SDSEngineering
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LIMITED GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATION REPORT

Job No:	211221
Address:	45 Meredith Street Strathfield
Lot/DP:	Lot 8, DP 17827
Client:	Hani Badran
Date:	11/11/2021
Issued:	A.E

SITE DETAILS

Slope Direction:	NE - SW
Slope Grade:	Minor
Existing Development Site:	
Presence of Trees:	Yes

SITE CLASSIFICATION - AS2870 (2011)

Depth of Soil Suction Change (H_s):	1.8
Characteristic Surface Movement (Y_s):	40 < Ys ≤ 60
Foundation Design To[1]:	Class 'H1'
Site Classification:	Class 'P'
Class 'P' Classification Due To[2]:	Presence of abnormal moisture conditions: trees.

1 - based on estimated characteristic surface movement (Y_s) **ONLY**
2 - for Class 'P' (Problematic) sites **ONLY**
where site has been classified as 'P' due to presence of uncontrolled fill, SDS Engineering reserves the right to reclassify the site if presented with compaction certificates satisfying the requirements of Class '1' controlled fill as defined by AS3798 (2007)

DCP - AS1289.6.3.2 (1997)

	DCP1	DCP2	DCP3	DCP4
0 - 100	< 1	1		
100 - 200	1	3		
200 - 300	2	5		
300 - 400	3	6		
400 - 500	2	6		
500 - 600	3	4		
600 - 700	2	4		
700 - 800	2	3		
800 - 900	4	2		
900 - 1000	6	4		
1000 - 1100	7	3		
1100 - 1200	7	3		
1200 - 1300	7	4		
1300 - 1400	18	5		
1400 - 1500	UTP	6		
1500 - 1600		12		
1600 - 1700		17		
1700 - 1800		UTP		
1800 - 1900				
1900 - 2000				
2000 - 2100				
2100 - 2200				
2200 - 2300				
2300 - 2400				
2400 - 2500				
2500 - 2600				
2600 - 2700				
2700 - 2800				
2800 - 2900				
2900 - 3000				

UTP - Unable To Penetrate (refusal) defined as less than 100mm penetration into relevant layer with excess of 20 blows

STRATA LOGS - AS1726 (2017)

BH1

Depth	Description	Density / Consistency	Moisture
0 - 150	FILL - Silty Sandy CLAY, high plasticity, dark brown	VL	M
150 - 800	CLAY, high plasticity, orange mottled grey	F	M
800 - 1400	CLAY with a trace of ironstone gravel, high plasticity, grey slightly mottled	St	M
1400 - 1600	SHALE, extremely to moderately weathered, brown. Refusal		

BH2

Depth	Description	Density / Consistency	Moisture

WIND CLASSIFICATION - AS4055 (2012)

Region:	Region 'A'
Terrain Category:	TC3
Topographic Class:	T1
Shielding:	PS
Wind Classification[1]:	N2 (W33)

1 - recommendation **ONLY** based on estimated future terrain category and shielding for the site in five years time

GENERAL COMMENTS

Medium sized trees located towards the front of the site and along the boundary towards the rear of the site. All footings are to founded within extremely weathered shale bedrock or better proportioned to a maximum allowable bearing capacity of 400 kPa.

LIMITATIONS

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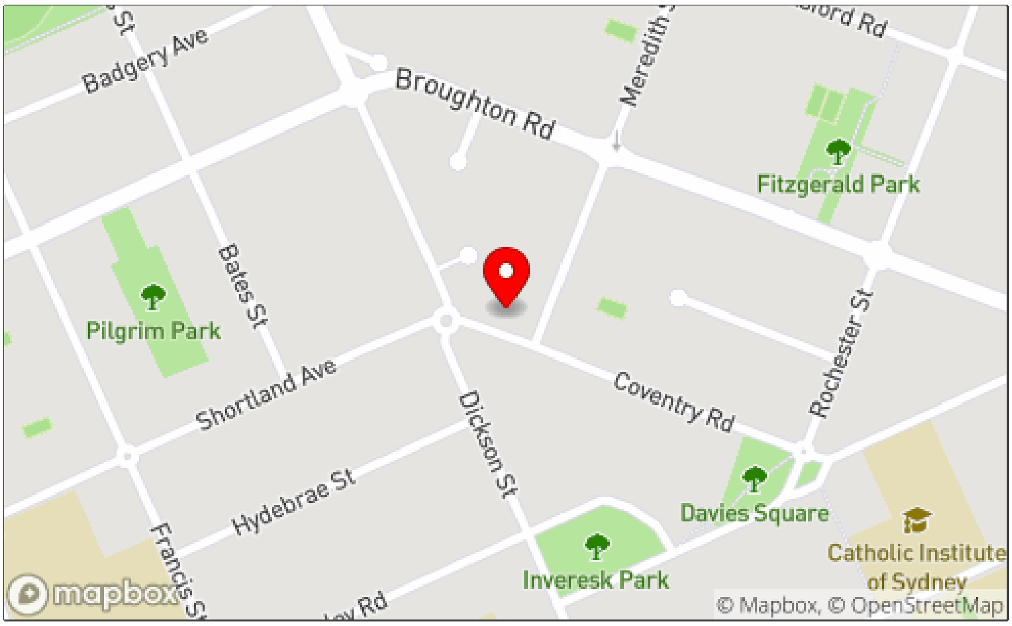
BOREHOLE LOCATIONS (NTS)

SITE LOCALITY (NTS)



SITE IMAGES

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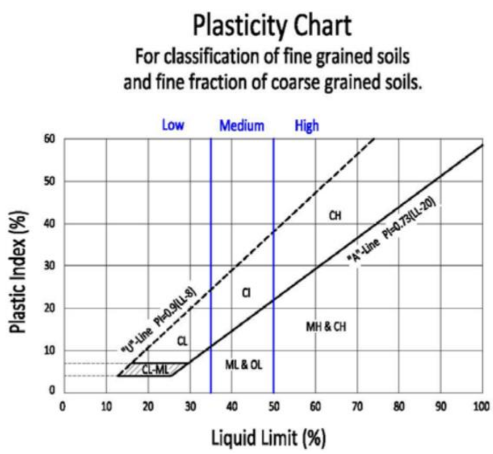
45 Meredith Street Strathfield	JOB NUMBER	DWG NUMBER	FIELDWORK
	211221	G001	S.M
BOREHOLE LOCATIONS	**DATE**	**SCALE**	**ISSUED**
	11/11/2021	NTS	A.E

STANDARD DESCRIPTIONS

SOIL DESCRIPTIONS

The following chart (adapted from AS1726 [2017]) is based on the Unified Soil Classification System (USCS).

Major Divisions		Particle Size (mm)	USCS Group Symbol	Typical Names	Laboratory Classification					
						% < 0.075 mm (2)	Plasticity of Fine Faction	$C_u = \frac{D_{60}}{D_{10}}$	$C_c = \frac{(D_{30})^2}{(D_{10})(D_{60})}$	Notes
	BOULDERS	______200								
	COBBLES	______63								
COURSE GRAINED SOILS (more than half of material less than 63mm is > 0.075mm)	GRAVELS (more than half of coarse fraction is larger than 2.36mm)		GW	Well grade gravels, and gravel-sand mixtures, little or no fines	Use the gradation curve of the material passing 63mm for classification of fractions according to the criteria given in ' Major Divisions'	0-5	-	>4	Between 1 & 3	(1) Identify fines by the method given for fine-grained soils (2) Borderline classifications occur when the percentage of fines (fraction < 0.075mm) is greater than 5% and less than 12%. Borderline classifications require the use of SP-SM, GW-GC.
		Coarse ______20	GP	Poorly grade gravels and gravel-sand mixtures, little or no fines, uniform gravels		0-5	-	Fails to comply with above		
		Medium ______6	GM	Silty gravels, gravel-sand-silt mixtures (1)		12-50	Below 'A' line or PL<4	–	–	
		Fine ______2.36	GC	Clay gravens, gravel-sand-clay mixtures (1)		12-50	Above 'A' line or PL>7	–	–	
	SANDS (more than half of coarse fraction is smaller than 2.36mm)	Coarse ______0.6	SW	Well grade sands and gravelly sands, little or no fines		0-5	–	>6	Between 1 & 3	
			SP	Poorly graded sands and gravelly sands, little or no fines		0-5	–	Fails to comply with above		
		Medium ______0.2	SM	Silty sands, sand silt mixtures (1)		12-50	Below 'A' line or PL<4	–	–	
		Fine 0.075	SC	Clayey sands, sand-clay mixtures (1)		12-50	Above 'A' line or PL>7	–	–	
FINE GRAINED SOILS (more than half of material less than 63mm is < 0.075mm	SILTS & CLAYS (Liquid Limit ≤ 50%)		ML	Inorganic silts, very fine sands, rock flour, silty or clayey fine sands or clayey silts with slight plasticity						
			CL CI	Inorganic clays of low to medium plasticity, gravelly clays, sand clays, silty clays, lean clays						
			OL	Organic silts and clays of low plasticity						
	SILTS AND CLAYS (Liquid Limit > 50%)		MH	Inorganic silts, micaceous or diatomaceous fine sands or silts, elastic silts						
			CH	Inorganic clays of high plasticity, fat clays						
			OH	Organic silts and clays of high plasticity						
	Highly Organic Soils		PT	Peat and other high organic soils						

SOIL COLOUR

Soil colour is described in the moist condition using black, white, grey red, brown, orange, yellow, green or blue. Borderline cases can be described as a combination of two colours, with the weaker followed by the stronger. Modifiers such as pale, dark or mottled, can be used as necessary. Where colour consists of a primary colour with secondary mottling, it should be described as follows:
(Primary) mottled (Secondary).

SOIL MOISTURE

Soil moisture conditions are based on the appearance or feel of the soil.

Term	Description
Dry	Cohesive Soils: friable or powdery, well dry of plastic limit Granular Soils: Cohesionless and free-running
Moist	Cohesive Soils: Can be moulded Granular Soils: Tend to cohere
Wet	Cohesive Soils: Usually weakened and free water forms on hands when handling Granular Soils: Tend to cohere and free water forms on hands with handling

SOIL CONSISTENCY & DENSITY

The consistency of cohesive soils may be estimated from simple field test such as the Dynamic Cone Penetrometer (DCP) or Pocket Penetrometer (PP). Pocket Penetrometer results are ideally performed on undisturbed samples and are indicative of Unconfined Compressive Strengths only.

Consistency – Essentially Cohesive Soils						
Term	**Field Guide**	**Symbol**	**SPT 'N' Value**	**DCP**	**Undrained Shear Strength (Cu) [kPa]**	**Unconfined Compressive Strength (q_u) [kPa]**
Very Soft	Oozes between fingers when	VS	0 – 2	< 1	0 – 12	< 25
Soft	Easily moulded with fingers.	S	2 – 4	1 – 2	12 – 25	25 – 50
Firm	Can be moulted by strong finger pressure.	F	4 – 8	2 – 3	25 – 50	50 – 100
Stiff	Not possible to mould with fingers.	St	8 – 15	3 – 5	50 – 100	100 – 200
Very Stiff		VSt	15 – 30	5 – 8	100 – 200	200 – 400
Hard	Can be indented with difficult by thumb nail.	H	>30	> 8	> 200	> 400

Non-cohesive soils are described in terms of density index.

Consistency – Essentially Non-cohesive Soils					
Term	**Field Guide**	**Symbol**	**SPT 'N' Value**	**DCP**	**Density Index (%)**
Very Loose	Foot imprints readily	VL	0 – 4	< 1	0 – 15
Loose	Shovels easily	L	4 – 10	1 – 3	15 – 35
Medium Dense	Shovelling difficult	MD	10 – 30	3 – 9	35 – 65
Dense	Pick required	D	30 – 50	9 – 15	65 – 85
Very Dense	Picking difficult	VD	> 50	> 15	85 – 100

Strength of rock is typically identified in qualitative terms in limited geotechnical investigation reports.

Term	Symbol	Field Guide to Strength
Extremely Low	EL	Easily remoulded by hand to a material with soil properties
Very Low	Vl	Material crumbles under firm blows with sharp end of pick; can be peeled with knife; pieces up to 30mm thick can be broken by finger pressure
Low	L	Easily scored with a knife; indentations 1-3mm show in a specimen with firm blows of the pick point.
Medium	M	Readily scored with a knife; a piece of core 150mm long by 50mm diameter can be broken by hand with difficult
High	H	Piece of core cannot be broken by hand but can be broken by a pick with a single firm blow; rock rings under hammer
Very High	VH	Hand specimen breaks with pick after more than one blow;
Extremely High	EH	Specimen requires many blows with geological pick to break intact material.

GENERAL NOTES

FILL - SUBDIVISIONS

Where significant depth of fill is encountered on site, a 'P' Site Classification will be issued as per the requirements of AS2870 (2011). Where SDS Engineering is provided with certificates satisfying the requirements of AS3798 (2007) for Class '1' compacted fill, SDS Engineering reserves the right to reclassify the site. In lieu of compaction certificates, footings are typically to be found below any fill material.

BEARING CAPACITY

All bearing capacities provided are for strip or raft footings with sufficient embedment engaging the founding layer. Where soft, loose or collapsible soils are encountered, a 'P' Site Classification will be issued as per the requirements of AS2870 (2011). This is rare however, and is typically limited to extremely loose sand sites or lots underlain by soft silts. Consideration may be given to either ground improvement techniques or construction of driven and/or bored piers in such instances. Pocket Penetrometer (PP) readings where provided are an estimate of Unconfined Compressive Strength (UCS) in cohesive soils and **do not** constitute an allowable bearing capacity.

WATER TABLE

Comments will be provided in the report under the relevant borehole should a water table and/or groundwater seepage be encountered during drilling.

A perched water table may occur locally after periods of rainfall. This is typical of soils overlying low permeability soils and/or bedrock. Perched water tables will typically result in a degree of seepage into footing or pier excavations; however, this can typically be managed by the contractor.

SLOPE STABILITY

This limited geotechnical investigation does **not** consider the impacts of potential of slope instability. Please refer to the requirements of local authority as to whether a slope stability risk assessment is required for the development.

TREES

Trees may have significant adverse impacts on building structures. These impacts vary from physical root damage to footings and/or services, to *abnormal* settlement or heave action of reactive soils associated with water uptake from roots. The removal of significant trees and subsequent rotting of roots and organic material may also result in significant long-term settlement of soils.

Where trees have been identified in this report as *potentially* in the zone of the influence of the proposed structure, a Lot Classification of 'P' will be issued. A conservative approach is taken, as engineers are not arborists, and the growth and mature height of trees is beyond our scope of expertise.

It is ultimately the design engineer's role to coordinate with relevant consultants such as arborists and landscape architects to design a suitable foundation system in accordance with Appendix 'H' of AS2870 (2011).

MAINTENANCE

The long-term performance of footings and foundations for residential dwellings is significantly affected by maintenance matters. A copy of the CSIRO's *Foundation Maintenance and Footing Performance: A Homeowners Guide* has been attached as an appendix to this report. This should be read and understood thoroughly by the occupants of the proposed development.

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Foundation Maintenance and Footing Performance: A Homeowner's Guide

CSIRO

BTF 18 replaces Information Sheet 10/91

Buildings can and often do move. This movement can be up, down, lateral or rotational. The fundamental cause of movement in buildings can usually be related to one or more problems in the foundation soil. It is important for the homeowner to identify the soil type in order to ascertain the measures that should be put in place in order to ensure that problems in the foundation soil can be prevented, thus protecting against building movement.

This Building Technology File is designed to identify causes of soil-related building movement, and to suggest methods of prevention of resultant cracking in buildings.

Soil Types

The types of soils usually present under the topsoil in land zoned for residential buildings can be split into two approximate groups – granular and clay. Quite often, foundation soil is a mixture of both types. The general problems associated with soils having granular content are usually caused by erosion. Clay soils are subject to saturation and swell/shrink problems.

Classifications for a given area can generally be obtained by application to the local authority, but these are sometimes unreliable and if there is doubt, a geotechnical report should be commissioned. As most buildings suffering movement problems are founded on clay soils, there is an emphasis on classification of soils according to the amount of swell and shrinkage they experience with variations of water content. The table below is Table 2.1 from AS 2870, the Residential Slab and Footing Code.

Causes of Movement

Settlement due to construction

There are two types of settlement that occur as a result of construction:

- Immediate settlement occurs when a building is first placed on its foundation soil, as a result of compaction of the soil under the weight of the structure. The cohesive quality of clay soil mitigates against this, but granular (particularly sandy) soil is susceptible.
- Consolidation settlement is a feature of clay soil and may take place because of the expulsion of moisture from the soil or because of the soil's lack of resistance to local compressive or shear stresses. This will usually take place during the first few months after construction, but has been known to take many years in exceptional cases.

These problems are the province of the builder and should be taken into consideration as part of the preparation of the site for construction. Building Technology File 19 (BTF 19) deals with these problems.

Erosion

All soils are prone to erosion, but sandy soil is particularly susceptible to being washed away. Even clay with a sand component of say 10% or more can suffer from erosion.

Saturation

This is particularly a problem in clay soils. Saturation creates a bog-like suspension of the soil that causes it to lose virtually all of its bearing capacity. To a lesser degree, sand is affected by saturation because saturated sand may undergo a reduction in volume – particularly imported sand fill for bedding and blinding layers. However, this usually occurs as immediate settlement and should normally be the province of the builder.

Seasonal swelling and shrinkage of soil

All clays react to the presence of water by slowly absorbing it, making the soil increase in volume (see table below). The degree of increase varies considerably between different clays, as does the degree of decrease during the subsequent drying out caused by fair weather periods. Because of the low absorption and expulsion rate, this phenomenon will not usually be noticeable unless there are prolonged rainy or dry periods, usually of weeks or months, depending on the land and soil characteristics.

The swelling of soil creates an upward force on the footings of the building, and shrinkage creates subsidence that takes away the support needed by the footing to retain equilibrium.

Shear failure

This phenomenon occurs when the foundation soil does not have sufficient strength to support the weight of the footing. There are two major post-construction causes:

- Significant load increase.
- Reduction of lateral support of the soil under the footing due to erosion or excavation.
- In clay soil, shear failure can be caused by saturation of the soil adjacent to or under the footing.

GENERAL DEFINITIONS OF SITE CLASSES

Class	Foundation
A	Most sand and rock sites with little or no ground movement from moisture changes
S	Slightly reactive clay sites with only slight ground movement from moisture changes
M	Moderately reactive clay or silt sites, which can experience moderate ground movement from moisture changes
H	Highly reactive clay sites, which can experience high ground movement from moisture changes
E	Extremely reactive sites, which can experience extreme ground movement from moisture changes
A to P	Filled sites
P	Sites which include soft soils, such as soft clay or silt or loose sands; landslip; mine subsidence; collapsing soils; soils subject to erosion; reactive sites subject to abnormal moisture conditions or sites which cannot be classified otherwise

Tree root growth
Trees and shrubs that are allowed to grow in the vicinity of footings can cause foundation soil movement in two ways:

- Roots that grow under footings may increase in cross-sectional size, exerting upward pressure on footings.
- Roots in the vicinity of footings will absorb much of the moisture in the foundation soil, causing shrinkage or subsidence.

Unevenness of Movement

The types of ground movement described above usually occur unevenly throughout the building's foundation soil. Settlement due to construction tends to be uneven because of:

- Differing compaction of foundation soil prior to construction.
- Differing moisture content of foundation soil prior to construction.

Movement due to non-construction causes is usually more uneven still. Erosion can undermine a footing that traverses the flow or can create the conditions for shear failure by eroding soil adjacent to a footing that runs in the same direction as the flow.

Saturation of clay foundation soil may occur where subfloor walls create a dam that makes water pond. It can also occur wherever there is a source of water near footings in clay soil. This leads to a severe reduction in the strength of the soil which may create local shear failure.

Seasonal swelling and shrinkage of clay soil affects the perimeter of the building first, then gradually spreads to the interior. The swelling process will usually begin at the uphill extreme of the building, or on the weather side where the land is flat. Swelling gradually reaches the interior soil as absorption continues. Shrinkage usually begins where the sun's heat is greatest.

Effects of Uneven Soil Movement on Structures

Erosion and saturation
Erosion removes the support from under footings, tending to create subsidence of the part of the structure under which it occurs. Brickwork walls will resist the stress created by this removal of support by bridging the gap or cantilevering until the bricks or the mortar bedding fail. Older masonry has little resistance. Evidence of failure varies according to circumstances and symptoms may include:

- Step cracking in the mortar beds in the body of the wall or above/below openings such as doors or windows.
- Vertical cracking in the bricks (usually but not necessarily in line with the vertical beds or perpends).

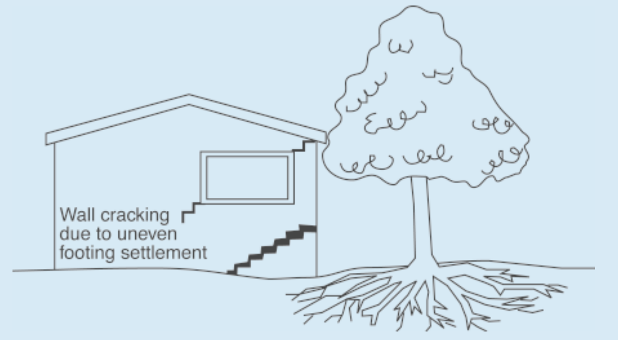
Isolated piers affected by erosion or saturation of foundations will eventually lose contact with the bearers they support and may tilt or fall over. The floors that have lost this support will become bouncy, sometimes rattling ornaments etc.

Seasonal swelling/shrinkage in clay
Swelling foundation soil due to rainy periods first lifts the most exposed extremities of the footing system, then the remainder of the perimeter footings while gradually permeating inside the building footprint to lift internal footings. This swelling first tends to create a dish effect, because the external footings are pushed higher than the internal ones.

The first noticeable symptom may be that the floor appears slightly dished. This is often accompanied by some doors binding on the floor or the door head, together with some cracking of cornice mitres. In buildings with timber flooring supported by bearers and joists, the floor can be bouncy. Externally there may be visible dishing of the hip or ridge lines.

As the moisture absorption process completes its journey to the innermost areas of the building, the internal footings will rise. If the spread of moisture is roughly even, it may be that the symptoms will temporarily disappear, but it is more likely that swelling will be uneven, creating a difference rather than a disappearance in symptoms. In buildings with timber flooring supported by bearers and joists, the isolated piers will rise more easily than the strip footings or piers under walls, creating noticeable doming of flooring.

Trees can cause shrinkage and damage



As the weather pattern changes and the soil begins to dry out, the external footings will be first affected, beginning with the locations where the sun's effect is strongest. This has the effect of lowering the external footings. The doming is accentuated and cracking reduces or disappears where it occurred because of dishing, but other cracks open up. The roof lines may become convex.

Doming and dishing are also affected by weather in other ways. In areas where warm, wet summers and cooler dry winters prevail, water migration tends to be toward the interior and doming will be accentuated, whereas where summers are dry and winters are cold and wet, migration tends to be toward the exterior and the underlying propensity is toward dishing.

Movement caused by tree roots
In general, growing roots will exert an upward pressure on footings, whereas soil subject to drying because of tree or shrub roots will tend to remove support from under footings by inducing shrinkage.

Complications caused by the structure itself
Most forces that the soil causes to be exerted on structures are vertical – i.e. either up or down. However, because these forces are seldom spread evenly around the footings, and because the building resists uneven movement because of its rigidity, forces are exerted from one part of the building to another. The net result of all these forces is usually rotational. This resultant force often complicates the diagnosis because the visible symptoms do not simply reflect the original cause. A common symptom is binding of doors on the vertical member of the frame.

Effects on full masonry structures
Brickwork will resist cracking where it can. It will attempt to span areas that lose support because of subsided foundations or raised points. It is therefore usual to see cracking at weak points, such as openings for windows or doors.

In the event of construction settlement, cracking will usually remain unchanged after the process of settlement has ceased.

With local shear or erosion, cracking will usually continue to develop until the original cause has been remedied, or until the subsidence has completely neutralised the affected portion of footing and the structure has stabilised on other footings that remain effective.

In the case of swell/shrink effects, the brickwork will in some cases return to its original position after completion of a cycle, however it is more likely that the rotational effect will not be exactly reversed, and it is also usual that brickwork will settle in its new position and will resist the forces trying to return it to its original position. This means that in a case where swelling takes place after construction and cracking occurs, the cracking is likely to at least partly remain after the shrink segment of the cycle is complete. Thus, each time the cycle is repeated, the likelihood is that the cracking will become wider until the sections of brickwork become virtually independent.

With repeated cycles, once the cracking is established, if there is no other complication, it is normal for the incidence of cracking to stabilise, as the building has the articulation it needs to cope with the problem. This is by no means always the case, however, and monitoring of cracks in walls and floors should always be treated seriously.

Upheaval caused by growth of tree roots under footings is not a simple vertical shear stress. There is a tendency for the root to also exert lateral forces that attempt to separate sections of brickwork after initial cracking has occurred.

The normal structural arrangement is that the inner leaf of brickwork in the external walls and at least some of the internal walls (depending on the roof type) comprise the load-bearing structure on which any upper floors, ceilings and the roof are supported. In these cases, it is internally visible cracking that should be the main focus of attention, however there are a few examples of dwellings whose external leaf of masonry plays some supporting role, so this should be checked if there is any doubt. In any case, externally visible cracking is important as a guide to stresses on the structure generally, and it should also be remembered that the external walls must be capable of supporting themselves.

Effects on framed structures
Timber or steel framed buildings are less likely to exhibit cracking due to swell/shrink than masonry buildings because of their flexibility. Also, the doming/dishing effects tend to be lower because of the lighter weight of walls. The main risks to framed buildings are encountered because of the isolated pier footings used under walls. Where erosion or saturation cause a footing to fall away, this can double the span which a wall must bridge. This additional stress can create cracking in wall linings, particularly where there is a weak point in the structure caused by a door or window opening. It is, however, unlikely that framed structures will be so stressed as to suffer serious damage without first exhibiting some or all of the above symptoms for a considerable period. The same warning period should apply in the case of upheaval. It should be noted, however, that where framed buildings are supported by strip footings there is only one leaf of brickwork and therefore the externally visible walls are the supporting structure for the building. In this case, the subfloor masonry walls can be expected to behave as full brickwork walls.

Effects on brick veneer structures
Because the load-bearing structure of a brick veneer building is the frame that makes up the interior leaf of the external walls plus perhaps the internal walls, depending on the type of roof, the building can be expected to behave as a framed structure, except that the external masonry will behave in a similar way to the external leaf of a full masonry structure.

Water Service and Drainage

Where a water service pipe, a sewer or stormwater drainage pipe is in the vicinity of a building, a water leak can cause erosion, swelling or saturation of susceptible soil. Even a minuscule leak can be enough to saturate a clay foundation. A leaking tap near a building can have the same effect. In addition, trenches containing pipes can become watercourses even though backfilled, particularly where broken rubble is used as fill. Water that runs along these trenches can be responsible for serious erosion, interstrata seepage into subfloor areas and saturation.

Pipe leakage and trench water flows also encourage tree and shrub roots to the source of water, complicating and exacerbating the problem.
Poor roof plumbing can result in large volumes of rainwater being concentrated in a small area of soil:

- Incorrect falls in roof guttering may result in overflows, as may gutters blocked with leaves etc.
- Corroded guttering or downpipes can spill water to ground.
- Downpipes not positively connected to a proper stormwater collection system will direct a concentration of water to soil that is directly adjacent to footings, sometimes causing large-scale problems such as erosion, saturation and migration of water under the building.

Seriousness of Cracking

In general, most cracking found in masonry walls is a cosmetic nuisance only and can be kept in repair or even ignored. The table below is a reproduction of Table C1 of AS 2870.

AS 2870 also publishes figures relating to cracking in concrete floors, however because wall cracking will usually reach the critical point significantly earlier than cracking in slabs, this table is not reproduced here.

Prevention/Cure

Plumbing
Where building movement is caused by water service, roof plumbing, sewer or stormwater failure, the remedy is to repair the problem. It is prudent, however, to consider also rerouting pipes away from the building where possible, and relocating taps to positions where any leakage will not direct water to the building vicinity. Even where gully traps are present, there is sometimes sufficient spill to create erosion or saturation, particularly in modern installations using smaller diameter PVC fixtures. Indeed, some gully traps are not situated directly under the taps that are installed to charge them, with the result that water from the tap may enter the backfilled trench that houses the sewer piping. If the trench has been poorly backfilled, the water will either pond or flow along the bottom of the trench. As these trenches usually run alongside the footings and can be at a similar depth, it is not hard to see how any water that is thus directed into a trench can easily affect the foundation's ability to support footings or even gain entry to the subfloor area.

Ground drainage
In all soils there is the capacity for water to travel on the surface and below it. Surface water flows can be established by inspection during and after heavy or prolonged rain. If necessary, a grated drain system connected to the stormwater collection system is usually an easy solution.

It is, however, sometimes necessary when attempting to prevent water migration that testing be carried out to establish watertable height and subsoil water flows. This subject is referred to in BTF 19 and may properly be regarded as an area for an expert consultant.

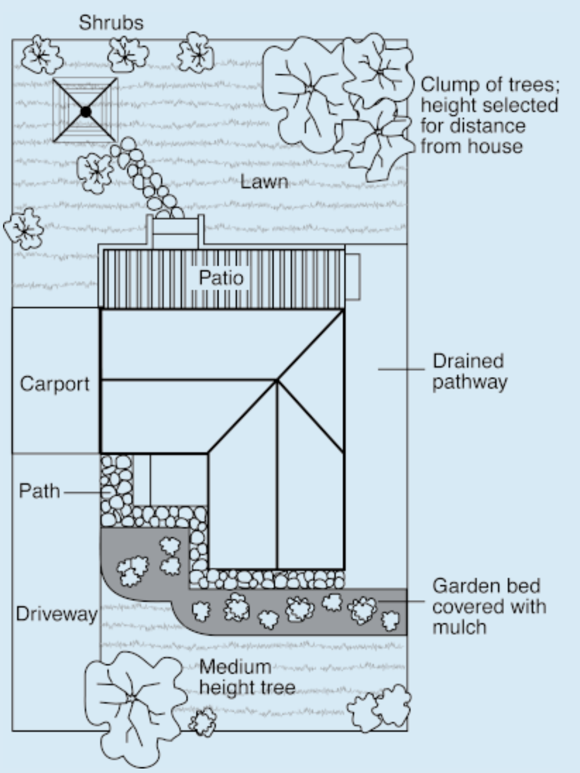
Protection of the building perimeter
It is essential to remember that the soil that affects footings extends well beyond the actual building line. Watering of garden plants, shrubs and trees causes some of the most serious water problems.

For this reason, particularly where problems exist or are likely to occur, it is recommended that an apron of paving be installed around as much of the building perimeter as necessary. This paving

CLASSIFICATION OF DAMAGE WITH REFERENCE TO WALLS

Description of typical damage and required repair	Approximate crack width limit (see Note 3)	Damage category
Hairline cracks	<0.1 mm	0
Fine cracks which do not need repair	<1 mm	1
Cracks noticeable but easily filled. Doors and windows stick slightly	<5 mm	2
Cracks can be repaired and possibly a small amount of wall will need to be replaced. Doors and windows stick. Service pipes can fracture. Weathertightness often impaired	5–15 mm (or a number of cracks 3 mm or more in one group)	3
Extensive repair work involving breaking-out and replacing sections of walls, especially over doors and windows. Window and door frames distort. Walls lean or bulge noticeably, some loss of bearing in beams. Service pipes disrupted	15–25 mm but also depend on number of cracks	4

Gardens for a reactive site



should extend outwards a minimum of 900 mm (more in highly reactive soil) and should have a minimum fall away from the building of 1:60. The finished paving should be no less than 100 mm below brick vent bases.

It is prudent to relocate drainage pipes away from this paving, if possible, to avoid complications from future leakage. If this is not practical, earthenware pipes should be replaced by PVC and backfilling should be of the same soil type as the surrounding soil and compacted to the same density.

Except in areas where freezing of water is an issue, it is wise to remove taps in the building area and relocate them well away from the building – preferably not uphill from it (see BTF 19).

It may be desirable to install a grated drain at the outside edge of the paving on the uphill side of the building. If subsoil drainage is needed this can be installed under the surface drain.

Condensation

In buildings with a subfloor void such as where bearers and joists support flooring, insufficient ventilation creates ideal conditions for condensation, particularly where there is little clearance between the floor and the ground. Condensation adds to the moisture already present in the subfloor and significantly slows the process of drying out. Installation of an adequate subfloor ventilation system, either natural or mechanical, is desirable.

Warning: Although this Building Technology File deals with cracking in buildings, it should be said that subfloor moisture can result in the development of other problems, notably:

- Water that is transmitted into masonry, metal or timber building elements causes damage and/or decay to those elements.
- High subfloor humidity and moisture content create an ideal environment for various pests, including termites and spiders.
- Where high moisture levels are transmitted to the flooring and walls, an increase in the dust mite count can ensue within the living areas. Dust mites, as well as dampness in general, can be a health hazard to inhabitants, particularly those who are abnormally susceptible to respiratory ailments.

The garden

The ideal vegetation layout is to have lawn or plants that require only light watering immediately adjacent to the drainage or paving edge, then more demanding plants, shrubs and trees spread out in that order.

Overwatering due to misuse of automatic watering systems is a common cause of saturation and water migration under footings. If it is necessary to use these systems, it is important to remove garden beds to a completely safe distance from buildings.

Existing trees

Where a tree is causing a problem of soil drying or there is the existence or threat of upheaval of footings, if the offending roots are subsidiary and their removal will not significantly damage the tree, they should be severed and a concrete or metal barrier placed vertically in the soil to prevent future root growth in the direction of the building. If it is not possible to remove the relevant roots without damage to the tree, an application to remove the tree should be made to the local authority. A prudent plan is to transplant likely offenders before they become a problem.

Information on trees, plants and shrubs

State departments overseeing agriculture can give information regarding root patterns, volume of water needed and safe distance from buildings of most species. Botanic gardens are also sources of information. For information on plant roots and drains, see Building Technology File 17.

Excavation

Excavation around footings must be properly engineered. Soil supporting footings can only be safely excavated at an angle that allows the soil under the footing to remain stable. This angle is called the angle of repose (or friction) and varies significantly between soil types and conditions. Removal of soil within the angle of repose will cause subsidence.

Remediation

Where erosion has occurred that has washed away soil adjacent to footings, soil of the same classification should be introduced and compacted to the same density. Where footings have been undermined, augmentation or other specialist work may be required. Remediation of footings and foundations is generally the realm of a specialist consultant.

Where isolated footings rise and fall because of swell/shrink effect, the homeowner may be tempted to alleviate floor bounce by filling the gap that has appeared between the bearer and the pier with blocking. The danger here is that when the next swell segment of the cycle occurs, the extra blocking will push the floor up into an accentuated dome and may also cause local shear failure in the soil. If it is necessary to use blocking, it should be by a pair of fine wedges and monitoring should be carried out fortnightly.

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