

10

Suburb histories PART 3



An overview of the evolution of the suburbs of the former Botany LGA

THEMATIC HISTORY - FORMER CITY OF BOTANY BAY

Part 3 provides a brief overview of the history of the development of each of the suburbs in the former Botany LGA, together with the main subdivision plans for that area in Bayside Council Historic Archives. The originals of these plans are available at the State Library of New South Wales.

Location of the suburbs in the former Botany LGA.

1. Banksmeadow
2. Botany
3. Daceyville
4. Eastlakes
5. Eastgardens
6. Hillsdale
7. Mascot
8. Pagewood
9. Rosebery

Note that the suburb boundaries of Mascot and Banksmeadow extend off this image and over the reclaimed areas of the airport and Port Botany respectively, and that Rosebery extends across the LGA boundary of Gardeners Road to the north.

The boundaries of the original land grants and Crown Land purchases are shown in blue.



1. THE SUBURB OF BANKSMEADOW



The suburb of Banksmeadow is located at (1) on the photo above. It is comprised mainly of the Veterans' Grants and accompanying village of Banks Meadow reserved in the earliest days of the Botany District's settlement.

The first formal road from the town of Sydney to Botany Bay was commissioned by Governor Lachlan Macquarie in 1813, and although it deteriorated quickly, soon becoming unsuitable for any form of wheeled traffic, it remained the only formal overland link until the current road was extended through Simeon Lord's 600 acre holding in 1863 (known originally as the Botany Parish Road). This road skirted the eastern edge of the Lachlan and Botany Swamps, following a path close to that of today's Anzac Parade/ Bunnerong Road, with a fork meeting the shores of the bay close to today's Banksmeadow before heading north again along the waterfront. In 1823 Governor Brisbane promised 100 acres of land to ex-convict John Heathway Brown on the southern shores of the peninsula adjacent to this road and extending into today's Randwick LGA. The grant was not officially confirmed until 1856, but Brown occupied the property, naming the estate Bunnerong and building upon it the first private dwelling in the Randwick area, 'Bunnerong House' (1825), the site of which would eventually become Bunnerong Power Station. The western part of the grant was used less intensively, being shown on early plans as market gardens, and was subject to later legal argument regarding its size and boundary, but the existing was upheld.

By 1830 the subdivision of the Church and School Lands to the north-east had begun. Action was taken to reserve allotments for veterans of the NSW Corps, leading to the later local name for the area of 'Veterans Swamp'. Eight lots of between 53 and 68 acres each were created, centred on a stream that ran through the centre of the swamp and these were offered to the veterans. Land for a village abutting to the south was also identified but was not subdivided at this stage. The granting of this land was not wholly altruistic, for the presence of a small group of trained men who could act as a reserve in this exposed and isolated area is potentially also to have been a factor in the establishment of the settlement. The veterans did not prove to be enthusiastic farmers however and as soon as the five-years of required occupation had elapsed were quick to sub-let and then on-sell the grants. The new occupants (both owners and tenant farmers) took advantage of the fertile soils of the swamp and the area was soon a thriving market garden precinct, considered one of the most productive and profitable in Sydney. Access to the town remained difficult and was achieved largely via a network of tracks that overlaid the grants to the north and connected to the more formal roads on the northern side of Lord's Estate. Aerial photographs taken in 1943 reveal that most of the area remained undeveloped, with a network of drainage channels linking productive plots and few formal structures on most of the area.

By 1863, following the passing of the Crown Lands Alienation Act in 1861, the village reserve had been subdivided and offered for sale as the 'Village of Banks Meadow' in September 1863. This subdivision was divided into three distinct sections; two offering residential and small business size lots, and the residue divided into approximately 2 acre lots for a range of uses. One year later, in 1864, the Village of Banksmeadow was officially proclaimed, with the village being 20 acres and 'suburban' lands (the larger lots) covering 100 acres. (NSW Government Gazette no.130, Tuesday 7 July 1863 - p.1474; and Sydney Morning Herald, 9 April 1864, p.4)

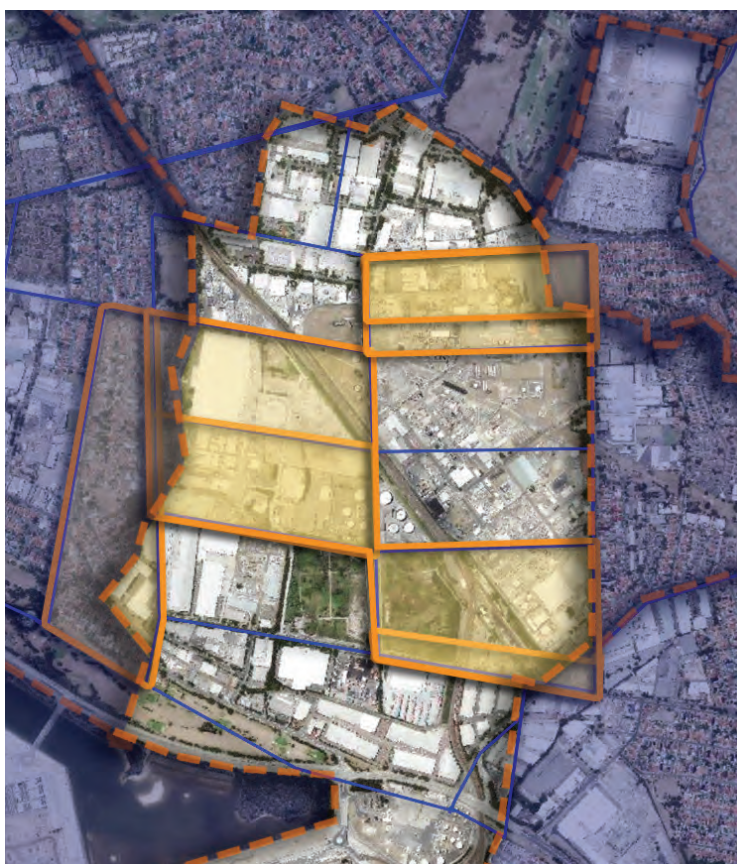
The Botany Bay Hotel sits on land that was once Lot 18 of the suburban lots which was situated near the middle of the village reserve. Richard Exell, builder, employee of the Sir Joseph Banks Hotel and Botany Alderman (1888-1897), purchased the land at its first release. Exell established the Botany Bay Inn in a small weatherboard cottage building on the site by 1864. This Inn was situated approximately 20 meters behind (north of) the site of the

Botany Bay Hotel today. The core of the current hotel was completed c.1875, when it changed its name to the Botany Bay Hotel. Most of the adjoining lands within the village were used for noxious industries such as tanneries and the large fellmongery owned by Geddes and Elliott, whose holdings extended over all except four of the original suburban lots. Not surprisingly given the proximity of these uses, residential development in the core of the village was limited, and most of these sites also became industrial in use.

Despite its isolation, the robust working population in the area enabled it to support a second hotel, the Pier. This was located to the west of Exell Street, an undated, c 1890-1900 plan revealing that it was originally built slightly to the west of the existing hotel building. By the 1890s the hotels were known for the types of behaviour seen at many pubs at the time; assaults, petty thefts, brawls and drunken misbehaviour. Bare-knuckle boxing was often carried out at Bunnerong and spectators came out from Sydney to watch. Famous boxers Larry Foley and Sandy Ross were common competitors and in one instance took Richard Exell's boat (the first centre-board boat in Botany Bay) and went out into the Bay, watched by swarms of spectators along the shores. The Botany Bay Hotel was reportedly looted by the crowds on their return, however on more than one occasion the 'well-to-do' patrons would return the following day to pay for the drinks that they consumed. (Jubilee History, p. 134) Evidence was given to a 1908 Special Licencing Court Enquiry into whether there were too many hotels in the area that "there were wool works, paper mills, and tanneries, and other industries, quite close to his hotel and that the employees of these industries, together with the visitors on Saturdays and holidays, largely patronised the house, which was absolutely necessary in the interests of the district." (9 March 1908, Evening News, p 5) Similar opinions were put forward regarding the Pier Hotel, and both continue to serve the local workforce and visitors to the area.

The Government Pier (also known as Long Pier) played a vital role in providing transport of raw materials to and from the rapidly growing industrial area. It was built in 1880 because 'a considerable amount of departmental material was being landed at the wharf for the Sand, Lime and Brickworks, and it was considered desirable that such material should be free from wharfage rates' (Cooper 23/8/1920; in Sydney Ports Corporation Heritage Inventory Sheet

4560021). Its principal purpose was to unload coal from Newcastle, aided by a tramway which ran from Botany Road and the Sand, Lime and Brickworks and onto the pier to facilitate loading/unloading operations (now marked by Coal Pier Road) (Jervis 1938:238 in Heritage Inventory Sheet 4560021). The pier continued to operate after it was de-nationalised, and supplied coal to the Sydney City Council's newly completed power station at Bunnerong in 1929. Active use continued until the 1960s, but it had significantly deteriorated and the pier was demolished as part of the Port Botany Expansion Project. Transport for local industries was largely provided by the Botany Goods Rail Line and later by truck. In the second half of the 20th century Banksmeadow became a major centre of heavy industry centred around the chemical plant, ICI Australia and New Zealand (now known as Orica) and the Davis Gelatine Works which was located immediately north of the market gardens of the Veterans Swamp. The area today remains almost wholly industrial in character, now focusing on the transport industries, of which the Port Botany Container Terminal and the Caltex Fuel Terminal, both of which were built on reclaimed land adjacent to the original Village of Banksmeadow, form the core.



The subdivision plans included on the following pages.

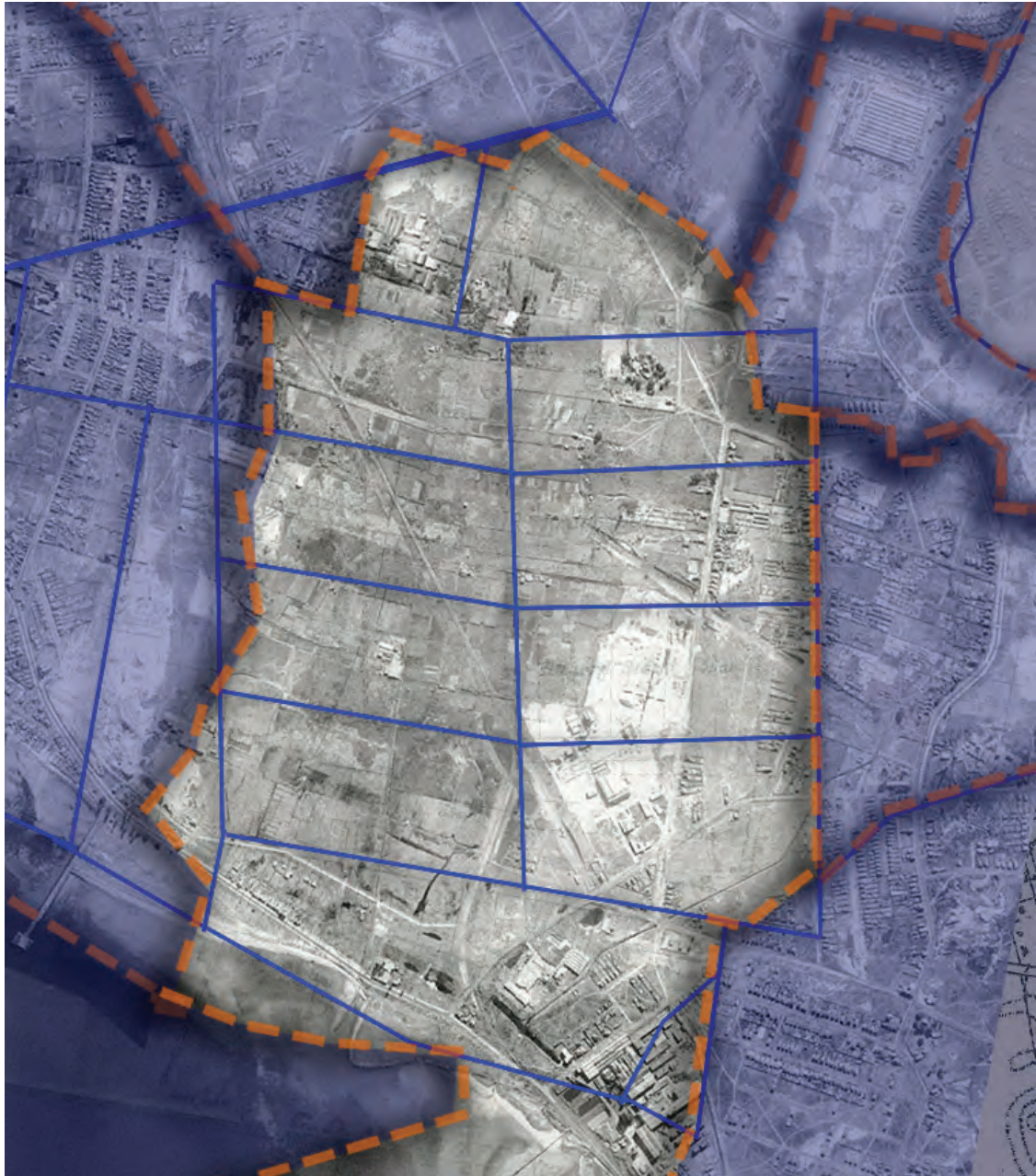


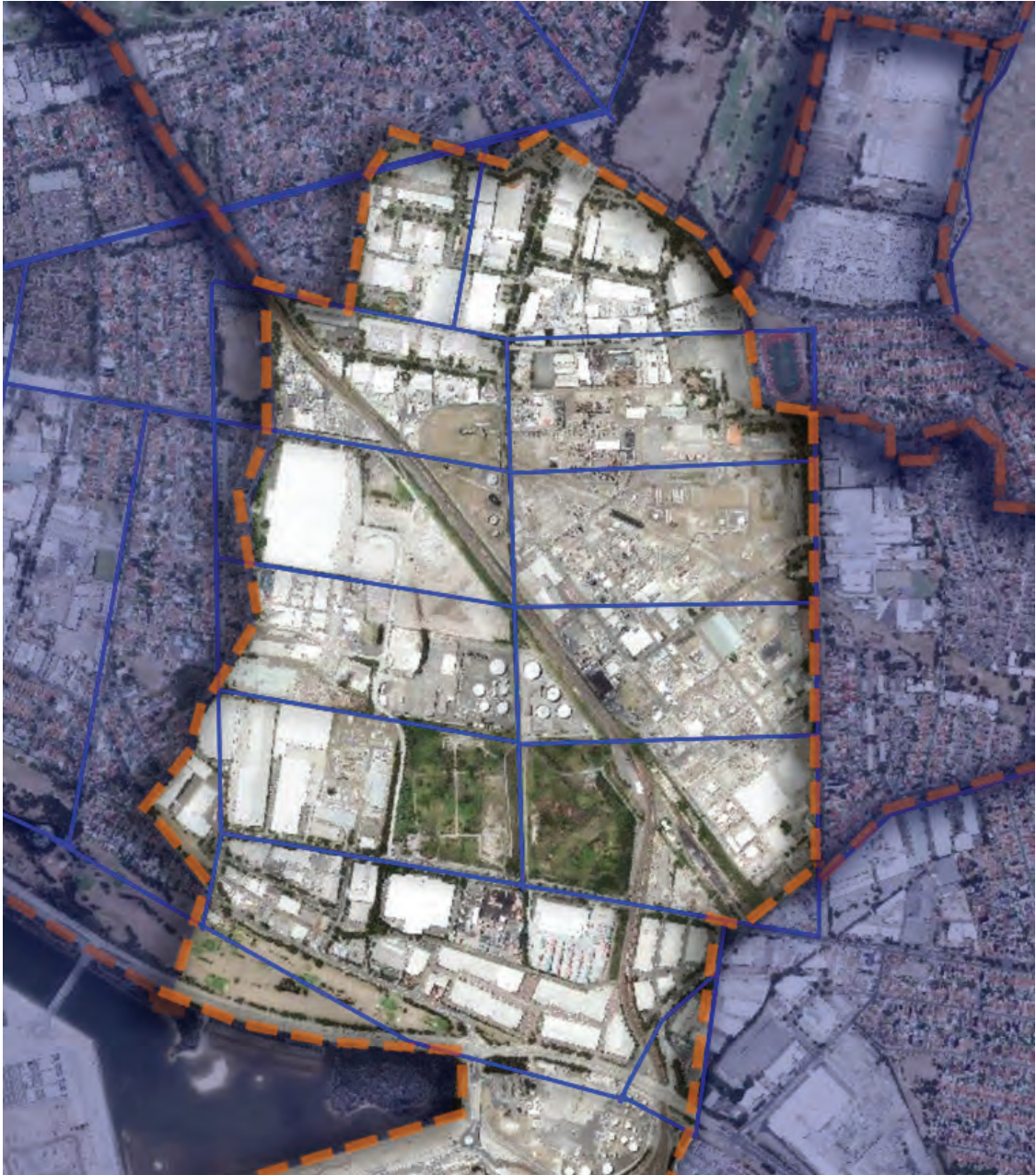
The Banksmeadow area in 1909 (this page) and in 1943 (over page, top) and 2014 (over page, bottom)

Development in the 19th century was minimal, the area used for market gardens with some noxious industries in the village on the shores of Botany Bay.

The beginning of industrialisation can be seen in the 1943 image, which shows the early development of the ICIANZ (Orica) site. Little remains of the original Banks Meadow village.

The area today is almost wholly industrial in character.



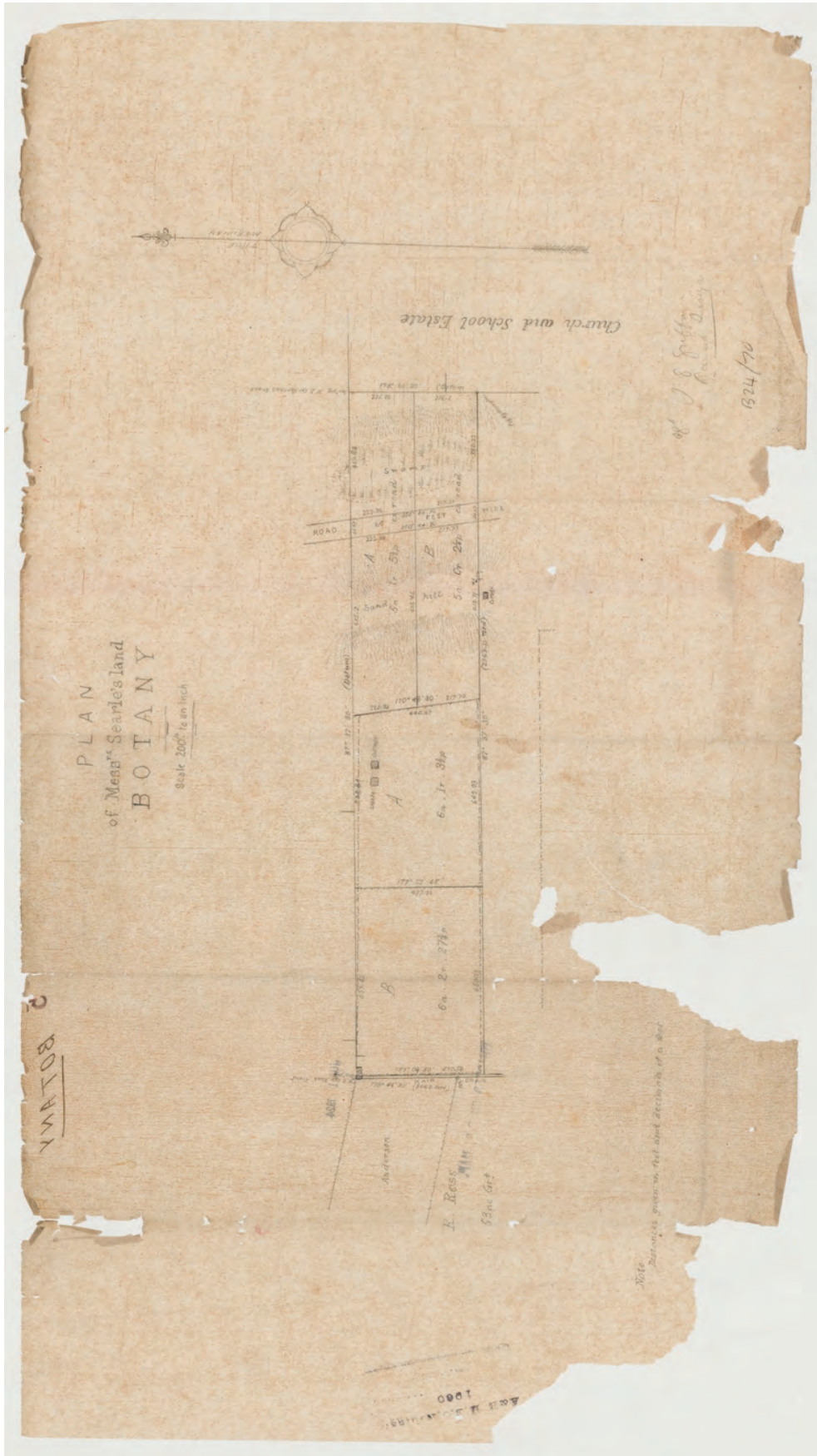


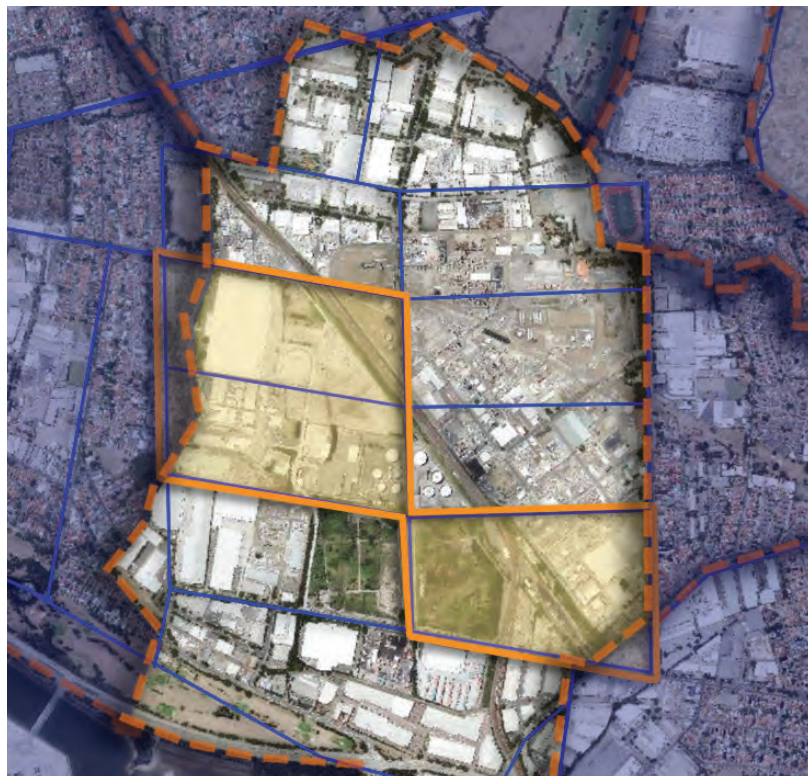


1858 Plan for the first subdivision of the north-eastern lot of the Veterans' Swamp. The land was divided into five long, narrow lots.

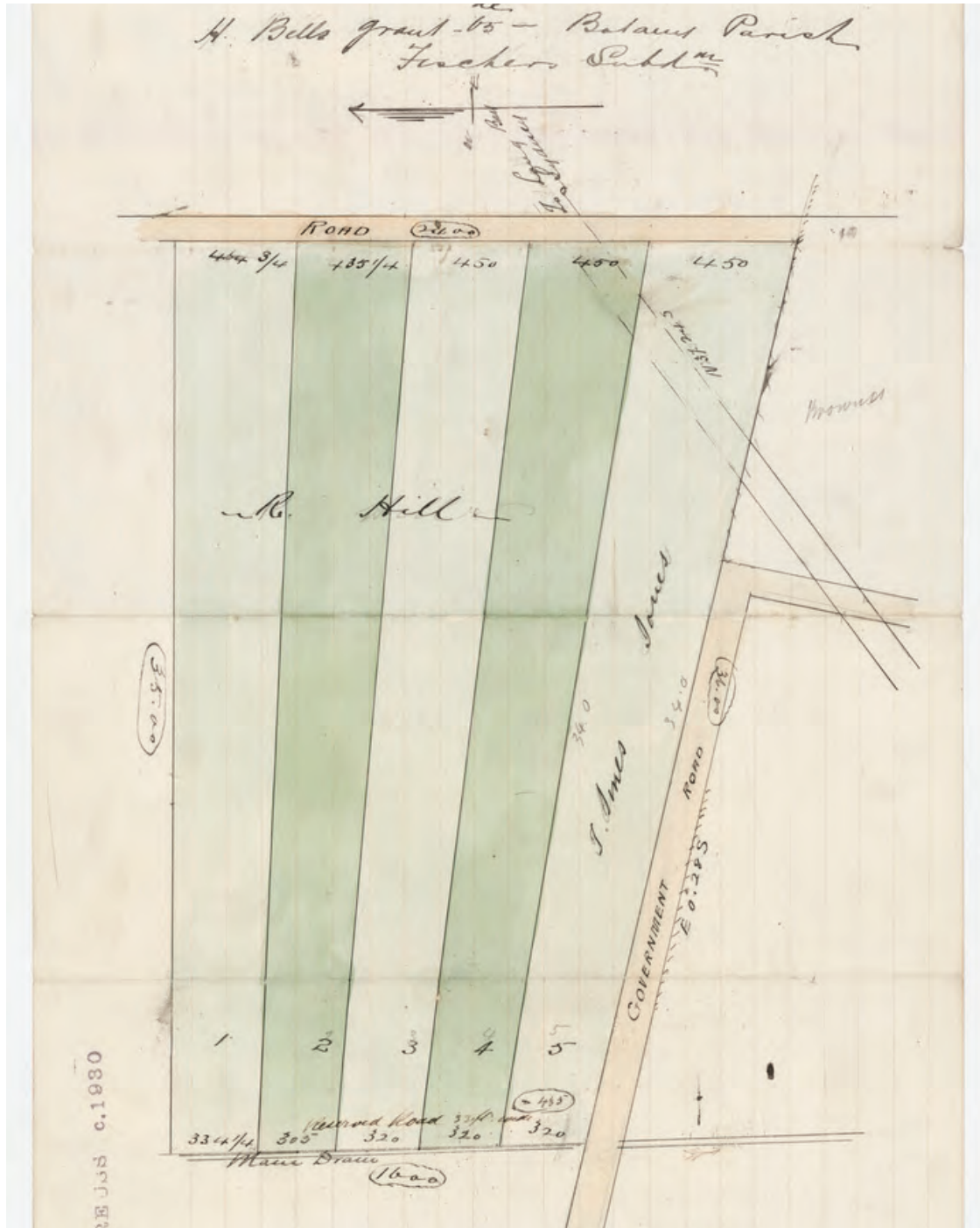


1858 plan of the sale of Searle's farm at the north-eastern corner of the Veterans' Swamp. The location of adjoining cottages is also shown.





Plan for the sale of Hutchinson Bell's large market garden. Bell had purchased the lots from the original grantees and lived on the farm in his house "Botany Prospect House" until his death. This plan also includes the names of adjoining owners at the time as well as cottages and improvements on these lots.



Undated plan of "Fincher's Subdivision" of Hutchinson Bell's Lot 4 of the Veterans' Swamp.

(facing) a plan to re-subdivide all three of Bell's lots.



BY ORDER OF THE PERMANENT TRUSTEE COMPLY OF N.S.W. LTD.

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IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF RANDWICK AND BOTANY

AUCTION SALE ON THE GROUND SAT 8TH NOVEMBER 1919 at 3 p.m.

Auctioneers - in - Conjunction

RICHARDSON & WRENCH LTD, 92 Pitt St. Sydney
S.C. SMITH & CO. 82 Pitt St. Sydney Tel. City 3478.

TERMS

10% deposit, balance in 20
 Quarterly instalments,
 bearing interest at 6% on
 Quarterly balances.

Solicitor to the Estate
S. L. RIDGE
 82 Pitt Street Sydney

TORRENS TITLE
ROBB & ROBB
 Licensed Surveyors R. P. Act
 Pitt St. Sydney.

All measurements subject to Dipositor Plan
 F. Cunningham & Co. Ltd., Litho, Sydney.



1868 First subdivision of J. Phelps' grant.

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