



## THE PARRAMATTA FEMALE FACTORY SITE INTERPRETATION: MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTRE CONTEXT

The Parramatta Female Factory Site Interpretation and Research Centre, including a museum with internal and external elements, is the proposal for the Parramatta Female Factory Site put forward by the Parramatta Female Factory Friends Inc., a not for profit advocacy group including descendants of convict women (including female factory), social and local historians, curators, local and national residents. This site is of exceptional significance and of international importance.



The Female Factory System was a unique political, economic and social framework developed by the British and Colonial Governments with significant input from Elizabeth Fry and Samuel Marsden based on the prisons and bridewells of England with a focus on concepts of social reform, applied through place and governance. An estimated 9,000 of at least 24,960 convict women went through the factory system. A significant number went through Parramatta Female Factory and from there to the rest of the Colonies.



The Parramatta Female Factory is a Governor Macquarie commissioned and Francis Greenway designed site, dating from 1818. **It is the earliest surviving convict women's site in Australia and was a model for 11 other Female Factories.** It contains buildings and localities of international standing and exceptional heritage value. It predates all but three of the current World Heritage convict listed sites in Australia and deserves unequivocally, to be listed along with these 11 sites.

An estimated one in seven Australians descends from these remarkable and courageous women. Their history, as part of a world class museum and research centre, is the best re-use of the exceptional heritage buildings on this site of world class heritage proportions. It is consistent with the publicly available NSW Government planning instruments developed specifically for this site.



The Parramatta Female Factory site was originally an Aboriginal site of significance. The other sites within the North Parramatta Precinct and their uses are corollaries to the building of the Female Factory. For this reason the primary interpretation of this location should be the Parramatta Female Factory, commensurate with the high significance assigned to this function and the remaining buildings and footprint.



The Parramatta Female Factory is where thousands of women were incarcerated as part of the convict system for a period of 30 years. It was a melting pot for the forging of the Australian identity.

The Parramatta Female Factory site, the original footprint (1818-1848) is envisioned by the Parramatta Female Factory Friends to be a **living history museum for all Australians.** This has the potential to be a world class museum providing national and state significant experiences of heritage and culture. **It has considerable economic and social viability.** At this point in time there is no NSW migration museum, NSW social history museum or National/State archaeology museum. This site would be interpreted as a part of an umbrella organisation consisting of a number of museums in a local network. This would be similar to PAHSMA - Tasmanian Trust for Port Arthur, Cascades Female Factory and National Parks and Wildlife in Tasmania or the Smithsonian for international comparison.



# PARRAMATTA FEMALE FACTORY MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTRE

The *Parramatta Female Factory Museum and Research Centre* is the most appropriate use of the original Parramatta Female Factory site. This nationally listed heritage site also contains world heritage values. It predates all but three of the current World Heritage convict sites in Australia. It is a sister site to Hyde Park Barracks with the same architect, commissioning Governor and timeframe, with the distinctive difference that it is the original model for the female factories in both the colonies of NSW and Van Diemen's Land, provided different functions to the Hyde Park Barracks and the most intact female convict site still in existence. This museum model would:

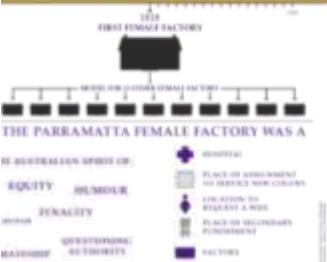


## 1. Interpret the nationally significant histories associated with the site:

- **Parramatta Female Factory site and building history** - Governor Macquarie commissioned, Francis Greenway designed with input from early Colonial Government Architects and convict building trades
- **Site social history** - individual experiences relating to the 5000+ women who passed through the factory; children in custody histories, social justice and prison reform, prison history, assignment system
- **Forced migration** - female convict history
- **Workers' industrial history** - first workers' action in Australia
- **Very early manufacturing history** – spinning, weaving and other products
- **Medical History** - earliest women's health service in Australia, early nursing and medical history and subsequent mental health history.

## 2. Provide a National Research Centre managed by the Parramatta Female Factory Friends:

- The Parramatta Female Factory Research Centre for public access focussing on the core themes of the female factory site
- Collect, store, disseminate resources of the female factory site and connected histories
- Provide, seminars, workshops, displays, tours and related events.



## 3. Provide preservation and access for all Australians:

- Present the earliest surviving intact convict women's site in Australia and world first convict female factory in a world class museum context.
- Respond to the site World heritage value and Burra Charter by:-
  - recognising the site integrity with no new buildings on the female factory footprint
  - legislating the State/Federal custodianship as an ongoing entity
  - sensitive adaptive re-use within the buildings, externally and throughout the factory footprint open spaces
  - ensuring access for all Australians for education, tourism, leisure and personal quality immersive experiences.

## LOCALITY USE

The Parramatta Female Factory footprint (developed and used 1818-1848) would be focussed primarily on the Parramatta Female Factory themes. Prior and past factory





period use would be included in the general interpretation exhibition. The First Peoples' use of the site should be interpreted here and in the open space interpretation areas. The key buildings with interpretation would be the hospital range, matron's quarters and meeting rooms range, first and second class workrooms buildings and the third class dining room area and third class sleeping quarters. The open spaces on the female factory footprint are also critical to the meaning and interpretation of the history. These still contain archaeology for the main barracks, 4 paired solitary cells and Gipps solitary cell range. The open space locations would have interpretations relating to original functions.



### **The building and open space primary uses:**

#### **Entrance Building 112**

This would be located in the Liberty Vernon building 112. on the Female Factory main gates entrance This would be an orientation point for the Museum for the precinct and would include general site history: Pre-Colonial, grants, the transportation experience and timelines of factory and post factory use. A digital information kiosk connecting the museum to related museums and collections of NSW and beyond.



#### **Main Spine - General business, muster yard, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> class barracks and 1<sup>st</sup> Class yard**

The main spine between the hospital and matron's quarters and between the Liberty Vernon building and the river would include the following interpretations: muster area, activities relating to general business and management of the site, specific site based archaeology interpretation of the main barracks, yard enclosures, first and second class convict experience, children's experience and original workroom and privy. This range would be for pedestrian use only with occasional seating for vista and reflection.

#### **Matrons Quarters/ Meeting Rooms/ Storage Building 103**

This building, a Francis Greenway design, is currently tenanted to HETI. If it was vacated it would include early Colonial history overview focussing on forced Migration history (transportation) and specific social and building history relating to the Parramatta Female Factory including context, the factory management, daily life in the factory, the matrons, marriage process (find a wife scheme) and Colonial assignment.



#### **Female Factory Hospital building 111**

This building is a Francis Greenway design. This aspect would include the nursing and medical history of the site with specific reference to the Factory period, the staff and patients (convict and free).

#### **The Airing Yard – laundry and exercise yard**

Open area maintained as an outdoor experience. Interpretation related to washing and could provide opportunities for groups (tourism and school) to congregate.



#### **Paired Solitary Cells Space, 2 of 4 (2<sup>nd</sup> Class Yard section 1)**

An interpretation here concerning incarceration – the experience of incarceration, the social reformers of the factory period whose influence affected the shape and management of the factory, as well as the advocates. This would include: John Howard; Jeremy Bentham; Elizabeth Fry and her disciples (such as Thomas Reid and Charlotte Anley) and the Sisters of Charity. There are two sets of solitary cells on the open green in front of the clock tower building and two behind the building. Second class yard interpretation here or behind the clock tower range. This area would be open space for events, and gathering education and tourism groups.





### **First Class Workroom and Kitchen Range Building 104**

This two storey second Liberty Vernon additions, adjacent to the hospital was originally first class work rooms. It would provide temporary exhibition space and lecture/workshop space. The interpretation would cover themes of the British social and industrial history context, convict women's journey, the over view of the factory experience throughout the colonies, the building of the factories, the workers' history context. This would hold the Parramatta Female Factory Rooms, along with small offices area in western end of hospital building 111, if the Clock Tower building was not available.



If the Matron's Quarters range is not available it would also include early Colonial history overview focussing on forced Migration history (transportation) and specific social and building history relating to the female factory including female factory context, the factory management, daily life in the factory, the matrons, marriage process (find a wife scheme) and Colonial assignment.



### **Third Class Dining Room and First Class Workroom Building 104a**

Set up as the original third class dining room interpretation and accompanied by interpretation of the women's individual stories and the subcultures of the factory. As one of these rooms is part of 1<sup>st</sup> Class workroom women and work in the factory included such as spinning, weaving, straw plaiting.

### **Clock Tower Building 101**

This building currently holds the HETI staff and operations. Should it be vacated in the future, then this would hold the national research centre and library, a lecture theatre and workshop spaces for education and public programming. The interpretation would focus on the life in the barracks as this is the original barrack stone construction material relocated with barracks clock and bell.

### **Paired Solitary Cells Space, 2 of 4 (2<sup>nd</sup> Class Yard section 2)**

This area to contain an interpretation of the punishment experience on footprint of second set of solitary cells and be maintained as garden space for visitors gathering, groups and general visitor picnicking.



### **Second Class Work Room Area and kitchen Building 102**

This room would have interpretation of the factory work and early industry in Australia, including wool and early trades associated with the factory.



### **Third Class Sleeping Quarters 105**

The building interpretation for this would be third class dormitory experience, crimes and punishments at the factory, factory class system, riots, with a focus on the 1827 workers' action. The yard would include oakum picking and rock breaking. This covers the original third class yard footprint to the river.

### **Third Class Workroom 1 Building 105 east wing (solitary cells, later period)**

This was originally a workroom but as the component extant is the asylum period and later the connection between factory as a place of refuge for mental health and the period of transfer from factory period to asylum period interpreted here.



### **Third Class Workroom 2 Building 107**

This would be used for work experiences and life/cultures, subcultures in the female factory and support public areas, such as for lectures, workshops, meeting rooms, museum office and daily business and management of the site.



## Gipps Solitary Cell Yard and Buildings 100 and 100a

Interpretations relating to original uses – farm, mill race, vegetable garden (possible opportunity for a community garden). A section of this area would be for later solitary cells. This interpretation doesn't need a new building but rather a ground tracing of the residence programmes and event activities hub.



### LOCALITY LINKAGES

The site localities would be interconnected with other North Parramatta Interpretations. In practical terms there would be interpretation opportunities for other themes such as use by the Indigenous museum of riverside aspects or custody and care in relation to the children of convict women sent to the Roman Catholic Orphanage in the last years of the factory system or the comparative conditions of incarcerated women to the Girls Industrial School or architectural comparisons between the Female Factory and the Parramatta Gaol. There are also possibilities for digital connections between this site and other members of the nodal network (i.e. other convict related museums or museums holding collections and interpretations e.g. Hyde Park Barracks, Dubbo Gaol, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery). This could be as simple as a museum access kiosk linking sites (including related themes across NSW) at the entrance of the museum and its constituents – Parramatta Female Factory, Roman Catholic Orphanage, Parramatta Gaol.



### CUSTODIANSHIP MANAGEMENT MODEL

The custodianship model would be a Trust with State and Federal representation. The successful precedent for this is PAHSMA in Tasmania.



### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

This model would provide social and economic capital in a location and at a time in NSW planning where this is critical as well as retaining the integrity of the heritage sites in this location. **Heritage would lead the development rather than development lead the heritage.** Significant Australian histories would be accessible for all Australians as well as overseas visitors. The profitability of other significant heritage sites are indication of the potential for this site to be an economic hub as well as heritage and cultural.

### Social Viability and Significance

Looking at the social viability the questions of significance and visitation are essential considerations. Its significance includes but is not limited to:

- significant Aboriginal pre-Colonial uses including a knapping site
- being the first purpose built female factory in the world and therefore the Colony of NSW as well as a model for the eleven other sites
- a Macquarie commissioned and Francis Greenway designed site (1818) with elements from subsequent NSW state architects
- earliest convict women's site surviving in Australia
- the site of the work social history and the site of the first identified workers' action
- estimated 9,000 female factory women went through the factory system (approximately 1 in 7 Australians related to these women). Parramatta Female Factory shaping these experiences for subsequent sites.





- Site of some of the earliest industrial history in Australia. The reason it is called a factory is because there was spinning and weaving on an industrial scale as well as other products produced
- Site of the earliest women's health service in Australia and early nursing and medical history
- Subsequent mental health history (1848-present)

## MUSEUM/RESEARCH CENTRE MODEL AND STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT

The Museum Site Interpretation and National Research Centre model meets the responsibilities and commitments set out by the State Government of NSW. It is in line with the criteria of compatibility with its significant historical values, improving the ability to understand its unique history and enhancing its heritage values.

## ECONOMIC POTENTIAL AND VIABILITY

This site has enormous economic potential for tourism, education, local and regional associated businesses. It would equal Hyde Park Barracks and exceed comparative thematic sites such Port Arthur and Cascades Female Factory because of the following:

- its specific significance
- its location in the geographical centre of Sydney with associated public and private transport access
- the only museum and national research centre presenting Australian identity specific interpretations and research opportunities -- linking identity, social history and cultural expression on one site
- Colonial history context - other early surviving sites in the precinct and locality. Including but not limited to: Old Government House (1790), Elizabeth Farm (1793), Experiment Farm(1791), Female Orphan School (1813), Macquarie Barracks (1818), Brislington House (1821), Macquarie Hospital Archaeology (1818), Hambledon Cottage (1824) and St John's Cemetery (1790)
- early Colonial Heritage tourism is a growing industry as a part of heritage touring.
- Parramatta, Sydney's second largest metropolitan CBD continues to develop significantly ensuring increasing regional visitation to add to state, national and international tourism
- site potential in providing directly relevant curriculum outcomes for primary, year 7, year 11 and year 12 (particularly for history but also Design and Technology, English, Visual Arts)
- in tertiary education the relevance would be particularly for social science, architecture curricula
- the potential heritage hub would also provide social and business outcomes



- within the context of the evolution of Australia and its identity, Parramatta is an opportunity for life-long learning within these communities.

A case study on Port Arthur has provided evidence for what at Parramatta would be a much larger income potential:

- Port Arthur has 389,000 tourists
- \$45 per tourist
- annual income of \$17.5m with a multiplier effect of 1.5, creates a further \$26m, so a total annual income of \$43.5m.



Port Arthur is remote, not located within a city or a 5 kilometre radius that includes: the earliest surviving homestead in Australia; oldest surviving Government House; Female Orphan School early children in care; Experiment Farm Cottage, the earliest grant and farm experiment; early churches and graveyards - St John's Cathedral, St Patrick's (including Pugin design aspects); Lancer Barracks with original Macquarie Barracks, archaeology with early hospitals, Ruddock Centre archaeology of convict hut/inn/house site, Cumberland Plains original remnant landscape at Parramatta Park all on Burramattagal land including knapping, women's site and historic sand sheet.

Parramatta is on the doorstep of Sydney which received 27million visitors in 2018-19 and almost 98 million came to NSW.



#### **WORLD HERITAGE VALUE**

**The 11 convict world heritage sites demonstrate the economic and social viability. This would be evident at this site through promotion and activation of:**

- world heritage value – social and economic opportunities
- international communities in its unique female colonial history and the mothering of a nation
- relevance to all Australians in its key themes and courageous survival of forced migration
- high education value for primary, secondary, tertiary and life-long learning opportunities
- commemorative site for descendants
- self-determined immersive visitation experiences
- economic viability through onsite service and business opportunities of tourism, education and associated local and regional generated business.



#### **WORLD CLASS MUSEUM FOR PARRAMATTA**

The current changes to Parramatta provides a unique opportunity to develop the Parramatta Female Factory Museum and Research Centre with a living museum interpretation, collection material and research resource managed in the form of a Trust and a site with World Heritage Status.





## Appendix 1.

### PARRAMATTA FEMALE FACTORY FRIENDS CHARTER

The Parramatta Female Factory Friends has grown out of community action to protect, conserve and bring the Parramatta Female Factory to all Australians. We do this through advocacy, site monitoring, female factory research, tours, talks, education activities and celebrations. We welcome anyone to join us who shares the same aims as identified in our charter, which is to:

1. Protect, preserve and conserve the site and all its provenance according to the Burra Charter
2. Advocate for the Female Factory Precinct for UNESCO World Heritage Site Status
3. Ensure that the precinct is listed and remains on local state and national heritage registers
4. To work in conjunction with other organisations for major future planning and strategic opportunities, in particular, those responsible for companion sites such as the Parramatta Gaol, Parramatta Park, Old King School and the Roman Catholic Orphanage
5. Advocate the establishment of a joint state and national statutory authority as custodian and manager who will:
  - a) Develop and manage the Parramatta Female Factory Precinct as a cultural, tourism and learning place of international significance
  - b) Manage, conserve, interpret and promote this site for the people of Australia in accordance with the guidelines of the Burra Charter and at the highest possible professional standard
  - c) Raise awareness of the value of and risks to the Female Factory site
  - d) To undertake and promote historical research in order to share the historical value of the two sites and to pass on the heritage of this irreplaceable site to future generations
  - e) To manage and promote the site in spirit of equality as a meeting place where all can access, share and understand our history and our Australian identity, past and present
  - f) To provide staff and budgets to conserve and maintain the site in accordance with 5. a-e

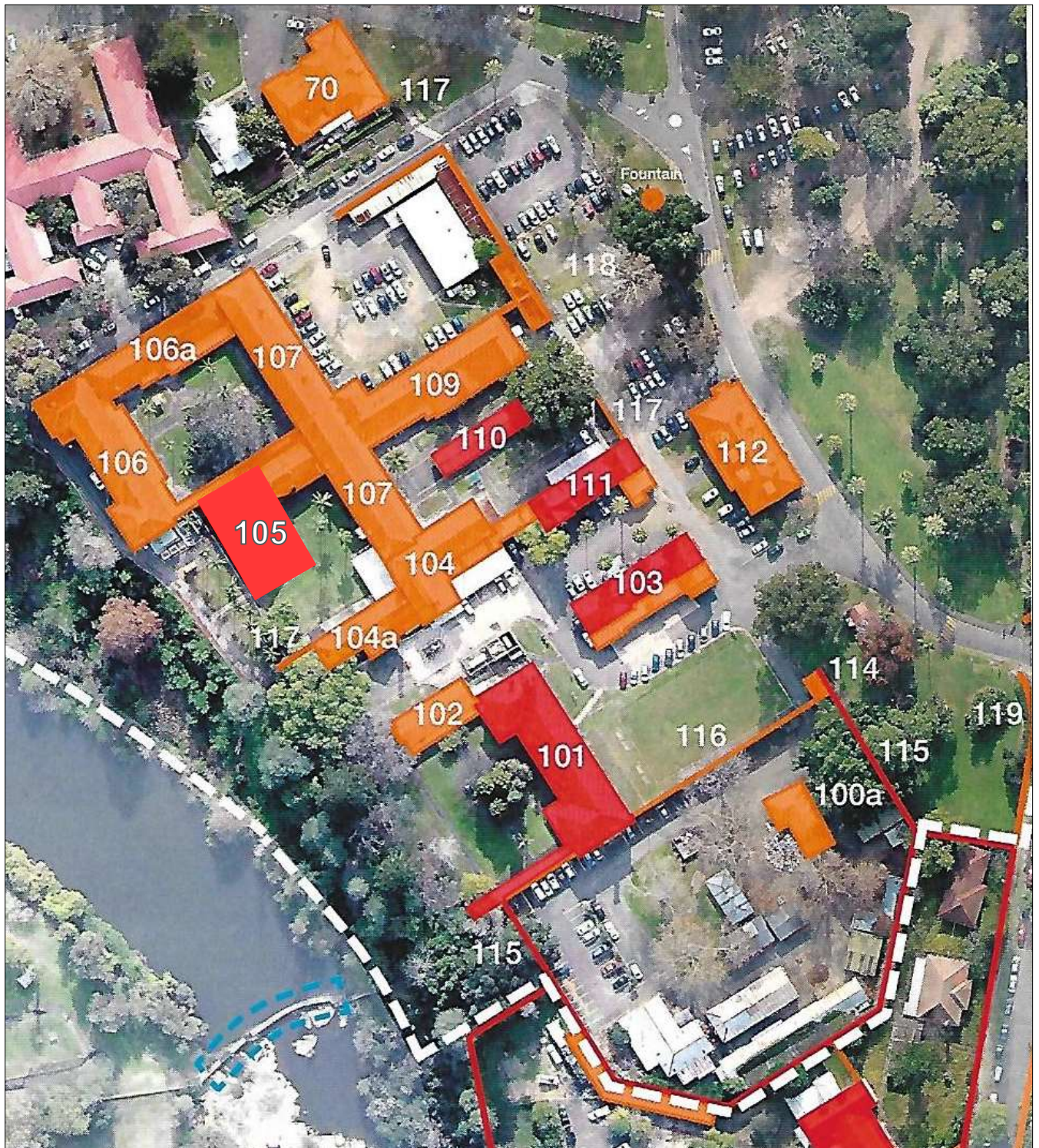




## Appendix 2. Parramatta Female Factory Site with National Heritage Perimeters





Appendix 3. Female Factory Site Map showing heritage value buildings



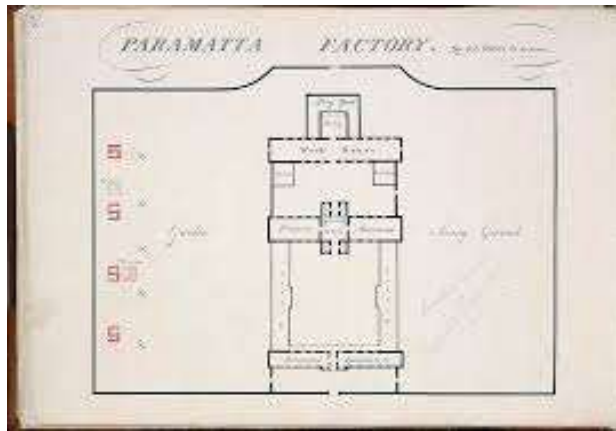
-  Exceptional Heritage Value
-  High Heritage Value



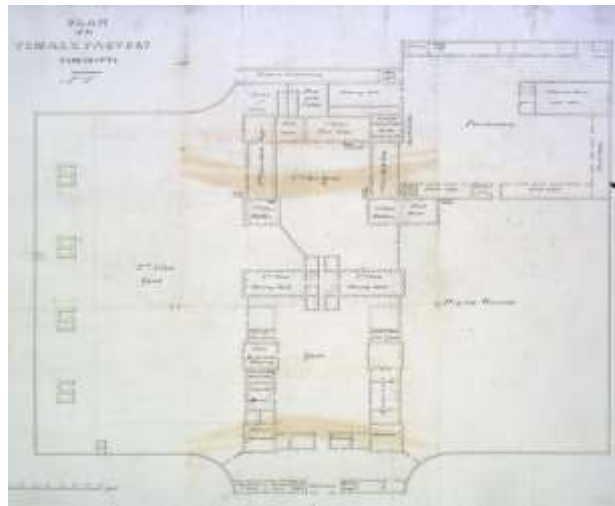


## Appendix 4. Historic plans of the Parramatta Female Factory

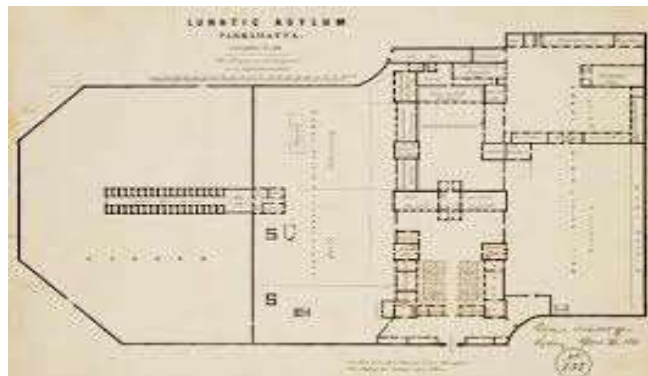
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**For more information on the Parramatta Female Factory:**  
[www.parramattafemalefactoryfriends.com.au](http://www.parramattafemalefactoryfriends.com.au)

Image Acknowledgements: Parramatta Female Factory, State Library of NSW Collection; Entrance - Parramatta Female Factory, Ralph Hawkins Collection; Convict women images - collections of Babette Smith, Matthews family, Upton Family and Trudgett Family; Introductory Image, Family Reunion, Upton Family Collection; Parramatta, Augustus Earle, National Library of Australia; Ronda Gaffey, Gay Hendriksen, Kerima-Gae Topp, Anne Mathews. Map 2: Heritage value as identified by Urban Growth NSW in *Parramatta North Urban Transformation Heritage Snapshot Cumberland Hospital East 2016*. Courtesy: Property & Development NSW which is a part of Department of Planning, Industry & Environment

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