

The not-so-slow and steady destruction of convict archaeology in Parramatta



Understanding cumulative impacts of development on 'convict hut' sites across the Parramatta CBD

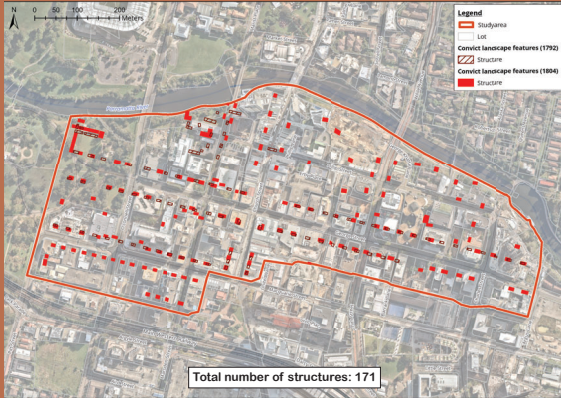
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Settlement in Parramatta

Parramatta was established as the second British settlement in New South Wales in 1788 and quickly became its agricultural and administrative centre. Convict labour was integral to the establishment and development of the early settlement. The convict labour force was originally housed in simple huts throughout the now Parramatta CBD. Since the earliest archaeological excavations of these 'convict huts', all analysis has argued that these resources are of 'State' significance.

The Study

This is the first stage of a research program which looks at the impact of piece-meal development on convict era archaeological resources. Publically available data from archaeological investigations, DA development and NSW major projects since the 1980s has been drawn on in this methodology. Mapping has been produced below to visually show the cumulative impact of development on the 'convict hut' sites throughout the Parramatta CBD.

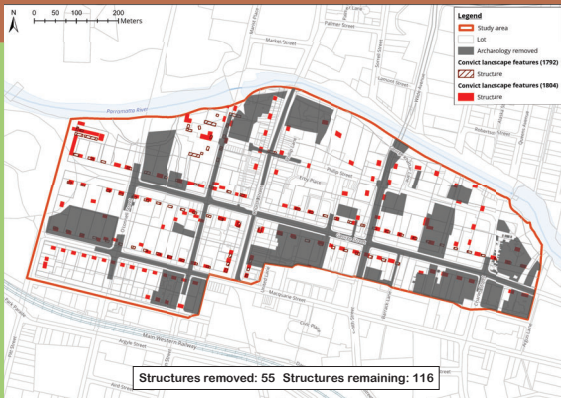


Left: An amalgamation of structures from 1792 and 1804 historical plans overlaid onto a current aerial of Parramatta CBD. Structures which were overlapping or very close and on the same alignment were counted as one structure.

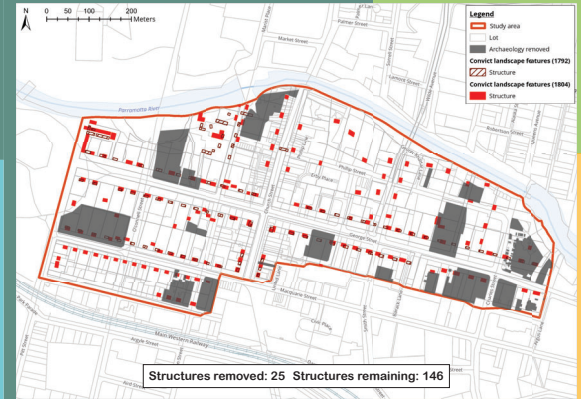
The Data

The following publically available data sets were used:

- Development Application (DA) data from the Parramatta Council DA tracker (1996 - 2022)
- Strata 3D mapping from DCS Spatial Services (up to November 2022)
- Section 140 Excavation Permits issued by Heritage NSW (up to September 2019)
- State Significant Development (SSD) and State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) from the Major Projects planning portal (up to May 2022)
- Archaeological Zoning Plan by Higginbotham (AZP) (1989)
- Parramatta Historical Archaeological Landscape Management Study (PHALMS) by Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd (2000)

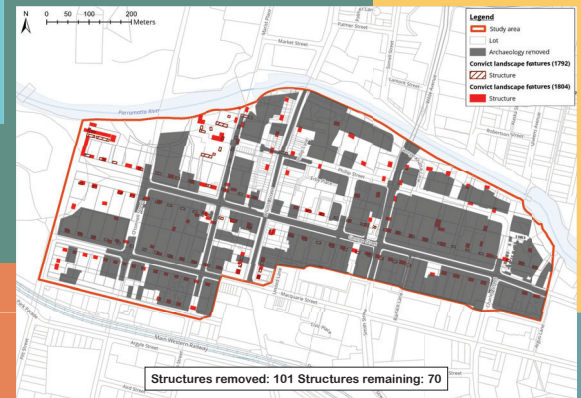


Right: DA data and Strata 3D data. Searches were restricted to the inclusion of 'basement' in the description. Limitations: Limited descriptions and doesn't capture impacts such as deep footings, piles or services that would have impacted the archaeology



Left: Addition of Section 140 permits and SSD and SSI data. Limitations: Data up to 2019 (Section 140), limited publically available reports on Heritage NSW online library and Major Projects Portal, occasional salvage or retention unclear.

Right: Addition of AZP and PHALMS data. Limitations: no data from 2000 onwards for PHALMS, no data from 1989 onwards for the AZP.

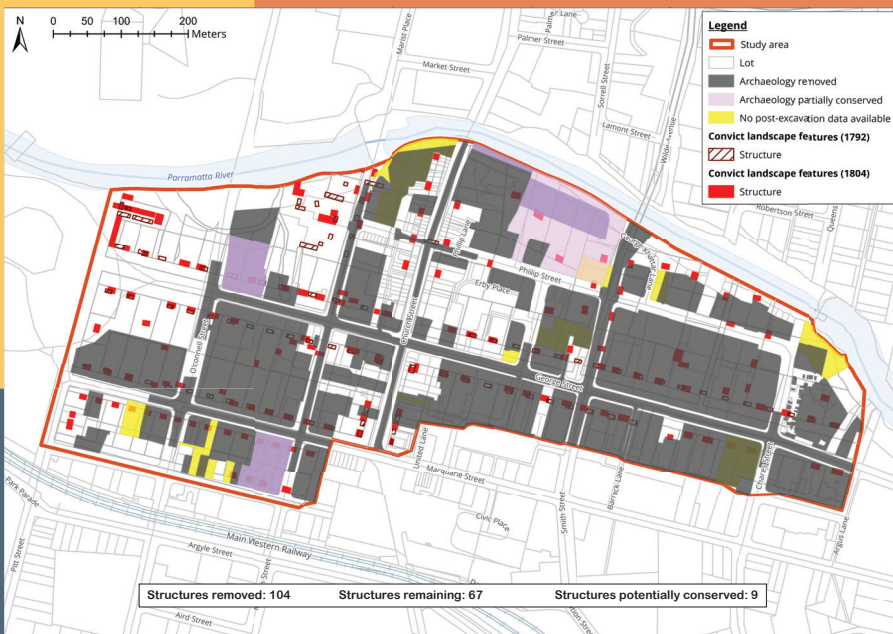


The final count down:

Minimum
61%
removed

Maximum
39%
remain

Potentially
5%
conserved



Where to next?

- Section 60 data and Section 140 data up to 2022 was received from Heritage NSW in October and is currently being analysed
- Publication of initial results in early 2023, to include additional data just received
- Future publications to address a range of questions, to potentially include areas such as overall significance, sustainable development, interpretation for the general public, and archaeological management plans

Acknowledgements

- Biosis Pty Ltd
- Heritage NSW



References:

- A plan of the Township of Parramatta 1791 (National Library of Australia, M2 811 1201)
- Plan of the settlement of Parramatta made by Governor Hunter, 20 August, 1791 (State Library of NSW, Bronwick Transcrip, G.W. Evans Acting Surveyor)
- The Future of Parramatta's Past: An Archaeological Zoning Plan 1788 to 1844 (Higginbotham 1989)
- Current aerial Imagery, NSW Spatial Services
- Parramatta Historical Archaeological Landscape Management Study (Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd 2000)
- Parramatta City Council Development Application Tracker
- Strata 3D mapping data, DCS Spatial Services