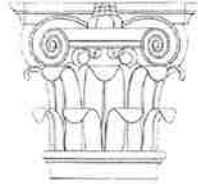


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Harper's Mansion, Berrima, NSW

Draft of: 20th March 2017

OPTIONS FOR KITCHEN ARCHAEOLOGY INTERPRETATION

Prepared for: Harper's Mansion Committee, National Trust of Australia (NSW)

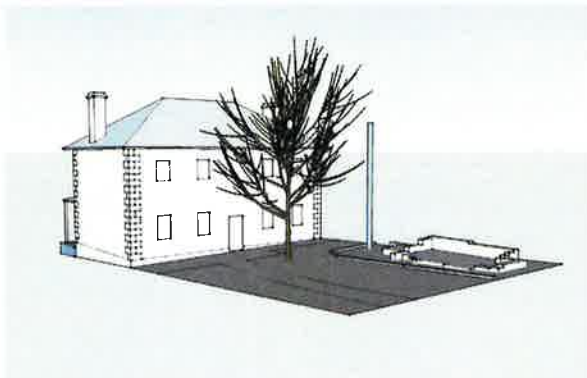
Introduction

A range of options to conserve/interpret the remains of the detached kitchen recently uncovered at Harper's Mansion was prepared for consideration by the Committee.

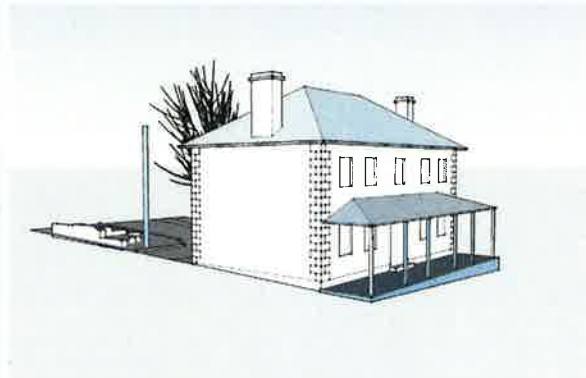
Ten Options

No.	Short Description	Longer Description	Degree of fabric conservation	Degree of interpretation
1	Leave uncovered and interpret	This option would involve some work in order to make remains stable. It also involves periodic maintenance/weeding/spraying.	Will result in loss of significant fabric in the mid-term by weathering and/or vandalism.	The remains themselves become an interpretation of the kitchen, and could be further interpreted by the use of signs, images, etc.
2	Cover up and interpret	Involves sheeting over some of the resource with suitable fill behind some low retaining walls.	Will result in almost complete preservation of the archeologic resource.	The remains would no longer be visible, but interpretation could be still be possible with signs and images.
3	Half cover up and interpret	Involves sheeting over the resource with suitable fill behind some low retaining walls	Will preserve the section of archaeology covered up. The remainder will slowly decay.	The visible fabric would be an interpretation of the kitchen, and could be further interpreted by the use of signs, images, etc.
4	Build protective structure and interpret	With posts outside line of walls and roof projecting further. Provide balustrade.	Will extend the period that the structure survives, cleaning and weeding will still slowly destroy the resource.	The remains themselves become an interpretation of the kitchen, and could be further interpreted by the use of signs, images, etc.

No.	Short Description	Longer Description	Degree of fabric conservation	Degree of interpretation
5	Cover up and build up walls and interpret	Involves partial reconstruction of walls in new material that could be touched by visitors.	Only reconstructed walls will be subject to weathering at no significance loss	The new walls would be an interpretation of the kitchen and could be further interpreted by the use of signs, images, etc. Could allow light projections at night
6	Cover up and build replica archaeology at higher level and interpret	Involves complete replica of archaeology made up of new material.	Will result in almost complete preservation of the archeologic resource.	LSJ have seen this done in Japan. Very expensive an open to misinterpretation
7	Cover up and interpret with steel frame	Involves a skeletal frame indicating the size and proportions of the original kitchen.	Will result in almost complete preservation of the archeologic resource.	Frame will help interpret original configuration of kitchen. Could allow light projections at night
8	Cover up and interpret with steel frame with roof providing shelter	As above but fixing on the roof that would provide some permanent shelter in the garden	Will preserve resource and provide a shelter in the garden	Frame will help interpret original configuration of kitchen. Could allow light projections at night
9	Conjectural reconstruction of kitchen	Involves rebuilding some of the weaker fabric and a complete, partly conjectural, reconstruction of the kitchen fabric	Involves substantial loss of original fabric and patina but would put structure in a stable configuration.	The new fabric would be an interpretation of the kitchen and could be further interpreted by the use of signs, images, etc. Could allow light projections at night
10	Cover up and build part conjectural reconstruction	Involves reconstructing the walls and some of the roof, left in half completed state for the benefit of interpretation.	Would protect resource but would require maintenance	The new walls would provide 3D interpretation of original kitchen structure.



Existing remains - view from Northeast



Existing remains - view from Southwest

Selected Options

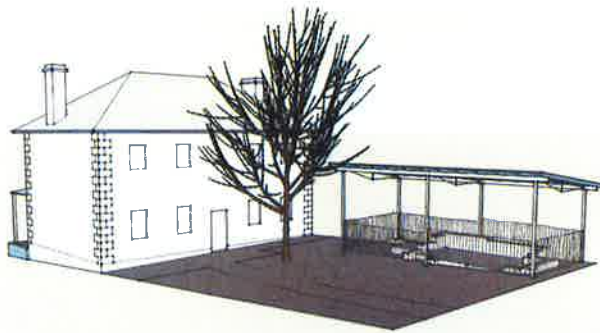
The committee has then selected two of the options for further studies. To help understand these options, sketches have been prepared as below and attached:

Roof Option (Option 4)

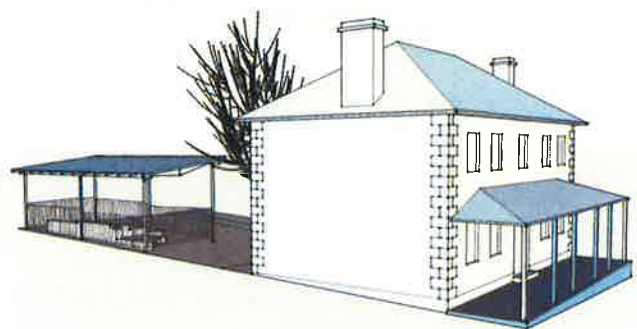
This option includes stabilizing the ruins, and building a protective structure around it with posts, a balustrade and roof above. This option allows the public to see the real archaeology, which is an interpretation of itself, and which could be further interpreted by signs and images. The fabric would be a little protected by the structure, but would still continue to deteriorate due to weathering and weed growth. The ruins would also not be completely secure and vandalism (conscious or unconscious) could also speed the deterioration process.

The stabilization procedure would include:

- Relay the top bricks of the walls in compo mortar
- Add a capping detail in the same mortar to shed water away from top of walls
- Check over all areas and stabilize any particularly unstable areas
- A periodical spray of weed killer to avoid weed growth
- Regular cleaning of growth (which are likely to occur).



View from Northeast

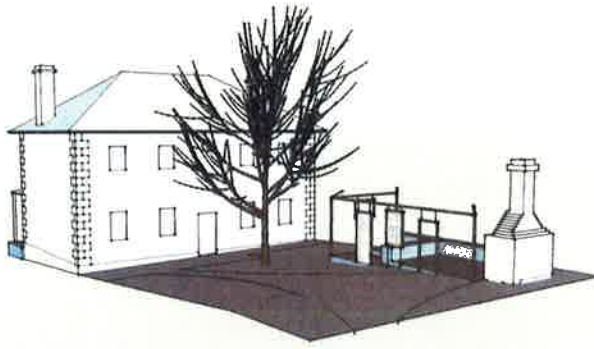


View from Southwest

Frame Option (Option 7)

The second option discussed includes interpreting enclosing the remains by building a structure around part of the remains and covering them with a mixture of soil and sand in order to stabilize moisture conditions during all seasons of the year. Reburial (or backfilling) as discussed by Martha Demas, is one of the most viable and flexible strategies for preserving archaeological remains¹. This procedure would protect the ruins from both weathering and vandalism. Above the encapsulated remains, a two sided frame would be built to interpret the original's kitchen size, location and configuration as can be seen in the above images. The space can be made accessible by elevating the ground to the level above the encapsulated floor, and the encapsulated walls can serve as outdoor seating. The chimney could be completely reconstructed (with little conjecture) in order to add gravitas to the design and act as a draw card to the place by adding a new substantial visible element. The windows and doors framing could hold a mural to both show their original location and provide further information on colonial kitchen wings.

¹ Martha Demas, "Site Unseen": The Case for reburial of Archaeological Sites", Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites (2004).



View from Northeast



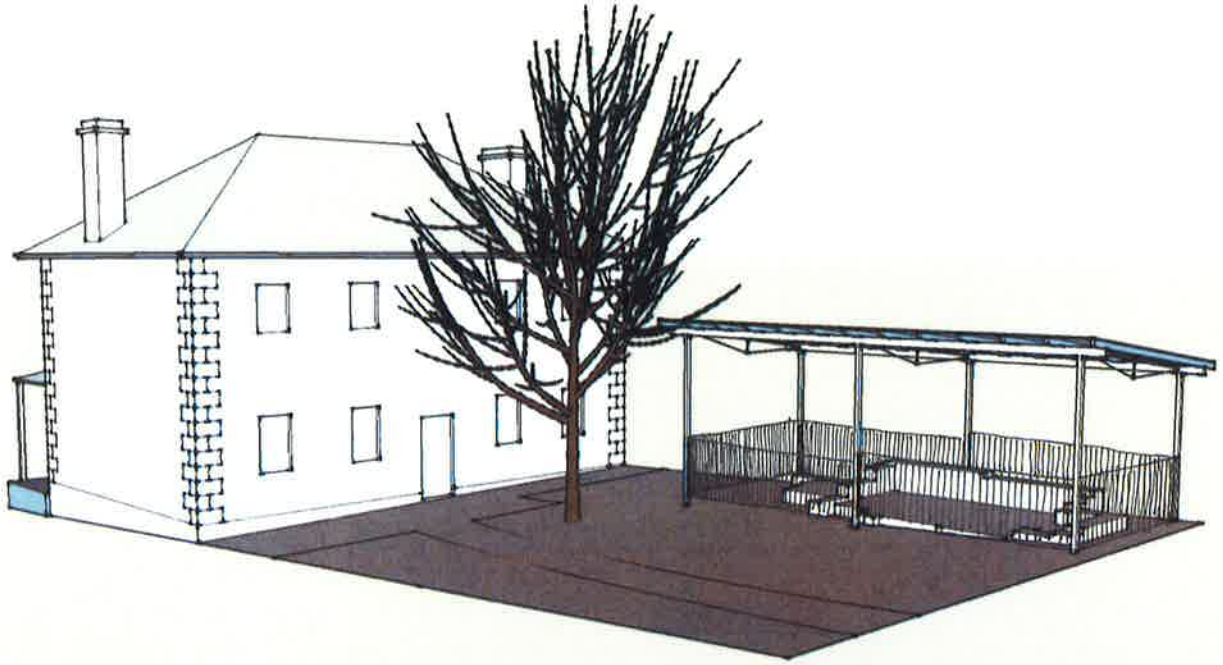
View from Southwest

General comment

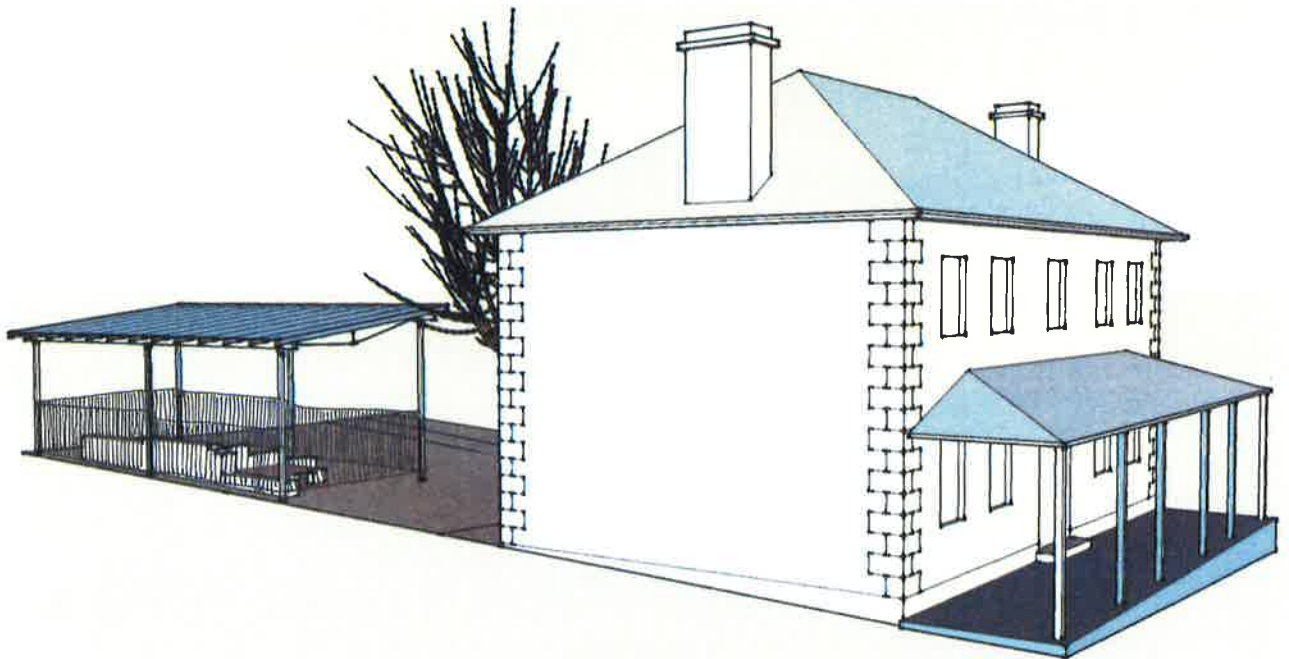
Both options are practical and can have added interpretation by use of photos, models, signs, etc. The roof option doesn't protect the ruins as much, but, as it is not a unique example of colonial building remains, this would be acceptable and it allows the public to see the "real thing". The frame option is an economical and more inventive way to show people what the kitchen used to look like and could attract further visitors, but hides the real archaeology from view in order to preserve it for longer.

Grazi Prada and Ian Stapleton
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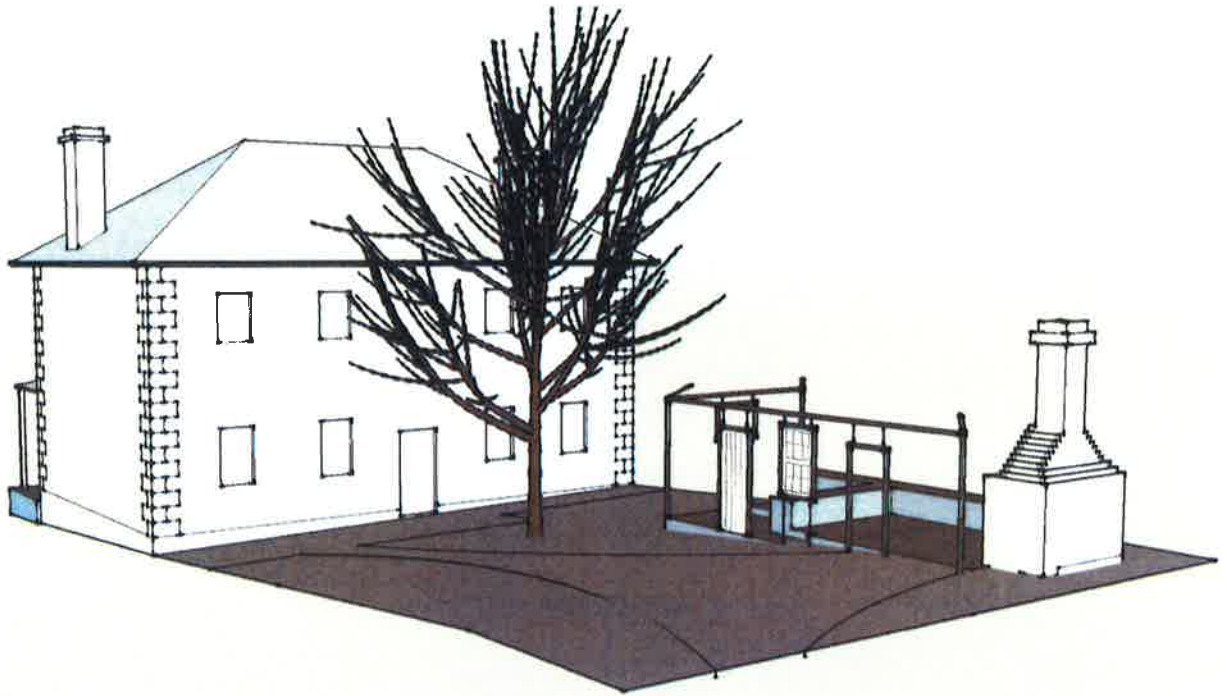
Appendix 1: Options Sketches



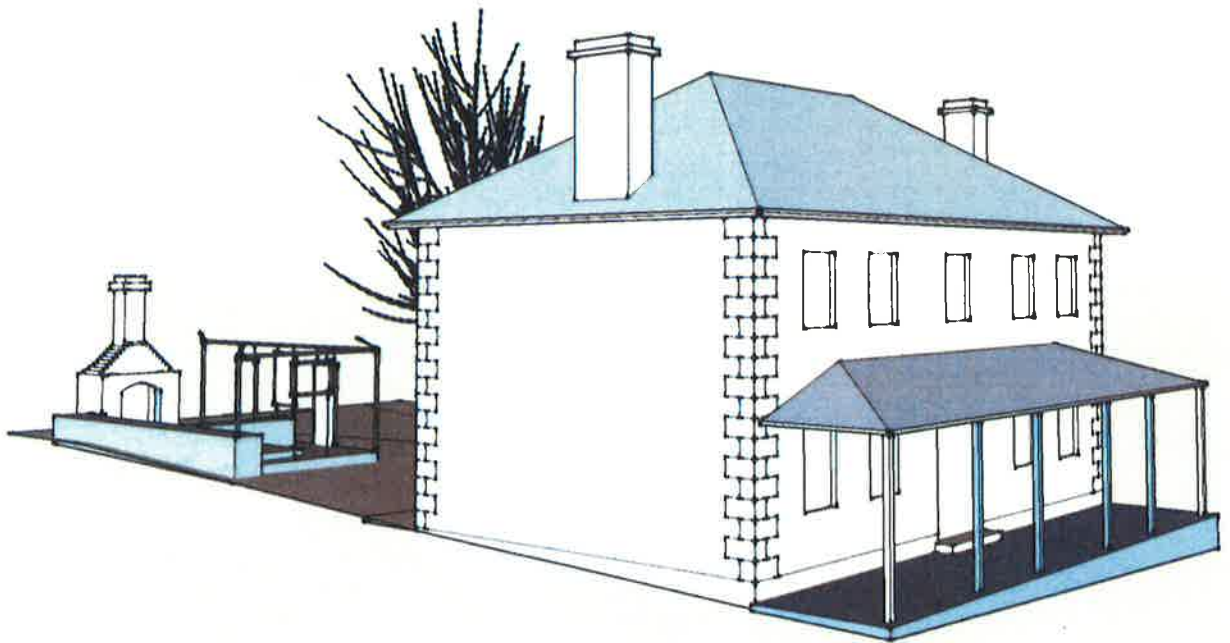
Roof Option: View from Northeast



Roof Option: View from Southwest



Frame Option: View from Northeast



Frame Option: View from Southwest