

- Penetration in northern wall of existing assembly hall to allow connection with new additions;
- Demolition of store-room and canopy adjacent to northern wall of assembly hall (later intrusive addition);
- Modifications to ground and first floor storerooms (west along corridor) and office/staff rooms on ground and first floors respectively (south);
- Removal of doors from assembly hall north to playground to facilitate connection with new central building addition;

The main southeastern staircase and the stained-glass window within it were retained and conserved. Prior to the redevelopment the stain glass window was protected from external impacts related to ballsports with a heavy, intrusive stainless steel mesh erected c1980- c1990s. It obscured the decorative window and was an intrusive façade element. The screen was removed and replaced with a minimalist black stainless tensile wire protective screen (see Figure 64).

While the internal modifications and demolition of fabric proposed for the existing school building have been minimised as much as possible, these works are required to connect the existing building to the new additions, as well as to incorporate space requirements for contemporary learning methodologies (i.e. targeting EFSG requirements).

Internal modification works proposed for fabric assessed in the CMP as being of 'exceptional' significance includes penetrations in the eastern wing classroom walls; removal of central corridor windows and wall underneath to ground level; and penetration in northern wall of assembly hall.

Figures 78 and Figures 79 provide detailed floorplans, colour-coded, to show the various existing categories of fabric from original, through to reconstructed, and contemporary. The Fort Street Public School Building is currently considered to be in good condition.

Exterior Images – Fort Street Public School Building



5-58: The northern elevation of the Fort Street Public School building. (Source:Curio 2023)



Figure 5-59: The North- Eastern front corner elevation of the Fort Street Public School building.



Figure 5-60: The Western Façade of the Fort Street Public School Building with new additions (Source: Curio 2023).



Figure 5-61: The western elevation of the Fort Street Public School building looking towards Circular Quay (Source: Curio 2023).



Figure 5-62: The Southern elevation of the Fort Street Public School Building (Source: Curio 2023).



Figure 5-63 Non-Visible Tensile Protective Mesh for the Stain Glass (Source Curio 2023).

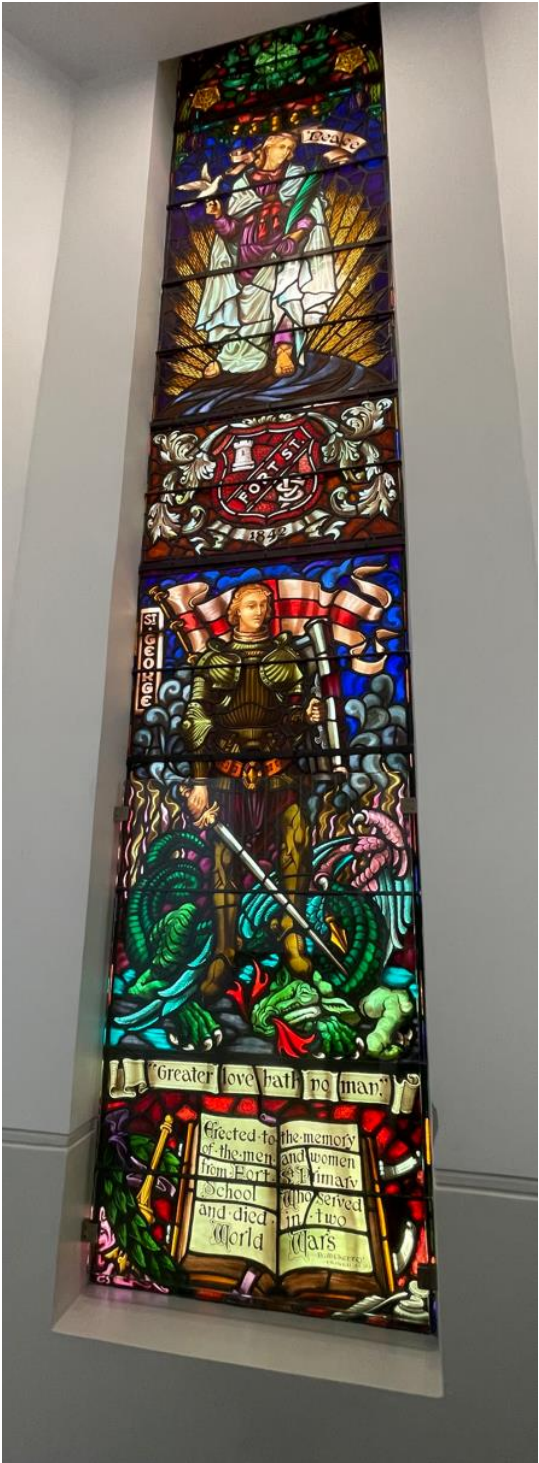


Figure 5- 64 Stained Glass Window (Source: Curio 2023)

Interior Images – Fort Street Public School Building Ground Floor



Figure 5-65: Practical Activity Area (Source: Curio 2023)



Figure 5-66: Collaboration Learning Studio (Source: Curio 2023)



Figure 5-67 Presentation room (Source: Curio 2023)



Figure 5-68: WC (Source: Curio 2023).



Figure 5-69: Storeroom (Source: Curio 2023)



Figure 5-70: Stair 3 (Source: Curio 2023)

Level 1 Images – Fort Street Public School Building



Figure 5-71 WD 10 (Source: Curio 2023)



Figure 5-72: WD 11 (Source: Curio 2023)

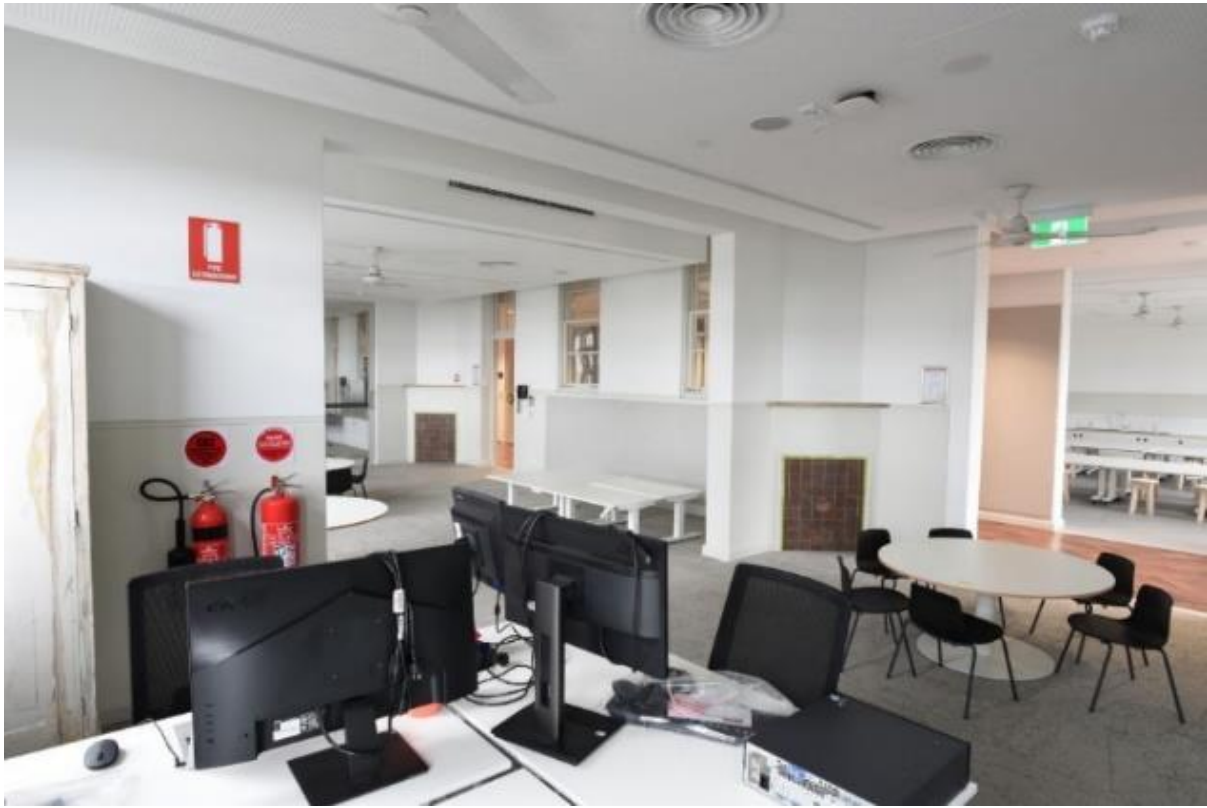


Figure 5-73: Open/independent learning room (Source: Curio 2023).



Figure 5-74 Collaboration learning studio (Source: Curio 2023)



Figure 5-75: Presentation (Source: Curio 2023)



Figure 5-76: Practical activity area (Source: Curio 2023).

Ground Floor

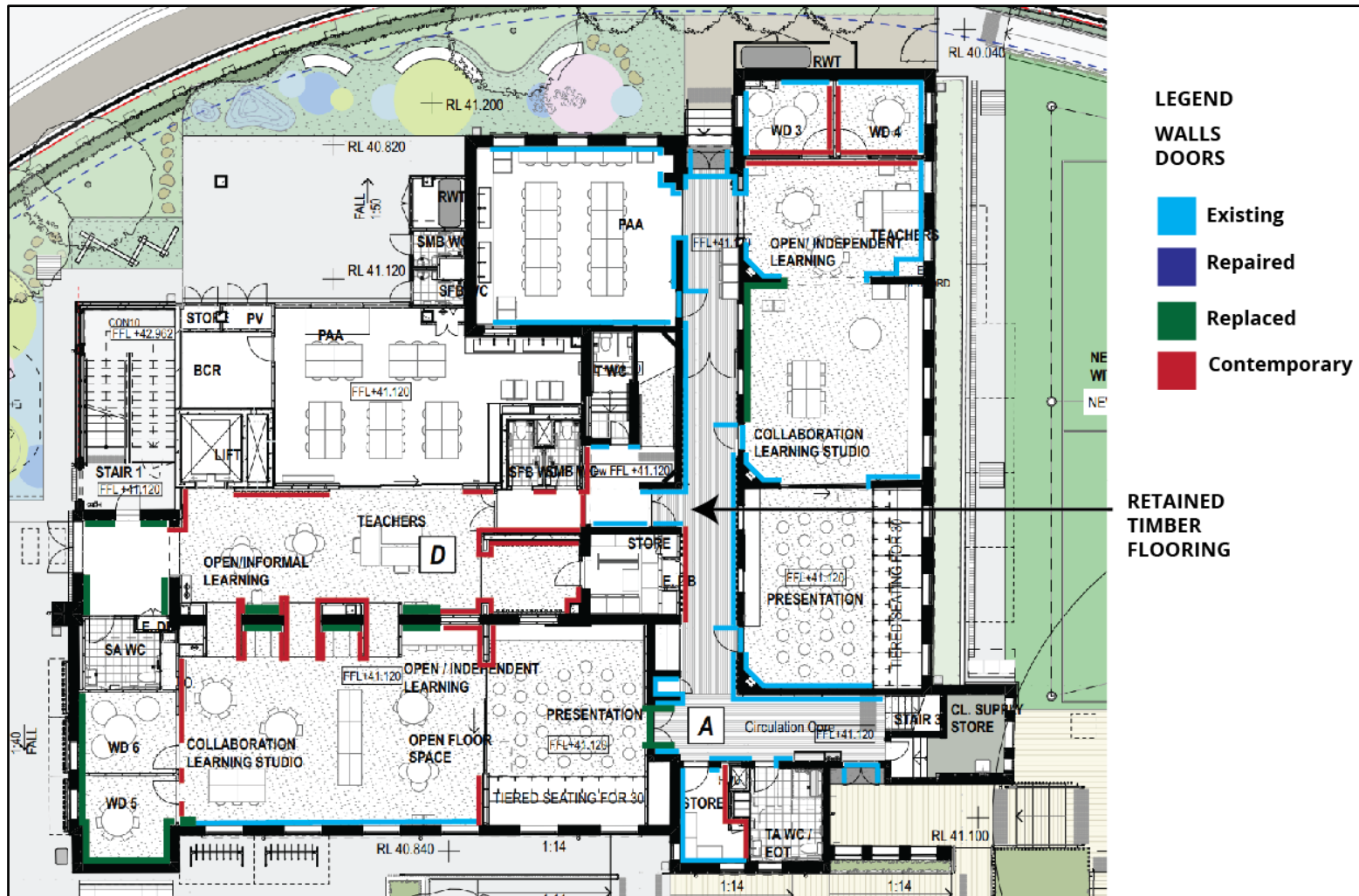


Figure 5-77: Fort Street Public School Building Ground floor plan – existing, repaired, replaced, contemporary fabric with Curio Overlay. FJC Studio

Level 1

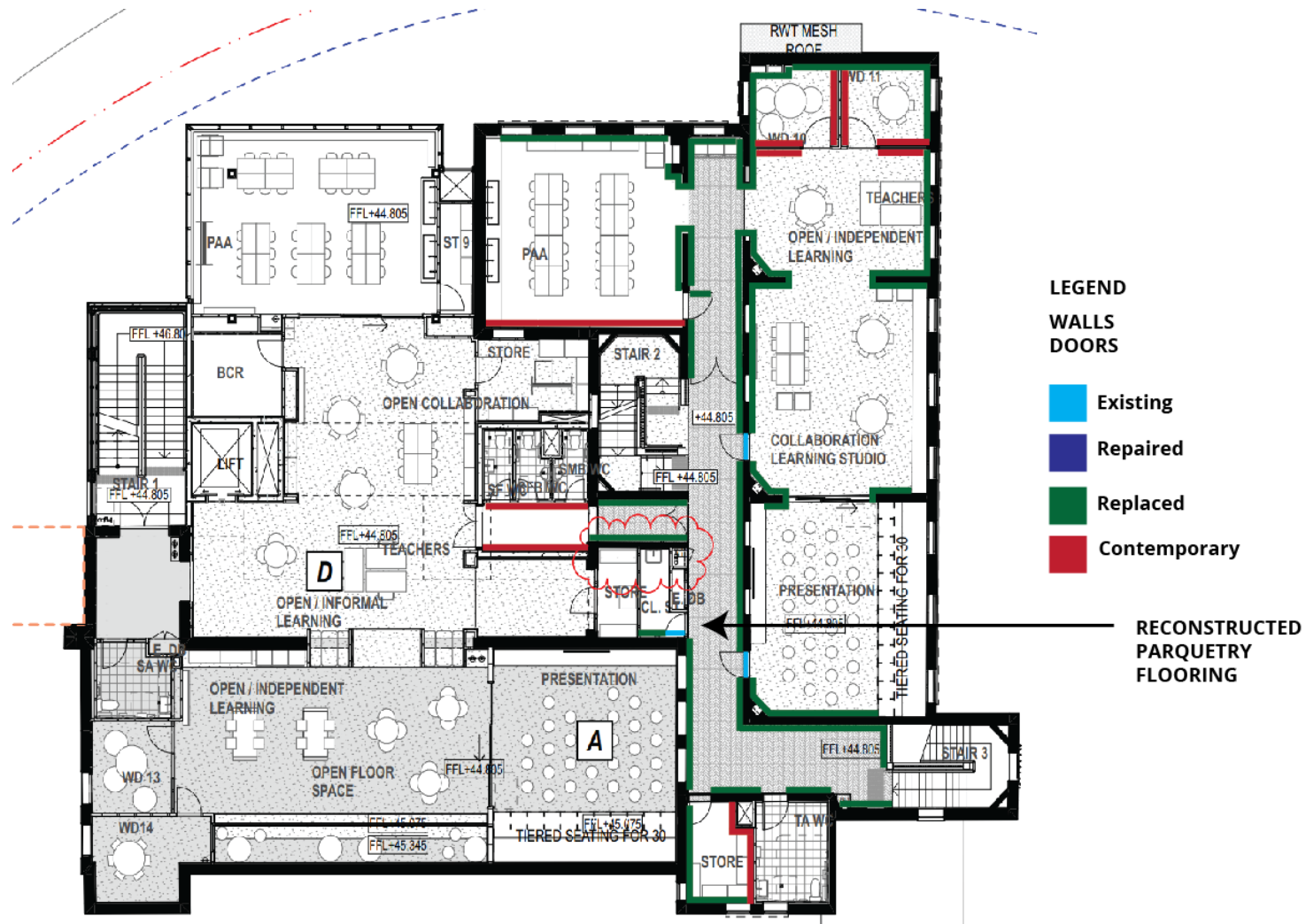


Figure 5-78: Fort Street Public School Building Level 1 floor plan – existing, repaired, replaced, contemporary fabric with Curio Overlay. FJC Studio

5.6. Cahill Expressway Cut

While the cutting for the Cahill Expressway is a dominant physical and visual feature in relation to the Fort Street Public School site, the Cahill Expressway is not part of the Fort Street Public School listing, but provides the unique geographic constraint to the physical curtilage of the Fort Street Public School Site. As part of the redevelopment of the site in 2023, there were no changes to the access across the Cahill Expressway, however, there is an approval for the creation of a new pedestrian access point across to Observatory Hill, as part of the existing SSDA approvals in place.



Figure 5-79: Cahill Expressway Cut, with Fort Street Public School on the left and the National Trust to the right background (Source: Curio 2023)

5.7 Contemporary Buildings

The following new school buildings were constructed as part of the redevelopment of Fort Street Public School which was completed in 2023. These buildings include the Communal Hall, OSHS/Canteen Kitchen (Building G), Windmill Wing (Building J and Building H) and the Staff Room (Building F).

5.7.1. Communal Hall, OSHS/Canteen Kitchen (Building G)

Building G consists of grey brick work, contemporary glazing with external louvres and has two hipped roofs with metal roof cladding. The larger part of building G contains the communal hall, whilst the smaller section of the building contains the canteen and kitchen.



Figure 5-80: Looking South towards the front elevation of Building G (Source:Curio 2023)

5.7.2. Windmill Wing (Building J and Building H)

Building J and Building H form the Windmill Wing. Building J and Building H employ simple geometric forms, grey face brick work, large areas of glazing, external louvres and metal balustrades. Building J connects to the Bureau of Meteorology via a glass bridge connection and consists of school learning spaces. Building H contains the sick bay, administrative rooms, and a storage room. Both buildings have outdoor rooftop play areas.



Figure 5-81: Looking South towards Building J and Building H. (Source: Curio 2023)



Figure 5-82: Looking East towards the Bureau of Meteorology and Building J. (Source: Curio 2023)



Figure 5-83: The south-western rear elevation of Buildings J and H with the Bureau of Meteorology to the rear of the photo (Source: Curio 2023)



Figure 5-84: Looking north towards the Southern façade of Building J and Building H standing outside the western side of the Messenger's Cottage. (Source: Curio 2023)

5.7.3. Staff Room (Building F)

Building F contains the staff room and staff bathrooms. The building is grey face brick work construction with a metal, hipped roof, and comprises simple geometric shape and forms, and large areas of glazing with external louvres.



Figure 5-85: Looking directly towards Building F. (Source: Curio 2023)



Figure 5-86: Looking towards the front elevation of building F (Source: Curio 2023)

5.8 Moveable Heritage

The 2016 Draft CMP prepared by TKD Architects refers to items of moveable heritage including honour rolls which were mounted on the side walls of the assembly hall, a memorial window in the main stair well and an associated wall mounted commemorative metal plaque. At the time of writing this CMP, the moveable heritage items were in the care of SINSW.

It should be noted that the stained-glass memorial window was incorrectly identified as moveable heritage, when in fact it forms part of the building fabric. As Curio did not have access to the moveable heritage items identified in the 2016 TKD CMP, images of these items have been sourced from the TKD CMP and it is understood that these items are in the care and control of Schools Infrastructure (Figure 5-88. To Figure 5-92.).

A number of artefacts were recovered during the archaeological excavations undertaken by Curio in 2021. These have been included as part of moveable heritage items and comprise:

- Meteorological artefact (I.e. evaporation basin) recovered from the area adjacent to the Messenger's Cottage (Figure 5-93. and Figure 5-94.);
- Artefact collection from the excavation of the Surgeon's Cottage (Figure 5-95. to Figure 5-96).

The evaporation basin is now with the Powerhouse Museum and is undergoing conservation. It has not been formally accessioned into the collection and a decision about possible display has not been made.

The artefact collection from the Surgeon's Cottage Excavation totals 693 individual items comprising glass, ceramic, bone, building materials shell and miscellaneous. It has been cleaned, bagged and a database prepared to curate and manage the collection. The database forms part of the records from the excavation and is included in the final excavation report for that work.

The bagged artefacts are now boxed in eight type 1 standard archive boxes (371 x 168 x250 mm) ready for storage and curation by Schools Infrastructure, in accordance with their permit requirements.

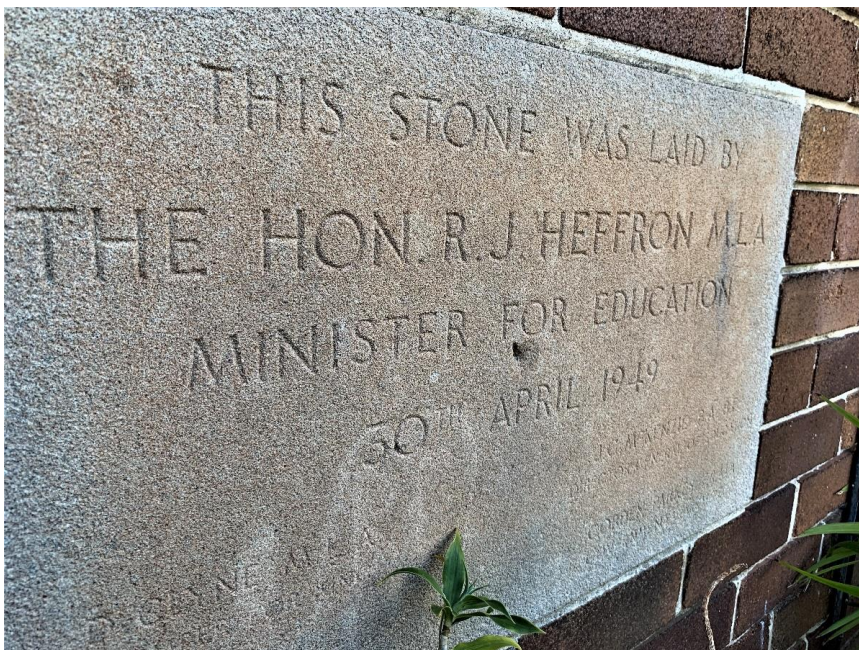


Figure 5-87: Environmental Education Centre Foundation Stone, 1949, as was mounted on southern side wall of the former EEC building (TKD, 2016)



Figure 5-88: Location of Fort Street Public School Foundation Stone, as was mounted on southern side wall of the former Environmental Education Centre Building (TKD, 2016)

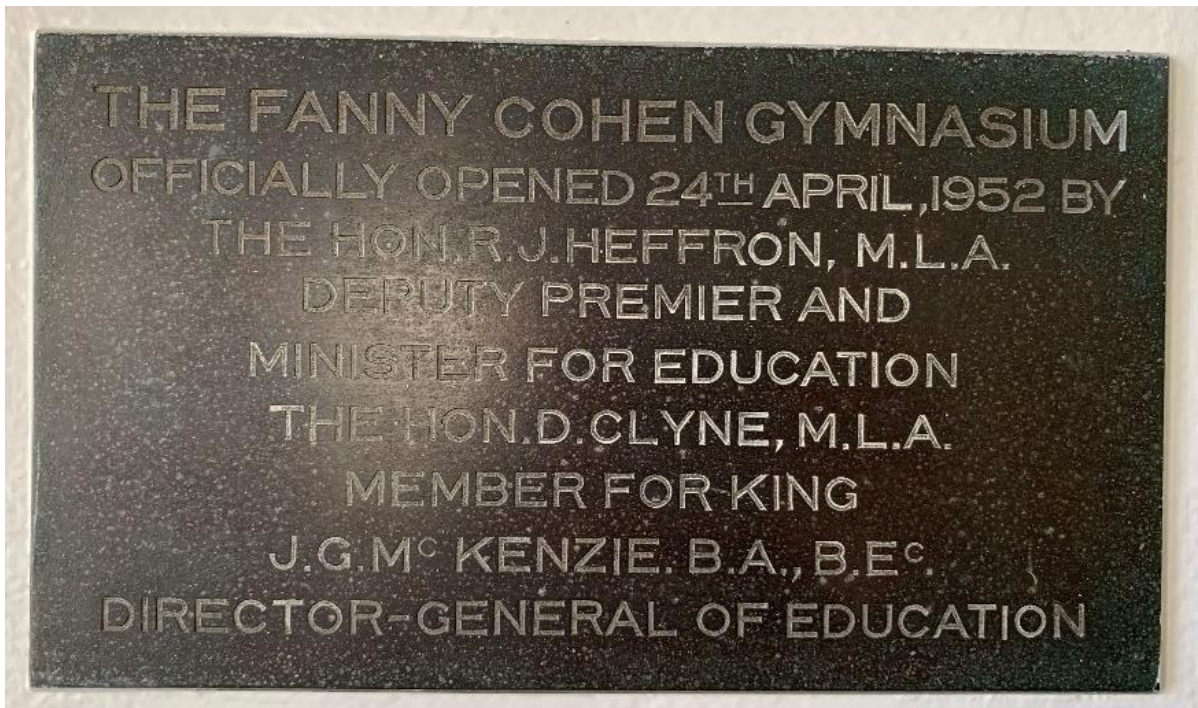


Figure 5-89: Opening Plaque, Fanny Cohen Gymnasium (1952) as was mounted on a wall in reception area of the former Environmental Education Centre building (TKD, 2016)



Figure 5-90: Memorial stained-glass window (left) (incorrectly identified as moveable heritage) and opening plaque (right). (Source: TKD 2016: Fig. 67)



Figure 5-91: Two of the honour rolls mounted on the side walls of the assembly hall of the Fort Street Public School Building (Source: TKD 2016: Fig. 68)



Figure 5-92: Copper evaporation basin immediately after excavation (Source: Curio, 2021)



Figure 5-93: Copper basin immediately after excavation (Source: Curio, 2021).

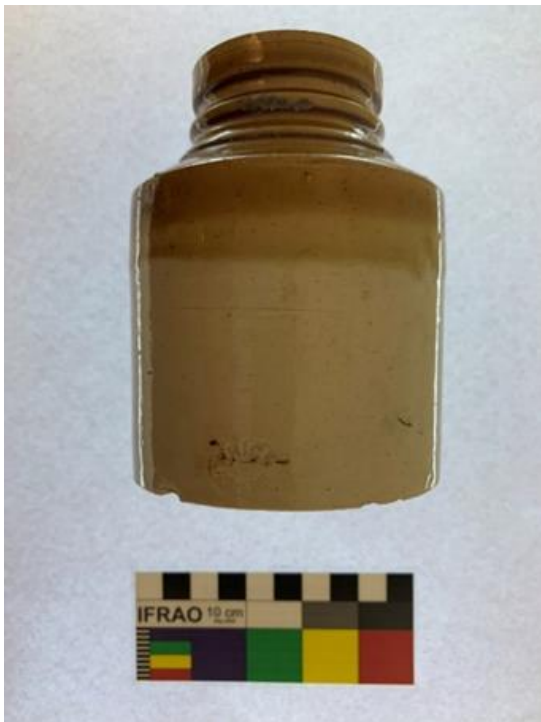


Figure 5-94: Complete Bristol-glazed food jar manufactured by Price of Bristol and dated from 1835 recovered from demolition deposit context (4-001). (Source: Curio, 2021)



Figure 5-95: Pins and glass beads recovered from context (4.008). (Source: Curio, 2021).



Figure 5-96: Slate and slate pencil recovered from demolition deposit context (1.002) and (4.002), respectively. (Source: Curio, 2021).



Figure 5-97: Two Streets ice-cream sticks, a tennis ball and a ¼ milk pint recovered from unstratified fills and (4.006) / (4.007) interface, respectively. (Source: Curio, 2021).

5.9 Archaeological Assessment and Post-Excavation Results

An Archaeological Assessment was prepared by AMBS in 2016 as part of the draft CMP. This assessment has since been superseded by archaeological research undertaken by Curio with the Registered Aboriginal Parties, leading up to, and during archaeological works undertaken as part of the major redevelopment of the site between 2019-2023.

Therefore, the following sections provide a summary of the AMBS assessment, where relevant, and the most updated data with respect to the Aboriginal and historical archaeological potential for the Fort Street Public School site drawn from the work undertaken by Curio up to, and including work completed in 2023. Appendix C, D and E provide full versions of the archaeological reports most relevant to this Conservation Management Plan.

Appendix C includes the *Historical Archaeological Research Design: Fort Street Public School* prepared by Curio (2019a), Appendix D includes the *Historical Archaeological Post-Excavation Report: Fort Street Public School* prepared by Curio (November 2023) and Appendix E include the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report: Fort Street Public School* prepared by Curio (2019c).

5.9.1. Aboriginal Archaeology

AMBS (2016, Section 3.4) concluded that:

On the basis of the registered Aboriginal sites in the region, a review of previous archaeological studies, and the environmental context of the study area, the following conclusions can be drawn regarding the potential presence of Aboriginal heritage sites within the landscape of the study area:

- *Aboriginal midden sites are one of the most common site types occurring across the landscape, and are the most likely site type to be present in the study area. Such midden deposits may include stone artefacts, if present;*
- *wide scale vegetation clearance has resulted in the removal of all original native vegetation, and there is therefore no potential for culturally modified trees surviving in the study area;*
- *axe grinding grooves, art and shelter sites are highly unlikely to be found in the study area due to the lack of suitable stone outcrops;*
- *excavations within the region indicate that high densities of artefacts can be present up to 500 metres from water sources, and that subsurface material may be much greater than indicated by surface numbers of artefacts.*

Given the study area's elevated location, which would have provided commanding views, access to resources along the shoreline, and access to fresh water and resources along the Tank Stream, encampment of Aboriginal people may have occurred in the vicinity.

There is potential for Aboriginal archaeological deposits to be present in areas within the study area which have experienced limited construction and other development impacts, specifically in the school yards north and east of the current school building, which have not been directly impacted by previous development. However, given the propensity of the local soils to experience significant sheet erosion following vegetation clearing, it is possible that any archaeological deposits in the area would have been disturbed.

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) was prepared by Curio Projects in 2019 (Curio Projects 2019c), which undertook a reassessment of Aboriginal archaeological potential across the Fort Street Public School site, in the context of recent investigations. The following has been extracted from Curio Projects 2019c.

The following assessment of Aboriginal archaeological potential within the study area is based on a combination of the environmental assessment, including original landform, possible levels of disturbance across the site, and original resource zones that would have been favourable to, or sustained local Aboriginal populations of the area prior to European settlement, in combination with known previous archaeological research in the vicinity of the subject site, or on comparable sites in Sydney. Consideration of these above factors determines the likelihood for Aboriginal archaeology, artefacts or physical objects to remain at the subject site in a subsurface capacity.

The following predictions are made with regards to Aboriginal archaeological potential within the study area:

- *In order for Aboriginal archaeological deposits to be present in situ within the study area, they would require the retention of natural soil profiles in the area that would be extant from 1788- and require these natural soils to be intact- subject to limited amounts of natural erosion.*
- *Artefact and midden sites are the most common site type in the region, and are the most likely site types to be present within the study area, should the site conditions allow the preservation of such a site (i.e. where historical land disturbance activities have not already removed all natural soil profiles)*
- *There may also be potential for isolated Aboriginal artefacts (stone artefacts and shells) to be present in a disturbed context.*
- *The study area has no potential for site types such as scarred trees, rockshelters and grinding grooves, as the natural features required for these types of sites are not present.*
- *It is highly likely that the study area landscape was occupied and used in some way by Aboriginal people prior to 1788- especially in consideration of the commanding presence and advantageous views from (what is now referred to as) Observatory Hill.*
- *The GyMEA soil landscape has a high propensity for sheet erosion following vegetation clearance, and this would have impacted the ability for the soils within the study area to retain an Aboriginal archaeological deposit.*
- *The study area has been subject to very high levels of historical ground disturbance and use since 1788 relating to the use of the site as a Military Hospital, Sydney Observatory activities/Bureau of Meteorology, and Fort Street Public School, that would likely have impacted and/or removed the majority of natural soil profiles.*

Overall, the Fort Street Public School study area is considered to have low potential for intact Aboriginal archaeological deposits to be present.

The archaeological testing of the site in 2019 (see below “Summary of Test Excavation Results”), the subsequent open area excavations and the archaeological monitoring of the civil works on the study area revealed extensive areas that had been disturbed by construction activities associated with a range of twentieth century construction, most notably the Cahill Expressway on the east and the annular road cutting that now defines the site. Other construction that has also affected the archaeological potential of the site includes demolitions and construction of twentieth century school buildings within the road cutting. As a result, no suitable areas of intact soil profile were identified during either the excavations or the monitoring which required testing for the presence of Aboriginal cultural material.

5.9.2. Historical Archaeology

AMBS (2016, Section 4.2) concluded that:

The potential for the area within the footprint of the school to contain historical archaeological remains is defined by the Cahill Expressway on-ramp, which surrounds and isolates the Fort Street Public School from the former Military Hospital/National School building, now the National Trust of Australia, to the south and the Sydney Observatory to the north.

The land between the school, as now defined by the Cahill Expressway on-ramp, and the Sydney Observatory, known as Flagstaff Park, has remained undeveloped. Until the construction of the school buildings, in particular the Primary School building on land north of the Messenger’s Cottage, the land had remained vacant. The ground around the school buildings is a combination of asphalt, adjacent to the Primary School building, and grass lawns adjacent to the former Messenger’s Cottage and Bureau of Meteorology building. The east-west brick wall immediately south of the Messenger’s Cottage and Bureau of Meteorology building is on the alignment of the northern boundary wall of the Military Hospital and the National School.

The area within the footprint of Fort Street School has the potential to retain structural features associated with the Military Hospital, the National School and the Observatory.

Historically, the area to the north of the boundary brick wall had remained undeveloped except for construction of the Messenger’s Cottage and the small stone and timber buildings to its west indicated on the Trigonometrical Survey Plan, but which are gone by Dove’s plan of 1880. These buildings may also have been associated with the observatory and its operation; however, this is not known. The area is now occupied by the Bureau of Meteorology building, which does not have a basement, and as such there is the potential that physical evidence of these buildings may be present.

The east-west boundary wall to the Military Hospital and National School is extant and is the earliest physical evidence of these structures surviving within the footprint of the school. There is potential that physical evidence associated with the construction of the wall is present within the trenches excavated for the wall foundations and adjacent areas.

To the south of the wall was the surgeon’s residence associated with the Military Hospital, re-used during the National School period as a dining room and kitchen, when adjacent school buildings were constructed. The area that had been occupied by the former surgeon’s residence, demolished in 1949, is now occupied by the

Environmental Education Centre, which does not have a basement. There is the potential for physical evidence of the surgeon's residence to survive beneath this building. Part of the building to the north of the Infant's School may survive at the south-west corner of the site.

Although not indicated on any plans or maps of Flagstaff Hill, rubbish pits, wells or cess pits were an essential feature of everyday life in the colony, and were frequently filled with an assortment of discarded artefacts, which may provide an insight into the daily lives of the people who lived in the associated buildings.

Reassessment of Historical Archaeological Potential

A Historical Archaeological Research Design (HARD) (Curio Projects 2019a) was prepared for the Fort Street Public School site to guide a program of historical archaeological test excavation undertaken at the site (July 2019- see relevant section below). The HARD included a reassessment of the historical archaeological potential of the Fort Street Public School site in accordance with seven identified historical phases of use of the site as follows.

Phase 1 (1788-1820)—Windmill Hill

It is considered that the study area generally has low to moderate potential to contain archaeological evidence related to the 1788-1820 use of the site, particularly relating to the 3rd Government Windmill (Smock Mill). Remains from this period may include:

- *Stone footings of the smock mill and/or other ephemeral evidence associated with the use of the site for mill activities.*
- *Evidence of the pre-settlement environment through to evidence of changes brought about to the environment through land clearing and early landscaping and development activities (potential to be recovered through palaeobotanical data retrieved from soil samples)*
- *Other evidence related to onsite activities from c1788-1820 for which we have very little detail or, to date, have remained undocumented including small outbuildings, postholes, remnant footings, fencelines, early rudimentary drainage attempts, pathways, and other remnant, fragmentary pockets of construction may also exist.*
- *Historical archaeological 'relics' recovered from wells, cesspits and rubbish dumps, if discovered, are likely to include a broad range of cultural materials that might provide an insight into the everyday life in early colonial NSW—evidence of the types of foods eaten, such as animal bones, oyster shells, seeds and other material evidence that helps to build the picture of the daily lives of early colonists.*

Phase 2 (c.1820-1850)—Military Hospital

It is considered that the study area generally has moderate to high potential to contain archaeological evidence related to the 1820-1850 military use of the site. Remains from this period may include:

Evidence associated with the Surgeon's Cottage and other outbuildings associated with the Military Hospital (such as kitchen, servant's quarters and outhouse), possibly towards the southern boundary of the Fort Street Public School study area. Evidence associated with this phase of the site's use is likely to include remnant fabric associated with the construction and use of the buildings—such as structural remains, footings, drainage, sewer systems, pathways, stone boundary walls, gardens and related landscaping elements.

Significant subsurface features such as cellars cut into the sandstone bedrock, known to be associated with the kitchen and/or surgeon's house.

Other evidence related to undocumented buildings and onsite activities from the Military Use period, or features for which we have very little detail, including small outbuildings, postholes, remnant footings, fencelines, pathways, and other remnant, fragmentary pockets of construction.

Phase 3 (c.1850-1890s)—Fort Street National School, Observatory and Messengers Cottage

It is considered that the study area generally has moderate to high potential to contain archaeological evidence related to the 1850–1890s early school and observatory use of the site. Remains from this period may include:

Deeper subsurface features such as wells, cisterns, and rubbish dumps, which may be present within the study area, likely undocumented, potentially cut into the sandstone bedrock.

Evidence of the two cottages originally located to the west of the Messengers Cottage (i.e. see 1855 historical plan), assumed to be associated with Observatory activities at the time.

Other evidence related to undocumented buildings and onsite activities from early school use and Observatory activities (i.e. messengers' cottage), or features for which we have very little detail, including other school outbuildings (kitchen, sheds, privies, etc.), former classrooms, postholes, remnant footings, fencelines, pathways, gardens, other remnant, fragmentary pockets of construction, and other drainage and landscape features.

Phase 4 (c.1890s-1900s) and 5 (1905-1918)—Ongoing School Use and Additions

It is considered that the study area generally has moderate to high potential to contain archaeological evidence related to the 1890s-1918 ongoing school use of the site. Remains from this period may include:

Other evidence related to undocumented buildings and onsite activities from early school use and Observatory activities (i.e. Messengers' Cottage), or features for which we have very little detail, including small outbuildings, postholes, remnant footings, former classrooms e.g. carpentry shed), fence lines, pathways, gardens, other remnant, fragmentary pockets of construction, and other drainage and landscape features.

Phase 6 (c.1919-1950)—Bureau of Meteorology, New Fort St School and Cahill Expressway

It is considered that the study area generally has high potential to contain archaeological evidence related to the 1919–1950 use of the site. Remains from this period may include:

Structural remains relating to demolished school buildings from this period, such as structural remains/footings of the Infants School (although it is considered likely that the majority of the Infants School was removed for the Cahill Cutting), additions and alterations made to the former military buildings (Surgeons' Cottage, kitchen etc) in their adaptation for school use.

Evidence associated with use of the site by the Bureau of Meteorology, including undocumented outbuildings, relics and artefact deposits associated with the construction and/or use of the MET building, use by the Bureau of the Messengers Cottage and surrounds, use of the site as the Bureau weather station etc.

Evidence for fill and soil movement associated with the construction of the Cahill Cutting.

Phase 7 (c.1950-1990s) and 8 (1990s–Present)—High School Relocation, National Trust and Fort Street Public School

It is considered that the study area generally has moderate to high potential to contain archaeological evidence related to the later use of the site (1950s–Present). Remains from this period may include:

Ephemeral and artefactual evidence of school use.

Evidence of the demountable classrooms erected to the west of the MET building (although considering the semi-permanent nature of these structures, they are unlikely to leave a substantial archaeological signature.

Summary of Test Excavation Results

Historical archaeological test excavation was undertaken at the Fort Street Public School site in July 2019 (Curio Projects 2019b), in accordance with a Section 60 excavation permit issued by the NSW Heritage Division in May 2019. Seven archaeological test excavation trenches (Test Trench 1-7) were excavated within the Fort Street Public School study area, along with a further three pits (Pits 8-10) excavated by environmental scientists under archaeological supervision (Figures 5-98 to 5-101).

The major feature exposed during the test excavation was the brick footings of the former surgeon's house below the Environmental Education Centre building (Test Trenches 4 and 6), confirming the presence of substantial evidence of the surgeon's house brick footings and a suggestion of an attached outbuilding retained within the Fort Street Public School site. While not encountered during the July 2019 test excavation investigation, the Fort Street Public School site retains further un-investigated archaeological potential for occupation deposits and deeper sub-surface features.

The test excavation also revealed potentially intact soil profiles (Test Trench 5, Environmental Pit 8 & 9) demonstrating potential for archaeological remains to be present in areas surrounding the former Environmental Education Centre and adjacent to the Messenger's Cottage. Test Trenches 1-3 revealed substantial modern truncation of the profile at the crest of the site and demonstrated the extensive nature of construction disturbance surrounding the main Fort Street Public School building.

Test Trenches 1 and 2 were located to investigate the potential for evidence of the third government windmill and early quarrying, however recovered no archaeological evidence of this former feature—with investigation demonstrating substantial modern truncation of the soil profile at the crest of the site and extensive nature of construction disturbance around the main Fort Street Public School building.



Figure 5-98: Remnant footings of Surgeons Cottage on northern side of EEC (Source: Curio 2019).



Figure 5-99 Remnant footings of Surgeons Cottage on southern side of EEC (Source: Curio 2019).



Figure 5-100: Historical Archaeological Test Excavation Trenches Location (Source: Curio 2019b, drawn by B. Owens)

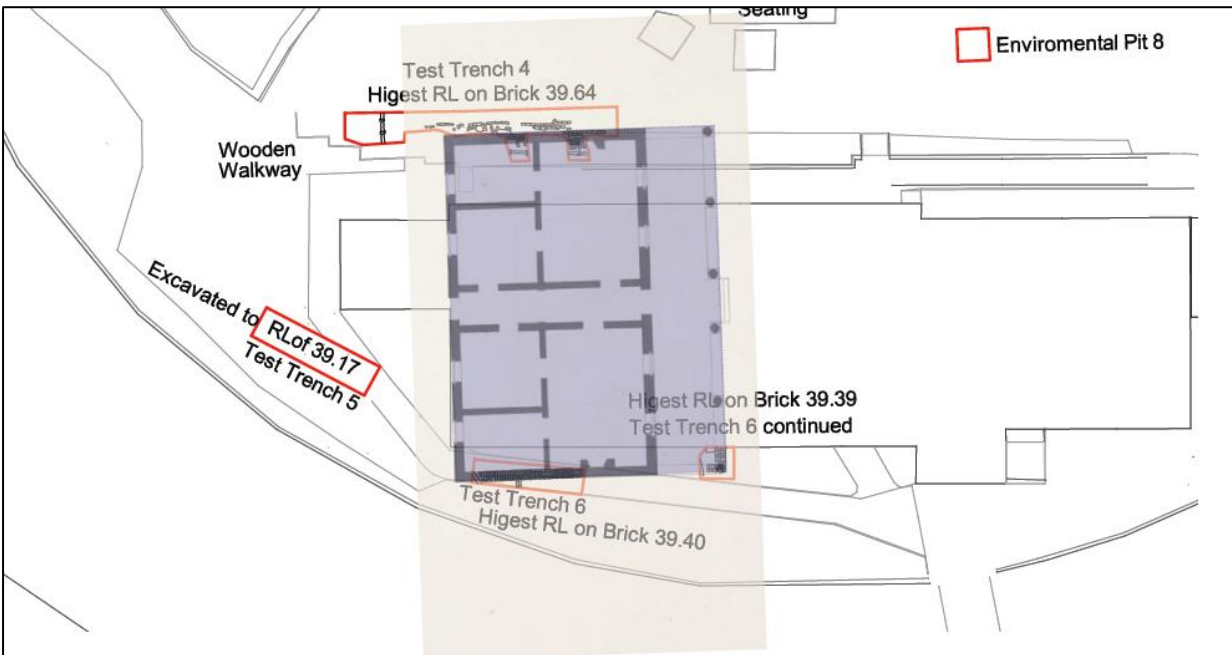


Figure 5-101 Overlay of Surgeons' Cottage Plan (1824) on archaeological survey plan.

On the basis of the results of the test excavations an open area excavation was proposed on the site of the Surgeons' Cottage with archaeological monitoring and Unexpected Finds Procedure employed across the remainder of the site.

The open area excavation of the Surgeons' Cottage took place in September 2021. The excavation revealed approximately 60% of the structural footprint as intact – the remainder being removed or severely impacted by the 1948 demolitions and subsequent construction activities. Only a small amount of occupation deposit was recovered from the excavation – the remainder having been removed, possibly during refurbishment of the cottage in the early twentieth century.

The monitoring work also revealed little in the way of substantive features or deposits.

Conclusion from the Excavations

The open area excavations and the monitoring revealed a site that had demonstrated substantial areas of disturbance. This disturbance had consequently removed or damaged the archaeological remains of the occupation of the site by the surgeons of the nearby Military Hospital. As a result, the ability of the structural remains on the site and the artefacts excavated during the archaeological work had a limited ability to answer the research design questions in a substantive way.

No significant areas of intact soil profile were identified which might require testing for the presence of Aboriginal cultural material.

Nevertheless, significant remains of the 1815 Surgeon's Cottage were exposed and recorded and remain in-situ below Building J of the new school complex.

A small collection of artefacts was recovered from the archaeological program that is associated with the occupation of the cottage, and later school, that should be curated on site. The results of the excavation, the remains of the cottage and the associated artefacts have interpretation potential.

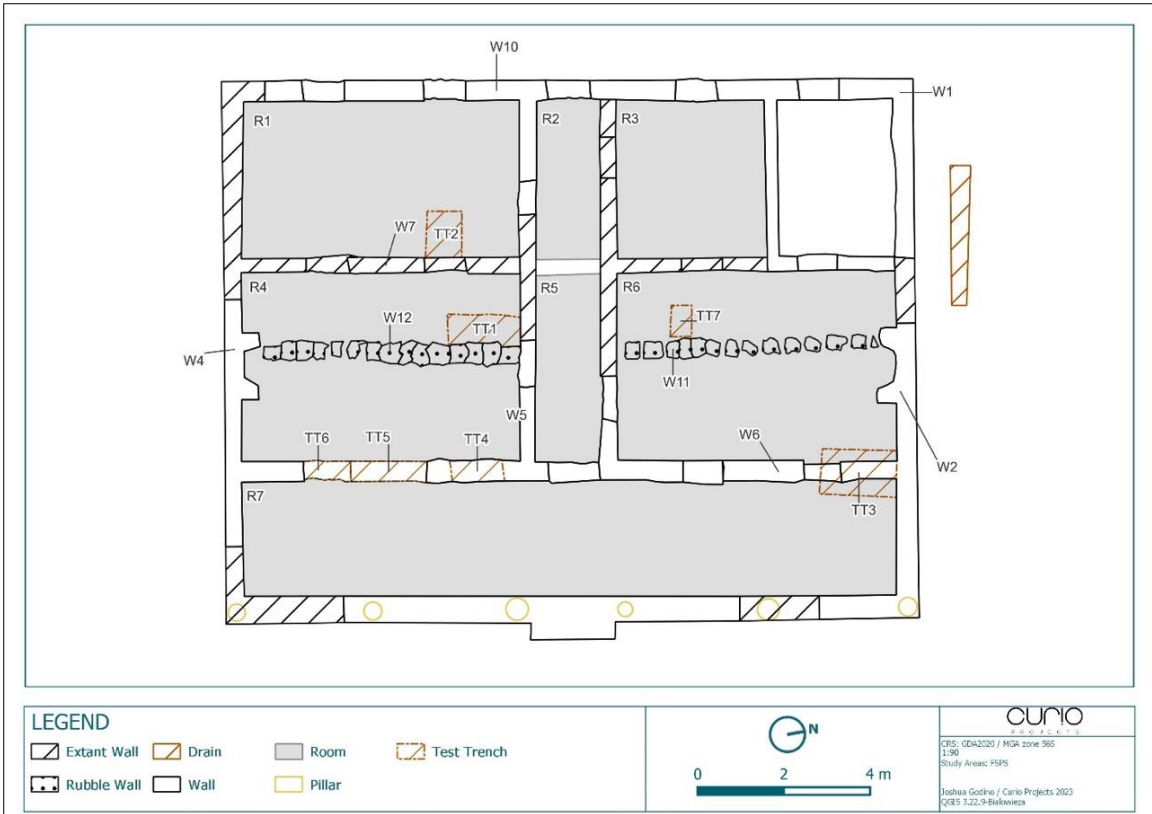


Figure 5-102: Overview of the Surgeon's Cottage excavation area showing the location of Test Trenches across the building footprint and structural features exposed during the archaeological program. Prepared by Matthew Kelly and digitised by Joshua Godino. (Source: Curio 2023)

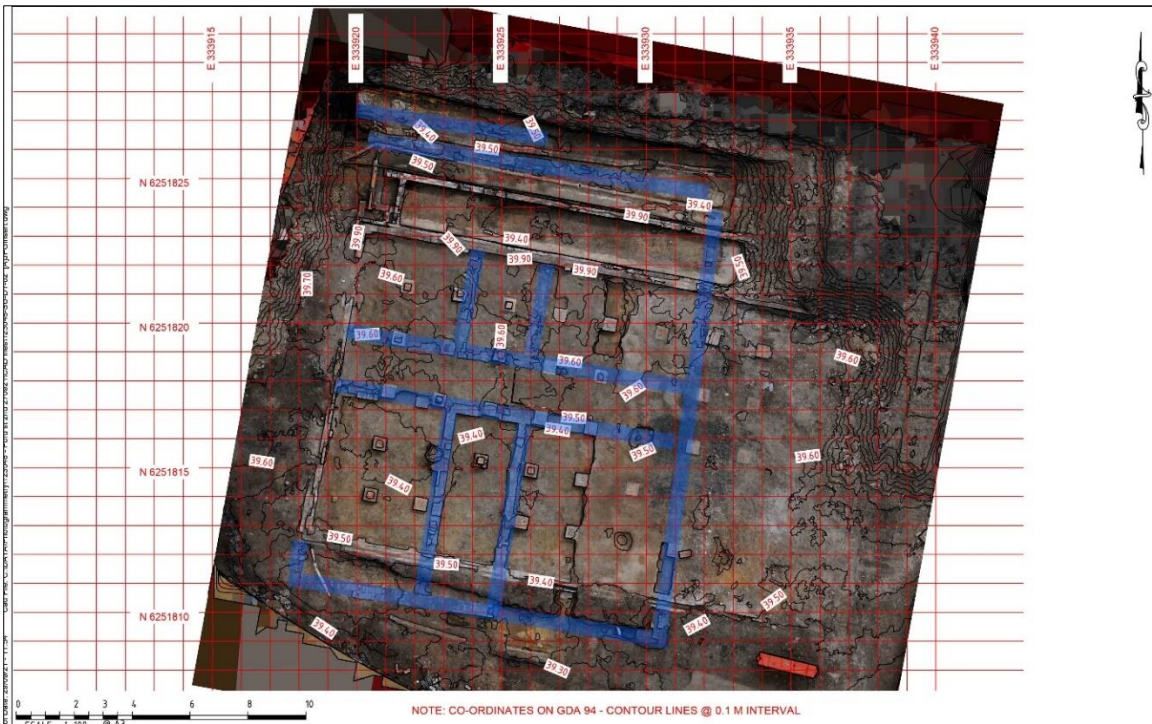


Figure 5-103: Survey of Surgeons' Cottage remains that remain in situ below Building J.

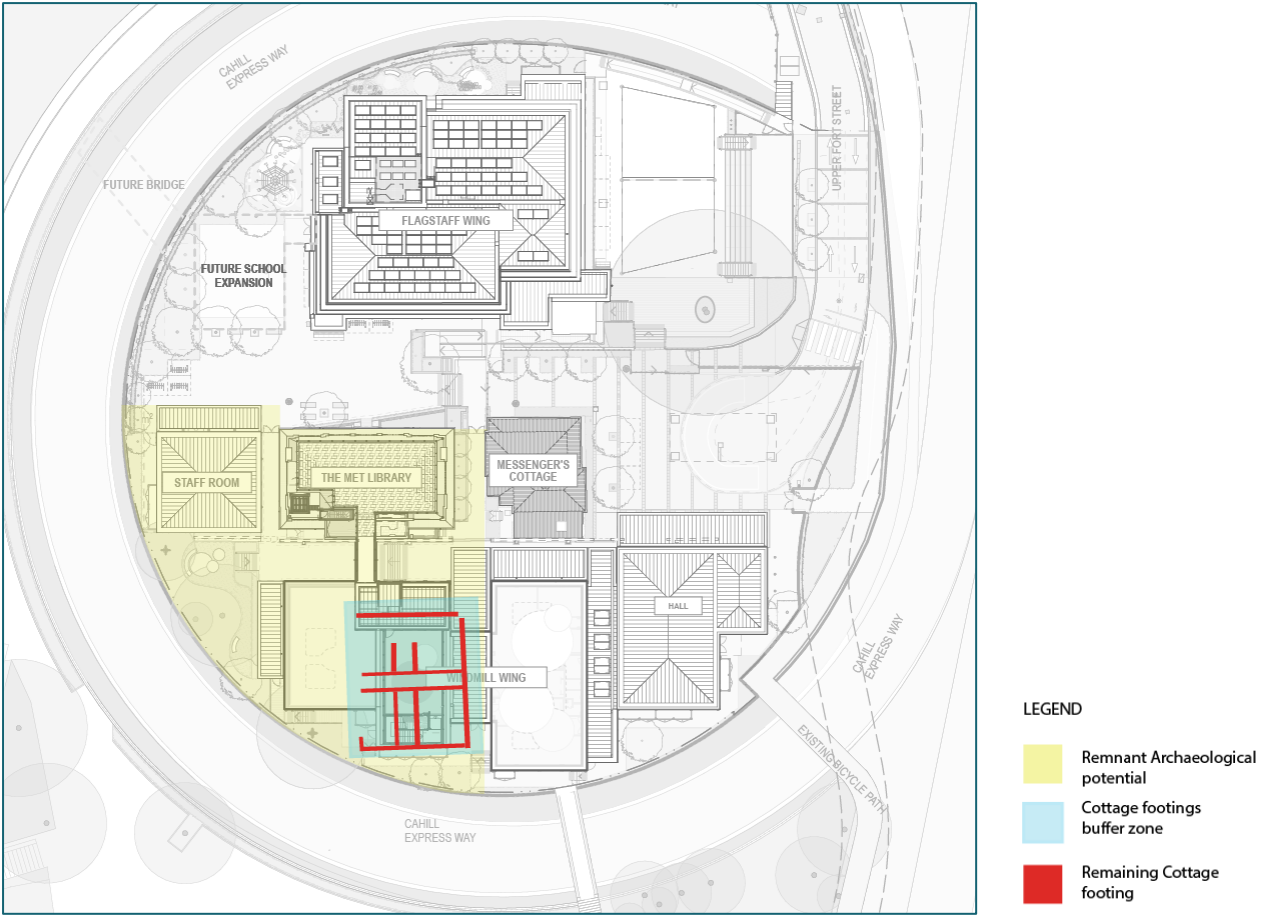


Figure 5-104: Archaeological sensitivity diagrammatic plan.

6. Comparative Analysis

Comparative Analysis

6.1 Introduction

The following section has been extracted directly from Section 4 of the draft CMP by TKD Architects, as indicated by the use of italics.

The discussion below compares aspects of Fort Street Public School with other places in New South Wales to establish its relative significance in terms of cultural heritage values. Aspects such as the design of school buildings during the inter war period, the influence of architect Harry Rembert on educational buildings designed in the Government Architect's Branch (GAB) from the second half of the 1930s onwards, and the relationship of Fort Street Primary School to the schools designed in the post World War II decades are examined.

6.2 Fort Street Public School Building

The advent of Modernist design in the GAB is credited to Edward Henry Rembert. Rembert, who was educated at Sydney Technical College, registered as an architect in 1924 and joined the Department of Public Works in August 1926. He was confirmed in the post of architect in 1942 and subsequently appointed senior designing architect in July 1947. Rembert worked under several Government Architects. They included Richard McDonald Seymour Wells, and Edwin Smith, who reorganised the GAB in 1930 to absorb the Architect's Branch of the Education Department of Public Instruction. The work undertaken by the GAB during the tenures of Wells and Smith tended to be conservative in character. Similarly, the schools designed by the architects of the Department of Education during the 1920s were restrained and relatively plain, generally brick buildings with tiled hipped roofs, and repetitive bays of windows relieved by decorative detailing derived from classical architecture around entries. In 1931 the GAB of the Department of Public Works and the architectural section of the Department of Education were amalgamated, most likely as an effort to reduce costs during the Depression.²⁹

The GAB undertook a tentative and early foray into more modern design when the isolation block at Crown Street Women's Hospital was documented. This building, which demonstrated a mild Art Deco influence in external decorative detailing, was officially opened at the beginning of June 1930. However, traditional architectural idioms predominated over the following decade. Some of Harry Rembert's work from the first half of the decade is polite and restrained in effect, relying on proportions and massing relieved by elements such as arcades and loggias to emphasis key parts of the building. This is demonstrated by Quirindi Courthouse (1930) and the Children's Ward at Parramatta Hospital (1935). These buildings are little different from those documented by other architects of the GAB during the 1930s.

Edwin Smith's successor was Cobden Parkes, who served as government architect from October 1935 until 1958. During the second half of the 1930s the GAB was responsible for an increasing number of significant Modernist buildings, most particularly hospitals. Examples of which include the Heffron and Delaney Buildings at Prince Henry Hospital (designed circa 1934), Tweed District Hospital at Murwillumbah (1936) and Jeffrey House at Parramatta Hospital (1937).

²⁹ "Public Service", Sydney Morning Herald, 30 May 1931, p.14.

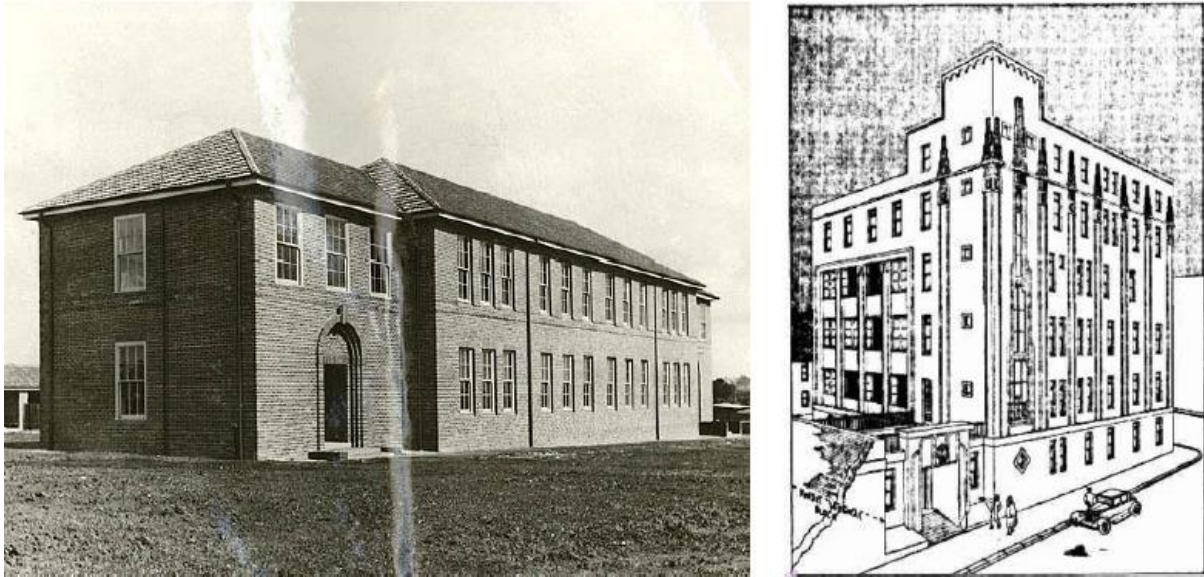


Figure 6-1: Auburn West Public School, designed in 1929, is characteristic of schools built in NSW during the 1920s (left). More modern architectural forms began to emerge in public buildings such as Crown Street Women's Hospital isolation block (right). (Sources: State Records digital id no. 4346_a020_a020000301; Sydney Morning Herald, 9 January 1929., TKD 2016 Fig. 119)

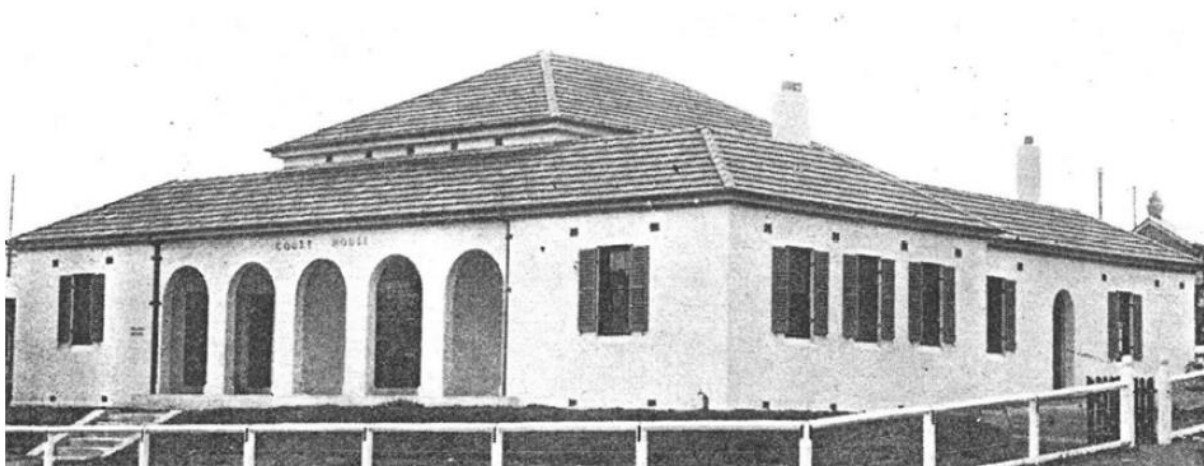


Figure 6-2: The restrained and conservative architectural expression of buildings from the first half of the 1930s attributed to Harry Rembert: Quriindi Courthouse, completed in 1930. (Source: Building, 12 August 1931, TKD 2016 Fig. 120)

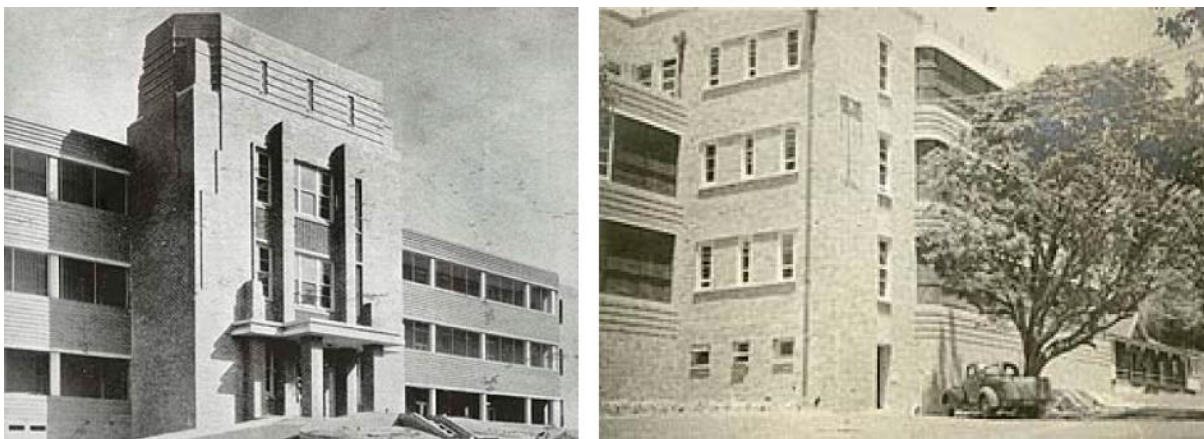


Figure 6-3: Early Modernism at Prince Henry Hospital (left) and Tweed District Hospital (right). (Source: State Records digital id no's 4346_a020_a020000190 and 4346_a020_a020000234, TKD 2016 Fig. 121)

Parkes, although conservative in outlook, encouraged Harry Rembert's tendencies towards Modernism. Rembert was responsible for the design of numerous public buildings, including schools, hospitals, courthouses, police stations and technical colleges during the 1930s and 1940s. By the mid-1930s his work reflected the influence of prominent Dutch architect Willem Dudok, who is noted for public buildings constructed in brick and dramatic asymmetrical compositions of square and rectangular geometric masses³⁰ Significant buildings attributed to Rembert and constructed during the 1930s include the Hoskins Block at Sydney Technical College (1937-38) and major buildings (1934-38) at Tighes Hill Technical College. During the 1940s Rembert's output included the Maternity Block at the Royal Hospital for Women at Paddington (1938) and St Margaret's Hospital in Darlinghurst (1941).



Figure 6-4: The blocky brick composition and massing of Fort Street Public School (left) is very reminiscent of buildings by Willem Dudok such as the Bavinckschool in Hilversum (right). (Sources: Building, August 1942; archinect.com – Ossip van Duivenbode photograph. TKD 2016 Fig. 122)



Figure 6-5: Significant educational buildings attributed to Harry Rembert include the Hoskins Block at Sydney Technical College (left) and the Trades Block at Tighes Hill Technical College (right). (Source: Roy Lumby, TKD 2016 Fig. 123)

The depression of the early 1930s curtailed the construction of new school buildings in the early 1930s, but picked up from 1933. Many schools were designed and documented in the Government Architect's office during the second half of the 1930s and early 1940s. Although most were conservative buildings with conventional hipped and tiled roofs with a minor acknowledgement of modern design by the inclusion of Art Deco influenced entry porches, a small number were, like Fort Street, more advanced aesthetically. They included what was originally called Bondi Central Domestic Science School (later Dover Heights Domestic Science School and now Rose Bay Secondary College) and East Maitland Boys High School (now Maitland High School). Documentation for both schools was completed in 1941. Rembert may have been involved with the drawings for the Domestic Science School, unlike Fort Street where the sketch design and documentation was undertaken by other personnel. However, it is confirmed that Rembert exercised a

³⁰ http://greatbuildings.com/architects/Willem_Marinus_Dudok.html, accessed 14 December 2015.

major influence on the building's design.³¹ East Maitland Boys' High School opened in June 1943 but delays in construction meant that the Dover Heights Domestic Science School was not completed until 1947³² Both were consistent in character with Fort Street Public School, sharing similar asymmetrical massing, extensive planes of brickwork and horizontal parapets concealing roofs. They also shared common planning features such as linear organisation, grouping of functions and double loaded corridors. The schools were, however, much larger in scale.

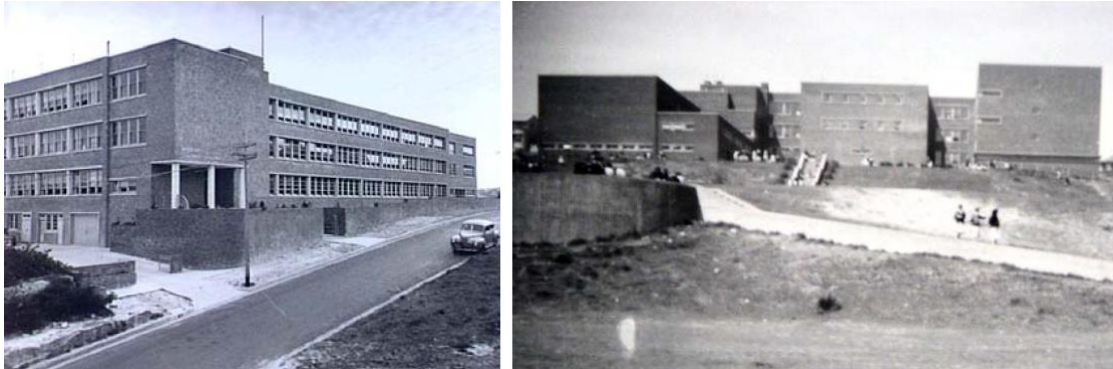


Figure 6-6: Two views of the Dover Heights Domestic Science School (now Rose Bay Secondary College) photographed around the time the school was completed (left) and in 1955 (right). (Source: Waverley Library Picnum 5741 and File 002/002556. TKD 2016 Fig. 124)

In 1947 Harry Rembert was appointed Senior Design Architect, increasingly less involved with the design process but having responsibility for the architectural design of the entire office. However, he became mentor to a talented generation of young trainee architects. Amongst the last projects he is credited with is the Infants section of the Moree Public School,³³ documented in 1949 but not completed until 1957. The building was more conservative in detail and architectural expression than its pre-war predecessors. At least one building constructed for a denominational school in the post war period recalls the advanced buildings designed and influenced by Harry Rembert. The first stage of St Francis de Sales Regional College at Leeton, a secondary school, was constructed between 1954 and 1956 to the design of local architects Steven O'Halloran and William Purtell. Its large areas of plain brickwork, massing and balance of horizontal and vertical elements are characteristic of the Inter War Functionalist style and the Rembert buildings.



Figure 6-7: Initial stage of St Francis de Sales Regional College, 1956. (Source: flickr.com, TKD 2016 Fig. 125)

³¹ Peter Webber, E H Rembert: the life and work of the Sydney architect, 1902-1966, p.45.

³² "Opening of Home Science School", Sydney Morning Herald, 18 September 1949, p.16.

³³ Russel Jack, The Work of the NSW Government Architect's Branch – 1958-1973, Volume 1, p.120. Rembert was not involved with preparation of drawings, which were the work of architect Robert Maclurcan

Notwithstanding Rembert's example, the design of school buildings within the GAB remained conservative and functional for much of the 1950s. Pre-war concepts informed design with only minor changes taking place until the introduction of the Wyndham Scheme in 1962. Planning remained linear in character. Steel framing allowed the introduction of larger areas of glazing. New building technologies such as glazed metal curtain walls found their way into some buildings and presented an up to date appearance, if nothing else. However, the loss of verandahs and extensive glass proved unsatisfactory because of the sun penetrating classrooms.³⁴



Figure 6-8: Primary school buildings from the 1950s demonstrate the tendency towards increased areas of glazing and access to sunlight in buildings: Goulburn North Public School (left) and Hornsby Public School (right). (Source: State Records digital ID 15051_a047_005925 and 15051_a047_006629, TKD 2016 Fig. 126)

During the 1950s the GAB took on a number of very talented trainees, who were mentored by Harry Rembert, by now senior designing architect. In 1958 young architect Michael Dysart, who had joined the GAB in the first half of the 1950s, developed an innovative new concept for primary school buildings. It consisted of a single ring of classrooms around a central court, wide eaves overhangs, external access within the court, cross ventilation and lighting from two sides of classrooms. A version was constructed at Belmont Primary School (1964). It was christened the "doughnut plan" and developed into a standard school typology.³⁵ The precedent established by Rembert for the design of modern schools was at last fulfilled.

Individual primary school buildings of architectural distinction were built during the early 1960s. One example was the Modernist Ultimo Public School located on a constrained inner city site. It dealt with its proximity to a busy road and western exposure by restricting fenestration and recessing the wall plane behind horizontal canopies and projecting end walls. Another was the public school in Mica Street, Broken Hill, which was designed to deal with the climatic conditions of the town and was influenced by the doughnut plan. Light was drawn into classrooms from central courts, leaving small areas of glazing in the perimeter walls. Louvered roof fascias, ventilated roof spaces and local stone was used in masonry walls.³⁶

³⁴ Jack, Volume 1, pp.120-121.

³⁵ "Country School, New South Wales", *Architecture in Australia*, Volume 47 Number 3: 46-47, July-September 1958; Jack, Volume 1, pp.93-94 and Volume 2, pp.12-15.

³⁶ Jack, Volume 1, pp.122-123.



Figure 6-9: Model of the “doughnut plan” devised by Michael Dysart. (Source: <http://architectureau.com/articles/designing-australian-schools/>, TKD 2016 Fig. 127)



Figure 6-10: Ultimo Public School (left) and Broken Hill Public School in Mica Street (right). (Sources: City of Sydney Archives NSCA CRS 47/2361; Google Street View., TKD 2016 Fig. 128)

During the second half of the 1960s the GAB Schools Building Research and Development Group looked into the changing needs of primary schools. There were fewer pupils in each class and curriculums had been revised and expanded. There was also a requirement for flexibility to meet new needs in the future. A new concept, designed by architect R Bailey, emerged. It was known as the cluster plan and was an alternative to the established linear plan. The cluster plan consisted of groups of classrooms, which incorporated ablutions facilities, small multi-purpose spaces for group work and operable walls to provide double class spaces if needed. Primary and infants school components were integrated by centralised administration, library, food service and common room areas. The design was compact to overcome sprawling, informal in character and domestic in scale. Each block had central corridors only two

classrooms long and was linked to each other by covered ways. A more compact and economical version was also developed at the same time.³⁷

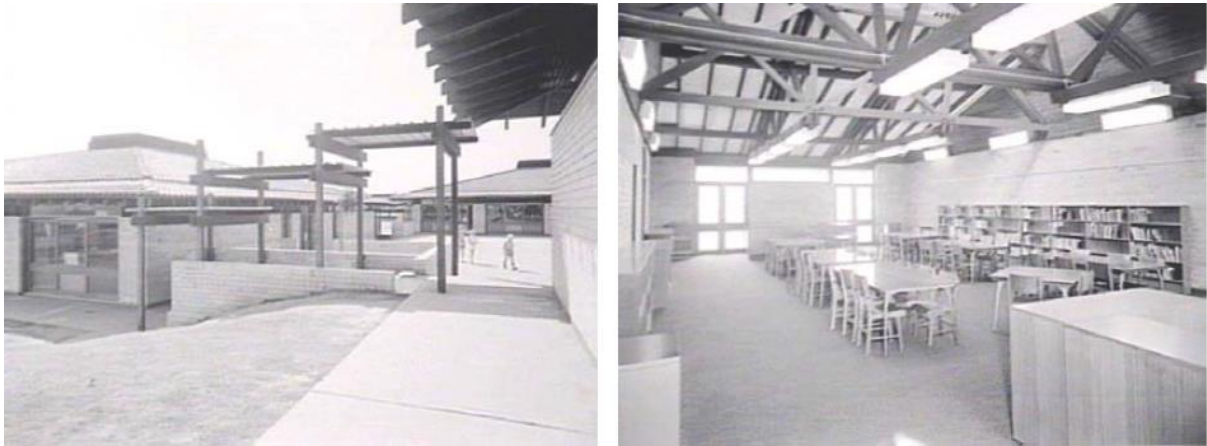


Figure 6-11: Tregear Primary School, designed in 1967, was an early example of cluster planning. (Source: SLNSW digital order no. d2_35487 and d2_35483., TKD 2016 Fig. 129)

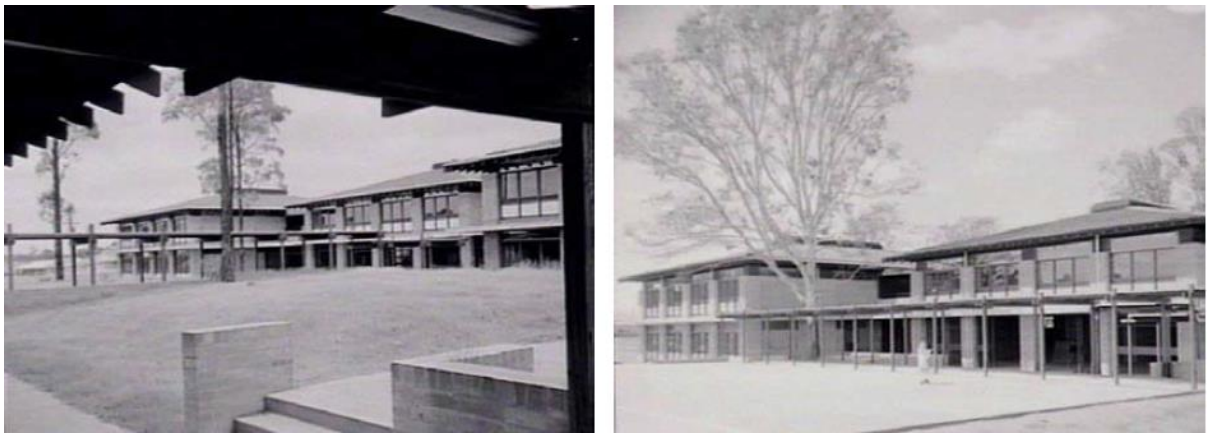


Figure 6-12: Lethbridge Park Primary School, designed in 1968 (left) and Blackett Primary School, designed in 1970 (right) are other early examples of cluster planning. The pyramidal tiled roofs and similarities in scale and building form were common features of these types of schools. (Source: SLNSW digital order no. d2_45710 and d2_39187., TKD 2016 Fig. 130)

6.3 Messenger's Cottage

The Messenger's Cottage was a pragmatic and low-cost solution to housing an employee of Sydney Observatory. Originally consisting of two rooms, it was subsequently enlarged to include verandahs and a third room. The most directly comparable buildings to it are probably the two cottages in the grounds of Sydney Observatory - the signal master's cottage (also known as the signal station) and the messenger's cottage, both of which were associated with the Fort Phillip signal station.

The location of each of these three cottages in relation to each other are depicted in Figure 6.13.

³⁷Jack, Volume 1, pp.123-125

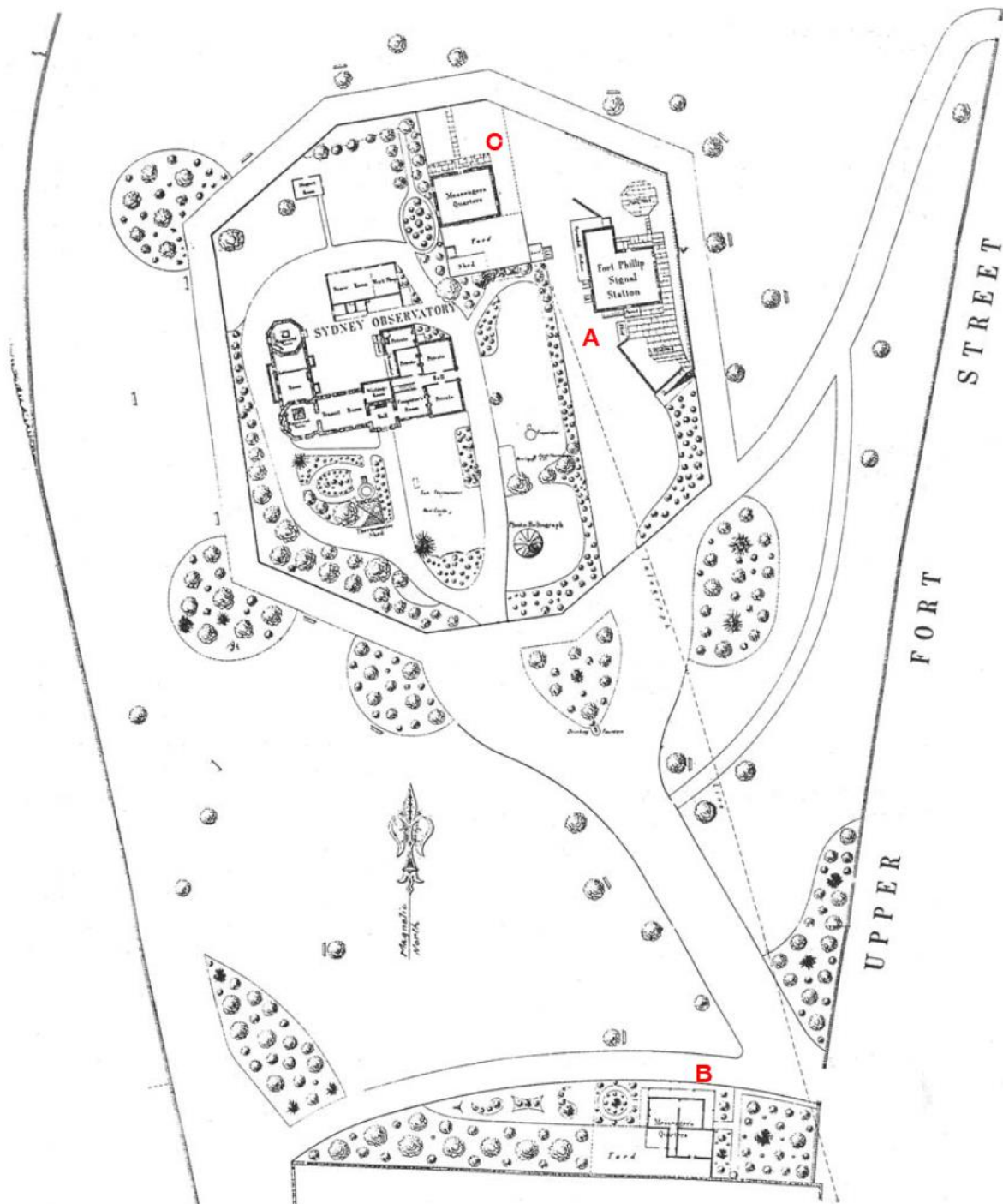


Figure 6-13: The three cottages associated with Fort Phillip and Sydney Observatory are indicated on this section of a map of Observatory Hill drawn around 1880. The Signal Station (signal master's cottage) is at A, the Observatory Messenger's Cottage at B and the Signal Station Messenger's Cottage at C. (Source: reproduced in Kerr, p.28. TKD 2016, Fig. 131)

6.3.1. Signal Station (Signal Master's Cottage)

The signalman's cottage was built to house the signal master at Fort Phillip and functioned both as workplace and residence. A flagstaff was initially erected in the 1790s on Dawe's Point to provide signals for shipping. By the first half of the 1840s the signal operative's job had become so demanding and responsible that he was paid a substantial salary and provided with quarters. These were initially accommodated by a hut and the windmill tower in the grounds of the Fort. During the second half of the 1840s this increasingly inadequate housing was replaced by a stone cottage designed in the office of Colonial Architect Mortimer Lewis. Funding for the cottage was approved by the colonial government at the

end of 1846 but tenders for its construction were not advertised until the beginning of December 1847. The builders commenced work the following month.³⁸ The stone cottage was completed during 1848. Its hipped roof appears to have been covered with slate. It straddled the rampart of the Fort so was partially two storeys high. It contained four rooms on the upper level, beneath which were the kitchen and service areas. The cottage was subsequently enlarged around the end of the 1850s and early 1860s.³⁹

According to James Semple Kerr, the original 1840s section, particularly the upper level, was notable for its high level of integrity, while the northern extension of 1859 as subjected to a relatively high level of internal change.⁴⁰ In the second half of the 1980s Sydney Observatory was converted into a museum, presenting its own history, as well as the history of astronomy and meteorology in New South Wales. Signal Station use as by Museum agreed to by The Minister for Public Works agreed to the Signal Station being used for museum purposes in November 1987. Around 2008 conservation works were undertaken to the building.



Figure 6-14: The Signal Station viewed from the south, circa 1875 (left) and from the Observatory Tower, circa 1905 (right). By this time it had been re-roofed with corrugated steel. (Source: SLNSW ON 4 Box 60 No 336, digital order no, a2825055 and PXE 711 / 37, digital order no. a116037. TKD 2016, Fig. 132)



Figure 6-15: Photographs of the Signal Station taken in December 1938. The Cottage continued to house the signal station and master during the 1930s. (Source: SLNSW digital order no's d1_19516 and d1_19517. TKD 2016, Fig. 133)

³⁸ "The Signal Master's House", Sydney Morning Herald, 20 January 1848, p.2.

³⁹ Kerr, pp.10-11.

⁴⁰ Kerr, p.50.



Figure 6-16: The signal master's cottage viewed from the northeast (left) and west (right), 2015. (Source: TKD 2016, Fig. 134)

6.3.2. Observatory Messenger's Cottage

In 1858 an electric telegraph line commenced operating from South Head to the city and out to Liverpool. As a result the station master became responsible for Morse code reception and transmission as well as manual signalling. The increased responsibilities eventually meant that the signal master needed assistance with operation of the Signal Station. The Colonial Government allowed the sum of £500 for the construction of a messenger's cottage at Fort Phillip during the second half of 1866⁴¹ but tenders were not invited until January 1868, and fresh tenders were invited the following month. The tender of Brown & Grace was accepted at the end of March 1868.⁴² Thought to have been designed by colonial architect James Barnet, the modest building was completed by 1871. The colonial architect designed a number of residences during the 1860s. They included the residence for the master of the benevolent asylum at Liverpool (1864), the pilot's residence at Newcastle (1869) and the telegraph station master's cottage at South Head (1869). It was a simple brick building with a verandah across the northern side, constructed of brick. Its hipped roof, punctuated by a tall chimney on either side of the building, was covered with slate.

According to James Semple Kerr the Messenger's Cottage was extensively renovated internally, probably during the 1970s. This resulted in the replacement of plasterwork and joinery. The Messenger's Cottage remained in use and was occupied by retired Maritime Services Board staff until the early 1990s when it was fitted out as offices for the administration of the complex by the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences. Use as a museum was agreed in-principle in November 1993 and the following year the Cottage was restored as an office for staff. Work included the introduction of air conditioning and removal of the verandah enclosure and the paint from three of the exterior walls to reveal the structural dichromatic brickwork.

The cottages on Observatory Hill are similar in scale and form to other dwellings designed in the Colonial Architect's office during the nineteenth century. Telegraph station offices were incorporated into larger purpose-designed residential buildings. A number of houses were associated with police stations and also gaols. The residences were not dissimilar to those built to accommodate school masters, as indicated by the following examples. Houses continued to be designed by the Government Architect's Office for a large part of the twentieth century.

⁴¹ Government Gazette, 28 December 1866 p.3256

⁴² Government Gazette, 27 March 1868, p.901.

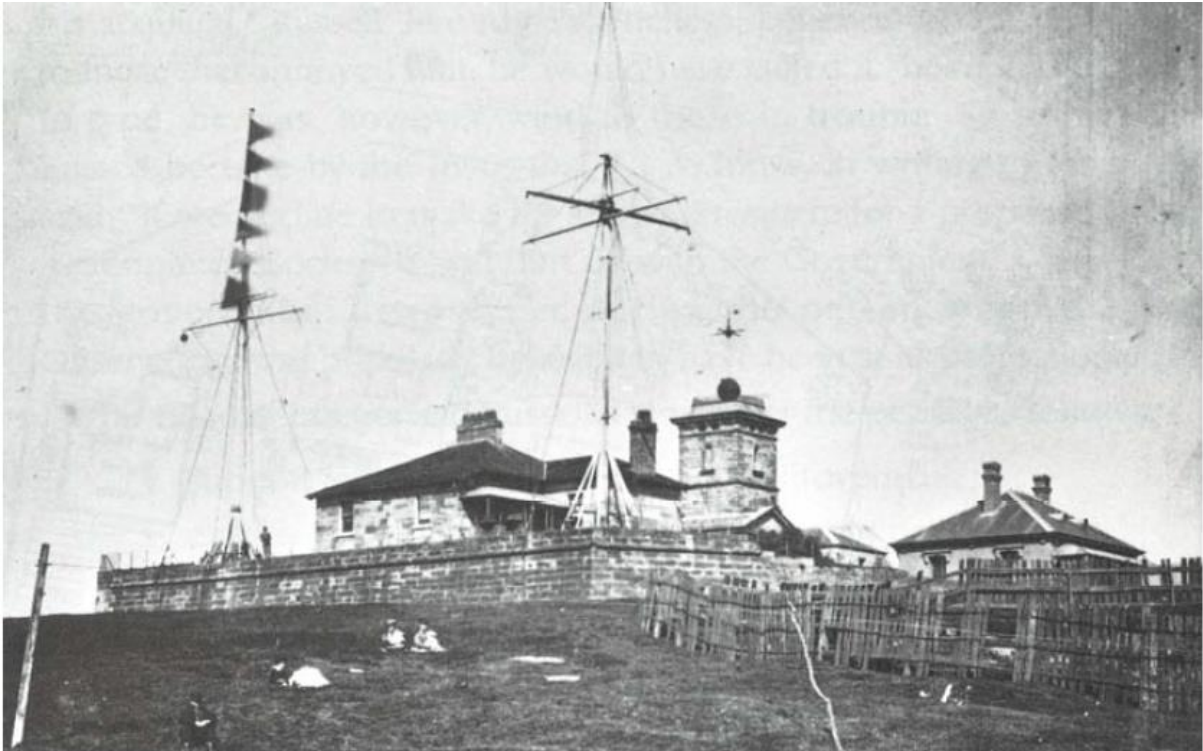


Figure 6-17: Photograph of the Observatory with the Signal Master's Cottage (left) and Messenger's Cottage (right) in the foreground, April 1871. (Source: SLNSW digital order no. d1_05276. TKD 2016, Fig. 135)



Figure 6-18: The Messenger's Cottage viewed from the west (left) and south (right), 2015 (Source: TKD 2016, Fig. 136)

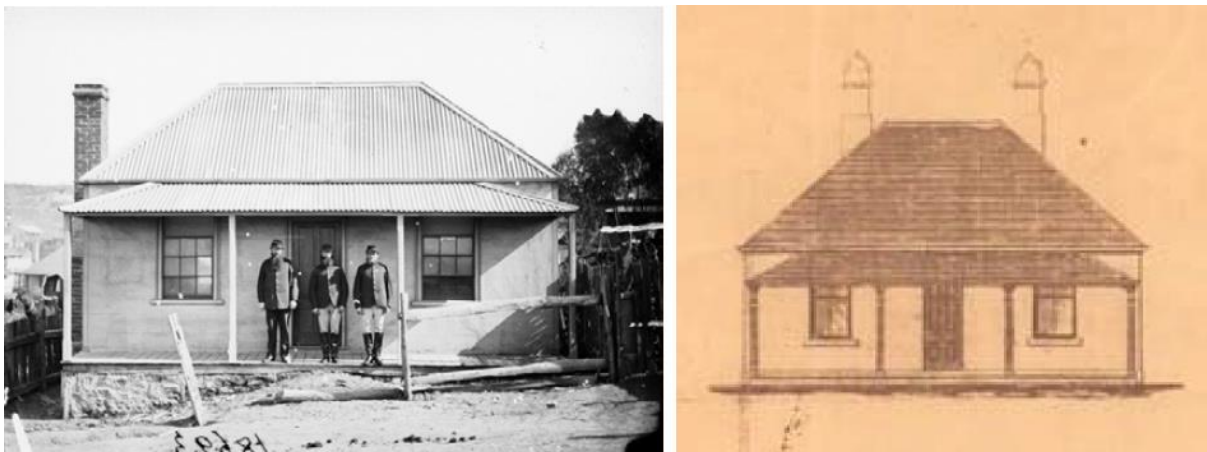


Figure 6-19: Police residence at Hill End, circa 1872 (left) and Bungendore Public School, 1878 (right). (Sources: SLLNSW digital order no. a2822580; State Records digital id no. 4335_a120_002453. TKD 2016, Fig. 137)

6.4 Bureau of Meteorology Building

With the formation of the Commonwealth Meteorological Bureau during the first decade of the twentieth century, new purpose-designed buildings were constructed in a number of state capitals during the interwar period. The buildings were designed by Federal Government instrumentalities.

In 1904, the Public Works Branch was established within the Department of Home Affairs to carry out public works.⁴³ In 1916, the Public Works Branch was transferred to the newly created Department of Works and Railways. The Department of Works and Railways, based in Melbourne, was responsible for public works, rivers, railways, construction and maintenance of public buildings and engineering works. The Department established an office in Sydney. It later became responsible for war service home building schemes, lands and survey, and properties (transferred and acquired). After the Department of Works and Railways was abolished in 1932, most of its functions passed firstly to the Department of the Interior, then briefly to the Department of Works in 1938 and then to the reformed Department of the Interior, established in April 1939.⁴⁴ Before June 1955 meteorological functions were carried out by the Meteorological Branch/Bureau of the Commonwealth Department of the Interior, after which the Commonwealth Bureau of Meteorology was established.

At the time the Bureau of Meteorology building was built John Smith Murdoch was chief architect of the Department of Works and Railways. Murdoch was responsible for the design and construction of many early Canberra buildings, such as the provisional parliament house, the powerhouse and the Hotel Canberra. The Department of Works and Railways and the Department of the Interior documented buildings associated with Commonwealth government instrumentalities around the country, the most familiar of which were post offices and branch buildings for the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

The central administration of the newly formed Commonwealth Meteorological Bureau was located in Melbourne. It was established in leased premises, a house known as "Frosterly" in Carlton, which was built as a family residence by Dr William Snowball around 1890. The Bureau took up residence at the beginning of 1908. It was selected because of its close proximity to the site of the proposed meteorological observatory in this section of the city.⁴⁵ Increases in staff levels after 1937 led to their dispersal into several rented premises, and the subsequent construction of a three storey addition designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works. The building was completed during the second half of 1939. According to one newspaper report:

The building ... will be three stories of steel frame and concrete construction. The forecasting staff will be housed on the ground floor, where special teleprinter facilities in sound-proof rooms will be installed. Bedrooms for staff on night duty will also be included ... The library and research section will be housed on the first floor, which also includes class and lecture rooms for the training of the meteorological staff and staffs engaged in civil aviation work. The top floor will have accommodation for the aviation staff, and a drafting room, as well as staff dining rooms [sic]. On the flat roof weather instruments will be installed operating recording instruments on the lower floors. ... The existing building will be remodelled on completion of the new wing.⁴⁶

⁴³ Responsibilities for astronomical and meteorological observations were transferred from the Postmaster-General's Department to Home Affairs in 1912.

⁴⁴ <http://guides.naa.gov.au/melbourne/chapter2/works.aspx>, accessed 31 August 2016

⁴⁵ "Meteorological Bureau", *Leader*, 22 June 1907, p.34.

⁴⁶ "Extensions to Cost £11,600", *The Age*, 27 April 1939, p.

In 1974 the Bureau's Head Office was transferred to a multi-storey building in the centre of Melbourne. The former "Frosterly" and the 1939 addition are still standing and have been adapted to contain residential apartments.

By way of contrast, for a number of years, in the national capital an official weather station was established in Acton. It was transferred to the Commonwealth Forestry Bureau at Westridge (now known as Yarralumla) in 1939.

The construction of the Sydney building on Observatory Hill at the beginning of the 1920s was followed by the proposed construction of a new three storey building in Perth in the grounds of the Perth Observatory during the second half of the decade. Perth Observatory was located on a site close to the city centre and near Kings Park that was selected in 1895. Construction commenced in 1897 and the observatory was officially opened on 9 April 1900. Work undertaken at the observatory included time and weather information; official meteorological records had been kept in WA since 1867.

The proposed Perth building and Sydney buildings were remarkably similar in the way that each level was employed:

The Federal Government has decided to erect a three-storey brick building ... on a site in the Observatory ground ... The new building ... will contain two floors for official purposes, while the top storey will be reserved for the residential quarters of the officer-in-charge. The ground floor will consist of a general office and two small rooms, one for the use of the divisional officer and the other as a copying room. The first floor will be occupied by records department and the library, and above this the officer-in-charge will have six rooms and two balconies. The building will be covered by a flat roof, and on the north-western corner will stand a 10ft. tower for meteorological instruments.⁴⁷

However, there is little evidence to suggesting the building was actually constructed. A final site had not been decided on in 1928 and in the first half of the 1930s the Meteorological Bureau was reportedly housed in the main Observatory buildings.⁴⁸ Photographs taken of the site up to the 1970s do not show a building like that described in the 1927 newspaper report. The Observatory was closed in the early 1960s, a number of buildings demolished and much of the site given over to government office buildings. The former observer's residence was vested in the National Trust of Australia in 1984.

Staff moved into the "handsome new three-storey building" at the intersection of Edward Street and Wickham Terrace, Brisbane building in the second half of November 1938. It was on the site of a cottage which became Brisbane's first observatory around 1887. As with Sydney, the meteorologist and their staff occupied the ground and first floor while the divisional meteorologist and his family occupied the second floor. A tall tower was used for wind recording apparatus.⁴⁹

Construction of a three storey addition to the Bureau in Melbourne commenced around the end of April 1939 and took about four months to complete. Designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works, it housed staff who were scattered across the city in rented accommodation. It was constructed with a steel frame and reinforced concrete floors. Forecasting staff and equipment were located on the ground floor, along with bedrooms for staff on night duty. The first floor contained the library and research section along with class and lecture rooms to train staff. The second floor contained accommodation for what

⁴⁷ Meteorological Bureau. "New Three-Storey Building", *West Australian*, 4 June 1927, p.8.

⁴⁸ "No Time Signal? Will Observatory Close? Keeness of Economy", *The Daily News*, 24 February 1932, p.6.

⁴⁹ "A New Home. Brisbane's Weather Bureau", *Daily Mercury*, 18 November 1938, p.6.

were described as the aviation staff, along with staff dining rooms and a drafting room. The roof was put to use as well with the installation of weather recording instruments.⁵⁰

The Bureau in Adelaide appears to have been the last to have been constructed during the interwar period. Located at the intersection of West Terrace and Glover Avenue, it was completed around the end of 1939. There is little evidence of the planning and organisation of the single storey building, which had a pitched roof and a tall observation tower rising above the intersection. The building no longer exists.



Figure 6-20: The Bureau of Meteorology in Melbourne showing the original section at left and the 1939 addition (left); the Bureau of Meteorology in Brisbane (right). (Sources: reproduced in *The Weather Watchers*, p.64; University of Queensland, Fryer Library - <https://espace.library.uq.edu.au/collection>. TKD 2016, Fig. 138)



Figure 6-21: The Bureau of Meteorology in Adelaide, 7 March 1941. (Source: State Library of South Australia - oia:collections.slsa.sa.gov.au:(AUASA)b2065800x, B 10416. TKD 2016, Fig. 139)

⁵⁰ "Weather Bureau. Extensions to Cost £11,600", *The Age*, 27 April 1939, p.17.

6.5 Conclusions

6.5.1. Fort Street Public School Building

The available evidence suggests that there were few educational buildings that were influenced by advanced Modernist thinking constructed in NSW during the 1930s and early 1940s. The known examples were designed in the GAB by or under the direct influence of Harry Rembert and consisted of technical colleges, a domestic science school and a secondary school. Fort Street Public School is the only primary school amongst these examples. It stands apart from the more conservative primary schools of the era because of its advanced aesthetic expression and functional, compact planning that exploited to advantage the restrictions of its small and constrained site. Fort Street also shares similarities in planning with other schools of the period. These include an assembly hall integrated into the building and linear planning of classrooms accessed from one side by a corridor. It was not until the late 1950s that innovative school buildings were being designed, which although not directly influenced by Fort Street Public School, were certainly made possible by Rembert's role and influence in the GAB at this time.

6.5.2. Messenger's Cottage

The Messenger's Cottage is generally typical of dwellings designed to house government employees during the nineteenth century. They share similar rectilinear footprints, economical masonry or timber construction, hipped roofs and verandahs across principal elevations. As with many of these buildings, it was enlarged and modified as needed to accommodate changing occupant requirements. The building is one of three cottages constructed on Observatory Hill during the mid nineteenth century.

6.5.3. Bureau of Meteorology

The Bureau of Meteorology was one of a small number of purpose designed buildings designed for various state capitals during the interwar period, of which only four are understood to have been constructed. Its planning and organisation of spaces, with office and administrative functions on lower levels and a residential flat on the top floor, appears to be typical. The architectural design of the building's exterior is characteristic of its early 1920s construction date but is unlike buildings erected in other state capitals during the 1930s. It is understood to be one of only two buildings to have survived and is the only building to have the potential and capacity to demonstrate original operations and uses.

7. Assessment of Heritage Significance

Assessment of Heritage Significance

This section provides an updated assessment of heritage significance of the Fort Street Public School site, which has been prepared in accordance with the recently updated NSW Department of Planning and Environment's document, *Assessing Heritage Significance Guidelines for assessing places and objects against the Heritage Council of NSW criteria*, 2023.

7.1 Assessment Methodology and Criteria

The *Assessing Heritage Significance Guidelines for assessing places and objects against the Heritage Council of NSW criteria* guidelines (2023) provide a framework for assessing significance of sites and heritage items, with the main aim of producing a succinct statement of significance to summarise an item or site's heritage values. The guidelines are predicated on the five types of cultural heritage value, as presented in *The Burra Charter 2013*: historical, aesthetic, scientific, social, and spiritual significance.

The NSW heritage assessment criteria provides the following criterion for the assessment of heritage significance.

An item will be considered to be of State (or local) heritage significance if, in the opinion of the Heritage Council of NSW, it meets one of more of the following criteria:

- *Criterion (a)—an item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area);*
- *Criterion (b)—an item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the cultural or natural history of NSW (or the cultural or natural history of the local area);*
- *Criterion (c)—an item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area);*
- *Criterion (d)—an item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;*
- *Criterion (e)—an item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area);*
- *Criterion (f)—an item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area);*
- *Criterion (g)—an item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's (or a class of the local areas):*
 - *cultural or natural places; or*
 - *cultural or natural environments.*

Further to the above criteria, assessment of the heritage significance of an item/place is also influenced by its level of intactness, which refers to the physical condition of such item/place. According to the Heritage Division's manual *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and 'Relics'*, intactness refers to:

A heritage place or archaeological site may need to retain sufficient integrity that it is able to convey its significance to people in the present. This could derive from factors unrelated to 'research potential' such as location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, association.

The significance assessment as presented below has been drawn both from the State Heritage Inventory, the Curio 2020 CMP, which includes significance assessment work undertaken by TKD and more recent updates prepared by Curio following the major redevelopment of the site in 2023. For ease of reading, individual attributes to significance assessment by either TKD or Curio have not been highlighted.

7.2 Assessment of Significance Against the Criterion

7.2.1. Criterion (a)—Historic Significance

The historical archaeological resources within the footprint of Fort Street Public School have an association with the colonial Military Hospital, the first National School and the Sydney Observatory and as such have state significance.

The Boundary Wall while altered considerably over the years, is historically significant owing to its presence and general orientation since the 1830s. It is considered to have historic significance at a **local level**.

The Messenger's Cottage is historically significant because of its associations with the Sydney Observatory. It was constructed about four years after the Observatory was completed to provide accommodation for an Observatory staff member. The Cottage is also significant because of its strong associations with the Bureau of Meteorology, which occupied it for several years between 1916 and 1922, and continued to use it after that period – in the 1960s it housed a member of the Bureau's staff and his family. The Cottage is also historically significant because it housed what has been claimed to be the first corporate childcare centre in Australia, opened in 1987. It is assessed as having historic significance at the **State level**.

The Bureau of Meteorology is historically significant as the first purpose-designed building to house the Bureau's activities to have been built in Sydney (possibly NSW) after the formation of the Commonwealth Meteorological Bureau in 1908. It has strong historical associations with weather observations on Observatory Hill, which had commenced by 1858, and with the former Messenger's Cottage, which housed the Bureau for a number of years at the beginning of the twentieth century. It is considered to have historic significance at the **State level**.

Fort Street Public School, associated with Fort Street School, is a highly significant school that was established as a National School in 1850 and has continued to educate primary and secondary school students to the present day. Although not a part of the original school site, which has retained Fort Street's earliest buildings that are now occupied by the National Trust of Australia (NSW), the building is the only section of the school at Observatory Hill that continues to serve its original function.

The construction of the school building was a direct result of the construction of the City Circle railway loop and the associated Cahill Expressway, which was constructed above the railway viaduct traversing Circular Quay. The excavation for the road circle linking the Cahill Expressway to Sydney Harbour Bridge necessitated the demolition of the existing primary school building at Fort Street Public School and its replacement with a new building.

While the recent redevelopment of the site in 2023 has involved the addition of new buildings to the site, it has also ensured the retention and conservation of the three heritage listed buildings, with .

the redevelopment of the site allowing for the Fort Street Public School to maintain its historic ongoing use as a school on the same site since the 1850s.

As one of four early National Schools established in inner Sydney in the 1850s, Fort Street Public School is assessed as having historic significance at the **State level**.

The Moreton Bay Fig is historically significant for contributing to the planned landscaping of the Fort Street School Site, Observatory Hill and its surrounding precinct, as is the historic stone pier. They are significant at the **Local Level**.

7.2.2. Criterion (b)—Historical Association

The original section of the Messenger's Cottage is understood to have been designed in the office of the Colonial Architect headed by Alexander Dawson, who was also responsible for Sydney Observatory. The additions that were undertaken in 1877 were documented in the office of the Colonial Architect whilst it was headed by James Barnet. Given its association with the establishment of the colony and its design by the Colonial Architect, the historical association is significant at the **State level**.

The Bureau of Meteorology is associated with the Department of Works and Railways under the direction of John Smith Murdoch. The Department was responsible for a wide range of buildings constructed for Federal government instrumentalities such as the Post Master General's Department, the Commonwealth Bank and significant early buildings in Canberra such as the Provisional Parliament House and hostels to accommodate politicians and public servants. Given its association with the core duties of the Government, the historical association is significant at the **State level**.

Fort Street Public School reflects the influence of prominent architect Harry Rembert, who worked in the Government Architect's Branch (GAB) from 1926 and 1965. Rembert is one of the most important architects to have worked in the GAB during the middle third of the twentieth century, pioneering modern architectural design there. He exercised a great influence on young trainees working there during the 1950s and early 1960s, a number of who became significant and influential architects in their own right. Whilst not the designer of the Fort Street Public School, he oversaw both its design and documentation and was influential in its design. It has similarities to technical college and school buildings for which he is credited.

Given its association with a number of significant state government initiatives and programs, the Fort Street Public School is assessed as having historic significance at the **State Level**.

The Boundary Wall and Stone Pier are not considered to meet the threshold for local or State Significance under this criterion.

7.2.3. Criterion (c)—Aesthetic/Creative/Technical Achievement (formerly Aesthetic Significance)

The Fort Street Public School Site a study and its surrounding study area may have aesthetic value to the local Aboriginal community in the context of the wider Sydney Aboriginal landscape it exists in. Should Aboriginal archaeological deposits be found to be present within the Fort Street Public School study area, they may potentially have aesthetic significance for technological form of the

artefacts, or as potentially considered useful for education and interpretative purposes.⁵¹ Gradings of significance is most appropriately determined by the local Aboriginal community.

The Messenger's Cottage is an example of a modestly scaled Victorian era cottage that was built by the Colonial government to house an employee of the Sydney Observatory. Although enlarged some fifteen years after the original section was completed and then subsequently modified, the house has a consistency of scale and picturesque massing. Its overall form, general appearance and internal planning are relatively intact. The building is assessed as having aesthetic significance at the **Local Level**.

The Bureau of Meteorology is a restrained example of the Inter War Free Classical style that demonstrates subtle refinement in the detailing of its external fabric. The conservation and adaptive reuse works (mostly internal) undertaken as part of the Bureau of Meteorology which had fallen into a significant state of disrepair and remained vacant for more than 20 years 2023 redevelopment works has conserved the exteriors of the building, several key elements of the interiors, including the front vestibule and has allowed for its retention and adaptive reuse for a new school library. It has aesthetic significance at a **Local Level**.

Fort Street Public School is a fine and generally intact example of the Inter War Functionalist style, reflecting the infiltration of European Modernist architectural philosophies and aesthetics into the Government Architect's Branch of the Public Works Department. The building also has aesthetic significance for its contribution to the environs of Observatory Hill Park. The contemporary building added to the north-west of the Fort Street Primary School are sensitive additions which complement the aesthetic characteristics of the heritage building. The existing building with its carefully designed additions and internal changes is assessed as having aesthetic significance at the **Local Level**.

The contemporary buildings – Building G, F, H and J added to the south and south-west of the Messenger's Cottage and the Bureau of Meteorology building, are heritage sensitive design interventions which complement the heritage values of the buildings and their surroundings, while enabling the retention, conservation and ongoing use of these heritage structures. Overall, the works undertaken to the heritage items and to the larger site have not detracted from the overall aesthetic significance of the heritage items, their curtilage and settings.

The Moreton Bay Fig is significant for its contribution to the setting of school and more broadly as a planned component of broader precinct landscaping and parklands associated with Observatory Hill and its Millers Point surrounds. It meets the threshold for significance at the **Local Level**.

The Boundary Wall and Stone Pier are not considered to meet the threshold for local or State Significance under this criterion.

7.2.4. Criterion (d)—Social, Cultural and Spiritual

The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage assessment Report (ACHAR) undertook an Aboriginal cultural heritage values assessment with the local Aboriginal Community as part of the redevelopment program for the site in 2020. The Statement of Significance which was prepared in consultation with the Aboriginal community and was approved by the Registered Aboriginal Parties for the project notes that:

⁵¹ Curio Projects 2020, *Fort Street Public School—Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report*. Prepared for Schools Infrastructure NSW (SI), pp. 7-8

Social, cultural and spiritual values of a site can only be identified through consultation with Aboriginal people. However, it is likely that should an Aboriginal archaeological deposit be present within the study area, it would be viewed to be of high social and cultural significance by the Aboriginal community, providing a direct and tangible link to past Aboriginal life and activity in Sydney's centre.

While little historical evidence is available regarding Aboriginal historical use of the study area and surrounds, as the highest point in Sydney Cove, Observatory Hill would likely have been a popular and/or important lookout for the local Aboriginal population. Therefore, Aboriginal archaeological deposits, if found to be located within the study area, may be of historical value.

Should an Aboriginal archaeological deposit be found to be present within the Fort Street Public School study area, this may have moderate scientific significance for its ability to provide evidence for and insight into Aboriginal occupation and use of the Millers Point/Observatory Hill locality prior to 1788, representative of the Fort Street Public School study area as part of the wider Aboriginal cultural landscape of the Sydney Harbour Foreshore.

The Fort Street Public School study area may have aesthetic value to the local Aboriginal community in the context of the wider Sydney Aboriginal landscape it exists in. Should Aboriginal archaeological deposits be found to be present within the Fort Street Public School study area, they may potentially have aesthetic significance for technological form of the artefacts, or as potentially considered useful for education and interpretative purposes.⁵²

Fort Street Public School also has special associations for former pupils. Evidence for this can be found at <http://homepages.ihug.com.au/~parsog/fortstreet/reunion2007a.html>, which describes a reunion and the feelings of participants towards the school and staff. It is also likely to have significance for parents of pupils and former staff, although this needs to be confirmed. Fort Street School alumni are known as "Fortians." It has social significance at a **Local Level**.

The Messenger's Cottage, and Bureau of Meteorology may have social significance, but there is little or no immediately available evidence to support this. Further social research may reveal more accurate intangible connections to the former workers at the site, particularly those associated with the Bureau of Meteorology and its later uses.

The evidence for site's social, cultural and/or spiritual associations with local Aboriginal communities, former (170+ years and continuing) school students, their families and staff (and possibly with Bureau of Meteorology) meet the threshold for **Local Significance**.

The Moreton Bay Fig, Boundary Wall and Stone Pier are not considered to meet the threshold for local or State Significance under this criterion.

7.2.5. Criterion (e)—Research Potential

While little historical evidence is available regarding Aboriginal historical use of the study area and surrounds, as the highest point in Sydney Cove, Observatory Hill would likely have been a popular and/or important lookout for the local Aboriginal population.

Should an Aboriginal archaeological deposit be found to be present within the Fort Street Public School study area, this may have moderate scientific significance for its ability to provide evidence for

⁵² Curio Projects 2019c, *Fort Street Public School—Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report*, Prepared for Schools Infrastructure NSW (SI)

and insight into Aboriginal occupation and use of the Millers Point/Observatory Hill locality prior to 1788, representative of the Fort Street Public School study area as part of the wider Aboriginal cultural landscape of the Sydney Harbour Foreshore and for its potential early post-contact evidence. Therefore, Aboriginal archaeological deposits, if found to be located within the study area, would meet the threshold of significance at the **local level** as a minimum, possibly State, depending on their nature, extent, type and integrity.

The following additional assessment of scientific significance was made following historical archaeological test excavation within the Fort Street Public School site in 2019, followed by monitoring and open area excavations between 2021 and 2023, all undertaken by Curio. The assessment text below has been extracted from the report titled *Fort Street Public School Post Excavation Report* prepared by Curio Projects, November 2023.

The archaeological investigations of the Fort Street Public School site identified tangible remains of the majority of the colonial period phases of occupation that span over two hundred years. Although the site's research potential has only been partly realised, the evidence retrieved through archaeological excavation can nevertheless be used to inform other comparable sites thus contributing to the knowledge about Sydney's colonial military past.

The archaeological resources of the site that remain comprise remnants of the cottage beneath Building J, the remaining sections of the boundary wall, deposits associated with its construction, and some areas that were not subject to bulk excavations. The recently completed archaeological program has demonstrated that nineteenth century deposits and artefacts were not extant to a significant degree and those that were present constitute a fraction of what had previously been present and were significant as a **local** research resource only.

The bulk of the archaeological resource was therefore embodied in the remnant structure of the cottage and associated features such as the drain. In particular, the remains of the Surgeon's Cottage comprise a significant set of remains from the early colonial landscape of Sydney that reflect a complementary set of remains to the former military hospital, now the National Trust Centre. The cottage remains are from a period of growth investment and expansion of the military presence in the Colony during Governor Macquarie's tenure and are a tangible reminder of that period. They are directly associated with a specialist class of military officer, military surgeons and assistant military surgeons, that provide a counterpoint to the civil medical officers at the 'Rum Hospital'. The cottage remains have the ability through further analysis and interpretation, to provide information about the site that cannot be derived from any other source. The remains of the cottage are of **State Significance**.

Parts of the associated artefact collection, while small, have similar associations with those officers, and their families, occupation of the place. The artefacts also demonstrate some aspects of the school occupation and the conditions for the teachers and students. The artefact collection from the period of the surgeon's residence (1814-1848), represents a small portion of what is likely to have been a substantial and significant occupation deposit from this period. However later work on the cottage appears to have removed all but a small residue of that deposit. The small size of the early collection reduces its ability to provide substantive information about the lives of the surgeons occupying the cottage. Therefore, the artefact collection is of **Local Research Significance**.

The meteorological evaporation tank is a rare example of specialist equipment from the nearby observatory during the period when it doubled as the meteorological office. Research has suggested that the form and materials of the tank are unique, and it may date to possibly the 1860s or 70s, used on site at the observatory, before it was moved to a place near the Messengers Cottage in the early twentieth century. It is an unusual rare and possibly unique artefact associated with a

significant activity carried out at the Observatory and the study area. More research is required to determine the designer and/or maker and any possible comparative examples from the late nineteenth century. The meteorological artefact is potentially of **State Significance**.

7.2.6. Criterion (f)— Rare

The Messenger's Cottage may be an uncommon surviving example of a modest cottage designed in the office of the Colonial Architect. It is one of three comparable cottages on Observatory Hill. It is considered likely to be rare at a **Local Level**.

The Bureau of Meteorology is a rare example of a purpose designed building to house the main NSW branch of the Bureau. There are known to have been four buildings, including Sydney and the addition to the Bureau of Meteorology's Melbourne headquarters, which were designed and constructed for this purpose during the interwar period. Only the Melbourne and Sydney buildings are known to have survived but the Melbourne building has been adapted to residential use.

While the Bureau of Meteorology Building is no longer used for its original purpose, its adaptive reuse and conservation has allowed for its retention as a heritage item and allows it to remain as a significant part of the school and the site's history. The Boundary Wall is possibly the earliest structure on site, and its primary heritage significance relates more to its presence and general orientation since the 1830s, than the intactness of its physical fabric, and is therefore assessed as a rare element remaining from the time period of the use of the site as a hospital. In terms of fulfilling the rare criterion, the Fort Street Public School site is assessed as meeting the threshold for rarity at a **Local Level**.

Fort Street Public School is a rare example of an Inter War Functionalist style primary school building designed by the Government Architect's Branch of the Public Works Department. It is also a rare example of a primary school demonstrating the style in NSW. It is considered rare at a **Local Level**.

The Moreton Bay Fig, Boundary Wall and Stone Pier are not considered to meet the threshold for local or State Significance under this criterion.

7.2.7. Criterion (g)—Representativeness (formerly Representativeness Assessment)

The Messenger's Cottage is representative of modestly scaled Victorian era residential buildings. Although a relatively large amount of internal and external fabric has been replaced or reconstructed, its early character can still be interpreted.

The Bureau of Meteorology Building with the weather station that has been retained on the rooftop, is representative of a purpose designed and built structure to house the NSW branch of the Bureau of Meteorology.

Fort Street Public School is representative of the Inter War Functionalist style architecture produced by the Government Architect's Branch during the second half of the 1930s and early 1940s, and representative of the style generally. Its planning compactly encapsulates public school design of the interwar period. Despite some modifications to items of building fabric, particularly windows and glazing, the building has retained a relatively high level of integrity in terms of its architectural form, planning and fabric.

The retention and conservation of the Fort Street Public School Building, the Messenger's Cottage and the Bureau of Meteorology have ensured that the representativeness of the buildings is maintained. As a collective and as individual heritage items, the Fort Street Public School Site, including its landscaped elements, is representative at a **Local Level**.

7.3 Statement of Significance

The Aboriginal archaeological resources within the Fort Street Public School area, if present, have the potential to contribute knowledge regarding resource gathering and subsistence strategies of Aboriginal people in the area prior to European contact. To date, no Aboriginal objects have been recovered. However, if Aboriginal objects were to be found, further assessment of their tangible and intangible values, undertaken in consultation with the Aboriginal community, would likely result in an assessment of at least **local, if not State significance**, depending on the extent, intactness and integrity of the resource found.

The historical archaeological investigations of the Fort Street Public School site identified the remaining archaeological resources of the site comprise the remains of the cottage beneath Building J, the remaining sections of the boundary wall, deposits associated with its construction, and some areas that were not subject to bulk excavations. The significance of these resources, ranges from local to State significance. The remains found at the Surgeon's Cottage are of **State Significance** as they reflect a complementary set of remains to the former military hospital (now the National Trust Centre) from the early colonial landscape of Sydney. The cottage remains have the ability, through further analysis and interpretation, to provide information about the site that cannot be derived from any other source. The associated artefact collection, while small, has similar associations with those officers, and their families, occupation of the place. Therefore, the artefact collection is of **local research significance**. The meteorological evaporation tank is a rare example of specialist equipment from the nearby observatory during the period when it doubled as the meteorological office. It is an unusual, rare and possibly unique artefact associated with a significant activity carried out at the Observatory and the study area. The meteorological artefact is potentially of **State Significance**.

Constructed during the nineteenth century in accordance with the designs of the office of the Colonial Architect headed by Alexander Dawson and James Barnet, the Messenger's Cottage is both a representative and rare, highly intact example, of a modestly scaled Victorian era cottage at a local level. It has an historical association with the Sydney Observatory, having been built to accommodate staff associated with the Sydney Observatory, and is one of only three comparable cottages on Observatory Hill. The Bureau of Meteorology occupied the cottage for several years between 1916 and 1922, and as a result of its physical intactness, its aesthetic contributions to the overall site, the Messengers Cottage is assessed as having **rarity value**, at the **local level**. The Messengers Cottage is also considered to have State Significance for its historic (intangible) heritage values.

As noted above, prior to the Construction of the Bureau of Meteorology Building (MET Building), the activities of the Bureau of Meteorology were housed in the former Messenger's Cottage, which evidences the significance of the historical association between the two structures on the site and their intrinsic intangible heritage value.

The Bureau of Meteorology Building (MET Building) is historically significant as it is the first, purpose-designed building to house the Bureau of Meteorology activities in Sydney and possibly NSW after the formation of the Commonwealth Meteorological Bureau in 1908. The Bureau of Meteorology was built in 1922 under the direction of John Smith Murdoch, as the purpose-designed headquarters for the main NSW branch of the Bureau of Meteorology. The Bureau of Meteorology is considered to have **State Significance** for its intangible heritage values (historic, associative and possibly social). The building façade and remaining original sections of the interiors have aesthetic significance as an example of the Inter War Free Classical style, including the subtle detailing of its external fabric. It retains commanding views to and from the site. The building has aesthetic significance at the **local**

level as a key landmark building that plays a central role in the aesthetic significance of the overall Fort Street Public School site.

The Fort Street Public School Building has aesthetic significance at a **local level** as an example of a 1940s modernist school that has been sensitively remodelled in 2023, in order to allow the school to manage future growth needs. The school was originally designed by renowned architect Harry Rembert of the Department of Public Works Government Architects Branch, in the Inter War Functionalist style. Given its association with a number of significant state government initiatives and programs, the Fort Street Public School is assessed as having historic and associative significance at the **State Level**.

The Fort Street Public School building, post redevelopment continues to have intangible heritage value for its continuous use as a public school for more than 174 years and for its ongoing association and social significance to pupils, their parents and staff across multiple generations at a **local level**.

The contemporary additions added to the north-west of the original building in 2023, as designed by FJC Studio (formerly FJMT), whilst not forming part of the significant heritage fabric, demonstrate heritage sensitivity in terms of their design, form, scale, massing and materiality.

The new buildings - - Building G, H and J,F , designed by FJC Studio (formerly FJMT) and added to the site in 2020-2023 are an example of heritage sensitive design interventions which complement the heritage values of the buildings and their surroundings, while enabling the retention, conservation and ongoing use of the heritage structures on the site.

In summary, The Fort Street Public School site comprises several institutional, governmental and residential buildings in a setting that has developed from the early nineteenth century. The physical fabric within this setting, including the Boundary Wall, Stone Pier, Moreton Bay Fig, Messengers Cottage, The Bureau of Meteorology, Fort Street Public School and archaeological artefacts are considered to have tangible heritage value and meet the threshold for **local significance**.

The insitu archaeological remains of the Surgeon's Cottage, due to their rarity and association with the early colonial landscape of Sydney are considered to have tangible heritage value and meet the threshold for **State Significance**.

Due to the unique and significant history of the various stages of the site's occupation and use over time, including its association with key people, the site is significant at the **State level** for its intangible heritage values. This includes the intangible values associated with the Messengers Cottage, The Bureau of Meteorology and the Fort Street Public School. The local Aboriginal Community have identified that the site has intangible heritage value, that upon further assessment by the local Aboriginal stakeholders may range from **local** through to **State significance**.

8. Gradings of Significant Components

8. Gradings of Significant Components

The gradings of heritage significance for the different elements of the Fort Street Public School site, has been based on the NSW Department of Planning and Environment's document, *Assessing heritage significance Guidelines for assessing places and objects against the Heritage Council of NSW criteria, 2023*.

Grading	Justification
Exceptional	Rare or outstanding element directly contributing to a place or object's significance.
High	High degree of original fabric. Demonstrates a key element of the place or object's significance. Alterations do not detract from its significance.
Moderate	Altered or modified elements. Elements with little heritage value, but which contribute to the overall significance of the place or object.
Little	Alterations detract from its significance. Difficult to interpret.
Intrusive	Damaging to the place or object's significance

Curio has used the term **Neutral** in our assessment of significance – **Neutral** is used to indicate items or elements of fabric which do not have a positive or negative heritage impact because they are contemporary or modern elements which have been designed carefully to form part of a heritage listed item/building or the setting of a heritage item without detracting.

Elements or items are graded as **Neutral in this CMP** if they do not detract from the overall significance of an item nor do they form part of the significance of the item or place, and may as in the case of the Fort Street Public School site, be sensitive additions to the site.

In analysing the significance Fort Street Public School, the following factors have been considered: physical fabric analysis; historical development of the buildings; level of intactness of the different elements; and the existing condition of the built fabric. While the historic and aesthetic significance of an element might result in a grading of exceptional or high significance, the altered or modified condition of the fabric has been considered in fine tuning the grading, which might result in a lowering of the significance from high to moderate.

8.1 Overall Site Elements

The below table presents the gradings of significance for the key overall elements of the Fort Street Public School Site. Gradings of Significance for Individual Buildings are detailed in Sections 8.2 to 8.4.

Grading	Element
Exceptional	Potential Aboriginal and historical archaeological resources within the Fort Street Public School site curtilage. Fort Street Public School Building (1) Bureau of Meteorology Building (2) Messenger's Cottage (3) Boundary wall between Messengers Cottage/Bureau of Meteorology and EEC Mature Morton Bay Fig tree on eastern side of Fort Street Public School

Grading	Element
High	1930s heritage wall running east to west behind the Messenger's Cottage and the Bureau of Meteorology; Site boundary demarcated by the cut of the Cahill Highway and the palisade fence – the orientation of the boundary is significant, not the fabric which is replicated. Relocated Stone Pier (c.1942)
Moderate	Nil
Neutral	Contemporary Staff Room Building F(4) Contemporary Building J (5) Contemporary Building H (6) Contemporary Building G (7) New addition added to the west of the Fort Street Public School Building
Little	Nil
Intrusive	Nil

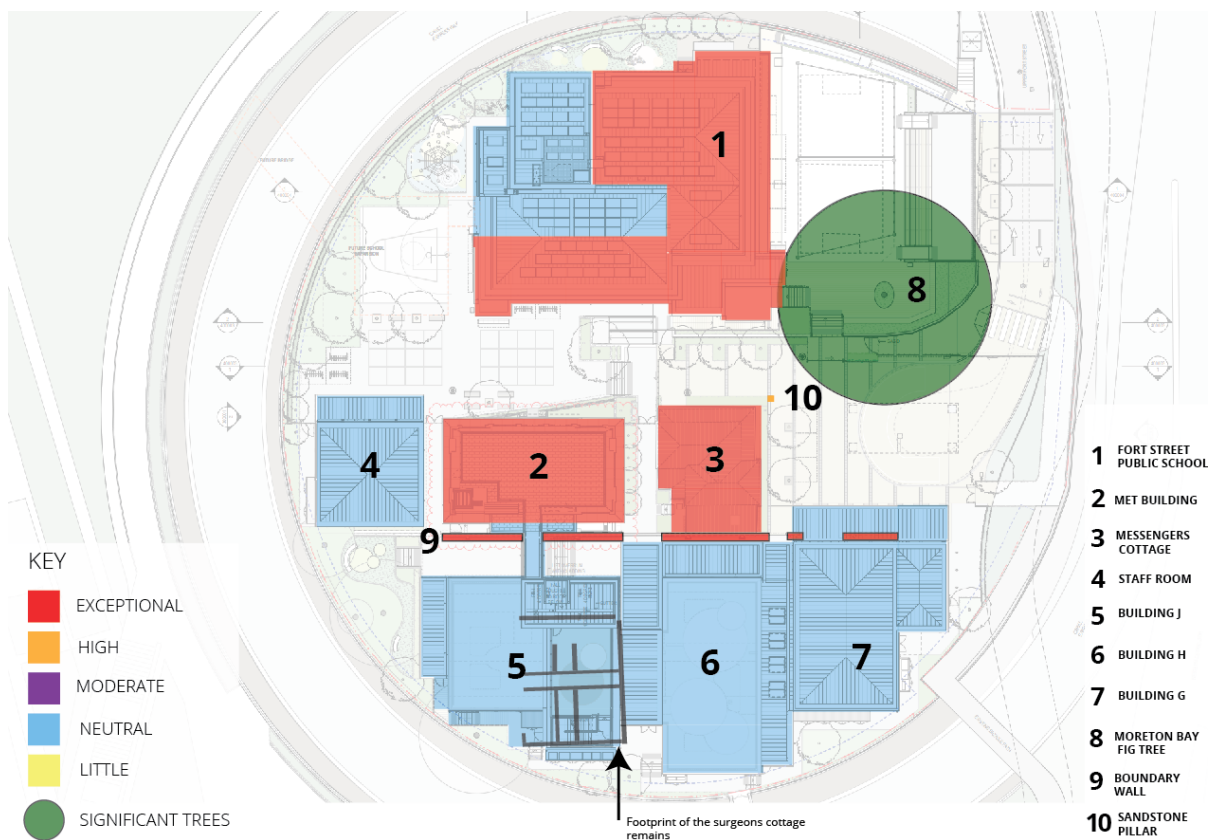


Figure 8-1: Grading of Site Components (Curio, 2023)

8.2 Messengers Cottage

Figures 8.2 – 8.6 highlight the gradings of significance for the external façades of the Bureau of Meteorology.

Element Description	Grading Of Significance
Exteriors	
Building Envelope (including façade configurations, scale, form and mass)	EXCEPTIONAL
Double hung sash windows	HIGH
Fixed window	NEUTRAL
Profile of hipped corrugated metal roof	EXCEPTIONAL
Fabric of hipped corrugated metal roof	HIGH
Timber Posts	HIGH
Chimneys	HIGH
Doors	HIGH

KEY

- EXCEPTIONAL
- HIGH
- MODERATE
- NEUTRAL
- LITTLE



Figure 8-2: Northern Façade of the Messengers Cottage showing Gradings of Significance
(Source: FJMT with Curio Projects additions)

- KEY
- EXCEPTIONAL
 - HIGH
 - MODERATE
 - NEUTRAL
 - LITTLE



Figure 8-3: Southern Façade of the Messengers Cottage showing Gradings of Significance
(Source: FJMT with Curio Projects additions)



Figure 8-4: Eastern Façade of the Messengers Cottage showing Gradings of Significance
(Source: FJMT with Curio Projects additions)

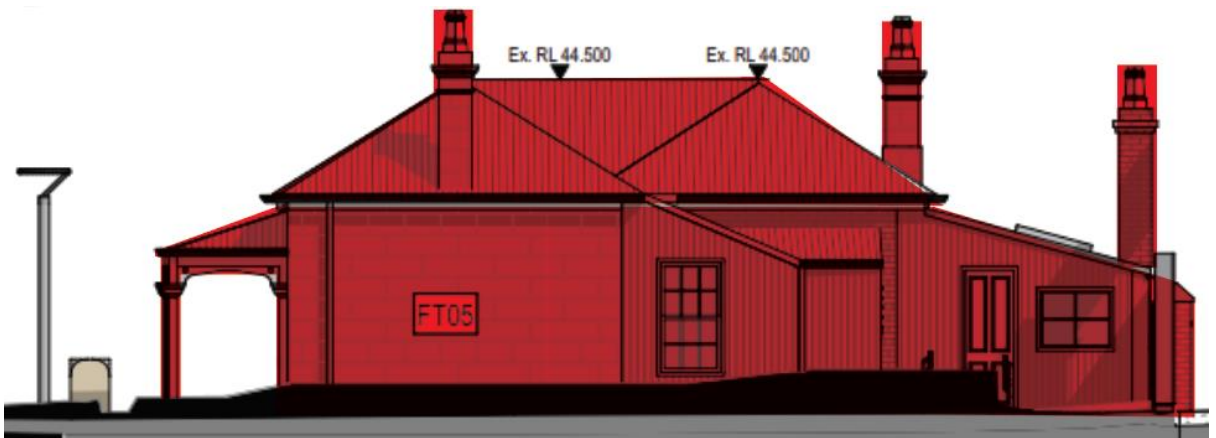


Figure 8-5: Western Façade of the Messengers Cottage showing Gradings of Significance
(Source: FJMT with Curio Projects additions)

Element Description	Grading Of Significance
Interiors	
Floors	EXCEPTIONAL
Original Walls	HIGH
Contemporary walls	NEUTRAL
Picture Rail	HIGH
Architraves	HIGH
Cornices	HIGH
Skirting	HIGH
Ceiling original/early	HIGH
Original Vents	HIGH
FIT OUT	
Tea Bay	MODERATE (spatial arrangement) Note Actual fitout is neutral.
WC	MODERATE (spatial arrangement) Note Actual fitout is neutral.
Laundry	MODERATE (spatial arrangement) Note Actual fitout is neutral.



Figure 8.6: Messengers Cottage Grading of Significance plan for Internal Elements (Source: FJMT Base Plan with Curio Additions, 2023)

8.3 Bureau of Meteorology (MET Building)

Element Description	Grading Of Significance
Exteriors	
Building Envelope (including façade configurations, scale, form and mass)	EXCEPTIONAL
Multi paned Double hung sash windows	EXCEPTIONAL
Original multipaned windows	EXCEPTIONAL
Double hung sash windows	EXCEPTIONAL
Original metal balustrading and brick piers	EXCEPTIONAL
Original portico	EXCEPTIONAL
Original front entry door and windows	EXCEPTIONAL
Original Verandah doors	EXCEPTIONAL
Weather Station	EXCEPTIONAL
Contemporary Fixed window	NEUTRAL
Chimneys	EXCEPTIONAL
Outdoor rooftop	MODERATE
Contemporary glass balustrades	NEUTRAL
Contemporary copper gutter and downpipe	MODERATE
Contemporary fixed window	NEUTRAL

Figures 8.7 – 8.10 highlight the gradings of significance for the external façades of the Bureau of Meteorology.

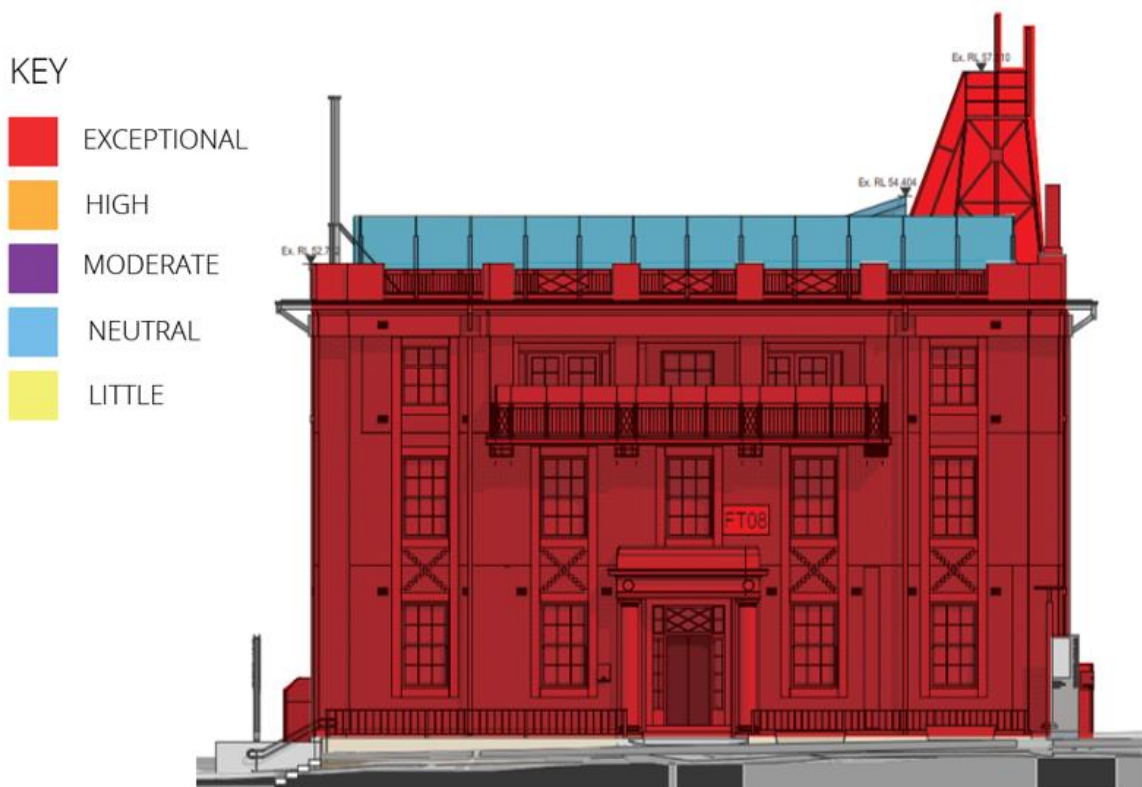


Figure 8-7: The Bureau of Meteorology Northern Facade (FJMT Base Plan with Curio Additions, 2023).

KEY

- EXCEPTIONAL
- HIGH
- MODERATE
- NEUTRAL
- LITTLE



Figure 8.8: The Bureau of Meteorology Southern Façade with modern glazing highlighted in blue. (FJMT Base Plan with Curio Additions, 2023)

KEY

- EXCEPTIONAL
- HIGH
- MODERATE
- NEUTRAL
- LITTLE

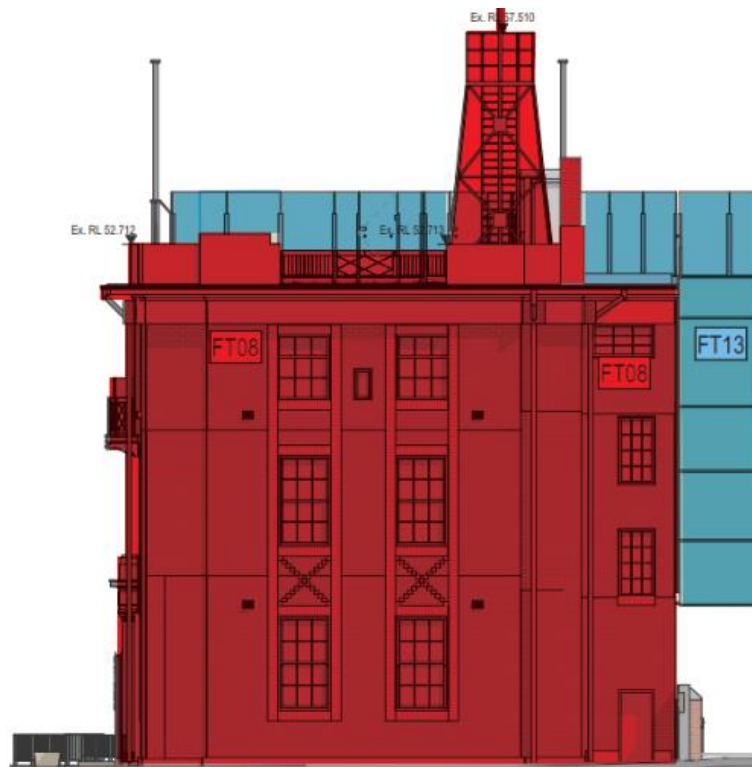


Figure 8.9: The Bureau of Meteorology Western Façade with modern glazing highlighted in blue (FJMT Base Plan with Curio Additions, 2023).

KEY

- EXCEPTIONAL
- HIGH
- MODERATE
- NEUTRAL
- LITTLE

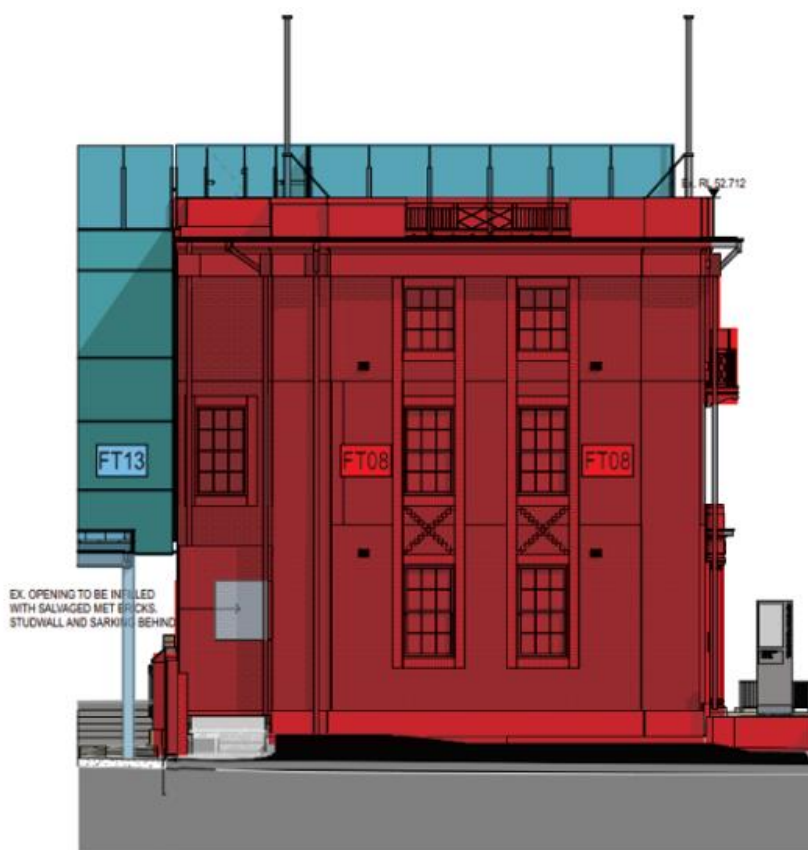


Figure 8.10: The Bureau of Meteorology Eastern Façade with modern glazing highlighted in blue (FJMT Base Plan with Curio Additions, 2023).

Element Description	Grading Of Significance
Interiors	
Contemporary Carpet and Vinyl flooring	MODERATE
Walls	HIGH
Original cornice profile	HIGH
Original Vents	HIGH
Picture Rail	HIGH
Original Architraves	HIGH
Original Cornices	HIGH
Original skirting	HIGH
Ceiling original/early	HIGH
Original Stairs	HIGH
Original timber entry vestibule	EXCEPTIONAL
Original timber door with glass inserts (level 2)	EXCEPTIONAL
Original fireplaces surround and mantel	HIGH
Contemporary walls	NEUTRAL
Contemporary Stairs	NEUTRAL
FIT OUT	
Kitchenette	NEUTRAL



Figure 8.11: Bureau of Meteorology Ground Floor Grading Of Significance Diagram. (FJMT Base Plan with Curio Additions, 2023).

Level 1



Figure 8.12: Bureau of Meteorology Level 1 Ground Floor Grading Of Significance Diagram. (FJMT Base Plan with Curio Additions, 2023).

Level 2

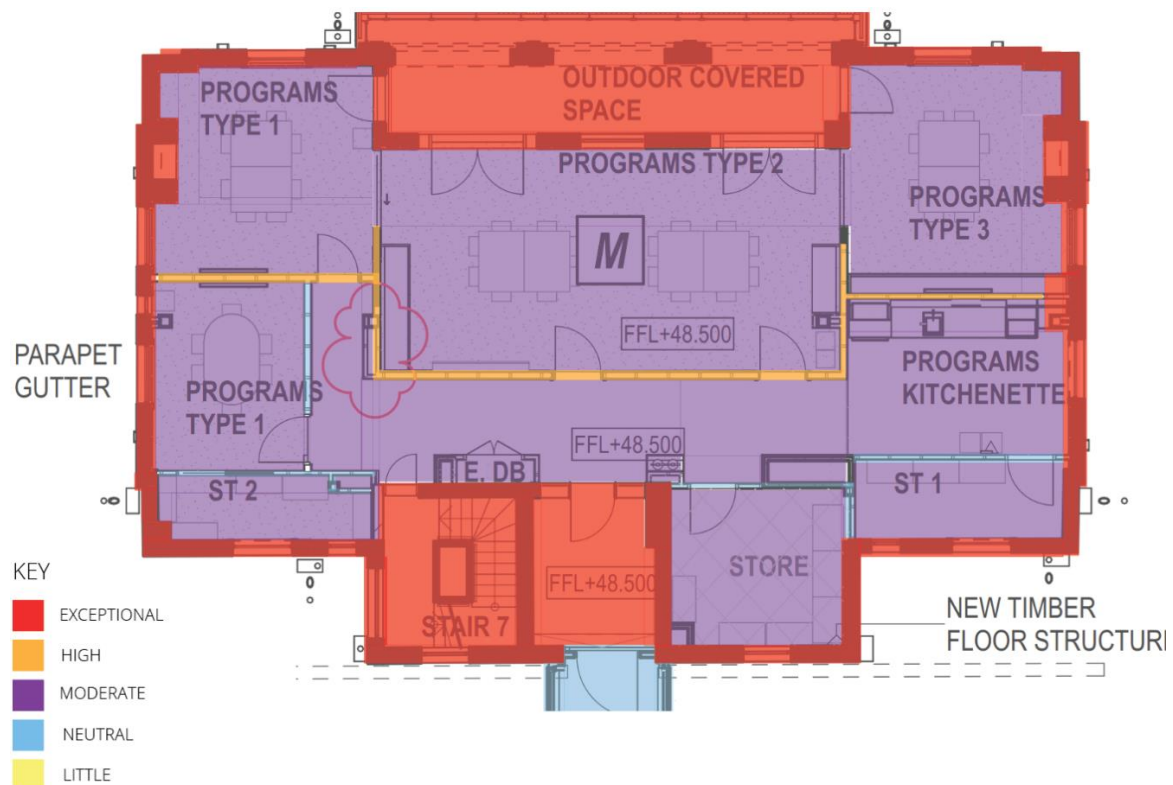


Figure 8.13 Bureau of Meteorology Level 2 Ground Floor Grading Of Significance Diagram.

8.4 Fort Street Public School

Element Description	Grading Of Significance
Exteriors	
Building Envelope (including façade configurations, scale, form and mass)	EXCEPTIONAL
Original metal framed windows	EXCEPTIONAL
Original set of terrazzo steps	EXCEPTIONAL
Contemporary windows	LITTLE
Contemporary second floor addition	LITTLE
Contemporary addition at ground floor, first floor and second floor	LITTLE

Figures 8.14 – 8.17 highlight the gradings of significance for the external façades of the Fort Street Public School.

- KEY
- EXCEPTIONAL
 - HIGH
 - MODERATE
 - NEUTRAL
 - LITTLE

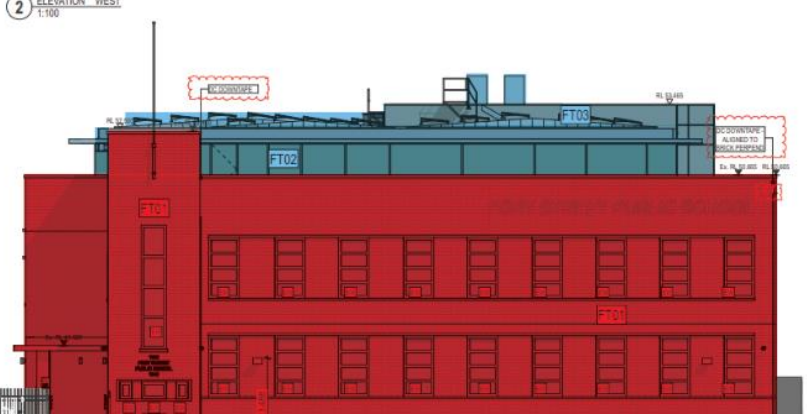


Figure 8.14 to 8-17 Fort Street Public School Ground Floor Grading Of Significance Diagram. Elevations in order from Top to Bottom. Northern Façade (Top Image), Southern Façade, Western Façade and Eastern Façade (Bottom) (Source:FJMT Base Plans with Curio Additions 2023)

Element Description	Grading Of Significance
Interiors	
Contemporary Carpet and timber flooring	MODERATE
Original walls	HIGH
Architraves	HIGH
Ceiling original/early	HIGH
Original Stairs	HIGH
Contemporary walls	LITTLE
Contemporary Stairs	LITTLE
Contemporary gyprock ceiling	LITTLE

Ground Floor



Figure 8-18: Ground Floor Fort Street Public School Ground Floor Grading Of Significance Diagram. (Source: FJMT Base Plans with Curio Additions 2023)

Level 1

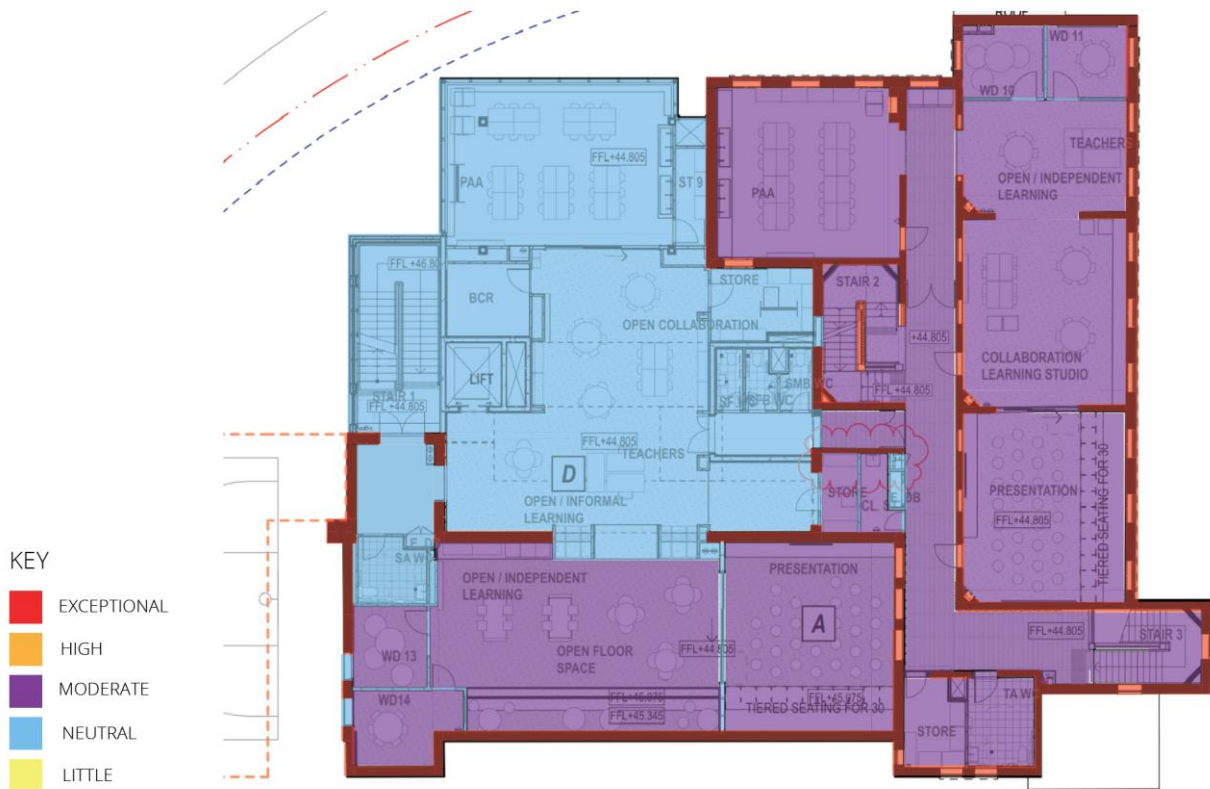


Figure 8.19: Level 2 Fort Street Public School Grading Of Significance Diagram.
 (Source: FJMT Base Plans with Curio Additions 2023)

9. Heritage Curtilage

9 Heritage Curtilage

9.1 Definitions

The following section has been primarily extracted from the TKD draft CMP document, as indicated by italics, with Curio additions and revision in plain text.

Heritage curtilage is defined in the NSW Heritage Office publication Heritage Curtilages as:

The area of land (including land covered by water) surrounding an item or area of heritage significance which is essential for retaining and interpreting its heritage significance.

It can apply to either:

*land which is integral to the heritage significance of items of the built heritage; or
a precinct which includes buildings, works, relics, trees or places and their setting.*

The term "heritage curtilage" is also used by the Heritage Council of NSW to describe the area listed on the State Heritage Register (SHR) or on a local environmental plan.

The heritage curtilage should contain all elements contributing to the heritage significance, conservation and interpretation of a place including (but not limited to):

*historic site boundaries;
buildings and structures and their settings;
functional and visual relationships between buildings and structures;
important views to and from the place;
any identified archaeological resources;
historic and visual spatial relationships between buildings, structures and grounds.*

The NSW Heritage Office guidelines describe four different types of heritage curtilages:

Lot Boundary Heritage Curtilage, where the lot would adequately contain the heritage significance of the place, including buildings, gardens and other significant features such as walls, fences and driveways that contribute to the heritage significance of the place;

Reduced Heritage Curtilage, where the significance of the place does not necessarily relate to the total lot area but to a lesser area of land;

Expanded Heritage Curtilage, where an area larger than the lot boundary is required to retain the heritage significance of the place, including its landscape setting or visual catchment; and

Composite Heritage Curtilage, which applies to conservation areas.

9.2 Heritage Curtilage for Fort Street Public School Site

The heritage curtilage should endeavour to satisfy the following principles:

An understanding of the original relationships of Fort Street Public School, the Messenger's Cottage and the Bureau of Meteorology Building to the site and to each other should be maintained;

An adequate setting should be provided for the three buildings that enables heritage significance to be maintained;

Adequate visual catchments or corridors should be provided to the buildings from major viewing points and from the site to outside elements with which it has important visual or historical

relationships. The most significant views are from the northern side of the site and from the east, because from these vantage points that the relationships of the items within the site and the relationship of the site with Observatory Hill are best understood.

While the central lot boundary for the Fort Street Public School Site (as effectively encapsulated by the cut of the Cahill Expressway) forms the primary curtilage of the site, the wider heritage setting and character of the Fort Street Public School Site is informed by its locational context in relation to its setting on Observatory Hill. Most significantly, the expanded curtilage as relevant to the Fort Street Public School Site includes the Sydney Observatory and Observatory Hill Park in the north and west, and the National Trust site to the south. This expanded associated curtilage of heritage significance makes allowance for the heritage context and visual connections surrounding the site.

Figure 9.2 represents the recommended curtilage for the Fort Street Public School Site, both with respect to the immediate lot boundary, as well as the expanded curtilage of heritage and historical significance and association.



Figure 9.1: Heritage Curtilage for Fort Street Public School Site. Main lot boundary vs expanded associated curtilage (Source: Near Maps with Curio overlay 2023).

9.3 Curtilage of Significant Built Elements

In addition to the overall curtilage of the Fort Street Public School Site, an appropriate curtilage for the individual heritage items contained within the site (i.e. Fort Street Public School Building; Bureau of Meteorology and Messenger's Cottage) is necessary to reflect and recognise the significance of the immediate setting and physical context of each item. The curtilage of each significant building will also serve to guide the location of future development works and/or additions within the site.

The recommended heritage curtilage for each of the items is presented in Figure 2.

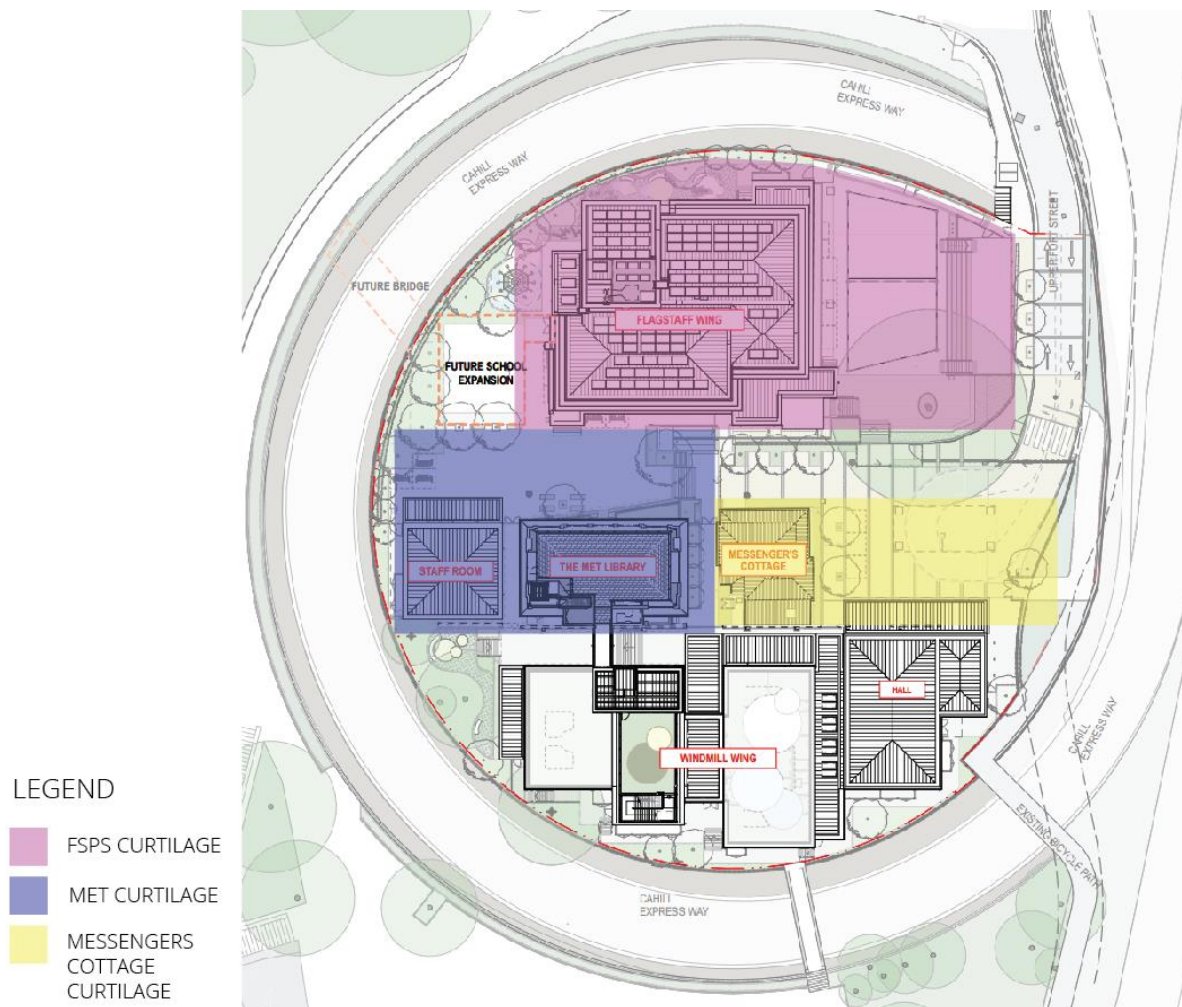


Figure 9-2: Recommended Curtilage for Heritage Items (Source: Curio over FJMT Architects Base Plan 2019)

10 Significant Views

10 Significant Views

10.1 External Views

Several key views of heritage significance have been identified for the Fort Street Public School site in relation to external heritage items and landscape character that influence, enhance, and contribute to the significance of the site, both as an individual element, as well as in its heritage context. These key five views are identified as:

1. Views to and from Observatory Hill (North)
2. Open space/low scale height to east of Messengers Cottage-views to and from site to Bradfield Highway (East)
3. Views between Millers Point and Fort Street Public School/Observatory Hill (West)
4. Views between National Trust Building and Fort Street Public School (South)
5. Views to and from Harbour Bridge (Northeast)

These key views are indicated in Figure 10.1 and are presented and discussed in more detail in the following subsections.

Of these five identified views, the most significant are Views 1 and 2, views to and from the site in the north and the east, as these vantage points best allow the relationships between the site elements of the Fort Street Public School site and the wider heritage context and connectivity, to be visually read and understood.

Due to its significance, potential views and vistas between the Fort Street Public School site and the Sydney Opera House were considered for this assessment of significant views, however the nature of the landforms and built environment of the area means that no clear view lines or vistas exist between the two sites (Figure 10-).

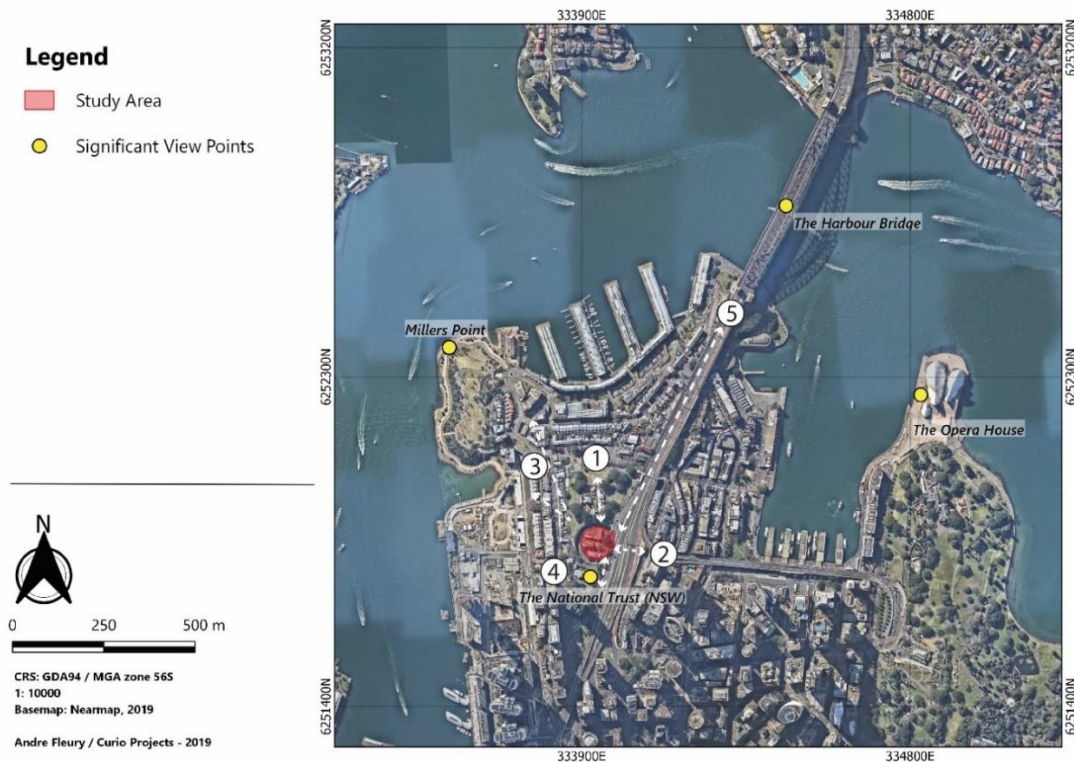


Figure 10.1 Map showing an overview of significant viewpoints (Source: Ethos Urban 2019).



Figure 10-2: View from Sydney Opera House towards Fort Street Public School Site (indicated in red). Site not readily visible, view line already dominated by Barangaroo Development (Source: Ethos Urban 2019)

View 1 – Sydney Observatory (North)

The historical connection between the Fort Street Public School site and Sydney Observatory remains evident through the visual connection between the two sites. While much of the visual connection between the buildings on the Fort Street Public School site that were originally connected in use to the Observatory (i.e. Messengers Cottage and Bureau of Meteorology building) has been obscured by the Fort Street Public School building, the views and vistas between these two sites are significant for their ability to communicate a visual comprehension of the wider historical and landscape context of Observatory Hill as a whole (Figure 10- and Figure 10-).

The open space and mature trees in the southern extent of Observatory Hill Park to the north of the Fort Street Public School site, are also significant in providing landscape context and heritage character of the Fort Street Public School site (Figure 10-). Views from the open space at the southern extent of the Observatory Hill Park, back south across the Fort Street Public School site, are also framed by the insistent backdrop of the Central Sydney CBD (Figure 10-).



Figure 10-3: View from Observatory hill south to Fort Street Public School (Source: Curio, 2023)



Figure 10-4: View of Fort Street Public School from Observatory Hill (Source: Curio, 2023)



Figure 10-5: View north from northern side of Cahill Cut, to Sydney Observatory. The open space and mature trees in front of the Observatory are an important component of the Public School's setting. (Source: TKD 2016: Fig 113)



Figure 10-6: Fort Street Public School viewed from the open space at the southern edge of Observatory Hill Park. Buildings in Central Sydney form an insistent backdrop when the school is seen from the north. (Source: Curio, 2023)