

FORMER MOUNTED POLICE BARRACKS AND ARMOURY

Kintore Avenue

The Mounted Police Barracks and the Armoury complex include some of the earliest surviving government buildings. Associated with the South Australian Police Force, they date from almost the colony's establishment. Both were purpose-built as part of a group surrounding a large quadrangle which was entered by two iron swing gates surmounted by arches.



(CD Ref 2835/98)

They are built of Adelaide limestone extracted from the quarry between the present Torrens Parade Ground and the Adelaide Railway Station and which ceased operation in the mid-1850s.

Soon after the foundation of South Australia, settlers asked for a modest police

service to protect them from Aborigines and escaped felons from New South Wales. However, there was some confusion as to whether this was to be a military or a civilian role.

Governor Hindmarsh established the police force on 28 April 1838 which also performed some military functions such as 'pacifying' Aboriginal warriors on the frontiers. As colonists began to settle further away from Adelaide, police were sent to establish stations in different regions, gradually expanding in numbers and activities.

There were two significant buildings at this North Terrace complex, one was the two storey barracks for the mounted police and the other the Armoury and inspectors' residences. The barracks building was originally a single storey built of limestone and brick with a slate roof. In 1882 the building was extensively modified with the addition of another storey. As many as seven different building stones including bluestone and sandstone have since been detected in the building.

The other surviving building, the Armoury and inspectors' residences, although built for the police force, became associated with South Australia's military history. It was from this building that contingents to the Boer War were organised. A local military force was first deemed necessary during the Crimean War when a voluntary Military Forces Act, 1854, was passed. South Australia's first permanent force was an artillery unit created in 1878.

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When the mounted police vacated the barracks in 1921 the premises became a teachers training college until new premises were built for them in 1927. The ground floor rooms were then used as the Children's Library and afterwards by the South Australian Museum as stores and offices.

Like the nearby Destitute Asylum, the buildings of the Mounted Police Barracks were grouped around a large quadrangle, in this case a parade ground. Tenders were called in 1850 by Captain Freeling the colonial engineer who prepared the plans. J.H. Walker the contractor completed the barracks in 1851. In 1854 additions were built consisting of an armoury and residential accommodation. The additions were designed by W Bennett Hayes and the building works were undertaken by W. Lines.

The Observer, 10 March 1855 described the new barracks and 'lofty' armoury, which held:

. . . a considerable stand of old heavy flint firelocks, with bayonets, cross belts &c., belonging to the police. These are now being cleaned and fitted up for the temporary use of the Volunteer Infantry, who regard the ponderous old-fashioned weapons, the stiff cross-belts and their accompanying pipe-clay with little veneration.

The east and left wings were occupied by inspectors Hamilton and Strong, each building being described as ' . . . a plain, substantial and commodious bachelor's residence'.

On the eastern side of the quadrangle were the quartermaster's quarters, a troop-room and other offices. On the western side were troop-rooms, mess-room and kitchen. On the northern side was a stable with twenty-two roomy stalls and two loose boxes. In front was 'a well arranged lavatory'. The powder magazine was isolated at the north-western corner, while a well with a force-pump occupied the centre of the quadrangle.



(CD Ref 2835/97)

The Armoury was also a single storey building, but it was very tall with a steep roof and was easily divided into two floors in 1857. As a specially built armoury, the building is unique in South Australia, its scope (and the large cache of arms it held) indicating the strength of the colony's mounted police in the early decades of settlement. Continuing its description the *Observer* reported that the:

. . . quadrangle is entered by two large iron swing gates on the eastern and western sides, surmounted by arches which were probably intended to be ornamental, though their style of adornment is rather too heavy to strike the eye agreeably. Upon the top of each are three messy stone structures, which if they look like anything resemble dog-kennels.

Between 1985-87 the Destitute Asylum buildings and the Mounted Police Barracks and Armoury were extensively renovated to form part of the museum complex.

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Department of Housing and Construction, Plan Room, HD 266-73; Donovan and Associates, *The history and significance of the Mounted Police Barracks complex*, 1982-3, pp. 3, 5, 7; *Observer*, 10 March 1855; PRO, GRG 24/6/No. 420/1851, 24/6/15,10,1855, 38//,/22.2.1851. 38/7/2/25.8.1851; Pike, D., *Paradise of dissent*, 1967, p. 283; *SA Museum, redevelopment heritage study*, 1980, p. 17; Spry, A.H., 'South Australian Museum redevelopment - materials survey' in *AMDEL Report*, No. 1339, 1980, pp. 25-30.

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The property described in this Information Sheet is included in the Register of State Heritage places. A heritage listing does not mean or imply right of access by the public to such properties.

The heritage related Principles of Development Control as well as the Precinct specific objectives and Principles of Development Control are contained in the Adelaide (City) Development Plan. These should be referred to in whole when contemplating any development.

Further information on the Heritage Incentives Scheme, an initiative of Council to sponsor timely and appropriate conservation action is available upon request of the Customer Service Centre.



CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	Former MOUNTED POLICE BARRACKS	Building No 127001
Address	At rear S.A. Museum, North Terrace (Park 12.70)	

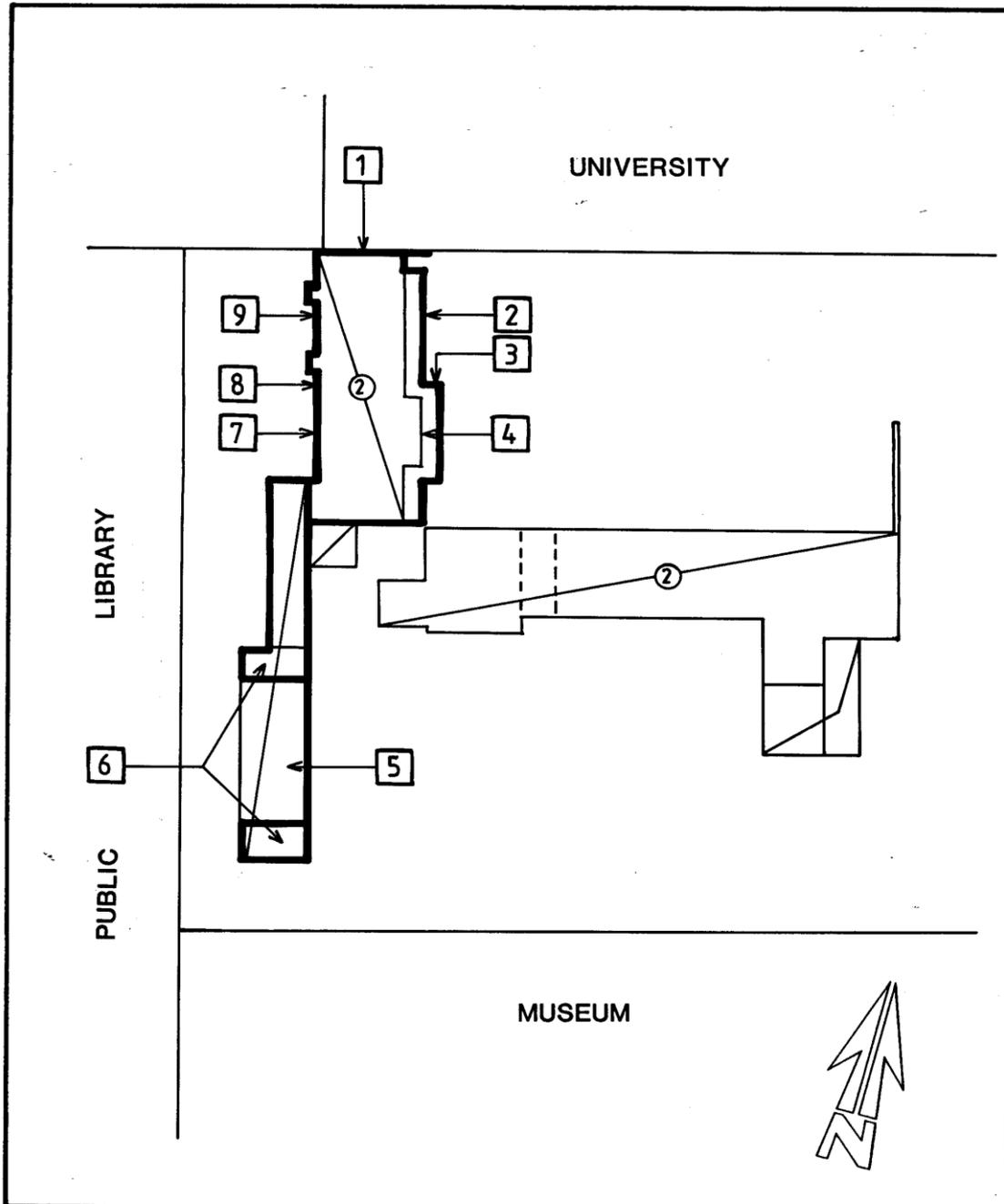


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Address	At rear S.A. Museum, North Terrace (Park 12.70)	127001

NOTES:

1. Brick end wall where building truncated.
2. Note timber brackets supporting balcony.
3. Rebuilt balcony.
4. Squared coursed sandstone with brick quoins.
5. Former stables.
6. Bluestone.
7. Bluestone at ground floor level.
8. Sandstone at first floor level.
9. Limestone at ground floor level.



CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	Former ARMOURY	Building No 127002
Address	At rear S.A. Museum, North Terrace (Park 12.70)	

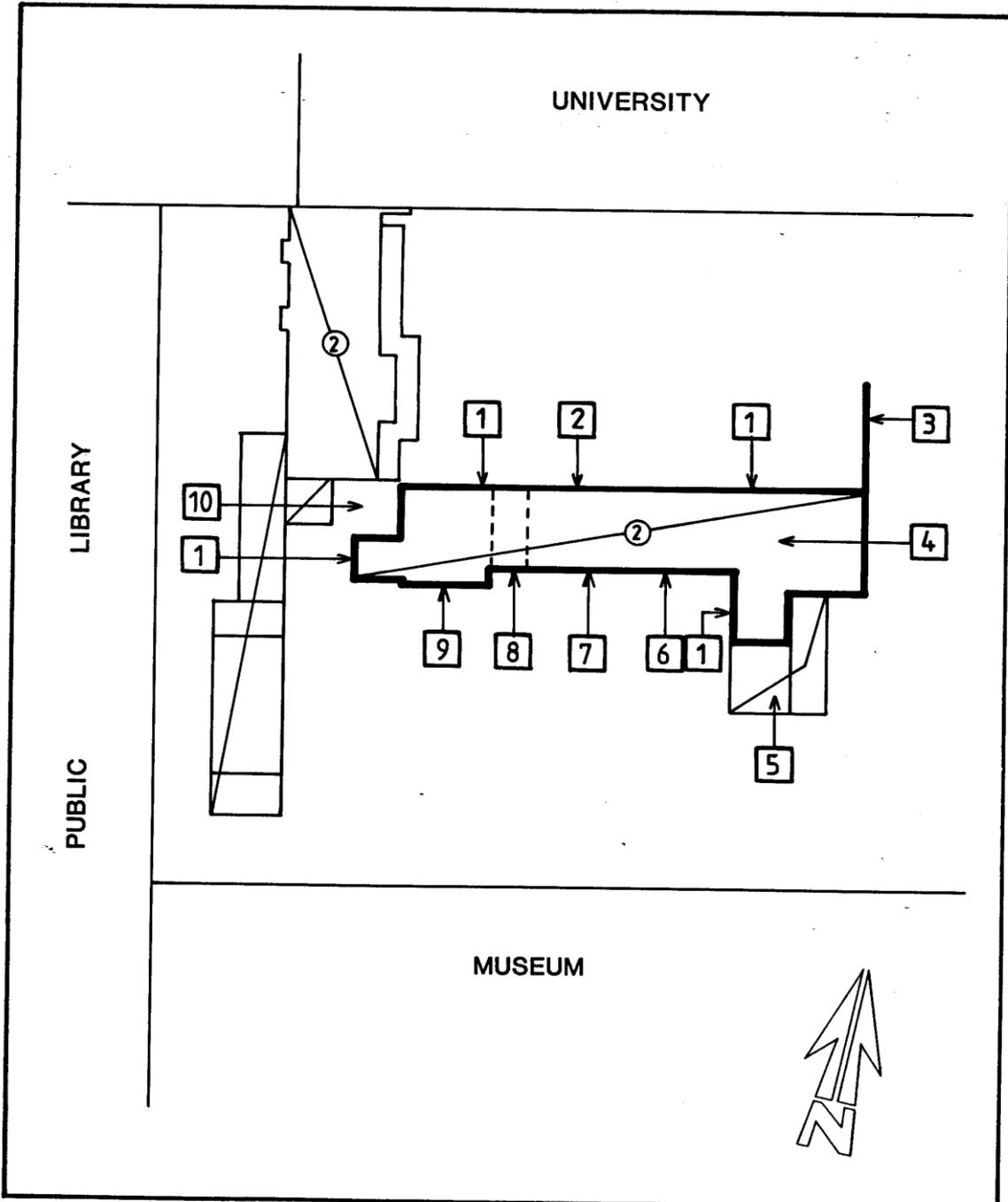


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CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

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Item	Former ARMOURY	Building No
Address	At rear S.A. Museum, North Terrace (Park 12.70)	127002

NOTES:

1. Squared sandstone.
2. Rock faced limestone with tuck pointing, brick quoins and sandstone detailing.
3. Arch and gate.
4. Slate roof.
5. Additions.
6. Limestone rubble.
7. Note sandstone quoins and moulded hoods to windows.
8. Rendered at first floor level.
9. Note decorative bargeboards.
10. Note enclosed courtyard.