



ARCHAEOLOGY - HERITAGE - MEDIATION - ARBITRATION

# 524-542 Pacific Highway, St Leonards

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Statement of Heritage Impact

SEPTEMBER **2023**

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Report to: Home Apartments

LGA: Lane Cove Council

Version: D.2023



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land that we live and work on.

We pay our respects to the Elders, past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal people.

We honour and acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on this land and commit to building a brighter future together.

A better understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures develops an enriched appreciation of Australia’s cultural heritage and can lead to reconciliation. This is essential to the maturity of Australia as a nation and fundamental to the development of an Australian identity.

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Statement of Heritage Impact is submitted to the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) in support of a concurrent State Led Rezoning and State Significant Development Application (SSDA) for a new mixed-use development, comprising build-to-rent housing, commercial and retail land uses at the Telstra Exchange Site at 524-542 Pacific Highway, St Leonards (the site).

This report addresses the relevant Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) and Study Requirements, and it is noted that to facilitate the abovementioned development, amendments to the Lane Cove Local Environmental Plan 2013 are proposed via a concurrent State Led Rezoning to rezone the site from B3 Commercial Core to B4 Mixed Use and to increase the maximum building height of 72m to 155m. The FSR of the site will remain as per existing at 17.1:1.

The Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARS) No.35631707 were issued on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and require that a Statement of Heritage Impact be undertaken to assess the impact of the proposal on the heritage significance of the site and surrounds. This Statement of Heritage Significance addresses this requirement and has been prepared in accordance with the *NSW Heritage Manual*.

In addition to the SEAR's, this Statement of Heritage Impact has also been prepared in accordance with the Study Requirements (IRF22/649) issued in March 2022 by the DPE in collaboration with other government agencies.

This report has determined that the subject site does not contain heritage significance, nor does it contain any archaeological potential. The proposal will not have an adverse impact on the heritage significance of the site or the surrounding area. The proposed scheme is considered a positive addition to the streetscape of the Pacific Highway, St Leonards.



## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

This Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI) is submitted to the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) in support of a concurrent State Led Rezoning and State Significant Development Application (SSDA) for a new mixed-use development, comprising build-to-rent housing, commercial and retail land uses at the Telstra Exchange Site at 524-542 Pacific Highway, St Leonards (the site).

The proposed development will specifically comprise the following:

- Site preparation and excavation.
- Retention and integration of the existing Telstra Exchange Building;
- Construction of a new 42-storey mixed-use development, comprising:
  - 21,472m<sup>2</sup> of build-to-rent housing across 31 storeys, including 272 dwellings;
  - 3,840m<sup>2</sup> of non-residential space within an 8 storey podium used for the purposes of short stay accommodation, including;
    - 721 m<sup>2</sup> of Key Worker Housing across 1 level, within the podium, delivering a total 10 dwellings to be managed as part of the build to rent development
- 2,014m<sup>2</sup> of community amenity facilities throughout the building.
- Residential lobby accessed via Christie Street and separate commercial use lobby accessed via Pacific Highway;
- Podium car parking and loading area with vehicular access via Christie Street, comprising a 48 space car stacker;
- Associated landscaping and public domain works; and
- Augmentation of, and connection to, existing utilities services as required.

It is noted that to facilitate the abovementioned development, amendments to *the Lane Cove Local Environmental Plan 2013* are proposed via a concurrent State Led Rezoning to rezone the site from B3 Commercial Core to B4 Mixed Use and to increase the maximum building height of 72m to 155m. The maximum FSR of the site will remain as per existing at 17.1:1.

### 1.2 Relevant SEARS and Study Requirements

This Statement of Heritage Impact addresses the following relevant Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements set out in Table 1 Below:

**Table 1:** Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements relevant to this Report

SEARS	Location in Report
20. Environmental Heritage <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where there is potential for direct or indirect impacts on the heritage significance of environmental heritage, provide a Statement of Heritage Impact and Archaeological Assessment (if potential impacts to archaeological resources are identified), prepared in accordance with the relevant guidelines, which assesses any impacts and outlines measures to ensure they are minimised and mitigated.</li></ul>	<p>This Statement of Heritage Impact has been prepared in accordance with the NSW Heritage Manual.</p> <p>An Archaeological Assessment was prepared by Comber Consultants (2022) which assessed the site as not containing historical archaeological potential.</p> <p>An assessment of any impacts and measures to ensure they are minimised and mitigated is contained at pages 41-47.</p>

In addition to the SEAR's, this Statement of Heritage Impact has also been prepared in accordance with the Study Requirements (IRF22/649) issued in March 2022 by the DPE in collaboration with other government agencies.

### 1.3 Site and Description

The Site is situated within the Lane Cove Local Government Area (LGA). It is close to the boundary of both North Sydney and Willoughby LGAs (see Figure 1). Located just 6 km north of the Sydney CBD, within Sydney's Lower North Shore, and approximately 2.5km from Lane Cove. The site is bounded by Pacific Highway to the north, Christie St to the west, 505 Pacific Highway to the east and 69 Christie St to the south (Figure 2).



The St Leonards Centre has recently undergone a transition from smaller, aging commercial buildings to new multi-storey, mixed-use development. The area immediately surrounding the site is undergoing wholesale renewal. To the north, 'The Forum', the foundation of the urban renewal at St Leonards, now acts as its commercial, retail and transport hub.

The Site comprises eight separate allotments and is located on the corner of the Pacific Highway and Christie Street. The site adjoins an existing commercial building to the south and a future residential development (New Hope) to the east (Photograph 1). The site has an area of approximately 1671.3 m<sup>2</sup>. The legal description is shown in Table 2 below:

**Table 2:** Legal property description (Home Apartments)

Address	Legal Description	Owner
524-530 Pacific Highway	Lot 7 Section 17 DP 3175	Telstra Corporation
	Lot 8 Section 17 DP 3175	Telstra Corporation
	Lot 9 Section 17 DP 3175	Telstra Corporation
	Lot 1 DP 433297	Telstra Corporation
536 Pacific Highway	Lot D DP 377423	Perpetual Corporate Trust Limited ACN 000 341 533 as custodian for GFM Investment Group Pty Limited ACN 609 143 035 in its capacity as trustee of GFM Home Trust Subtrust No. 2
538 Pacific Highway	Lot C DP 377423	Perpetual Corporate Trust Limited ACN 000 341 533 as custodian for GFM Investment Group Pty Limited ACN 609 143 035 in its capacity as trustee of GFM Home Trust Subtrust No. 2
540 Pacific Highway	Lot B DP 377423	Perpetual Corporate Trust Limited ACN 000 341 533 as custodian for GFM Investment Group Pty Limited ACN 609 143 035 in its capacity as trustee of GFM Home Trust Subtrust No. 2
542-542A Pacific Highway	Lot A DP 377423	Perpetual Corporate Trust Limited ACN 000 341 533 as custodian for GFM Investment Group Pty Limited ACN 609 143 035 in its capacity as trustee of GFM Home Trust Subtrust No. 2



Figure 1: Site Location (Home Apartments)



**Figure 2:** Showing the cadastral information (c.2011-12 -Six Maps, DFSI Spatial Services, NSW LRS, prepared by Caroline Plim).





**Photograph 1:** Study area. Camera facing south east from the corner of the Pacific Highway and Christie Street.



## 2 LEGISLATION

### 2.1 Heritage Act 1977

#### State Heritage Register

s31 of the NSW Heritage Act 1977 provides for the establishment and maintenance of the State Heritage Register by the Heritage Council. s32 allows the Minister to direct the listing of an item which is of State heritage significance and sets out the procedure for listing an item.

Under s57 of the Heritage Act a person must not “demolish, despoil, excavate, alter, move, damage or destroy” an item listed on the State Heritage Register without a permit under s60 of the Act.

The study area is not listed on the State Heritage Register.

#### Protection of relics

As defined in the NSW Heritage Act 1977 a “relic”:

*means any deposit, artefact, object or material evidence that:*

- (a) relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement, and*
- (b) is of State or local significance*

Under section 139 of the Heritage Act 1977:

*A person must not disturb or excavate any land knowing or having reasonable cause to suspect that the disturbance or excavation will or is likely to result in a relic being discovered, exposed, moved, damaged or destroyed unless the disturbance or excavation is carried out in accordance with an excavation permit*

Under s140 of the Heritage Act 1977 a permit is required to disturb or excavate a relic.

As this project is being assessed as a State Significant Development a s140 permit is not required. In addition, the Historical Archaeological Assessment (Comber 2022) has determined that the site does not contain historical archaeological significance.

#### s170 Register

s170 of the NSW Heritage Act 1977 requires that Government agencies maintain a register of all heritage assets owned or maintained by that agency. s170A requires that the Government agency maintain and manage all heritage places listed on the s170 register under its control.

The study area is not listed on a s170 Register.

### 2.2 Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979

This project is being undertaken as a State Significant Development under Part 4, Division 4.7 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 (EPA Act). Section 4.41 of the EPA Act (see below) does not require that a State significant development seek approval under the NPW Act as follows:

4.41 Approvals etc legislation that does not apply (cf previous s 89J)

- (1) The following authorisations are not required for State significant development that is authorised by a development consent granted after the commencement of this Division (and accordingly the provisions of any Act that prohibit an activity without such an authority do not apply)—
  - (a) (Repealed)
  - (b) a permit under section 201, 205 or 219 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*,
  - (c) an approval under Part 4, or an excavation permit under section 139, of the *Heritage Act 1977*,
  - (d) an Aboriginal heritage impact permit under section 90 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*,
  - (e) (Repealed)
  - (f) a bush fire safety authority under section 100B of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*,
  - (g) a water use approval under section 89, a water management work approval under section 90 or an activity approval (other than an aquifer interference approval) under section 91 of the *Water Management*



*Act 2000.*

(2) Division 8 of Part 6 of the *Heritage Act 1977* does not apply to prevent or interfere with the carrying out of State significant development that is authorised by a development consent granted after the commencement of this Division.

(3) A reference in this section to State significant development that is authorised by a development consent granted after the commencement of this Division includes a reference to any investigative or other activities that are required to be carried out for the purpose of complying with any environmental assessment requirements under this Part in connection with a development application for any such development.

The Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARS) No.35631707 were issued on 28th January 2022 and require:

*20. Environmental Heritage*

*Where there is potential for direct or indirect impacts on the heritage significance of environmental heritage, provide a Statement of Heritage Impact and Archaeological Assessment (if potential impacts to archaeological resources are identified), prepared in accordance with the relevant guidelines, which assesses any impacts and outlines measures to ensure they are minimised and mitigated.*

This Statement of Heritage Impact has been written to satisfy the above requirement. This report which is written in accordance with the NSW Heritage Manual. An historical archaeological assessment has been undertaken and is documented in a separate report (Comber 2022). The historical archaeological assessment informs this State of Heritage Impact.



### 3 HERITAGE LISTINGS

524-542 Pacific Highway, St Leonards is not listed on the Lane Cove Local Environmental Plan 2009 (LEP) and is not listed on the State Heritage Register. Figure 3 below shows the Heritage Map from the Lane Cove LEP

As can be seen from this map the study area is not within the visual catchment of any item listed on the LEP.



Figure 3: Heritage Map, Lane Cove LEP



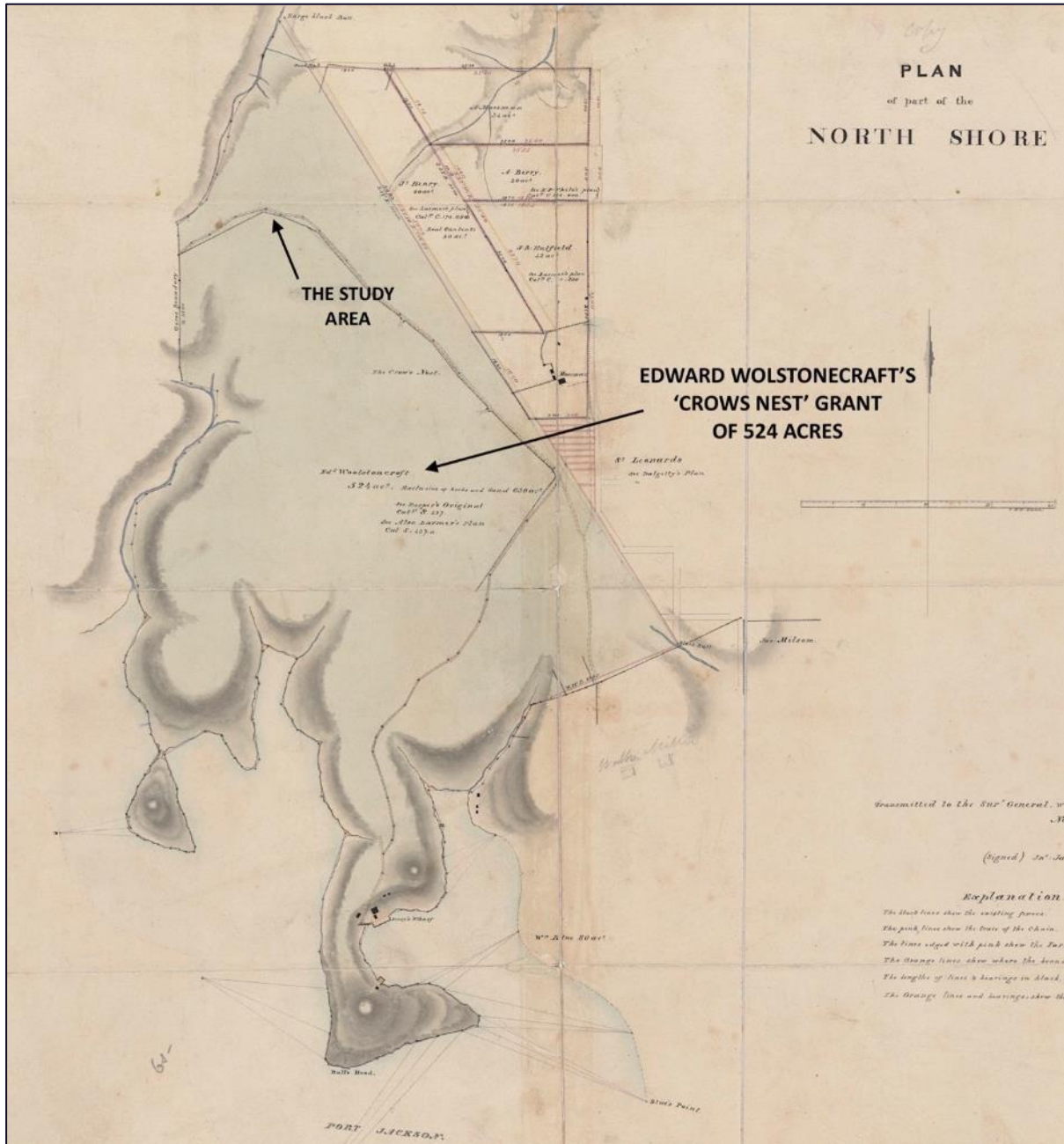
## 4 HISTORY

### 4.1 Edward Wollstonecraft and Alexander Berry, Crows Nest Estate

The study area is situated within the boundaries of 524 acres (212 ha) (Portion 323) formally granted to merchant and landowner Edward Wollstonecraft (1783-1832) on 30 June 1825. In June 1812 Wollstonecraft became merchant Alexander Berry's London agent after meeting him on a voyage from Lisbon to Cadiz (Anderson 2019:33; Perry ADB 1966). Alexander Berry (1781-1873) had previously travelled to Sydney to sell cargo and was interested in exporting goods from London and India to Sydney (Stephen ADB 1967; Perry ADB 1966). He had an interest in colonial exploration and was commissioned by the Colonial Government to survey the south coast of New South Wales including the Shoalhaven River where he was later granted land (Anderson 2019:33; Perry ADB 1966). Berry used his avid pursuit of knowledge and learning to his financial advantage and in 1820 Governor Macquarie aptly described Berry as 'an eminent merchant, well acquainted with the present state and resources of this colony' (Thorne 1970: 19).

Wollstonecraft and Berry entered a mercantile partnership and both sailed for New South Wales with the former arriving in 1819. Wollstonecraft remained in Sydney managing their property and store on George Street while Berry returned to London. During this time Wollstonecraft was appointed as a magistrate and was considered a prominent figure in the colony. He had an active interest in the liquidity of the colonial economy and during the 1820s was a director of the Bank of New South Wales and the Bank of Australia, also holding the position of chairman of the Chamber of Commerce (Stephen ADB 1967).

Berry applied for land in the colony on which the partnership could accommodate stock received in payment of debts. Governor Macquarie refused the request until Berry take up permanent residence in the colony (Perry ADB 1966). While Berry was away Wollstonecraft was granted land on the North Shore where he built a cottage he named 'Crow's Nest'. The grant deed for 524 acres (212 ha) in the 'District of Hunters Hill' (Portion 323) was dated 30 June 1825, post-dating its selection. Like other grants of the era, it was conditional upon retaining ownership and cultivating 50 acres (20.23 ha) within five years (Figure 4) (Serial 14 p191 NSW LRS).



**Figure 4:** Survey of Edward Wollstonecraft's North Shore grant of 524 acres (212 ha) dated 3 November 1841 (Surveyor's Sketch Book Bk 4 Fol 64, SARNSW)

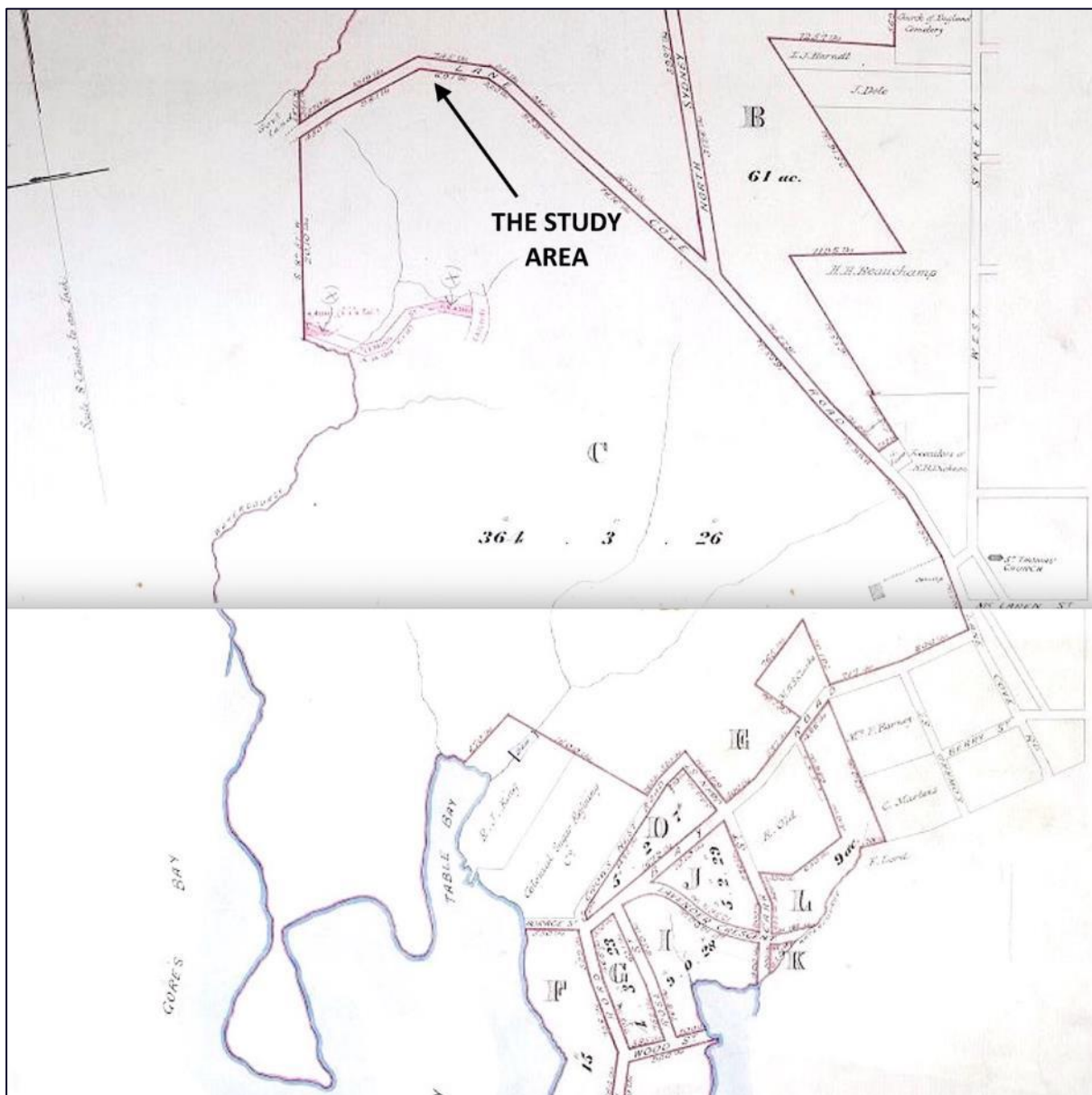
After Berry's return to the colony in 1821 he and Wollstonecraft successfully applied for 10,000 acres (4,047 ha) with the undertaking that they would maintain 100 convicts. Berry's exploration of the area led to selection of land on the Shoalhaven where a successful pastoral enterprise was established (Perry ADB 1966; Stephen ADB 1967).

The bond between Berry and Wollstonecraft was reinforced on Berry's marriage to Wollstonecraft's sister Elizabeth on 22 September 1827 (Stephen ADB 1967). Wollstonecraft spent most of his life managing Berry's properties and upon his death on 7 December 1832 his North Shore grant known as Crow's Nest Farm and other land was inherited by Elizabeth Berry. Elizabeth and Edward Berry set up what appears to be a deed of trust over the estate in 1833 and in 1845 took out a 'sale annuity' over it (PA 3083 NSW LRS). Elizabeth Berry died in 1845 after which Alexander Berry reputedly lived as a recluse at their home 'The Hermitage' on Crow's Nest Farm. In June 1853 trustee David Berry, Alexander's brother conveyed the title to the estate back to Alexander Berry 'Esquire of the City of Sydney' for the considerable sum of £10,000 (Bk 27 No 98 NSW LRS).

Like Wollstonecraft, Berry was active in colonial affairs, becoming a Justice of the Peace in 1822 and was for a time a secretary of the Agricultural Society. With a life-long interest in learning, Berry was a member of many other societies. From 1828 until 1861 Berry was a 'nominee in the Legislative Council' but only spoke 'on matters affecting his own interests' (Perry ADB 1966).

#### 4.2 Subdivision of the 'Crow's Nest' Estate from the 1850s

'Crow's Nest Farm' was reputed to have been unproductive and in the 1850s Alexander Berry began the process of subdividing and selling portions. Some parts of the estate, especially around the shores of Sydney Harbour were sold prior to this date (Swords 1978:32). In January 1872 Berry converted the property to Torrens Title at which time it was valued at £30,000. According to the Primary Application Berry occupied part of the property, a portion was unoccupied, and Mr J. J. Beattie of 'the Crow's Nest' leased another part. The extent and location of Beattie's leasehold was not recorded (PA 3083 NSW LRS). A certificate of title was issued to Alexander Berry in August 1872 at which time the property was divided into several areas with a small part of the northern part of 'Block C' linked to the study area. At this time the sale of allotments was largely around the north shore of the harbour (Figure 5) (Vol 144 Fol 103 NSW LRS)



**Figure 5:** Survey showing Block C of the Crow's Nest Estate of 364 acres 3 roods and 26 perches in 1872. The approximate location of the study area on Lane Cove Road is indicated (Vol 144 Fol 103 NSW LRS).

On Alexander Berry's death in 1873 his estate (including Crow's Nest Farm and land on the South Coast) was inherited by his brother 'agriculturalist' David Berry (1795-1889). David had managed the extensive Shoalhaven property for many years, and in later years managed it in conjunction with his cousin's son John Hay (Swords 1978:34; Bk 27 No 97 NSW LRS; Stephens ADB 1969). David Berry died in 1889 at the age of ninety-four nominating John Hay as the principal beneficiary of his will, with solicitor and trustee James Norton. Land to the west of the study area was resumed by the Minister for Public Works from the Crows Nest Estate for the construction of the North Shore or 'Milsons Point' railway and St Leonards Station in 1891 (Vol 144 Fol 103). The proximity of the railway line and the station both had the potential to promote land sales and development in the locality.

Parts of the 'Crows Nest' or 'Berry's Estate' was progressively subdivided and slowly sold during the 1880s and 1890s (LFSP2520 Folder 155 NLA). A new certificate of title issued to John Hay and James Norton in March 1895 described the part of the Crows Nest Estate linked to the study area as of 59 acres one rood (23.9 ha). Land resumed by the Department of Public Works for railway construction to the west of the study area was excluded from the conveyance (Vol 1158 Fol 235 NSW LRS). A new title issued in April 1895 redescribed the land as 54 acres 3 roods (21.9 ha) and is illustrated in the plan reproduced in Figure 6 below (Vol 1160 Fol 54 NSW LRS).



**Figure 6:** Plan of part of Block C of the Crows Nest Estate showing the location of the study area in red and land resumed for St Leonards Station and the route of the railway line, c.1895 (Vol 1160 Fol 54 NSW LRS).

### 4.3 Subdivision of Block C of 'Berry's Estate'

In 1893 part of Block C of the Berry Estate including the study area was subdivided and prepared for sale. Section 17 of Block C was bounded by Lane Cove Road (the Pacific Highway after c.1933) in the north, Albany Street in the east, Nicholson Street in the south and Christie Street in the west. The study area corresponds with Lots 7, 8, 9 and 10 of Section 17 on the corner of Lane Cove Road and Christie Street (Figure 7).





Figure 7: Subdivision plan of 'Berry's Estate' (Crows Nest No 3 Subdivision) and land offered for auction on 13 May 1893. Lots 7-10 of Section 17 linked to the study area are outlined in red (SP2/190 SLNSW).

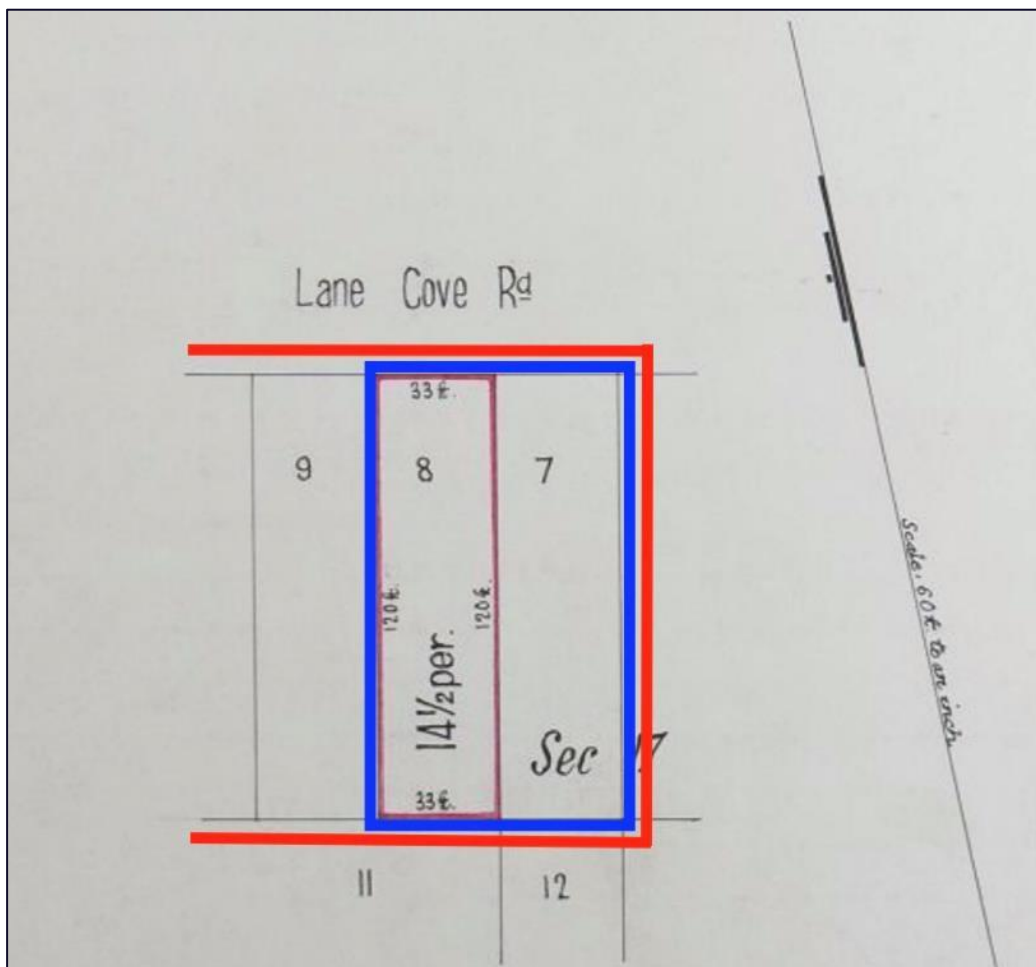
Subdivision plans and newspaper advertisements promoted 20 acres (8.09 ha) of land on the south side of Lane Cove Road emphasising the advantages of the location.

The opening of the Milson's Point Extension of the North Sydney Railway in MAY and the Extension of the Tramway Line to the North Sydney-road Terminus will give purchasers of building sites on the CROW'S NEST No. 3 SUBDIVISION the full facilities of reaching their homes by either RAIL or TRAMWAY within a few minutes from MILSON'S POINT... (SMH 3 May 1893:8).

Allotments sold slowly and it wasn't until January 1904 that Lot 9 Section 17 DP 3175 linked to the study area was purchased by Hannah Board of North Sydney, wife of freeholder Alfred James Board (Vol 1368 Fol 219 NSW LRS). Henry George Kent, a blacksmith of North Sydney purchased Lot 8 in July 1908; Patrick Dolan, a blacksmith of Chatswood purchased Lot 7 in September 1908; and Michael Minogue, a railway signalman of Sydney purchased Lot 10 in September 1915 (Vol 1903 Fol 157, Vol 1905 Vol 155 & Vol 2617 Fol 137 NSW LRS). Lots 7, 8 and 9 faced Lane Cove Road and Lot 10 had frontages to Lane Cove Road and Christie Street. The history and development of the allotments will be discussed in Sections 2.4 to 2.8.

#### 4.4 Lots 7 and 8 Section 17 DP3175 – 524-530 Pacific Highway (formerly Lane Cove or Gordon Road), St Leonards

In July 1908 Henry George Kent, a North Sydney blacksmith purchased Lot 8 comprising 14 ½ perches (366.74 sq m). Patrick Dolan, a blacksmith of Chatswood purchased Lot 7 of 14 ½ perches (366.74 sq m) and the adjacent Lot 12 on Nicholson Street to the south in September 1908. Lot 12 is outside the study area. Evidence that Kent or Dolan occupied or developed Lots 7 and 8 during their ownership has not been located. David John Moore of Greenwich purchased Dolan's Lot 7 in July 1911 and Kent's Lot 8 in August 1911 (Figure 8) (Vol 2167 Fol 236 & Vol 2178 Fol 183 NSW LRS).



**Figure 8:** Lots 7 and 8 Section 17 DP 3175 of 14 ½ perches as recorded on one of D. J. Moore's certificates of title in 1911. The study area is outlined in red and Lots 7 and 8 in blue (Vol 2178 Fol 183 NSW LRS).



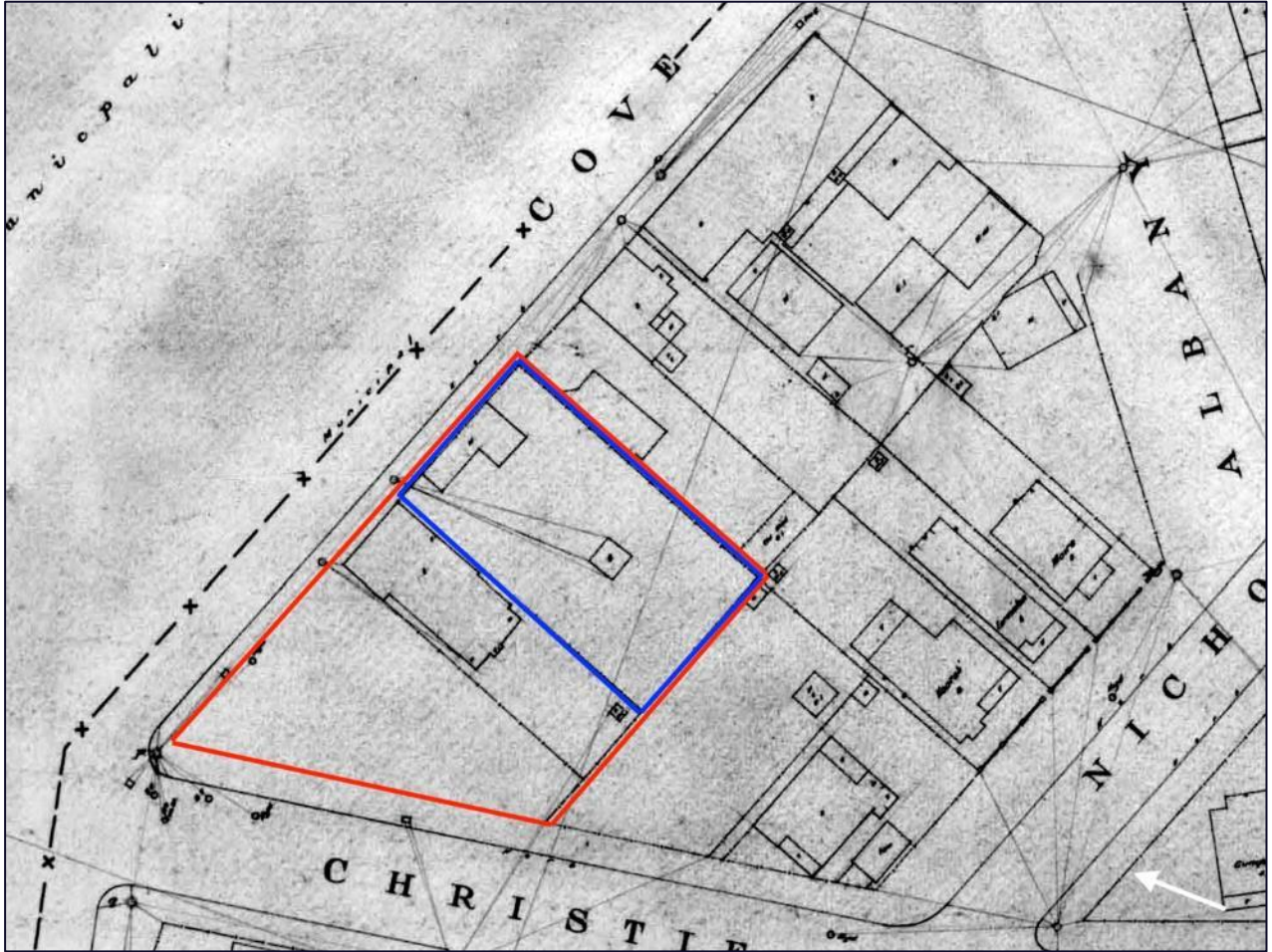
It is thought that David Moore leased Lots 7 and 8 and editions of the Sands Directory in 1913 and 1914 record St Leonards Picture Pavilion on 'Gordon Road' in the vicinity of allotments. Gordon Road was listed as Lane Cove Road from c.1918 and Pacific Highway from c.1933. The allotments were occupied by D. J. Moore & Sons, carriers from c.1914/15-c.1927. It should be kept in mind that street numbering was not used on Lane Cove Road until c.1928 making the identification of site occupants difficult to accurately identify, except by their location between the nearest cross streets.

St Leonards Picture Pavilion is likely to have been an 'open-air' structure either wholly or partly roofed. Venues of this type were cheaply built and had many advantages for exhibitors, excepting the uncertainty of the weather. As the venue was roofed in some way and duration on the site exceeded six months, the St Leonards Picture Pavilion was required to be licenced under the Theatres and Public Halls Act of 1908. The Act was designed to protect public safety through compliance with fire and other regulations (NSW Gov Gaz 20 May 1914, 2949).

In Sydney in 1910 'no fewer than 150 structures for open-air picture shows were erected In the metropolitan area' (Daily Telegraph 16 Dec 1910, 1). Picture show operators registered as firms in Sydney between 1909 and 1912 included The Pavilion Picture Company operating from 'The Reserve Ocean side Manly' by W. E. Cormack, W. J. Maling, J. Hewitt, R. J. Wild and A. W. Gowanlock from 1912; and North Sydney Pavilion Pictures operated by J. S Hardie and D. E. Hardie junior from 1909 (Register of Firms Index, Item 2/8541 & Item 2/8543 SARNSW). It is not known if either of these operators were linked to the St Leonards Picture Pavilion.

Suburban open-air cinemas were a popular and cheap form of public entertainment accessible to the wider community. Related structures usually included projection boxes, screens and in some cases roofing. The need for management and structures to comply with the Theatres and Public Halls Act attracted complaints by operators especially due to the cost of licence fees (SMH 3 Aug 1910, 4). Due to the ephemeral nature of open-air cinemas there are few records of businesses of this type. Further documentary or pictorial evidence of the St Leonards Picture Pavilion has not been located.

Editions of the Sands Directory from 1915 until 1927 indicate that D. J. Moore & Sons Carriers now operated from Lots 7 and 8 on Lane Cove Road. Listings in 1917 and 1918 indicate that part of the site was leased to real estate agents O'Brien & Turner and then to estate agent Michael O'Brien from 1919 until 1923. Public Works Department plans and surveys prepared in 1926 for the construction of the sewer provide evidence of structures on the two allotments including an 'old' timber, 'L'-shaped building at the street frontage and a square, brick building at the centre of the two sites. It is not known if either building was linked to the St Leonards Picture Pavilion formerly in this location (Figure 9) (PWDDTS715 Aug 1926 & DFB1912 7 Feb 1926, Sydney Water Archives).

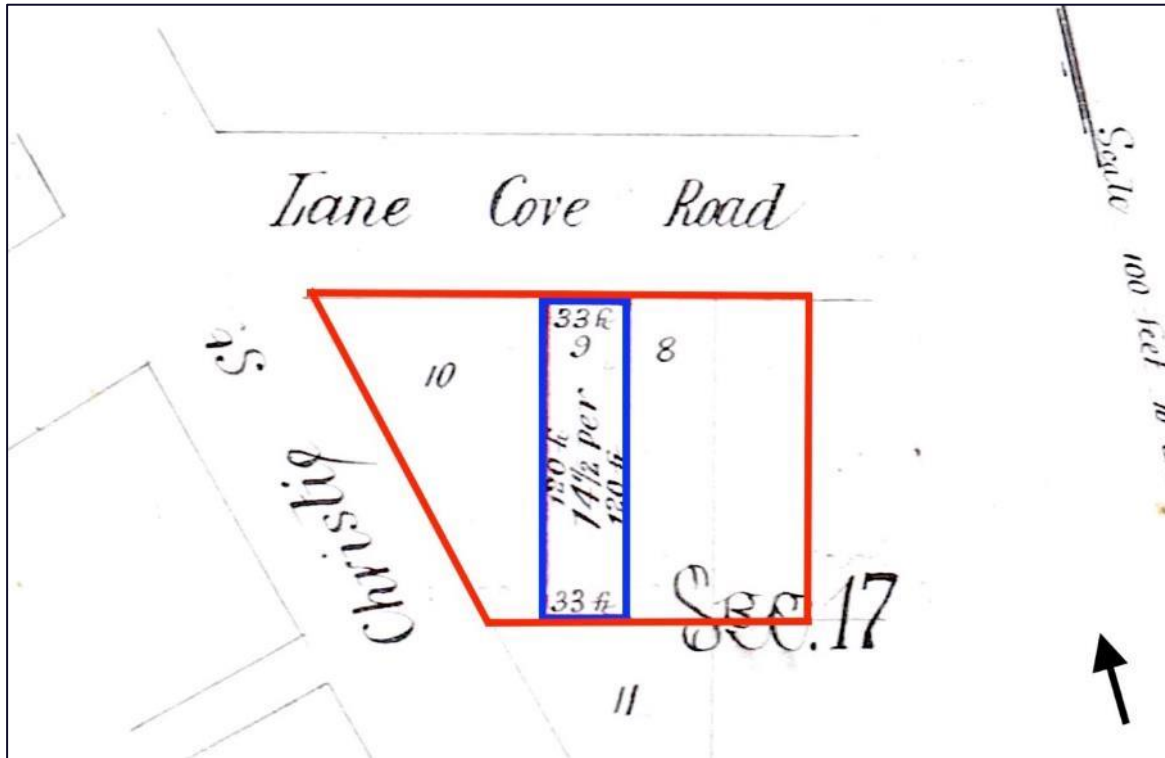


**Figure 9:** Part of a Public Works Department plan dated August 1926 providing evidence of buildings on David Moore's Lots 7 and 8 Section 17 on Lane Cove Road at St Leonards. The study area is outlined in red and Lots 7 and 8 in blue (PWDDTS715 Aug 1926 Sydney Water Archives).

D. J. Moore & Sons was not listed in the 1928 Sands Directory suggesting Lots 7 and 8 were unoccupied. David Moore died in October 1938 and in June 1939 the property was conveyed to his executors, son James Robert Moore a storeman of Artarmon, and William Henry Moore a condiment manufacturer of Crows Nest (Vol 2178 Fol 183 NSW LRS). In May 1944 the Commonwealth of Australia compulsorily acquired Lots 7 and 8 for a proposed telephone exchange (Vol 2167 Fol 236 NSW LRS; A6074 PO3781 NAA).

#### **4.5 Lot 9 Section 17 DP3175 - 532-534 Pacific Highway (formerly Lane Cove or Gordon Road), St Leonards**

Hannah Board of North Sydney purchased Lot 9 Section 17 comprising 14 ½ perches (366.74 sq m) of the Berry Estate in January 1904 (Vol 1514 Fol 145 NSW LRS). She and her husband Arthur James Board continued to live in North Sydney (Figure 10).

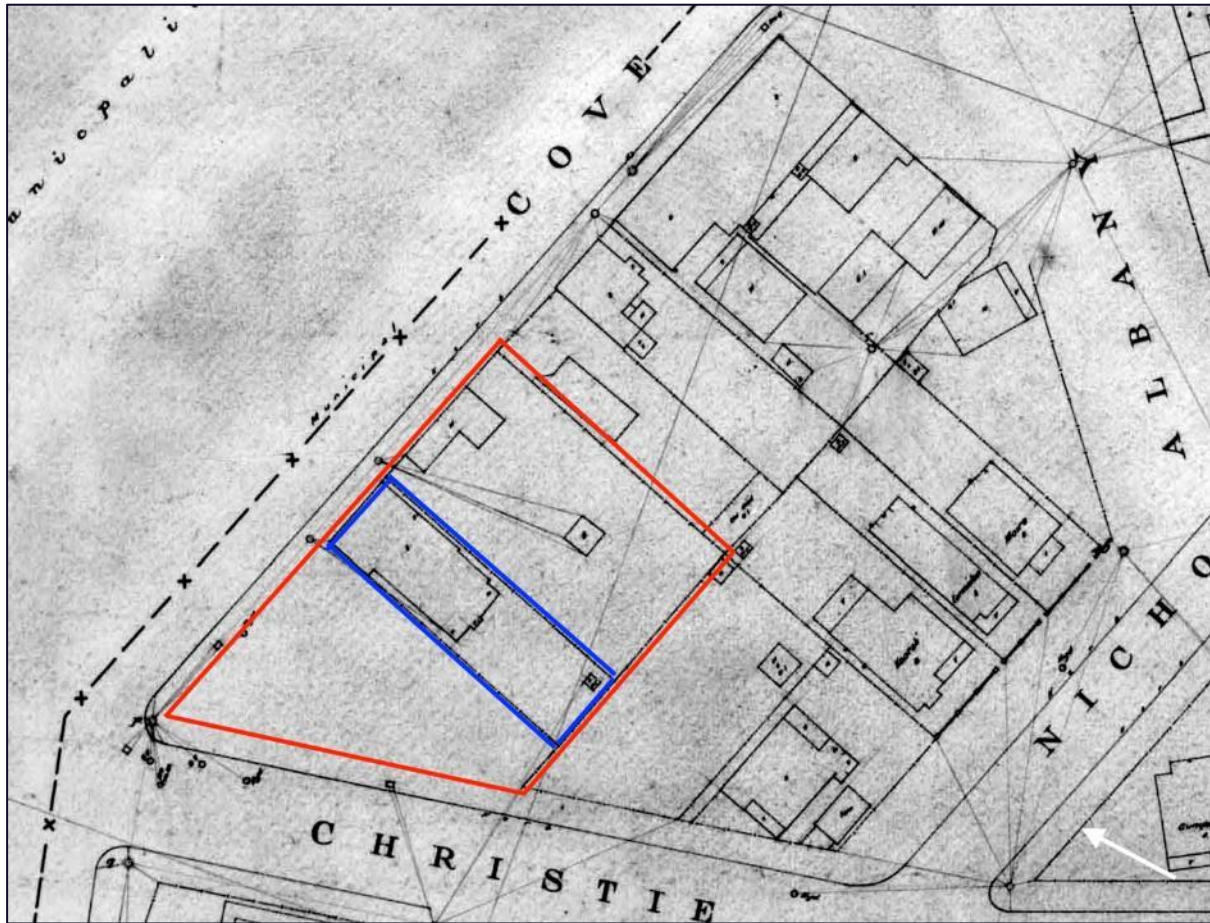


**Figure 10:** Lot 9 Section 17 DP 3175 as recorded on Hannah Board's 1904 certificate of title.  
The study area is outlined in red and Lots 7 and 8 in blue (Vol 1514 Fol 145 NSW LRS).

The arrangement of Sands Directory listings on Gordon Road between Christie and Albany Streets between 1904 and 1910 is difficult to interpret however it is thought that Lot 9 was built on and what appear to be two shops and possibly including residences were leased (Construction 29 Apr 1942, 6). Tenants between c.1905 and 1910 are thought to include P. Murphy, a greengrocer, Alexander Beveridge, a general store operator, and Miss Annie Campton who sold smallgoods.

In June 1911 Hannah Board transferred the title to Lot 9 to her foster son Arthur Hoskin (1874-55), a signwriter and decorator of St Leonards (Vol 1514 Fol 145 NSW LRS; SMH 20 Dec 1916, 10). The Sands Directories for 1911 and 1912 list Hoskin in 'Gordon Road' in the vicinity of Lot 9. Hoskin took out mortgages over the property in 1912 and 1913 and the 1913 Sands Directory indicates that tenants included Robert Adams, a hairdresser, and Frank Curtis, a fish shop proprietor. Possibly unable to sustain two mortgages, in April 1914 Hoskin sold Lot 9 to Samuel Robert Smart, a bootmaker of St Leonards (Vol 1514 Fol 145 NSW LRS). From 1914 until 1918 Smart operated a boot making business on the Gordon Road at St Leonards. Listings in the Sands Directory for this location suggest that the building on Lot 9 contained two premises one of which was leased to tenants including fish shop proprietor E. Donnelly in 1914, and Miss V. Hill confectioner from c.1914/15 until c.1919 (Sands Directory).

A 1926 Public Works Department plan and Field Books prepared for the construction of the sewer in 1926 provide the important evidence of buildings on Lot 9. The Surveyor's Field Book prepared in July 1926 records the northern section of a building near Lane Cove Road as built of brick with a timber-framed extension with a small, galvanised iron porch at the southern end. A small, brick water closet or external toilet is located at the south east corner of the allotment. The Sands Directory listings indicate that the building comprised two shops however it is not known if it incorporated residences (Figure 11) (PWDDTS715 Aug 1926 & DFB1912 7 Feb 1926 Sydney Water Archives).



**Figure 11:** Part of a Public Works Department plan dated August 1926 providing evidence of a brick and timber building and a small, brick water closet on Lot 9. The study area is outlined in red and Lot 9 in blue (PWDDTS715 Aug 1926 Sydney Water Archives).

Listings in the Sands Directory between 1919 and 1926 indicate that the Smarts leased all or part of the building. From c.1925 until c.1928 Margaret Smart operated a confectionary at what became known as 534 Lane Cove Road by 1928-29. Circa 1929 Smart operated the store as a laundry and mixed business (Sands Directory). Following Samuel Smart's death in 1928 the title to Lot 9 was conveyed in November 1929 to his widow Margaret Smart. Michael Joseph Scanlan a 'gentleman' of North Sydney purchased the property in the same month in 1929 (Vol 1514 Fol 145 NSW LRS). In April 1942 tenders were advertised for the demolition and removal of two brick shops and dwellings at 532-534 Pacific Highway St Leonards corresponding to Lot 9 of the study area (Construction 29 Apr 1942, 6). In May 1944 the Commonwealth of Australia compulsorily acquired Lot 9 for a proposed telephone exchange (Vol 1514 Fol 145 NSW LRS; A6074 PO3781 NAA).

#### **4.6 Photographic evidence of Lots 7, 8 & 9 Section 17 DP3175 – 524-534 Pacific Highway (formerly Lane Cove), St Leonards in the 1930s and 1940s**

Aerial views provide valuable evidence of the extent of development of the study area in the context of the surrounding locality in the 1930s and 1940s. An undated aerial photograph of St Leonards thought to date to the 1930s but as late as 1932, provides evidence of buildings on Lots 7, 8 and 9 (Figure 12) (Milton Kent ON 447/Box 026 Item 02 SLNSW).

An aerial photograph of the site in 1943 indicates that the buildings on Lots 7, 8 and 9 were demolished (Figure 13 below) (1943 Aerial Six Maps).



**Figure 12:** Part of an undated (c.1930-32) aerial photograph of St Leonards providing evidence of buildings on Lots 7, 8 and 9 while Lot 10 remained undeveloped (Milton Kent ON 447/Box 026 Item 02 SLNSW).



**Figure 13:** Part of a 1943 aerial photograph providing evidence of the demolition of buildings on Lots 7, 8 & 9. The study area is outlined in red and Lots 7, 8 and 9 in blue (1943 Aerial Six Maps).

#### 4.7 St Leonards Telephone Exchange - Lots 7, 8, 9 DP 3175 and Part of Lot 10 DP433297 - 524-534 Pacific Highway, St Leonards

As early as 1941 proposals were made for the construction of a telephone exchange at St Leonards and from 1944 Lots 7, 8 and 9 Section 17 DP 3175 were compulsorily acquired by the Commonwealth of Australia (Vol 1514 Fol 145 & Vol 2167 Fol 236 NSW LRS). A right-of-way from the exchange site to Christie Street was formed in 1948 through a grant to the Commonwealth of the southern part of Lot 10 Section 17 DP 3175 (later Lot 1 DP 433297) (Vol 3505 Fol 160 NSW LRS). In 1971 Lot D (formerly part of Lot 10) was also acquired by the Commonwealth however the site was not developed in conjunction with the telephone exchange and was sold in 1985 (Vol 7203 Fol 200 NSW LRS).

A telephone exchange (Building 1) was constructed at 524-534 Pacific Highway, St Leonards in November 1950 and opened in the following weeks along with exchanges at Lindfield and Pymble (SMH 15 Nov 1950, 6). The St Leonards exchange initially carried '4,800 lines providing modern facilities for present subscribers and about 800 new services'. It was anticipated that it would 'ultimately serve nearly 4,000 new subscribers' (Daily Telegraph 31 May 1952, 5).

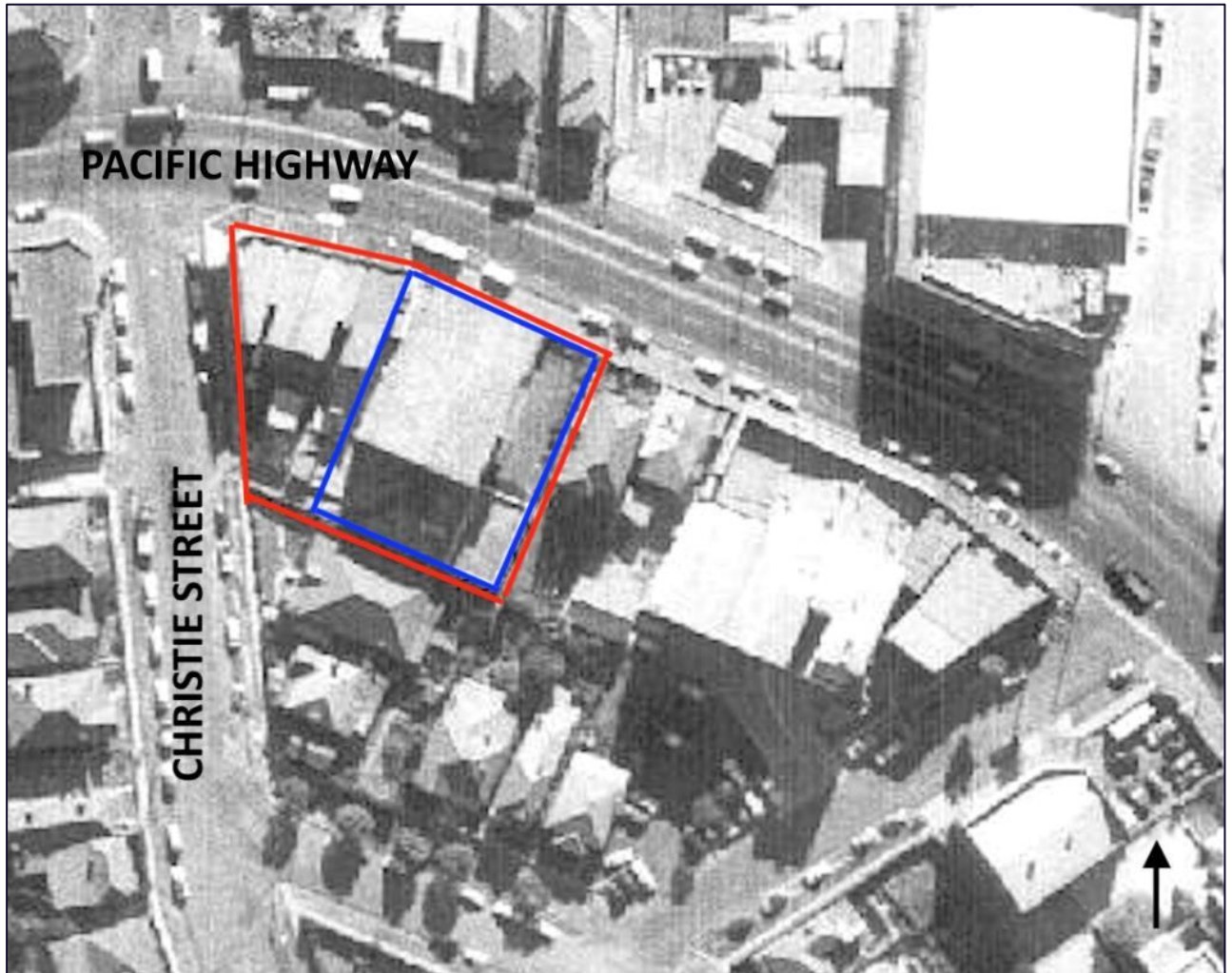
The large building was utilitarian in design and constructed of face brick with a shallow, gable end roof and narrow eaves overhang. The building was positioned at the northern end of the site (Lots 7, 8 and 9 Section 17 DP3175) abutting the boundary. A courtyard and pedestrian entrance was located on the east side and an access lane on the west side. The east, north and west facades featured grouped, square and rectangular modular windows that were set into what appear to be concrete 'frames' expressed beyond the brickwork.

A photograph dated 1958 records the St Leonards telephone exchange (L. B. Manny 3 Mar 1958, Stanton Library). An aerial photograph dated July 1961 provides evidence of the extent of the structure's footprint at this time (Photograph 2 and Figure 14) (Sydney Sht 9130 28 Jul 1961 1050\_31\_068 HIV).



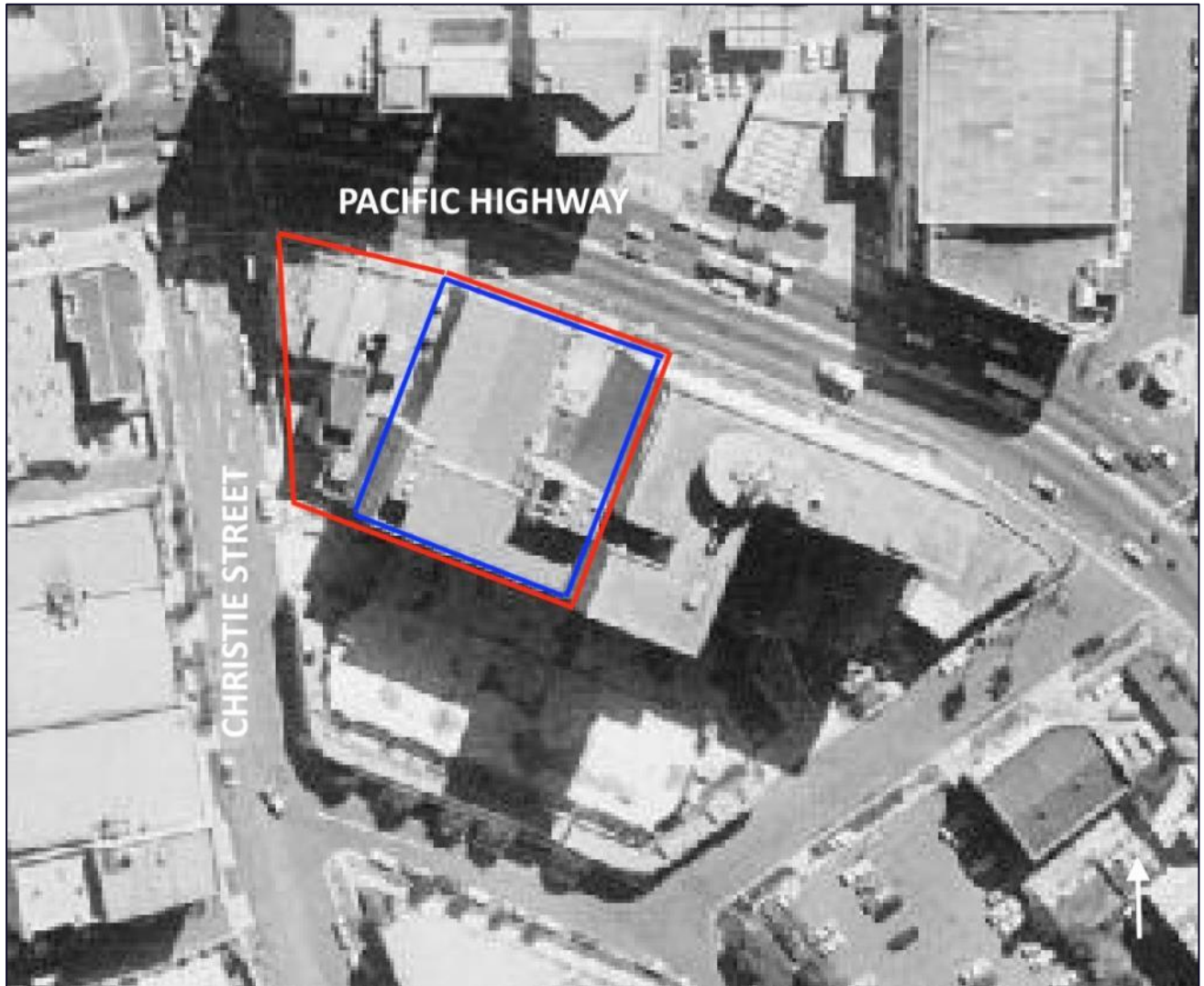
**Photograph 2:** View looking northwest down the Pacific Highway with St Leonards Telephone Exchange on the left-hand-side of the image in 1958 (L. B. Manny 3 Mar 1958, Image courtesy Stanton Library Historical Services).





**Figure 14:** An aerial photograph providing evidence of the extent of buildings associated with St Leonards Telephone Exchange in July 1961. The study area is outlined in red and Lots 7, 8 and 9 (the Telephone Exchange) in blue (Sydney Sht 9130 28 Jul 1961 1050\_31\_068 HIV).

In 1967 plans were made for extensions to the exchange and by c.1972 a second building was constructed to the south of the 1950s exchange (Comm Aust Gaz 9 Mar 1967, 1338; Item C424, 1972/1914 NAA). The brick and concrete rectangular structure was built along the southern boundary butting up to the east and west boundaries. Building 2 was extended between 1972 and 1978 with the addition of short wings extending from the east and west ends of the northern façade creating a 'U'-shaped plan. The southern-most rectangular portion of Building 2 of the exchange is evident in an April 1971 aerial photograph while the footprint of Building 2 as it exists today is evident in a 1978 aerial (Figure 15) (Sydney Sht 9130, 21 Apr 1971, Id 1939\_084 HIV; Sydney Sht 9130, 11 Apr 1978, Id 9130 2707\_14\_173 HIV).



**Figure 15:** An aerial photograph providing evidence of the extent of the St Leonards Telephone Exchange in April 1978. The study area is outlined in red and Lots 7, 8 and 9 (the Telephone Exchange) in blue (Sydney Sht 9130 2707\_14\_173 HIV).

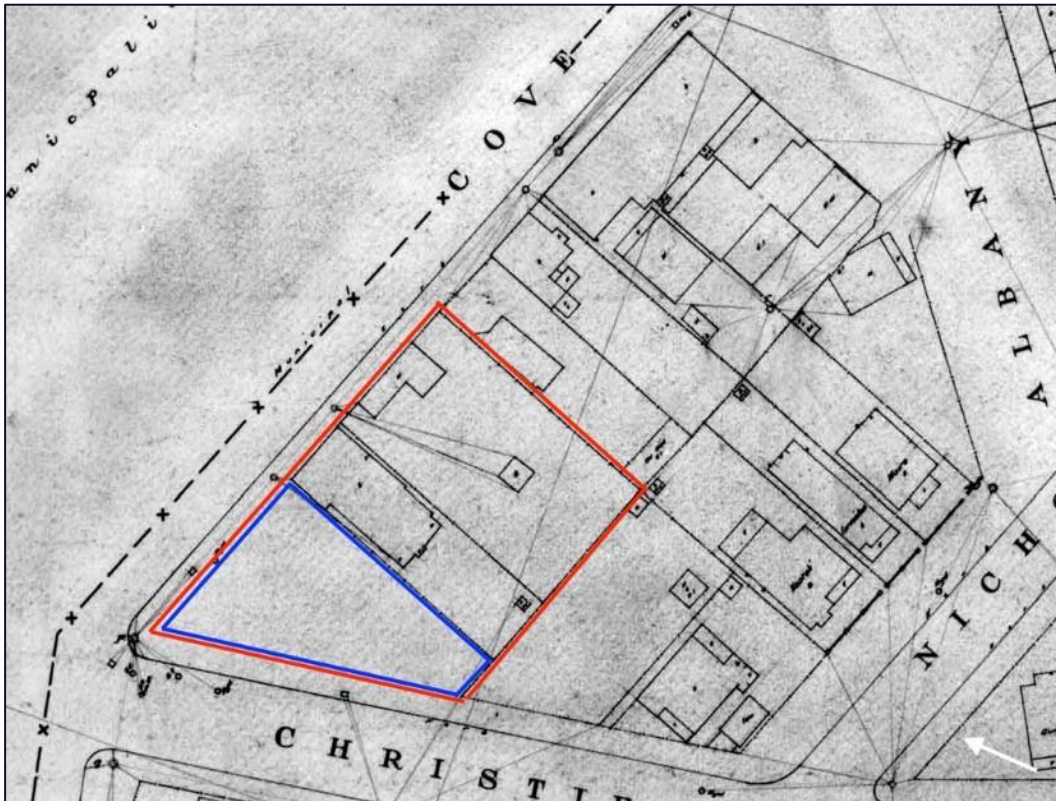
In November 1985 the title to the exchange site and the grant of right-of-way were transferred to the Australian Telecommunications Commission trading as Telecom Australia (Vol 6164 Fol 217 & 1/433297 NSW LRS). The trading name, Telecom Australia, was changed to Telstra on 1 July 1995 ('Telstra and its Management', aph.gov.au, viewed 16 Jul 2022).

#### **4.8 Lot 10 Section 17 DP3175 - 536-542 Pacific Highway (formerly Lane Cove or Gordon Road), St Leonards**

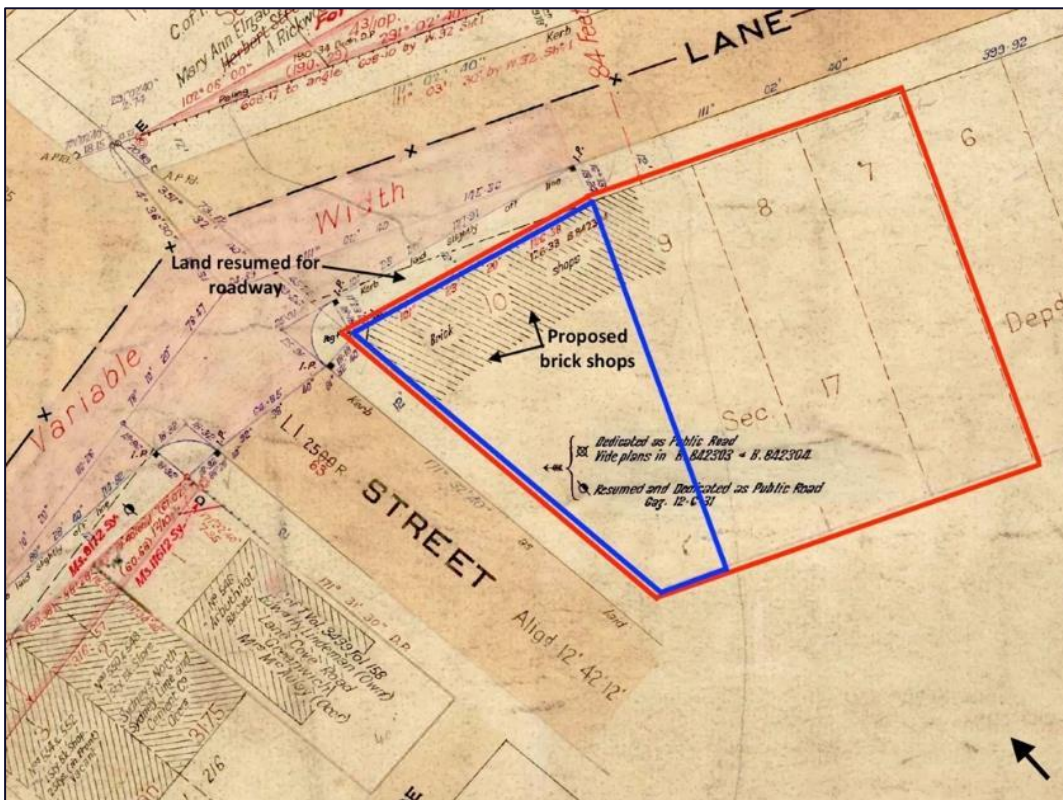
In September 1915 Michael Minogue, a railway signalman of Sydney purchased Lot 10 Section 17 DP 3175 of the Berry Estate (Vol 2617 Fol 137 NSW LRS). The site on Gordon Road (later Lane Cove Road) was an irregularly shaped allotment of 24  $\frac{3}{4}$  perches (625.9 sq m) on the corner of Christie Street, St Leonards. In September 1923 Lane Cove Council resumed a small triangular piece of land from Lot 10 for part of the roadway at the junction of the two streets. A new title for the residue of 22  $\frac{3}{4}$  perches (575.4 sq m) was issued (Vol 3505 Fol 160 NSW LRS).

A Public Works Department plan dated August 1926 in Figure 15 below shows that Lot 10 was undeveloped at this time. A water hydrant shown in the July 1926 Surveyor's Field Book was the only structure on the site in the previous month (PWDDTS715 Aug 1926 & DFB1912 7 Feb 1926 Sydney Water Archives).

A Crown Plan dated March 1927 and including later additions and annotations up to 1932 records a row of brick shops planned for Lot 10 or under construction. The hatching on the plan indicating the buildings extends into Lot 9 however Lots 7 and 8 to the east were vacant (Figure 17).



**Figure 16:** Part of a Public Works Department plan dated August 1926 providing evidence that Lot 10 was undeveloped except for a water hydrant. The study area is outlined in red and Lot 10 in blue (PWDDTS715 Aug 1926 Sydney Water Archives).



**Figure 17:** Part of a Crown Plan for the proposed realignment of Lane Cove Road indicating a row of brick shops, were under construction or proposed for Lot 10 between March 1927 and 1932. The study area is outlined in red and Lot 10 in blue (CP105.2550 NSW LRS).

The Assurance and Thrift Association Ltd purchased Lot 10 from Minogue in November 1928 (Vol 3505 Fol 160 NSW LRS). Entries in the Sands Directory between 1928 and 1932/33 suggest that the premises at the corner of Lane Cove Road and Christie Street were not occupied and might not have been completed. An undated aerial photograph of St Leonards thought to date to the early 1930s provides evidence that Lot 10 was vacant (Figure 18) (Milton Kent ON 447/Box 026 Item 02 SLNSW).

A 1943 aerial photograph of the study area provides evidence of Lot 10 at this date and the construction of four premises built up to the northern, eastern and western boundaries. The southern portion of the allotment appears to be vacant although might include outbuildings not visible in the image (Figure 19) (1943 Aerial Six Maps).



**Figure 18:** Part of an undated c.1930-32 aerial photograph of St Leonards providing evidence of the undeveloped Lot 10 (Milton Kent ON 447/Box 026 Item 02 SLNSW).



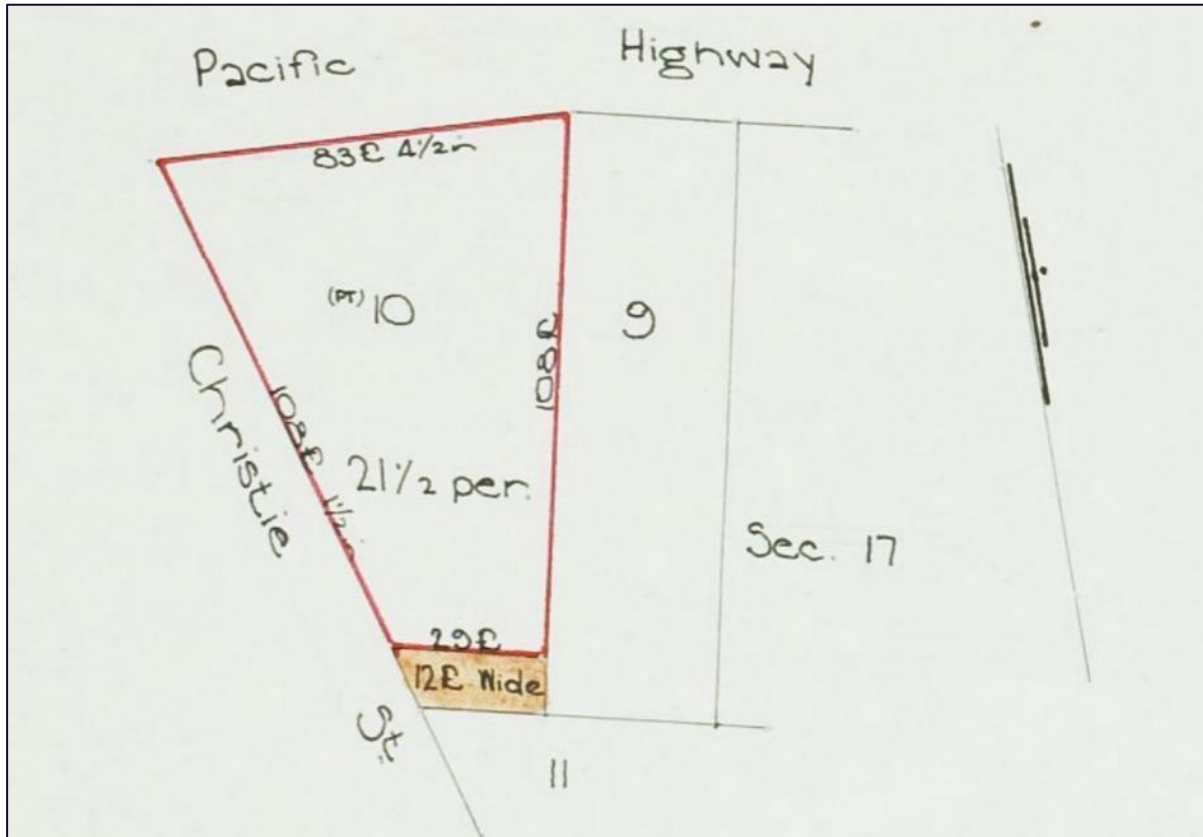
**Figure 19:** Part of a 1943 aerial photograph showing a terrace of four buildings built up to the north, east and west boundaries of Lot 10. The study area is outlined in red and Lot 10 in blue (1943 Aerial Six Maps).

Based on later evidence the four, two-storey, terrace-style, brick buildings varied in their planning due to the configurations of Lot 10. The northern façade facing what was known as the Pacific Highway from c.1933 featured differing façade treatments with first storey verandahs alternating between square and arched heads. The brick parapet detailing extended around a splayed corner and along the Christie Street façade. Extensions at the southern ends of the buildings comprised double and single-storey sections also built in brick. Each shop had an awning over cantilevered over the footpath while the awning for No 542 extended around into Christie Street (Photograph 3).



**Photograph 3:** Shop facades

In December 1948 the Commonwealth of Australia acquired a 12-foot wide grant of right-of-way over the southern portion of Lot 10 providing access for the Telephone Exchange on Lots 7-9 to Christie Street to the east (Vol 3505 Fol 160 NSW LRS). The grant of right-of-way was redescribed as Lot 1 DP 433297 in 1985. In August 1951 the Assurance and Thrift Association Ltd transferred the residue of Lot 10 to Stanley John Thompson and John Eskbank Hall, estate agents of St Leonards (Figure 20) (Vol 6303 Fol 233 NSW LRS).

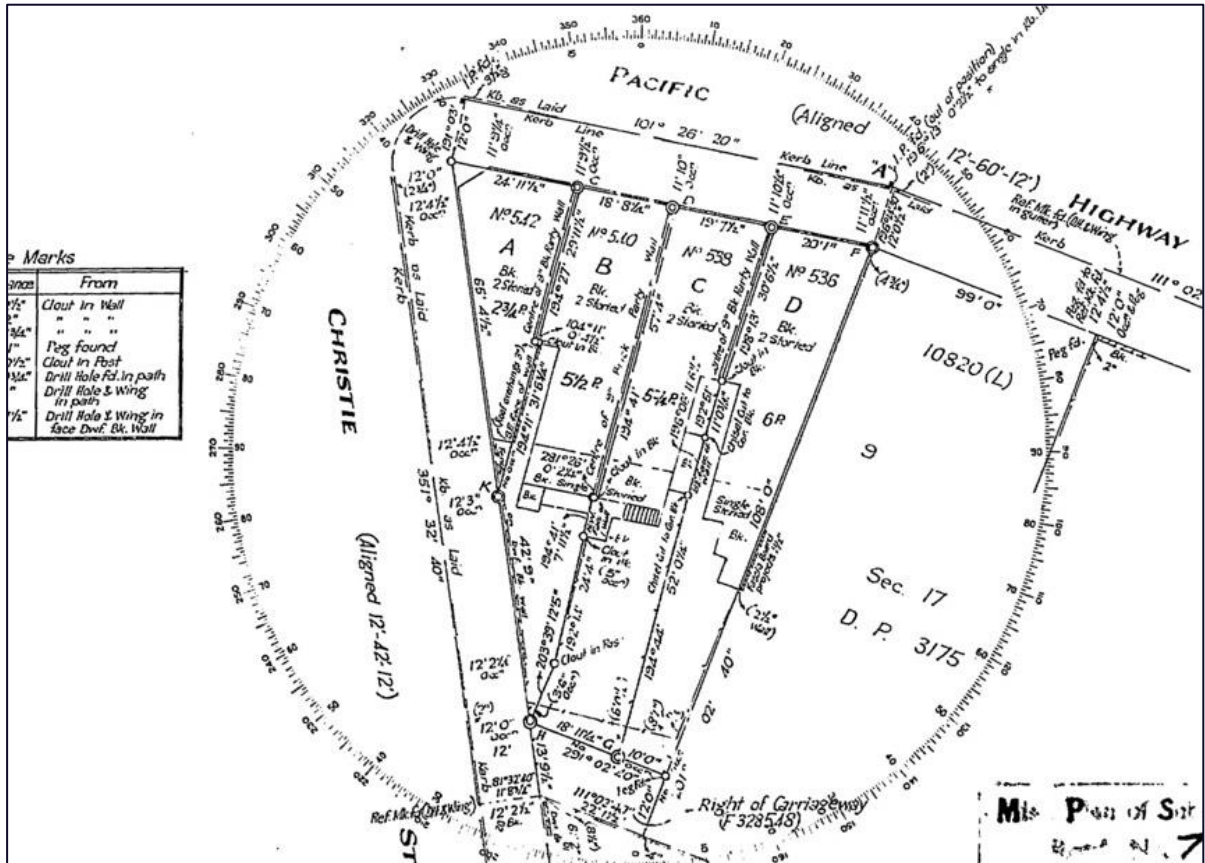


**Figure 20:** Plan in Volume 6303 Folio 233 dated April 1951 providing evidence of the 12-foot (3.65 m) wide 'grant of right-of-carriageway' over the southern portion of Lot 10 and the residue of 21 ½ perches (Vol 6303 Fol 233 NSW LRS).

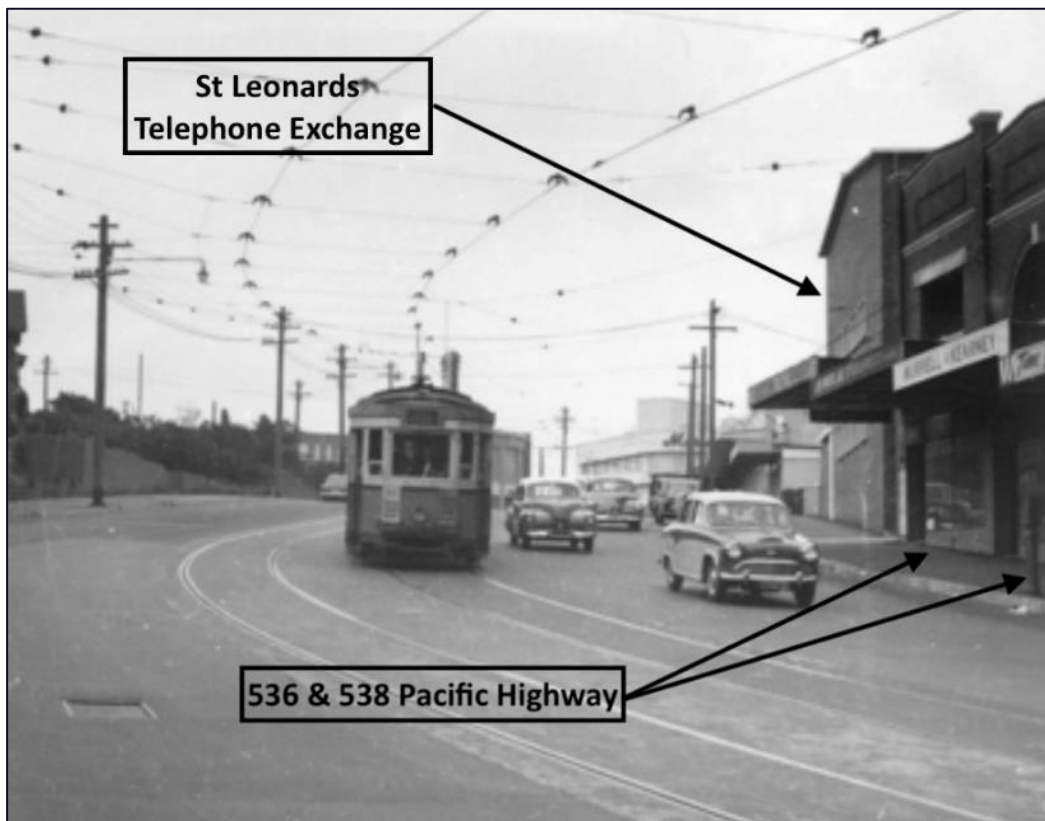
#### 4.9 Lots A, B, C & D Sec 17 DP 3175 536-542 (formerly Lot 10) – 536-542 Pacific Highway, St Leonards

Between 1951 and 1952 Stanley John Thompson and John Eskbank Hall, estate agents, subdivided Lot 10 into four separate allotments of varying sizes - Lots A, B, C & D DP 377423 – with cross-easements made for the party walls between the buildings (Figure 21) (Vol 6532 Fols 189, 190, 191 & 192 NSW LRS).

A photograph of part of the combined shops and residences in March 1958 is reproduced in Photograph 4 below. The image records one of the last trams on the soon to be discontinued North Shore Line.



**Figure 21:** A survey dated 10 January 1952 records Lots A, B, C and D and the footprints of the four, two-storey brick buildings on the sites (DP 377423 NSW LRS).



**Photograph 4:** A photograph of No 536 and No 538 Pacific Highway from the intersection with Christie Street in March 1958 (L. B. Manny 3 Mar 1958, Courtesy of Stanton Library).





In July 1952 Lot A of 2 ¾ perches (0.8382 sq m) on the corner of Lane Cove Road and Christie Street (No 542) was purchased by Thomas Ewart Cadwallader, engineer of Concord West (Vol 6532 Fol 189 NSW LRS). No 538 or Lot C of 6 ¾ perches (2.0574 sq m) was purchased by Leonard White, a poultry farmer of Oxford Falls in July 1952 (Vol 6532 Fol 190). William Robert Ross of Smithfield purchased No 540 or Lot B of 11 ½ perches (3.5052 sq m) in October 1952 (Vol 6588 Fol 109 NSW LRS). No 536 or Lot D of 6 perches (1.8288 sq m) was purchased by Yee Yat Hiu and Yee Chung On in July 1956 (Vol 7203 Fols 199 & 200 NSW LRS).

In 1973 restrictions under the Main Roads Act 1924 were placed over parts of Lots A, B and C at the Pacific Highway, presumably for future road widening (Vol 6588 Fol 109, Vol 6532 Fol 189 & 190 NSW LRS).

Subsequent owners of Lot A, B, C and D up to 2015 are recorded in Table 1 below. See the Land Titles Schedule in the Appendices for details of the lessees of Lot D.

LOT A - No 542	LOT B - No 540	LOT C - No 538	LOT D - No 536
1953, Clark Matting & Rubber Pty Ltd	1963, Dorothy Elizabeth Moore of Lane Cove and Lucy Edna Irene White of Barnawartha, Victoria	1956, Oxford Finance Pty Ltd	1959, Frank Shir-King and Gock Kin fish shop proprietors of Marrickville
1955, Australia and New Zealand Bank Ltd	1963, Harrie Murrell Pty Ltd now HM Pty Ltd	1958, Lum Wang restaurant proprietor and Hana Wang of St Leonards	1971, Commonwealth of Australia
1960, George Donald Innes surveyor of Wollstonecraft		1959, Pak Chin Yip merchant of St Leonards	1985, J. Gollan
1972, Florence Betty Innes widow of Wollstonecraft		1977, Foondy Yip widow of Lugarno	2015, L Baron
1988, Konstantin Grein and Annegret Grein		2012, R. Yip executor of Yip Estate	
1997, Michael Chang Pty Ltd		2014, C. Yiu-Kwing	
1999, Walker Douglas Investments Pty Ltd			
2003, Mijenzo Pty Ltd			
2009, R L Thomason Pty Ltd			

**Table 1:** Owners of Lot A, B, C and D up to 2015

#### 4.10 The Study Area in July 2022 (524-542 Pacific Highway, St Leonards)

In July 2022, 524-542 Pacific Highway, St Leonards (the study area) is owned by G. F. M. Investment Group Pty Ltd and is proposed for redevelopment. As shown in the aerial photograph in Figure 22, the Telstra Exchange buildings on Lots 7, 8 & 9 DP 3175 on the eastern part of the study area and the four, two-storey shops and residences on Lots A-D DP377423 at the west end of the study area remain largely intact.

Photographs from the Pacific Highway and Christie Street provide evidence of the extent and condition of buildings in the study area in (Photographs 1 and 2).



## 5 PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

### 5.1 Description

This street corner may be considered as a fairly typical post WW1 row of shop-top housing and retail with the more unusual aspect being the unadorned brick façade of the Telecom Exchange dating from c 1950.

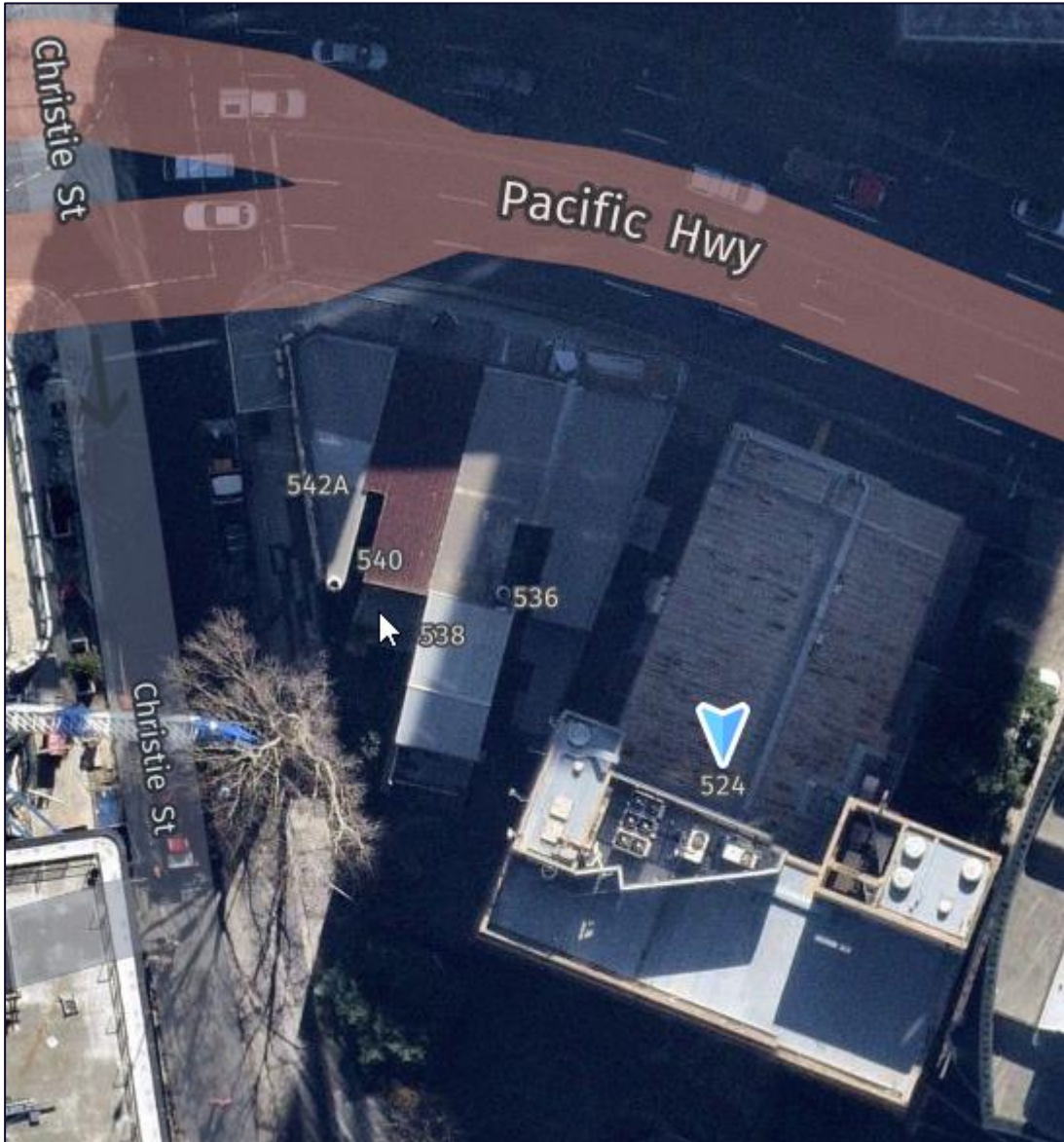
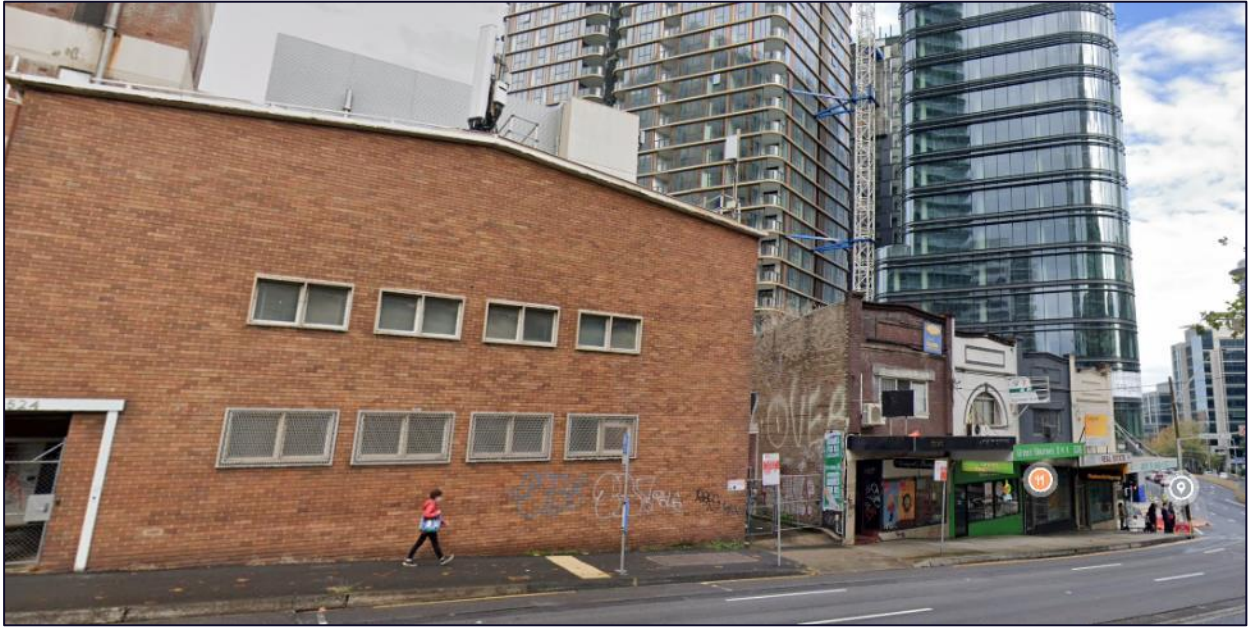


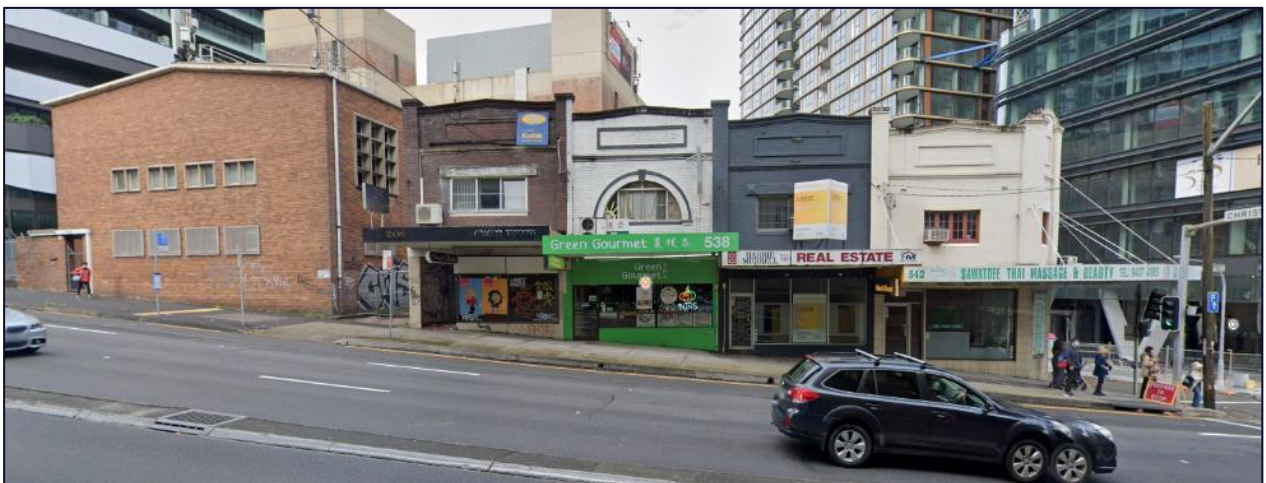
Figure 22: Site Map of 524-534 Pacific Highway . (Nearmaps 02/08/2022)



**Photograph 5:** View of the St Leonard's Telephone Exchange 524-534 Pacific Highway in 2022 (Google Streetview)

The Telecom (later Telstra Exchange) is an example of a particular class of utilitarian engineering building function and the simple unadorned flat gable frontage to the Pacific Highway is distinctive but not a great aesthetic or material resolution. With the addition of tall buildings to the east (see Photograph 5 above) and the row of shops to the west (Photograph 6 below), the more elaborate side elevations visible above have been lost. The red face-brick façade predominates with an eaveless roofline and simple hooded window bands. The façade is mostly as it was built with the exception of mesh over the lower windows and graffiti at the lower levels of the wall. The entry to 524 is a small alcove on the extreme eastern end of the façade.

However the greatest degree of change has arisen from the 1972 rear additions and rooftop excrescences being aerials, mobile towers, access ladders etc.



**Photograph 6:** View looking south at the shops and residences at 536-542 Pacific Highway in 2022 (Google Streetview)

The row of four shopfronts are separated from the Telstra Exchange by a small setback that is now defaced with graffiti. This gateway leads to the rear of the Telstra site and is gated with a mesh gate. The four shopfront facades are in various states of originality. Three out of four parapeted buildings have been painted with the dark liver brick only evident on No 536. The terraced shopfronts show adaptation to the slope of the Pacific Hwy by stepping down to the west. Consequently, each shop entry is recessed on the left hand side with a large picture display window to the right. This asymmetrical entry is quite common as is the alternating treatments above the cantilevered awnings which are conventional in size, anchoring and depth.

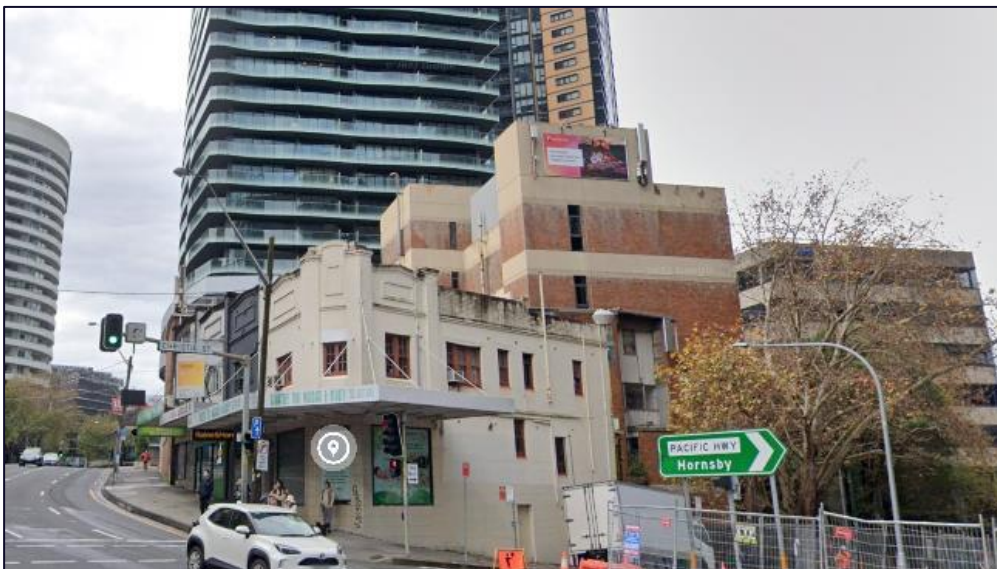
Above the awning, each shopfront is anchored by two expressed brick pilasters at each common wall. Each pilaster is surmounted by a raised capping with cornice. The parapet line is gently raked to the centre and below the profiled brick-on-edge capping there are rectangular relief panels above the central window or arched opening.



**Photograph 7:** View of the shop and residence dating from 1932 from opposite corner of Pacific Highway and Christie Street in 2022 (Google Streetview)

External alterations or adaptations through 80 years of continuous use include the painting of facades, the window box airconditioners, signage panels and projecting billboards, infilled balconies, and new or altered shopfronts in aluminium.

No 542 shopfront on the corner of Christie Street shows some modest adaptation to the corner splay and the steep drop off of Christie Street. However there is no name plate or date plate on the corner as might be expected.



**Photograph 8:** View of the shop and residence at 542 Pacific Highway from corner of Pacific Highway and Christie Street in 2022 (Google Streetview)



**Photograph 9:** View of No 524, the corner shop from Christie Street in 2022 (Google Streetview)

The Christie Street elevation is unadorned apart from a single door and some utility windows. There is no plinth or podium line in the brickwork, the elevation being sheer. This reinforces a very utilitarian aspect to the overall design. The awning stops one bay past the splayed corner.



**Photograph 10:** View from Christie Street to the rear of 524-534 Pacific Highway in 2022 (Google Streetview)

The rear aspect of the shops off the stub lane from Christie Street shows the scale disjunction between the tall Telstra Exchange to the right and the smaller, stepped forms of the rear of the shops fronting Pacific Highway. There is no distinguishing features to this architecture that are not found in numerous other places all over Sydney.

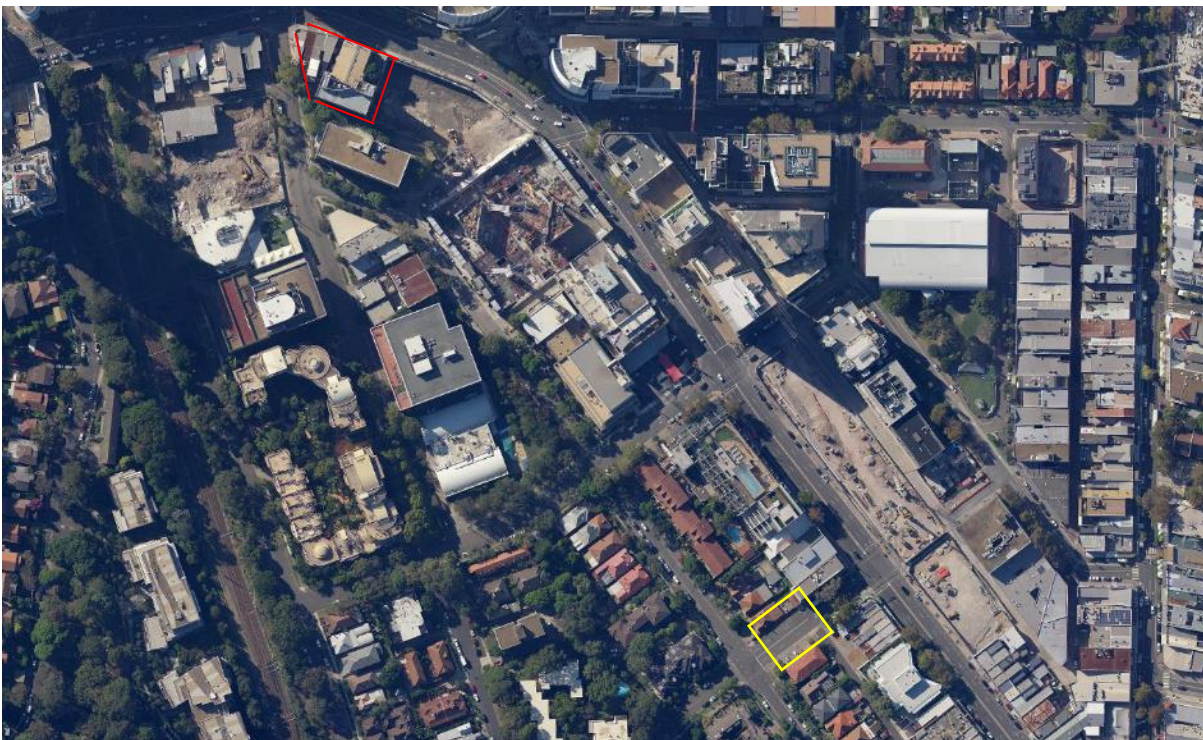
## 5.2 Comparative Analysis

The following analysis shows the comparison between the facades of shopfronts facing the Pacific Highway at the subject site and those in the adjacent LGA, Willoughby which have the status of local heritage items. Neither listed cluster is within the visual catchment of the subject site. All of the shop rows cited are individually listed and they are not part of heritage conservation area. They demonstrate a higher order of architectural features, intactness and detailing which elevates their significance in the Crows Nest town centre.

**Nos 366-376 Pacific Highway** (Photograph 11) known as the Higgins Buildings is a corner development built 1923, on the same southern side of the Highway as the subject site. The block of 6 shopfronts on the corner have a central parapet surmount with building name plate, in the entablature. They step down the slope to the north.



**Photograph 11:** 366-376 Pacific Highway. These shops are not a conservation area but are individually listed on the North Sydney LEP (refer to Heritage Map Sheet HER\_001)



**Figure 23:** Subject site outlined in red, Nos 366-376 outlined in yellow.

**328-338 Pacific Highway** (Photograph 11) are an intact row of shopfronts, each individually listed. The LEP inventory form describes them as:

**326**

*A good example of a two-storey rendered masonry commercial building in the Inter-War Functionalist style with interesting and simple Art Deco detailing. Although there are a number of examples of Inter-War Functionalist commercial architecture within the general area, the subject site's unique façade makes it an unusual building within*

the district. Originally designed as a showroom and auditorium for the Sydney County Council, a prominent public electricity utility company, the building's functionalist, streamlined design reflects the organisation's modernising image. The subject site retains several distinctive elements which relate this history and contribute to the significance of the place. This includes the building's simple geometric façade, the remaining elements of the first-floor auditorium, and the curved geometry of its textured rendered interior walls. A rare survivor of this style and period, it is also rare for its history as a Sydney County Council showroom and its status as the most intact example of the four suburban showrooms created by the County Council in the 1938-1940 period. See under 'Crow's Nest Retail Buildings Group' NSHS0997.

### 330-336

'A good and well detailed example of a two storey, brick and rendered masonry commercial building in the Federation Free style with residences to the first floor that was built as a row of four and that forms a streetscape of high quality. See under 'Crow's Nest Retail Buildings Group' NSHS0997.'

One of a row of four two storey shops (nos. 330, 332, 334, 336 Pacific Highway) with modernised ground floor shop fronts below cantilevered awnings, unified by relatively intact 1st floor facades, each featuring an arched semi-circular opening, forming a recessed verandah with rendered classical balustrade, below a parapet with rendered corbelling, a brick triangular feature with round louvred vent, between brick pilasters the area between the pilasters and the triangular feature being roughest stucco finished. This building is designed in the Federation Freestyle.

### 338

Two storey painted brick commercial premises with plate glass shopfront. Suspended metal awning with metal soffit. Very ornate façade above with painted brick wall with brick and stucco pilasters each side of a rectangular opening now infilled with timber framed glazing. Moulded cornice above the pilasters with Art Nouveau stucco decoration above with central feature at the apex of a pedimented parapet. Leadlight windows to glazed infill.

2-storey brick shop with triangular parapet featuring sinuous Art Nouveau stucco detailing. Centrally placed window to first floor is flanked by stucco pilasters with classical capitals. A moulded stucco corbel runs above the pilasters and the window. This building is designed in the Federation Free style



**Photograph 12:** 328-338 Pacific Highway. Not a conservation area but all individually listed

**312-324 Pacific Highway** (Photograph 12 below) is an intact row of shops described in the LEP as:

*"A good and well detailed example of a two storey, rendered masonry commercial building with residences to the first floor that was built as a row of seven and that forms a streetscape of high quality. See under 'Crows Nest Retail Building Group' NSHS0997."*

*"A row of shopfronts (312, 314, 316, 318, 320, 322-324) below a suspended awning, each modernised individually, are linked at first floor level by the repetition of seven identically detailed bays. Each bay comprises a verandah behind a semi-*

*circular arched opening, the archivolt moulded in stucco with a keystone extending to a moulded cornice, above which is an entablature containing a frieze with central blind panel, a bolder cornice then a parapet which has a central finial flanked by symmetrically curved wings to the pilasters which form the boundaries between panels. This building is designed in the Federation Free style.”*

*Two storey rendered masonry commercial premises built as one of seven with dividing pilasters. Modern aluminium framed glazed shop front to the ground floor. Suspended awning to the first floor with pressed metal soffit. Roughcast render to the upper floor with a smooth render decoration. Semi circular openings with inset balconies and fibro batten wall with timber framed 16 Pane double hung sashes and sidelights and timber framed doors sidelights and fanlight. Moulded string course above and a frieze with a central panel. Moulded render cornice above and parapet to the street with a central finial bust with curved capping each side.”*



**Photograph 12:** 312-324 Pacific Highway. Not a conservation area but all individually listed

It may be readily concluded that the subject site at St Leonard’s has shop-top housing and retail that, in terms of detail and character architecturally, is inferior to the listed items above in nearby Crow’s Nest.

To the north of the site concealed however by newer and taller developments facing the Pacific Highway, there is the C8-Heritage conservation area. It too is beyond the visual catchment of the subject site.





## 6 SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

### 6.1 Preamble

Significance assessment is the process whereby sites or landscapes are assessed to determine their value or importance to the community.

A range of criteria have been developed for assessing the significance which embody the values contained in the Burra Charter. The Burra Charter provides principles and guidelines for the conservation and management of cultural heritage places within Australia.

### 6.2 Significance Assessment

#### Historical

*Criterion (a) – an item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)*

Historical research has not identified attributes that meet this criterion.

#### Association

*Criterion (b) – an item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)*

Historical research has not identified attributes that meet this criterion.

#### Aesthetic/Technical

*Criterion (c) – an item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area)*

The Telecom (later Telstra Exchange) is an example of a particular class of utilitarian engineering building function and the simple unadorned flat gable frontage to the Pacific Highway is distinctive but not a great aesthetic or material resolution.

Does not meet the threshold for local or state significance.

#### Social

*Criterion (d) – an item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons*

Historical research has not identified attributes that meet this criterion.

#### Research

*Criterion (e) – an item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)*

Historical research has not identified attributes that meet this criterion.

#### Rarity

*Criterion (f) – an item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)*

Historical research has not identified attributes that meet this criterion.

The shopfronts not rare, the form and architectural character of these brick and stucco shopfronts is typical of those found elsewhere in St Leonards, the lower North Shore and indeed throughout Sydney.

The Telstra Exchange is a standardised suburban design, and not unique as similar buildings found at Lindfield and Pymble also opened later in 1950.



### **Representative**

*Criterion (g) – an item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's*

- *cultural or natural places; or*
- *cultural or natural environments.*

*or a class of the local area's*

- *cultural or natural places; or*
- *cultural or natural environments*

Historical research has not identified attributes that meet this criterion.

### **6.3 Statement of Significance**

524-542 Pacific Highway, St Leonard's is of low significant as evidence of the provision of shop top accommodation for retailers and their families at a primary commercial area within the St Leonard's village then suburb boundaries. The design of Telstra Telephone Exchange is a site-specific utilitarian design for housing telephonic communications in suburban Sydney in the 1950s and 1960s. The provision of retail shops at this and other locations in St Leonards was crucial in the development of the centre due to its proximity to the Railway Station Both structure typologies point to the importance of suburban expansion in the post WWII Sydney.

However they do not individually or as a group meet the criterion for items of local or state heritage significance.

## 7 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME

### 7.1 Built to Rent Model

Ultimately, the BTR model facilitates a much better rental experience, consistency and length of tenure, and a higher-quality residential product. The model caters to a growing rental market, with many residents no longer choosing to purchase a property, and instead rent in the long-term or for their entire life. There are 272 BTR apartments in the complex.

The area immediately surrounding the site designated as 'state significant' is undergoing wholesale renewal. To the northwest, 'The Forum', the foundation of the urban renewal at St Leonards, now acts as its commercial, retail and transport hub. These sites are all destined to be high rise, mixed-use developments with varying offerings of commercial floor space. The approved landscape has transformed the character and scale of development in the precinct permanently, activating the area's "natural" centre through the provision of high-amenity connectivity to a range of land uses. To retain the subject site as an island of 2-3 stories in a sea of tall towers would represent a severe under-development of the site and would be a significant cause for 'economic hardship'.

### 7.2 Short Stay accommodation

Considering the shortage of short-term accommodation in the current and foreseeable future, the amended proposal has now incorporated 84 units within the Level 8 Commercial Podium. These have no external nor heritage implications. In addition, they have included 10 x Key Worker Housing units at L8 and have reduced the commercial space accordingly.

### 7.3 Assessment of Built Environment

The following assessment of the *DKO Architecture drawing set 00013070, revision 3, dated 4 September 2023* considers the proposal level by level in its description and addresses those aspects (if any) that add or detract from the site and its urban context.

The proposal by DKO shows the proposed basement plan (Figure 24) with access off Christie in the same location that it has been since first formed. This enables the existing Telstra Loading dock to maintain operations.

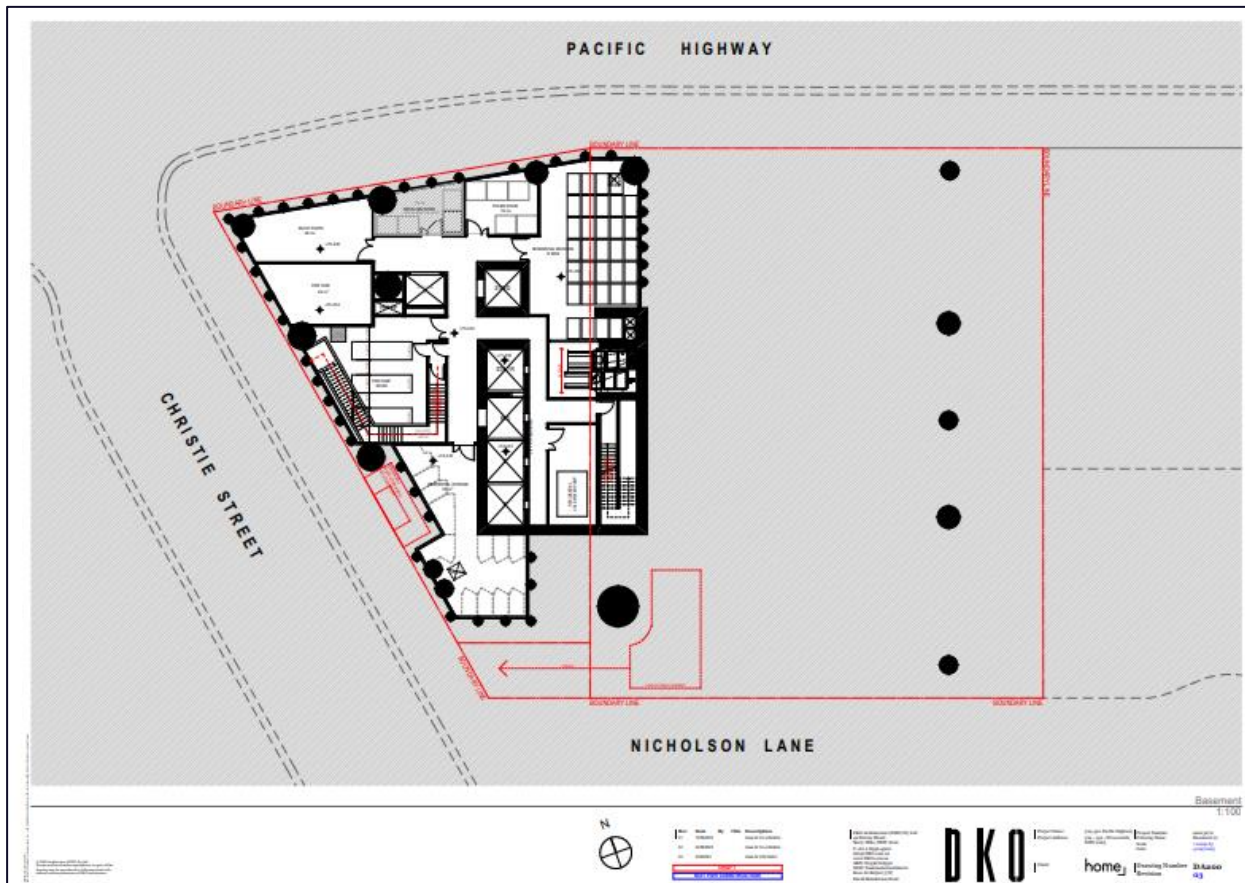


Figure 24: Proposed Basement Plan of 524-534 Pacific Highway (DKO Architecture, 2023)



The proposed Ground floor plan (Figure 25) shows that the new façade and frontage activities are setback 3m off the boundary line which creates a widened footpath and better traffic sightlines. This breaks with the earlier street pattern of built-to boundary frontages but is consistent with the neighbouring new Tower to the southeast. It also obviates the need for a splay on the corner of Christie Street and the Pacific Highway.

The Pacific Hwy frontage now comprises two new retail tenancies which is a functional improvement on the atypical and utilitarian blank façade that the Telstra Exchange now presents to the busy Highway. This public activation is desirable. In addition to the two retail tenancies there are two lobbies, one to the commercial podium and one to a staircase leading to the residential BTR tower over. In effect there are now four entries in 524-534 Pacific Highway where previously there were four so the pattern of active street frontages is maintained.

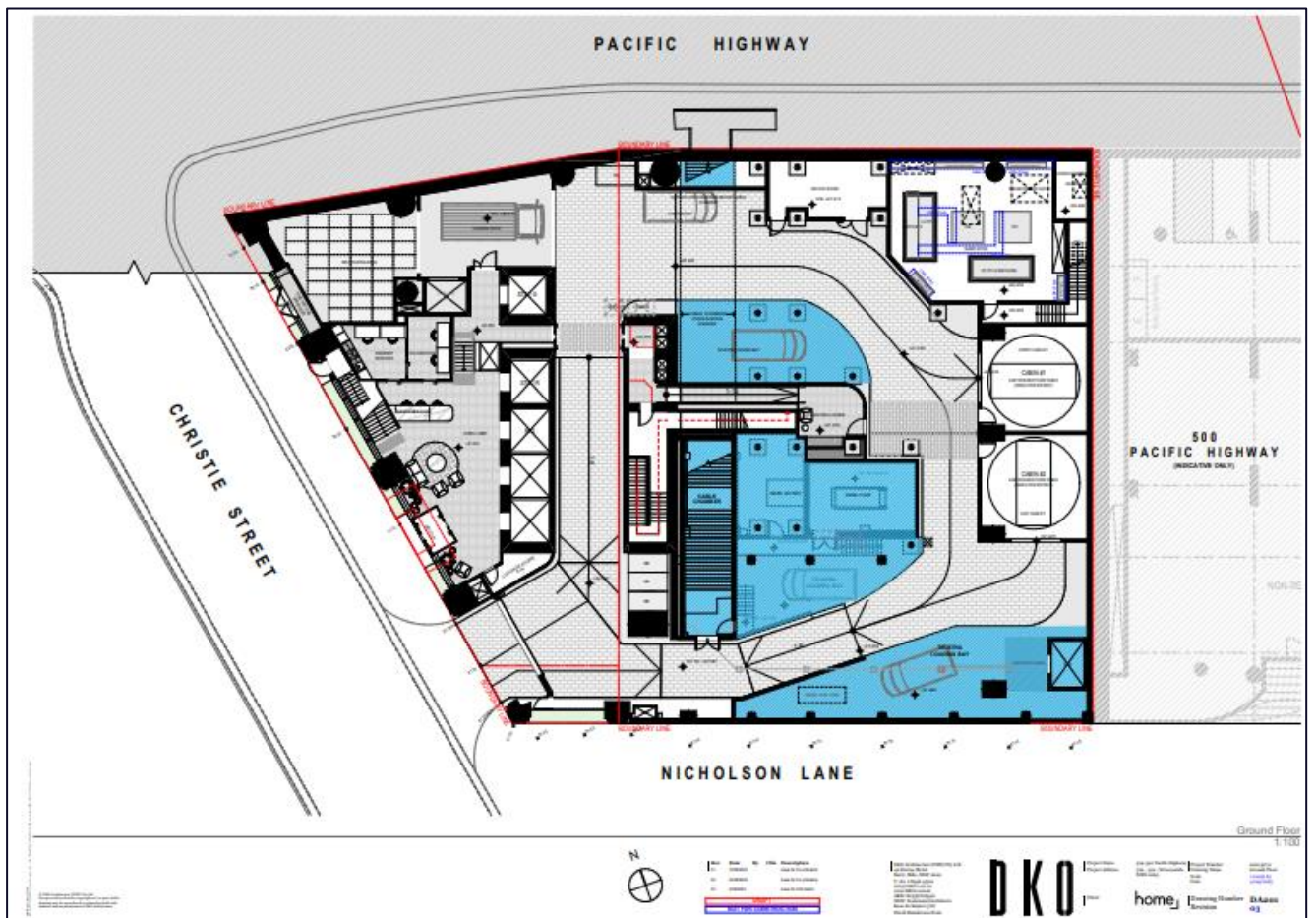


Figure 25: Proposed Ground Plan of 524-534 Pacific Highway (DKO Architecture, 2023)



The area coloured blue on the Level 2 plan below (Figure 26) is the current Telstra exchange which is maintained operating *in situ*. The grey area indicates a residential co-working space.

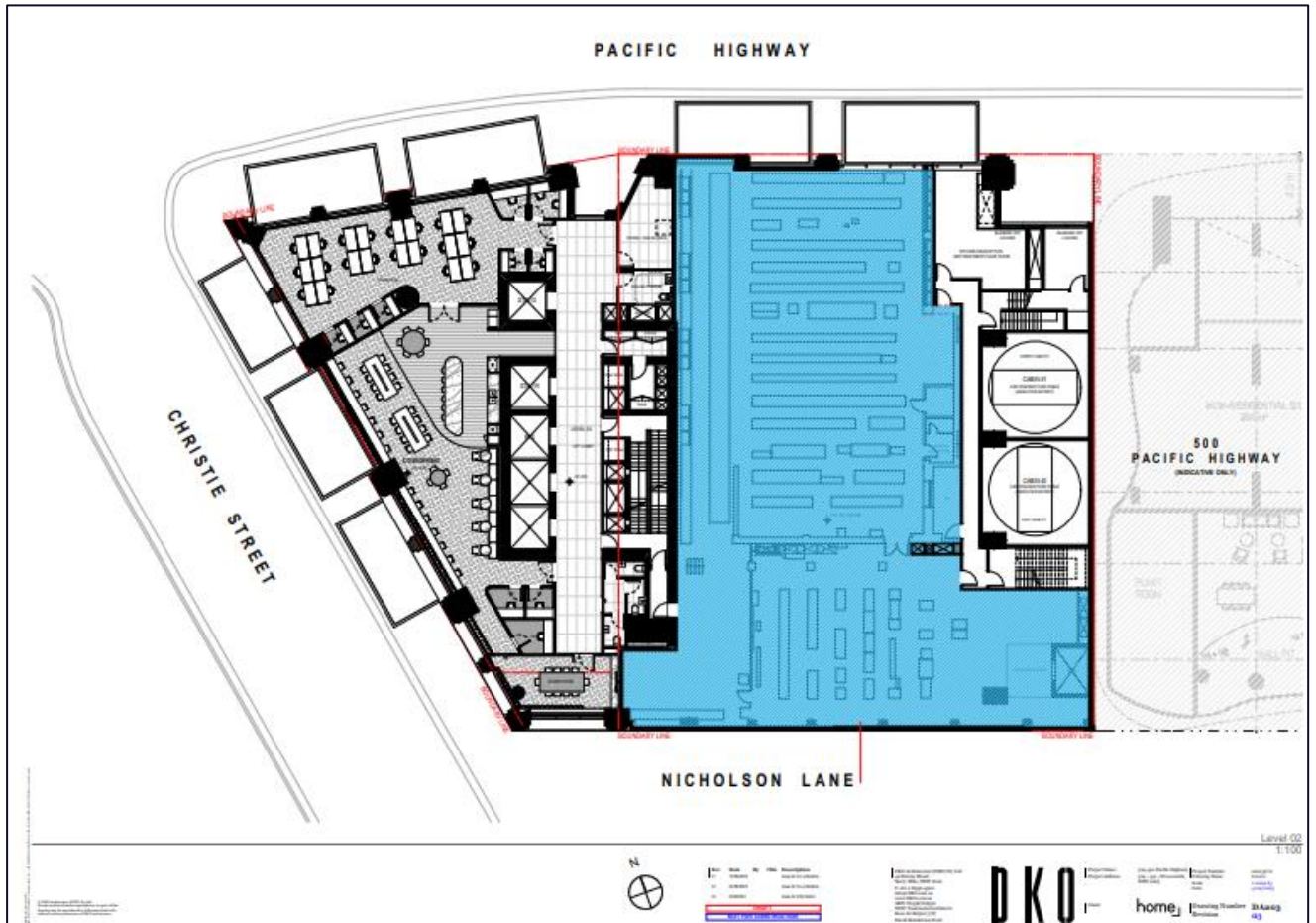


Figure 26: Proposed Level 2 Plan (DKO Architecture, 2022)



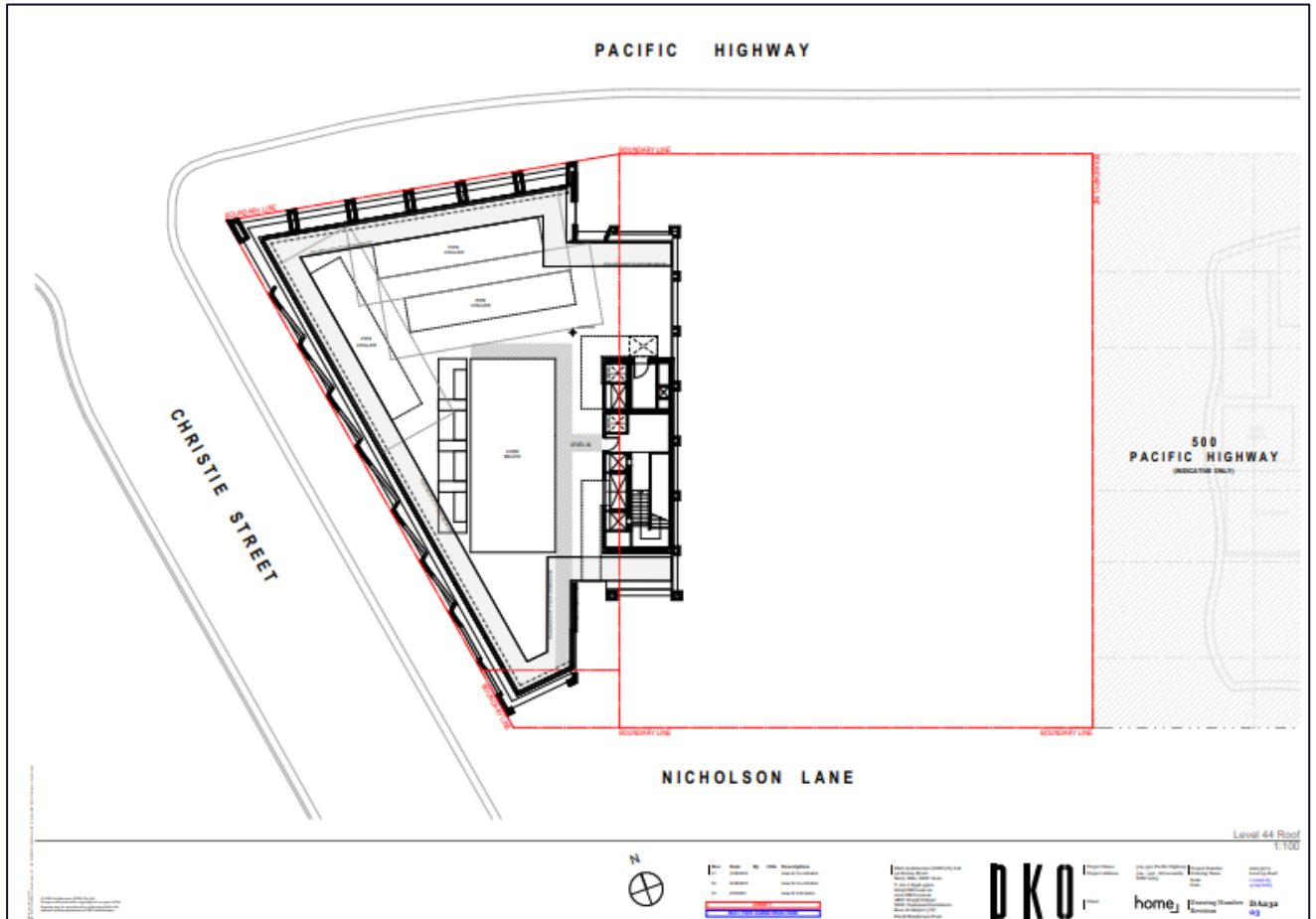
The typical floor plans of the residential tower (Figure 27) indicate an angular tall tower with a central core, a mix of studio and 2 bedroom units, and indented balconies. The Tower is biased towards the street corner and is not contiguous with the adjacent development.



Figure 27: Proposed Typical Floorplans (Levels 11-16) of 524-534 Pacific Highway (DKO Architecture, 2023)

At the upper levels the Eastern wing sets back progressively in a series of terraces in order to reduce overshadowing.

The roof plan (Figure 28) demonstrates the splayed façade to the east side of the tower is reduced and there is a large setback of over 24 metres to the façade of the adjacent tower.



**Figure 28:** Proposed Roof Plan at L44 of 524-534 Pacific Highway (DKO Architecture, 2023)

The proposed façade render (Figures 29-31) shows the tall tower comprises three bands:

- A recessed glazed transparent façade at street level off the Pacific Highway with street trees in the new wider footpath due to the increased setback.
- A middle band comprised of commercial tenancies and STA- a red brick framed block with high proportion of glazing in 2 and 4 level increments cantilevers over the street level.
- A multi-level residential tower broken into 3 blocks with incised angular reveals and indents splitting the faced into two unequal strips. It also cantilevers over the lower middle band of commercial tenancies. It sets back progressively at the higher levels above L37 [see Figure 29].
- Planters fringe the transition levels, and help articulate the form.

The façade is a total replacement and makes no reference to the previous small scale tenancies. Notably the Telstra function is now ‘buried’ in the mass of the podium and it no longer has a street presence. However, the new façade will be an improvement to the current utilitarian façade.

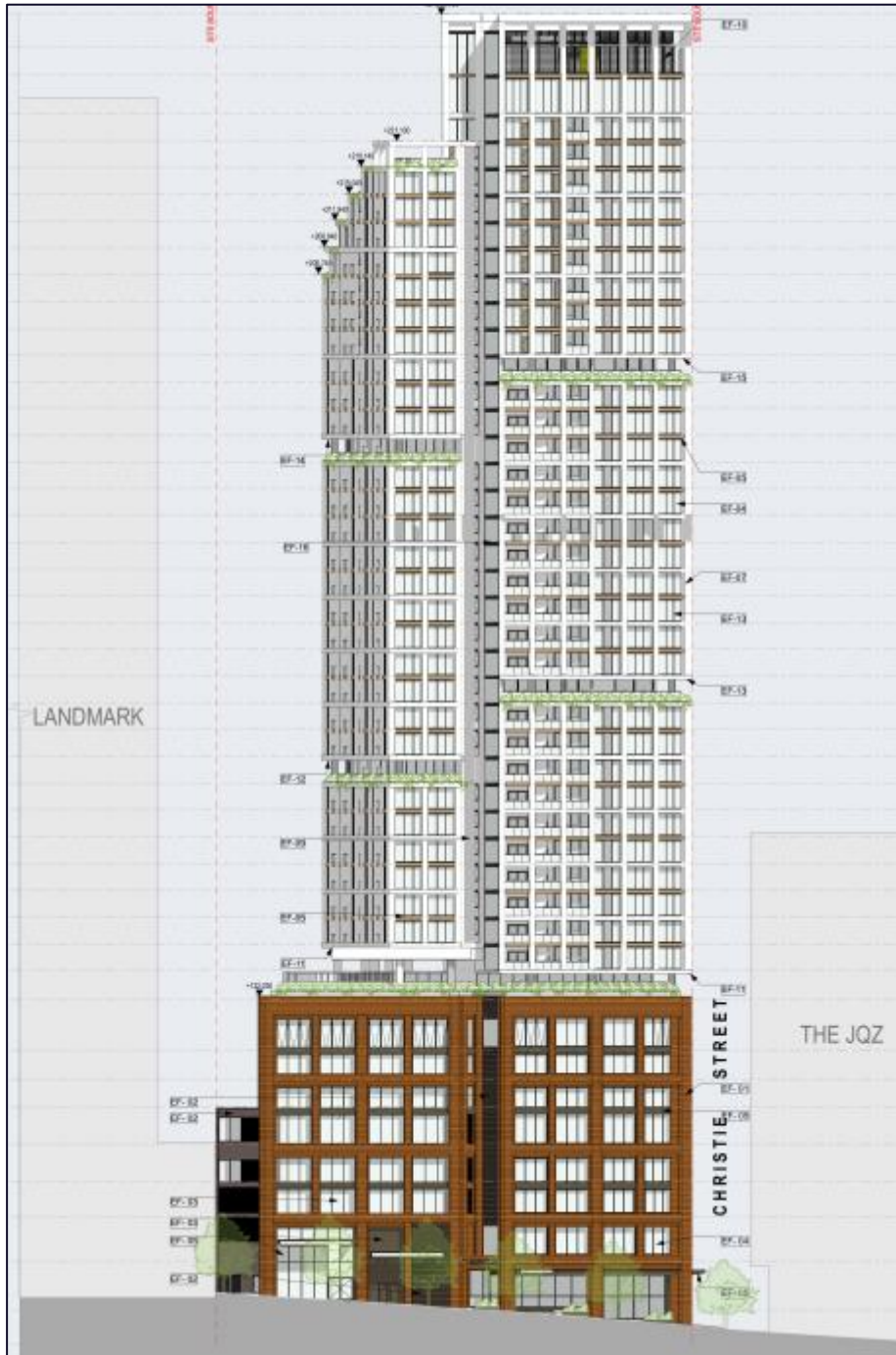


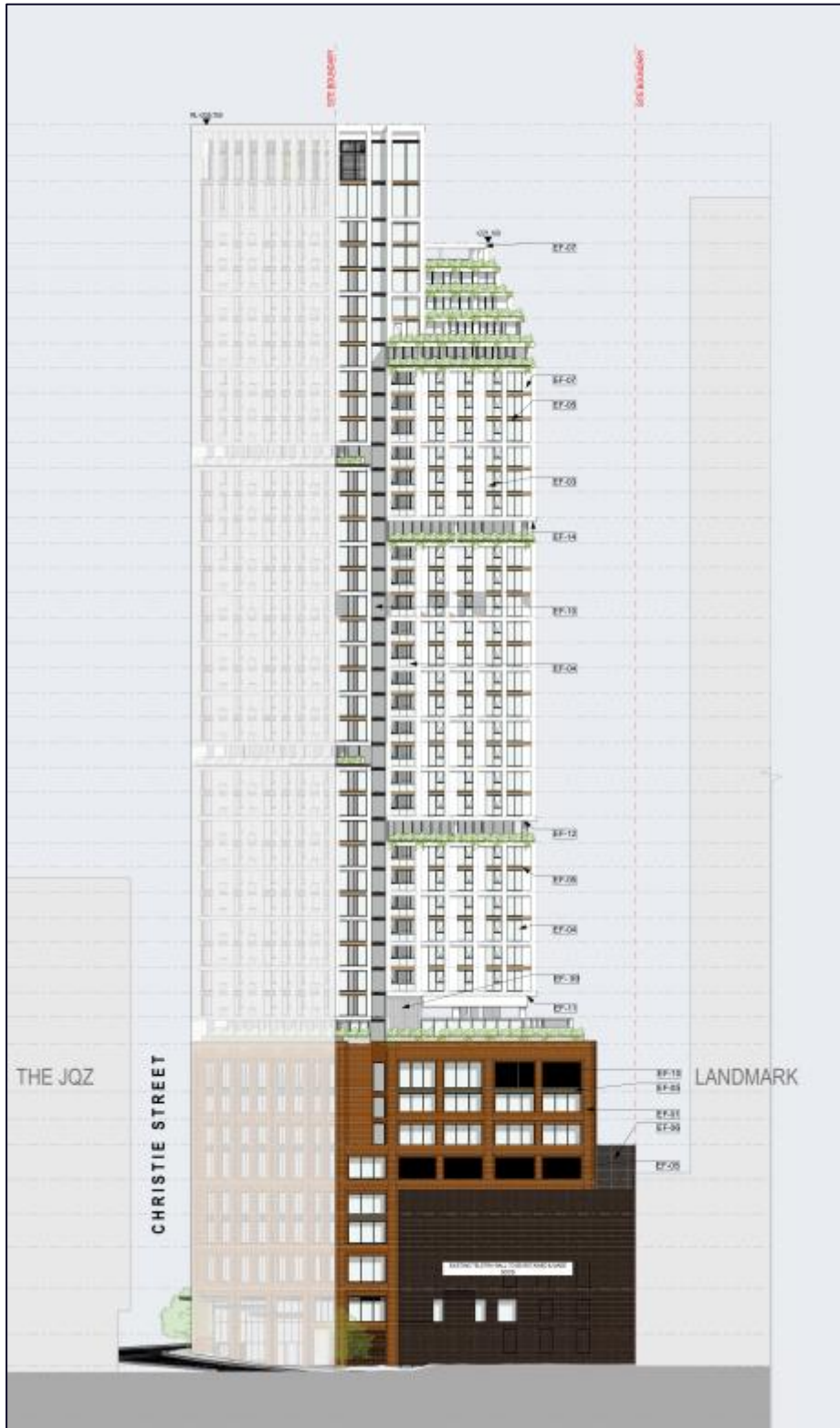
Figure 28: Proposed Façade of 524-534 Pacific Highway (DKO Architecture, 2023)





**Figure 29:** Proposed Elevation of Lower levels of Podium brick facing Christie St (DKO Architecture, 2023)

The red brick clad framing of the middle band comprised of commercial tenancies might be said to reference the previous brick clad facades of the St Leonards properties of the early to mid-twentieth century. However, the scale is much larger, and rather than punched openings in blank face brick work, this relationship is now inverted and the glazing predominates.



**Figure 30:** Proposed Rear Façade of 524-534 Pacific Highway (DKO Architecture, 2023)

The current corner arrangement built at No 524 Pacific Highway is a splay. This proposal eliminates the splay due to the wider setback at the ground entry level. However, the middle and upper towers address the corner in a sharp angle as the same façade language is adopted on Christie Street. It is noted that this arrangement is atypical for St Leonards in that most of the adjacent building facades are rounded rather than angular.



The State Significant Development of this site is considered positive in that:

- There is no potential for direct or indirect impacts on the heritage significance of items of environmental heritage as none are listed in the vicinity.
- The site is redeveloped to the highest order and no economic hardship is anticipated given the demonstrable need for the BTR model of high-rise housing.
- The Telstra Exchange function is maintained on site with an improved façade.
- A commercial function (short stay accommodation) is maintained on this important corner site.
- A new, more viable facade is proposed that will enhance the St Leonards streetscape in the vicinity.

#### **7.4 Assessment of Heritage Impact**

The row of shops at 524-542 Pacific Highway, St Leonards are not listed on the LEP or State Heritage Register. They do not contain local or state significance. There are no buildings or structures within the visual catchment of the site that are listed on the LEP or State Heritage Register. There are no significant heritage views to or from the site.

An Aboriginal Archaeological Assessment (AAA), and an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) both prepared in consultation with the Aboriginal community (Comber 2022) determined that the site does not contain archaeological or Aboriginal cultural significance.

An Historical Archaeological Assessment (Comber 2022) determined that the site does not contain historical archaeological significance.



## 8 SUMMARY

As detailed in section 7.4 of this report, the subject site does not contain heritage significance, nor does it contain any archaeological potential. The proposal will not have an adverse impact on the heritage significance of the site or the surrounding area. The proposed scheme is considered a positive addition to the streetscape of the Pacific Highway, St Leonards.



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## Abbreviations

ADB	<i>Australian Dictionary of Biography</i>
<i>Comm Aust Gaz</i>	<i>Commonwealth of Australia Gazette</i>
CP	Crown Plan
DP	Deposited Plan
HIV	Historic Imagery Viewer, Spatial Services NSW
LGA	Local Government Area
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
ML SLNSW	Mitchell Library State Library of New South Wales
NLA	National Library of Australia
<i>NSW Gov Gaz</i>	<i>New South Wales Government Gazette</i>
NSW LRS	New South Wales Land Registry Services
PA	Primary Application
SARNSW	State Archives and Records New South Wales
<i>SMH</i>	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i>
SEARS	State Environmental Assessment Requirements
Vol Fol	Volume and Folio