



HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

RAILWAY CORRIDOR RETAINING WALL NORTH OF REDFERN RAILWAY STATION REDFERN NSW 2016

FINAL
9 December 2011

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This report has been prepared under the guidance of the Expert Witness Code of Conduct in the Uniform Civil Procedure Rules and the NSW Land & Environment Court Practice Directions relating to the provision of evidence by expert witnesses. The opinions in the report represent the professional opinions of the author based on an assessment of the available information cited in the report.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This Heritage Assessment was prepared by NBRS+PARTNERS Architects for DeiCorp Construction Pty Ltd, acting on behalf of the Aboriginal Housing Company Limited (AHC). The Heritage Assessment is prepared to fulfil the Director General's Requirements (DGR) "Issue 13" of Application No MP06_0101 MOD 1. The condition states:

13. Heritage Interpretation

A Heritage Interpretation Plan addressing the cultural and social significance of the area is to be prepared. This shall also include an assessment on the heritage significance of the railway corridor retaining wall.

1.2 Definition of the Study Area and Study Objectives

The site comprises the rail corridor retaining wall located on the western boundary of the railway corridor between Redfern Railway Station and Cleveland Street overbridge. The retaining wall is located north of Redfern Railway Station and Lawson Street, Redfern, and east of Eveleigh Street. Part of the subject site includes the northern boundary wall to the pedestrian walkway and vehicular traffic overbridge on Lawson Street (see Figures 1 and 2). The subject site comprises the brick retaining wall and the concrete block wall located above, aligning with a reserve on Eveleigh Street.

This Heritage Assessment is intended to identify any heritage values associated with the site in accordance with the standard assessment criteria and to determine the potential for redevelopment of the site.

1.3 Methodology

This report generally follows the format set out in the document entitled *Assessing Heritage Significance (2001)* published by the NSW Heritage Office. The terms *fabric, place, preservation, reconstruction, restoration, adaptation* and *conservation* used throughout this report have the meaning given them in *Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter) 1999*.

1.4 Limitations and Author Identification

The report is a result of analysis of available research material combined with a physical assessment of the existing building fabric and a streetscape analysis. Due to safety reasons, the western retaining wall and the northern side of the Lawson Street Overbridge were investigated from the eastern side of the rail tracks and Redfern Railway Station platforms.

The report was researched and prepared by Lynette Gurr, Senior Heritage Consultant, of NBRS+PARTNERS.

1.5 Sources

The main documentary sources consulted in the research for this report are listed below:

- Mitchell Library: State Library of NSW – Maps, Plans and Small Pictures File;
- State Records;
- NSW Land & Property Management Authority; and
- National Library of Australia.



Figure 1 – Site location with subject site circled in red (Source: Google Maps)



Figure 2 – Location of the railway corridor retaining wall located on the eastern boundary of The Block (Source: Google Maps)

2.0 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

2.1 Historic Overview

The thematic history has been drawn from several sources including the *Statement of Heritage Impact: The Pemulwuy Project* and *Conservation Management Plan: The Settlement Neighbourhood Centre, 17 Edward Street Darlington*, both prepared by Cracknell and Lonergan Architects and Heritage Consultants. The Redfern Oral History, Redfern Waterloo Authority, and Aboriginal Housing Company web pages have also provided useful information on the history and development of the locality.

2.2 Aboriginal Occupation pre 1788

The subject site lies within the traditional lands of the Cadigal, or Gadigal people. The Cadigal tribe was one of 34 Aboriginal tribes, or bands, that inhabited the greater Sydney area. The Cadigal clan occupied a large territory stretching from South Head to Botany Bay and west to Petersham. They were one of the clans of the coastal Darug, or Eora people. Neighbouring clans of the Eora land included the Wanegal, the Kamergal, the Karegal and the Bidjigal.

2.2.1 Pemulwuy (1750-1802)

Pemulwuy is noted for his resistance to the European settlement of Australia after 1788. Historians argue about the nature and extent of Aboriginal resistance to European settlement of Australia, but if one person can be identified who clearly carried out armed warfare against the settlers of early Sydney it was Pemulwuy. In March 1797, following a pursuit by settlers, Pemulwuy led 100 men and confronted the British troops in Parramatta. Pemulwuy was shot seven times, taken to hospital and later escaped. Five others were killed instantly. Pemulwuy led several attacks which resulted in head-on confrontations with the New South Wales Corps, including the sacking of the Lane Cove settlement and the capture of Parramatta.

Pemulwuy is the name of the heroic Aboriginal warrior, one of the earliest Aboriginal men to lead the resistance of British invasion of Sydney. The Sydney suburb of Pemulwuy, New South Wales named after him as well as Pemulwuy Park in Redfern, New South Wales. Pemulwuy has become a heroic figure to Aborigines, and Eric Willmot published a novel about him in 1987.

2.3 Early European Settlement

The arrival of the First Fleet in 1788 had a disastrous impact on the Aboriginal tribes of the Sydney region. The Eora people were soon dispossessed of their traditional lands which were integral to their social, cultural belief, lore and communal structure. Also devastating was the introduction of diseases such as smallpox, colds, flu and measles. It is believed that almost half of Sydney's Aboriginal population died in the smallpox epidemic of 1789 with only three Cadigal people remaining by 1791.

Those Eora people who survived European diseases, either fled the Sydney region to escape the threat of violence or disease, or joined others (eg Pemulwuy) to stage a resistance to European settlement of Australia.

Following European settlement, William Hutchinson, William Chippendale, William Redfern and James Chisholm received land grants in the Redfern area between 1817 and 1819 (Figure 2).



Figure 3 - Parish Map No. 14066301

Source: NSW Land & Property Management Authority

2.3.1 Land Grant - William Chippendale

William Chippendale's grant of 1819 extended both sides of the present Cleveland Street, and was bounded on the east by the line of Botany Road and on the west in part by the Black Wattle Swamp Creek. The "Chippendale Estate" was originally a Crown Grant of 95 acres made to William Chippendale by Governor Macquarie in 1819, on condition that at least 20 acres were to be cleared and cultivated within five years and during that time none of the land could be sold. In 1815, William Chippendale and his wife Henrietta (née Rushton), free settlers from Liverpool, arrived in Sydney with their large family. They may have occupied part of the land in present Chippendale prior to the making of the land grant, as Henrietta's father, Thomas Rushton, lived on the adjoining land.

The area of the grant made to the Chippendale's was outside the formal boundary of Sydney Town, and well beyond the Toll gates at Brickfield Hill. By 1817, William Chippendale had constructed a house on the site which included accommodation for a government man (assigned convict). Chippendale is recorded as running cattle, growing potatoes and raising barley crops there. Henrietta Chippendale died in 1816. William was left with the task of raising a large family and looking after the extensive farm. In November 1817, Chippendale shot and killed the convict brick maker, James Harris, who, together with another man, was running from Chippendale's farm after stealing potatoes from his fields near the Blackwattle Swamps.

In 1821, Chippendale sold his grant for 380 pounds to Solomon Levey, an emancipist convict turned Colonial business tycoon.¹ From 1825, Levey was in partnership with Daniel Cooper of the nearby "Cleveland House" in Surry Hills. Together they established a major trading company with interests in shipping, whaling and banking which allowed them to make further substantial real estate purchases including nearly all of Alexandria, Waterloo, much of the present Eastern Suburbs and land on the North Shore. Levey returned to England where he died in 1833. In 1844, his heirs sold a large part of the Chippendale property, over 62 acres, to William Hutchinson.²

2.3.2 William Hutchinson and Family

William Hutchinson (1772-1846), public servant and landowner, was transported to Australia in 1799 for stealing goods. Convicted of theft in Sydney he was sent to Norfolk Island. He was soon appointed overseer of government stock, an acting superintendent of convicts and, in 1809, a superintendent. He returned to Sydney and, in 1814, Macquarie appointed him principal superintendent of convicts and public works. He was an important citizen and active in the establishment of the Bank of NSW in 1816, of which he was Director. He owned real estate in the centre of Sydney, Chippendale, Liverpool, Waterloo, Parramatta and Melbourne.³ In 1801, he married Mary Cooper (Chapman) who bore him eight children. Hutchinson also received a further grant of 52 acres west of Chippendale's grant in 1819 (Golden Grove Estate).

The land which Hutchinson purchased in 1844 was the southern part of the original Chippendale grant, bounded on the north by Vine Street and extending south to the boundary of his own grant. This area, which acquired the name of "Hutchinson's Paddock", was said to be well-watered and known for its watercress beds.⁴ As the name indicates, the area consisted largely of paddocks with only a few buildings. This land and that of his original grant were leased for market gardens to Chandler, McAuley, Warren, Fitzgerald and Griffiths.⁵

¹ Old Systems Title Bk C No. 356

² Old Systems Title BK 7 No. 749

³ Paul Edwin Le Roy, Hutchinson, William (1771-1846) *Australian Dictionary of Biography Online Edition*, 2006

⁴ Fitzgerald, S., (1990) *Chippendale: Beneath the Factory Wall*, pp 14-15

⁵ ML Plans ZM4 811.18194/1844/1

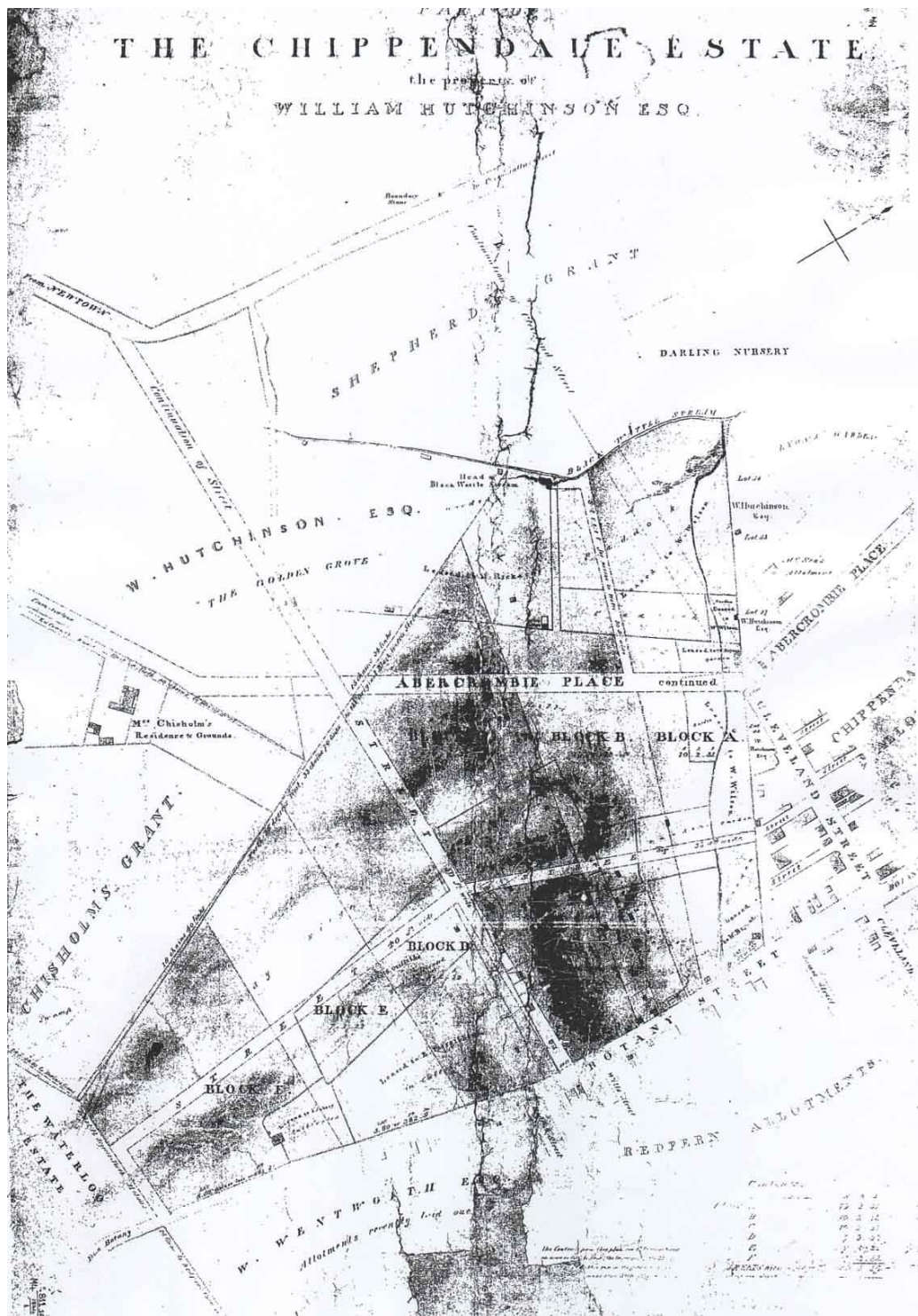


Figure 4 - 1844 Plan of part of the Chippendale Estate - Property of William Hutchinson
 Source: ML Plans ZM4 811.18194/1844/1

Hutchinson appears to have subdivided his 62 acres soon after he purchased the land. The six Blocks, A to F, each contained between 7 and 10 acres (see Figure 3). He bequeathed this land to his children.

On part of Block B, Hutchinson's son-in-law, John Rose Holden, built "Eve(r)leigh House" (named after his mother's maiden name). Holden married Mary, the third daughter of William Hutchinson in 1834. He became the executor of Hutchinson's estate following his death in 1846. Holden built Everleigh House, circa 1840. Following his wife's death in 1849, Holden remarried Susan Broadhurst. They returned to England in 1853, where he died in 1860. His son, George Holden, medical practitioner living in Berkshire, England, gave his power-of-attorney to Thomas McCulloch, solicitor. McCulloch lived at Eveleigh House from 1865 to 1869. Eveleigh House (Figures 3 and 4) was located in the vicinity of Louis Street just south of Vine Street, east of Abercrombie, west of Eveleigh Street and north of Caroline Street. This is the area now referred to as 'The Block'.



Figure 5 - Reuss and Brown Plan of subdivisions in and around Sydney, 1857. Everleigh House is shown on this plan (circled in red).

Source: National Library of Australia

McCulloch subdivided Everleigh (Eveleigh), part of Hutchison's Estate, in early 1869. Richardson and Wrench sold Eveleigh House (with about three acres of land) for £2500 and 90 of the building allotments for 30 shillings to five pounds three shillings per foot frontage.⁶ In 1878 Eveleigh House and Grounds was converted to Torrens Title by a Primary Application lodged by Hugo L Beyers, Andrew H McCulloch and George P Slade⁷ at which date the land was subdivided into 37 allotments for sale.

⁶ Property Circulars, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 February 1869, p3

⁷ Government Notices: Notice under Real Property Act, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 April 1878, p10



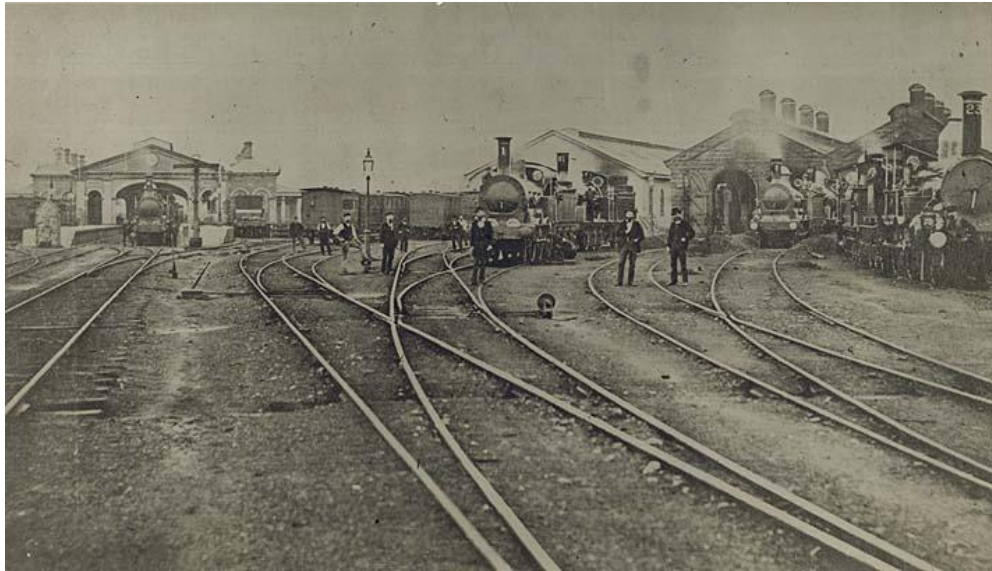
Figure 6 - Portion of Trigonometrical Survey of Sydney 1865. Everleigh (Eveleigh) House is circled in red.

Source: City of Sydney Archives

2.4 The Coming of the Railway

Hutchinson's estate was divided by the construction of Sydney's first railway line which extended from Sydney to Parramatta Junction and opened in 1855. Eveleigh Station was opened in 1878 and was renamed Redfern Station in 1906, following the opening of Central Railway, the new Sydney Terminus. Railway workshops were established alongside Redfern Station (located between the present Central and Redfern Stations). By 1875 these workshops were overcrowded and too small, so, following recommendations, a new site was selected nearby on sixty-two acres granted to James Chisholm. After 1880, when the Government and Chisholm came to an agreement on compensation, this land was cleared for the construction of the Eveleigh Railway Workshops.

The Eveleigh Railway Workshops consisted of carriage workshops, responsible for the building and maintenance of rolling stock, located on the north side of the railway line. On the south side of the railway line were the locomotive workshops to service and later built steam locomotive engines. By the 1880s, the railways had become the major employer in the district. The Eveleigh railway workshops were one of the largest employers in Sydney at the turn of the century, declining only in the latter half of the twentieth century. Those working at the Workshops largely lived in the surrounding suburbs of Redfern and Darlington. The railway dominated the industrial and employment scene of the Redfern area for many years.



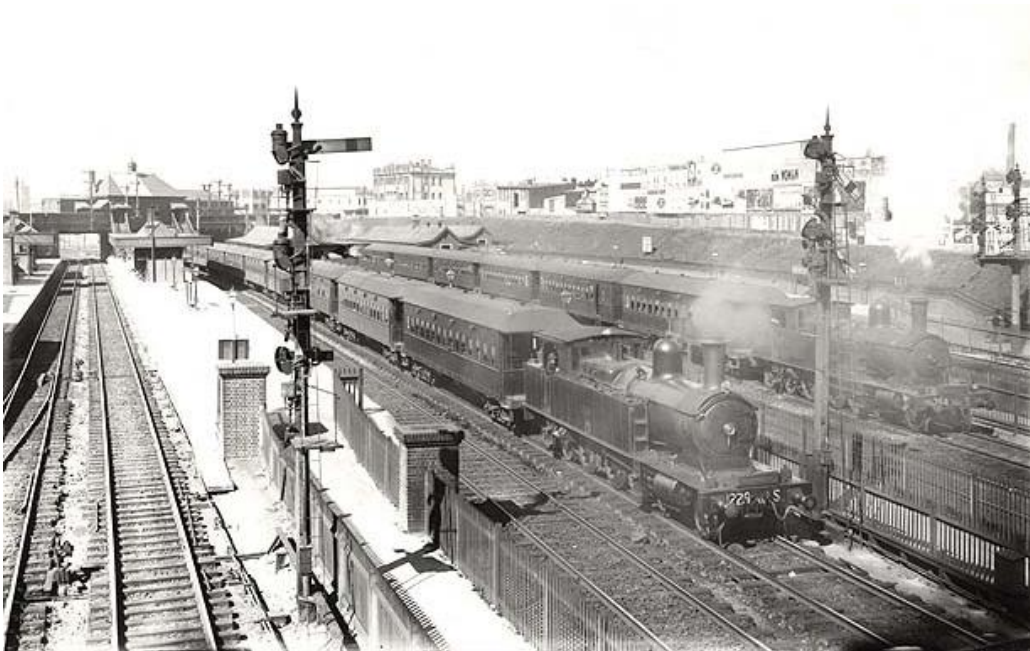
*Figure 7 – View of the former Sydney Railway Station, c. 31/12/1875.
Source: 842/49NID, State Records*



*Figure 8 - Illawarra Steam Dive under construction - view from Workmen's Footbridge
Eveleigh looking west, undated.
Source: 877/33, State Records*



*Figure 9 - View of Redfern Railway Station, undated.
Source: 878/20, State Records*



*Figure 10 - Redfern Railway Station, 01/01/1920.
Source: 878, State Records*

Further resumptions of Hutchinson's land began in the 1890s as expansions to the suburban rail network took place. The present Lawson Street Overbridge was constructed in 1891 when the railway line was quadruplicated between Redfern and Eveleigh and thence to Granville, "*it is proposed to erect an overhead bridge, from which access will be provided to the various platforms...there will also be a booking office on the bridge*"⁸.

The residue of land comprising Hutchinson's Eveleigh Estate adjoining the railway corridor was resumed in 1911 for the widening of the railway tunnel (known as the 'Bottle Neck') and construction of additional platforms at Eveleigh Station (now Redfern Station). Redfern Railway Station was extended in 1919 and again in 1924/25 at which date it comprised 10 platforms. Construction of underground platforms for the Eastern Suburbs Railway and Illawarra lines commenced in the late 1940s but was later abandoned; the platforms were eventually rebuilt in the later 1960s.

The most recent works to the station comprise the removal of the southern footbridge (following closure of the Eveleigh Railway Workshops) in 1994, new footbridge at northern end and stair access to platforms in 1999 and works to the ticket office and station building following the riots in 2004.



Figure 11 - North face of Lawson Street Overbridge, 2000s (Source: State Heritage)

⁸ Sydney Morning Herald, 21 January 1891, p4

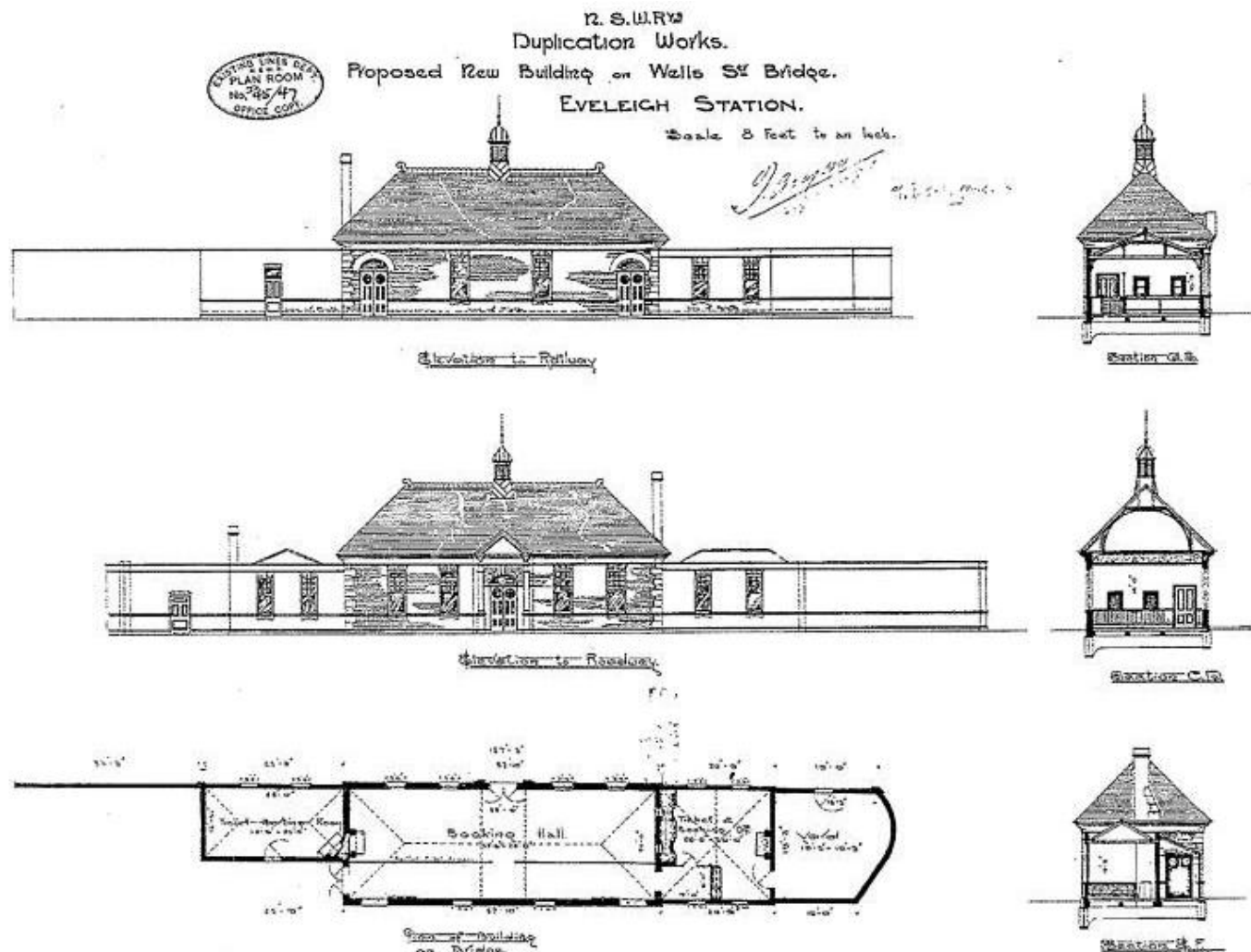


Figure 12 - Proposed new building - Wells Street Bridge, Eveleigh Station, c1891. Source: State Rail Archives, State Records

2.5 Housing the Workforce – Subdivision of the Eveleigh Estate

Subdivision of the Eveleigh Estate (east of Abercrombie Street) coincided with the opening of the Eveleigh Railway Workshops and opening of the Eveleigh Railway present Redfern) Station. During the 1880s Redfern and Darlington underwent major residential development to provide housing for workers at the railway workshops and local industry. The characteristic architecture of this period comprised two storey brick houses in rows of terraces. By 1890 the Darlington and Redfern area was mostly developed and built upon and occupied by a large number of family members working at the Workshops. The built streetscape in the vicinity of the present 'The Block' was established in this period (see Figures 12 and 13).

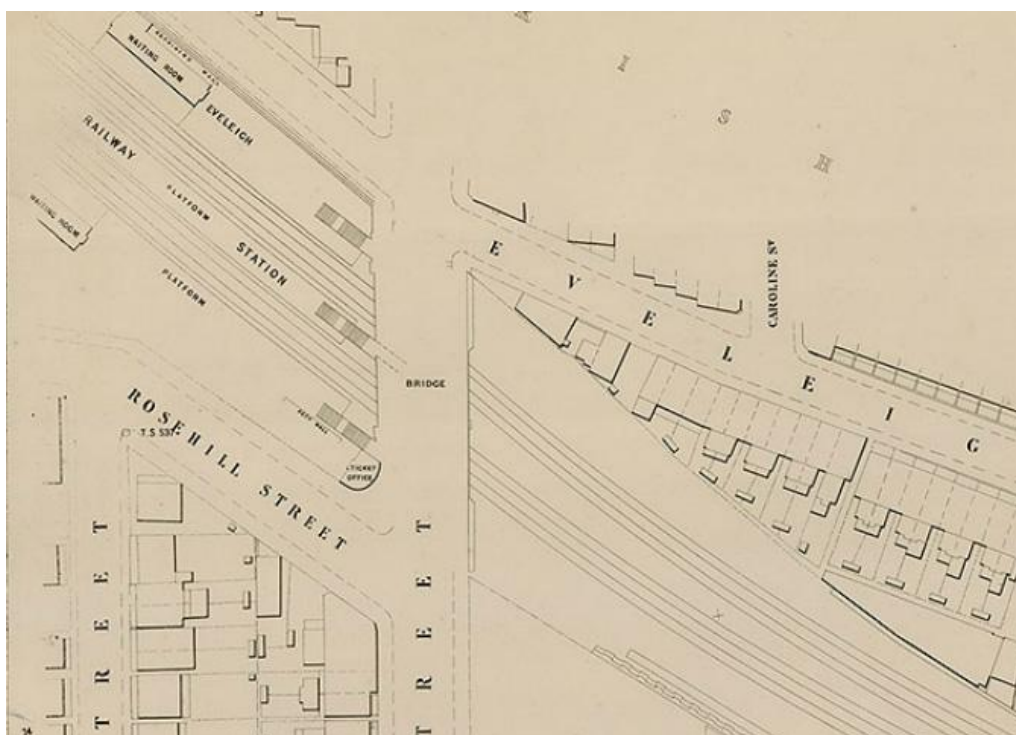


Figure 13 - Sydney Metropolitan Detail Series Redfern Sheet 20, 1888. This portion shows rows of housing on the eastern side of Eveleigh Street adjoining the railway lines. The plan shows a night soil laneway at the rear of the Eveleigh Street properties, and an indication of a retaining wall along the railway corridor. This could possibly be the extant sandstone wall (Source: State Library of New South Wales)

Intensive residential development of Hutchinson's land grant was accompanied by the growth of a shopping centre in Redfern and Regent Streets east of the railway station in close proximity to the Post Office, Police Station and Court House. By the turn of the twentieth century, the Redfern/Darlington area had become a densely populated working class suburb with some middle class enclaves, and was virtually built out. A network of corner stores shops had been created and its public institutions were in place.

In the interwar years, the Eveleigh Railway Workshops remained large but became assembly and holding areas. The decline of the railway operations at Eveleigh (the loco service depot closed in 1986, and the rest of the complex two

years later), the abandonment of brick making and footwear manufacture and the diminution of small scale production, signalled the end of the industrial role of Redfern and Darlington. Industrial decline had a profound impact on the working class character of the area.

As the earlier population declined, it was augmented by people moving into the suburb. A number of European migrant groups took up occupation in the area in the late 1950s. Later migrant waves also had some impact. Virtually unique to Redfern and Darlington, was the entry of the large numbers of Aboriginal people, some who had been there since the early twentieth century and others who came following changes in legislation regulating their movement in the 1900s.

2.6 Between the Wars

Aboriginal people from rural areas started moving into Redfern and the surrounding area during the 1920s because it was located centrally and rents were cheap. In addition, the workshops in Redfern and nearby Chippendale offered the possibility of regular work. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, many Aboriginal people sought refuge with relatives in the Redfern area as work in rural areas became scarce. The Eveleigh Railway Workshops was the largest employer of Redfern's residents. The Great Depression resulted in high unemployment among the Aboriginal population of the area. Landlords evicted many tenants of rental properties in the area, with a large number of Aboriginal people moving to shanty towns at the La Perouse Aboriginal Community.

A period of rent control began with the Fair Rents Act 1915 and lasted in NSW into the 1950s (NSW was the last State to relax rent control). Throughout the Depression years, anti-eviction campaigns were conducted by the Unemployed Workers Movement, and the Lang government passed ejection postponement legislation in an attempt to alleviate some of the problems faced by tenant.⁹

In 1937, the Federal government adopted a new official policy towards Aboriginal people. Under this policy of assimilation Aboriginal people of mixed descent were to be assimilated into white society whether they wanted to be or not. Those not living tribally were to be educated. All others were to stay on reserves. The following year, New South Wales followed suit by changing their official policy from 'protection' to 'assimilation'.

⁹

[http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/publications.nsf/0/2C8F9AE4E0B1D081CA256ECF00081976/\\$File/09-99.pdf](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/publications.nsf/0/2C8F9AE4E0B1D081CA256ECF00081976/$File/09-99.pdf)



Figure 14 - 1943 aerial of Redfern, Eveleigh and Darlington illustrating the densely populated residential area and factory buildings (Source: Six Viewer, NSW Land & Property Management Authority)

2.7 Aboriginal Self-determination and Identity

After World War II, there was a large Aboriginal population shift back into Redfern seeking refuge with relatives concentrated in and around 'The Block'. This followed moves by Randwick Council to close the shanty towns at La Perouse.

By the early 1960s, the Aboriginal population of Redfern was estimated at over 12,000 people. During the decade, an emerging social crisis arose in the community, involving alcohol, drugs and crime. This was coupled with discrimination and high unemployment among the Aboriginal community. Living conditions for local Aboriginal people declined rapidly over the course of the next two decades as people were at the mercy of disreputable and/or absentee landlords. The housing stock, predominantly cheap rental accommodation built in the 19th century, became run down and fell into disrepair. This led to growing criticism of Redfern as a "slum" area.

The Aboriginal population of Redfern swelled in the wake of the 1967 Nation Referendum on Aborigines, reaching more than 35,000. This in turn led to further overcrowding and shortage of accommodation with resulting discrimination on the part of landlords and owners. There followed calls from South Sydney Council and State Government to relocate the Aboriginal population away from the inner city. The NSW Department of Housing

commenced resettlement of Aboriginal people west of the city of suburbs such as Mt Druitt and Campbelltown.

The lack of affordable housing for Redfern's increasing Aboriginal population [resulted in] a group of Aborigines squatting in empty terraces in Louis Street Redfern, in the latter months of 1972. In November that year, police arrested 15 (goomies) alcoholics who were squatting in the empty houses. They were released in the care of Father Ted Kennedy at St Vincent's Church in Redfern. Fr Kennedy housed the goomies in the church hall, but when the number of homeless people living in the church grew to over 50 South Sydney Council exerted great pressure on Fr Kennedy to evict them.

On 2 December 1972, the new ALP Gough Whitlam federal government was elected. Whitlam's team had been toying with the idea of Aboriginal land rights, especially since 26 January 1972, when Aboriginal activists opened the "tent embassy" outside Canberra's old parliament building. Whitlam's Aboriginal Affairs minister Gordon Bryant was keen to help the Redfern Aborigines.

Fr Ted Kennedy teamed up with Aboriginal leaders including Judge Bob Bellear and his brother Sol. The Builder Labourers Federation imposed a green ban on the Louis Street site prohibiting the owner from demolishing and redeveloping the houses. Kaye Bellear leased some of the vacant houses in Louis St. These dilapidated terrace houses were 80-100 years old and were largely shabby and ramped, tiny 12 feet wide double story properties. Under a 'blind-eye' agreement with the owner-developer, the squatters organised themselves and formed a company.¹⁰

The resulting Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC) was the first community housing collective in Australia. Incorporated in 1973 the Company was formed in direct response to the widespread discrimination Aborigines experienced in the private rental market. The AHC subsequently acquired 27 derelict houses on 'The Block' bounded by Vine, Eveleigh, Caroline and Louis Streets. The properties were renovated with Aboriginal employment and training by the AHC, though not without obstacles placed in their path by the South Sydney Council. The AHC offices are located in the former Railway View Hotel (Figure 14) at the corner of Lawson and Eveleigh Streets.

¹⁰ Aboriginal Housing Company History. <http://www.ahc.org.au/>



Figure 15 – Drinkers outside the Railway View Hotel with view to Eveleigh Street.
Source: State Library of New South Wales

The AHC also helped kick start the grassroots Aboriginal civil rights movement, in conjunction with emerging organisations like the Aboriginal Medical, Legal and Children's Services and the Aboriginal Black Theatre House. In the 1970s, Redfern became a symbol of the Aboriginal people's struggle for self-determination, a place for "Indigenous people to remain living in a community environment with the extended family, living together providing a support network"¹¹.

Funding for the AHC's housing project was terminated when the Fraser Coalition government was elected in 1975.

Without financial assistance the Block descended into disrepair and disorder. By the early 1980s the Aboriginal Housing Company had acquired almost half the properties on the Block and with another change of federal government (Hawke/Keating) came renewed support for Redfern's Aboriginal community. In 1994 the last house on the Block was finally owned by the Aboriginal Housing Company.¹²

¹¹ Statement of Significance : The Block, Australian Heritage Commission (1983 revised 2000)

¹² Ibid.