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Heritage Consultants



71 Macquarie Street, Sydney

Preliminary Heritage Appraisal

Report prepared for Mirvac
June 2011

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a preliminary heritage appraisal of 71–79 Macquarie Street, Sydney, known as the Amatil Building, to accompany a concept plan application to the NSW Department of Planning for a new building. This report comprises preliminary background research, carried out with a view to ascertaining whether there are any heritage constraints arising from the existing building itself or from heritage buildings in the vicinity. This report includes recommendations regarding specific studies and assessments of heritage significance and heritage impact, which should be undertaken as part of the future Detailed Project Application submission.

Godden Mackay Logan (GML) has undertaken some preliminary research on the existing building, including limited consultation with relevant individuals and/or agencies considered to be the most likely to have any important information or potential heritage interest in the existing building.

1.2 Site Identification

71-79 Macquarie Street, Sydney (the subject site) is shown in Figure 1.1.

1.3 Methodology

This preliminary heritage appraisal has been prepared having regard to the *NSW Heritage Manual's* Guidelines (NSW Department of Planning and Heritage Council of NSW, First Edition 1996).

This preliminary heritage appraisal is also consistent with the relevant principles and guidelines of *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 1999* (Burra Charter).

1.4 Terminology

The terminology used in this report is consistent with the terminology used in the Burra Charter.

1.5 Authors

This preliminary assessment was prepared by Susan O'Neill, Associate, and David Logan, Partner, of GML. Section 2.0 Historical Overview was researched and written by Michelle Richmond, Historian and Senior Heritage Consultant, and Section 4.0 Preliminary Assessment of Archaeological Potential was researched and written by Lyndon Patterson, Consultant.

1.6 Heritage Listings

The Amatil Building, constructed in 1963–4 and designed by Stephenson and Turner Architects, is not included in any statutory or non-statutory heritage lists, but is located in the vicinity of a number of listed items, including the Sydney Opera House.

1.7 Statutory Context

The subject site is located within the Sydney City Council Local Government Area.

1.8 Structure of this Report

This report has been divided into five sections. Section 1.0 provides an overview and summary, Section 2.0 provides a historical overview, Section 3.0 summarises preliminary investigations regarding the heritage significance of the Amatil Building and identifies the heritage items in the vicinity of the subject site, Section 4.0 provides a preliminary assessment of the archaeological potential of the subject site, and Section 5.0 concludes the report and recommends what assessments should accompany any future Detailed Project Application.

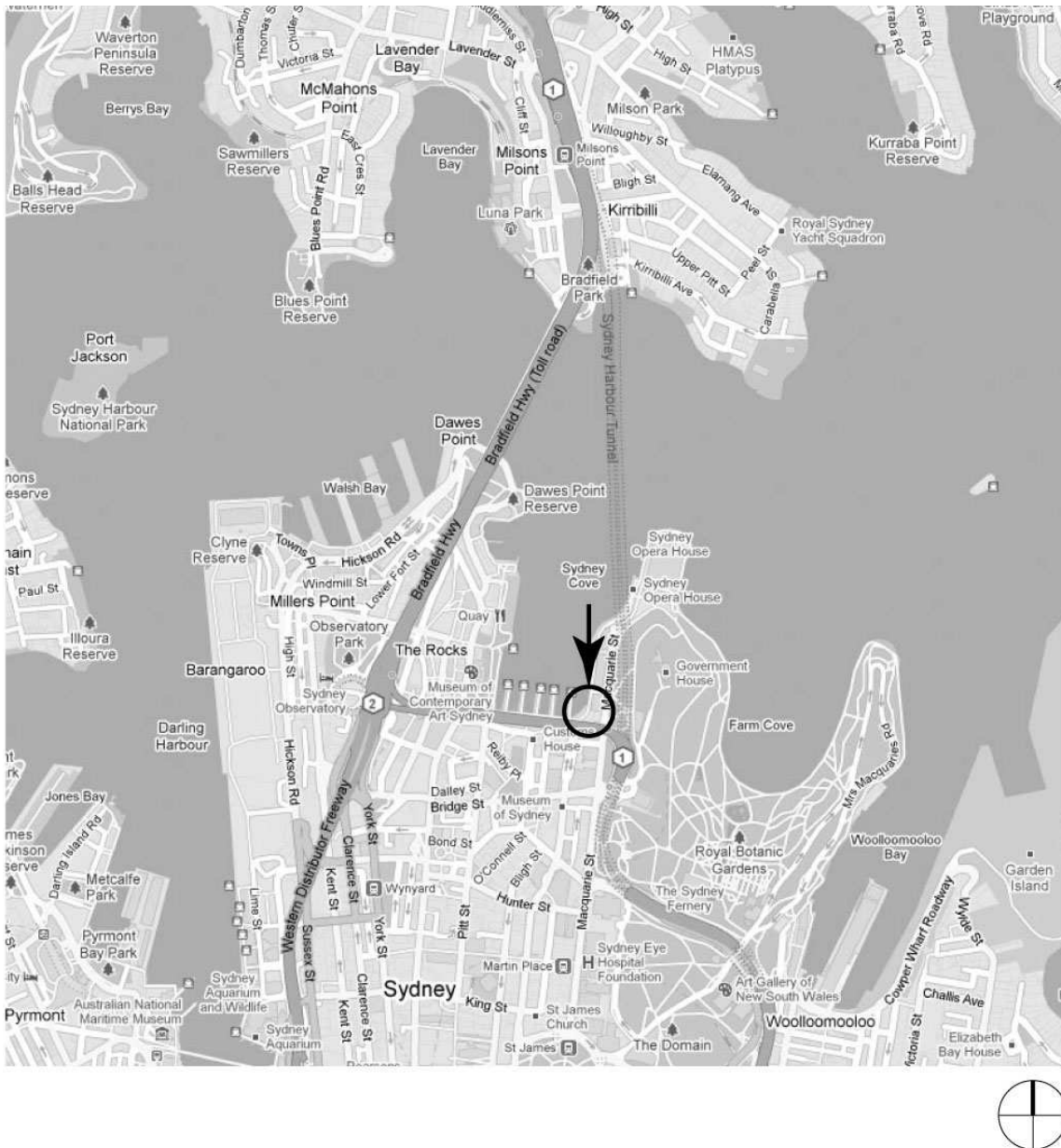


Figure 1.1 Location of 71 Macquarie Street, Sydney.

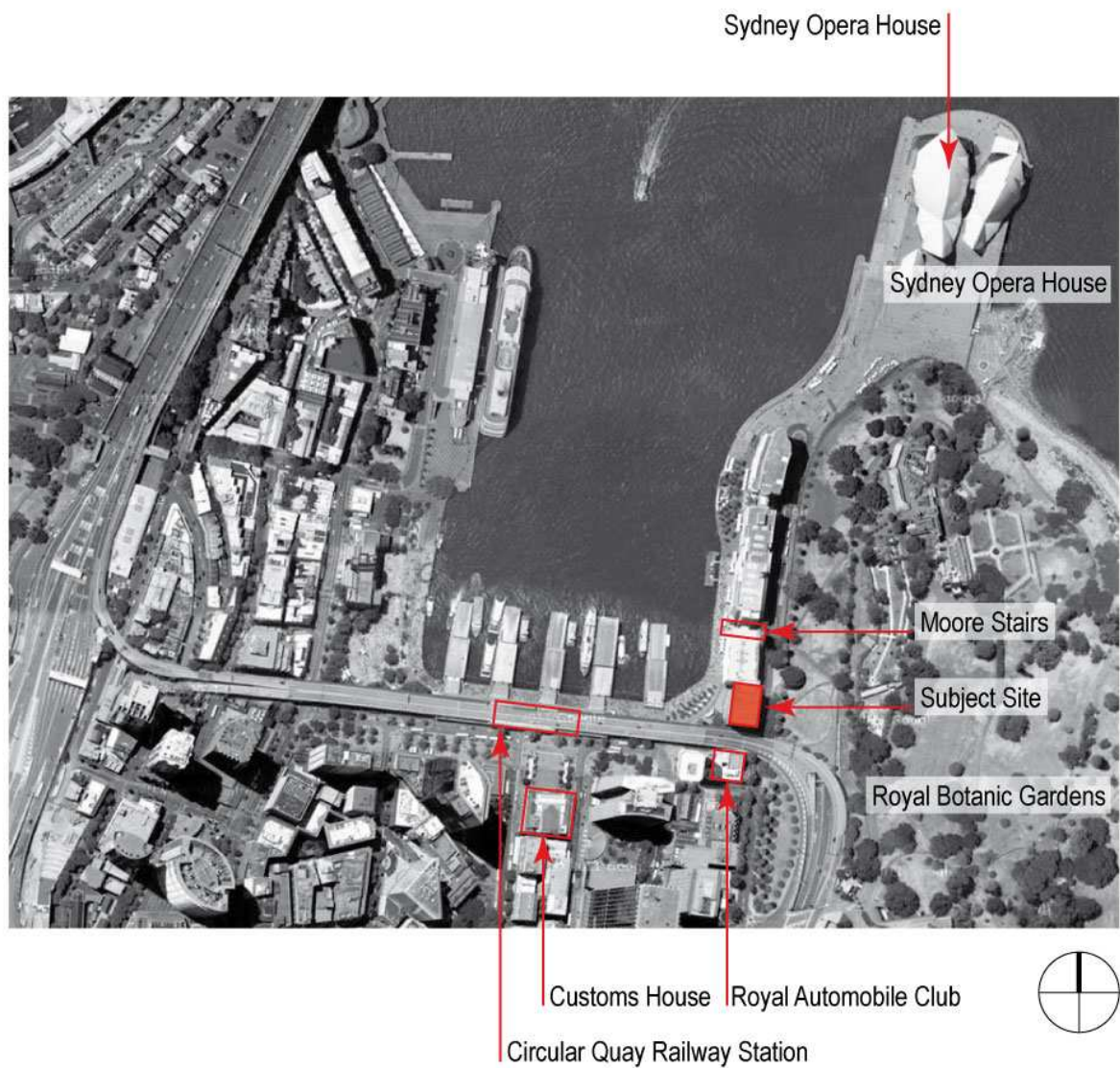


Figure 1.2 Heritage Items in the vicinity of 71 Macquarie Street, Sydney

2.0 Historical Overview

2.1 Site History Overview and Documentary Evidence

The site of the Amatil building at 71 Macquarie Street lies on land that was included in the area set aside as the Governor's Domain, following the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788. During the 1850s, part of this land was subdivided as Section 106 of the City of Sydney, when Macquarie Street was extended north from Bent Street to Circular Quay. The subject building lies on Lots 10,11,12,13 & 14 of Section 106 of the City of Sydney.

The northern end of Macquarie Street developed as a commercial centre, following improvements to the port facilities at Sydney Cove, with the creation of the semi circular quay in the 1840s and the construction of wharves and the move of Government House to its present location. Land in Section 106 was sold and developed from the 1850s onwards. The boom in the wool trade from the 1860s saw the area tied to the wool industry for many years.

Wool stores and warehouses were constructed along Macquarie Street at east Circular Quay from the 1860s, however it was the 1870s and 1880s that were the wool boom years. These sandstone warehouses fronted both Macquarie Street and Circular Quay East and remained on the site until after the Second World War.

The demolition of the wool and bond stores, which commenced during the 1950s, made way for the modern multi-storey office blocks along East Circular Quay. The first, Unilever House designed by architects Stephenson and Turner, opened in early 1957. Unilever House was followed by ICI House designed by Bates, Smart and McCutcheon and opened in October 1957. On the subject site, the British Tobacco Company (Aust) engaged Stephenson and Turner to design their head office building in 1963. These new structures were monuments to the commitment of progress and development during a long period of economic boom.¹

The function of Sydney Cove changed following the turn of the twentieth century. The area became a focus for commuter traffic of ferries and trams, as well as overseas liners. In 1902 a brick tram shed was constructed at Bennelong Point. This was demolished in 1959 to make way for the construction of the Opera House, which opened in 1973. From this time on, the quay took on a different status.

Following the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1932, work commenced on the construction of Circular Quay Railway Station, however this ground to a halt during World War Two. It was eventually opened in 1956, the same year that work began on the Cahill Expressway, which opened in 1962. This saw the demolition of the buildings south of the subject site including the original bond store at 79 Macquarie Street.

Since 1980, various development proposals have centred on East Circular Quay. In February 1989, at the end of a property boom, Colonial Mutual Life (CML) finalised the purchase of five sites, which were consolidated into the East Circular Quay development site. To compensate a reduction in the height of the proposed development, the City of Sydney Council sold CML the roadway adjacent to the site, allowing a wider building. The development took on an even greater significance when, in March 1993, Sydney won the bid for the 2000 Olympic Games.

The subject building is the only surviving building dating from the 1960s development of East Circular Quay.

2.2 History and Development of the Subject Site

The subject site lies on Lots 10 to 14 Section 106 of the City of Sydney. Lots 10 and 11, which were granted to Joshua Richmond Young in May 1854 and Lots 12,13 & 14, which were granted to William Long in December 1863. William Long also purchased Lot 11 from Young in the 1860s and by 1871 had constructed four stone wool stores across the sites numbered 71 to 77 Macquarie Street.² Lot 10 (79 Macquarie Street) has a more complicated history and it is unclear when construction began on this site however historical photographs show that a wool bond store, almost identical to those at 71-77 Macquarie Street was constructed on the site and this building is definitely in existence by 1896 but was possibly built earlier (Figures 2.1, 2.2, 2.4 & 2.5).

Long remained the owner of 71-77 Macquarie Street until his death in 1900. These buildings were leased to Patrick McMahon and Marsden & Sons until the 1880s then to Edward Flood & Co. Flood had built the Blackwall wool stores at the northern end of Macquarie Street on Circular Quay in the 1860s to establish his wool-pressing business in Sydney. In the 1880s he moved his operations to the subject properties (Figure 2.3).

Long died in 1900 and his land (Lots 11,12, 13 & 14) came into the ownership of the Perpetual Trustee Company who remained the owners until 1915. From 1897 until c 1910 the properties were leased to Pitt Son & Badgery Limited (Figure 2.4) and after this date they were leased separately to individual companies.

The Macquarie Street Land Company Limited purchased 71-77 Macquarie Street in 1915. The Rate Assessment Books from this time indicate a movement away from the wool industry at East Circular Quay. No. 71 was in use as a hall occupied by the NSW Lancers 'A' Squadron 7th Light Horse, No. 73 and 75 were in use as warehouses leased to Burgon & Ball Ltd who sold sheep shearing machines, and Elliott & Co who were building material importers, while No. 77 retained its connection to the wool industry being occupied by the Commonwealth Government NSW Wool Shippers Sampling Department. Ownership of the properties bounced between solicitors Stuart Thom and Lindsay Crouch and merchant Thomas Savage, from 1927 until 1935 when they were purchased by Management Estate Pty Ltd.

The construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and its road and rail infrastructure impacted development at East Circular Quay and in 1939 the subject properties at 71 to 79 Macquarie Street were included those resumed by the Commissioner for Road Transport and Tramways (Figure 2.6).

79 Macquarie Street remained separately owned until 1939, when it was purchased by the Commissioner for Road Transport and Tramways. During the 1920s, it was in use as a warehouse, owned and occupied by Arthur Leplastier & Co and from 1930 until 1939 it was used as a dance hall and studio.

The properties adjoining the subject site, to the south, were demolished for the construction of the Cahill Expressway and the city circle railway line. No 79 appears to have been demolished at this time also (Figure 2.7).

In May 1961 the site, still referred to as 71-79 Macquarie Street, was purchased by WD & HO Wills (Australia) Pty Ltd. They submitted a development application to the City of Sydney Council for the construction of an 18 storey office building, designed by Stephenson and Turner³. This application did not go ahead and in 1963 the property transferred ownership into the name of their parent company the Australian Mutual Provident Society with a long term lease to British Tobacco Company (Aust) Ltd⁴. Plans dated August 1963 by Stephenson and Turner Architects for a

seventeen storey building with basement parking were submitted to Council⁵ and in September, permission was granted to demolish the existing buildings⁶. Some of the brick barrel vaults from the original buildings were retained and remain in the basement of the new building. Construction of the British Tobacco Company (Aust) Ltd Head Office began in 1964 and the building opened in 1966 (Figure 2.10).⁷

In 1973, British Tobacco Company (Aust) Ltd changed its name to Allied Manufacturing and Trade Industries Limited to better reflect the Group's diverse operations and in 1977 this was shortened to AMATIL. In 1978, ownership of the building was transferred to Allied Manufacturing and Trading Industries Limited (AMATIL) and it became known as the Amatil Building.

In recent years, the company engaged Savcor to carry out a complete façade refurbishment. The part of the company who own the subject building changed their name AMP Life Limited in 1998 and they remain the current owners.⁸

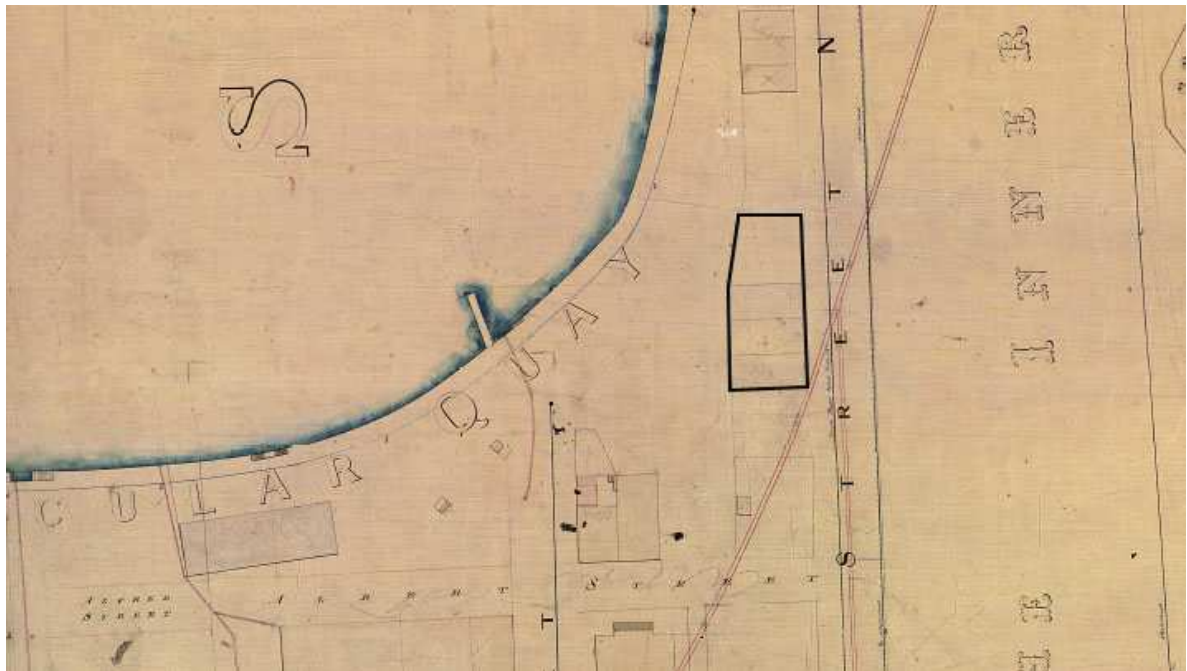


Figure 2.1 1865 Trig Survey showing the subject site outlined. While there appears to be some indication of development on the site at this time, the rate assessment books record no development on the site until c1870. (Source: City of Sydney Archives)

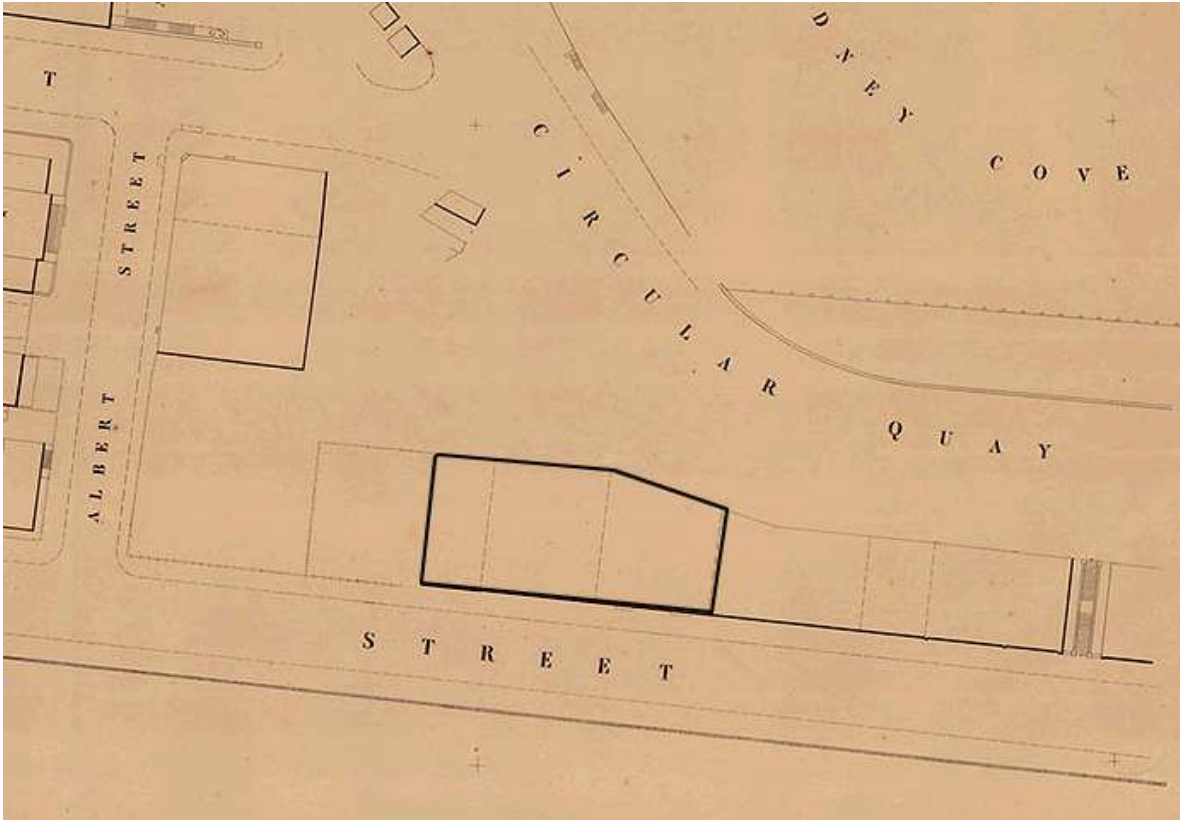


Figure 2.2 1884 Sydney Water Plan showing development on the subject site at this time. (Source: SLNSW)

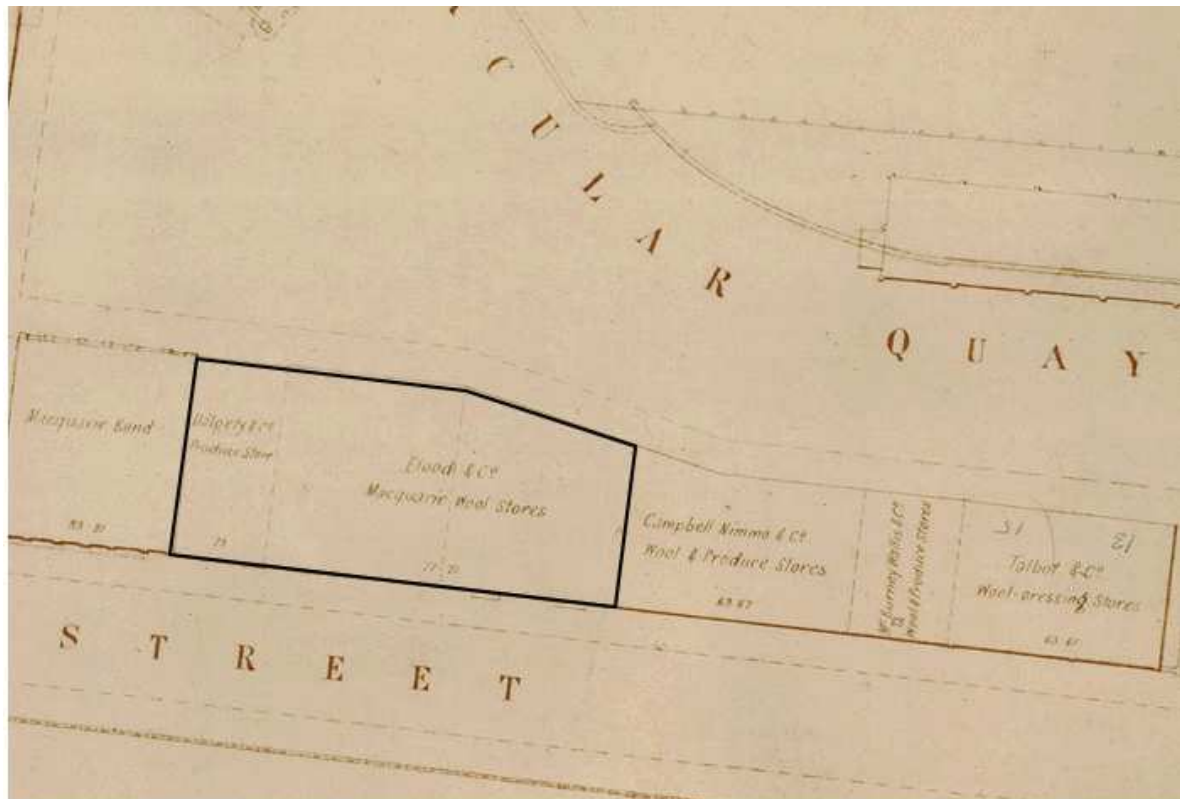


Figure 2.3 1895 Sydney Water plan showing development on the subject site at this time. (Source: SLNSW)



Figure 2.4 Circular Quay 1900-1910. Name on subject buildings reads Pitt Son & Badgery Ltd. (Source: SLNSW PXE 711/168)



Figure 2.5 1925 photograph of East Circular Quay showing the five bond stores which relate to this study near arrow. (Source: City of Sydney Archives)

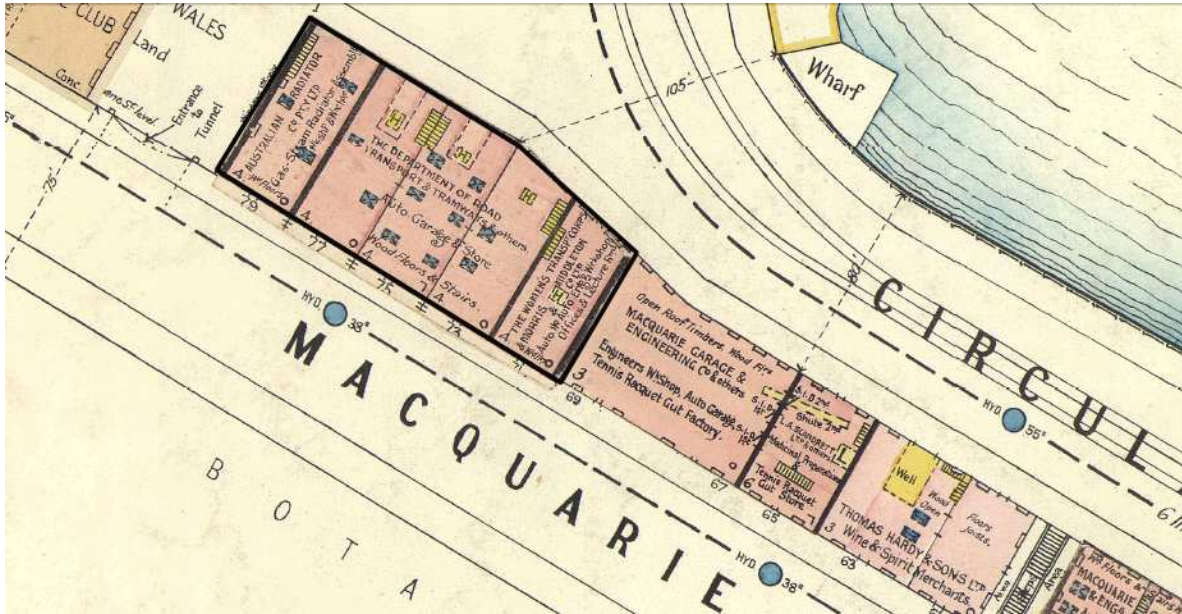


Figure 2.6 Fire Underwriters Map drawn between 1917 and 1937 showing development on the subject site outlined. (Source: City of Sydney Archives)

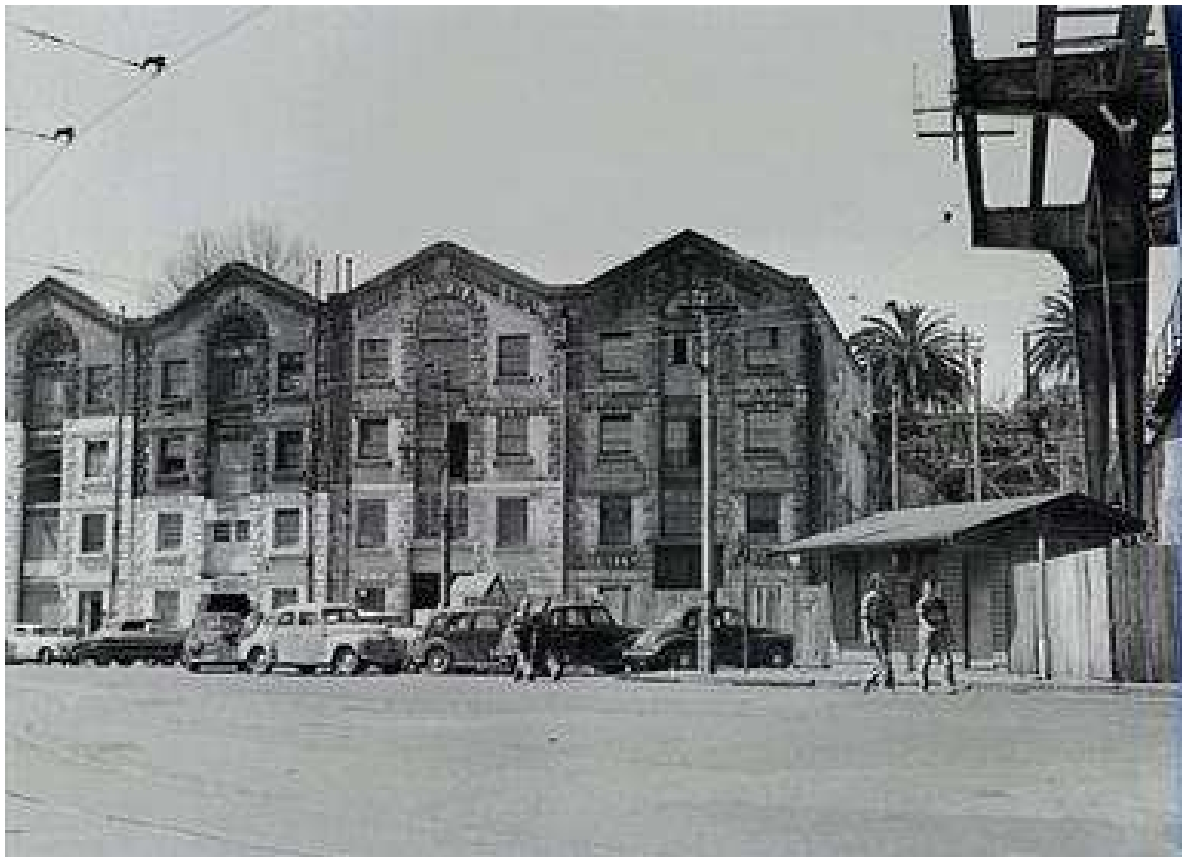


Figure 2.7 71–79 Macquarie Street (from East Circular Quay) Sept 1955 during the construction of the Cahill Expressway which opened in 1962. (Source: City of Sydney Archives)



Figure 2.8 Photograph of the top floor of the four sandstone warehouses located at 71–79 Macquarie Street, taken in 1961 as viewed from Macquarie Street. (Source: City of Sydney Archives, Citation: NSCA CRS 47/2189).



Figure 2.9: Photograph of part of the four sandstone warehouses located at 71-79 Macquarie Street showing their East Circular Quay frontage, taken in 1962 just prior to their demolition. (Source: City of Sydney Archives, Citation: 026\026626).



Figure 2.10 1970 view showing subject building (far right) at East Circular Quay (Source: SLNSW)

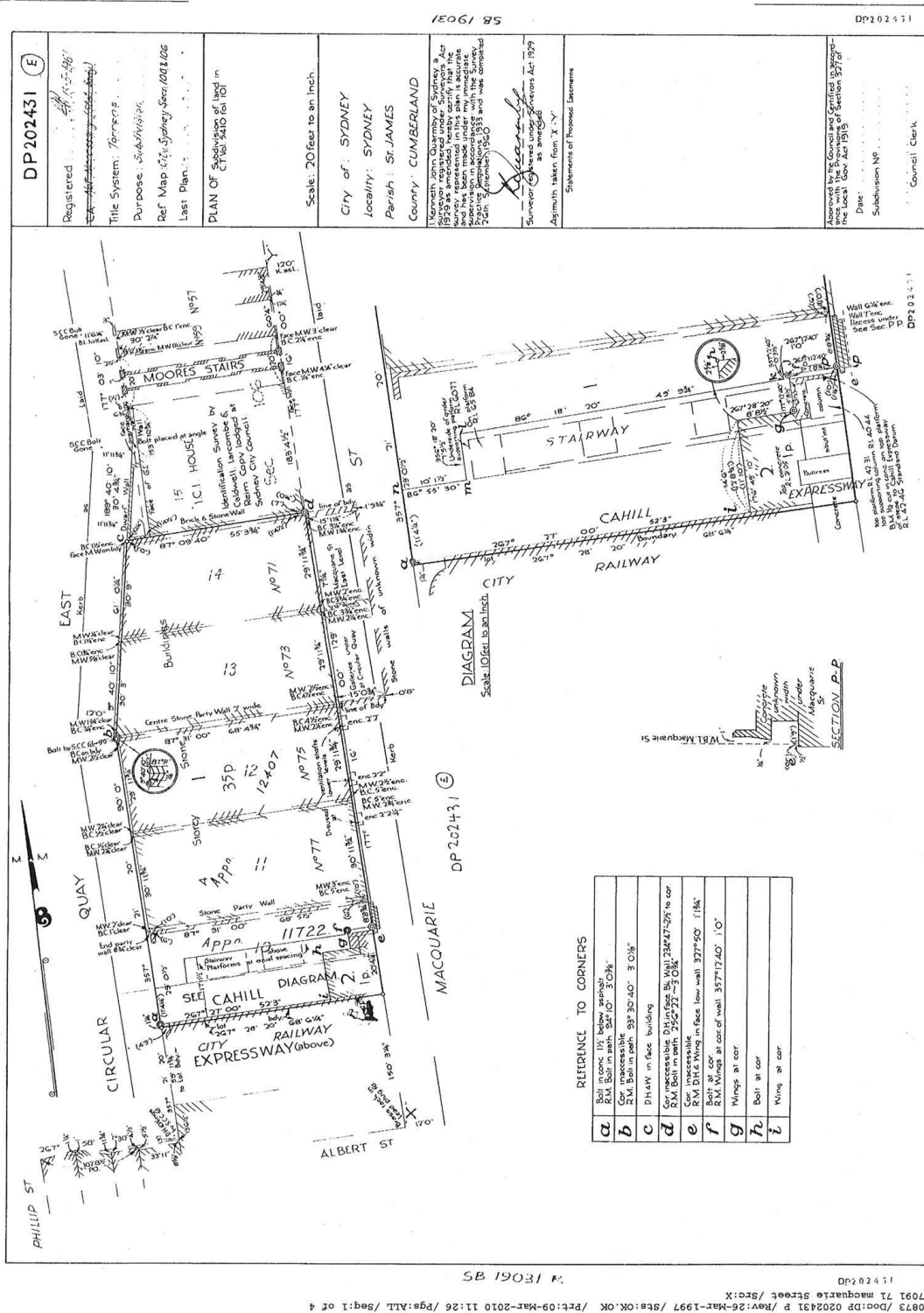


Figure 2.11 The current title dated 1960 text indicates the four-storey sandstone warehouses and galleries under Macquarie Street. (Source: DP 202431, City of Sydney)

2.3 Endnotes

- ¹ Ashton P 1993, *The Accidental City, Planning Sydney Since 1788*, Hale and Iremonger.
- ² Council Rate Assessment Books from 1871. Buildings then numbered 19, 21,23,& 25 Macquarie Street.
- ³ City of Sydney, Building Application Cards, 1961, DA428/61.
- ⁴ Certificate of Title, NSW, Vol 8205, Fol 33.
- ⁵ Stephenson & Turner Architects, August 1963, Drawing No 28451, North Sydney.
- ⁶ City of Sydney, Building Application Cards, 1961, DA2074/63 and 725/64.
- ⁷ Coca-Cola Amatil, Company History.
- ⁸ CN 5239802, Department of Lands.

3.0 Preliminary Heritage Assessment

3.1 Summary of Preliminary Consultation and Research

The building is not currently heritage listed, nor is there any proposal to list it. Nevertheless, as part of due diligence, consultation was undertaken with three main heritage stakeholders/interest groups for buildings of this period. These were the Australian Institute of Architects, the City of Sydney Council and a Director (and heritage expert) of Stephenson and Turner, the building's architects.

The Australian Institute of Architects (NSW Chapter) (AIA) maintains a list of twentieth-century buildings of significance and is an authoritative body on buildings of this period. Ms Anne Higham, Heritage Architect, advised that the AIA does not currently have any listing of the building nor does it have any records, articles or other references that may point to the building's being of heritage significance.

Margaret Bergomi, Director of Stephenson & Turner, was contacted to determine whether the firm holds any of the original drawings of the building. Ms Bergomi indicated that the firm did not hold any of the original drawings of the building, but was able to forward an index of microfilm drawings which her firm holds. The index indicates these are the same as the set of drawings currently held by Hassell Architects. Ms Bergomi also checked a reference book on the firm of Stephenson & Turner which covered the period 1920–1970. This mentions a number of projects from the 1960s but does not identify the Amatil Building (formerly known as the British Tobacco Company Head Office). Ms Bergomi suggested that this probably indicated that the firm did not regard this building as one of its more important works.

Contact was also made with Mr Tony Smith, Heritage Manager of the City of Sydney. Mr Smith indicated that the building is not currently listed by the Council, nor was it identified as part of a study of 1950s and 60s office buildings undertaken by a consultant for the City of Sydney to inform an updating of the Council's heritage list. Mr Smith indicated that he was not aware of any specific heritage interest in the building.

3.2 Summary of Heritage Interest/Potential Significance

The building is not mentioned in any of the authoritative texts on Sydney's architecture, nor has it specifically been identified in previous studies of buildings of this period. The opening of the building was written up in an article in *Building: Lighting: Engineering* magazine in July 1966 in which it was described as being made of steel frames and reinforced concrete. It was also stated that the entrances at Macquarie Street and Circular Quay were finished with Reper marble on the floors with white Sicilian marble on the walls. There is nothing in this article that would point to the architecture of the building as being of heritage significance. Further, it was common practice for such articles to be written upon the opening of all new high-rise buildings of this period.

While the number of office buildings surviving in the city from the 1960s period is known to be dwindling, and this building is clearly a representative example of the period, it is nevertheless our opinion that there are many better examples, even amongst those that are not currently listed.

3.3 Heritage Items within the Vicinity of the Site

The Detailed Project Application for redevelopment of the site would need to be accompanied by a Heritage Impact Statement. This would need to assess the impacts of any proposal on heritage

items within the vicinity of the site. The first and foremost of the heritage items within the vicinity is the Sydney Opera House, which is included on the World Heritage List.

The listing identifies a buffer zone which extends around the harbour edges to include Circular Quay and the Royal Botanic Gardens, as well as all the east Circular Quay buildings, including the subject site. Development within the buffer zone requires consideration for its potential impacts on the heritage significance of the Sydney Opera House as well as the harbour foreshores generally.

Other heritage items within the vicinity of the site are the Royal Automobile Club (RAC), the Circular Quay railway station, the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain, Customs House, the sea wall and balustrade extending around Circular Quay and the Moore Stairs linking Macquarie Street and East Circular Quay. Views to and from those items would need to be considered when determining the impact of the proposal for the subject site, as well as views to and from more remote items such as the Sydney Harbour Bridge and The Rocks area. Consideration would need to be given to any impacts on the existing visibility of the RAC building from the Circular Quay area and, in particular, from the Sydney Cove waterway. The streetscape of Macquarie Street south of Alfred Street would also need to be considered for its heritage value along with the individual heritage buildings which front that street.

Our preliminary assessment is that the proposal would be unlikely to impact on any of the heritage items in the vicinity; including the requirements of the heritage buffer zone for the Sydney Opera House under its World Heritage listing.

Nevertheless, a detailed analysis of potential impacts on heritage items in the vicinity of the site would need to be undertaken in a Heritage Impact Statement that would accompany any specific project/development application.

4.0 Preliminary Assessment of Archaeological Potential

4.1 Introduction

From an archaeological perspective, there are effectively three separate areas of the site. These are: the portion of the site below Macquarie Street, the area beneath the existing building footprint, and the area to the west of the existing footprint.

4.2 Macquarie Street Arches and Tunnels

A preliminary archaeological assessment was undertaken for the portion of the site beneath Macquarie Street.

Demolition and excavation plans for the construction of the British Tobacco Company (Aust) Ltd Head Office, prepared by Stephenson and Turner Architects, dated 1963,¹ show an existing coursed stone wall of unknown thickness, twelve and half courses high and a brick barrel vault (arch shape) covering the third basement level and most of the second basement level (RLs 9.4 to above 20.90). Excavation for the present building was carried out in 1963 and construction of the British Tobacco Company Building (now the Amatil Building) occurred in 1964.² The magazine article in *Building: Lighting: Engineering* magazine, July 1966, referred to in Section 3.2, also identified the existence of underground tunnels, which affected the construction of the building.

These tunnels have been attributed to a former wool store which existed on this site. The tunnels may have survived, in part, under Macquarie Street and may extend within the boundary of the subject site. It is also possible, however, that during the excavation for and construction of the British Tobacco Company Building in 1963 that most, if not all, of the sandstone walls and arch structures of the gallery were removed. If the arches have survived, they may be of archaeological interest. Figures 4.1 and 4.2, dated January 1964, show the sandstone vault structure and gallery under Macquarie Street, apparently being demolished, with a lot of debris on the floor.

4.3 Existing Basements and Other Portions of the Site

A site inspection of both basement levels was undertaken by a GML archaeologist in 2010. Level One basement contained a carpark space, workshop and storage area in the area of the former gallery space underneath Macquarie Street (Figure 4.3).

Level Two basement contained a workshop and storage area in the area of the former gallery space underneath Macquarie Street (Figure 4.4). No historic structures or sandstone fabric were noted in the accessible areas during the site visit. There were, however, two inaccessible areas on the Level Two basement area, one accessed via a doorway with a sign that read 'sump pump' and 'confined space' and an area boarded off in the northeast of the basement (Figure 4.5). It is possible that some remains of the sandstone structure may survive in these areas.

In addition, the Bennelong Stormwater Channel, if still in existence at this location, passes close to, or may even cross the south eastern corner of the site.³ The Bennelong Stormwater Channel was an important development in health and sanitation of early Sydney and was constructed in 1856-57 and went from the Central Business District, along Macquarie Street and discharged into Sydney Harbour at Bennelong Point. The Bennelong Stormwater Channel is listed on the NSW State Heritage Register (listing number 5146) and is owned by Sydney Water.⁴

It is concluded that there may be potential for other archaeological remains to survive elsewhere on the site, unless the whole of the footprint of the existing building was originally excavated into bedrock. Further, the area of the forecourt to the west of the existing footprint may be partially unexcavated and, given its proximity to the original shoreline, may have historical archaeological potential. This and other areas of the site may also have aboriginal heritage values and this requires further assessment. Both the historical archaeological potential, including research into the proximity of the Bennelong Stormwater Channel to the subject site, and Aboriginal archaeological potential of the subject site will require further investigation and assessment, which should accompany the Detailed Project Application.



Figure 4.1 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).

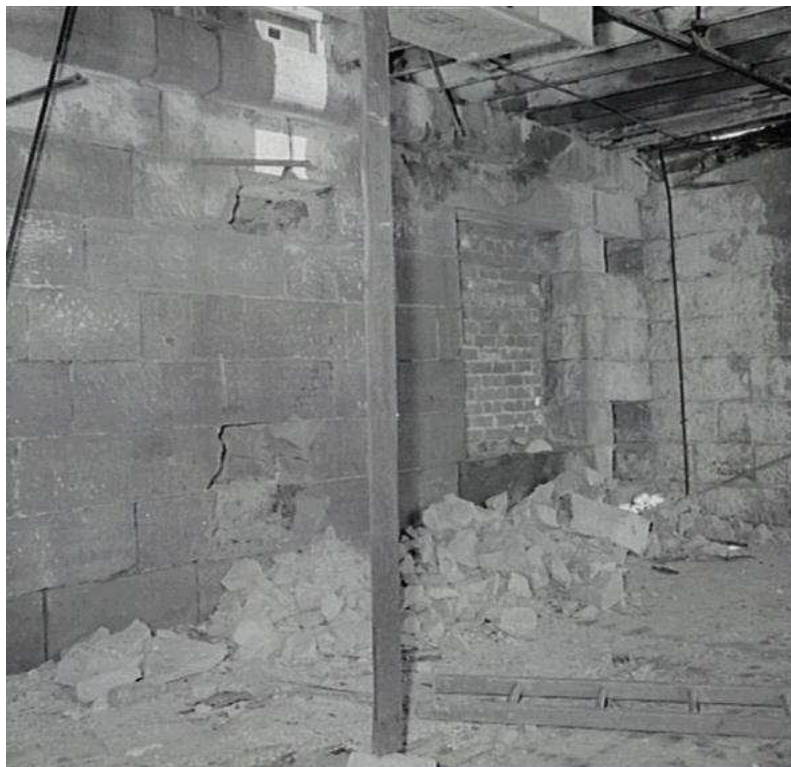


Figure 4.2 Photograph of sandstone gallery under Macquarie Street, 1964 appears to show demolition in process. (Source: City of Sydney Archives, Citation: NSCA CRS 48/3827).



Figure 4.3 Level One basement showing car space. (Source: GML, 2010)



Figure 4.4 Level Two basement, a workshop and storage a space. (Source: GML, 2010)



Figure 4.5 Level Two basement, showing doorway with two areas that were inaccessible during the site inspection, the pump sump and the boarded off area. (Source: GML, 2010)

4.4 Endnotes

- ¹ Stephenson & Turner Architects, August 1963, Drawing No 28451, North Sydney.
- ² City of Sydney, Building Application Cards, 1961, DA2074/63 and 725/64.
- ³ Coffey Geotechnics, 2011, Geotechnical Desk Study 71-79 Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW, Unpublished Report, Sydney, p3.
- ⁴ NSW Heritage Branch Website: <http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/07_subnav_04_2.cfm?itemid=4570854> Accessed on 28 April 2011.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The existing building at 71-79 Macquarie Street, Sydney has not been identified as being of heritage significance in any current or proposed heritage lists. It is not currently regarded as being of heritage significance by the Australian Institute of Architects or by the architectural firm of Stephenson & Turner, which designed the building. While GML believes that demolition of the building would be supportable on heritage grounds, the construction of a replacement building (of similar height but greater depth) requires consideration of its potential impacts on the setting of heritage items in the vicinity and on potential archaeological values. This preliminary assessment indicates that the setting of heritage items in the vicinity would be unlikely to be adversely affected by the concept proposal, subject to detailed consideration of view lines and materiality.

5.2 Recommendations

It is recommended that the following reports accompany any future Detailed Project Application:

- A Heritage Assessment of the Amatil Building, including a comparative study of 1960s commercial buildings to place the Amatil Building in context in terms of its architectural design and period of construction;
- A Heritage Impact Statement, which would need to assess the impacts of any proposal on heritage items within the vicinity of the site and any archaeological potential;
- A Historical Archaeological Assessment of the site, including the underground tunnels beneath Macquarie Street;
- An Aboriginal Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Assessment of the site and its immediate vicinity.

