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# BROOKLYN CEMETERY

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## CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

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Prepared by

**THE EJE GROUP**

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## **Preamble**

As requested by Hornsby Shire Council, the aim of this project is to prepare a (Draft) Conservation Plan (herein called the 'Plan') including policies and advice on the management of Brooklyn Cemetery, Brooklyn.

The work comprises research into the history of the site, its graves and their occupants undertaken by Cynthia Hunter, Historian; a landscape assessment of the site and structures undertaken by Mr Phil Williams of EJE Landscape Architecture; a geotechnical investigation undertaken by Mr Mark Delaney of Robert Carr & Associates; and examination of documents and physical evidence of the site and the preparation of conservation management recommendations undertaken by Mr Ian Grant, Mr Chris Dwyer and Ms. Sara Breeze of EJE Town Planning.

Following acceptance by Council, the Plan will then be considered by the Heritage Council of the NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (Heritage Branch).

## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Study Site**

The Study Site for this Plan has frontages to Brooklyn Road to the east and north, and the Pacific Highway to the west. Access to the site is by way of an access road off Brooklyn Road. It is sited on steep sloping ground between the Pacific Highway and Brooklyn Road.

### **1.2 The Plan**

This Plan relates to the whole of the Brooklyn Cemetery and is a result of the deterioration and subsidence of a number of graves over recent years and the current availability of funds, this Plan has been commissioned by Hornsby Shire Council so that the cause of the subsidence problem can be identified and remedies proposed and thus that the cemetery and graves within may be conserved and managed for the future.

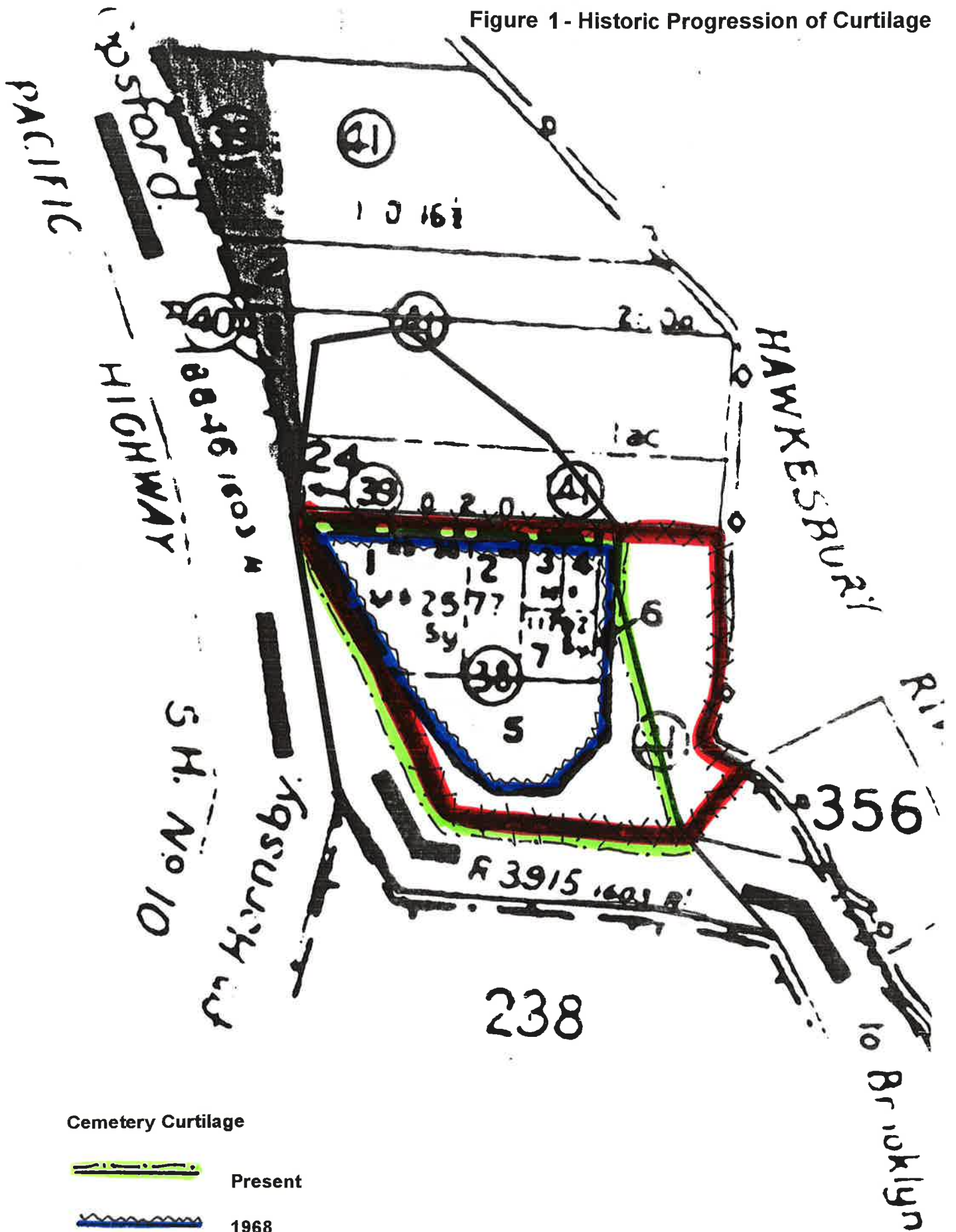
Chapter 2 of the Plan explains the statutory and management planning context pertaining to cemeteries in NSW. Chapter 3 includes an understanding of the significance of the place. It includes an investigation of the historical, social, scientific and archaeological aspects of the cemetery and examines the people interred in the cemetery and the quality of the fabric of the graves and headstones in the cemetery.

Using Chapter 3 as a basis, Chapter 4 contains the assessment of the significance and provides a statement of the heritage value of the cemetery. Additionally the physical condition and the integrity of the fabric is considered. Chapter 5 concludes with a Statement of Significance for Brooklyn Cemetery.




Chapters 6, 7 and 8 contain the management recommendations. They provide background information, conservation policies and implementation procedures for the conservation of the Cemetery. Specific attention is paid to management and retention of significant fabric, that will assist in the interpretation of the significance of Brooklyn Cemetery. Chapter 9 includes all supporting documentation revealed during field and academic investigations.

The methodology used for this Plan is based on the National Trust's *The Conservation Plan* (1990 edition) written by J.S. Kerr, and the terminology follows that of the Australian ICOMOS, *Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance* (the Burra Charter).

Figure 1 - Historic Progression of Curtilage



Cemetery Curtilage

-  Present
-  1968
-  1906

## **2 Statutory and Management Planning Context**

The following summary briefly considers the most significant legislation relating to the cemetery.

### **2.1 Heritage Act 1977**

This Act provides a range of means of protecting heritage items through different types of conservation orders, and is currently administered by the Heritage Branch of the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning. It empowers the Minister, on the recommendation of the Council, to make a variety of conservation instruments for the purpose of protecting items of the environmental heritage.

Orders under section 130 of the Act are made to prevent harm to heritage items. There are currently no Conservation Orders (Interim or Permanent) under the Act covering the Cemetery. Nevertheless section 139 of the Act prohibits disturbing or excavating land for the purpose of discovering, exposing or moving a relic, unless an Excavation Permit has been issued under the Act. A relic is defined as:

“any deposit, object or material evidence:

- (a) which relates to the settlement of the area that comprised New South Wales, not being aboriginal settlement; and
- (b) which is 50 or more years old.”

### **2.2 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979**

This Act controls land use planning throughout New South Wales. This includes Regional Environmental Plans (REPs), Local Environmental Plans (LEPs) and provisions for development control.

The Brooklyn Cemetery is zoned Open Space A - Local Public Recreation, and Special Uses A - Community Purposes, under Hornsby Shire LEP 1994. Hornsby Council requires consent for development within these zones for uses specified in the zoning table. Items under Section 90 of the Act must be considered and this includes development on lands adjacent to the Cemetery. The Brooklyn Cemetery is also included under the Hornsby Shire LEP Heritage Schedule as an item of local heritage significance. As such, it is protected by the heritage provisions within the LEP i.e. the Council must take into consideration the effect of proposed works upon the heritage significance of the place. The Cemetery is affected by the principles of the Heritage Development Control Plan. Although a Development Control Plan for Brooklyn was adopted by Council in June 1996, the Cemetery is not specifically addressed in this DCP.

### **2.3 The Local Government Act 1993**

This Act was proclaimed 1 July 1993 and replaces the Local Government Act 1919. The new Act has provisions including:

- the provision of a legal framework for an effective, efficient, environmentally responsible and open system of local government;
- to encourage and assist the effective participation of local communities in the affairs of local government; and
- to require all Councils to have regard to the protection of the environment in carrying out their responsibilities

It also contains a set of principles in a Charter (Chapter 3) to guide Council in the carrying out of its functions.

## **2.4 Public Health Act 1991**

This Act requires the public health aspects of burials, including specification for depth of graves, provisions for removal of remains and issues relating to infectious diseases.

## **2.5 Other Legislation**

- **Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975**

The Australian Heritage Commission is a federal statutory authority established under this Act. The commission is responsible for maintaining the Register of the National Estate, however the Brooklyn Cemetery is not included on this Register.

- **Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages**

This relates to the proper registration of particulars of the death of any person buried at the cemetery.



### **3 Analysis of Documentary Evidence**

#### **3.1 Historical Background**

The following report was provided by Mrs Cynthia Hunter, a Consultant Historian and employed by The EJE Group as part of the Study team for this project.

## **Brooklyn Cemetery, a History prepared by Cynthia Hunter, April 1996**

### **Content**

- 1.0 The Locality, Brooklyn and the Lower Hawkesbury River
  - 1.1 The River as a Highway
  - 1.2 The Northern Roads
  - 1.3 George Peat
  - 1.4 The Great Northern Railway
  - 1.5 Local Roads and the Pacific Highway
- 2.0 Land Occupancy by Europeans in the vicinity of Brooklyn
  - Bar Island, Dangar Island, Long Island, Milson Island
  - Milson and Peat Island, Mental Hospitals
- 3.0 Establishment of Churches and Public Education
  - 3.1 The Cemetery, and nearby land
  - 3.2 The Cemetery and the Churches
  - 3.3 The dedication of Public Reserves
  - 3.4 Recent Road Works in the vicinity
- 4.0 The Management of Brooklyn Cemetery by the C of E Trustees
  - 4.1 C of E burials 1909-1965
  - 4.2 Analysis of C of E burials
  - 4.3 R. C. burials, analysis
  - 4.4 Non-secular burials at Brooklyn Cemetery since 1969
- 5.0 The Rail Crossing Disaster
- 6.0 War Graves
- 7.0 Brooklyn Families
- 8.0 Bibliography

### **Selected maps and diagrams**

Parish of Cowan, 1846. AO Map 2302, 6 of 12.

Survey shewing the line of road from the Jump to Peat's Ferry on the South Side of the Hawkesbury River, J. Nutt, 1848. AO Map 5247.

Copy of J. Nutt's 1848 Map: Royal Australian Historical Society's Journal, vol 11, p. 222.

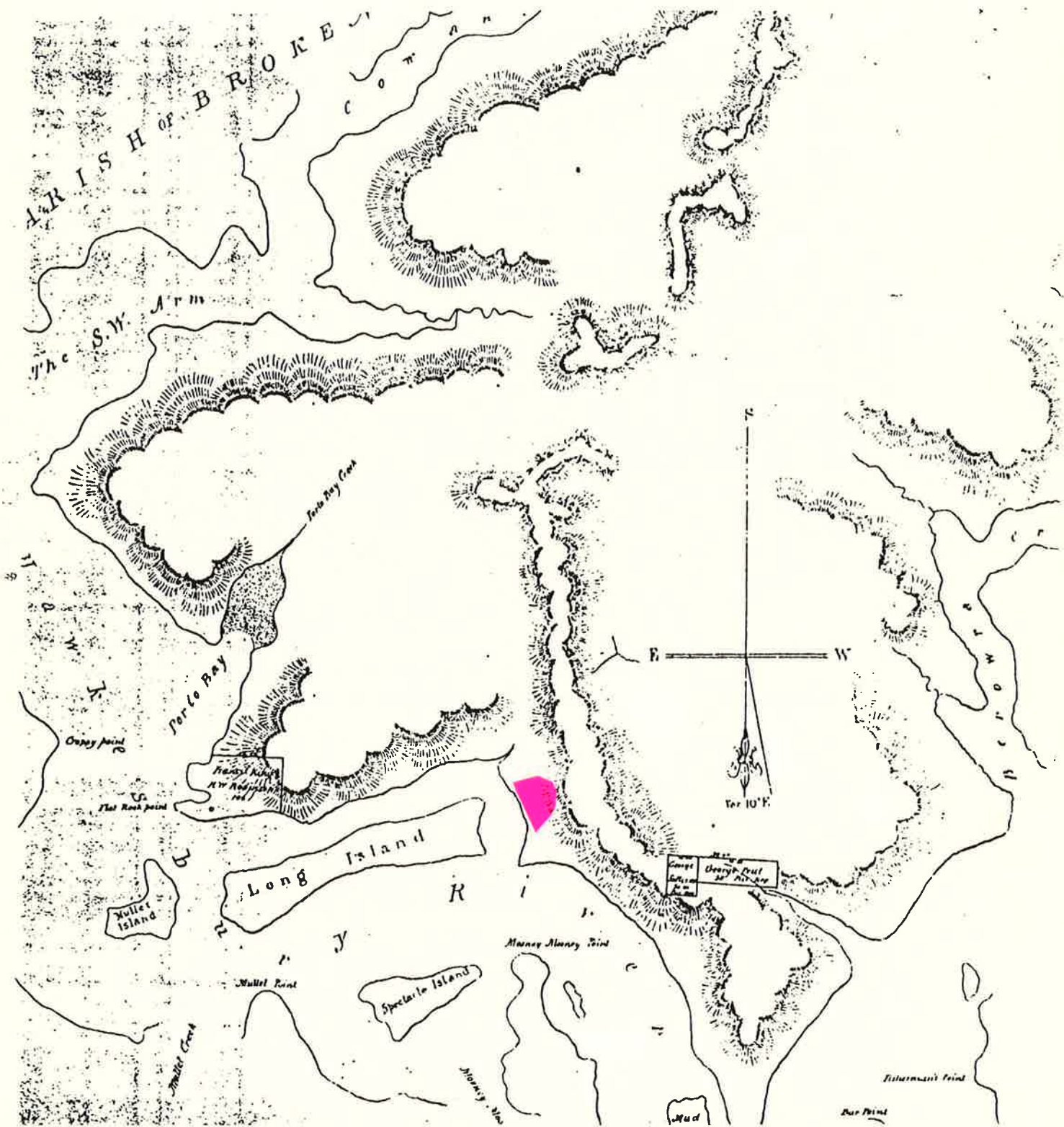
Parish of Cowan, 1913 edition.

Drawing of part of Parish of Cowan, 1913 edition, showing land portions taken up by settlers in the vicinity of a portion of land, part of which was dedicated for the Peat's Ferry or Brooklyn Cemetery.

Diagram of Brooklyn Cemetery, as defined in the Parish of Cowan Map 1968 edition.

Diagram of Brooklyn Cemetery, as defined in the Parish of Cowan Map 1913 edition.

Inset Map of Brooklyn, from Hornsby Shire Local Environment Plan.



Part of Parish of Cowan Map, 1846, AO 2302, 6 of 12.  
 Site of Brooklyn Cemetery is highlighted.

## Brooklyn Cemetery History: Summary

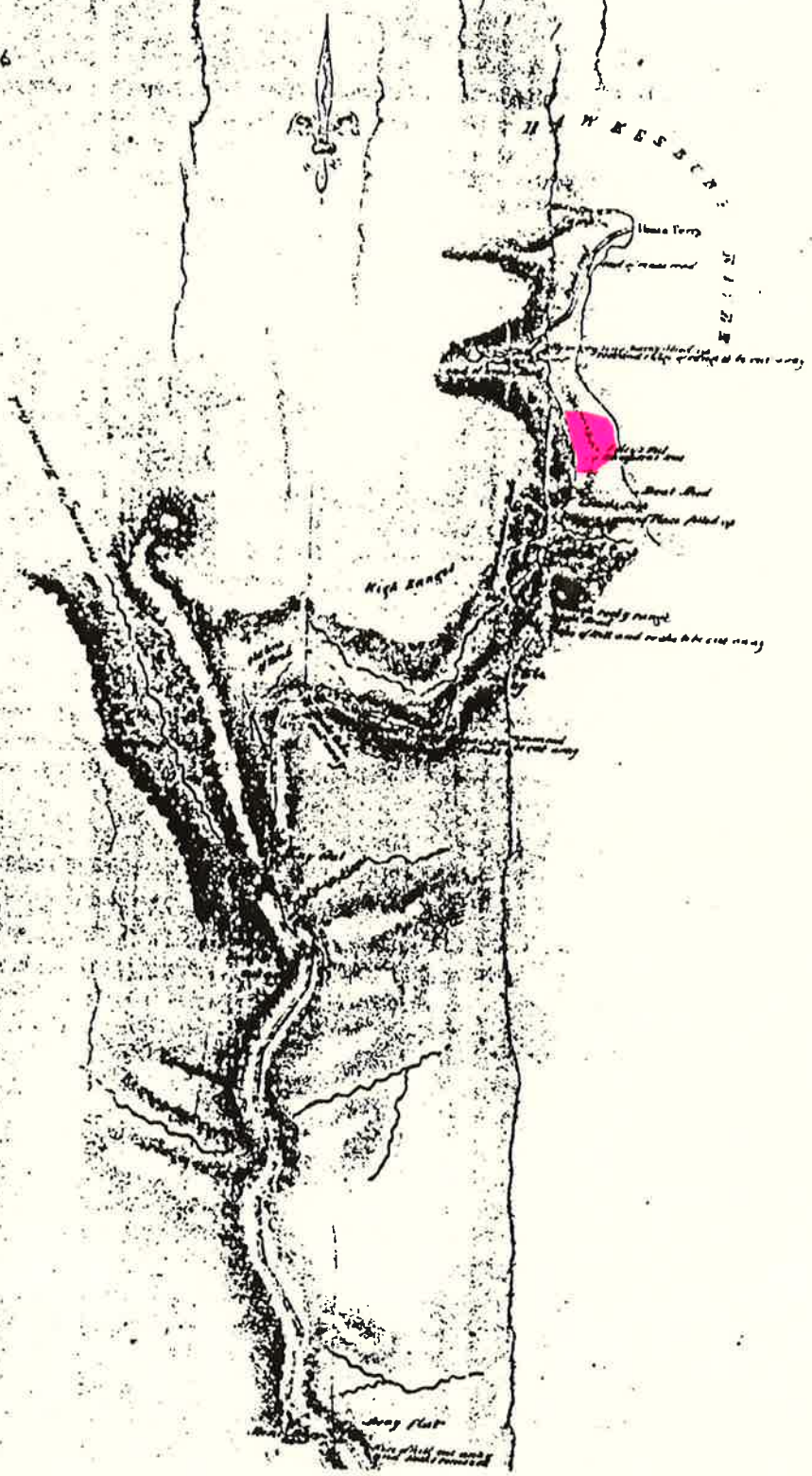
1. Land was dedicated for Brooklyn Cemetery in 1906. Previously, deceased residents and others were interred in the Anglican cemetery at Bar Island (c. 1870-1906). A nearby location for interments for persons other than Anglicans is not known. At least one burial (1843) on private land, Peat's Fairview, is recorded.
2. Use made of the cemetery land before 1906 has not been determined. An 1848 survey map indicates occupation of the site. The 1913 Parish Map suggests that a portion between the purchases of Peat and Seymour was surveyed. Whether this was ever purchased by a settler and subsequently resumed, or retained from sale by the government, has not been determined at the time of writing. By 1880, a small portion of land within this larger portion (and to the north of the cemetery site) was set aside for a public school. Another small piece in the vicinity was set aside for a Wesleyan Church.
3. Early funerals at Bar Island, and many subsequent funerals at Brooklyn cemetery, including all from the island Mental Hospitals (that is, Rabbit Island (1909-1936) and Peat Island (1937-1950) in the Church of England Register and Milson Island (1939-1950) in the Roman Catholic Register, see 4.2 and 4.3), would have been conducted by boat. The portion of land initially set aside for the Peat's Ferry or Brooklyn Cemetery extended to the water's edge. This water frontage provided access to the cemetery for boats. In 1921, an effort was made to secure a jetty to facilitate funerals.  
A horse and cart was used to convey funerals from the village and, in the 1930s, a horse-drawn hearse was available in the community until motor vehicles were introduced.
4. The locality itself has social and economic significance far more extensive than its own environs. The natural and cultural landscape is highly significant. There is hardly another such focus of transport and communication on the eastern coast of the State. Here, a great waterway of historical significance to the metropolis has been crossed sequentially by Peat's Ferry, the rail ferry GENERAL GORDON, the Great Northern Railway Bridge, the Pacific Highway and the ferries FRANCES PEAT and GEORGE PEAT, the Pacific Highway Bridge, and the F3 Freeway and its Bridge. These engineering feats have been all been of the highest and most innovative technical standard of their time on a world-wide scale. The occupations of persons buried in the cemetery indicate a close relationship between the Brooklyn community, and the transport and communication focus.
5. In the late 1920s, the new Pacific Highway impinged significantly on the cemetery site. Resumption was considered and effort was made to find an alternate site for the cemetery. However, the core cemetery was retained and remains a peaceful oasis, even although it is ringed by roads and works that contrast greatly with its purpose.
6. Another factor that gives the cemetery a significance far greater than the immediate locality is the greater use made of it by the nearby island Mental Hospital, during the period 1909 to 1950, than by the civilian community, in terms of interment numbers. Additionally, it has been revealed that patients 'worked at the cemetery'. Deceased hospital patients came from a wide area: what few records that were consulted, indicate this area to be from Port Macquarie to the western extremity of the Hunter Valley, and to Western Sydney. There is no acknowledgment at the cemetery of this circumstance. When known, it is a poignant reminder of past policies and social attitudes to the tragedy of mental illnesses.
7. Memorials at the cemetery reflect both the socio-economic situation of the community and the limitation imposed by the environment. In comparison with memorials in cemeteries generally, those at Brooklyn are of a vernacular, modest construction and arrangement. Engraved tablets have been prepared by stonemasons. These are generally small and unadorned. Grave surrounds feature hand-placed, familiar materials - bush rock, stones, bricks, metal, pipe, tiles, timber, plastic and living plants. A simplicity is portrayed that reaffirms every-day life amid the unmatched grandeur of surrounding landscapes and riverscape, and large-scale, man-made engineering achievements.



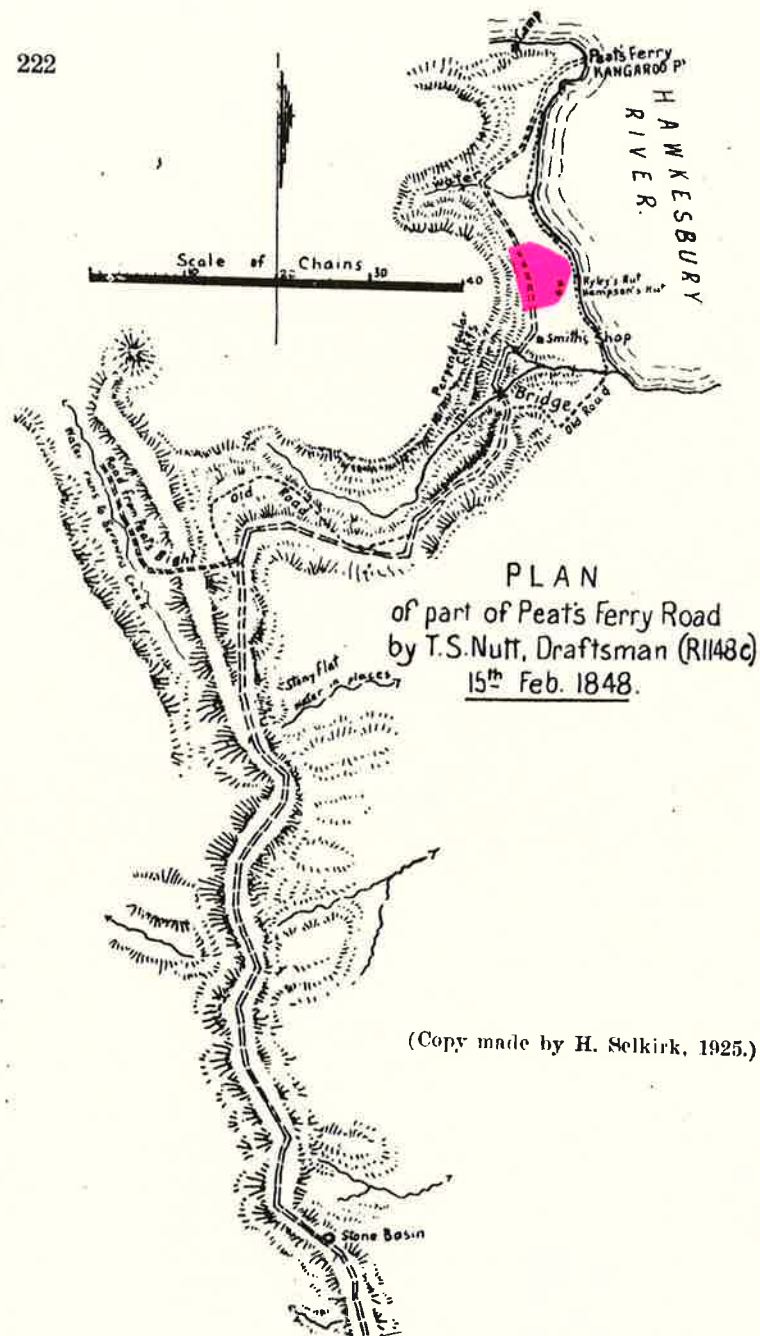
showing the line of Road  
from the Jump to Peat's Ferry  
on the South side of  
the  
**HAWKESBURY RIVER**

1848

R. 11466



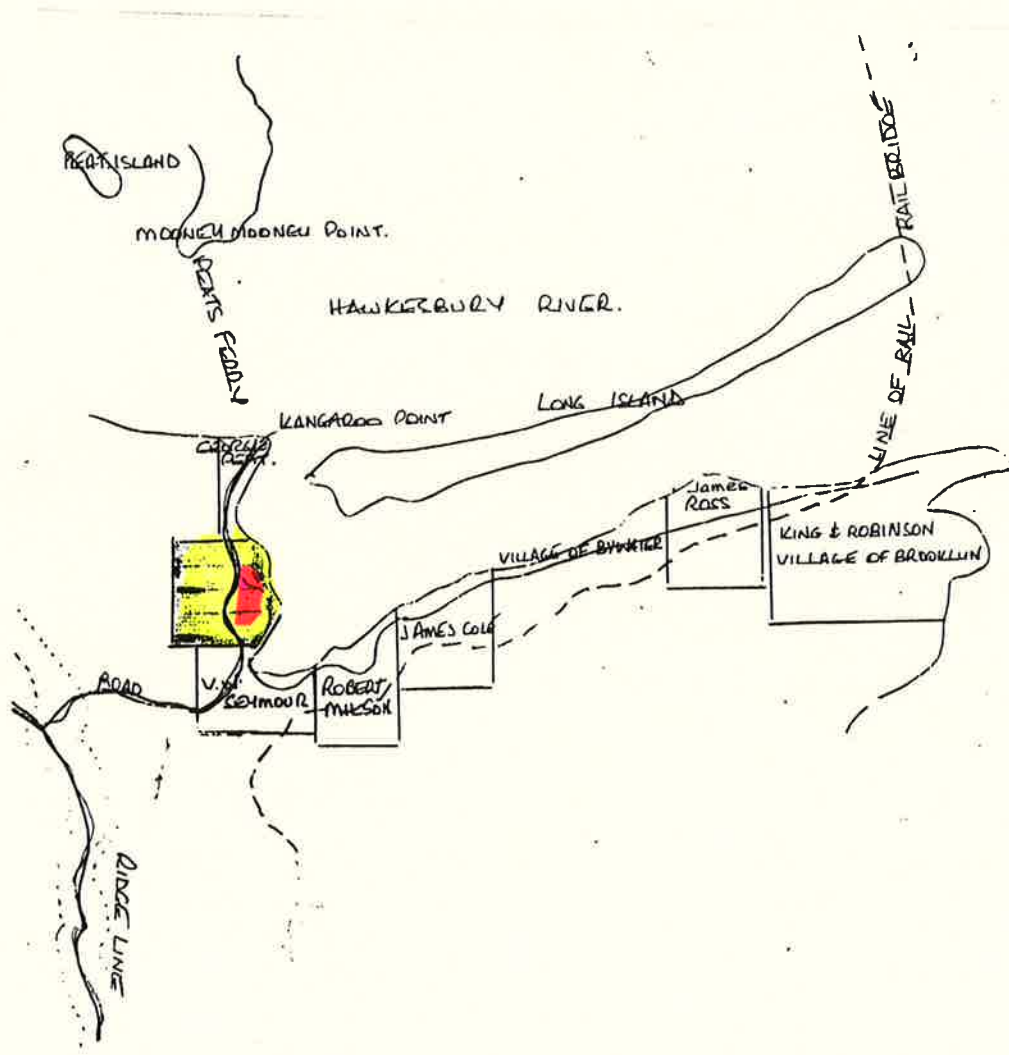
Part of a 'Survey, shewing the line of Road from the Jump to Peat's Ferry on the South side of the Hawkesbury River', by J. Nutt, 1848.  
Site of Brooklyn Cemetery is highlighted



Above: copy made from Nutt's survey map of part of Peat's Ferry road, which accompanied an article in *RAHS Journal*, vol. 11, p. 222. The original map (AO Map 5247. J Nutt 1848) is titled 'Survey shewing the line of road from the Jump to Peat's Ferry on the South side of Hawkesbury River'. Sites marked are a 'Camp' near the ferry, Ryley's hut and Hampson's hut near the site of the present Brooklyn cemetery, and Smith's Shop near the new line of road. The map indicates European occupation in 1848. The present cemetery site is highlighted.







**Above:** diagram made from the 1913 Parish map to show the land portions taken up by settlers around the water front. As already noted, the 1848 map indicates that land in the vicinity of the present cemetery was occupied by Europeans at that time. The status of this portion of land from approximately 1850 to 1880, has not yet been determined. The cemetery site is highlighted within the portion shaded yellow.



1. 0 The Locality: Brooklyn and the Lower Hawkesbury River

The entrance to Broken Bay is just over three kilometres across at the narrowest point and about twenty metres deep at low tide. This ideal entrance makes access relatively easy for seafarers in any weather conditions. Once inside the entrance, three principal waterways separate from the Bay and estuary: Brisbane Water, Pittwater and the Hawkesbury River. Brooklyn is a small township at the head of the estuary waters.

The estuary has many offshoots. Cowan Creek is the largest of them. From this vicinity, the Hawkesbury River itself begins its meandering pathway westward, flowing inland to join the Nepean River and thus encircle the Sydney Region almost as far south as Wollongong. Commercial and recreational navigation has been possible only as far as Windsor. The earliest European visits to Broken Bay and along the Hawkesbury were made by boat, as early as March 1788, and this was the most practical way of accessing the area for many subsequent years.

The landform consists of deep sandstone beds, up to 250 metres thick, which were laid down in the Triassic geological period some 200 million years ago. Gradual uplifting resulted in the formation of a plateau in the Hornsby district. Subsequently, erosion by water exposed high cliffs and ledges. The rise of the sea level following the last ice age, about 6000 years ago, created the present width and depth of the Lower Hawkesbury. The land on either side of the river is amongst the State's most inhospitable bushland terrain, featuring towering cliffs and ledges of weathered sandstone. Some of the creeks resemble New Zealand Fjords and the scenery about the Hawkesbury River is amongst the world's most spectacular.

The earliest Europeans came to exploit the marine environment, both as the only practical means of transport between Sydney and Windsor, and as a resource for earning a living. The foreshore lacked soils suitable for agriculture: even building a dwelling among the sandstone hills must have been a harder task than in most other places. Timber-getters worked in the area since 1815 and, in 1824, at Kangaroo Point, a man named Edwards occupied some land for grazing. For the next fifty years, in the vicinity of Brooklyn, a population of timber getters, shingle splitters, bushrangers and lawless outcasts, boatmen, fishermen, oystermen, punt operators, ship carpenters, hired farm workers and stock keepers, lived in proximity about the water's edge.

1.1 The River as a Highway

From the earliest years, the harvest of the estuary provided subsistence, and a livelihood, for those who braved the inhospitable conditions which the Lower Hawkesbury afforded. There was also the regular sea passage to the market place at Sydney. The Hawkesbury was traversed by ship to and from Windsor, in preference to the land route, and the advent of steam powered shipping, following 1831, gave hopes of even more efficient use of the river. In late 1839, a steam shipping company (the Brisbane Water Steam Navigation Company) was formed to serve the Lower Hawkesbury, made up of some large landholders in the Brisbane Water area. This probably influenced King and Robinson to purchase, in 1840, the strategically-situated thirty-five acre portion that was later to be subdivided, in 1884, for the town of Brooklyn.

## 1.2 The Northern Roads.

The steep topography of this north-eastern area of the County of Cumberland made land access to the Hawkesbury, difficult. Early tracks followed the major ridge line. Reference to the earliest survey maps shows one major ridge line extending in a North-South direction. This single ridge line provided, and still provides, all lines of land communication northward from the metropolis.

The difficulty of crossing the Hawkesbury River in the vicinity of the coast or estuary, and the presence of a settlement at Windsor, influenced the early location of the principal road from Sydney to the North. In the late 1820s, a route was selected and a road was constructed that crossed the Hawkesbury River at Wiseman's Ferry, and thence proceeded in the direction of the Wollombi and Hunter Valleys. This route was called the 'Great Northern Road'.

A track from the north shore settlements, that passed through St Leonard's and Pennant Hills, joined the 'Great Northern Road' near Dural. As early as 1829, another track, known as 'Sawyers Road', followed a ridge from Wahroonga to a point between the present Mt. Kuring-gai and Berowra Railway Stations. In the 1840s, a settler, George Peat, continued this track to a ferry which he had established between Kangaroo Point and Mooney Mooney Point, where he held additional land. This track became known as the Peat's Ferry Road.

From 1844, there was a second road to the North, by way Gosford, Brisbane Water other coastal areas, and to Maitland. A linking road joined the more western road to Wollombi and the Hunter Valley. In 1849, an official road was surveyed and constructed along the line of Peat's Ferry Road, but was never improved to the extent that the Wiseman's Ferry road was. 'Peat's Ferry' was purchased by the government and a ferryman was placed in command.

Although the ferry ceased operating, possibly in the 1870s, and the route was, for a time, superseded by the railway service and its great bridge, following 1889, the potential remained for Peat's line to be the most convenient and direct route to the Hunter Valley and the North, for road-based transport. Kangaroo Point, and Brooklyn, were destined to become significant places in the total East coast transport network.

## 1.3 George Peat

George Peat (1792-1870), was the son of a First Fleeter and was born in Sydney in 1792. At an early age he was apprenticed as a shipbuilder. About 1830-1831, he was attracted to the Hawkesbury as a place where he could combine his trade as a shipbuilder with that of a grazier. He took possession of sixty acres at Mooney Mooney Point, which he named Fairview and where he erected a large stone-built 'country house'. A few years later, Peat took up fifty acres at 'Peat's Bight', near the entrance of Berowra Creek. He leased additional land and brought cattle there to raise and breed. Although he kept an establishment in Sydney, he did reside at Fairview and was the first resident landowner in the vicinity of the present site of Brooklyn. As already noted, in order to access his farms conveniently by land, he located a land route from Pennant Hills to the Hawkesbury. He built a ferry - which had sails and was worked by sweeps - to safely transport livestock between his farms, and to the market. He bought a ten-acre piece of land at Kangaroo Point, the southern landing place for the ferry. Neighbouring graziers used the ferry too, as well as other travellers and their livestock, who were informed about the facility through the colony's newspapers.

Peat's Ferry Road therefore originated in the desire of squatters and settlers generally to find a quicker means of communication. Peat's skill as a path-finder was proved by the adoption of his line of road as the best line for an alternate public road to the North.

#### 1.4 Great Northern Railway

Linking up the Sydney and Newcastle railway systems was seriously considered in the 1870s and surveyors set out to find a suitable route. The route taken by the road through Wiseman's ferry was considered but the rough country northward was an insuperable barrier to building a railway line.

The chosen route was from Strathfield to Hornsby and thence to Hawkesbury River. It followed Peat's Ferry Road but near Cowan, it diverted from the ridge top and made a descent to the river. This steeply graded section of railway line (the 'Cowan Bank'), has grades as steep as 1 in 39. Having made the descent, a short branch line took the train to a river wharf pending the completion of the bridge and its approach. This line was opened to traffic to Hornsby in September 1886 and to Hawkesbury River in April 1887.

The line from Hamilton to Gosford was completed in August 1887, and that from Gosford to Mullet Creek, including the piercing of the Woy Woy Tunnel, was ready in January 1888.

While the bridge was under construction, passengers were conveyed from Gosford to Long Island by way of Brisbane Water and the Rip. Later passengers were conveyed from the tunnel platform to Long Island by the paddle wheel steamer GENERAL GORDON, a vessel built especially for the purpose.

The first Hawkesbury Railway Bridge was built by the Union Bridge Company of New York. Work started in April 1887 and the bridge was opened for traffic on 1 May 1889. This allowed direct rail communication between Sydney and Newcastle and brought to Brooklyn the opportunity of social and commercial growth. This had been foreseen several years earlier when the Fagan brothers subdivided land for a village of Brooklyn. The area became an attractive place for picnics, recreation, boating, fishing and marine sport.

Prior to the railway works, the greater part of the inhabitants lived about Bar Island, Peat's Bight and Peat's Ferry. On the establishment of the railway station at Brooklyn, the population began to centralise there.

For about thirty years, rail transport was supreme. Change was to come with the introduction of motor vehicles, especially after World War One.

#### 1.5 Local Roads and the Pacific Highway

The Local Government Act came into effect in 1906. This Act brought about the formation of Hornsby Shire Council. (Also, the year 1906 was when the land for the Brooklyn Cemetery was dedicated.) Responsibility for making and forming public roads, bridges and ferries was then transferred to local councils. Previously, a Commissioner for Roads administered various 'road districts', each supervised by an superintendent, and maintenance and other work was implemented by appointed Trustees and a tendering process. In addition to Peat's Ferry Road, there were district Mail Roads to be kept in order, roads that served the many outposts in this mountainous area. Mail came by horseback from Hornsby, and had to be delivered to scattered homes about Cowan, Berowra, Muogamarra, Kangaroo Point, Peat's Ferry and Brooklyn.

Perusal of the minute book of the Peat's Ferry Progress Committee from the 1890s indicate that the road that linked the railway station to the old Peat's Ferry Road was frequently impassable for drays carrying goods and produce. Referral to a map indicates why - the swampy estuary of Seymour's Creek had to be crossed. As well, the particularly steep ascent or descent at the junction of the Brooklyn Road with Peat's

Ferry Road had to be negotiated. Both difficulties deteriorated with each spell of bad weather.

The advent of motor cars and trucks made improvements to existing roads imperative and the road link between Kangaroo Point and Hornsby became a subject for representation to the Main Roads Board. The first car to negotiate the old Peat's Ferry Road came that way in 1925. (HKA 3 July 1925) The motor vehicle, and therefore the road, was then seen as a new agent for Brooklyn's economic improvement, bringing a new wave of visitors to its scenic foreshore and marine environment. Plans were put forward to develop 'Brooklyn House' into a large hotel with shops (HKA 22 August 1924). A small boom in house building occurred (HKA 15 August 1924) and a new sawmill set up in the village (HKA 14 August 1925). The village of Bywater subdivision was opened up in 1898.

One of the first works undertaken by the Main Roads Board (which was set up in 1923) was to plan the construction of a direct road link between Sydney and Newcastle. The demand for such a road began about 1913 and persisted into the 1920s. Much debate arose over the best route that the link between Berowra and Gosford should take, and the scheme to re-establish the old route through Peat's Ferry gained favour. A great deal of attention subsequently focused on the Brooklyn area. The Kangaroo Point to Mooney Point crossing was confirmed as the most suitable place for a bridge or ferry crossing. While surveys were in progress, a proclamation declared the route of the road, which was to pass through Crown land almost entirely. However, in the vicinity of 'Peat's Ferry', some land was already alienated.

Thus, in 1926 and 1929, land in this locality, and near the cemetery, was resumed for Main Roads purposes. Included were George Peat's 11 acre portion at Kangaroo Point, and certain adjoining land. (G. G. 22 January 1926) In 1929, two other small portions were resumed, one from the Trustees of the Methodist Church of Australia. (G. G. 4 October and 2 November 1929). As indicated below, it appears that the Main Roads Board wanted to resume the Cemetery site too, but this did not eventuate, probably because an alternate site could not be found.

Brooklyn News. Brooklyn Progress Association has received a request to endeavour to secure a new site for a cemetery, as it desired to close the present one. A party of Trustees and Progress Association members will try and find a suitable place for the purpose. HKA 11 December 1930.

Brooklyn News. Effort is being made to have the cemetery removed because it is in the way of the Main Roads Board. It is hard to find a new site. HKA 26 February 1931.

The Main Roads Board offered money for the road work to Hornsby Shire Council, as relief work for the unemployed - recalling that the Great Depression rendered large numbers of men unemployed at this time. Road building began immediately. The task fell quite naturally into three parts: the road to Kangaroo Point, the river crossing, and the road to Gosford. The work provided many unemployed Brooklyn men with a regular pay packet. Unemployed men were organised into gangs of fifty, twice a week, until about 800 men were at work. Each man was supplied with a tent and blankets.

Brooklyn News. Forty-five married men, mostly residents of Brooklyn, start work on the road.... HKA 28 August 1930.

Brooklyn News. There are many 'campers' about the district, at sites wherever water is available... HKA 26 February 1931.

The labour involved in building the new road was great indeed, as the account in 'The Roadmakers, the History of Main Roads in New South Wales' indicates (pp. 116-123). The section from Hornsby to the Hawkesbury River was opened to traffic in June 1930. A lasting benefit from the road works was the laying on of a water supply to provide water to the workers and their camps.

In 1931, the coastal highway between Sydney and the Queensland border was named the 'Pacific Highway'.

At first, two ferries, named GEORGE PEAT and FRANCES PEAT, provided for crossing the river. A toll was charged. The road bridge, commenced in 1938, was opened in 1945. While work progressed building the road bridge, it was necessary to replace the old rail bridge with a new structure. This replacement bridge was commenced in 1939 and completed in July 1946, and over 300 men were employed on its construction.

When the section between Mooney Point and Gosford was completed, the new route reduced the distance between Sydney and Newcastle by forty-eight miles, and more than halved the travelling time from about nine hours to four and a half hours.

The road and the rail are such an integral part of Brooklyn's identity, and the construction of the ways, roads, and bridges of world class engineering standards are such a significant part of Brooklyn's history, that, as expected, there are buried in the cemetery people, the circumstances of whose deaths indicate this close relationship between them and the provision of services for the benefit of a State: the fletcher, the railway worker, the victims of the rail crossing smash, and the young men and women riding bicycles or motor bikes to work, killed by collisions with cars on the Peat's Ferry Road.

## 2.0 Land occupancy by Europeans in the vicinity of Brooklyn

George Peat appears to have been the earliest to purchase land in the vicinity, in 1836: fifty acres in the Parish of Cowan, at the head of a creek flowing into the Hawkesbury at its confluence with Berowra Creek. The creek is called Muogamarra Creek and its estuary Peat's Bight.

An adjoining thirty acres was purchased by George Sullivan. Both lots included land on the crest of the northern extremity of the main ridge running South-North. Joseph Izard purchased forty acres to the West of Peat's.

About 1840, Francis John King and Richard Robinson purchased thirty-five acres at the eastern end of the channel that ran between Long Island and the river's southern shore. This locality was then called Marramarra. The Point, called Flat Rock Point, was probably a strategic place for boatmen to set down passengers who had travelled to Barrenjoey by coasting ship, and who wanted access the mainland in this area. In turn, cargoes of fish for markets in Sydney may have been assembled at this point.

Peat's own ferry was operating in 1844 and subsequently available to travellers. The potential of the locality as a river crossing place and transport focus was probably foreshadowed from as early as the 1830s.

Other acreages West of King and Robertson's were secured later, by James Ross, James W Cole, Robert Milson, and Vincent William Seymour. They were taken up at various times, before the 1880s and these families contributed to the pioneering generation of the community.

Nearby islands in the river are associated with Brooklyn's history to varying extents. These islands are Bar, Milson (or Mud), Peat, Dangar (or Mullet), and Long.

## Bar Island

Bar Island is situated at the entrance to Berowra Creek. In 1862, the island was reserved from sale for the preservation of a water supply and other public purposes. The island was surveyed in 1871. It was found to be of area nine acres, two roods. An acreage thereon was then secured for an Anglican Church, St John's. A temporary church was used until the permanent church was erected.

From June 1875 to December 1883, a half-time school, (half-time with Peat's Ferry School), known as Bar Point School, operated here. When the permanent church was finished, in 1876, the school continued in the new building. The church is said to have been built from the stone ruins of George Peat's house at Fairview Point, near Mooney Mooney Point. In 1884, the Bar Point school became a provisional school, until 1892. The school opened again during 1902 and 1903, when it closed. Access to the school for both teacher and pupils was by boat.

A cemetery was located beside the church in 1880, and here many burials were performed, of deceased persons who had lived at the Peat's Ferry settlement, and elsewhere. The dates of death of those whose headstones have been transcribed, (about twenty), occurred between 1884 and 1906. Those with names closely associated with the pioneers of the Peat's Ferry-Brooklyn area are Vincent William Seymour (1899), Mary A Absolem (1887), James Cole (1885), John and Mary Green (both 1886), Jeannie Green (1897), W. H. G. Green (1906), and Ann Elizabeth Milson (1886).

The opening of the Peat's Ferry-Brooklyn Cemetery in 1906 appears to correspond with the cessation of burials on Bar Island. St John's subsequently fell into disrepair and was demolished although the church has kept its control over the three acres of church land. The rest is managed by Hornsby Council.

## Dangar Island, formerly Mullet Island.

This island was surveyed and measured in 1862. Probably, the island was the scene of a variety of unofficial activities in the preceding years. The island was selected as a conditional purchase by Henry Dangar senior, but actually purchase in 1864 by his son Henry Carey Dangar who, a few years later, erected a large home there. In 1886, he leased the island to the Union Bridge Company who erected accommodation and administrative facilities there as well as workshop facilities for building the bridge spans. A large stone water tower was built at this time. The festivities held to celebrate the opening, in May 1889, were held on Dangar Island. The bridge itself made Brooklyn the major settlement on the Lower Hawkesbury River.

Dangar then re-established his home on the island, with tennis court, swimming pool, gardens, pavilion, slipway, wharf, and so on, and developed the island for agriculture. Many distinguished guests came there for picnics and social occasions.

Following his death in 1917, the property was subdivided and from 1921, land sold publicly. A few holiday homes were built. Many homeless families subsisted there during the Great Depression and World War Two years. The Dangar home was destroyed by fire in 1940.

During World War Two, an Army camp was station at McKell Park, Brooklyn. The water tower on Dangar Island served as a look-out tower, and a gun emplacement was set up. Since then, the island has become a place of permanent and recreational homes with every facility and service enjoyed by mainlanders.

## Long Island

Long Island was reserved from sale in 1882, for the preservation and growth of timber. In 1911, it was reserved for public recreation. The eastern section of the island supports an integral part of the railway construction.

## Milson Island, formerly Mud Island.

This island was surveyed and measured in 1865 and sold to Robert Milson, who played a significant part in the early history of the area.

In 1902, the island was resumed for an Inebriate Asylum. It was subsequently reserved, in 1921 and dedicated in 1924, for a Mental Hospital.

## The Mental Hospitals of Milson and Peat Islands

In 1901, Peat (or Rabbit or Goat) Island (12.5 acres) and Milson or Mud Island, were acquired by the Chief Secretary's Department. In 1902, the land was resumed for use as an Inebriate Asylum although this did not eventuate until 1910. In the intervening years, some experiments in rabbit control had been carried out on Milson Island.

Wards were built on Peat Island. Patients began arriving here in 1911, the first was a large group moved from the Watt Street Asylum at Newcastle, and then others came from other asylums. By 1915 there were 160 patients. This number increased to about 400 in the 1940s, and about 600 in the 1950s.

During the time of World War One, Milson Island was used as a military hospital and quarantine island for certain infectious diseases in soldiers. In 1921, the island became a Mental Hospital. Patients from Peat island were transferred there. The islands were isolated and all provisions and communication came by boat. The hospital at Milson Island continued until 1971.

Conditions for patients on both Peat and Milson Islands were shocking. Facilities were primitive, staffing inadequate, nursing reflected past attitudes to mental health. Many Brooklyn people were employed at the hospital over the years. In the 1940s, the inmates were put to work building the causeway which links the Peat Island to the mainland.

Many of the patients were forgotten by their families. Some were admitted as young as four years, and generally they all stayed until they died and their burial was left to the hospital. Roberts notes that from the establishment of the asylum in 1911, until it set up its own columbarium in the 1950s, about 600 persons died at Peat Island. From records examined for this report, the Church of England buried 310 patients, and the Roman Catholics buried 61 patients (1939-1950 only), a total of 371 patients, (over 60%) at Brooklyn cemetery. As these records are incomplete, the percentage was probably higher. Other burials were performed at Mount White Cemetery.

### 3.0 Establishment of Churches, and Public Education

Considered here because it is part of the history of the cemetery site, before the dedication in 1906.

Public Education: Background: A 'provisional' school could be established in areas where at least 15 children, but fewer than 25 (the number required for a 'public school'), could be expected to attend. Parents provided the building and the furniture, while the education authority paid the teacher and supplied books and equipment. In time, the minimum number of children was reduced, to 12, then 10, and 9. After 1882, the Department of Public Instruction paid for the building, but parents met many other costs. Such a school was generally staffed by untrained teachers or by teachers of the lowest classification.

A 'half-time' school was a response to providing education to children in areas of scattered population. The teacher was required to travel to two locations. An attendance of at least 20 children was required, in two groups of 10. In time, this number was reduced. In 1884, at the time when the Peat's Ferry school became a 'public school', the minimum number of children expected to attend was about 20.

### Peat's Ferry School

Summary: A provisional school was opened at Peat's Ferry in April 1871, although it appears to have closed in 1872.

From June 1875 to December 1883, Peat's Ferry school operated as a half-time school with Bar Island. (Then, from February 1884 to April 1892, and January 1902 to July 1903, Bar Island was a provisional school.)

From the beginning of 1884, Peat's Ferry school became a full public school.

From the beginning of 1889, the school took the name 'Brooklyn'.

### Peat's Ferry Churches

The earliest Church of England services conducted for the scattered inhabitants of the Lower Hawkesbury may have been held in George Peat's house at Fairview, in the 1840s. When Peat's daughter died there in 1843, she was buried at Fairview.

The Church of England established a church, St John's, and a cemetery, at Bar Island, in the mid 1870s. It is said that this church was built from the stone ruins of Fairview, which had been destroyed in a fire some time after Peat's death in 1870. At the time St John's was established, Bar Island was the most central location for the Anglican population around Peat's Ferry, Peat's Bight, Mooney Mooney Point, and thereabouts. At Peat's Ferry, most people lived at the western end of the three kilometre stretch of foreshore that makes up today's Brooklyn.

Anglican services were performed at Peat's Ferry during 1893 and 1894, 'in the vicinity of the burial ground', according to an article in the Church of England Historical Society's publication, June 1960, pp 92-93. (It is possible that the Wesleyan Chapel was used prior to building St Mary's). The same article says that after services commenced at Peat's Ferry, services at Bar Island were discontinued.

Peat's Ferry Progress Committee minutes confirm that in 1891, James Ross had already given a church site on his land, and a collection was in hand to fund the church building. (Ross purchased Portion 23, about thirty-four acres, in 1883. Some of this land was purchased from him by the Railway Department and he subsequently subdivided the rest. James Ross also gave a site for a Mechanics Institute, and other blocks he gave to his children.). During 1895, the Anglican Church of St Mary's was erected on the land given by James Ross.

#### 3.1 The cemetery site, and land nearby:

Time did not permit the inspection of late nineteenth century Cowan parish maps held at Kingswood Archives, in particular AO Map 12246, and AO Map 27017. These would have indicated whether a portion of land between Peat's and Seymour's, marked on the accompanying map, had previously been purchased from the Crown or reserved from sale as a Public Reserve. If the former, a history of resumption by the Crown would be revealed. A history will also be revealed of the provision of land for the road to Brooklyn (station), and subdivision into the small portions which are indicated in the accompanying map, which is part of the 1913 Cowan Parish map. It has been confirmed from Government Gazette notices that one of these small portions was given for a Wesleyan Church, and one for a public school. Land to the south of the Peat's Ferry Road (?38 acres) appears to have been made available for Church and School



purposes of some kind. The provenance of this land, from say 1860s to 1900, would complete the pre-history of the cemetery site.

From sources other than Parish maps and Government Gazette notices, it is learnt that in the 1870s, a Wesleyan Chapel stood near where the present cemetery is now located. In 1878, an application was made to rent the Wesleyan Chapel for the Peat's Ferry half-time school. A small building then used for the school stood 'near the middle of the present cemetery'. (William Matthews, 1950, page 2). A letter to the department of Public Instruction in 1879 notes that the building used as a school had been formerly occupied by the Government Superintendent of Roads.

Representation by the people secured an area of two roods of land here for a public school site, which was dedicated in April 1880. (Govt Gazette 14 March 1906, p 1886). The school did occupy the Wesleyan Chapel and the former building used for a school was sold for use as a store. (Matthews, p. 2) The half-time school continued at this location until 1883, when it was noted that the school had occupied the Wesleyan Chapel for seven years.

Then, probably due to the subdivision of the village of Brooklyn in 1884, the community preferred to build their permanent school nearer the eastern end of the settlement. Another site was chosen and a school erected in 1884. A special school building was never erected on the land dedicated for the purpose in 1880.

The fate of the Methodist Chapel is not known. The presence of a building of some kind in the vicinity of the cemetery is indicated in the minute book of the Brooklyn Church of England Cemetery Trust. In the years following 1909, Trustees met at the cemetery for their meetings, although other meetings were held at St Mary's C of E Church, built in 1895 on land given by James Ross.

### 3.2 The Cemetery, and the Churches

People of Church of England faith appear to have been the majority of the population from the earliest years. The Bar Island establishment indicates this. Although a Wesleyan Chapel predates the 1870s, there is little history about it, whereas vigorous community support built St Mary's in 1895, and retained it until relatively recent times when it was sold for conversion to a residence. Originally, the amount of cemetery land reserved for C of E (1 rood 4 perches) was far greater than that for Roman Catholic (24 perches), Presbyterian (16 perches) or Methodist (16 perches).

The original apportionment was altered in the 1940s. Comparison of two cemetery maps (1913, and 1968) indicates this. The C of E site was enlarged considerably, most probably due to the demand for burial sites for hospital patients. A document attached to Elizabeth Roberts study notes that in 1945, 16 perches were added to the Roman Catholic burial site, and the Presbyterian and Methodist sites were reduced to 8 perches each. The Roman Catholic site was used for burials from the hospital as well, probably influencing the re-apportionment of cemetery land for these three denominations. It has been noted that the burial of hospital patients in Brooklyn cemetery ceased in 1950.

Trustees were appointed for each church burial site. The C of E cemetery records have survived in the form of a burial register, 1909 to 1969, and the Trustees minute book, 1906 to 1967. Burial records that have survived for the Roman Catholic section are for the years 1939 to 1950 only. These records have been summarised and analysed, and this is included in this report.

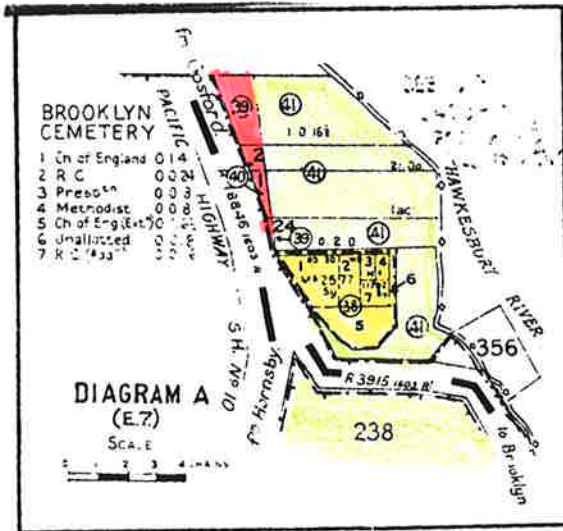
### 3.3 Dedication of Public reserves

In 1947, that is at the time when work on the new Pacific Highway was finished, the new road bridge nearing completion, and the cemetery re-organised, the residual land (surrounding the cemetery) previously vested in the Main Roads Board was vested in Hornsby Shire Council as Public Reserves.(G. G. 19 September 1947, p. 2170)

### 3.4 Recent road works

A major and relatively recent alteration to the cemetery environs, the date of which has not yet been determined, was the construction of a new, easily graded access for the Brooklyn Road to join the Pacific Highway. No longer did the cemetery land adjoin a Reserve leading to the water's edge. An embankment was built to take the new road east of the cemetery, altering the outlook from the hillside. The old road was closed at the Highway, but left to form an access road to the cemetery itself.

'Diagram A', Brooklyn Cemetery, taken from the Parish of Cowan map, 1968 edition.



The area coloured yellow, (38) is the reserve at that time (1968) for the General Cemetery, first dedicated as per Gov. Gazette notice 14 March 1906.

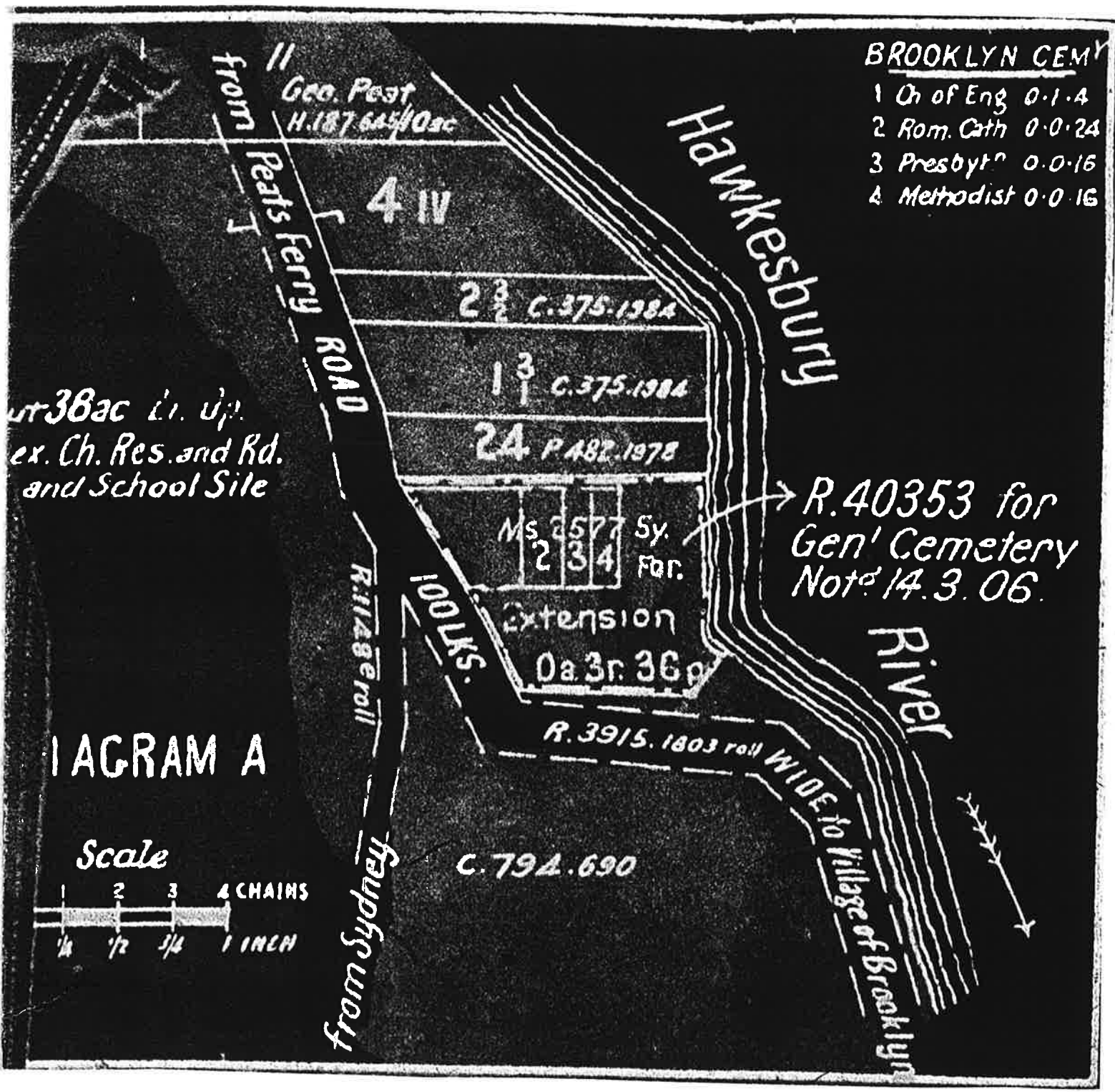
The areas shaded red (39,40) were resumed under the Main Roads Act, Gov Gazettes 4 Oct and 1 Nov 1929.

The areas shaded green (41) were dedicated as public reserves, Gov Gazette 19 September 1947.

The additional area shaded green (238) was dedicated a public reserves, Gov Gazette 15 September 1950.

'Diagram A', Brooklyn Cemetery, taken from the Parish of Cowan map, 1913 edition.

Note: the land dedicated for a cemetery extended to the river.  
 Portion 24 was the site reserved in 1880 for a public school. The land reserved for a Wesleyan Church is not identified at this stage.



#### 4.0 The Management of Brooklyn Cemetery.

The following actions have been extracted from the Minute Book of the Church of England Cemetery Trust, Brooklyn (1906-1967).

YEAR	BUSINESS
1906	Rules adopted for management were those of Rookwood Cemetery. Tenders were called for the services of a grave digger.
1914	routine
1921	Trustees seek to secure a jetty close to the cemetery. To achieve this facility, they seek the cooperation of the Roman Catholics and the Hornsby Shire Council, and propose a public meeting. Cemetery maintenance ordered.
1923	The meeting was held at the Church, Brooklyn. No action yet concerning the wharf.
1930	Trustees have a notice board put up at the cemetery. Trustees agree to obtain grave-digging tools.
1931	Trustees write to Lands Department for an extension of land for the cemetery.
1932	Charges decided upon by Trustees are, £1 for a grave site; 5/- for permission to erect a headstone, and £1 to remove a corpse. Trustees accept tenders for clearing and fencing the cemetery. <i>The specification for this fencing is attached.</i>
1933	Fencing tender of £20 accepted.
1936	Repairs to fences and gate authorised.
1937	The matter of re-opening graves of hospital patients for additional burials was discussed. The re-use of graves is agreed to as long as the trustees, the minister and the hospital authorities concur over which graves are to be re-opened. Fees for re-opening graves are discussed.
1939	There is difficulty in securing a reliable grave digger. Trustees decide upon repairs to the entrance gates, and the building of an opening for pedestrians. The unsold part of the cemetery was cleaned up, and the new portion was cleared and fenced. Tenders were accepted for this additional fencing. The ground work undertaken included removal of loose stones, grading off the new portion, grubbing out a gum-tree stump, chipping and cleaning up paths, improving the path through the turnstile, removal of young saplings and burning off.
1940	A lock was purchased for the South gate to the cemetery. One key was given to the Mental Hospital for their use. Trustees paid a gratuity of £1.10.0 in return for hospital patients working in the cemetery.
1943	Dissatisfaction among trustees results in them writing to Hornsby Shire Council seeking the Council to take over the management of the cemetery.
1945	£20 is allocated for cleaning up and repairs to fencing.
1948	With difficulty, enough trustees (and new secretary and a new treasurer) are found to continue the management. New fees are set: £2 for a new grave, 10/- to re-open a grave, 10/- to curb a single grave and £1 to curb a double grave. £10 was allotted for keeping the cemetery cleaned up during the year. Trustees had a balance of £45. A vote of thanks was recorded to Mr J. Blundell who for 42 years had served the residents of Brooklyn as secretary of the Brooklyn Cemetery Trust.
1949	Meetings up to this time appear to have been held at the cemetery itself, possibly in the old church there. A letter was received from the Imperial War Graves Commission asking for permission to erect memorials on graves of returned servicemen free of charge. This was agreed to. It was decided to call tenders to erect a small shed to house tools. The shed was to be 5 ft by 4 ft, made of timber and fibro, and the cost was not to exceed £14. Water was to be laid on, and this was to cost an additional £14. The Roman Catholics were asked to contribute

	to this but they did not reply to the request. The annual allowance for cleaning up was agreed to. During the year, the cost to dig 6 graves and have 3 days maintenance work done, was £15.9.0.
1950	Trustees decided to abandon plans for the shed 'as it would serve no useful purpose' as there were to be 'no further interments from the Lunacy Department'. Water was laid on, at a cost of £6.10.9. £10 was voted for maintenance and £5 for levelling the ground.
1952	Trustees refused an application from Brooklyn Progress Association to erect a notice in the corner of the cemetery nearest the road junction to advertise Brooklyn as a Tourist Resort. Trustees vote £12 for maintenance and money to buy a hose tap for the stand pipe. The account balance was £62.
1953	Annual Reports were sent to the Lands Department. Trustees vote £12 for maintenance. This sum continues for several years.
1954	Annual Meeting of the Trust is now held at the Fire Brigade.
1955	routine
1956	routine
1957	routine
1958	routine
1959	Trustees vote in increase fees. New fees are £4 for a grave site and £1 to re-open a grave.
1966	New trustees are elected at a meeting of the C of E Parish Council held at St Marks Church Berowra
1967	Trustees are informed that control of the cemetery has now passed from private trusteeship to the local council in accord with a recent Act of Parliament. The account balance of £58.0.5 credit is handed to the council on 22 November 1967. The trustees were thanked for their efforts.

The present cost of a grave site is \$500, said to be among the cheapest cemeteries in metropolitan Sydney.

December 8<sup>th</sup> 1932

At a meeting of the Church of England  
portion of the Brooklyn cemetery  
There were present the Rev. Cameron  
presiding, Messrs Bennington, Cole  
Rass & Blundell

Moved by Mr Bennington seconded by  
Mr Cole that Mr J. Walsh's tender of  
£1.5 - for grave digging be accepted.

Moved by Mr Cole seconded by Mr. Rass  
that tenders be called for fencing  
cemetery, with post and top rail  
posts 7 ft long 9 x 3 rails 7 x 2 1/2 9 ft long  
mortised and erected with 3 wires No 8  
galvanised timber specified.

Gray gum Turpentine. Black-hutt  
Strong-bark. Iron-Bark or old  
Bloodwood.

W. J. Cameron  
16.6.36

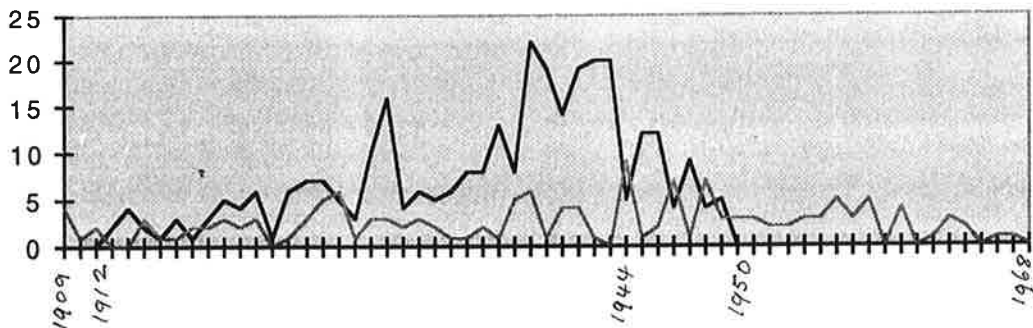
In 1932, The Church of England Cemetery Trustees decided to call tenders for the erection of a fence at the cemetery. The above photocopy is of the page from the minute book wherein the fence specification are detailed.

4.1 Summary of entries from the Burial Register for the Church of England portion of Brooklyn Cemetery, 1909 to 1965. 'Institution' refers to patients from the Mental Hospital.

year	Institution	Civilian
1909		4
1910		1
1911		2
1912	2	0
1913	4	0
1914	2	3
1915	1	1
1916	3	1
1917	1	2
1918	3	2
1919	5	3
1920	4	2
1921	6	3
1922	1	0
1923	6	1
1924	7	3
1925	7	5
1926	5	6
1927	3	1
1928	10	3
1929	16	3
1930	4	2
1931	6	3
1932	5	2
1933	6	1
1934	8	1
1935	8	2
1936	13	1
1937	8	5
1938	22	6
1939	19	1
1940	14	4

1941	19	4
1942	20	1
1943	20	0
1944	5	9
1945	12	1
1946	12	2
1947	4	7
1948	9	1
1949	4	7
1950	5	3
1951		3
1952		3
1953		2
1954		2
1955		3
1956		3
1957		5
1958		3
1959		5
1960		0
1961		4
1962		0
1963		1
1964		3
1965		2
1966		0
1967		1
1968		1
1969		0
1970		

The accompanying graph enables a comparison to be made between hospital patients (darker line) and civilian burials (lighter line). The greatest number of burials of civilians occurred in 1944, the year of the rail crossing disaster.





#### 4.2 Church of England burial register, 1909 to 1969

##### **Civilian population:**

##### Total burials, 144, including

- 17 children
- 2 youths
- 33 domestic duties
- 14 retired
- 14 pensioner
- others have no information

##### Occupations where given

- 1 agent
- 1 proprietor
- 1 C. Agent
- 1 cabinet m(aker)
- 1 estate agent
- 1 fettle
- 12 fishermen
- 1 gardener
- 1 glass cutter
- 5 labourer
- 1 orchardist
- 4 oysterman
- 1 painter
- 1 punt skipper
- 1 railway
- 1 returned soldier
- 1 sailor
- 1 garage proprietor
- 1 shorthand office attendant
- 1 storekeeper
- 1 teacher

##### Places of residence, other than Brooklyn, of deceased persons.

Berowra  
Dangar Island  
Eastwood  
Hornsby  
Manly  
Marra Marra Creek  
Mooney Mooney Point  
Palm Beach  
Patonga

In several instances, persons deceased of address other than Brooklyn, have been brought to this cemetery to be interred with another family member already interred there. There are several instances of reopening of graves for a second burial, such as husband/wife, or child/parent.

Church of England burial register, 1909 to 1969.

**Hospital patients**

Total burials from 1912 to 1950: 310

Ages: 15 to 80 years.

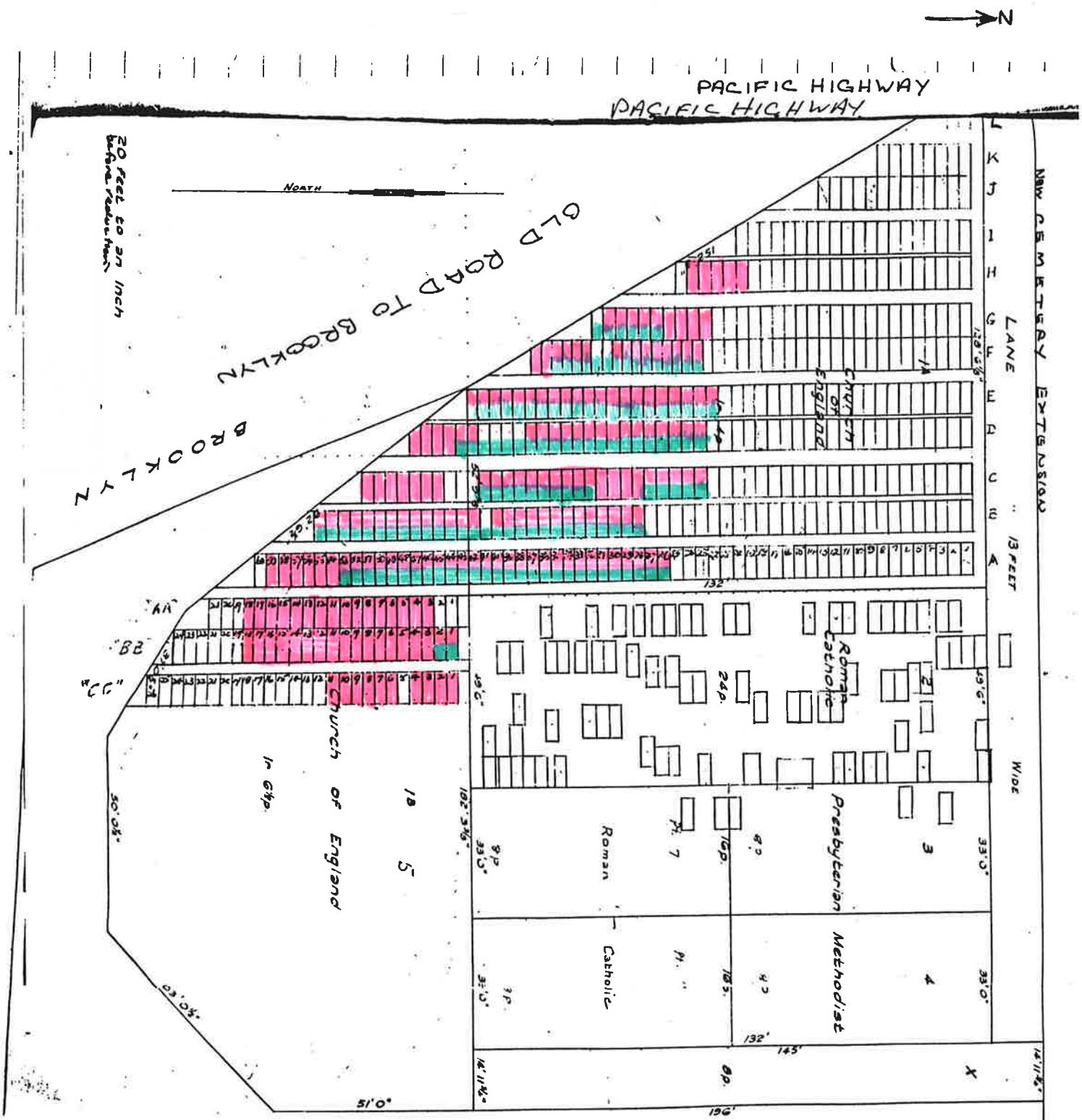
Of the Church of England burials between 1939 and 1950, 30 % are civilians and 60% are hospital patients. The years of most burials for patients are a peak in 1928/1929, and a greater peak from 1938 to 1946.

The following list of places are the places of residence of deceased patients, other than Rabbit Island (1909-1936) or Peat Island (1937-1950), in this series. However, this is less than 5% of all deceased patients.

Annandale  
Bateman's ?  
Chero Bay  
Clarence Town  
Glebe  
Guildford  
Kogarah  
Lithgow  
Newcastle  
Port Macquarie  
Ryde  
St Peters  
Turanville  
West Maitland  
Young

Church of England burial register, 1909 to 1969

- Row A: 13 citizens interred from 1909 to 1958.  
13 patients interred from 1912 to 1916. Row re-opened for 16 additional patient burials during 1938.  
Extension to Row A  
14 patients interred from 1933 to 1935. Row re-opened for 10 additional patient burials from 1946 to 1948.  
Extension to site, called AA  
16 patients interred from 1935 to 1936.
- Row B: 18 citizens interred from 1914 to 1956.  
14 patients interred from 1921 to 1939. Row re-opened for 13 additional patient burials during 1939.  
Extension to Row B  
13 patients interred from 1937 to 1938. Row re-opened for 12 additional patient burials from 1948 to 1950.  
Extension to site, called BB  
19 patients interred from 1941 to 1944.
- Row C: 14 citizens interred from 1920 to 1965.  
16 patients interred from 1916 to 1920. Row re-opened for 13 additional patient burials from 1939 to 1941.  
Extension to Row C  
7 patients interred from 1939 to 1940. Row re-opened for 10 additional patient burials from 1946 to 1948.  
Extension to site, called CC  
11 patients from 1944 to 1950.
- Row D: 16 citizens interred from 1923 to 1938  
15 patients interred from 1921 to 1925. Row re-opened for 18 additional patient burials between 1941 and 1942.  
Extension to Row D  
6 patients interred from 1940 to 1942.
- Row E: c. 12 citizens interred from 1926 to 1968.  
21 patients interred from 1926 to 1929. Row re-opened for 17 additional patient burials between 1942 and 1943.
- Row F: 19 citizens interred from 1931 to 1964  
15 patients interred from 1929 to 1930. Row re-opened for 11 additional patient burials between 1944 and 1945.
- Row G: 19 citizens interred from 1937 to 1961  
10 patients interred from 1931 to 1941. Row re-opened for 5 additional patient burials between 1945 and 1946.
- Row H: 14 citizens interred from 1937 to 1965  
5 patients interred in 1933.
- Row I: 15 citizens interred from 1949 to 1985.
- Row J: 8 citizens interred from 1956 until HSC takeover.
- Row K: 2 citizens interred from 1956 until HSC takeover.
- Row L: 1 citizen interred from 1961 until HSC takeover.



Map of Brooklyn Cemetery, used in E. Robert's assignment.

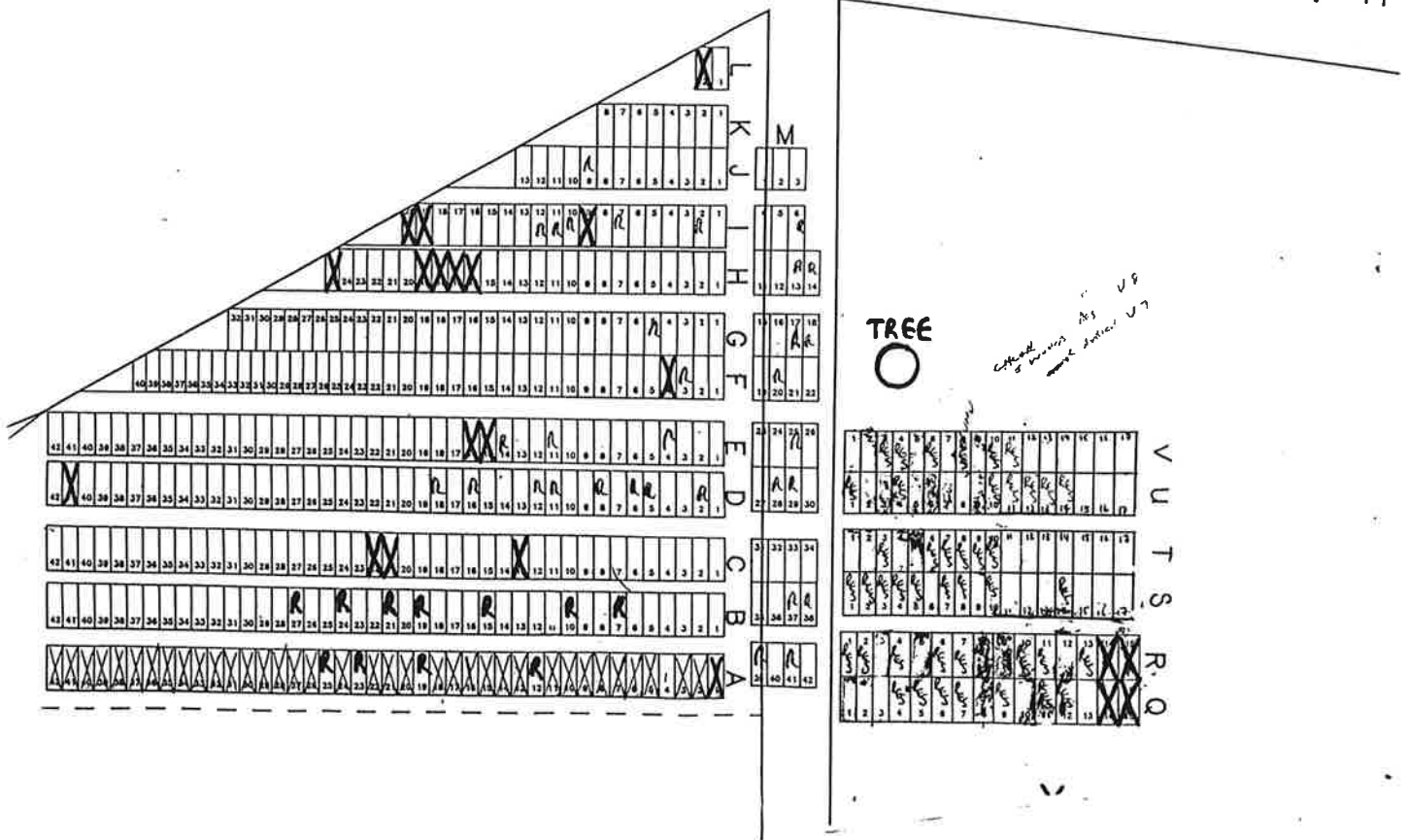
This diagram indicates the cemetery layout, most probably at the time management of the cemetery was taken over by Hornsby Shire Council.

The diagram has been used here to differentiate areas within the C of E section used for the burial of Mental Hospital patients. These burial plots are coloured. Those coloured in two colours were used for a second interment. The southern extension, needed for the increasing number of these burials, is indicated.

The incomplete R C burial record does not provide information to allow a similar representation to be made.

In 1906, the cemetery site extended to the waterfront. When the waterfrontage section was resumed has not been determined, nor when and if any further resumption was made for the new turnoff into Brooklyn Road.

PACIFIC HIGHWAY H



Map of Brooklyn Cemetery supplied by Hornsby Shire Council.

Since the cemetery was placed under HSC management, the 'laneway' has been used for burials, and a section opened for burials on adjoining land which would have been the 1880 school site subsequently resumed for road works and public recreation. The 'Tree' appears to be on the former school-public recreation site. An estimated age for the tree would suggest whether it was planted while a school site (1880-1947) or a public reserve (1947 onwards)

4.3 Roman Catholic burials in Roman Catholic portion of Brooklyn Cemetery, from July 1939 to June 1950.

Source: copy of a compilation prepared by B. L. Jansen, 15 January 1951, from information in

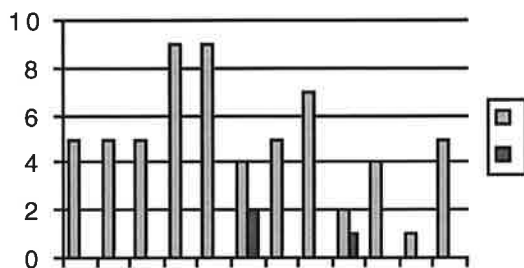
1. Register of deaths (Gosford (RC) Parish)
2. Exercise Book (Register, Brooklyn)
3. Death certificates issued by Mental Hospital doctor

The compiler notes that in some cases dates were imperfectly recorded, and that the register (2) did not indicate a site location for any individual burial.

'Place of residence for institutional deaths are either 'Peat Island', or 'Milson (Mental) Island'.

YEAR	HOSPITAL PATIENTS Milson Is	LOCAL RESIDENTS
1939	5	0
1940	5	0
1941	5	0
1942	9	0
1943	9	0
1944	4	2
1945	5	0
1946	7	0
1947	2	1
1948	4	0
1949	1	0
1950	5	0
total	61	3

Of the Roman Catholic burials between 1939 and 1950, less than 5% are civilians (dark columns) and over 95% are hospital patients (lighter columns). The years of most burials are 1942 to 1946. The two civilians buried in 1944 were victims of the rail crossing disaster.



4.4 Non-secular burials at Brooklyn Cemetery since 1969, when management was assumed by Hornsby Shire Council. These figures are supplied by Hornsby Shire Council, Environment Division.

In no year has the civilian burial rate equalled that of 1944, the year of the rail crossing tragedy, when at least eleven civilians were interred, seven of whom were killed in that event.

The average is 2.5, the range 0 to 4.

YEAR	NUMBER
1970	1
1971	4
1972	1
1973	2
1974	3
1975	1
1976	4
1977	0
1978	0
1979	3
1980	4
1981	2
1982	4
1983	3
1984	1
1985	3
1986	1
1987	4
1988	6
1989	2
1990	2
1991	4
1992	2
1993	0
1994	3
1995	4

# 15 DEAD IN SMASH AT CROSSING

## Train Wrecks Bus Near Hawkesbury River

### FIVE SERIOUSLY INJURED

Fifteen people, including six children, are dead and five others are in hospital, as a result of a collision between the Kempsey mail train and a bus at a level crossing near the Hawkesbury River station yesterday morning. Four of the injured are in a critical condition.

It was the most disastrous level-crossing accident in New South Wales for more than 30 years.

The bus, which provides a local service from Kangaroo Point to Brooklyn, was carrying 21 passengers. It was smashed to pieces. The bodies of three of the victims, including the bus driver, were carried on the front of the locomotive among wreckage for nearly a quarter of a mile.

Passengers, some already dead, some shockingly injured, were thrown long distances by the terrific force of the impact. Fragments of the bus were strewn round them. Others were run over by the train.

In one family three were killed outright and three others were seriously injured.

Police have been told that the crossing gates were open to road traffic when the smash occurred. The gates open outwards, away from the railway track, so that the crossing is never closed to trains.

### TENDER DERAILED ON VIADUCT

Although the driver had the brakes of the train full on, it did not stop until it reached the viaduct approaching the Hawkesbury River bridge, on the other side of the station to the crossing.

The train was not scheduled to stop at the station. As it passed through, wreckage, protruding from the front of the locomotive tore away 20 yards of bricks and stone from one end of the platform.

The tender left the rails, and the train swayed dangerously before it jolted to a stop.

There were about 300 passengers in the train, and none of them was injured. Railway officials said that it was extraordinary that the train was not wrecked.

With one exception, all the victims lived in Brooklyn Road. They were:—

#### KILLED

Sister Ephrem Mary Nolan, 48, of St. Catherine's Orphanage, Brooklyn Road, Brooklyn.

Sister Germaine Mary Brennan, 43, of St. Catherine's Orphanage.

June Darker, 12, and Vera Gauchl, orphans and students at St. Catherine's.

Mrs. Eileen Mary Mollers, 34.

Mrs. Elizabeth Robinson, 63.  
Mrs. Olive Hibbs, 53.  
Mrs. Gladys Silvia Italiano, 50, and her two daughters, Valerie, 11, and Norma, 14.

Walter Cox, 6.  
John Austin Callen, 55, driver of the bus.

Mrs. Mary Parkyns, 74, of Braidford Street, Newtown.

Mrs. Sovinia Mary Malone, 51.  
Keith Cameron, 13, son of Captain J. Cameron, master of the Peat's ferry.

#### INJURED

Alfred Raphael Italiano, 63, husband of Mrs. Italiano.  
David Italiano, 9, his son.  
Neil Ross, his grandson.  
Gloria Silvia, 9.  
Edward Marsh, 73.

All those who lost their lives were killed outright, with the exception of Keith Cameron, who died in hospital six hours after the accident.

The injured, who are in Hornsby Hospital, are all reported to be in a critical condition, except Edward Marsh, who, doctors believe, has a good chance of recovery.

Some of the victims had boarded the bus less than five minutes before the crash. Many intended to catch the 9.30 a.m. train for Sydney at Hawkesbury River Station. Others, including a few of the children, had been sent by their parents on shopping errands to Brooklyn.

### "AMAZED TO SEE GATES OPEN"

The Kempsey mail train left Sydney at 8.15 a.m. in charge of driver J. Sponberg, fireman Moller, and guard F. O'Brien. Every seat was occupied. It descended the steep-winding grade from Cowan at a speed of 40 miles an hour, the next scheduled stop being Gosford.

"As the train turned the last bend in the decline," said Sponberg, "I saw the bus travelling along the road, which runs parallel with the railway line for some distance.

"When the train was approaching the level crossing I was amazed to see the gates open for vehicular traffic, and the bus about to cross the line. I jammed on the brakes, but it was too late.

"The engine struck the bus broadside on. The bus seemed to smash into fragments. Pieces were hurled everywhere. The train stopped about 30 yards from the platform at the Hawkesbury River station."

#### GATEKEEPER'S STORY

The gatekeeper at the time of the tragedy was Peter Cecil Tolley, 20, of Woy Woy.

Tolley said that three minutes before the bus arrived from Kangaroo Point a military lorry crossed the line through the gates, and he was then in his cabin beside the gates. The Kempsey mail train was due to pass through at 9.20 a.m. It reached the level crossing at 9.21.

Tolley said he heard it rumbling down the grade, and when he looked out of his cabin he saw the bus approaching. The bus rounded a turn in the road, and as it reached the crossing he ran towards it.

"I put up my hands and shouted to the driver to stop," he said, "but

the bus was on the railway line by this time."

Apparently the driver of the bus did not hear the train, and as the gates were open for him to cross he presumably did not suspect any danger.

About 40 people waiting on the Hawkesbury River station platform to catch the train to Sydney were horrified spectators of the smash.

"For a short distance," said one of them, "the body of the bus appeared to be wrapped round the engine, but as it approached the platform the steel roof of the bus was thrown into the air. It crashed against a tin shed beside the line.

"Some of the passengers were thrown on to the side of the line, but most of them seemed to be run over by the train.

#### PLATFORM DAMAGED

"The train passed through the station with the brakes screeching. As it approached the river end of the platform, portion of the body of the bus, which was protruding from the front of the locomotive, tore out one end of the platform."

The tender was derailed and the air brake pipes were severed. Passengers in the train were jolted from their seats as the train stopped with a sudden jerk.

The derailed tender was forced into the rear of the locomotive, and it had to be removed with oxy-acetylene cutters. Portion of the engine of the bus and two of the wheels were thrown into the Hawkesbury River.

Thirty soldiers, led by Captain Dryden, M.C., were among those who ran to the aid of the victims, many of whom had been stripped of their clothing.

Fifteen ambulances from the Central District Ambulance and Parramatta and Western Suburbs were rushed to the scene, and three doctors were called.

### BODIES ON FRONT OF LOCOMOTIVE

When the train stopped, the bodies of the bus driver and of a woman and a girl were found entangled in the wreckage on the locomotive.

Soldiers, ambulance men, and police, led by Inspector Sadler, and Detective-sergeants Chuck and Blackwood, Detectives Fraser and McMahon, had difficulty in extricating them.

Most of the women residents of Brooklyn helped to give first-aid to the wounded. They ran backwards and forwards with hot water and brought torn-up sheets, towels, and other linen from their homes for use as bandages.

Soldiers said that the women worked with the stoicism of trained nurses.

#### ARMS ROUND DAUGHTER

Mrs. Italiano was found dead on the line, with her arms round her youngest daughter, who was also dead. Police believe that when the crash occurred she tried to protect the girl by throwing her arms around her.

"Some distance away along the line," said Mrs. Agnes Foster, one of the women who helped to attend the wounded, "we found Mr. Italiano. He was in a terrible state. He was calling for his family. 'Save them. Save them,' he said."

The Italiano family were on their way to North Sydney to visit a daughter who is ill in hospital, and they were taking the son of the daughter, Neil Ross, to see his mother.

Edward Marsh, who appeared to be the least seriously injured of the bus passengers, said: "I'm all right" when women and soldiers offered to help him. He was the only one whose clothing was intact.

Later at the Hornsby Hospital, he told Madame Nasser, who employs him as a gardener at the Peat's Ferry Kiosk: "I saw the train bearing down on the bus and I shouted to the others in the bus: 'We're gone! I think I jumped out.'"

However, he was found some distance from the scene of the crash and it is believed he was thrown through the open door.

Mrs. Parkyns was leaving Brooklyn for her home at Newtown after spending several days with friends there.

#### THIRD SON LOST

Captain Cameron and his wife, who arrived at Hornsby Hospital before their son died, have lost two sons at the war, and sons and brothers of some of the other victims are on active service.

Before Mrs. Mollers left home she said she intended to buy a lottery ticket. She left three children, the eldest aged 10. The girl, Gloria Silvia, who was badly injured, decided to travel by bus to Brooklyn, as she thought it safer than riding her push bicycle.

Police used their boatshed at Brooklyn as a temporary morgue for the bodies, and during the day the Coroner, Mr. Williams, gave an order for burial. Police said that the funeral arrangements would be left for the relatives.

The Kempsey mail train was held up at Hawkesbury River for about two hours.

#### IMMEDIATE INQUIRY

The Railway Commissioner, Mr. Hartigan, said late last night that a departmental inquiry into the accident would be held without delay.

He extended to the relatives and friends of the victims his deepest sympathy.

Departmental officials, he said, had been sent to the Hawkesbury district to do all they could to alleviate the distress of the bereaved families.

The Minister for Transport, Mr. O'Sullivan, also expressed his and the Government's sympathy with the relatives.

The meeting of the Hornsby Council last night was adjourned until next Thursday as a mark of sympathy with the relatives.

(Pictures on page 6)



## 5.00 The 1944 rail crossing disaster

This serious event is outlined here because several of the victims are buried in Brooklyn Cemetery.

Sixteen people died when the Kempsey Mail Train collided with the Kangaroo Point to Brooklyn bus, carrying twenty-one passengers, on the morning of 20 January 1944. The collision occurred at the level crossing near Brooklyn town. The north-bound train was not scheduled to stop at Hawkesbury River, so was travelling at considerable speed. Several of the passengers in the Brooklyn bus were on their way to catch a train to Sydney; others, including some of the children, were on local shopping errands for their families. Fifteen of the sixteen dead were killed instantly, one died later in Hornsby Hospital, and the rest were seriously injured. Three hundred passengers in the train escaped injury. The station was damaged and the bus was destroyed.

It was the most disastrous level-crossing smash in New South Wales for thirty years. Apparently, the crossing gates, in the care of a twenty-year old attendant, were open to road traffic when the smash occurred.

Many of the dead were Brooklyn people. They included John Callen the bus driver, two nuns and two children from St Catherine's Orphanage, Mrs Eileen Mollers, Mrs Elizabeth Robinson, Mrs Olive Hibbs, Mrs Mary Parkyns, Mrs Gladys Italiano and her two daughters and a son, Walter Cox 6 years, and Keith Cameron 13 years.

Injured were Mr Italiano, his grandson Neil Ross 3 years, Gloria Silvia 7 years, and Mr Edward Marsh. The Italiano family were Brooklyn residents (on their way to visit other family members in Sydney); so was Mrs Molliers who had left her three children at home, the eldest 10 years, while she went to do the shopping. Gloria Silvia was going to ride her bicycle to Brooklyn, but went by bus instead, thinking it safer. Edward Marsh was the gardener at the Peat's Ferry kiosk. Keith Cameron 13 years, was the son of Captain Cameron, the master of the Peat's Ferry. Captain Cameron and his wife had recently lost two other sons at the war.

Many military personnel were in the area at the time, the rail bridge considered a target in the event of possible invasion. Many soldiers assisted police, ambulance and civilians in the rescue process.

Walter Cox and 'Florence Molone' are the only two civilian Roman Catholic burials, (both on 21 January 1944), in the transcribed Roman Catholic burial register, for 1944. Three of the victims are buried in the C of E section: Elizabeth Robinson, Eileen 'Molles', and Olive Hibbs, on 21 or 22 January 1944. The two nuns from the Orphanage were buried in the Mercy Sisters plot at Northern Suburbs Cemetery. The burial places of the other victims are not known.

Peat's Ferry (Brooklyn) had been the location of another fatal rail accident, in 1887, before the rail bridge was completed. A train load of excursionists from Sydney came to the Hawkesbury for a pleasant day's outing at the time of the celebrations for the Jubilee, 50 years, of Queen Victoria's reign. Two excursion trains preceded the fatal train that day, and both were waiting on sidings near the river's edge for the third train to arrive. After leaving Cowan, and in making the steep descent to the river, the brakes of the train failed. The train came on at increasing speed down the Cowan Bank, for more than fifteen minutes of uncontrollable velocity. The noise alerted the pointsman at the station who managed to throw the train onto a siding thereby preventing a collision with another passenger-laden train. However, the run-away train careered into some trucks, toppled over an embankment and the locomotive sank into the mud. Five people were killed and a great many injured.

This was a disaster of great proportions, but none of the victims were local people and no memorials in the cemetery mark the terrible event. (SMH 22 June 1887)  
Another similar smash occurred about 1925 when a goods train's brakes failed coming down the Cowan Bank and the run-away train collided with an engine near the station. The driver and fireman were killed. (History of Brooklyn, p. 14.)

The 1944 level crossing smash was followed by representation to replace the crossing with an overpass. This had not been done by 1958 (Progress Committee Minutes).

#### 6.00 Brooklyn people commemorated in the cemetery who had given war service

##### War graves

F. M. Anlezark NX8887 Gunner 2/1 Field Regiment RAA., died 31 July 1974 aged 69 years

Harry Strath late AIF NG died 5 February 1944 aged 22 years.

Robert Parkhill, late AIF and the Boer War, died 4 June 1926 aged 45 years

Tom Johnson, H. O. Cox 2/17 Batt AIF Died of wounds New Guinea 16 October 1943 aged 28 years

R. D. Nelson NX153665 Corporal Army Provost Corps Died 14 January 1955

William Paynten late 1st AIF 7 October 1942 aged 63 years.

Additionally, the memorial stone for Robert Buie tells a remarkable tale:

In Loving Memory of/Uncle Bob/  
Robert Buie/Lewis Gunner 3801, World War One/  
Died Anzac Day 1964 aged 70/  
He shot down the Red Baron/Baron Von Richthofen/  
April 21, 1918/Congratulated by General Rawlinson/  
In person by General Birdwood, Brown and Hobbs/  
Lest We Forget.

#### 7.00 Civilian burials: Brooklyn and district families

Before the advent of the railway there were only five or six families in the Brooklyn area. Those who secured original land purchases from the Crown were: King and Robertson, who sold their land. In 1881, it was acquired by brothers Peter and William Fagan, who made the Brooklyn subdivision, in 1884. These families do not appear to be represented in the cemetery.

James Cole, who lived on the northern side of the river but whose sons and daughters lived on the southern side.

Robert Milson

Mr and Mrs James Ross

Vincent William Seymour

Marriages followed, between children of subsequent generations of these families. The cemetery is the resting place of many members of these families.

Vincent William Seymour was a retired mariner who settled at Mooney Mooney Creek in about 1857. He later bought portion 4, near the cemetery site. He married Sarah Rebecca Hibbs. He farmed at Brooklyn and Mooney Mooney Creek. When he died, in 1889, he was buried at Bar Island Cemetery. Although only one burial in the name Seymour is listed (A8), Hibbs are represented (F12, G 16-18)

### The Cole family.

James W. Cole was the owner of Portion 18, at Brooklyn.

James Cole was one of the earliest permanent settlers on the Hawkesbury at this locality, although he lived on the northern side of the river. The children of James Cole were among the earliest settlers in Brooklyn and at least five generations have lived there. Among Cole burials are:

Mrs Siddie Cole B12 (1891-1918)	Sid Cole junior B13 (1888-1949)
Sarah Maria Cole (1863-1920)	James Cole B20 (1853-1941)
J Cole Sen B21 ( )	J W Cole B24 ( -1938)
Bertie W Cole C8 (1903-1930)	Ernest J Cole C 9 (1882-1921)
Isabella Cole C10 (1860-1926)	Sydney Cole C11 (1858-1949)
Cecil Cole C 14 (1893-1965)	Robert Cole F16 (-)
Royal George Cole M26 (-)	

### The Smith Family

There are three generations of this family buried in Brooklyn Cemetery. The parent generation was Peter (1837-1921) and Ellen (1844-1918) Smith. Peter Smith, a mariner, came to the area in the 1850s. He became the first resident fisheries inspector, a position held for about twenty years (1880s-1905).

Of their several children, a son Les (1890-1961) was proprietor of the Brooklyn to Wiseman's Ferry river mail boat in the 1930s and 1940s.

Another son, Alfred John Smith (1887-1951), and his wife Elsie Grace Smith (1889-1969) were proprietors of tourist ferries that served Patonga, Palm Beach and Newport. A grand daughter of Peter and Ellen Smith is also buried in Brooklyn Cemetery.

The parents of Elsie Grace Smith were William Cross (1849-1931) and Eliza (1859-1933). Eliza Cross was a former nurse and from the 1900s to the 1930s, was the midwife for Brooklyn mothers. William Cross was for many years the cemetery's grave digger: Eliza helped a newcomer into the world, her husband helped another out of it.

### The Blundell family

It will be noted elsewhere that Mr J. Blundell was for 42 years (1906-1948), secretary of the Brooklyn Cemetery Trust.

Josiah Blundell (1878-1965) and his wife Rebecca (1883-1964), were residents of Mooney where they owned a dairy that supplied Mooney, Peat and Milson Islands with milk. Their daughter Iris (1920-1937), a 'shorthand office attendant', was killed in a motor accident at Kangaroo Point, while riding her bicycle home.

Christopher James Blundell ( -1949) of Mooney Mooney is buried in the cemetery.

### The Buie Family

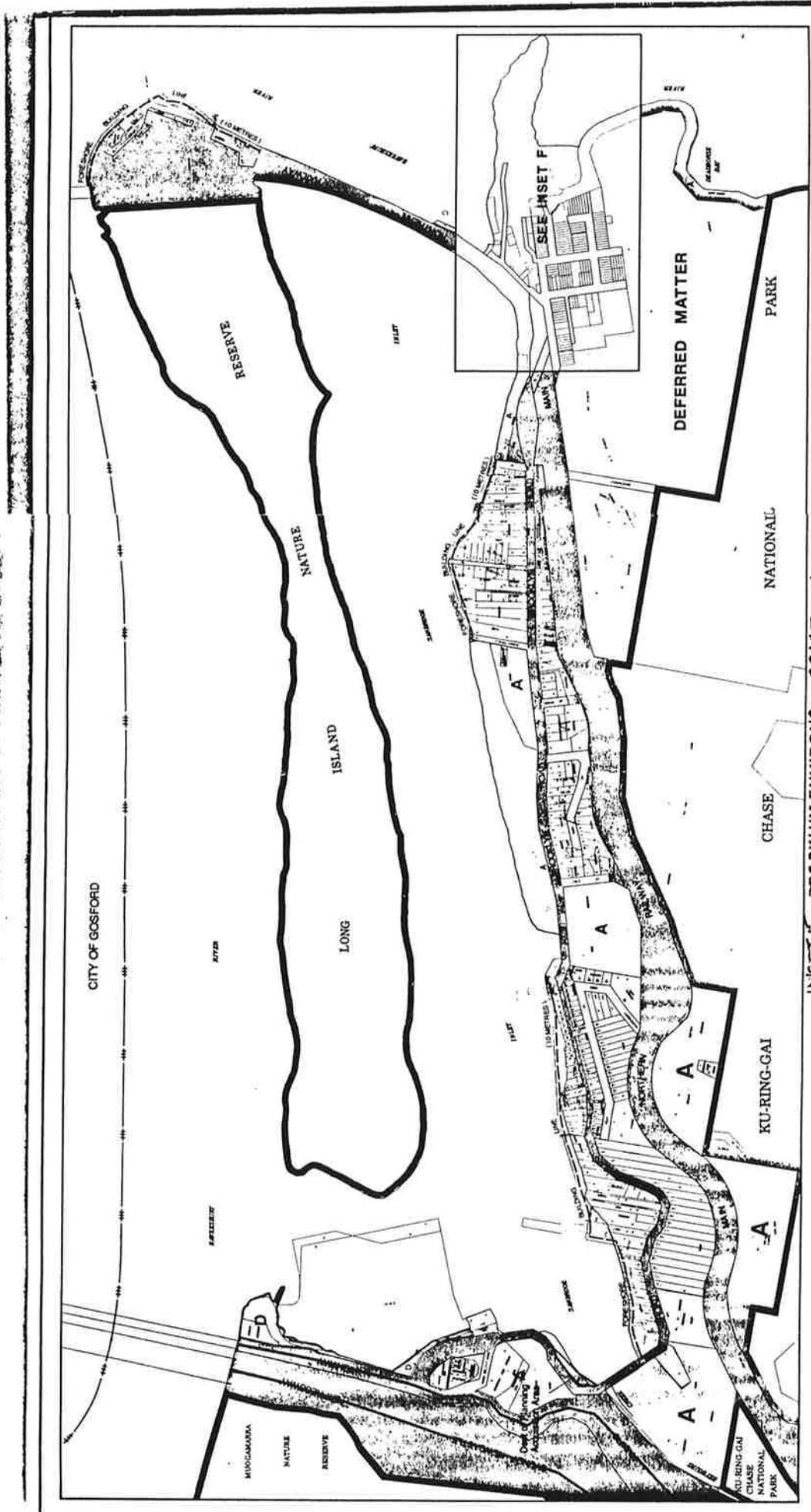
James (1860-1931) and Jean (1870-1947) Buie came to NSW from Scotland in 1887 and in time settled at Brooklyn where James worked as a fisherman and oyster farmer. Of their several children, a son, James junior ( ) was also a fisherman and oyster farmer. He and his wife Daisy ( ) are buried in Brooklyn Cemetery.

Another son, Robert, was a soldier in World War One and is credited with shooting down Baron von Richthofen (the Red Baron) on 21 April 1914 (1918?), whilst a machine gunner, and was mentioned in dispatches.

A grandson, Mark Buie ( ), was killed on Pacific Highway in a motor cycle accident.

Among Buie burials are:

Robert Buie F1 (1894-1964)	James Buie F2 (1860-1931)
William K Buie G12 (-)	W. Buie G12 (-)
Elizabeth S Buie G12 (-)	James Buie M4 (-)
Daisy Ethel Buie M5	J M Buie M6
M T Buie M13	M T Buie M14
Mark Warren Buie M15	H C Buie M 16-19
W B A Buie T4	



INSET F BROOKLYN ENVIRONS SCALE 1:8,000

From LEP

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## **4 Analysis of Physical Evidence**

### **4.1 Physical Assessment**

#### **4.1.1 Topography**

The Cemetery is situated on foot slopes of about 7-10 degrees gradient that fall to the east to the Hawkesbury inlet. Slopes above the site rise at about 25-30 degrees from the Pacific Highway to the freeway.

A prominent fill embankment up to 5m to 6m in height has been constructed along Brooklyn Road to provide upgraded access to the Pacific Highway. The embankment is battered at about 25-30 degrees with the north eastern side constructed or faced with sandstone spawls.

#### **4.1.2 Soils**

Soils in the area, contrary to popular belief, are non-dispersive soils (see Appendix 1 - Geotechnical Report). Non-dispersive soils can be defined as soils that are resistant to breakdown when inundated or subjected to flowing water. Water running through these soils is usually clear, indicating little erosion possibility.

#### **4.1.3 Drainage**

Drainage across the site occurs predominantly by surface runoff with a small rounded natural gully across the southern part of the site. The embankment intercepts site runoff and directs it into a culvert which runs under Brooklyn Road at the gully. An eroded drain up to 1m deep occurs along the high side of the access road. A small bitumen rise at the edge of the Pacific Highway diverts up slope catchment down the road, however during heavy rainfall, some discharge across the Cemetery site may occur.

#### **4.1.4 Vegetation**

The Cemetery is enclosed by a copse of pine trees and native trees but dominated by two mature Cedrus spp. cedar trees planted in the early 1900s, now about 25 metres high with a 1m trunk diameter. There are Radiata or Slash Pine on the northern and eastern edges. On the south edge the native vegetation is dominated by Rough Bark Angophora.

#### **4.1.5 Architectural Resources**

The cemetery contains few items of architectural rarity with regard to cemeteries and burial grounds. The particularly unique headstones within Brooklyn General Cemetery include:

- Grace Marlow Hewitt Headstone (galvanised iron (or zinc) sheeting with gold lettering) (Row 6);
- Harold Roy Gottwald Headstone (chipped out with large nail) (Row 10);
- Isabella Cole column (rather than a one-plane headstone)(Row 10);
- Grave of Ettie Spong Fowell (written in foreign language\* and very large plot)(Row 12); and
- Those graves that are adorned with low, decorative fences (Various).

\* Translation: 'Pray for Ettie Spong Fowell Nee Eshorne N Sister Oarnns who died 15.1.1939 - Let Perpetual Light Shine Upon Her'

at foot of grave: 'A Very Galant Lady'

## **4.2 Visual Assessment**

### **4.2.1 Landscape Character**

The visual characteristic of the area is one of open waterways surrounded by a natural rising topography generally covered with the indigenous vegetation typical of the Hawkesbury sandstone area. The development around the Brooklyn area is provided with panoramic views of the Hawkesbury waterways, the rising ground of the topography surrounding these waterways providing visual vantage points.

### **4.2.2 Attractive Views from the Cemetery**

Located above the Hawkesbury waterway the site would have originally had excellent views out to the east. Indeed the site aspect and natural panorama would have been carefully selected for the location of the Cemetery and form an important part of the heritage of the site. The former access road was located to the west of the site leaving an unobscured vista.

The more recent construction of the raised access road immediately to the east of the site has obscured these views to some degree and removed the historical significance of the transportation of coffins from the water up slope to the Cemetery for burial. Regrowth of understorey plants on the embankment of this access road and young tree saplings are further decreasing the views of the waterway and screening the Cemetery from the access road.

### **4.2.3 Views into the Cemetery**

The surrounding bushland prevents any distant views of the Cemetery, generally views are limited to vantage points around the site particularly from the vehicular access roads.

Located beside the only access road into Brooklyn the cemetery is an important part of the history of the township. All traffic entering or leaving Brooklyn passes this site and as such the site provides an important historical feature and a key landscape element as an entry feature. As mentioned previously the regrowth occurring to the east and the new access road embankment reduce the potential views to the east and isolate the sites visual links to the waterway.

Historical plantings including the mature Cedar trees form an important component of the site.

## **4.3 Functional Considerations**

### **4.3.1 Access / Circulation**

The Cemetery is accessed via a sealed road off Brooklyn Road. This road approaches the Cemetery from the south and encircles it very closely until the arc ends near the large cedar tree. It is evident that this access road passes over existing graves (see Figure 1 comparing initial layout and current layout). Pedestrian circulation throughout the site is relatively easy through aisle access between marked graves.

### **4.3.2 Signage**

There are no signs informing people that a Cemetery exists, although it is visible from Brooklyn Road. The Cemetery does not have a sign displaying its name or age. There are internal signs indicating the location of different denominational areas of the cemetery, however.

### **4.3.3 Site Services**

There are no site facilities or services such as toilets, water taps, stormwater drains, electricity,



or telephone. There is however provision of some seating. There is also a bitumen (non-guttered) entrance road off Brooklyn Road. The site is not fenced.

#### **4.3.4 Maintenance**

The site is maintained by Hornsby Shire Council and facilities such as grass cutting, plant trimming, grave digging and general maintenance is carried out by Council employees.

#### **4.3.5 Site Security**

In the absence of site fencing, secure gates, lighting, or security patrols, there is no ability to control access to the Cemetery.

#### **4.3.6 Future Demand**

The small village of Brooklyn will continue to require the services that the Brooklyn General Cemetery provides. Refer to the Conservation Policy for more information.

## **5 Assessment of Cultural Significance**

### **5.1 The Concept of Cultural Significance**

Cultural significance is a generic term and relates to those buildings, works, relics or places of historic, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic significance. Once the significance of the place is understood it allows informed policy decisions so that the significance can be conserved, maintained and possibly adapted and developed. The concept of Cultural Significance attempts to highlight the aspects of the item which are important to the community, and the level of that importance. The differing areas within which an item is assessed are as follows: (summarised from *Cemeteries: Guidelines for Their Care and Conservation (1992)*):

#### **5.1.1 Historic Significance**

Cemeteries provide a historical record of the local community. The monuments within cemeteries document the nation's growth and provide valuable insights into its history. They record significant events in the history of a region and unlike most other histories, record the lives of all, whether rich or poor, famous or infamous. Headstones and memorials also document facts about an individual or a family, particularly when they were important locally.

The genealogical value of cemeteries is of course an important component of their historic significance as nearly all monuments include some biographical or genealogical information. Not only the headstone but also the inscription on the headstone is important.

#### **5.1.2 Social Significance**

Much of the value of cemeteries lies in their ability to evoke the customs and tastes of their time and to document the particular social standards of a period. The monuments and landscapes of cemeteries express the funary ritual and formal mourning customs people practise. The changes in practise can also be expressed through cemeteries and the investigation of the fabric. The transformations that are most evident in Australia are between the elaborate, Victorian 'Romantic' burial practices and monuments, and the contrasting rationalist or pragmatic approach.

War memorials, memorials to other events and dedicated graves are also part of the social significance of a cemetery and provide a reminder that the sacrifice required to preserve national ideals of freedom and justice were not in vain.

#### **5.1.3 Archaeological Significance**

As funary monuments and plantings are seldom updated or replaced, cemeteries become unaltered physical records of cultural preferences and shifts in preference. Cemeteries often provide some of the most intact physical evidence surviving in an area from earlier periods and provide an accessible record of the history of an area. This evidence includes the landscape itself, the monuments and other artefacts. As archaeological artefacts, headstones are readily available and are usually in their original locations and contexts.

#### **5.1.4 Architectural Significance**

Architectural significance includes consideration of the artistic merit or technical accomplishment of the items found within cemeteries. The monuments erected in cemeteries tend to reflect the contemporary developments in architectural style. They also hold examples of the skills of local craftspeople, such as ceramic edging tiles. Many rural cemeteries include examples of rustic craft skills and ingenuity in the design and construction of memorials from locally available

materials.

Most cemeteries were designed in the latest landscape fashion. Landscape design and layout includes the arrangement of burial areas, alignment of drives, paths or avenues, and other features such as shelters, pavilions or sculpture.

The layout of most cemeteries can be described as axial or grid, and most cemeteries are characterised by internal denominational divisions. Sections are usually divided by pathways running between separate sections. The cemetery's boundaries are often reinforced by planting, fencing and gates.

#### **5.1.5 Aesthetic Significance**

The aesthetic significance of a cemetery derives from the interaction of a number of factors, and may be determined by the combined effect of landscape design, monuments, setting and plantings. Planting is one of the key elements of the cemetery landscape because the arrangement of mature plantings will usually be the dominant visual feature of the cemetery.

The relationship of the cemetery to the wider landscape (its context and setting) may also be important. Other physical relationships may also be significant, such as the presence of visual links between burial grounds and associated elements (such as the river / water). Cemeteries also provide tranquil places in an otherwise busy world.

Individual monuments or other elements within a cemetery may also be of aesthetic significance owing to their particular artistic merit, design or technical accomplishment.

#### **5.1.6 Scientific Significance / Research Potential**

Cemeteries frequently provide environments which have been little modified since the first settlement of an area, and as such may contain flora and fauna that is native and has not been disturbed since settlement. The botanical resources may also extend to introduced species that have become unfashionable and subsequently rare.

## **5.2 Assessment of Significance for Brooklyn Cemetery**

### **5.2.1 Historic Significance**

Historically the Cemetery must be considered to have regional significance. Its early existence continued the wider purposes (i.e. not only simply local needs), that the original Cemetery on Bar Island had: it served the state government in providing a burial place for the mentally handicapped patients from all over the state, who were incarcerated on Peat (and Milson) Islands and who were formerly buried on Bar Island. The Cemetery also has significance regionally for its close links with the state's northern railway and with the rail disasters associated with the difficult local terrain.

### **5.2.2 Aesthetic Significance**

Aesthetically the significance of the site has been substantially compromised with the isolation from the river foreshore resulting from the re-routing of Brooklyn Road approximately twenty years ago and with the making of the internal access road. However there remains sufficient physical evidence - landform, headstones, mature plantings, etc to assign Local aesthetic significance to the Cemetery.

### **5.2.3 Social Significance**

Socially the Cemetery has regional significance because of the range of groups beyond the local area whose relatives are buried there.

Socially it is also of regional significance for its potential to reveal information which could contribute to an understanding of: **1** The pattern of settlement of Brooklyn and surrounding areas; **2** the scale of usage / occupation of Peat (and Milson) Islands for mental purposes over the last century and **3** The impacts of the presence of the railway line adjacent to the site over the last 109 years.

### **5.2.4 Scientific Significance**

Archaeologically the site's significance has also been substantially compromised, principally because of the subsidence and slippage of the central area graves and the subsequent damage to the headstones of those graves, but also because of the alienation and lack of identification of those graves affected by the making of the internal access road. In this context the remaining headstones and their configuration have only local significance. They have potential to reveal information which could contribute to an understanding of the method and forms of burial in the extended Brooklyn community over a ninety year period.

## **5.3 Statement of Significance for Brooklyn Cemetery**

Historically the Cemetery has regional significance due to its early existence continuing wider purposes (i.e. not only simply local needs) than the original Cemetery on Bar Island. The Cemetery also has historic significance regionally for its close links with the state's northern railway and with the rail disasters associated with the difficult local terrain. Aesthetically the Cemetery has local significance, although this has been substantially compromised by the re-routing of Brooklyn Road.

Socially the Cemetery has regional significance because of the range of groups beyond the local area whose relatives are buried there. Scientifically the site's significance has been substantially compromised, principally because of the alienation and lack of identification of those graves affected by the making of the internal access road. Nonetheless the Cemetery is of regional scientific significance for its potential to reveal information which could contribute to an

understanding of the pattern of settlement of Brooklyn and surrounding areas, and the scale of usage/occupation of Peat (and Milson) Islands for mental hospital purposes over the last century, and the impacts of the presence of the railway line adjacent to the site.

This Statement appears on the Inventory Sheet in Appendix B.

## **6 The Conservation Policy**

### **6.1 General**

The main aim of establishing a Conservation Policy is to develop guidelines by which the level of heritage significance of the item or place can be retained and revealed. This involves consideration of:

- Any emergency works required
- the range of values which give the item or place its significance
- Where and to what extent physical intervention can be tolerated including scope for interpretation
- appropriateness of the form and extent of current uses
- the appropriateness of the existing physical context of the item or place
- the existing historical context
- the role of detail / finishes in contributing to significance
- whether some components / areas are better suited than others in relation to interpretation / adaptive re-use
- security, maintenance, identification.

Since the Cemetery is considered to have regional significance, it is important that the first step in acknowledging that level, should be taking actions to ensure that the elements contributing to that significance, are retained and/or reinstated and appropriately conserved.

The regional significance of the site is attributable more to the graves of the mental patients and the many railway accident victims than (generally) to the graves of the local residents, so it is vital that the Conservation Policy should address

- 1 the regionally-significant gravesite areas and
- 2 the area of damaged gravesites.

Because of the potential significant threat to the stability of an increased number of gravesites and thus to the overall significance of the Cemetery, it is obviously necessary for the Conservation Policy to address the site stabilisation issue as a matter of urgency and only then to consider issues relating to the hierarchy of significance of the various graves.

What is important in this instance therefore, is stabilisation and reinstatement then conservation and interpretation.

### **6.2 The Specific Policy Issues**

#### **6.2.1 Emergency Works**

The grave area requiring "Emergency Works" is generally that defined by the graves of:

- 1 William Paynter in the South West (Row 5)
- 2 Les E. L. O. Smith in the South East (Row 9)
- 3 Ernest James Cole in the North East (Row 9), and
- 4 Brisbane Fitzroy Jones in the North West (Row 5).

The works required are reinstatement, both of subsidence of soil and headstones. However emergency work considered to be required prior to this occurring, is installation of appropriate site stormwater drainage to divert future surface and sub-surface water away from the site. It should be noted that the Geotechnical Consultant has advised that the current damage "does not appear to be related to slope instability or soil dispersion, but rather to settlement

consolidation of loosely placed soil in the graves". However, the geotechnical report further notes that "some discharge across the Cemetery site may occur". It is known that when the Brooklyn Road / Pacific Highway intersection was in its old location and the approach from Brooklyn was steeper, overland water flows in heavy rain were a problem. Further, a former Council Engineer familiar with the cemetery and its characteristics advised that in his day, "seepage" was a problem.

For these reasons we strongly recommend that an investigation be made of the stormwater drainage system surrounding the site, to determine its extent and the adequacy of its design and construction. We would further recommend that if inadequacies are found, then remedial installation measures should be undertaken.

The other emergency issue is the stabilisation and backfilling of damaged graves and the repair and reinstatement of headstones. This intervention should follow the satisfactory review and resolution of the drainage issue.

### **6.2.2 The Range of Values Which Give the Item its Significance**

As indicated in the Statement of Significance, the Cemetery has significance Historically, Socially and Scientifically. Its aesthetic significance has been compromised by the new positioning of Brooklyn Road, but its setting remains rural and attractive. The major on-site trees contribute greatly to the site's visual appeal and should be conserved. The plantings deserving of conservation are mentioned in the Landscape Architect Report. These should be identified in the proposed site specific Management Plan.

To enable the scientific integrity of the site to be conserved and interpreted, it is recommended that the original limits of the Cemetery on the foreshore, including if possible, the location of the original jetty, be identified by markers and that the location of these be identified in the interpretive information on the site. The exact location of the jetty is not physically evident, however it is known that it was located on the waterfront which formed the original eastern boundary of the Cemetery land. We further recommend that the foreshore markers be made accessible to pedestrians from the new Brooklyn Road.

### **6.2.3 The Existing Historical Context**

The Cemetery's historical context has changed. No longer does the Cemetery provide a resting place for mental patients from Peats Island. It is therefore essential that the former context of the cemetery is given adequate interpretation. This will involve protecting what little remains of the site's links with the river foreshore and the identification of the areas within the Cemetery occupied by mental patients and possibly major disaster victims.

### **6.2.4 Appropriateness of Physical Context**

The Cemetery was sited to have access to the water and the road serving the township, in a rural setting. This physical situation remains, although now the access to the water is cut off and some sense of the isolation and peace of the original site has been lost.

It is therefore imperative that what remains of the Cemetery be retained and that urban development be kept at a distance from the site. The surrounding land is currently zoned so that that objective is achievable but every effort should be made at Council level to ensure the appropriate long-term zoning of surrounding land.

In relation to landscape issues, new road construction to the east has isolated the site from the water views. The physical barrier created by the construction of the recent roadway to the east as opposed to the western location of the former road and the regrowth of native vegetation has obscured views out of the site, as well as limited views into the site. This has reduced the



heritage significance of the site and has not recognised the potential to highlight the history of the township or develop the opportunity to create an entry feature on the approach road into the township.

Recommendations include:

- 1** Clearing of new regrowth sapling vegetation between the eastern access road and the Cemetery to improve views into and out of the site.
- 2** Retain the mature cedars and prevent any disturbance of existing hydrology or ground levels.
- 3** Examine the possibility of providing pedestrian access between the Cemetery and Rest Park and relocating car parking adjacent to the entrance or off-site (see 6.2.5 below). Interpretative information could also be provided on this pedestrian link.

### **6.2.5 Physical Intervention**

The physical intervention identified above is the first important step in arresting further damage and decay and conserving the significance of the site. The other major current constraints to conservation and the adequate interpretation of the Cemetery as a whole are: **1** the old policy of allowing mourners to plant trees/shrubs within the bounds of the grave plot, **2** the location of the access road within the site and across many of the now-unidentified grave sites and **3** any intervention resulting in the removal of fragments of broken headstones. These constraints are such as to demand a certain level of physical (and statutory) intervention.

It is recommended that trees / shrubs should not be permitted in grave lots and all existing such trees and shrubs be removed. This procedure is recommended due to the destructive nature of the roots of such trees and shrubs to graves and headstones. It is also recommended that the portion of the existing on-site access road which crosses known grave sites be removed. It may be possible to remove on-site parking entirely to within Rest park adjacent to the site and to provide a pedestrian link between the two (see 6.2.4 above). In both cases it will be necessary to incorporate appropriate provisions into the site-specific Management Plan for Brooklyn Cemetery, and for Council to redesign the road. It is further suggested that before any works be done regarding tree or shrub removal, relatives or other responsible parties of the deceased be contacted and permission gained. The third issue is the control of fragments of broken headstones. This is a matter requiring the preparation of a Council Policy including allowance for action to be taken against offenders who are found removing or to have removed such fragments.

We believe that other limited intervention is appropriate to allow adequate interpretation of the site. This could include fencing with a low visual impact (eg timber bollards, etc) to separate possible recreational spaces from the graves, as well as appropriate directional/locational signage and interpretive information. The only other physical intervention considered necessary in the foreseeable future, is that required to carry out pruning of the existing plantings.

### **6.2.6 The Contributory Role of Detail / Finishes of On-Site Elements**

A Cemetery's particular character is defined by the styles of headstones of the major / unusual graves - or by the style of single isolated headstones. The particularly unique headstones within Brooklyn General Cemetery include those made of materials other than the traditional marble (e.g. galvanised iron (or zinc) sheeting with gold lettering - Grace Marlow headstone); obviously hand made headstones (e.g. Roy Gottwald headstone chipped out with large nail); deviations from the traditional flat plane headstone (e.g. Isabella Cole column); graves of different size and script (e.g. Ettie Spong Powell plot written in foreign language - and very large plot) ; and graves with decorative fences at a low height (various). These should be the focus of restoration and longer term management.

In addition the two major cedars identifying the site should be carefully maintained and protected

to ensure that the landscape significance of the site is preserved for future generations.

### **6.2.7 Adaptability of Certain Areas of the Site**

The Brooklyn Cemetery is a small area, much of which has been used for grave sites. Currently however a portion is set aside for recreational purposes and this is accessible only by means of an access road which passes over a large number of now-unidentified graves. Equally a majority of grave sites belonging to former mental patients are unidentified. These, fortunately are in an area of the site which has not been designated for a competing / inappropriate use.

For this reason it is likely to prove less costly and involve less intervention, to create interpretive boundaries and signage for this, most important area of the Cemetery.

Interpretation of the remainder of the site can only be effectively achieved if the access road is curtailed well before it interferes with the grave sites. This may mean terminating it at the top of the site and creating parking in the top, south western corner, in conjunction with pedestrian access from Rest Park to the Cemetery or relocating car parking to within Rest Park.

## **7 The Conservation Management Plan**

### **7.1 General**

Any comprehensive Management Plan for the conservation of items / places of environmental heritage, should take account of the issues identified in the Conservation Policy and should include:

- the longer term aspirations of the owner and community for the item / place
  - Master plan to be incorporated into the Brooklyn Cemetery Management Plan
  - Interpretation and Cultural Tourism, etc.
- the suitability / adaptability of the existing planning framework
- the resourcing implications of the Policy issues, both in terms of longer-term management funding and manpower and capacity to support and fund interpretation.

### **7.2 Realisation of Conservation Policy Issues**

#### **7.2.1 Owner and Community Aspirations for the Item / Place, and Suitability / Adaptability of the Existing Planning Framework**

The current zoning of the Brooklyn Cemetery land is unusual for such land. Cemeteries are normally zoned specifically "Special Uses" allowing for the use of the land for burials only.

General community interest in the conservation of Cemeteries (e.g. Gore Hill, Rookwood and Sandgate Cemeteries) is evidence of the need for Councils to have appropriate statutory mechanisms in place which are consistent with the protection of these cultural resources into the future.

The problem with the current zoning is that it allows too many competing uses, very few of which are compatible with longer term conservation objectives for Cemeteries - the uses permissible within the "Local Public Recreation" zone (Gardening, Camping, Caravan Parks, Child Care Facilities, Communication Facilities, Community Facilities, Dams, Entertainment Facilities, Public Buildings, Recreation Facilities, Utility Installations and Subdivision) would ultimately compromise the conservation of all those elements which contribute to the regional significance of the Cemetery.

In this context it is appropriate that all the Brooklyn Cemetery land be zoned Special Uses A - (Community Purposes) so that every future management action will be appropriate to those needs rather than serve them as a secondary issue. This zone allows for a broad management base for the Cemetery and associated open space and it is understood that Council intends to prepare a Masterplan for the site as part of its obligations under the Local Government Act 1993 to prepare Management Plans for all Council-owned properties.

Such protection, while not having the legal status of a Planning Instrument, would ensure that any potentially damaging recreational uses would be prohibited and that effective interpretation could be confidently implemented as a longer-term objective. Under this circumstance no specific Development Control Plan would be required, as long as the Masterplan defined the limits of the ancillary community purposes.

Another opportunity presented by this review is the potential community benefits to be gained from Cultural Tourism as a result of the implementation of appropriate and adequate Conservation Management and site interpretation. Communities across Australia are identifying their unique heritage / cultural resources and ensuring that potential tourism groups get to know about these attractions. In this respect it is recommended that appropriate educational / promotional material is produced and marketed to such groups. This is another way to engender widespread feelings of "ownership" and management of this unique resource.

In relation to the interpretation of the Cemetery on-site, cooperation with the Hornsby Tourism Association is further recommended because it may be possible to obtain supplementary funding for signage, etc.

On-site interpretive signage should be identified on the Masterplan and should include:

- 1 The overall context and history of the site - preferably near the entrance or adjacent to the car parking area;
- 2 The area of the mental patient's graves, (see Map of Brooklyn Cemetery used in E. Robert's assignment - 3.1 Historical Background);
- 3 Denominational boundaries (including re-construction of previous fencing between Church of England and Roman Catholic sections);
- 4 Labelling of the important mature trees and their date of planting; and
- 5 Visual linkages by arrow and distances to key locations such as Peat Island, the old Cemetery on Bar Island (suggested location adjacent to proposed pedestrian links).

In relation to the graves themselves it is considered that once restoration of the damaged graves has been completed, Council management of the grave site should include a regular (say bi-monthly) check of all sites, removal of debris and recording of any damage or change. This activity should be included in Council's annual budgets and the information should be reported to Council's Environment Division in consultation with the Heritage Planner.

## **7.2.2 Resource Implications of Policy Issues**

### **Longer Term Management Funding**

The recommendations contained in the Conservation Policy section imply increased funding input from Council, first in terms of emergency works and then in terms of annual maintenance and site interpretation.

In terms of the funding of the emergency works, it is recommended that Council budget to fund a local area stormwater management review (and re-design if required) and then to obtain estimates for and then implement, rehabilitation and restoration works to the damaged grave sites. In this context it is also recommended that Council approach the Heritage Office for advice on any emergency works / restoration grants available through the Heritage Assistance Fund. In relation to the restoration of headstones it is recommended that Council advertise its intentions and seek voluntary input in relation to return of materials as well as labour, from interested descendants and relatives of the dead.

In terms of longer-term recurrent funding it is considered that a change of zoning may have a positive effect on the required level of annual maintenance budgeting. A further possibility is that promotion of the Cemetery will draw a degree of voluntary support from the wider community. The extent of the possible budgetary impact of this support should if possible, be quantified.

### **Capacity to Support and Fund Interpretation**

The Roads and Traffic Authority has a hierarchy of signs (eg for Tourism purposes, etc) and can provide advice on which signs can be obtained and used and also on their design and siting. In relation to heritage signage, the RTA and the Heritage Office have established a close working relationship and it is advisable that the Heritage Office should be consulted in relation to interpretive funding, design guidelines and appropriate consultants.

In relation to heritage signage, the RTA and Heritage Branch of DUAP have established a close working relationship and it is advisable that the Heritage Branch should be consulted - not only in relation to interpretive funding but also in relation to design guidelines and appropriate consultants to provide advice, design materials and placement of such signage / interpretative instruments.

## **8 Appendices**

## **Appendix A - Geotechnical Report**



# ROBERT CARR & ASSOCIATES PTY LIMITED

Telephone: (049) 62 3566 Facsimile: (049) 62 3522 A.C.N. 063 515 711



Job N° 333

08 May 1996  
md/kw

The Manager  
EJE Architecture  
412 King Street  
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300

Attention: Mr Chris Dwyer

Dear Sir

## RE SLOPE STABILITY ASSESSMENT BROOKLYN CEMETERY, BROOKLYN

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents an assessment of slope stability and grave subsidence at Brooklyn Cemetery for EJE Architecture. It is understood that the results of this report are to be included in a Conservation Management Plan being prepared for the cemetery.

EJE Architecture provided cadastral and layout plans of the cemetery. The cemetery dates back to the start of the century with the oldest grave dated 1909.

### 2.0 FIELD WORK & LABORATORY TESTING

Field work was carried out on the 24th of April 1996 by a senior engineering geologist and involved:

- \* mapping of the site and its surrounds and
- \* drilling and logging of a borehole (refer to attached log)

Site location is shown on Drawing 1 and the results of field mapping presented on drawing 2 attached.

Laboratory testing involved two Emerson crumb tests to assess soil dispersion (ie the potential of soils to be eroded by dissolution of clay minerals by flowing water). Results are attached and are discussed in section 6.0.

### 3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

As shown on Drawings 1 and 2, the site is bounded to the west by the Pacific highway, to the north and east by Brooklyn Road and to the south by Old Brooklyn Road which now forms the access road to the cemetery.

QUALITY SYSTEM



**CERTIFIED**  
AS/NZS ISO9001:1994  
REGISTRATION No. 7312

*Consultants in the Geotechnical Sciences*

**Directors:** Robert Carr B. Sc., BE, MEng Sc., MIE (Aust); James Young;  
Phillip Hitchcock B.Sc.(Hons); Mark Delaney B.Sc.(Hons)



Topographically the cemetery is situated on foot slopes of about 7° to 10° gradient that fall to the east to the Hawksbury River inlet. Slopes above the site rise at about 25° to 30° from the Pacific Highway to the Freeway.

A prominent fill embankment up to 5 m to 6 m in height has been constructed along Brooklyn Road to provide upgraded access to the Pacific Highway. The embankment is battered at about 25° to 35° with the north eastern side constructed or faced with sandstone spawls.

Drainage across the site occurs predominantly by surface run off with a small rounded natural gully across the southern part of the site. The embankment intercepts site run off and directs it into a culvert which runs under Brooklyn Road at the gully. An eroded drain up to 1 m deep occurs along the high side of the access road. A small bitumen rise at the edge of the Pacific Highway diverts up slope catchment down the road, however during heavy rainfall, some discharge across the cemetery site may occur.

Damage to the graves is confined to an area as shown on drawing 2. Damage involves tilting of headstones and subsidence, tilting and cracking of grave surrounds and covers. Damage appears confined to graves typically dating pre 1940 and mostly double graves. Little evidence of damage or subsidence was noted in newer grave sites dating post 1960 which occur adjacent to the older damaged graves.

#### 4.0 SUBSURFACE CONDITIONS

Geologically the site is judged to be situated in the Hawkesbury sandstone. Prominent sandstone rock outcrop occurs along the Pacific Highway and slopes above as well as at the corner of Brooklyn Road and the cemetery access. Sandstone outcrop across the site was noted:

- \* in the eroded road drain along the access road,
- \* along a small gully across the southern part of the site and
- \* in an eroded drain adjacent to the road embankment at the lower eastern part of the site.

Sandstone rock outcrops are shown on Drawing 2.

An 1:100 plan of Brooklyn general cemetery provided shows the location of 14 boreholes that were drilled at some stage across the site, with rock levels ranging from 1.5 m to 2.25 m indicated.

Borehole 1, located as shown on Drawing 2 encountered the following profile;

- \* TOPSOIL, comprising silty sand, 0.25 m thick, over
- \* RESIDUAL clay, hard, dry to depth in excess of 1.4 m.

The clayey nature of the site soils was also noted in eroded drain exposures and recent grave mounds.

## 5.0 SLOPE STABILITY ASSESSMENT

The risk of slope instability has been assessed on the basis of observed site conditions as noted in sections 3.0 and 4.0 in accordance with the classification system formulated by the Australian Geomechanics Society which is presented in Table 1.

**TABLE 1 - SLOPE INSTABILITY RISK CATEGORIES**

Risk of Instability	Explanation	Implications for Development
Very High	Evidence of active or past landslips or rock face failure; extensive instability may occur.	Unsuitable for development unless major Geotechnical work can satisfactorily improve the stability. Extensive Geotechnical investigation necessary. Risk after development may be higher than usually accepted.
High	Evidence of active soil creep or minor slips or rockface instability; significant instability may occur during and after extreme climatic conditions.	Development restrictions and/or Geotechnical works required. Geotechnical investigation necessary. Risk after development be higher than usually accepted.
Medium	Evidence of possible soil creep or a steep soil covered slope; significant instability can be expected if the development does not have due regard for the site conditions	Development restrictions may be required. Engineering practices suitable to hillside construction necessary. Geotechnical investigation may be needed. Risk after development generally no higher than usually accepted.
Low	No evidence of instability observed; instability not expected unless major site changes occur.	Good engineering practices suitable for hillside construction required. Risk after development normally acceptable.
Very Low	Typically shallow soil cover with flat to gently sloping topography.	Good engineering practices should be followed.

The Brooklyn cemetery site is assessed to have a low risk of overall slope instability in accordance with the classification system in Table 1.

The damage to the grave sites is not associated with local or overall slope instability.

## 6.0 DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

As noted previously the damage to the grave sites involves tilting of headstones and tilting, settlement and cracking of grave surrounds and covers. The damage appears confined to older graves dating pre 1940 and typically double sites. Newer adjacent graves shown little or no signs of damage.

Emerson crumb dispersion testing carried out on soils recovered from borehole 1 indicates that the clay soils are non dispersive. As such the collapse of the graves can not be attributable to loss of support by dissolution and erosion of clay soils.

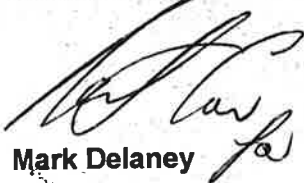
It is understood that regulations for graves sites requires a soil cover of about 1.2 m. The excavated soil is usually replaced without compaction and as such some degree of settlement and consolidation of the soil cover will occur with time. It would be expected that the rate of settlement would be at a maximum following placement and would reduce with time. After a period of about 20 years it could be reasonably assumed that at least 90% of the total settlement of the soil cover would have occurred due to consolidation.

Discussions with undertakers at Sandgate cemetery have indicated that after a certain period of time, wooden coffins eventually rot which can lead to sudden collapse and infill of the coffin by overlying soils. It is understood that older coffins were typically made from higher quality woods that were more resistant to weathering and were capable of remaining intact for periods of up to 50 years and longer before breaking down sufficiently to result in collapse. Once a coffin lid rots through the overlying loosely placed soil would infill the coffin leading to a relatively sudden subsidence of soil cover. This subsidence may be of sufficient magnitude to result in tilting, subsidence and cracking damage to the graves.

In conclusion the observed damage does not appear to be related to slope instability or soil dispersion but rather to settlement consolidation of loosely placed soil in the graves in particular following rot and collapse of coffins.

If you have any questions regarding this report please contact the undersigned.

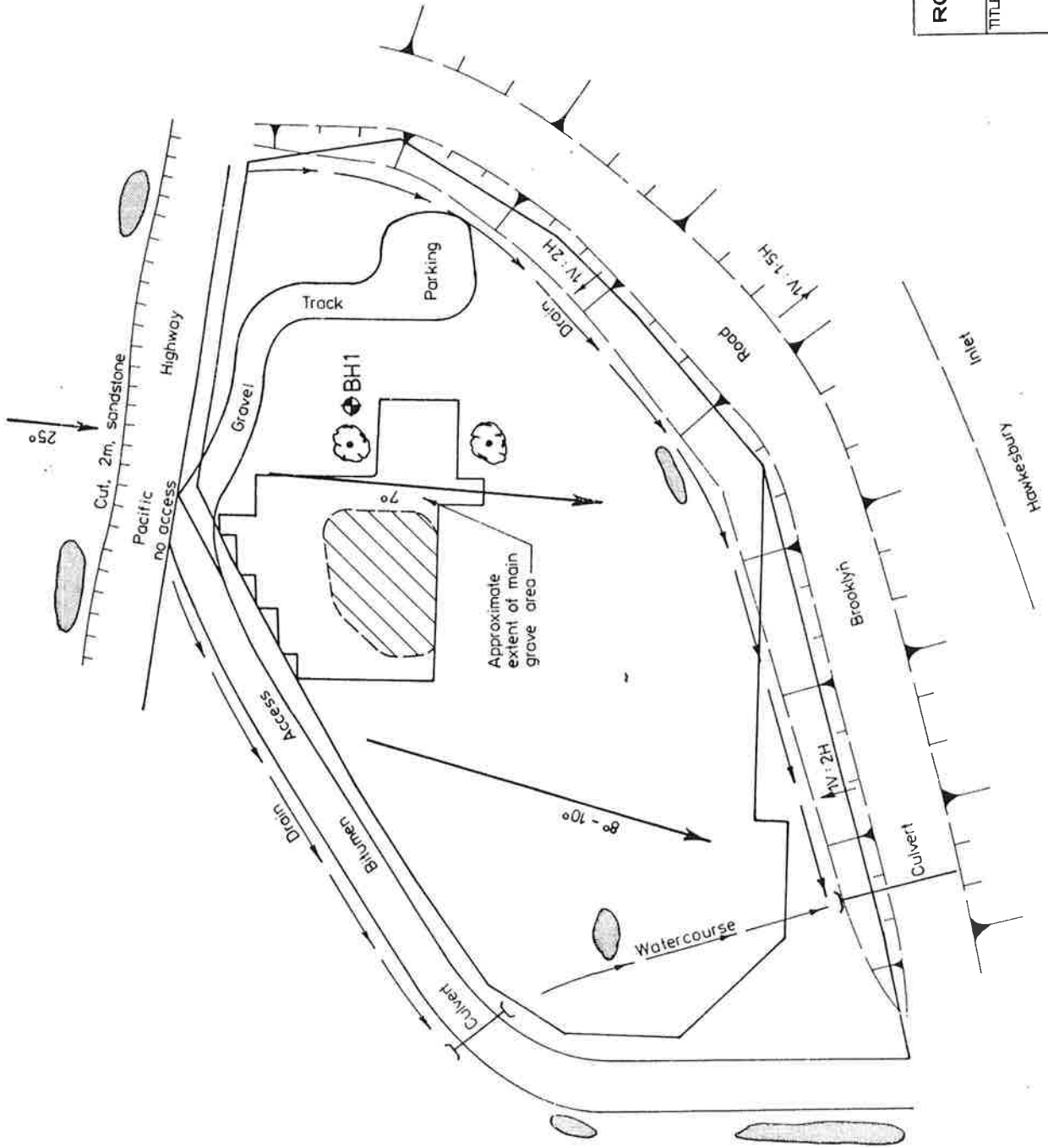
Yours faithfully  
**ROBERT CARR & ASSOCIATES PTY LIMITED**



**Mark Delaney**

attachments:

Borelogs  
Drawing 1, Location Plan  
Drawing 2, Site Plan  
Laboratory Results



- LEGEND**
- BH1
  - 7°
  - Cutting
  - Fill embankment
  - Sandstone outcrop
  - Large pine tree
  - Area of damaged graves

Approximate borehole location  
 Approximate slope angle in degrees  
 Cutting  
 Fill embankment  
 Sandstone outcrop  
 Large pine tree  
 Area of damaged graves

<b>ROBERT CARR &amp; ASSOCIATES PTY LIMITED</b> Geotechnical & Environmental Testing Services	
TITLE: <b>SITE PLAN BROOKLYN CEMETARY</b>	
CLIENT: EJE Architecture	PROJECT No: 333
DRAWN BY: MD	SCALE: 1 : 600
APPROVED BY: RJC	DATE: 7/5/96
	DRAWING No: 2
	REV: 0
	OFFICE: NEWCASTLE



# TEST BORE REPORT LOG

HOLE No: 1

CLIENT: EJE  
 PROJECT: Stability Assessment  
 LOCATION: Brooklyn Cemetary

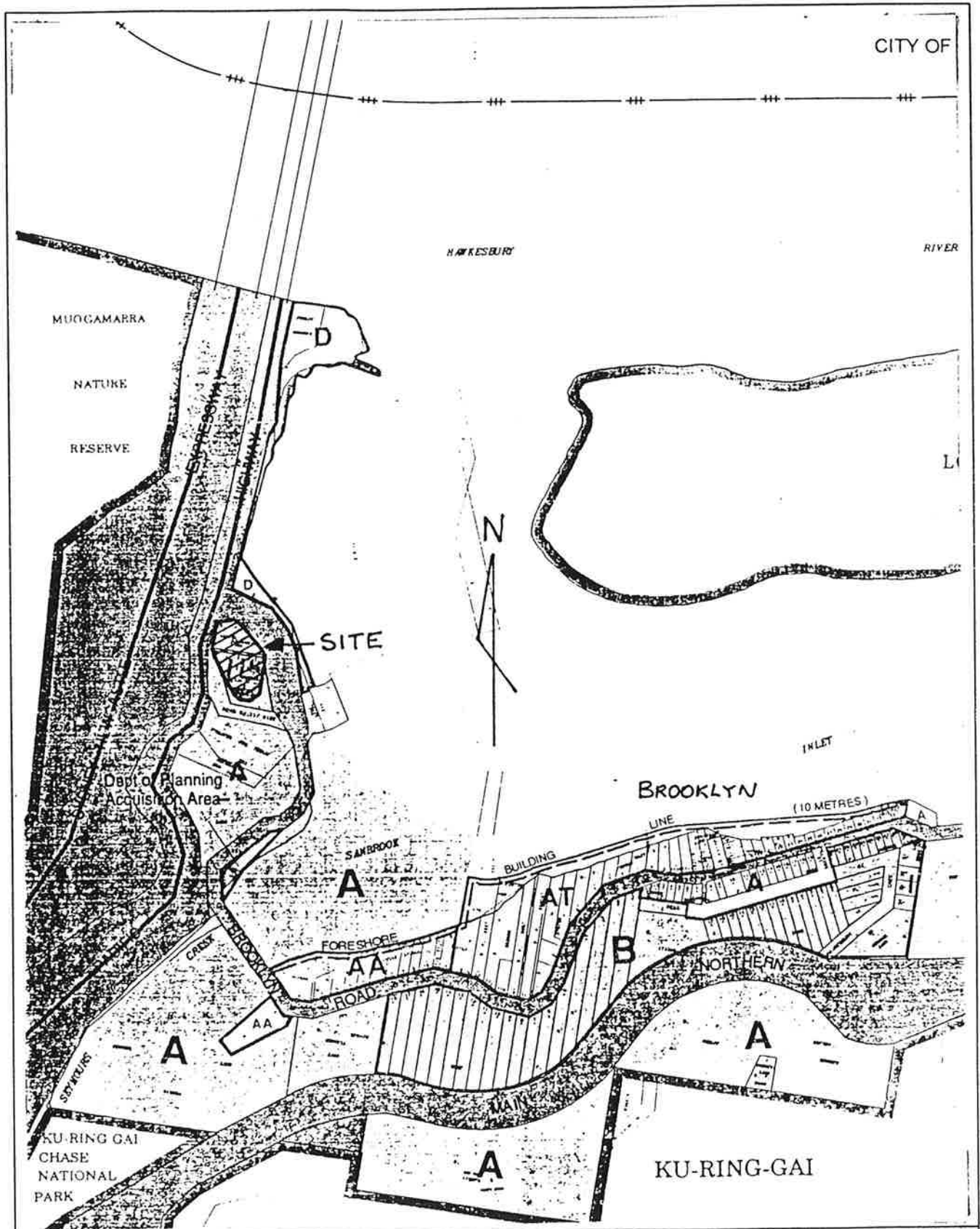
DATE: 24/4/96  
 PROJECT No: 333  
 SURFACE LEVEL: Existing

SHEET 1 of 1  
 Method of hole  
 advance: Hand Auger

GROUND WATER	SAMPLES TESTS DEPTHS	DEPTH (M)	RL (M)	STRATA	DESCRIPTION (SOIL TYPE, STRENGTH, MOISTURE, COLOUR, ORIGIN)
		0.25			Silty SAND; becoming clayey SAND, dry, grey, TOPSOIL
	0.5 D				CLAY; medium to high plasticity, hard consistency, dry, orange and brown, with some ironstone gravel, RESIDUAL
1	1.2 D				
					END BORE 1 AT 1.4m AT REFUSAL ON ROCK FRAGMENT
2					
3					
4					

F-LOG-002

<b>ROBERT CARR &amp; ASSOCIATES</b> Geotechnical & Environmental Testing Services 12-16 Annie Street, WICKHAM NSW 2293 Ph: 049 623566      Fx: 049 623522	LOGGED: MD
	CHECKED: RJC
	DATE: 29/4/96



**ROBERT CARR & ASSOCIATES**  
 Geotechnical & Environmental Testing Services

TITLE  
 LOCATION PLAN  
 BROOKLYN CEMETARY

E-A4-001

CLIENT	EJE Architecture			OFFICE	NEWCASTLE
DRAWN BY	MD	SCALE	1 : 8000	PROJECT No	333
APPROVED BY	RJC	DATE	7/5/96	DRAWING No	1 Rev 0

**RESULTS OF EMERSON CLASS NUMBER  
DETERMINATION OF A SOIL**

**CLIENT:** EJE Architecture                      **PROJECT N°:** 333  
**PROJECT:** Brooklyn Cemetery              **DATE:** 10.5.96  
**LOCATION:** Brooklyn

**SAMPLE N°:** BH 1 (A177)

**DEPTH:** 0.5 m

**MATERIAL DESCRIPTION:** Orange/brown clay with some  
ironstone fragments

**SOURCE OF MATERIAL:** Sampled insitu

**DATE OF SAMPLING:** 1.5.96

**TYPE OF WATER USED FOR TEST:** Distilled

**TEMP OF WATER USED FOR TEST (°C):** 20.5

**EMERSON CLASS N°:** 5



**REMARKS:**

This laboratory is registered by the National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia. The test(s) reported herein have been performed in accordance with its terms of registration. This report shall not be reproduced except in full.

ROBERT CARR & ASSOCIATES PTY LIMITED  
NEWCASTLE LABORATORY N°: 9811  
TESTED BY: CW                      CHECKED BY: CW  
REPORT N°:333/1  
DATE: 10.5.96  
SIGNED:

A large, handwritten signature in black ink, written over the printed name 'ROBERT CARR &amp; ASSOCIATES PTY LIMITED' and the 'SIGNED:' label.



**RESULTS OF EMERSON CLASS NUMBER  
DETERMINATION OF A SOIL**

**CLIENT:** EJE Architecture  
**PROJECT:** Brooklyn Cemetery  
**LOCATION:** Brooklyn

**PROJECT N°:** 333  
**DATE:** 10.5.96

**SAMPLE N°:** BH 1 (A178)

**DEPTH:** 1.2 m

**MATERIAL DESCRIPTION:** Orange/brown grey clay with some ironstone fragments

**SOURCE OF MATERIAL:** Sampled insitu

**DATE OF SAMPLING:** 1.5.96

**TYPE OF WATER USED FOR TEST:** Distilled

**TEMP OF WATER USED FOR TEST (°C):** 20.5

**EMERSON CLASS N°:** 6



**REMARKS:**

This laboratory is registered by the National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia. The test(s) reported herein have been performed in accordance with its terms of registration. This report shall not be reproduced except in full.

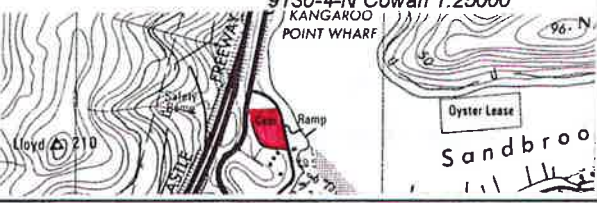
ROBERT CARR & ASSOCIATES PTY LIMITED  
NEWCASTLE LABORATORY N°: 9811  
TESTED BY: CW  
REPORT N°:333/2  
DATE: 10.5.96  
SIGNED:

CHECKED BY: CW  
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Carr', written over the 'SIGNED:' label.

## **Appendix B - Heritage Inventory Form**

# BROOKLYN CEMETERY CONSERVATION PLAN Inventory 1996

## BROOKLYN GENERAL CEMETERY - BROOKLYN ROAD, BROOKLYN

<p><b>PRESENT NAME</b> <i>Brooklyn General Cemetery</i></p> <p><b>PREVIOUS/OTHER NAMES</b></p>	<p><b>REFERENCE No</b> <i>BROO/R001</i></p> <p><b>PREVIOUS REFERENCE No</b> <i>039 / L121 - Hornsby Shire Heritage Study 1993</i></p> <p><b>DATE INSPECTED</b> <i>2nd April, 1996 / 24th April, 1996</i></p>
<p><b>LOCATION</b></p> <p><b>STREET No</b> <b>STREET NAME</b> <i>Brooklyn Road</i></p> <p><b>TOWN/SUBURB</b> <i>Brooklyn</i> <b>POSTCODE</b> <i>2083</i></p> <p><b>LOCALITY</b> <i>Brooklyn</i></p> <p><b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA</b> <i>HORNSBY SHIRE</i></p>	<p><b>SITE SKETCH PLAN</b></p> 
<p><b>PRESENT OWNER</b> <b>TYPE</b> <i>Local Government</i></p> <p><b>NAME</b> <i>Hornsby Shire Council</i></p> <p><b>STREET No</b> <i>296</i> <b>STREET NAME</b> <i>Pacific Highway</i> <b>TOWN/SUBURB</b> <i>Hornsby</i> <b>POSTCODE</b> <i>2077</i></p>	<p><b>PROPERTY DETAILS:</b></p> <p><b>a REAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTION</b> <i>Lots 3-5 &amp; 7, DP752026; and Lot 395, DP45975</i></p> <p><b>b SITE AREA</b></p> <p><b>c EXISTING ZONING</b> <i>Open Space A - Local Public Recreation - Hornsby Shire LEP 1994</i></p>
<p><b>CATEGORY</b> <i>Area</i></p> <p><b>SUB CATEGORY</b> <i>Cemetery</i></p> <p><b>DATE OF CONSTRUCTION</b> <i>1906 - present</i></p> <p><b>ARCHITECT/DESIGNER</b> <i>N/A</i></p> <p><b>BUILDER</b> <i>N/A</i></p>	<p><b>MAP REFERENCE</b> <i>'56' 332600E, 6286520N AMG 9130-4-N Cowan 1:25000</i></p> 
<p><b>PHOTOGRAPH</b></p> 	

<p><b>HERITAGE LISTING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> REGISTER OF THE NATIONAL ESTATE (AHC) - REGISTERED</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> REGISTER OF THE NATIONAL ESTATE OF AUST. (AHC) - INTERIM</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> REGISTER OF NATIONAL TRUST (NSW)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> REGISTER OF SIGNIFICANT TWENTIETH CENT. ARCHITECTURE (RAIA)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS HERITAGE AND CONS. REGISTER</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> COMMONWEALTH HISTORIC SHIPWRECKS ACT (DECLARED SITE)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> HERITAGE COUNCIL REGISTER - PERMANENT CONS. ORDER</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> HERITAGE COUNCIL REGISTER - INTERIM CONS. ORDER</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> HERITAGE COUNCIL REGISTER - SECTION 130 ORDER</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> HERITAGE COUNCIL REGISTER - NOMINATION</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> NSW GOVT DEPT HERITAGE REGISTER (S170 HERITAGE ACT)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> NP&amp;WS HISTORIC SITES REGISTER</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> NP&amp;WS ABORIGINAL SITES REGISTER (CONTACT SITES)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERS (NSW) HERITAGE REGISTER</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXISTING HERITAGE STUDY (WRITE NAME BELOW)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN HERITAGE SCHEDULE</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN HERITAGE SCHEDULE</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> OTHER</li> </ul> <p><i>Hornsby Shire Heritage Study 1993</i></p>	<p><b>HISTORICAL PERIOD</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>PERIOD</th> <th>BUILT</th> <th>USED</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>PRE 1800</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>1800 - 1825</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>1826 - 1850</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>1851 - 1875</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>1876 - 1900</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>1901 - 1925</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>1926 - 1950</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>1951 - 1975</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>POST 1975</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>HISTORICAL THEMES</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>S.H.I.P. THEMES</th> <th>LOCAL THEMES</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Death</td> <td><i>Burial Grounds of the Brooklyn District</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health</td> <td><i>Burials of Patients of the Mental Hospitals of Milson and Peat Islands</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Persons</td> <td><i>Resting Places of past Residents of the Brooklyn District</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	PERIOD	BUILT	USED	PRE 1800	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1800 - 1825	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1826 - 1850	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1851 - 1875	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1876 - 1900	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1901 - 1925	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1926 - 1950	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1951 - 1975	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	POST 1975	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	S.H.I.P. THEMES	LOCAL THEMES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Death	<i>Burial Grounds of the Brooklyn District</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health	<i>Burials of Patients of the Mental Hospitals of Milson and Peat Islands</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Persons	<i>Resting Places of past Residents of the Brooklyn District</i>
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**HISTORICAL NOTES** *Land was dedicated for Brooklyn Cemetery in 1906, and the use of this site before that date has not been determined. All early burials were conducted by boat, thus the original water frontage was rather practical. In the late 1920's the new Pacific Highway impinged significantly on the cemetery. Resumption was considered and effort was made to find an alternate site for the cemetery. However, the core cemetery was retained and remains a peaceful oasis. The cemetery was not only used by the local population. In fact, greater use of it was made by the nearby island Mental Hospital during the period 1909 to 1950. It has also been revealed that patients 'worked' at the cemetery. Deceased hospital patients came from a wide area; records indicate this area to be from Port Macquarie to the western extremity of the Hunter Valley, and to western Sydney.*

*Memorials at the Cemetery reflect both the socio-economic situation of the community and the limitation imposed by the environment. In comparison with memorials in cemeteries generally, those at Brooklyn are of a vernacular, modest construction and arrangement. Engraved tablets have been prepared by stonemasons. These are generally small and unadorned. Grave surrounds feature hand-placed, familiar materials - bush rock, stones, bricks, metal, pipe, tiles, timber, plastic and living plants. A simplicity is portrayed that reaffirms every-day life amid the unmatched grandeur of surrounding landscapes and riverscapes, and large-scale, man-made engineering achievements. The cemetery is still in use and includes Church of England, Roman Catholic, Presbytery and Methodist sections.*

<b>PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS / DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS</b>				
<b>a</b>	<b>ARCH. STYLE</b>	<i>N/A</i>	<b>MATERIALS:</b>	Exterior <i>N/A</i> Interior <i>N/A</i>
<b>b</b>	<b>OTHER DETAILS OF PHYSICAL APPEARANCE</b>			
<b>c</b>	<b>MODIFICATIONS</b>			
<b>d</b>	<b>CURRENT CONDITIONS</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INTACT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REPAIRS REQUIRED	
		<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED - UNSYMPATHETIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED - SYMPATHETIC	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: <i>Severe subsidence evident / Various Grave Disintegration.</i>		

**INFORMATION SOURCES**

**WRITTEN** *Hornsby Shire Council Heritage Study 1993 - Perumal Murphy Wu Pty Ltd: History of the Brooklyn Cemetery, Cynthia Hunter 1996: Brooklyn Cemetery History - Assignment, E. A. Roberts 1985*

**GRAPHIC** *Hornsby Shire Council Heritage Study 1993 - Perumal Murphy Wu Pty Ltd: History of the Brooklyn Cemetery, Cynthia Hunter 1996: Brooklyn Cemetery History - Assignment, E. A. Roberts 1985*

<b>EVALUATION CRITERIA</b>			(S) = STATE (R) = REGIONAL (L) = LOCAL
HISTORIC	RARE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (R)	REPRESENTATIVE <input type="checkbox"/>
AESTHETIC	RARE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (L)	REPRESENTATIVE <input type="checkbox"/>
SOCIAL	RARE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (R)	REPRESENTATIVE <input type="checkbox"/>
SCIENTIFIC	RARE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (R)	REPRESENTATIVE <input type="checkbox"/>

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE** *Historically the Cemetery has regional significance due to its early existence continuing wider purposes (i.e. not only simply local needs) than the original Cemetery on Bar Island. The Cemetery also has historic significance regionally for its close links with the state's northern railway and with the rail disasters associated with the difficult local terrain. Aesthetically the Cemetery has local significance, although this has been substantially compromised by the re-routing of Brooklyn Road.*

*Socially the Cemetery has regional significance because of the range of groups beyond the local area whose relatives are buried there. Scientifically the site's significance has been substantially compromised, principally because of the alienation and lack of identification of those graves affected by the making of the internal access road. Nonetheless the Cemetery is of regional scientific significance for its potential to reveal information which could contribute to an understanding of the pattern of settlement of Brooklyn and surrounding areas, and the scale of usage/occupation of Peat (and Milson) Islands for mental hospital purposes over the last century, and the impacts of the presence of the railway line adjacent to the site.*