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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT  
OF TIMBER FEATURE  
FREMANTLE PRISON NO. 12 THE TERRACE**

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for

Philip Griffiths Architects and  
Department of Housing and Works

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### **Geographic Co-ordinate Information**

Geographic co-ordinates in this report were obtained using a Leica Total Station (TCR307) device. The manufacturer states that these devices are accurate to within <1cm .Geographic co-ordinates in this report are based on the GDA94 coordinate system.

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## INTRODUCTION

During ongoing archaeological work at the Fremantle Prison, Eureka Archaeological Research and Consulting UWA (Eureka) was asked to assess a timber feature exposed by construction workers (CPD Group) during excavation of a drainage trench along the veranda of No.12 The Terrace. No. 12 is situated along the Terrace, north of the main entrance of Fremantle Prison, Fremantle Western Australia. This report contains the results of that assessment and the recording of the feature.

## SURVEY

On the 25th June 2008 Don Smith (CPD Group) asked archaeologist Kelly Fleming (Eureka) to examine a timber feature exposed during the excavation of a drainage trench along the western wall of No.12 The Terrace (Figure 1).

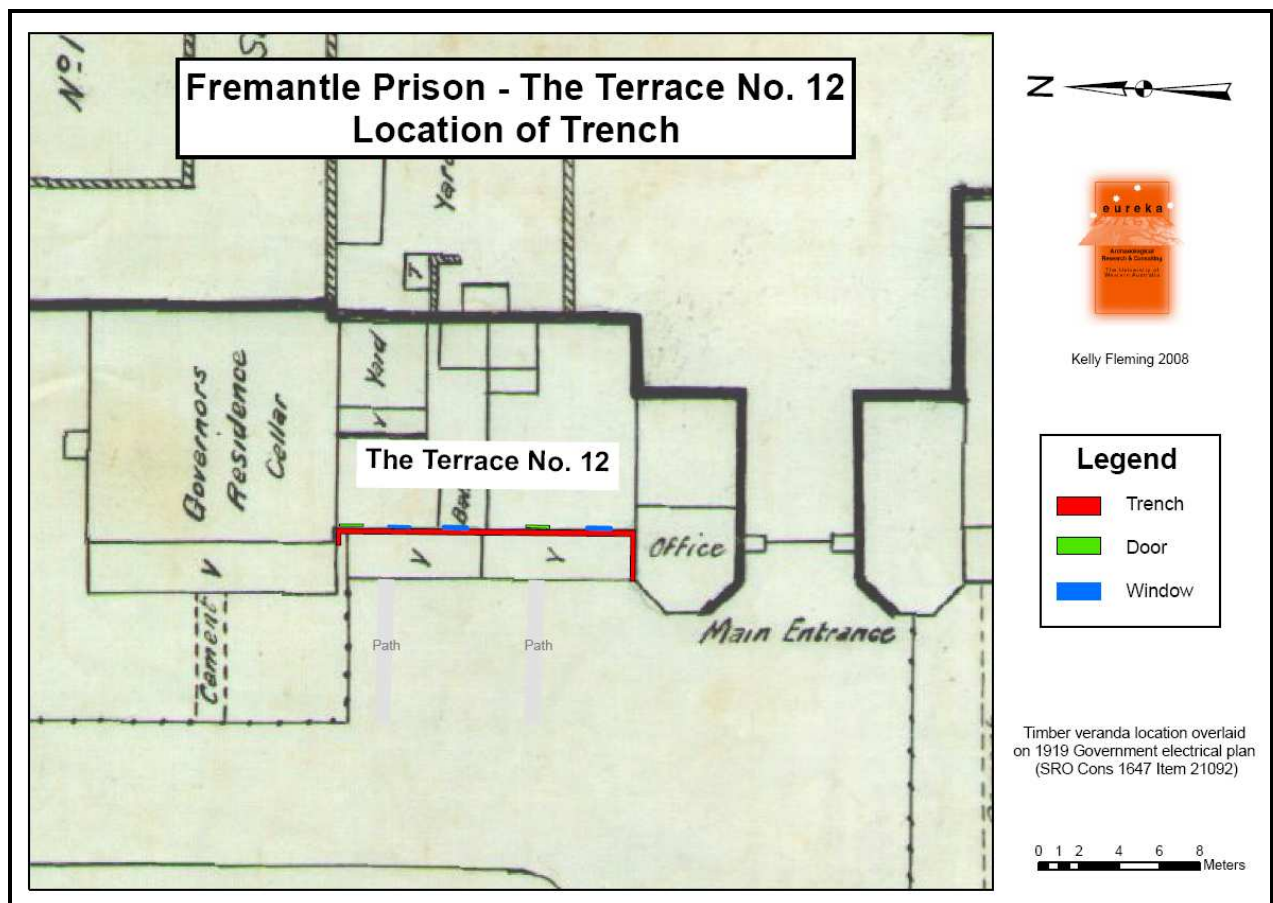


Figure 1. Location of drainage trench No. 12 The Terrace Fremantle Prison

The timber was observed lining the bottom of the drainage trench in an approximate north south direction (Figure 2). Along the western wall, sections of timber were also visible suggesting that at some time in the past wooden joists had extended outwards from the main building, most likely as part of a wooden veranda. This has now been covered over by the existing concrete veranda.



Figure 2. Timber feature No. 12 The Terrace Fremantle Prison prior to full exposure

As the exposed timber was potentially part of the former timber veranda [c. 1900]{Bavin, 1990 [February] #366} work on the trench was stopped and the timber fully exposed by Eureka for further assessment and recording.

Consultation between Historical Archaeologist Dr Alistair Paterson (UWA) and Don Smith (CPD group), determined that the timber lining the bottom of the trench was a sacrificial plank and was not part of the actual structure of the veranda. However, the timbers exposed in the western face of the trench (Figures 3 & 4) were determined to be *in situ* joists of the former timber veranda.



Figure 3. Timber joists in west wall underlying concrete veranda No. 12 The Terrace, looking south



Figure 4. Timber joists in west wall underlying concrete veranda No. 12 The Terrace from above

It was recommended that the timber at the bottom of the trench (the sacrificial plank) could be recorded and removed as it was in an extremely fragile state. It was further recommended that the timber joists along the western face should also be recorded and left *in situ*, as they were protected by the existing concrete veranda. If any further development or removal of the veranda takes place the feature should be reassessed.

## RESULTS

A brief site survey and full photographic record were taken. The positions of all timbers and the adjacent structures were plotted with a total station. All timber features were fully photographed as was the site to provide context. The resulting survey was mapped and overlaid on a 1919 plan showing the historical veranda (Figure 5).

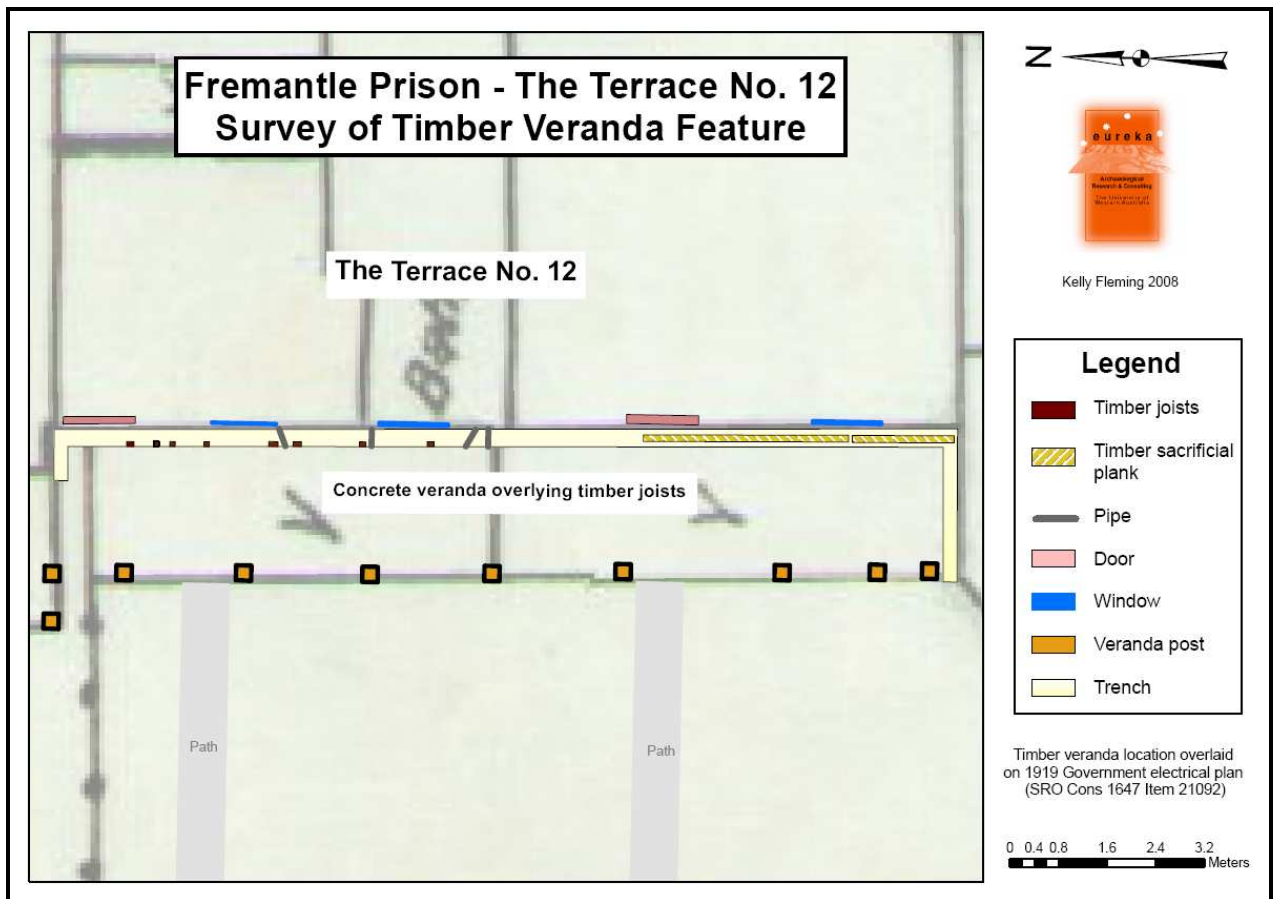


Figure 5. Plan showing location of timber features No. 12 The Terrace veranda

Eight joists were visible underlying the northern portion of the veranda and appeared to be relatively intact however the timber is soft and deteriorated. The joists differ in dimensions with two larger joists of approximately 15 x 6 cm and six small approximately 8 x 4 cm. The joists are spaced between 20 cm and 100 cm from one another (Figure 5).

The sacrificial plank was only visible at the southern end of the trench, however a number of fragments of timber were removed from the northern end of the trench prior to Eureka being called, suggesting the plank may have originally existed along the majority of the trench. The surviving portion was in two pieces, the northernmost measuring 3.4 m in length and 10 cm (width) x 4 cm (depth). The second portion measured 1.7m x 10 cm x 4 cm. A hand forged bolt was embedded in the southern end however this was not attached to any other timbers. No joists were visible in the northern wall at the southern end of the veranda adjacent to the sacrificial plate.

The drainage trench had already been excavated around the entire frontage of No. 10 and No.12 The Terrace prior to Eureka being called. No further veranda features were visible however miscellaneous building rubble, including bricks believed to date to c.1900 and limestone rubble was removed from the trench (Figures 6 & 7).



Figure 6. Millard brick c. 1900



Figure 7. H.S.B.S. brick c. 1900?



## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The above report outlines a brief assessment and survey, undertaken at No.12 The Terrace, Fremantle Prison, of an exposed timber feature believed to be remnants of the earlier timber veranda underlying the present concrete one. It was determined on site that the timber in the bottom of the trench was a sacrificial plank, whilst that exposed in the western wall of the trench was likely to be *in situ* joists. It was recommended that:

- The timber joist features should be fully recorded and left *in situ* prior to the trench being filled in; and
- The sacrificial timber plank could be removed after recording.

These recommendations have now been implemented.

It is further recommended that an archaeological assessment takes place prior to any further development planned at No.12 The Terrace, or along other veranda's at the Fremantle Prison site. It is highly possible that other buildings along the front of the prison may also contain potential archaeological features.

## MANAGEMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIAL

The timber veranda joists underlying the existing concrete veranda are currently protected by this surface. However, the portions exposed were found to be in a fragile and deteriorated state. If any further development works are planned (i.e. the removal of the present concrete veranda) appropriate methods should be used to protect the timber features and professional conservation advice sought.

## REFERENCES

Bavin, L. J. (1990a). *Fremantle Prison Conservation and Future Use: Archaeological Zoning Plan of the Prison Compound*. Report Prepared for Building Management Authority.