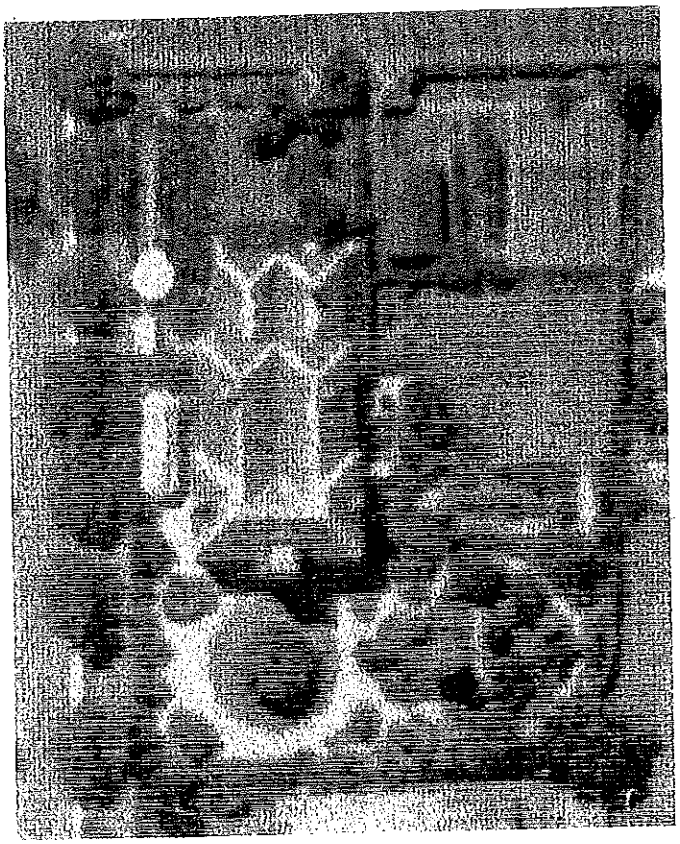
VILLA ALBA MUSEUM LANDSCAPE RECONSTRUCTION

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEST EXCAVATIONS

A report to Villa Alba Museum Inc and Heritage Victoria



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- Jessie Serle (VAM Inc Project Manager)
- James Broadbent (VAM Inc heritage landscape consultant)
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ABBREVIATIONS

VAM Inc	Villa Alba Museum Incorporated

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report documents the results of archaeological test excavations conducted within the grounds of Villa Alba in Kew. Archaeological testing was commissioned by the Villa Alba Museum (hereafter referred to as VAM Inc) Management Committee as part of the design development stage of a proposed landscape reconstruction. The project was directed by Maddy Atkinson in consultation with Jeremy Smith (Heritage Victoria) and James Broadbent (landscape architect for VAM Inc). The field team consisted of undergraduate and graduate volunteers from La Trobe University, Monash University, the University of Melbourne and Holmesglen TAFE. Archaeological testing took place on Monday 8th April and Wednesday 10th 2002.

1.1 Study area

Villa Alba is a 19th century property on the corner of Walmer Street and Nolan Avenue in Kew (Figure 1.1). Both statutory and non-statutory authorities have acknowledged the historical significance of the property. Heritage listings are as follows:

- H605 Victorian Heritage Register
- D/No 014210 Register of the National Estate (Australian Heritage Commission)
- B1385 National Trust (VIC)
- #158 City of Boroondara Heritage Overlay

Under the provisions of the Heritage Act 1995, it is an offence to excavate or disturb this site without a 'Permit to carry out works or activities to a place or object on the Victoria Heritage Register' (Pursuant to Section 67 of the *Heritage Act 1995*)

Areas identified as requiring archaeological testing were located to the north, east and south of the main building (Figure 3.1).

1.2 Rationale

Archaeological investigations have been undertaken at this time for two main reasons. Firstly, archaeological evidence will contribute to the development of a landscape design for the reconstruction of the late 19th century Villa Alba garden and surrounds. Secondly, soils surrounding the Villa Alba mansion which have been found to be contaminated with lead will need to removed to a depth of up to 0.6 metres. Removal of deposits from the site may have an adverse impact on any archaeological remains existing below the surface.

1.3 Project aims

The broad aim of subsurface testing at Villa Alba was to determine the presence, location and depth below current ground surface of archaeological remains relating to a number of landscape features identified in historical plans, photographs, survey field books and aerial photographs. This information would then be used by the landscape architect in the development of a design which approximates the 1880s/1890s landscape of Villa Alba.

Specific aims are listed below. As testing was limited to two days, the client was informed of the possibility that not all areas would be tested within that time. The aims are therefore listed in order of priority. See Figure 3.1 for the location of areas to be tested.

Area 1

- determine the presence and depth below surface of a path adjacent to the retaining wall steps
- if the path is present, determine the distance of the north-south path from the fence line

Area 2

- determine the presence and depth below surface of an east-west path

Area 2A

- if paths are located in Areas 1 and 3, locate the junction of the two

Area 3

- locate the remains of the summer house
- determine the presence and depth below surface of a gravel path at the end of the original fence
- determine the presence and depth below surface of paths and beds related to a former parterre garden in the southeast of the property and any edging materials.

Area 4

- determine the presence and depth below surface of footings of former brick features
- determine the presence and depth below surface of a north-south path near the western fence
- locate remains of fence posts/gate along northern boundary
- determine the presence and northern width of a former latticed arbor
- determine former ground surface levels adjacent to the north facing retaining wall

Area 5

- determine the depth below surface of former garden surface and remains of steps in north facing retaining wall
- determine the presence and southern width of a former latticed arbor

Area 6

- determine the spacing of fence posts relating to former fence/gate construction

1.4 Consultation

Prior to the commencement of fieldwork, the archaeologist met with Jeremy Smith (Heritage Victoria), James Broadbent (landscape architect for VAM Inc) and Jessie Serle (project manager, VAM Inc) to discuss the scope of works, methodology, timelines, project requirements and site access.

In accordance with the Heritage Act 1995, a permit to conduct an archaeological excavation was obtained from Heritage Victoria prior to the commencement of fieldwork (Appendix 3). A review of the history of land use on the site indicated that the presence of Aboriginal cultural remains would be highly unlikely and therefore no applications were lodged with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria or the relevant Aboriginal tribal authority.

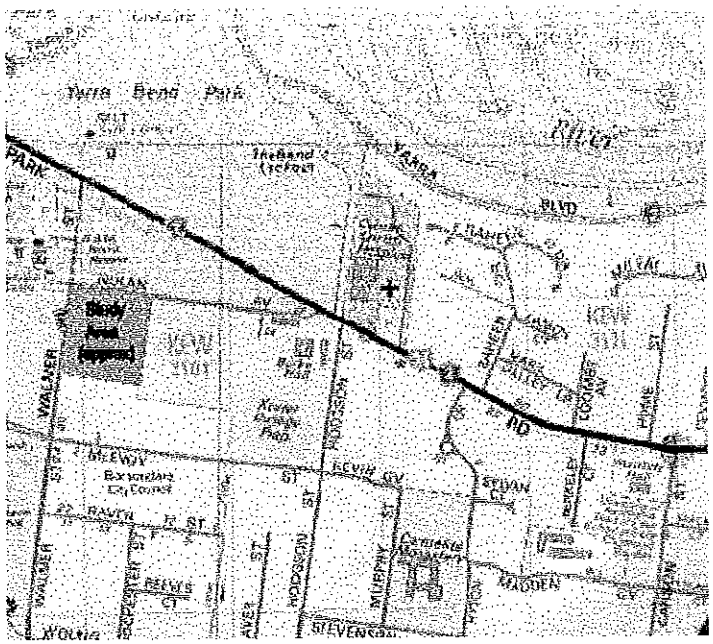

Figure 1.1 Location of Villa Alba and study area (approximate) (Melways Map 2D G11)

2.0 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

2.1 Site ownership

The following summary of site ownership is taken from the Villa Alba Conservation Analysis (Sanderson 1989) and inclusions recommended by J.Serle to be made to the draft Conservation Management Plan by Hubbard and Riddett (1998).

1852 - 1855	Ellen Miller
1855 - 1860	John Hodgson
1860 - 1862	James McEvoy,
1862 - 1918	James McEvoy the Younger and William McEvoy as trustees for Anna Maria Greenlaw (construction of Villa Alba buildings)
1918 - 1950	Samuel and/or Esther Fripp
1950 - 1974	Royal Women's Hospital (construction of hospital buildings)
1974- 1991	Mount Royal Hospital
1991-2001	St George's Hospital and Inner Eastern Geriatric Service
Aug 2001 – present	Unregistered pending settlement between St George's Hospital and Inner Eastern Geriatric Service and St George's Health Service Ltd in Dec 2002 (Society of Jesus representing Xavier College, contracted purchaser, and VAM Inc, manager under lease of house and part of land by City of Boroondara in the interim).

2.2 Land use history

The house currently standing at Villa Alba had been built by 1884. This house was an extension of a previous residence, Studley Villa, which had been located on part of the same site. No information about the landscape prior to 1883 is available. A photograph taken in 1895 (Figure 2.1) shows a lattice summer house to the southeast of the house, and two fences (one wire, one iron) bordering the garden on the east and south sides. By 1911 landscape features on the property included garden beds and a summer house to the south, a conservatory, fish pond and toilet within an octagonal enclosure to the east, and two gate lodges to the north and a billiard room (Adshead and McQuie, 2001). Between this time and 1945 the main changes to the landscape were in the form of new plantings, including a hedge, palm tree and vegetables (Hawker, J. 2/4/2001).

With the property passing into the hands of the Royal Women's Hospital in 1950 came the construction of substantial buildings immediately to the north and south of the Villa Alba mansion (see Figure 3.1 for the location of hospital building outlines). Above ground evidence of garden plantings, gate lodges and the summer house was removed in the process. The hospital outbuildings were demolished in early 2001 (J.Serle 2002 pers.comm). Figure 2.2 shows the position of the hospital buildings in relation to Villa Alba in 1953. Following the demolition of the hospital buildings, Douglas Partners (10/102001) undertook a contamination assessment of the site for Xavier College. Low level lead contamination to was found to a depth of 0.4m in the lawn east of Area 1 and at one spot southeast of the house. The lawn area was excavated to a depth of 100mm and new fill introduced. Lead contamination to a depth of 0.6m was also detected in the northern area of the site in the vicinity of test Area 4 (exact north-south line of contamination testing unknown).

The demolition of the hospital buildings and the subsequent use of the site as a construction depot by contractors employed by Xavier College from early 2001 to early 2002 represent significant sources of potential disturbance to the land surface in areas north and south of the mansion. Temporary site offices were erected to the north of the mansion. It is not clear to what extent the rubble from hospital demolition was cleared from the site. However it is known that in order to facilitate the passage of heavy machinery (cranes and trucks) across the site, fill was added to areas north, south and southeast of the mansion. Whereas the deposit had previously been displaced by vehicles becoming bogged (particularly in the southern area), it was then subject to considerable compaction. Up to 12 inches of this fill was later "sliced off the top" to create more level surfaces, and a noticeable segment of surface deposit has been removed from the southeastern corner of the site. In recent months approximately 15cm of topsoil has been added to the area north of the mansion.

Summary

Between 1883 and 1950 changes to site use consisted largely of the addition of small outbuildings, landscape features and garden beds. Since 1950 the land has been subject to practices potentially harmful to the preservation of archaeological remains such as:

- building construction and demolition
- the installation of subsurface services
- the introduction of fill
- vehicular access (displacement and compaction of deposits)
- removal of deposits at varying levels from areas to the north and south of the site.

The northern area of the site is currently not in use and has been seeded with grass. The southern area currently serves as access for machinery and vehicles associated with the construction of the Xavier College Early Learning Centre to the east.

2.3 Previous archaeological investigations

Test excavations were carried out in the southwest corner of Villa Alba by Smith *et al* in 2001 (Smith and Jamieson, 2001). Testing produced archaeological evidence of late 19th century landscape features and indicated that similar remains could be well-preserved across other areas of the site.

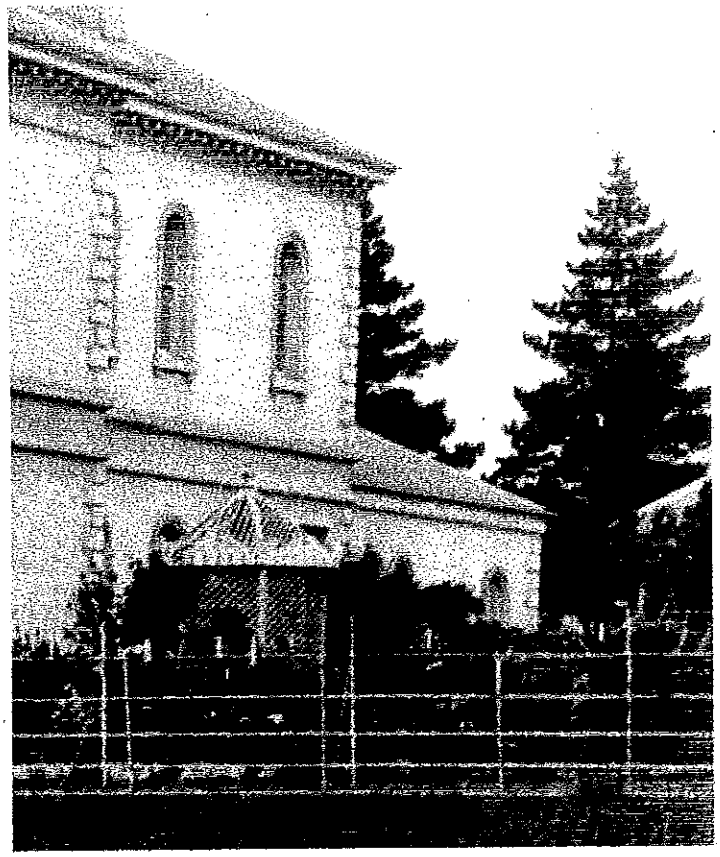

Figure 2.1 Detail of 1895 photograph, Villa Alba garden (Source: J.Serle)

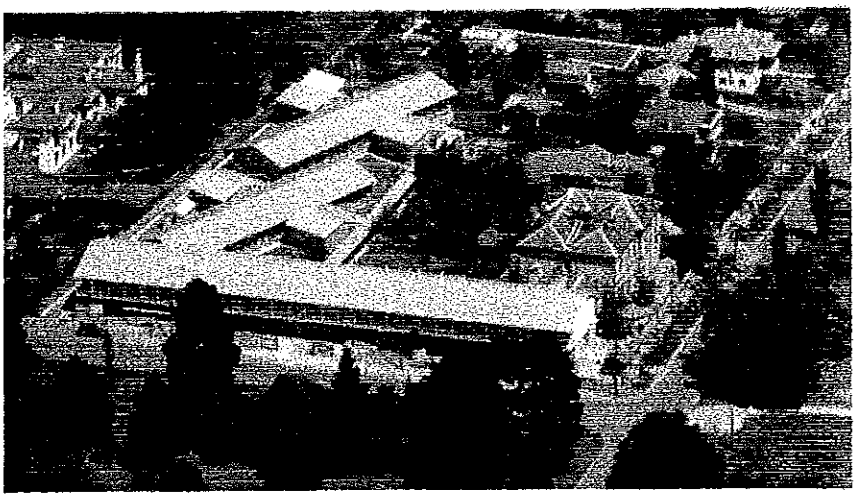

Figure 2.2 Villa Alba and hospital buildings, aerial view, 13/11/1953 (Source: J.Serle)

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Review of site history and previous archaeological studies

The historical review consisted of an examination of the following documents provided by Jessie Serle:

- sections of the Villa Alba Conservation Management Plan/ Conservation Analysis
- Villa Alba promotional material
- newspaper articles related to the construction of hospital wings
- landscape notes prepared by Heritage Victoria
- extracts from minutes of VAM Inc meetings relevant to the history of the site
- historical photographs, plans and surveyor's field records
- archaeological report by Smith *et al* (2001) and contemporary architectural plans.

3.2 Shovel test pits

Two shovel test pits, STP 1 (area 3, south of the main structure) and STP 2 (area 4, north of the main structure), were excavated to gain an indication of type and depth of subsurface deposits in these locations. The pits measured 30cm x 30cm and were excavated to depths of 23cm and 29cm respectively. Each was backfilled. The locations of the test pits are indicated in Figure 3.1

3.3 Hand excavated trenches

A total of 12 hand excavated trenches ranging in size from 1 x 0.6m to 3.3 x 3.3m were excavated in areas 1, 2, 3 and 4 to depths ranging from 3cm to 65cm. The location of each trench was recorded in relation to fixed points on the Villa Alba house (Figure 3.1). Deposits were allocated context numbers and described. Trenches were described, drawn in plan and section and photographed. Features were described and photographed. Depths below surface were recorded. Artefacts were noted and the trenches were backfilled at the completion of fieldwork (Plate 4.9). The locations of the trenches are indicated in Figure 3.1.

Area	Trench	Dimensions (m)	Depth (cm)	Orientation
1	A	2 x 1	12	N – S
1	C	2 x 1	12	N – S
2	J	1.2 x 0.65	11	N – S
2A	not tested	/	/	/
3	STP 1	0.3 x 0.3	23	N - S
3	B	1 x 0.6	21	N – S
3	D	1 x 1	18 – 23	N – S
3	E	3.3 x 3.3	5 – 7	NE – SW
3	L	1 x 0.9	34	N – S
3	M	1 x 0.8	3 - 5	N – S
4	STP 2	0.3 x 0.3	29	N – S
4	F	1 x 1	65	N – S
4	G	1 x 1	40	N – S
4	I	2 x 0.6	20	E – W
5	not tested	/	/	/
6	not tested	/	/	/

Table 1: Summary of trenches and test pits excavated in each area.

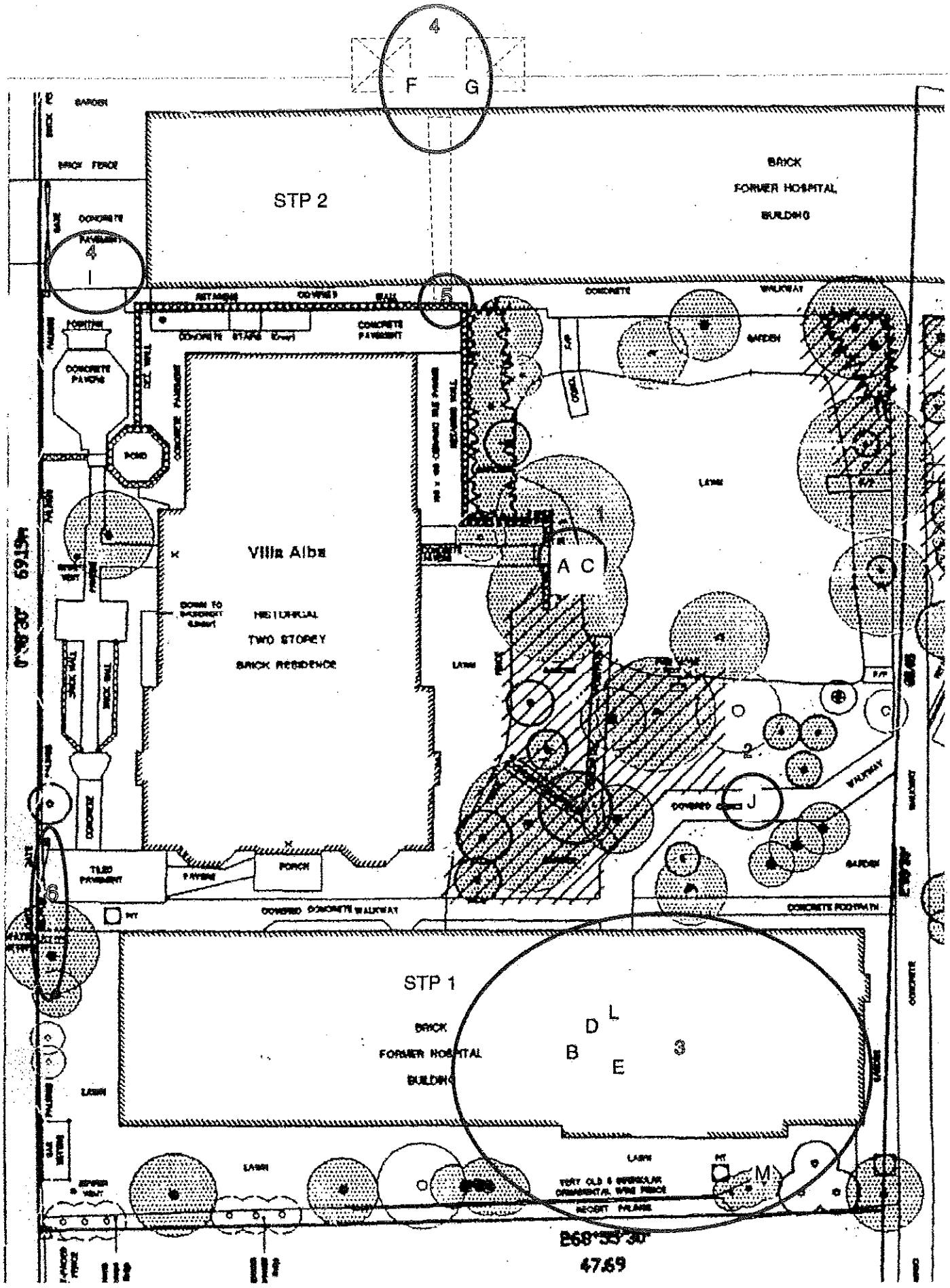

Figure 3.1. Location of shovel test pits and excavated trenches.

4.0 RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

This section presents the results of the test excavations and preliminary interpretations of the features and deposits recovered.

4.1 Area 1

Area 1 was located to the east of the Villa Alba house.

The aims of Trenches A and C were to

- determine the presence and depth below surface of a path adjacent to the retaining wall steps
- if the path is present, determine the distance of the north-south path from the fence line.

Trench A was located north – south along the eastern side of the retaining wall and set of steps. A layer of white gravel in a loose sandy matrix (context 3) was uncovered between 1 and 2 cm beneath the ground surface in the northern section of the trench, directly east of the steps. This was lying on a very compact surface (context 4) and together these contexts were interpreted as the remains of a section of gravel path. Fragments of concrete (context 2) lying just under the surface leaf litter (context 1) were not *in situ* and are related to the period of hospital occupation and/or demolition. One fragment of amber glass was recovered.

The southern section of Trench A extended into areas of existing vegetation, and although some gravel was present, due to the degree of disturbance caused by root growth it was not possible to definitively trace areas of gravel and compaction into this area. The only artefacts noted were plastic debris on the surface.

Trench C was located directly east of Trench A. A layer of white gravel (context 7) lying on a compact base (context 9) extended across the centre west area of the trench and was interpreted as a continuation of the path identified in Trench A. The surrounding area was too disturbed to trace the path any further (Plate 4.1).

The results of testing in Area 1 are as follows:

- a gravel path was located to the east of the steps within 2cm of the current ground surface level
- the eastern edge of the path was at least 1.3 metres east from the retaining wall and up to 5cm below the current ground surface
- the orientation, width and total depth of the gravel path layer, and the location of the western edge was not discernible due to prior disturbance of the ground surface due to vegetation growth.

4.2 Area 2

Area 2 was located in an existing garden area to the east of the Villa Alba house.

The aim of Trench J was to determine the presence and depth below surface of an east-west path.

Trench J was located north–south across a currently existing path. Beneath the sandy surface (context 10) lay a compact silty sand layer (context 11) which had been shaped to form the base of a path. This context, and the patches of yellow concrete laying sand (context 12) at the north and south ends, are interpreted as the remains of the construction of a former concrete path in the same location (this concrete has been removed).

Beneath these layers, at a depth of approximately 11 cm below the current ground surface, was a very compact, dark brown silty sand with few inclusions (context 13). This context had clearly defined edges, bounded on the north by a strip of rocky yellow orange clay (context 14) and a compact grey brown strip on the southern edge (context 15). Context 13 has been interpreted as the remains of a path (Figure 4.1, Plate 4.2). No artefacts were recovered.

The results of testing in Area 2 are as follows:

- a path predating the construction of a concrete path was located approximately 11 cm below the current ground surface and oriented due east - west
- the path appears not to have been surfaced with gravel or any other material.

4.3 Area 2A

Area 2A was located in an area of existing garden to the east of the Villa Alba house.

The aim of testing in area 2A was to locate the junction of any paths located in areas 1 and 3. The results of testing in Trenches A and C indicated that vegetative growth created a degree of soil disturbance which greatly obscured the remains of any paths. Area 2A was therefore not tested.

4.4 Area 3

Area 3 was located south of the Villa Alba house.

4.4.1 Shovel Test Pit 1

The aim of STP 1 was to determine the type and depth of subsurface deposits. STP 1 was located 7.3m SSE of the corner of the main structure. The stratigraphy consisted of a grey silty sand layer with stone and brick fragments overlying compact orange and brown clay with brick inclusions. Beneath this, at a depth of 20cm below the current ground surface, a compact grey silty sand with a dense spread of white pebbley gravel appeared. In the south section a black greasy deposit appeared, possibly wood, at the same level as the layer of gravel. No artefacts apart from brick fragments in the fill were recovered.

The results of this test pit indicated that remains of a path may be *in situ* beneath a layer of fill in some areas of the site.

4.4.2 Trenches B, D and L

The aim of Trenches B, D and L was to locate the remains of the summer house, in the form of post holes or other construction related features.

Trenches B, D and L were placed in the vicinity of the summer house foundations as suggested by historic plans and the surveyor's field books. The stratigraphy of these three trenches was

essentially the same; a shallow loose surface layer (contexts 16, 20, 25) on top of a compact fill layer (contexts 17, 21, 26), with a compact grey sandy silt at the base of the excavation (contexts 18, 22, 30). This layer occurred between 15 and 18 cm below the current ground level.

At the base of Trench B the grey context (18) appeared to be cut by a pale layer to the east, parallel and oriented north-south (context 19). The interpretation of this layer was not possible without extending the excavation; it may be related to a foundation trench or to the construction of garden features.

A terracotta service pipe (context 28) had been inserted into the southwest corner of Trench L to a depth of 18cm. This service may correspond to ablutions facilities shown in a 1956 MMBW Drainage Plan of the former hospital building. Further excavation in this area was not possible therefore the existence of archaeological features in this corner of the trench is still unknown.

At the base of Trenches D and L post holes were identified. The location of the post hole in Trench D (context 24) corresponded closely with the position indicated in the surveyor's field books (VPRS 8600/P1, 1894). The southwest corner of the post hole in Trench L (context 32) was located 1.29m from the southwest corner of the post hole in Trench D. The bases of the post holes in both trenches were both located 34 cm below the current ground surface; the top of the post holes were 21 and 22cm below the current ground surface (Figure 4.2, Plate 4.3). One nail (circular cross section, badly corroded) was recovered from each post hole.

The results of testing in Trenches B, D and L are as follows:

- two post holes, believed to be related to the construction of the summer house, were located at 21cm and 22cm below ground surface. Each was dug to a similar depth (12 or 13 cm).

4.4.3 Trench M

The aim of Trench M was to determine the presence and depth below surface of a gravel path at the end of the original fence.

Trench M was located adjacent to the eastern end of the original wire fence running along the southern border of the property (see Figure 3.1). This area appeared to have been subject to some disturbance. The surface consisted of vegetation growing in loose sandy silt matrix (context 33). This layer had a depth of between 3 and 5cm. Directly beneath the surface vegetation patches of white pebble gravel embedded in a compact grey surface were evident (context 34). This context was interpreted as the remains of an original path which extended from the end of the fence. The area around this trench had been subject to significant disturbance in the form of soil and fill removal and so it was not possible to determine the direction or dimensions of the path. Trench M was not backfilled so as to allow VAM Inc to take survey levels at a future date if required (Plate 4.4). A toy car and part of a toy truck were noted on the surface. No other artefacts were recovered.

The results of testing in Trench M are as follows:

- a pebble gravel path was located at a depth of 3 to 5cm below the existing ground surface at the end of the original southern boundary fence.

4.4.4 Trench E

The aim of Trench E was to determine the presence and depth below surface of paths and beds related to a former parterre, and any edging materials.

The location of Trench E was determined by James Broadbent's analysis of historic plans. The trench was initially a 2.3 x 1m opening oriented NE – SW, intended to expose a path and the edges of garden beds (Figure 4.3, Plate 5). It was later extended to follow changes in the nature of the deposits uncovered (Plate 9).

The top two strata of Trench E were similar to those of Trenches B, D and L: a shallow loose surface layer (context 35) on top of a compact fill layer (context 36). Unlike other areas of the site, the compact fill layer was much shallower with a depth of 4-5cm, a possible result of previous surface disturbance. At the southern end of the trench a very compact light grey sandy base with a scatter of loose white pebbles across the surface was uncovered (context 37). This appeared to be related to small patches of compacted pebbles located elsewhere within the square, and has been interpreted as the possible remains of a garden path. Across the northern end of the trench, adjacent to the compact pebble layer, was a dark brown fine loamy soil with no inclusions (context 38). It appeared to correspond to a section of garden bed outlined in James Broadbent's historical reconstruction (see Figure 4.5). The definition of the southern boundary of this deposit improved with depth, however time limited the extent of excavation possible within the current project. This context has been interpreted as the remains of a garden bed.

Embedded in context 37 were a number of wooden fragments (context 39, Figure 4.3, Plate 6) ranging in size from 3 x 3cm to greater than 15 x 12cm. The compaction of the surrounding matrix and the fragility of the wood prevented their removal as whole specimens, however an *in situ* inspection suggested that they had been machined and were not likely to be the remains of wooden stumps or vegetation. They may be the remains of edging materials. Andrew Thorn of VAM Inc has taken a sample for species identification. The results were not available at the time of writing. No artefacts were recovered.

The results of testing in Trench E are as follows:

- remains of a pebble gravel path may be *in situ* beneath a layer of fill in some areas of the trench at a depth of 7-8cm below the current ground surface
- evidence of what appears to be garden soil was recovered in the northern part of the trench at a depth of 7-8cm below the current ground surface
- possible remains of wooden edging materials were recovered (this has yet to be confirmed)
- it was not possible to accurately define the outlines of garden beds and paths within the limits of the current project, however despite obvious surface disturbance it appears that evidence of a former parterre is still *in situ* in some areas of the site.

4.5 Area 4

Area 4 was located to the north of the Villa Alba house and retaining wall.

4.5.1 Shovel Test Pit 2

The aim of STP 2 was to determine the type and depth of subsurface deposits. STP 2 was located 6.3m north of the concrete retaining wall behind the Villa Alba house (see Figure 3.1).

The stratigraphy consisted of 15cm of topsoil and newly seeded grass overlying 13cm of extremely compact fill, consisting of concreted brick, sand and clay. The last 2cm of the pit consisted of an orange yellow clay with patches of dark brown/grey sandy silt. It is not known whether this was fill or a cultural layer, as further excavation was not possible without widening the area of the test pit. No artefacts other than brick fragments were recovered.

The results of this test pit indicated that any intact historical cultural features within the area formerly occupied by the hospital building would be located under very compacted fill at a depth greater than 32cm below the current ground surface.

4.5.2 Trench I

The aim of Trench I was to determine the presence and depth below surface of a north-south path near the western fence. This path was believed to be located in one the least disturbed areas of the site.

Between 10 and 13cm of topsoil (context 40) was laid over a shallow layer of fill containing clay, brick and stone fragments (context 41). In the centre of the trench, beneath the fill, was a compact path with a surface of dense white gravel (context 42) at a depth of between 14 and 18cm below the current ground surface. The path tapers from its widest point of 76cm in the south to a width of 66cm in the north. On either side of the path was a compact light grey/brown fine-grained deposit (context 43) into which the path had been cut. This was excavated only so far as to reveal the outlines of the path. A shallow trench on either side of the path suggests that it might once have been lined with bricks although there were no bricks remaining *in situ* (Figure 4.4, Plate 4.7). No artefacts were recovered.

The results of testing in Trench I are as follows:

- remains of an *in situ* pebble gravel path were found beneath a layer of fill at a depth of 14 – 20cm below the current ground surface.

4.5.3 Trenches F and G

The aim of trenches F and G was to determine the presence and depth below surface of footings of former brick features.

The locations of Trenches F and G were determined by James Broadbent's analysis of historic plans and were placed so as to reveal evidence of the brick features in relation to the intersection of two gravel paths.

In Trench F, 15cm of topsoil (context 44) overlaid at least 20cm of fill (context 45). This fill was compact but less concreted than that encountered further south in STP 2. It extended to the base of the excavation 65cm below the surface. A piece of a stoneware vessel and a stoneware ink jar were recovered from fill near the base of the excavation. An expanse of clear yellow sand (context 46) appeared in a layer with well-defined edges at the western edge of the trench 34cm below the current ground surface. This layer was excavated to a depth of 65cm and was ultimately revealed to be a service trench with a metal feature *in situ*. Further excavation was not possible. Although the trench revealed evidence of considerable disturbance, large fragments of brick were visible in the western section. It is not known whether the disturbance was limited to

the immediate area of the service installation and was detected by an unfortunate placement of the trench, or whether it represents damage to the cultural resource of the whole area. Further excavation to the west and north would be needed to resolve this question.

Trench G also had 15cm of topsoil (context 47) overlying compact fill (context 48). This fill was more compact than that in Trench F, consisting of a clay matrix with bluestone gravel, brick, wood, ceramic and metal inclusions. Artefact fragments in the fill included part of a ceramic electrical insulator and a non-diagnostic fragment of pink on white tableware. A terracotta service pipe was uncovered along the southern boundary of the trench (context 49), most likely related to the ablution facilities which were located in the southeast corner of the former structure. As there was evidence of considerable disturbance in the area of greatest interest, excavation was not continued beyond a depth of 40cm below current ground surface.

The results of testing in Trenches F and G suggest that although there is evidence of disturbance in both trenches, it is not possible to state definitively that the brick footings have been removed. Although the results of Trench I suggest that historic landscape features previously existed within 20cm of the current ground surface, levels across the site have been altered considerably over time, and the depth below surface of footings is not known. As neither trench was excavated to natural or non-cultural layers, the footings may exist below this level. Alternatively, test trench placements may be slightly inaccurate and there is the potential for historic built features to be revealed by further testing in the vicinity.

4.6 Untested areas

4.6.1 Area 4

Two additional aims of testing in Area 4 were to

- locate remains of fence posts/gate along northern boundary
- determine the presence and northern width of a former latticed arbor.

The northern boundary and presumed location of the latticed arbor were not tested due to the depth of fill to be removed and lack of time and human resources.

4.6.2 Area 5

The aims of testing in Area 5 were to

- determine the depth below surface of former garden surface and remains of steps in north facing retaining wall
- determine the presence and southern width of a former latticed arbor

The area adjacent to the north facing retaining wall could not be tested as the concrete capping on the retaining wall protruded into the testing area and blocked access to the deposit. The fill can only be removed using a pick and there was insufficient space to use this tool.

The presumed location of the latticed arbor was not tested due to the depth of fill to be removed and lack of time and human resources.

4.6.2 Area 6

The aim of testing in Area 6 was to determine the spacing of fence posts relating to former fence/gate construction. This area was not tested due to lack of time and human resources.

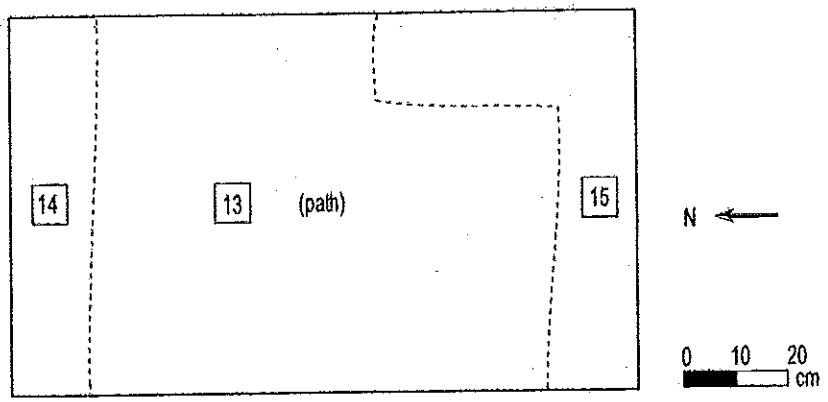

Figure 4.1 Plan of Trench J

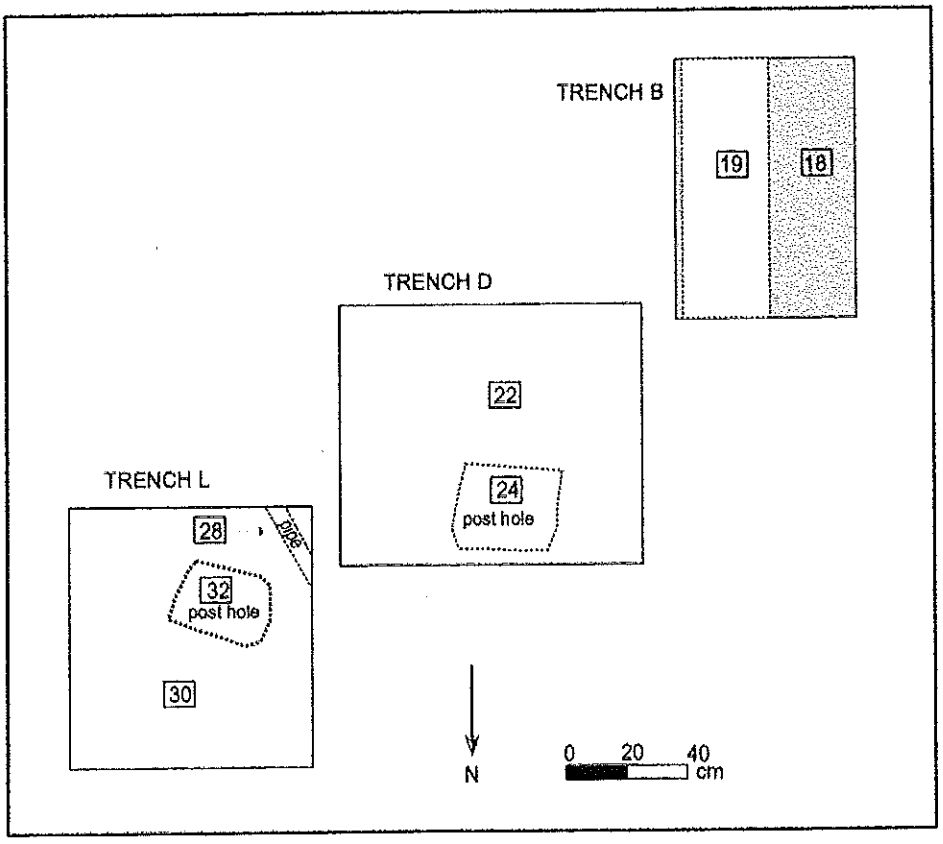

Figure 4.2 Plan of Trenches B, D and L showing post holes.

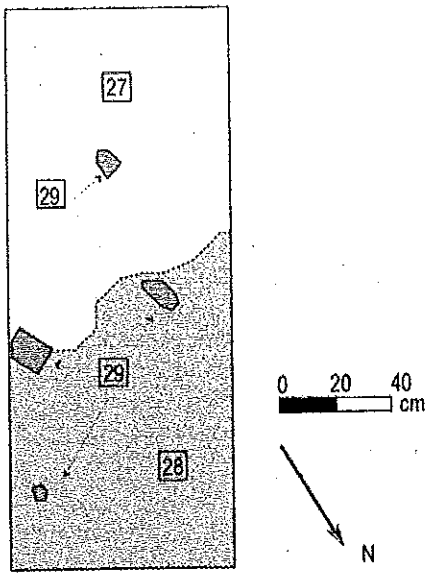

Figure 4.3 Plan of Trench E (prior to extension)

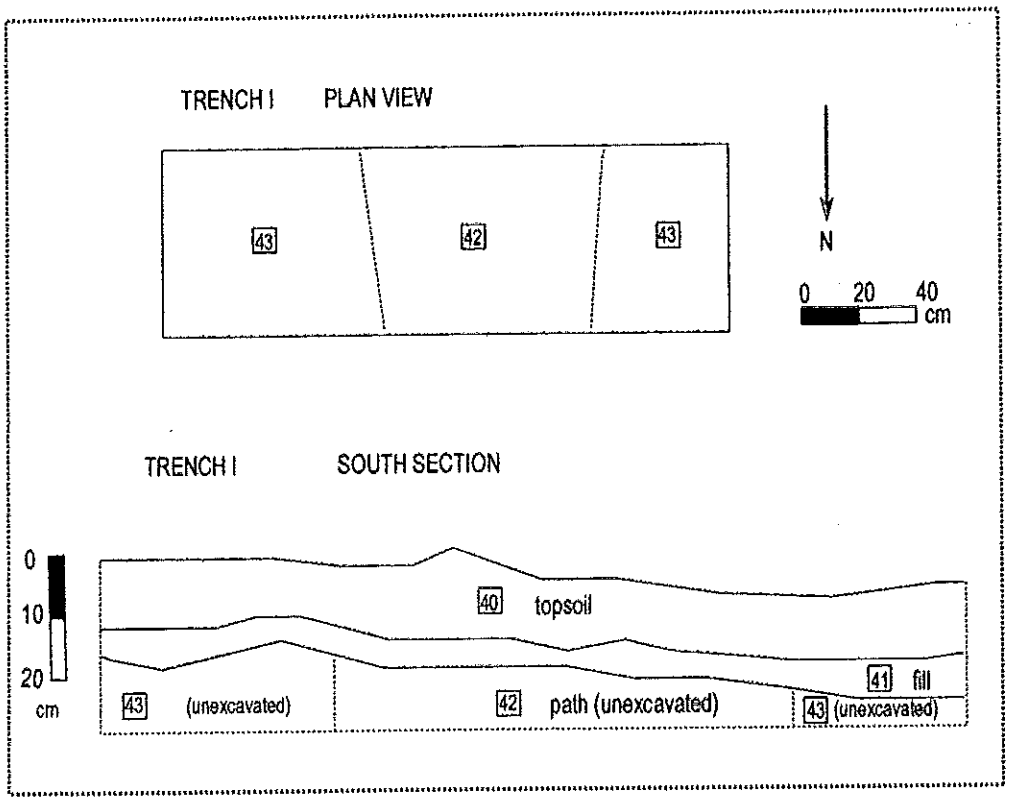

Figure 4.4 Plan and section of Trench I

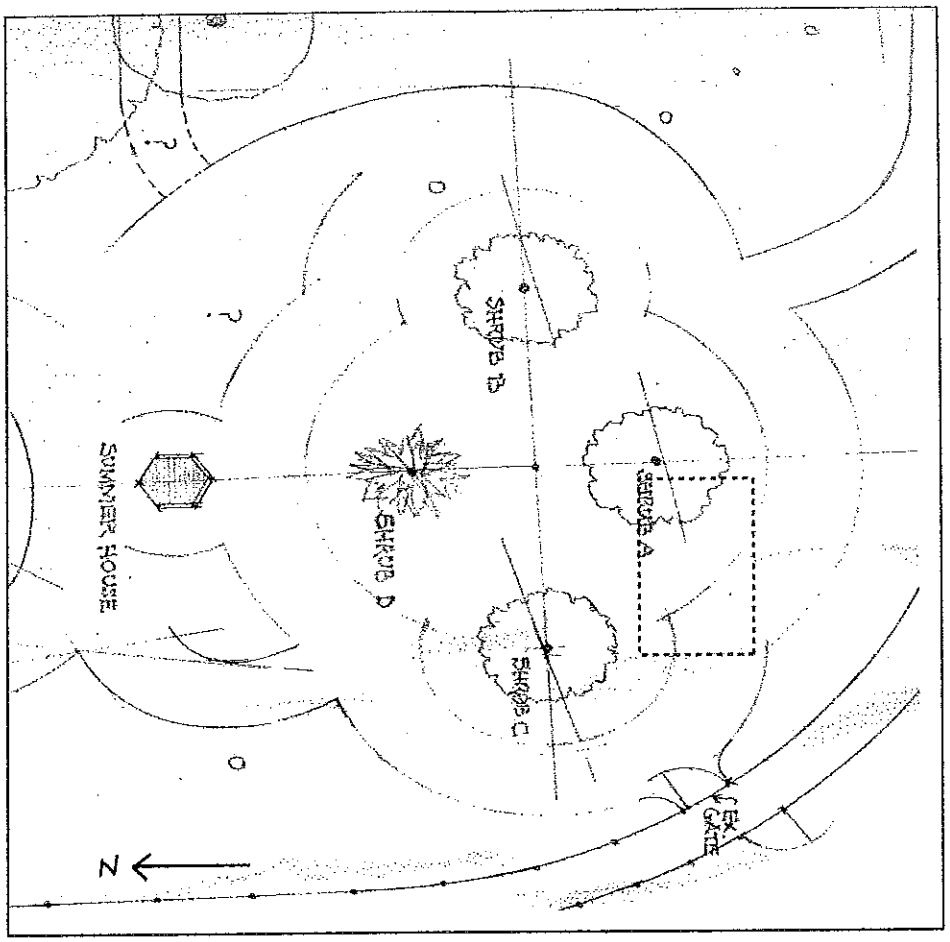

Figure 4.5 Broadbent's reconstruction of southeastern garden parterre showing approximate location of results of Trench E.

5.0 DISCUSSION

The broad aim of subsurface testing at Villa Alba was to determine the presence, location and depth below current ground surface of archaeological remains relating to a number of landscape features which had been identified in historical documents. Excavations in parts of Areas 1, 2, 3 and 4 have demonstrated that despite a history of changing land use and considerable surface disturbance at Villa Alba, evidence of late 19th century landscape features has been preserved in certain places across the site. This evidence was identified at depths of between 2cm and 22cm below the current ground surface.

5.1 North of Villa Alba

The status of archaeological remains in the northern part of the property was not clearly resolved during the current project. The path in the southwest corner (Area 4) was recovered intact. Evidence of substantial disturbance near the northern boundary (Area 4) was noted, however the possibility of historical landscape features existing *in situ* has yet to be discounted in this area and to the north of the retaining wall (Area 5). This should be taken into consideration when planning future developments in these areas of the site.

5.2 South of Villa Alba

Archaeological evidence of the location of the summer house and possible garden layout in the southeastern corner of the property (Area 3) was recovered *in situ*. This result is encouraging given the degree to which the land surface has been disturbed over the past 12-15 months. The extent of disturbance across the area and the degree to which it prevents the recovery of additional archaeological data is unclear. Given that the 19th century garden design and depth below surface in this corner of the site is not well documented in historical records, additional archaeological investigation is warranted before any further disturbance of this part of the site takes place.

Area 6 was not tested during the current project, however Smith et al (2001:1) excavated in the vicinity in 2001 and recovered what they interpreted as the remains of a fence and gate in their Trench B. Further investigation of this area would be at the discretion of the VAM Inc Management Committee.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES AT VILLA ALBA

Recommendation 1
Disturbance of the ground surface north of Villa Alba should be monitored by a qualified archaeologist. If archaeological remains are identified, the archaeologist will have the authority to suspend further subsurface disturbance until the remains have been adequately assessed and documented. A Permit to disturb or destroy archaeological remains will be required from Heritage Victoria prior to commencing works in this area.

Recommendation 2
Structural features and any artefacts recovered during archaeological monitoring should be fully documented, catalogued and analysed in accordance with Heritage Victoria guidelines. On completion of monitoring, a report should be prepared describing the results and any historical or management implications.

Recommendation 3
Additional subsurface testing should be carried out in the southeastern corner of the site (Area 3) by a qualified archaeologist before any further disturbance of the ground surface takes place. The purpose of testing will be to determine the extent to which evidence of the layout of the 19th century garden remains *in situ* and can be recovered. A Permit from Heritage Victoria will be required prior to commencing works.

There are at least two ways in which the VAM Inc Management Committee can meet this requirement should archaeological investigation be required.

1. A limited program of subsurface testing similar to that completed in this project, involving hand excavated test pits placed strategically across the site. A nominal suggested time for fieldwork would be two days. This would allow statements to be made about the nature and integrity of archaeological resources at several locations across the site. Should the archaeological resources be found to be largely intact further advice would be required from Heritage Victoria before the remains could be disturbed or destroyed.

2. Broad area excavation, involving the mechanical removal of overburden and definition of features by hand excavation. This would allow statements to be made about the nature and integrity of archaeological resources across the whole area and possibly reveal the layout of the 19th century garden. A nominal suggested time for fieldwork would be at least three or four days, including one day on which a mechanical excavator would be employed. Should the archaeological resources be found to be largely intact further advice would be required from Heritage Victoria before the remains could be disturbed or destroyed.

Both strategies require the preparation of a report describing the results and any historical or management implications at the completion of fieldwork.

Permit applications should be discussed with Heritage Victoria and lodged at least six weeks prior to the scheduled commencement of archaeological works.

7.0 REFERENCES

Unpublished reports and notes

Hawker, J. 2001. *Villa Alba - landscape notes.*

Sanderson, P. 1989. *Villa Alba Conservation Analysis.*

Serle, J. 1998. Recommended inclusions for the 1998 Hubbard and Riddett *Villa Alba Conservation Management Plan.*

Smith, J. and A.Jamieson, 2001. *Villa Alba Test Excavations.* Heritage Victoria.

Plans

Adshead and McQuie Pty Ltd 2001. *Plan of Compilation of Field Records Dated 1894 and 1911 Villa Alba Kew.*

Broadbent, J. 2001. *Villa Alba Kew. Reconstructed garden, preliminary design.*

MMBW Drainage Plan 77833 23/9/1956 (held by VAM Inc)

Archival records

VPRS 8600/P1, unit 54, field book 946, 18/1/1894 Plan 7. Public Record Office of Victoria.

APPENDIX 1 PLATES

Plate 1 Area 1 Trenches A and C looking west.

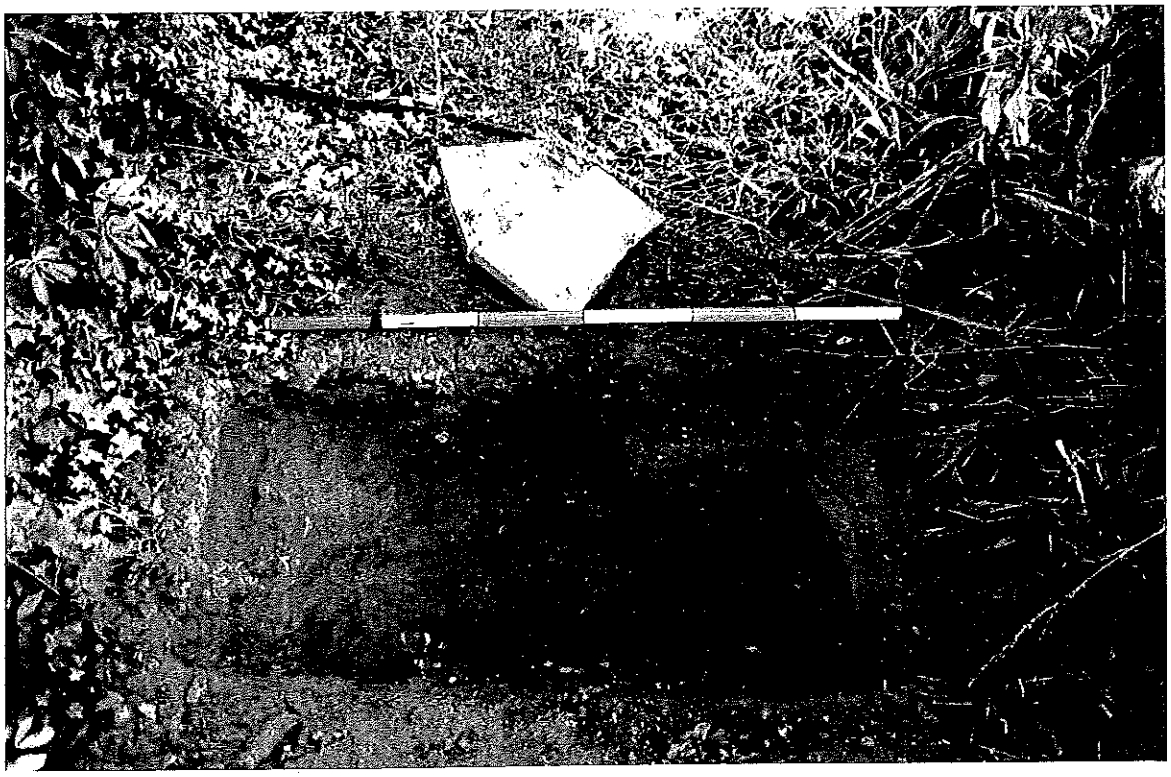

Plate 2 Area 2 Trench J looking east.

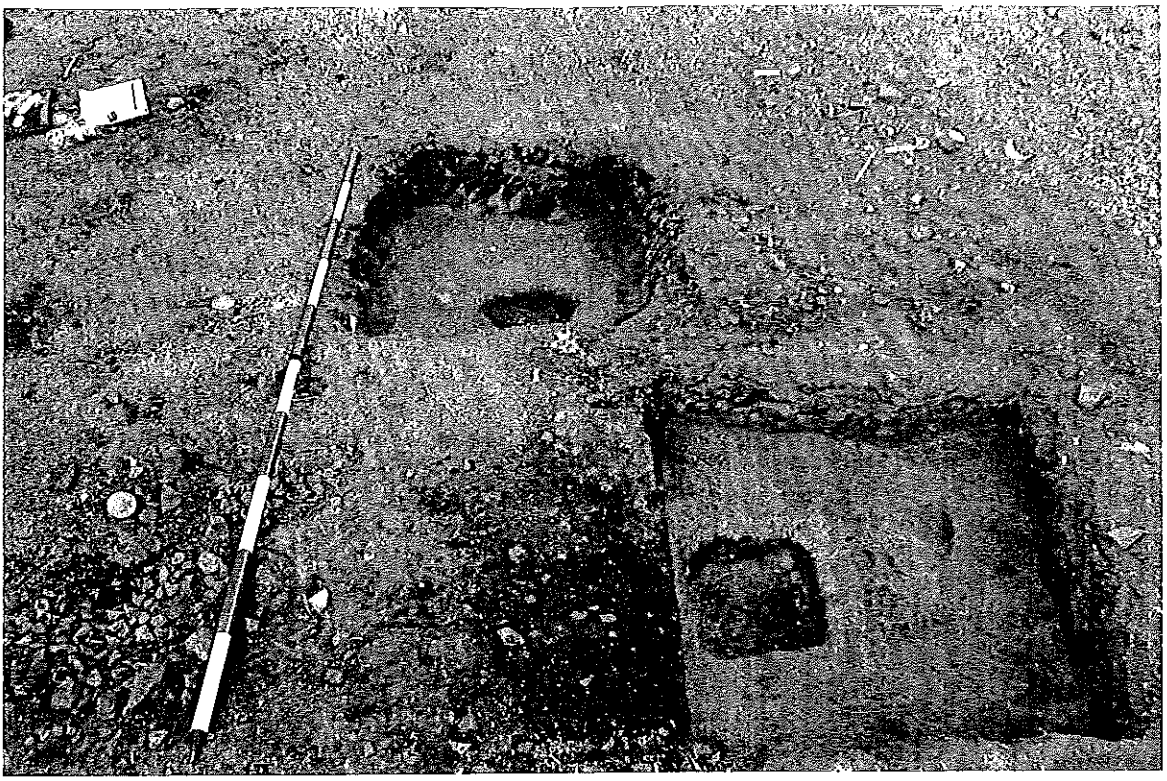

Plate 3 Area 3 Trenches D and L looking west (D is in the foreground).

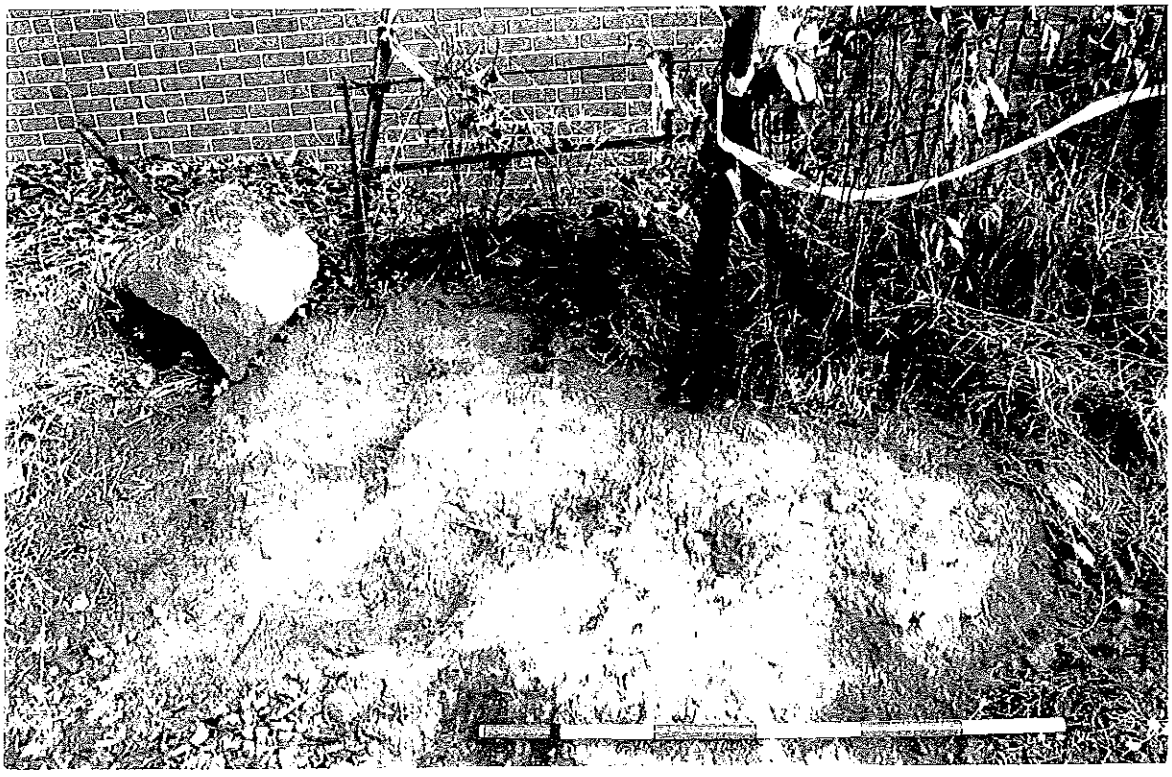

Plate 4 Area 3 Trench M looking south.

Plate 5 Area 3 Trench E looking south west.

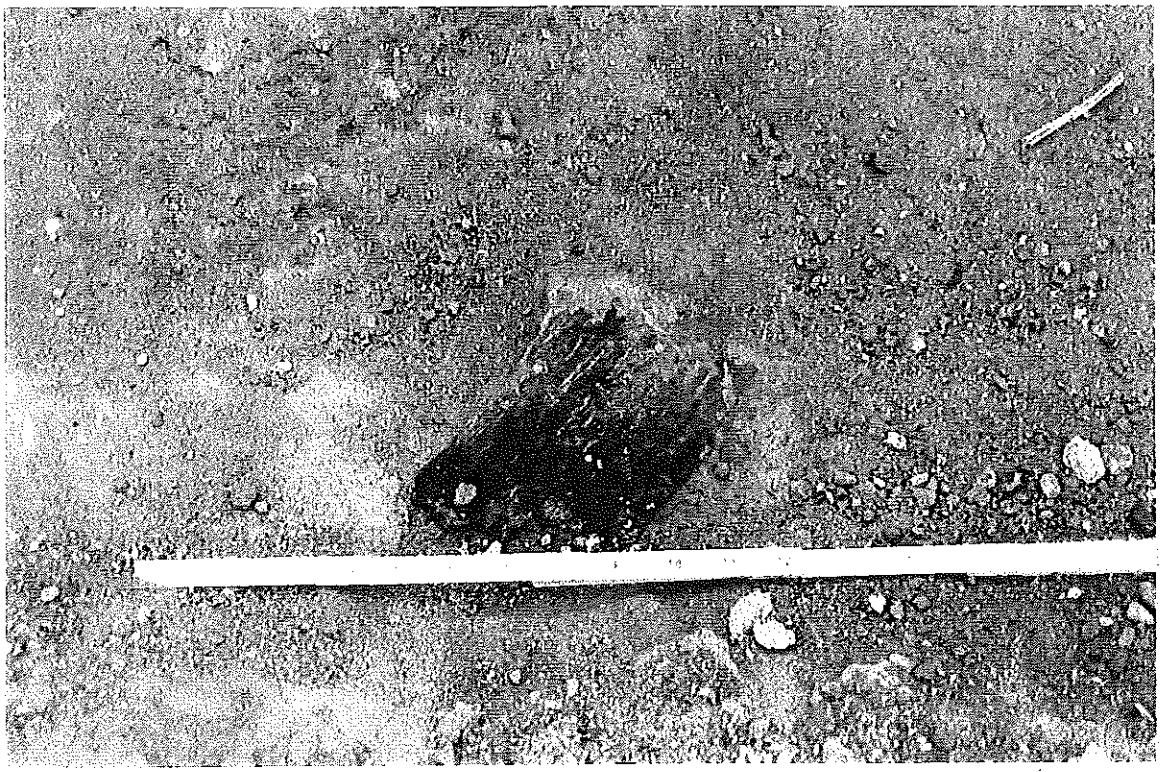

Plate 6 Area 3 Trench E wood detail.

Plate 7 Area 4 Trench I (path) looking south.

Plate 8 Area 4 Trenches D and L, backfilling in progress.

Plate 9 Area 4 Trench E and field crew.

APPENDIX 2 CONTEXT LIST

Context #	Area/Trench	Description	Equivalent to
1	1 / A	surface leaf litter, humus	5
2	1 / A	concrete paving (large fragment) under 1	8
3	1 / A	white gravel in loose sandy soil, under 1	
4	1 / A	very compact, dark grey sandy silt, under 3	9
5	1 / C	surface leaf litter, humus	1
6	1 / C	loose dark soil within dense root zone	
7	1 / C	patch of white gravel in loose sandy soil, under 5	3
8	1 / C	concrete paving (large fragments), under 5, next to 7	2
9	1 / C	very compact, dark grey sandy silt, under 7	4
10	2 / J	surface, loose stoney grey sand, some yellow sand	
11	2 / J	compact grey silty sand shaped to form path, under 10	
12	2 / J	patches of yellow concrete laying sand adjacent to 11	
13	2 / J	dark brown very compact silty sand, under 10, 11	
14	2 / J	orange yellow clay with rocky inclusions along northern edge of path 10,11,12	
15	2 / J	compact grey brown layer along southern edge of path	
16	3 / B	surface, loose, sandy with stones, debris, 4cm thick	20
17	3 / B	compact fill, brown and orange clay, wood, brick, charcoal inclusions, 12 cm thick	21
18	3 / B	grey sandy silt, no inclusions, dug to 20cm blo surface	22
19	3 / B	pale sandy silt, adjacent to 18, dug to 20cm blo surface	
20	3 / D	surface, loose, sandy with stones, debris, 4cm thick	16
21	3 / D	compact fill, brown and orange clay, wood, brick, charcoal inclusions, 14 cm thick	17
22	3 / D	grey sandy silt, no inclusions, dug 18-23 cm blo surface	18
23	3 / D	dark grey fill inside post hole, with tree root outlines	
24	3 / D	post hole incision, base of cut 34 cm blo surface, top of hole is 21 cm blo surface	
25	3 / L	surface, loose, sandy with stones, debris, 3cm thick	16, 20
26	3 / L	bluestone gravel in SW corner, above 28, next to 25	
27	3 / L	compact fill, brown and orange clay, wood, brick, charcoal inclusions, 12 cm thick	17, 21
28	3 / L	terracotta pipe in SW corner, base 18cm below surface, under 26	
29	3 / L	trench for 28	
30	3 / L	grey sandy silt, no inclusions, dug to 22 cm blo surface	18, 22
31	3 / L	dark grey fill inside post hole	23
32	3 / L	post hole incision, base of cut 34 cm blo surface, top of hole is 22 cm blo surface	24
33	3 / M	surface vegetation in a sandy silt matrix	
34	3 / M	white pebbley gravel in a compact grey base	
35	3 / E	surface, loose, sandy with stones, debris, 2-3cm thick	16, 20, 25
36	3 / E	compact fill, brown and orange clay, wood, brick, charcoal inclusions, 4-5 cm thick	17, 21, 27
37	3 / E	very compact light grey/white sandy base with some white pebbles (path), under 36	
38	3 / E	dark brown fine loamy soil, no inclusions, next to 37	
39	3 / E	large pieces of machined wood, embedded in 37	
40	4 / I	dark brown topsoil	44, 47

41	4 / I	fill layer; sand and clay with rock and brick fragments	
42	4 / I	compact white gravel on a sandy silt base (path)	
43	4 / I	very compact, fine grained light grey brown	
44	4 / F	dark brown topsoil	40
45	4 / F	compact fill, clay and sand with stony inclusions	
46	4 / F	sand under 41 in western section, 34cm blo surface, service trench	
47	4 / G	dark brown topsoil	40, 44
48	4 / G	compact fill, clay, bluestone gravel, brick, wood, ceramic and metal debris	
49	4 / G	terracotta service pipe in trench	

PERMIT

HERITAGE ACT 1995

PERMIT NO: P6058

OWNER/APPLICANT: Jessie Serle
Villa Alba Museum Inc.
ADDRESS: 31 Lisson Grove
HAWTHORN 3122

ARCHAEOLOGIST: Maddy Atkinson
ADDRESS: 11 Gertrude Street
PRESTON 3072

Heritage VICTORIA

HERITAGE REGISTER NO: H 605
REGISTRATION CATEGORY: Heritage Place FILE: HER/2001/00031

NAME OF PLACE /OBJECT (IF ANY): **Villa Alba**

LOCATION: Walmer Street, Kew

Pursuant to Section 74 of the Heritage Act (1995) and in respect to the above-mentioned place / object, the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria hereby grants a PERMIT, subject to conditions as prescribed hereunder to carry out the following:

Test excavations to determine location, integrity, significance and extent of any archaeological features

CONDITIONS:

1. Approved works or activities are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the registered place.

2. The archaeologist is to conduct a series of test trenches across the site, and record all significant features that are exposed. All works are to be recorded and interpreted in the project report.

3. An officer of Heritage Victoria, acting under the authority of the *Heritage Act 1995*, may at any time inspect the works undertaken or relics recovered under the Permit. The Executive Director is to be informed when the approved works have been completed.

4 This permit shall expire if the permitted works have not commenced within one (1) year of the date of issue of this permit, or are not completed within two (2) years of the date of issue of this permit.

5 At the completion of the works, the archaeologist must provide 2 copies of the test excavation project report to HV. The must contain recommendations relating to future works on the site.

NOTE THAT PERMISSION HAS BEEN GIVEN FOR INSPECTIONS OF THE PLACE OR OBJECT TO BE UNDERTAKEN DURING THE CARRYING OUT OF WORKS, AND WITHIN SIX (6) MONTHS OF NOTIFICATION OF THEIR COMPLETION.

TAKE NOTICE THAT ANY NATURAL PERSON WHO CARRIES OUT WORKS OR ACTIVITIES NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PERMIT OR CONDITIONS IS GUILTY OF AN OFFENCE AND LIABLE TO A PENALTY OF UP TO 1,500 PENALTY UNITS ($150,000) OR 5 YEARS IMPRISONMENT OR BOTH, OR IN THE CASE OF A BODY CORPORATE 3,000 PENALTY UNITS ($300,000).

THE ATTENTION OF THE OWNER AND/OR APPLICANT IS DRAWN TO THE NEED TO OBTAIN ALL OTHER RELEVANT PERMITS PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS.

Copy to: Statutory Planner, Boroondara City Council, Private Bag 1, Camberwell 3124
Bob Talbot, Manager planning & Building, XavierCollege, Barkers Road, Kew, 3101

HERITAGE VICTORIA
22/80 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000

Signed ..... Assistant Director

Date 12 APR 02