

71 Macquarie Street—Response to Submissions on Archaeology by Sydney Water and Heritage Council of NSW, May 2012

Executive Summary

Godden Mackay Logan Heritage Consultants (GML) have prepared the following report in response to submissions from Sydney Water and the Heritage Council of NSW regarding potential archaeological issues arising from the proposed development at 71 Macquarie Street, Sydney

Sydney Water's response identifies that the development would be located over or very close to the Bennelong Oviform Stormwater Channel SWC 29 which is of local heritage significance. Sydney Water's position is that development should not extend over, or within one metre from the outside of, the stormwater channel¹. They have also stated that no new openings should be made in the early brick built oviform shaped stormwater channels and that they will require accurate drawings to ascertain the precise nature of any impacts or construction within the 1 metre zone around the drain.

GMLs response: A detailed Archaeological Assessment report would be prepared and the impact of any proposal on the drain would be assessed in a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) and any other methods required by Sydney Water. Based on existing survey and Sydney Water plans no physical impacts are anticipated on the Bennelong Drain or within the one metre curtilage around it. However, in the event that physical impacts were to become necessary, Sydney Water's approval would be sought and any approval conditions, such as archival recording would be complied with.

The **Heritage Council of NSW** submission states that preliminary archaeological research has indicated that sandstone galleries/vaults that may survive beneath Macquarie Street may be significant and may need to remain in situ, as per GML's preliminary assessment advice. Their submission states that the proposed development would need to be designed in such a way that it allows for the retention of these elements if detailed research finds that they are so significant as to warrant in situ retention. The Heritage Council recommended that archaeological test excavation be undertaken on the site.

GMLs response: Based on further research and site inspection undertaken by GML subsequent to the preliminary assessment, it now appears likely the arches of the sandstone gallery were removed during demolition of the warehouses and construction of the present Amatil Building in the 1960s. While historic photos and plans indicate that the former sandstone arches were removed from the basement areas during construction of the Amatil building there is some potential for remains of sandstone walls to survive on the other side of the concrete walls in the storage space area on basement levels one and two. This area is not readily accessible and archaeological test excavation may be required to assess the likelihood of any elements surviving. Given that these elements (if surviving) would date from the 1860s warehouses that occupied the site, and would have limited research potential, it is considered unlikely that they would be of such significance to warrant in situ retention. This will be further assessed in the detailed Archaeological Assessment to be prepared following the Concept Plan.

Introduction

Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd (GML) was commissioned by AMP/Mirvac to provide archaeological and heritage advice in response to submissions from Sydney Water and the Heritage Council of NSW on the proposed development at 71 Macquarie Street, Sydney. This response has been prepared by Lyndon Patterson, Senior Consultant of GML and reviewed by David Logan, Partner of GML.

Sydney Water Response—Bennelong Drain

The Bennelong Drain is listed on the Section 170 Register of the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW) and is of high historical and technical significance. It is one of the original sewers built in Sydney c1857². Sydney Water has provided a response to heritage matters on the Bennelong Drain in a letter dated 6 March 2012.

Aerial photographs showing the location of the Bennelong Drain in relation to 71 Macquarie Street are shown in Figure 1. Sydney Water has indicated that the plans showing the location of the Bennelong Drain are indicative only and may not show the exact location of the drain. Mirvac have mapped the locations of the drains in relation to location of the proposed building (Figure 7).

The impact of any proposal would be assessed in a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) and any other methods required by Sydney Water. No major changes are anticipated to the Bennelong Drain or within the one metre curtilage. However in the event that impact to the drain is required, following consultation and approval from Sydney Water, archival and photographic recording would be undertaken as per the recommended management as outlined on the Bennelong Stormwater Channel No 29 listing on the Heritage Branch website³, with a copy of the records lodged with Sydney Water archives and the NSW Heritage Office.

Heritage Council of NSW Response—Sandstone Gallery

The Heritage Council of NSW provided a submission letter dated 12 March 2012. This states that preliminary archaeological research has indicated that sandstone galleries/vaults that may survive beneath Macquarie Street may be significant and may need to remain in situ. Their submission states that the proposed development would need to be designed in such a way that it allows for the retention of these elements if detailed research finds that they are so significant as to warrant in situ retention.

The Heritage Council of NSW recommended that archaeological test excavation be undertaken on the site. At this time, a thorough Archaeological Assessment of the site has not been undertaken, but will be completed prior to the lodgement of any development application.

A site visit was undertaken by GML on 4 April 2012 to basement levels one and two of 71 Macquarie Street, Sydney, to look for evidence of the arches and the sandstone gallery from the warehouse phase (from c1860s). The arches and gallery are shown in historic photos (Figures 2 and 3).

Based on results of the site visit on 4 April, it appears the arches of the sandstone gallery have been removed. Further, analysis of the historic plans of the sandstone arches reveals a demolition plan (Figure 4). It is likely that the sandstone arches were removed during demolition of the warehouses and construction of the present Amatil Building in the 1960s.

The space of the former gallery is presently used as a carpark in basement level one (Figure 5) and a storage space in the basement level two (Figure 6). Figure 7 shows this storage space and also the proximity of the Bennelong Drain to the present building.

While it appears the historic arches have been removed, there is potential that remains of some of the sandstone walls of the gallery exist on the other side of the concrete walls in the storage space area on basement levels one and two. The extent of remains of any sandstone walls may be established during demolition of the present building. Archaeological test excavation and recording of any historic features remaining may be required to assess the likelihood of any elements surviving. Given that these elements (if surviving) are likely to date from the 1860s (i.e. post-colonial period) warehouses that occupied the site, and would have limited research potential, it is considered unlikely that they would be of such significance to warrant in situ retention. However, this will be further assessed in the detailed Archaeological Assessment to be prepared following the Concept Plan.

Figures

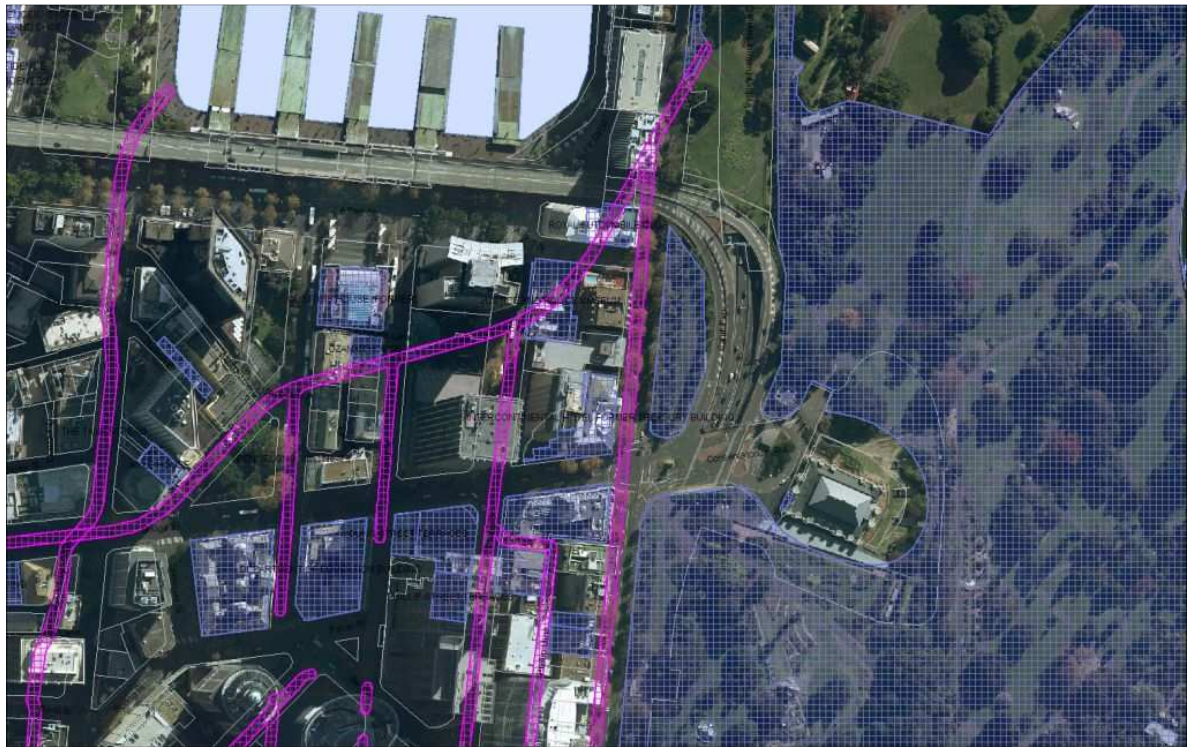


Figure 1: Aerial photograph showing the lines of the Bennelong Drain (purple) in relation to 71 Macquarie Street (at the north centre part of the image). (Source: Sydney Water).



Figure 2: Photograph of sandstone vaulted archways under Macquarie Street, 1964 appears to show demolition in process. (Source: City of Sydney Archives, Citation: NSCA CRS 48/3825).

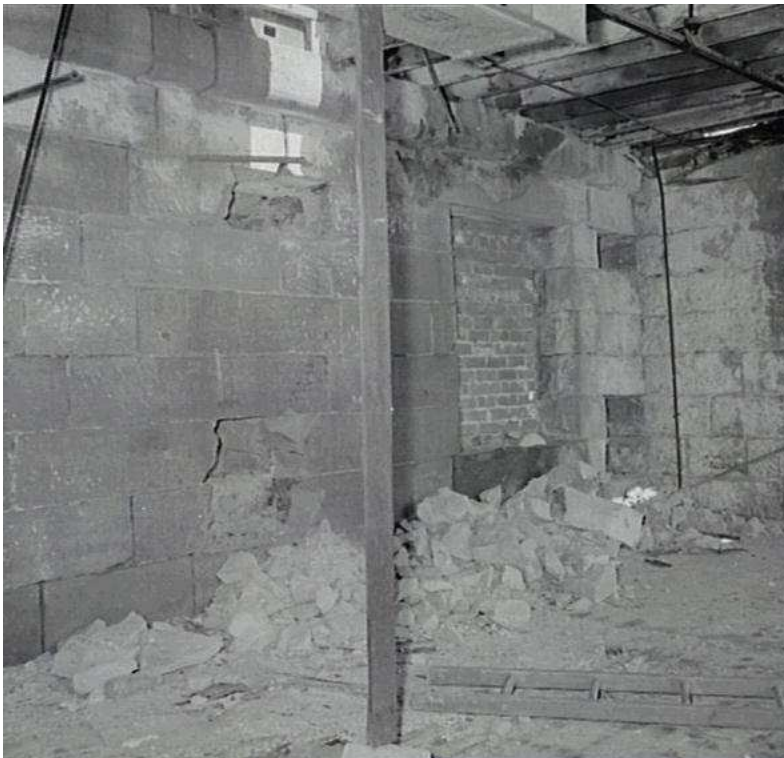


Figure 3: Photograph of sandstone gallery under Macquarie Street, 1964, appears to show demolition in process. (Source: City of Sydney Archives, Citation: NSCA CRS 48/3827).

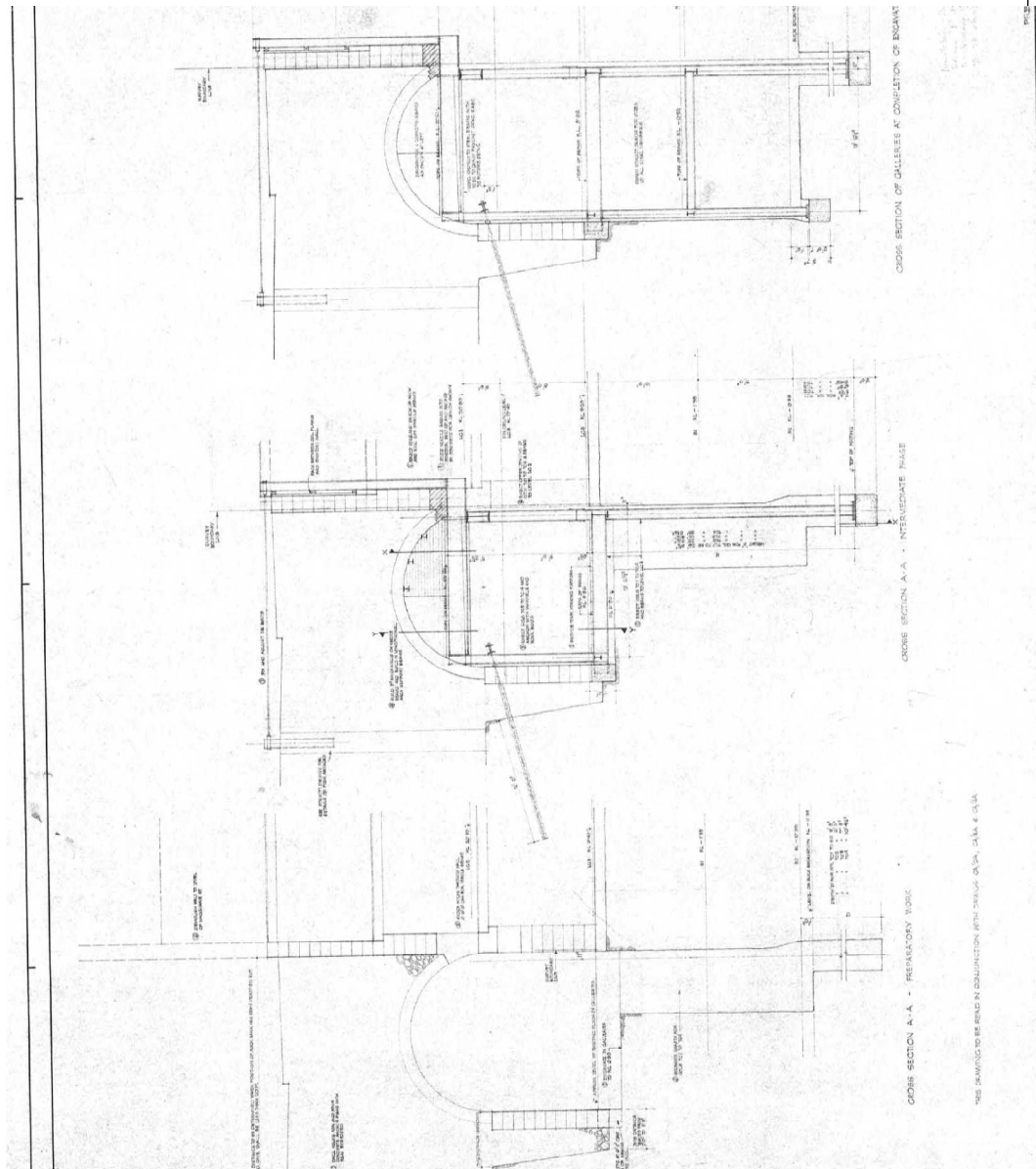


Figure 4: Plan of the British Tobacco Company Building (Source; Demolition and Excavation Scheme 'B' Modifications to Gallery Construction, Stephenson & Turner Architects, 1963).



Figure 5: Level one basement showing car space. (Source: GML, 2010)

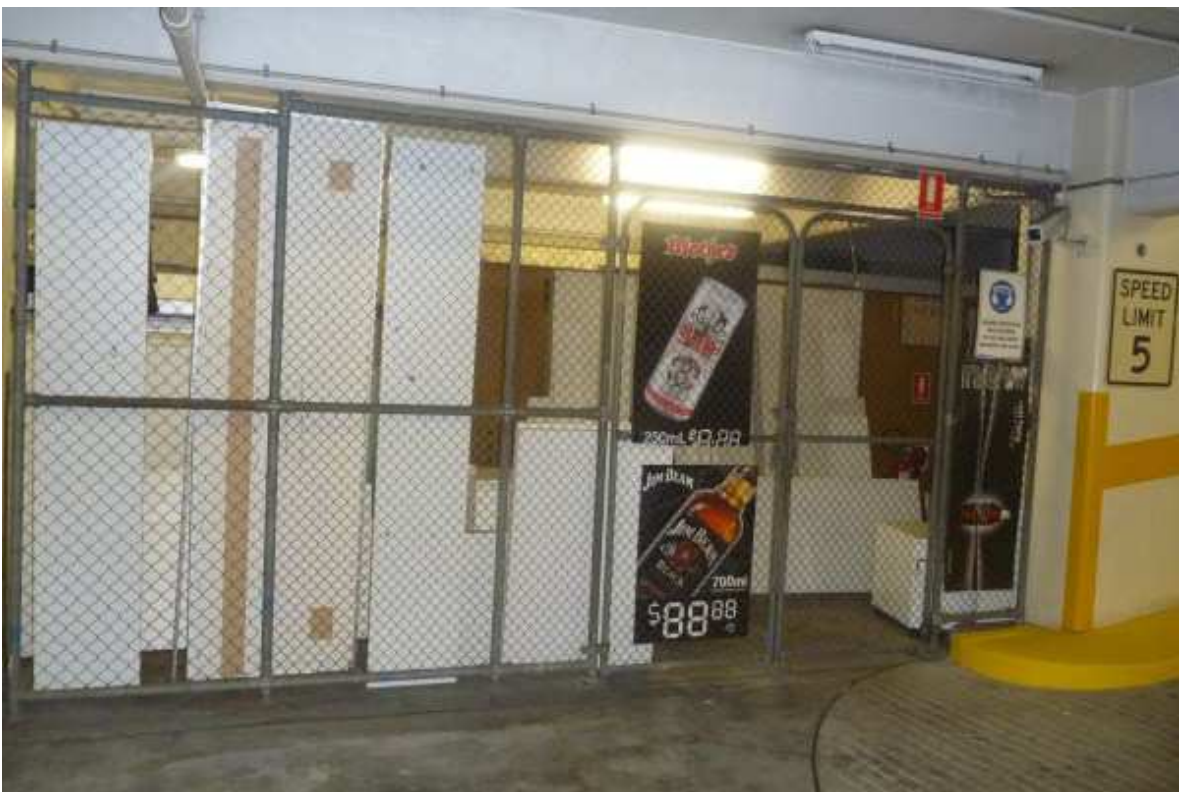


Figure 6: Level two basement storage area in the area of the former gallery (Source: GML, 2012).

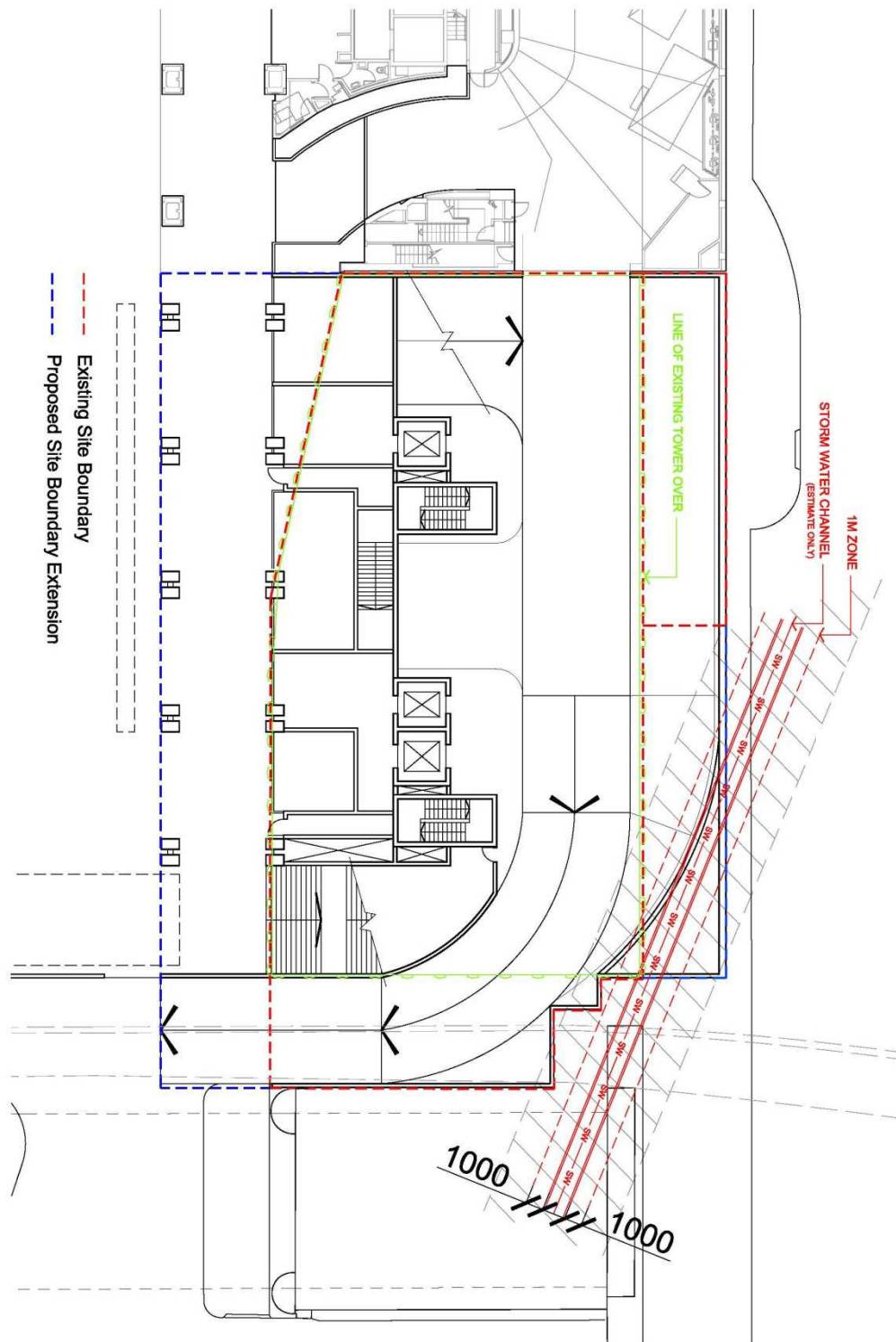


Figure 7: Plan showing the area of the former gallery (marked by 'Line of existing tower over') and proximity of the Bennelong Drain and buffer zone to 71 Macquarie Street. (Source: Hassell / Sydney Water Authority 2012).

Footnotes

- 1 Letter from Sydney Water to Mr Alan Bright, A/Director, Metropolitan and Regional Projects South, Department of Planning and Infrastructure, dated 6 March 2012.
- 2 Heritage Branch Website, accessed 24/04/2012 <http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/07_subnav_04_2.cfm?itemid=4570854>
- 3 Ibid.