

BOTANIC GARDENS AND PRECINCT

North Terrace

W.E. H Marcus in 1876 wrote:

The glory of Adelaide, and the pride of her citizens, is our beautiful Botanic Garden, which under the magic wand of Dr Richard Schomburghk, has grown into a thing of beauty which will be a joy for ever . . .

A botanic gardens was initially mooted by Colonel Light in his plan for Adelaide which allowed for such an area close to the river. Before the gardens were established at the present site three other sites were used as botanic gardens. The first in 1837 was the larger of two islands below the weir opposite Strangways Terrace, but this was soon found to be unsuitable and abandoned, probably due to flooding. The second gardens were established opposite the site of the Newmarket Hotel on North Terrace and in 1840 were abandoned when the site proved to be too small. The third site, opened with much ceremony by Governor Gawler in 1840, was near the present Frome Road bridge straddling both sides of the River Torrens. Bad luck struck again when the colony declared itself bankrupt in 1841. John Bailey, the curator, was retrenched and the gardens abandoned with no more attempts to establish a botanic garden until the 1850s.

The fourth site was chosen in 1854 with George Francis as its first director. This botanic garden was opened to the public in October 1857. A committee was formed to manage the 40 acres. In 1860 the first Botanic Garden Act was passed, ' . . . to provide for the permanent support and management' of the gardens empowering the board of governors to control the use of money voted by parliament.

By 1856 about 8 acres had been partially planted, and a wide and irregular watercourse cut through the grounds. During the layout stage Francis saved the finest of the existing gum trees. Some of these original trees - which predate the city itself - still stand. The watercourse (First Creek) was prone to severe flooding and because of this constant problem the lakes were created in 1857. Another problem which was harder to overcome was the leaching into the creek of toxic chemicals which killed the aquatic birds. This problem was caused by tanneries and brickworks along the creek and was only resolved when deep sewerage was connected in the 1880s.

By 1873, the Botanic Gardens encompassed 130 acres including Botanic Park (formerly the police paddock). A further 6 acres was given over by the Lunatic Asylum after 1873 as inmates were moved to the new Parkside Asylum. In 1877 the Botanic Park was opened to the public, having been transformed from a wilderness area to an 'English' park with carriage drives. Approximately 10 acres of this was handed over for zoological gardens.

Botanic Park and Gardens were by this time under the direction of Dr Richard Schomburghk. He was largely responsible for the development of the area, although the first director, G.W. Francis had accomplished the heavy work of establishment.

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G.W. Francis served his apprenticeship in England at the celebrated firm of Loddiges. He and his family emigrated to South Australia in 1849. He became involved in the establishment of the present Botanic Garden and was director from 1855 until 1865 when he died. The second director Dr Richard Schomburghk was born at Fribault, Saxony, in 1811. Making a special study of botany he became connected with the imperial Garden at Potsdam. He and his brother left for South Australia in the 1840s and settled on the Gawler River. Richard was curator of the Gawler Museum and was then appointed the second superintendent of the Botanic Gardens. He was particularly industrious, recommending the building of the Palm House, the Museum of Economic Botany, the Wood House and the Victoria Regina Building, and converting Botanic Park from a 'primeval forest' and devoting much time to experimentation with seeds from all parts of the world and publishing his results.

Schomburghk served almost until his death in 1891. The Botanic Gardens had reached a state of maturity with many buildings being erected to serve its various functions while creating an ornamental appearance in keeping with the classical layout. Potentially economic crops were trialed and strains of wheat, oats, sorghum, fruits, vines and flax were distributed to the public for further assessment. In this way the gardens continued the pioneer initiatives of J.B. Hack and G. Stevenson, but at a much more scientific level. Exotic ornamental plants, conifers and deciduous trees were introduced to 'soften' the harsh environment. From a relatively early date the public enjoyed the lush appearance of the gardens with shrubberies, pergolas, statues and fountains placed at strategic points.

Botanic Park was landscaped for public use. Little now remains of this grand scheme which was to include an area for horticultural displays and music recitals, although many of the Moreton Bay fig trees, conifers and plane trees survive. The carriageway constructed to link Hackney Road with Frome Road no longer links with Frome Road but is still used within the park together with the now pedestrian bridge across First Creek. Botanic Park soon became a place for public speaking forums. In September 1880 the inaugural meeting of the Salvation Army of Australasia was held, together with meetings of the Labor Regulation League (the forerunner of the present ALP). The 'forum' known as Hyde Park Corner, under the ring of Moreton Bay fig trees, remained important to soap-box orators until the early 1950s.

In the 1920s the Royal Adelaide Hospital expanded its borders nearly 90 feet at the expense of the gardens. However, when the former Lunatic Asylum/Consumptive Home was demolished in 1938 on the eastern boundary, this became part of the Botanic Gardens. The director's residence was demolished as it was in the area newly dedicated to the Royal Adelaide Hospital, but the Botanic Gardens gained Yarrabee House as compensation.

Apart from the gardens themselves there are many significant buildings and structures associated with their formative years:

G.W. Francis Arbor and Glasshouses (former Wood Museum, 1864). Although greatly altered over the years, due in part to the encroachment of the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the basis of the structure, one of the earliest to survive, remains a memorial to the gardens' first director;

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North Lodge. Erected as a head gardener's cottage in 1866 it has an interesting asymmetrical composition and retains its original picturesque appearance. It was constructed by Nimmo & McGee;



(CD Ref 1725/46)



Former Lunatic Asylum Morgue, now a tool-shed;

(CD Ref 1725/40)

Carriageway entrance gates, Hackney Road;



(CD Ref 1725/47)



(CD Ref 1725/44)

The Rose Garden Fountain. Robert Barr Smith donated £150 towards the purchase of this fountain and A.M. Simpson arranged its importation from England in 1907. It was manufactured at Coalbrookdale, notable since the earliest days of the Industrial Revolution for its manufacture of cast-iron items. The fountain was erected in 1908;

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Simpson Kiosk. This building was provided for by A.M. Simpson and was designed by the architectural practice of E.J. Woods. It has been recently extended and sympathetically altered;

(CD Ref 1725/42)

Main entrance gates, North Terrace. These iron gates, wicket gates and railing were made by Turner and Allen, London iron founders, shipped to Port Adelaide and erected in 1880;



(CD Ref 1725/34)



Stone wall, Botanic Road boundary;

Museum of Economic Botany (described separately);

Palm House, (described separately);

(CD Ref 1725/35)

Lodge and gates, Botanic Road which were built as part of the Lunatic Asylum in 1865 (extended in 1875);

Yarrabee House, corner Botanic Road and Hackney Road (described separately).



(CD Ref 1725/37)

Best, B., *George William Francis*, 1986, p. 89; Botanic Gardens Library, Letter: director to architect-in-chief, 4 April 1938, director of Botanic Garden to director of Public Buildings, no. 357, 11 March 1969; *Chronicle*, 3 November 1938; Harcus, W.E., *South Australia: its history, resources and productions*, 1876; Lamshed, M., *The Botanic Gardens*, 1955 pp. 63-7, 93; MLSA, Historical photographs; *Observer*, 28 March 1891; PRO

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GRG38/7/155/20.12.1865 38/7/131/1.12.1865; GRG70 Annual reports of the Botanic Gardens, 1873-84; SAPP, No. 29, Appointment of Hospital and Lunatic Asylum Commission, 1864, p. iv; SAPD, 15, 30 October 1935, 22, 23 September 1936; *South Australian Government Gazette*, 10 October 1857, 21 January 1858; *South Australian Register*, 23 January 1877; State Heritage Branch, Register nomination: Museum of Economic Botany, 3 March 1981; Brief for the conservation of the tropical house, October 1982.

The text in this Information Sheet was copied from the **Heritage of the City of Adelaide: An Illustrated Guide**, (1996). The photographs contained in this Information Sheet are a selection of those held by Heritage Services, in digital format.

The property described in this Information Sheet (except the Carriageway Entrance Gates) is included in the Register of State Heritage places. The Carriageway Entrance Gates described in this Information Sheet is a place of Local Heritage (City Significance). 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	ADELAIDE BOTANIC GARDENS	Building No
Location of Items	City Heritage Register	
Address	City Heritage Register	

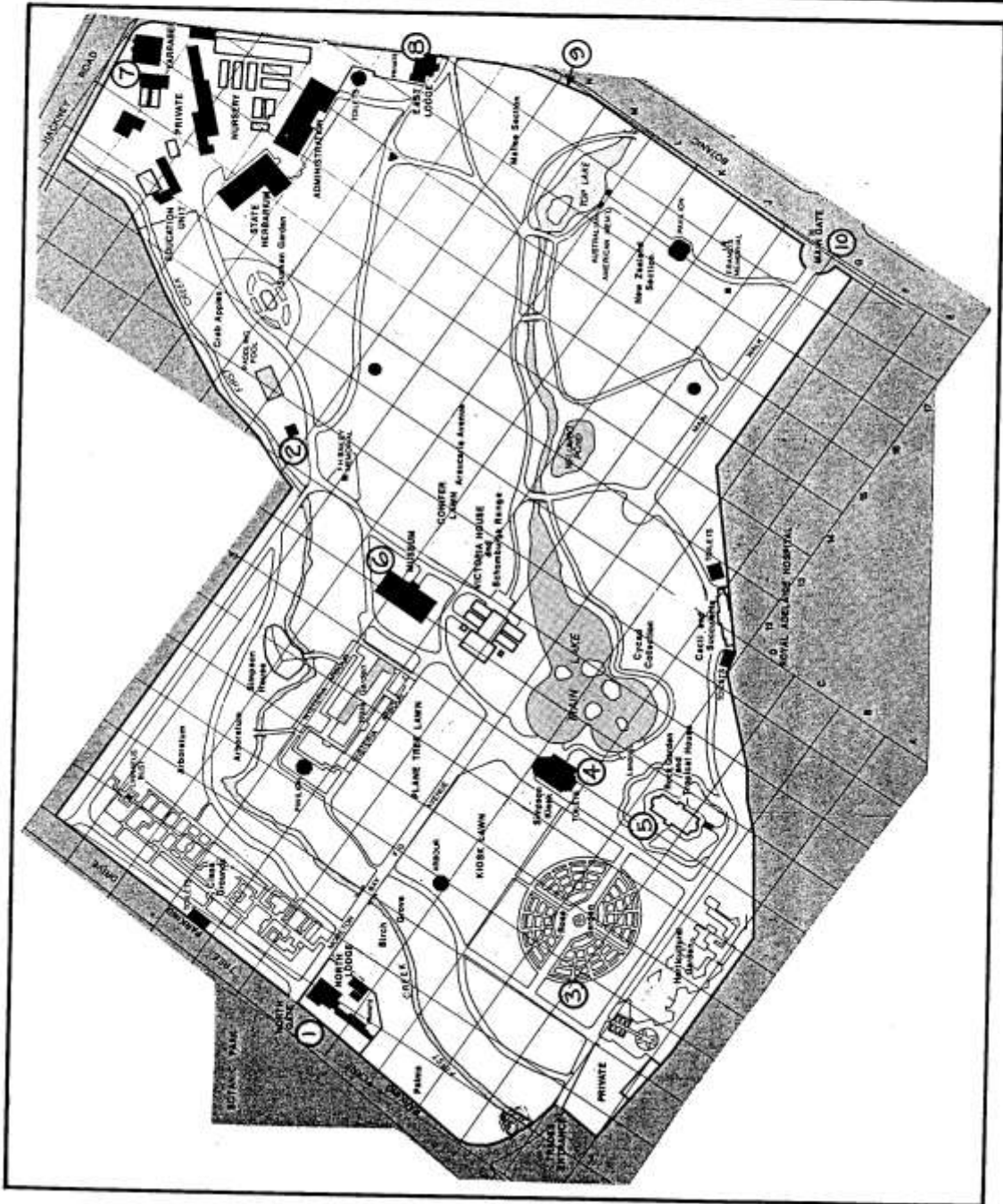


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CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	LODGE AND GATES (Part Former LUNATIC ASYLUM)	Building No 110501
Address	Botanic Gardens, Botanic Road (Park No. 11.05)	

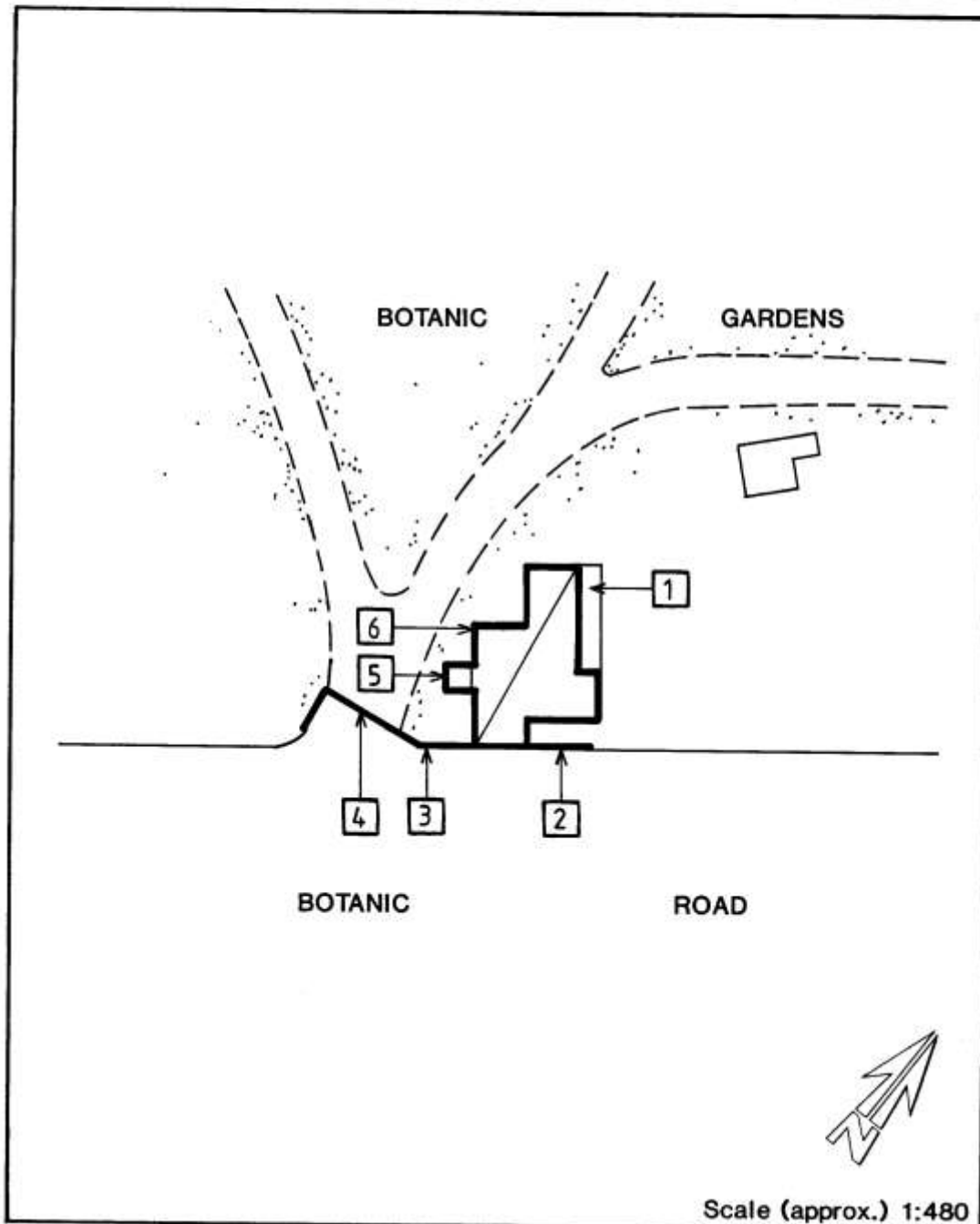


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Item	LODGE AND GATES (Part Former LUNATIC ASYLUM)	Building No 110501
Address	Botanic Gardens, Botanic Road (Park No. 11.05)	

NOTES:

1. Sympathetic infill of verandah.
2. Bluestone and cast iron fence.
3. Cast iron gates and fence.
4. Red brick pillars with rendered inlays and ornate capping.
5. Portico (Note joinery).
6. Coursed random bluestone with red brick quoins.



CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	MAIN GATES TO BOTANIC GARDENS	Building No	110502
Address	Junction North Terrace, Botanic Road and East Terrace (Park No. 11.05)		

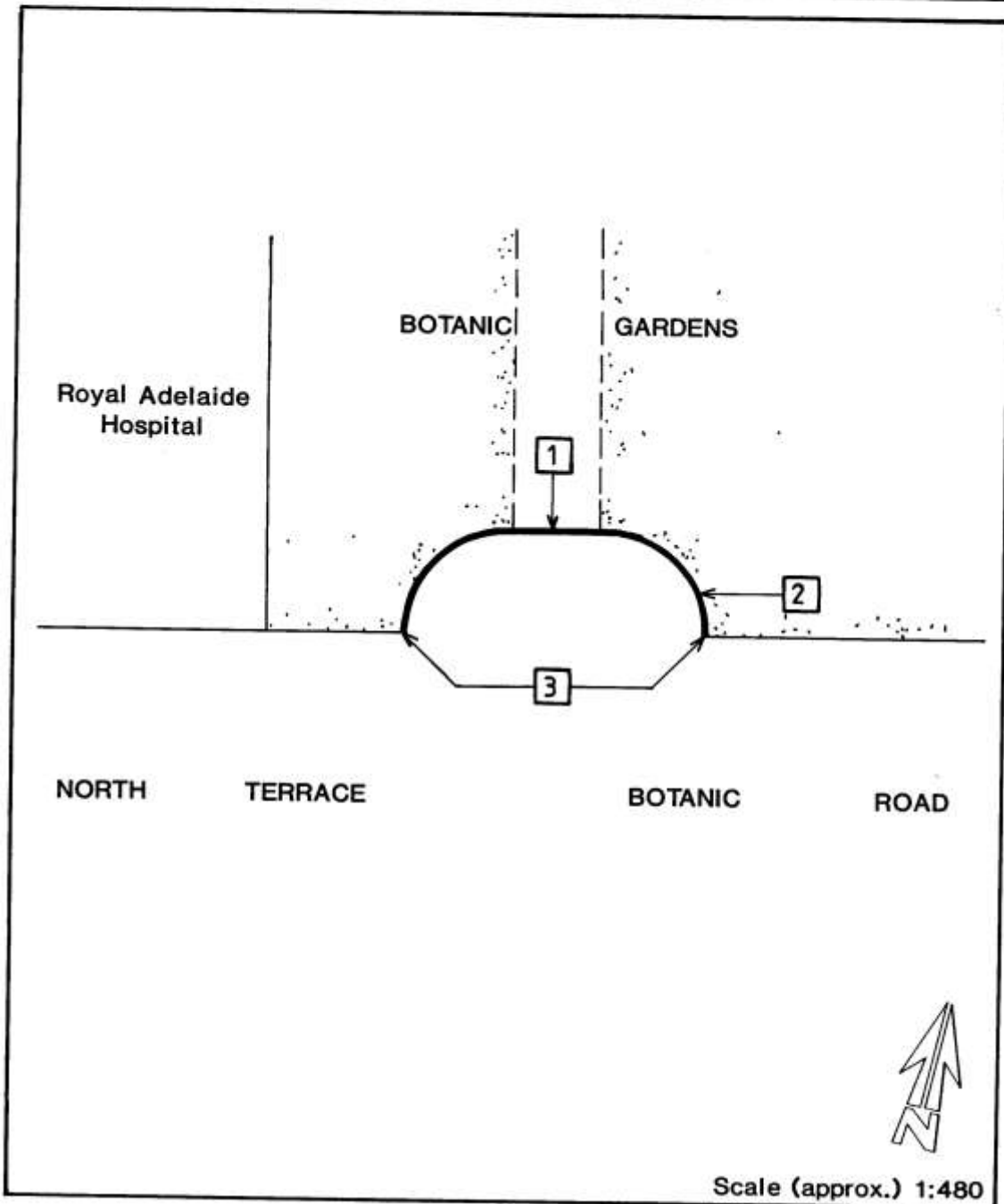


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Item	MAIN GATES TO BOTANIC GARDENS	Building No 110502
Address	Junction North Terrace, Botanic Road and East Terrace (Park No. 11.05)	

NOTES:

1. Ornate cast iron central entrance and pillars (topped with "gaslight" lightfittings - now electric).
2. Cast iron fence and gates.
3. Rendered pillars.



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Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	WALL TO BOTANIC GARDENS	Building No	
Address	Botanic Road (Pk. 11.05)		110515

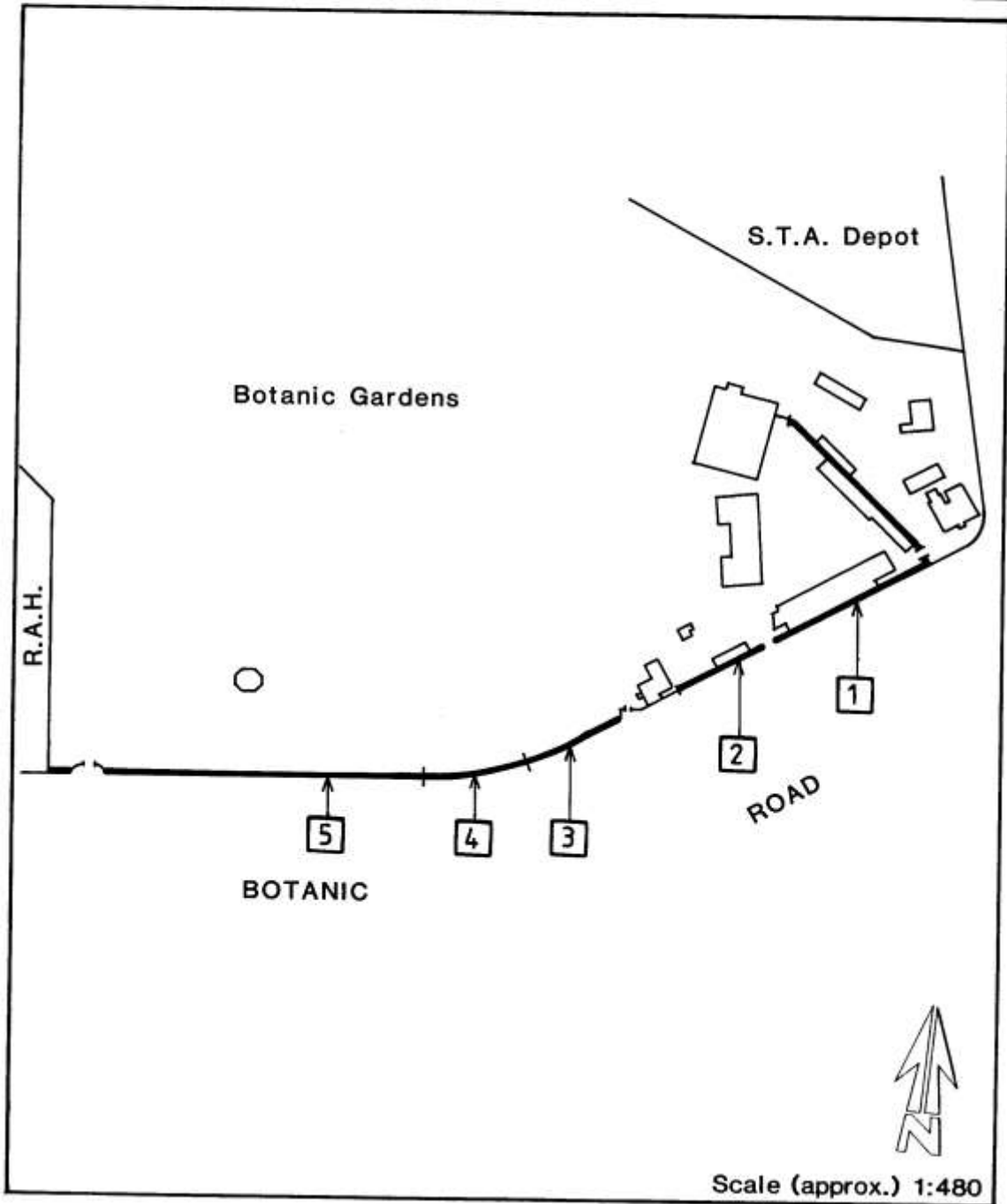


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Item	WALL TO BOTANIC GARDENS	Building No
Address	Botanic Road (Pk. 11.05)	110515

NOTES:

1. Approximately 3m high.
2. Partially rebuilt.
3. Random bluestone rubble.
4. Limestone rubble.
5. Bluestone rubble (some repointing).



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Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	Former LUNATIC ASYLUM MORGUE	Building No	110504
Address	Botanic Gardens, off North Terrace (Park No. 11.05)		

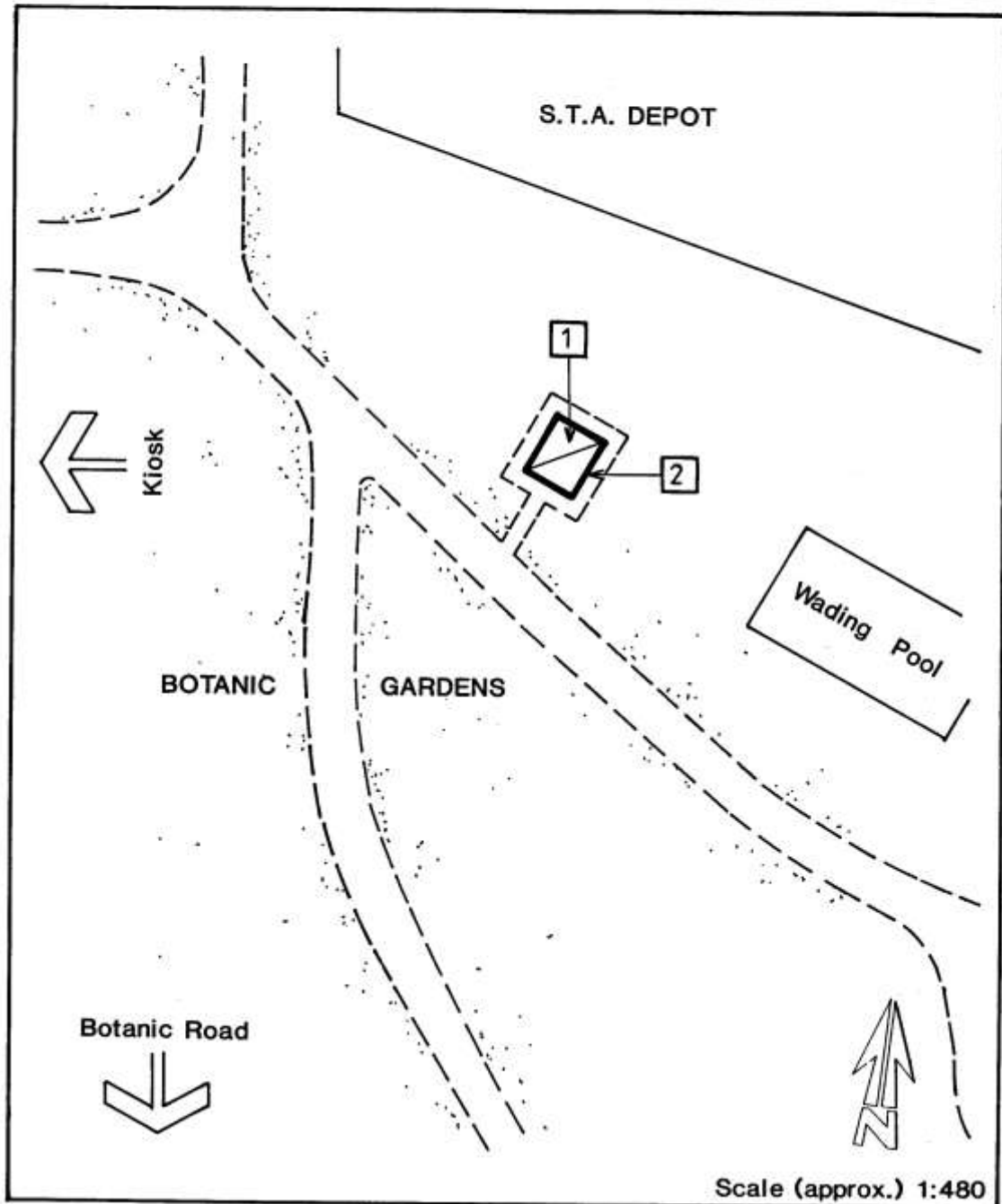


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Item	Former LUNATIC ASYLUM MORGUE	Building No 110504
Address	Botanic Gardens, off North Terrace (Park No. 11.05)	

NOTES:

1. Skylights added.
2. Squared line jointed walling with brick quoins and bluestone plinth.



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The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item BOTANIC GARDENS KIOSK (SIMPSON KIOSK)

Building No
110506

Address Botanic Gardens, off North Terrace (Park 11.05)

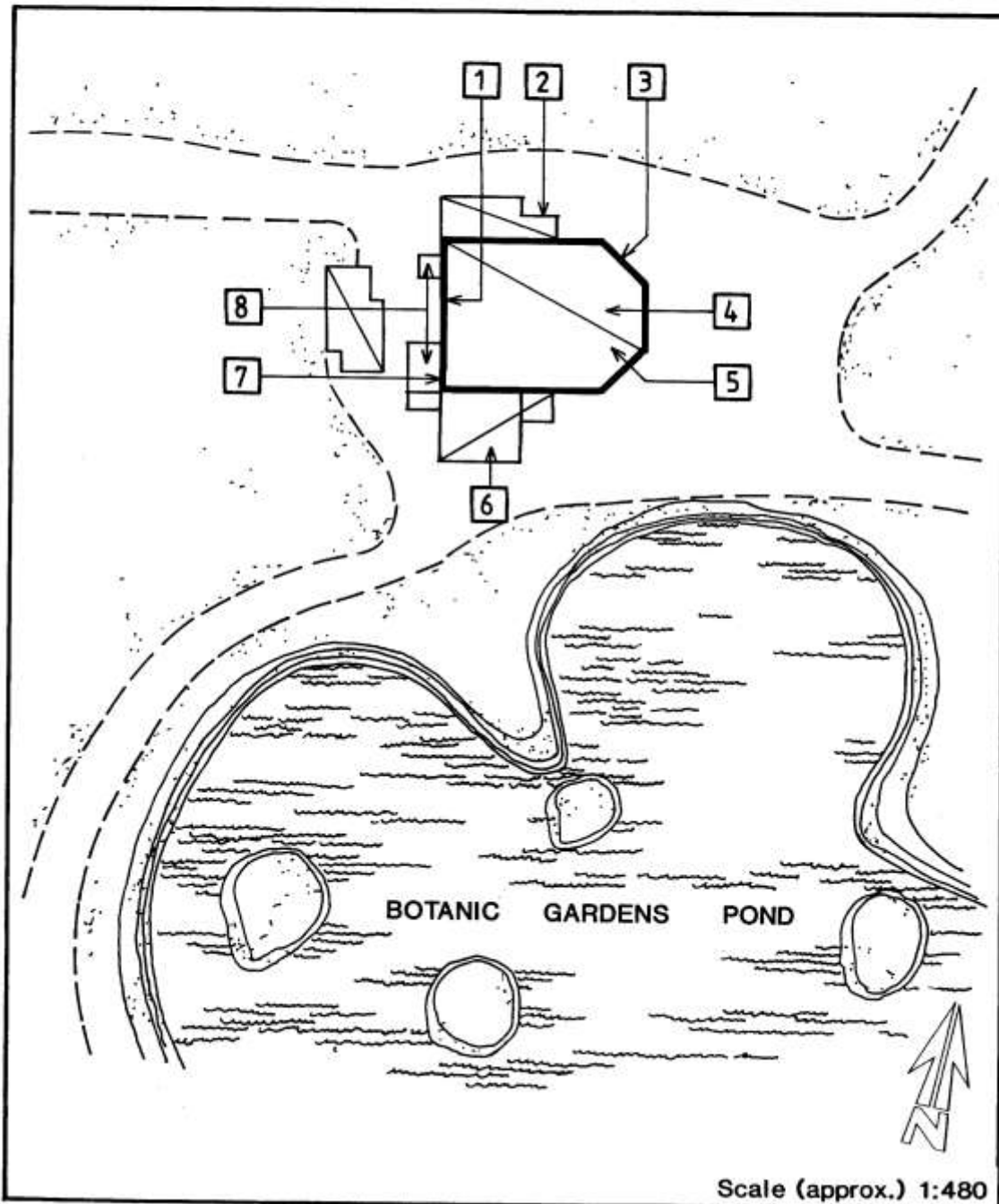


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Item	BOTANIC GARDENS KIOSK (SIMPSON KIOSK)	Building No
Address	Botanic Gardens, off North Terrace (Park 11.05)	110506

NOTES:

1. Stuccoed arches and leadlight above windows.
2. Recent extension.
3. Note Bluestone plinth.
4. Note Bellcast roof.
5. Recently enclosed verandah retaining substantial timber joinery.
6. Recent extension.
7. Red brick (Stretcher bond) with some use of brown glazed bricks for quoins.
8. Minor extensions at rear.



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The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	ROSE GARDEN FOUNTAIN	Building No
Address	Botanic Gardens, off North Terrace (Pk. 11.05)	110507

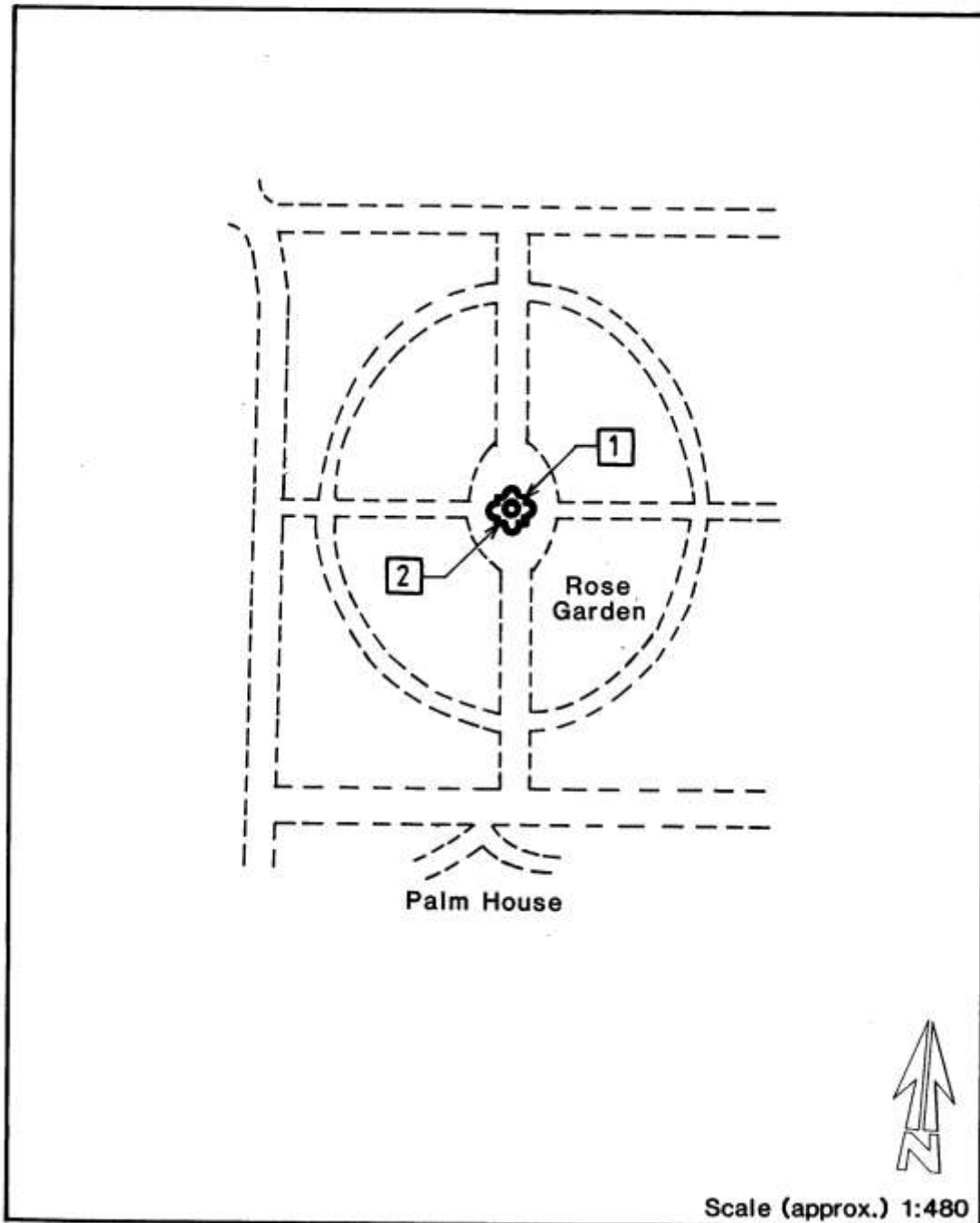


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Item ROSE GARDEN FOUNTAIN	Building NO
Address Botanic Gardens, off North Terrace (Pk. 11.05)	- 110507

NOTES:

1. Rendered masonry base and pond.
2. Cast iron fountain.



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The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

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Item	NORTH LODGE	Building No	-
Address	Botanic Gardens, off North Terrace (adjacent to Botanic Park) (Pk. 11.05)		110508

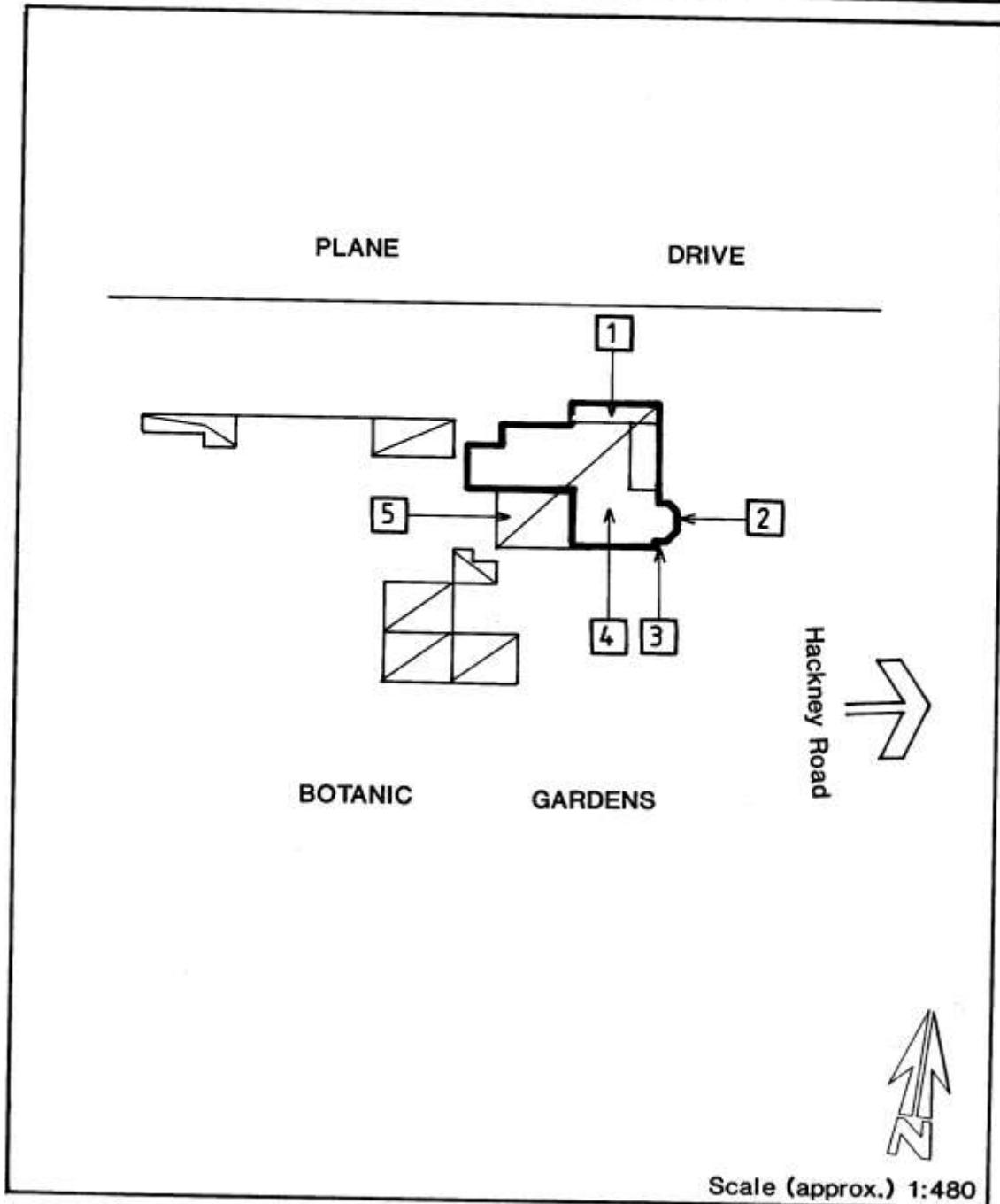


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Item	NORTH LODGE	Building NO
Address	Botanic Gardens, off North Terrace (adjacent to Botanic Park) (Pk. 11.05)	110508

NOTES:

1. Verandah filled-in.
2. Rendered bay window.
3. Bluestone rubble with stucco enrichment.
4. Slate roof.
5. Rendered addition.