

Bruce Dalpra

NORFOLK ISLAND

KINGSTON AND ARTHUR'S VALE
HISTORIC AREA

REPORT ON IMPACT OF PROPOSED BUILDING DEVELOPMENT

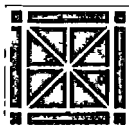
REPORT
NO 36
1994.1

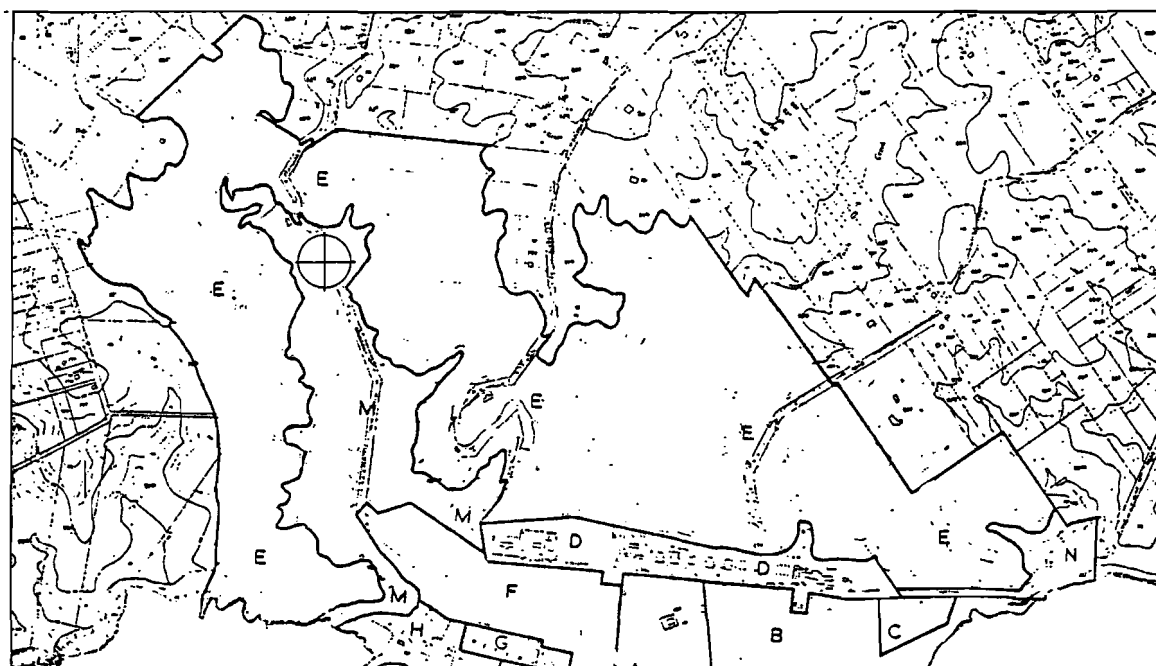
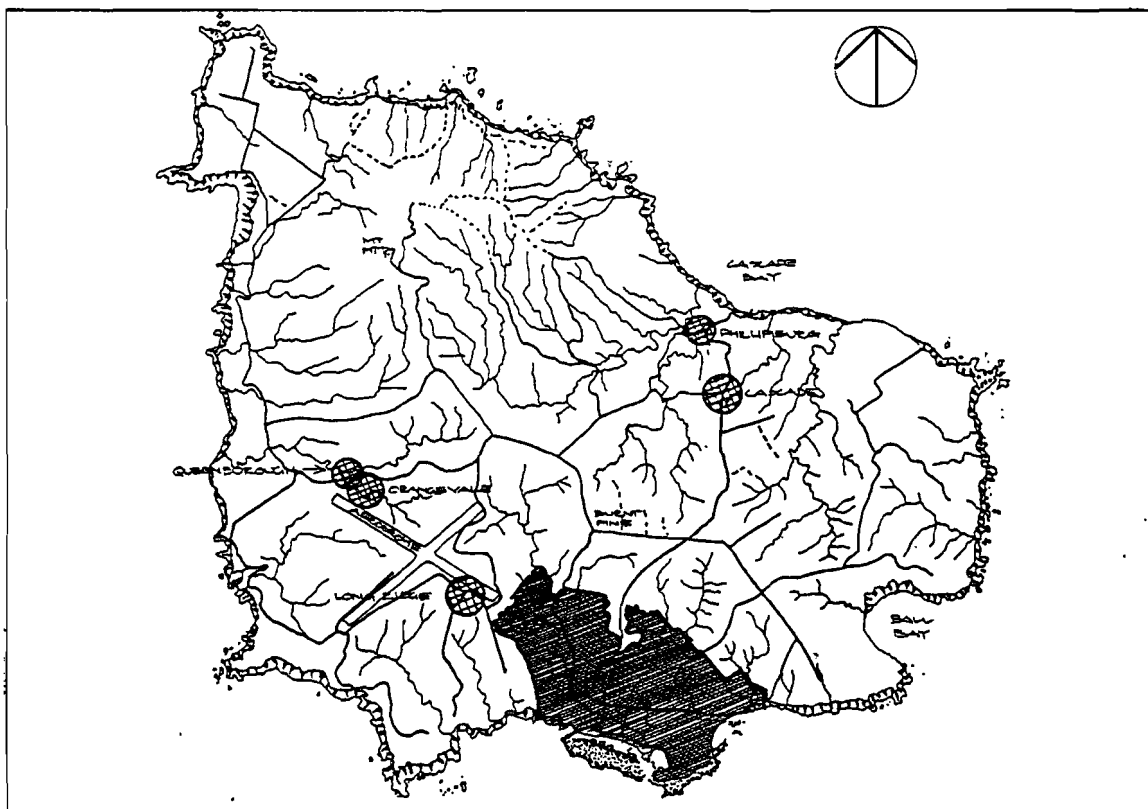
Portion 52r,
Watermill Valley

April 1994



This report was prepared for Australian Construction Services
on behalf of the KAVHA Management Board





A: Government
House Reserve
B: Lowland
C: Cemetery Reserve
D: Quality Row
E: Land above 100ft.
and Stockyard Valley

F: Swamp
G: Prisoner
Compounds
H: Landing Place
Ridge
J: Slaughter & Emily
Bay Beach Front

K: Windmill Ridge
L: Chimney Hill
M: Arthur's Vale -
Watermill Valley
N: Bloody Bridge

Portion 52R

Frontispiece: Norfolk Island and Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area.

**Report on Impact of Proposed Building Development on Heritage
Assets, Portion 52R, Watermill Valley**

April 1994

Authorship

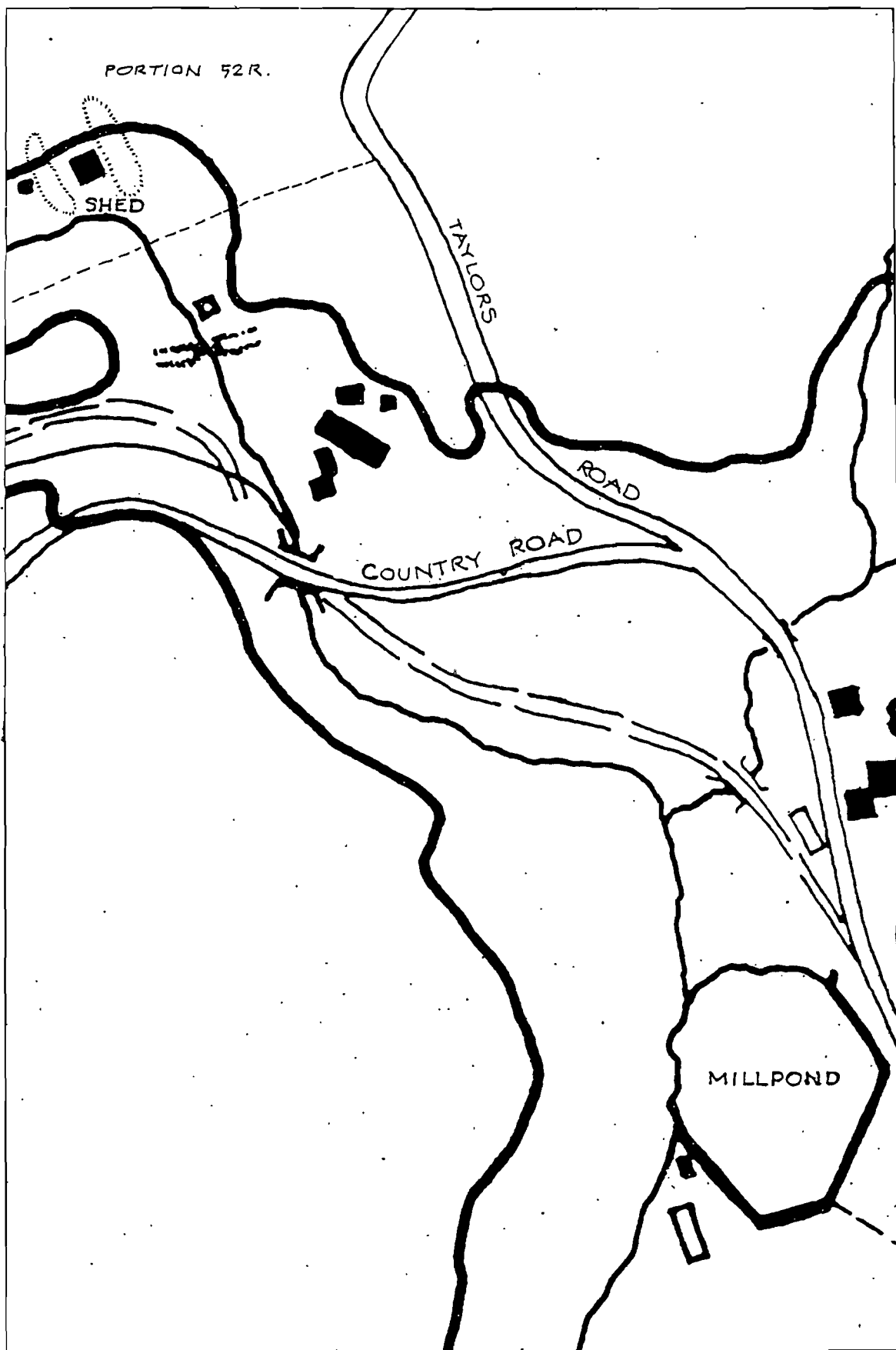
The main part of this report, concerning the archaeological aspects, was prepared by Graham Wilson. Comments on the interpretative aspects were prepared by Peter McLaren for ACS.

Acknowledgements

The assistance of the following persons in the preparation of this report is acknowledged:

Mr George (Puss) Anderson
Mr Haig Beck
Mr Grahame Crocket
Mr Bruce Delprado
Mr Richard Morrison
Mr Neville Nicolai

PART ONE:
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
ASPECTS**



Sketch 1: Plan, northern end of Watermill Valley (Area M).

Background

As a result of concerns expressed by the KAVHA Management Board regarding the proposed development and its possible adverse impact on culturally significant sites located on Portion 52r (see attached letter) a site inspection was undertaken on 5 April 1994 in the company of Mr Neville Nicolai and Mr George (Puss) Anderson.

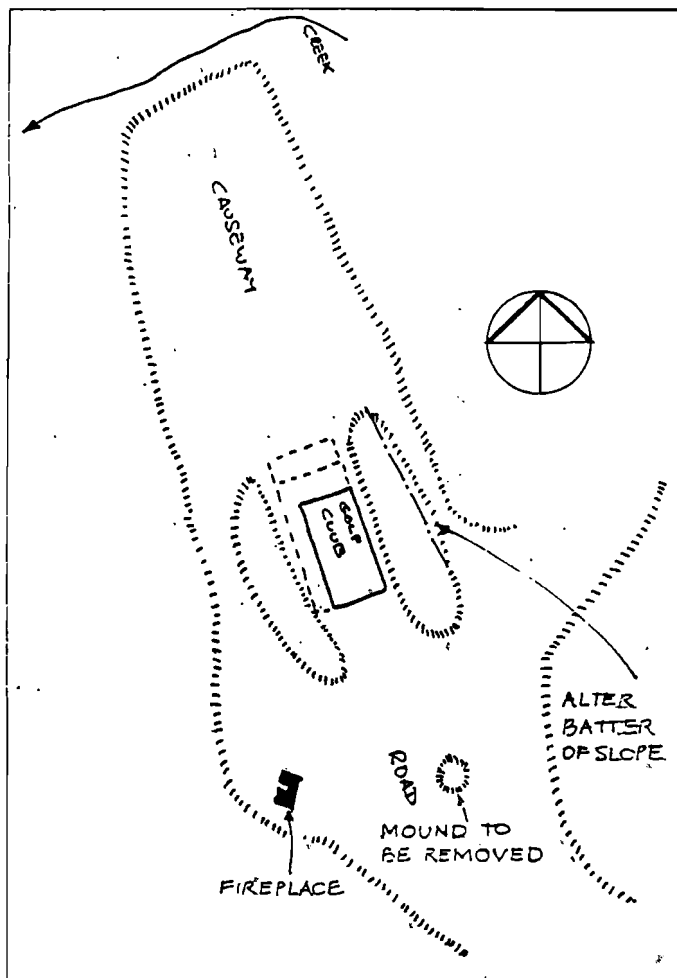
Located on the property are a number of places of cultural significance dating to the Second Settlement period (1825-1855). These sites are not well documented but their form, function and location provide sufficient evidence for an assessment of their significance to be made. Three discernible sites are located within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development: a calcarenite fireplace (M1), a road and cutting from Taylor's Road and a causeway crossing Watermill Creek.

The fireplace appears to have been associated with a wattle and grass structure which may have served as a shepherd's hut during the Second Settlement period. No evidence in the fabric could be found to indicate a date earlier than 1825. The road and cutting from Taylor's Road appears to have provided access from the upper end of Watermill Valley to the north-eastern part of the Longridge Settlement and is one of a number of disused roadways within the upper reaches of the Valley. The causeway which carried the road across the Creek may have been formed as a result of the construction of a large dam (M4) between 1839 and 1844. The remains of the earthen dam wall are located to the south on the adjoining property. Construction of the dam would have flooded the natural crater as well as the road. The causeway appears to have been constructed as part of the dam building process to maintain the function of this road. A culvert may have been located in the position where the causeway crosses the Creek although no physical evidence of such was found. The dam survived into the 1880s but had been breached by the mid 1890s.

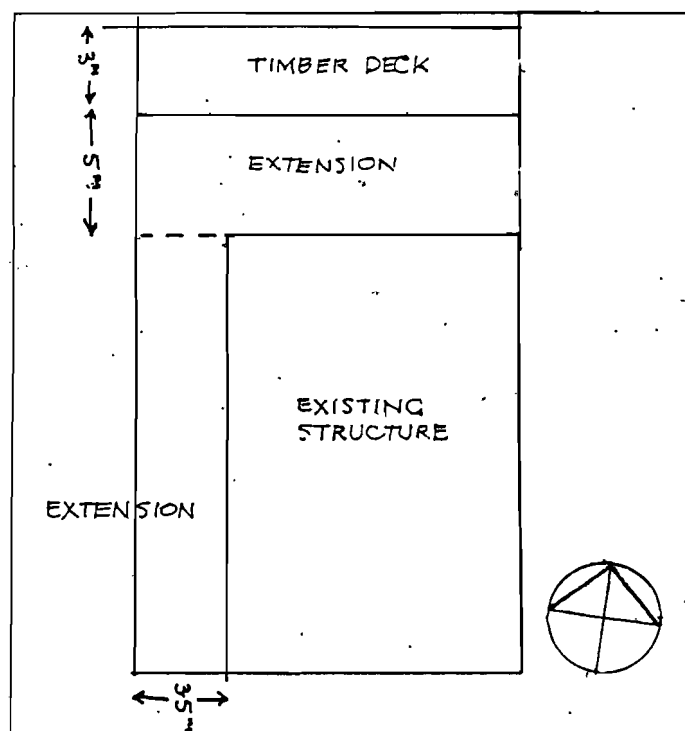
Since 1961 the site has been modified to the extent that much of the "crater" has been landscaped, the central section of a hillock on the approaches to the causeway has been partly removed in order to erect the "golf club" building (M2), the northern margin of this hillock has also been cut and partly terraced, a low mound of earth has been placed in the centre of the roadway in the east and a small terrace has been created at the base of the slope on the northern part of the site.

Development Proposals

The property was examined in regard to the proposal submitted to the Norfolk Island Building Board (described here as Proposal 1) and further examined in order to assess possible alternatives to this proposal.



Sketch 2: Plan of proposed development site.



Sketch 3:
Plan of existing structure
and proposed extensions
(not to scale).

Proposal 1

It has been proposed to modify the former "golf club" building by means of a series of extensions. The construction of this building has already resulted in the removal of part of a small divided hillock through which the Second Settlement roadway passed as it approached the causeway. Both the road bed and the original dimensions of the cutting were removed during this process. It is suggested that the following forms of extension be permitted so as not to compromise the surviving heritage significance of the site.

- a maximum extension to the south of 3.5 m in width and not exceeding the height of the existing roof ridge
- a maximum extension to the west of 5m along the whole frontage of the building including the proposed 3.5m extension referred to above, and not exceeding the height of the existing roof ridge with a further permissible extension to the west of 3m for timber decking only

No further extension or addition to the existing structure should be permitted beyond these boundaries as illustrated in Sketch 1

All work to be supported on pine footings. This is of a reversible form and reduces the degree of impact on the heritage value of the site. Reduction of the levels on the southern side of the building within the "cut" should be taken no further downwards than the ground level immediately adjacent to the southern wall of the "golf club" and no further south than the 3.5m limit.

There are no objections on heritage grounds for the removal of the "golf club" building itself. Should the whole structure, both the original building and its proposed extensions, be removed at some time in the future these footings should be taken-up and the holes backfilled with clay soil.

Any service lines from the structure to a septic tank should be excavated to the minimum allowable depth with the trenches being backfilled and site of the trenches returned to their original contours.

The recently deposited mound of earth located in the centre of the roadway to the east of the "golf club" may be removed and the area returned to its original contours.

The northern margin of the hillock which has been partly cut and terraced may be reshaped for a width of 0.5m along, and parallel to the edge of the existing cut by forming a new batter down to the level of the existing terrace surface.

Other Proposals

Should Proposal 1 not be proceeded with, the only restrictions to building

work on other parts of Portion 52r are as follows (see Sketch 2):

- along crest and sides of the causeway to the west of the "golf club" building
- in the immediate vicinity of the crest and slope of the southern section of the divided hillock
- the crest of the northern hillock
- in the immediate vicinity of the fireplace
- the line of the roadway to the east of the "golf club" building

An alternative site for the construction of a dwelling house was indicated as lying on the terrace at the base of the slope to the north of the "golf club" building. This site contains no known sites of cultural significance and has been modified by terracing since 1961. No objection can be made to development of this site based on heritage considerations.

PART TWO
**INTERPRETATIVE
ASPECTS**

The development proposal

It is proposed to extend the existing open shed (M2) as shown in Sketch 2, to form a residence.

Alternative proposals

As an alternative it has also been suggested that a new residence be constructed east of the existing structure, which would then be demolished. The new shed would be positioned at the base of the Taylors Road embankment, which is obscured from view from the major vantage points.

The location

The open shed (M2) is located within the previous 9-hole golf course, near the picturesque northern extremity of Watermill Valley. The shed is positioned in a cutting in a small hillock. A convict road formerly ran through the cutting, and the route of the road can still be seen running from north to south on either side of the cutting. It is important for interpretation of the place that the location of the road continue to be seen. The location of the shed has clear sight lines to the Millpond (M10A), a popular parking spot for visitors, and Country Road to the south. It is largely obscured from view from Taylors Road to the east.

Significance of the existing structure

The Conservation and Management Plan notes with regard to the existing structure that it is not culturally significant, other than as part of the history of the place, and that it may be removed (CMP p.561). Because of its rather prominent location, it also to some extent interferes with the appropriate interpretation of the area.

Conditions for development

In any new development, the total structure, including retained material from the existing building, should not be visible from any road or from the millpond.

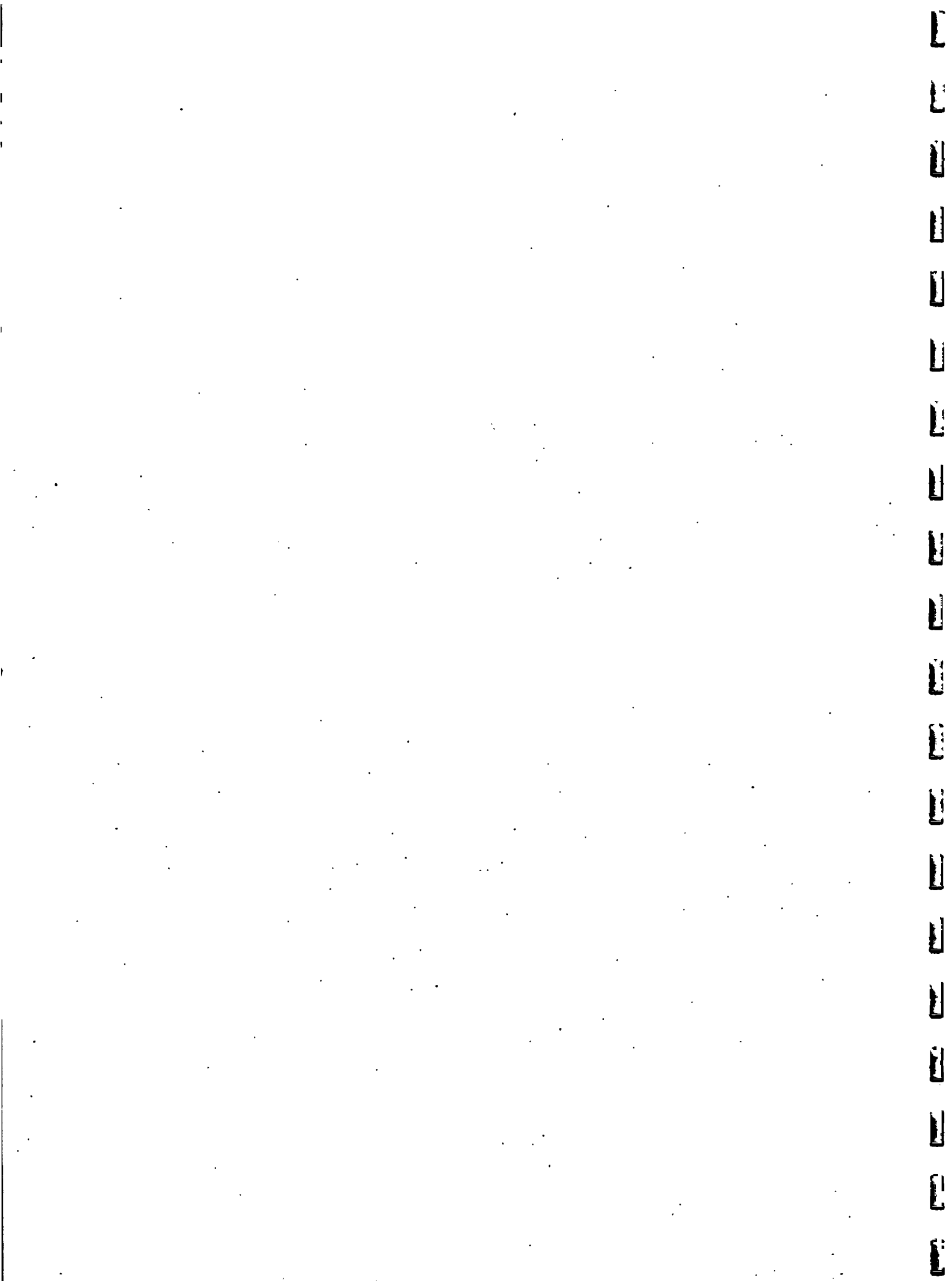
The preferable approach would be for the existing shed to be removed and for a new shed to be located at the base of the Taylors Road embankment, as indicated above. The constraints applicable to construction on the existing site, as outlined above (see p.7) would not apply to construction on the Taylors Road embankment site.

If the existing shed is retained and extended, sufficient new shrubs and other vegetation should be planted to screen the structure from the roads and the millpond. New vegetation should be indigenous, should correspond to species growing near the site, and should not include species likely to grow taller than the plant material growing immediately adjacent to the

site. All planting should correspond to the recommendations of the *Landscape Management and Conservation Plan* prepared for the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area.

It should be stressed that this approach, although preferable to leaving the structure open to view, still involves some adverse interpretative effects, since it introduces plant material into an area which was historically cleared for roads, grazing or agricultural purposes. For this reason the construction of a new residence located at the base of Taylors Road as indicated above would be preferred.

APPENDIX





OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

In reply please quote:

94/5

NORFOLK ISLAND 2899

31 March 1994

22257

Mr & Mrs Neville Nicolai
P.O. Box 161
NORFOLK ISLAND

Dear Mr & Mrs Nicolai

As you know, on 28 March 1994 the KAVHA Management Board considered your application to extend and renovate the former "golf club" building on portion 52r thus converting it to a dwelling.

The KAVHA Board agreed in principle to the establishment of a dwelling on portion 52r, subject to Norfolk Island Building Board approval and to the matters set out below. The matters are as follows.

First, you indicated that in the longer term, you intend to construct a new dwelling on another part of the portion. I have been asked to ensure that you are aware that the portion can not be sub-divided and if this new dwelling was approved by the Building Board any existing dwelling would have to be removed.

Second, there was also concern expressed that the existing "golf club" building was constructed on an old convict road and that the site and the mound adjacent to it may have some archaeological significance which should not be disturbed. The Board has requested therefore that Mr Graham Wilson, a consultant archaeologist to KAVHA, who is currently on the Island, inspect the site to determine whether it is of any archaeological significance and if so whether the extensions you propose should be approved to go ahead.

It would be appreciated if you could contact Mr Wilson to allow him to inspect the site, and on receipt of a report from him, the Board will out of session confirm or otherwise its agreement to your proposal. Mr Wilson can be contacted through Mr Puss Anderson on 22300.

Yours sincerely

Alan Kerr
ADMINISTRATOR

cc Mr Neil Tavener
Health and Building Surveyor

