the later years of the eighteenth century. From then to the present day it has been a busy and continuously occupied commercial precinct. Initially on the fringe of settlement it evolved as part of a well-known and very busy part of Sydney described as "bazaar" – like in the later part of the nineteenth century. The buildings within the study area illustrate this later nineteenth and twentieth century history. Archaeological evidence contained within this site would provide substance for the eighteenth and early-mid nineteenth century history that, at this time, is only known from several surveys and official records. It could provide greater evidence of the occupants and activities associated with this place. Any evidence of eighteenth century activity in this area would be rare. However, archaeological evidence contained within this site is likely to be disturbed and fragmentary and, thus, compromised in its ability to address these issues. The research value of this site is assessed to have medium or middle level cultural significance.



*View of the basement of 9 Albion Place*



## SECTION 6.0

### MANAGEMENT

#### 6.1 The Development Proposal

This site is proposed for redevelopment to accommodate a new retail/residential and hotel building on part of the site and refurbishment of several of the existing buildings. It entails:

- Demolition of Roma House and excavation beneath this site
- Demolition of 9 Albion Place and the construction of new building adjoining 1-7 Albion Place, an entrance foyer through to the new commercial building behind and a basement retail area. This requires comprehensive excavation beneath this site and the alley adjoining it
- Retention and refurbishment of Taito House
- Retention and refurbishment of 1-7 Albion Place. Some excavation required behind these buildings to create a paved courtyard
- Retention and refurbishment of 518-520 Kent street
- Excavation over area of Cresta House and the Village Cinema site and the construction of the new building with multiple levels of below-ground car-parking.
- Retention of Cresta House façade.



*The Village Cinema building on Kent Street; this site will be redeveloped*

## **6.2 Impact Assessment**

### **6.2.1 Roma House site**

Despite the disturbance caused by the construction processes for this early twentieth century building it is likely that some archaeological relics will be found beneath it, principally very deep features such as wells or pits although some structural remnants of buildings may be preserved as well. This evidence is likely to be disturbed and cannot be plotted with accuracy. It is known that this site has contained buildings that date to at least 1822 and may have been the site of eighteenth century occupation as well as industrial activity. The proposed excavation will remove all this remnant evidence.

### **6.2.2 9 Albion Place and Lane**

This site was certainly occupied by the mid-nineteenth century and it is likely that the construction of the later nineteenth century building, which does contain a basement level, impacted on some remnant evidence. However, it is still considered likely that archaeological relics will survive on this site, possibly structures and relics deep within the profile. The proposed excavation will remove this remnant evidence

### **6.2.3 Village Cinema and Cresta House**

The earlier excavations associated with these sites is likely to have already removed most and probably all of any remnant archaeological profile. Further excavation for the new work will have little or no impact.

### **6.2.4 1-7 Albion Place**

The only excavation associated with these buildings will be at the back to create a paved courtyard. This is an area that has already been disturbed for extensions to the building and the introduction of services. However, it is likely that remnant archaeological material of the later nineteenth century will survive here and possibly relics of an earlier date. Excavation here is likely to disturb this resource.

### **6.2.5 Albion Lane**

Some resurfacing work is required here. It is likely that this will only impact on upper levels which have already been disturbed through the introduction of services. Any substantially deeper excavations towards the centre of the lane could impact on early nineteenth century relics.

### **6.2.6 Taito House and 518-520 Kent Street**

The work here entails refurbishment of the existing buildings. No excavation is planned and there will be no impact on archaeological profiles.

The excavation required by the new development is likely to reveal and disturb archaeological evidence. In most cases this resource is likely to have already been impacted upon to varying degrees by past work. Deeply excavated features such as wells or cess-pits are likely to survive with a greater degree of integrity. It is impossible to identify specific sites or places that are more likely to contain these or any other relics. The extent of disturbance and fragmentation caused by earlier works will only become apparent when the new work commences on site.

### **6.3 Statutory Considerations**

When the potential for the retention of "relics", as these are defined in the NSW Heritage Act, is identified for a site a number of legislative requirements are made of its owners/managers who will be responsible for the disturbance of that archaeological resource. The Act requires that an Excavation Permit be sought from the Heritage Council of NSW.

An application for a Permit is made through the Heritage Office of NSW. It may take twenty-eight days to process and it requires a small fee. No excavation of any kind may take place on the site until the applicant is notified of the permit's approval.

Aboriginal relics are afforded protection by the National Parks and Wildlife Act. The identification at any time during the excavation of this site of Aboriginal relics will require notification to be made to the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The relics must be made safe and retained in situ until advice for their proper management is provided by the NPWS.

### **6.4 Management Procedures for the Archaeological Resource**

#### **6.4.1 Application for an Excavation Permit**

This assessment has identified the potential for archaeological relics to be revealed and disturbed by the proposed development of this site. Application for an Excavation Permit prior to the commencement of any site works will be a requirement for this site. The application must:

- nominate an archaeologist who will be responsible for the investigation and documentation of archaeological evidence
- provide a document called a "research design", essentially a specification of works, which describes how the archaeological investigation will be carried out and the issues to be addressed by it
- identify a permanent repository for artefacts which may be obtained from the site and for the records which are generated by the archaeological investigation.

#### **6.4.2 Archaeological Investigation and Documentation**

The uncertainties with respect to the degree of fragmentation of the archaeological resource, the depth of the profile and the location of specific elements indicate that archaeological investigation of this site prior to the commencement of the bulk excavation would be impractical. Monitoring and recording of relics revealed during the course of the bulk excavation would be appropriate. This could be preceded in some places, such as the rear of 1-7 Albion Place or the site of 9 Albion Place, by short exploratory trenching by mechanical excavator to more accurately assess the archaeological profile.

The purpose of archaeological work on this site is to transfer the remnant evidence contained within the ground to a more accessible and permanent record. Sign-off of an excavation permit is made with the presentation of a report that documents this evidence and its interpretation. Copies are to be made available to the Heritage Office of NSW and the Sydney City Council and a copy is to be lodged with any artefacts that may be conserved from the site.

### **6.4.3 Artefacts**

It is a condition of the Excavation Permit that the owners of the site assume responsibility for the professional curation of artefacts that may be retrieved from the site during the course of its investigation. Artefacts, like the report generated from the investigation, generally are the only evidence that remains after the site has been redeveloped unless elements such as wells or foundations are retained in situ as interpretive elements.

The permit requires that artefacts are cleaned, catalogued, boxed and provided with a permanent repository. The repository may be on site, it may be in a commercial storage area or it may be offered to a public authority such as a Museum. It is highly unlikely that the latter would take a collection. The repository must be specified in the application for a permit and the arrangements for access to the collection must be made clear.

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