

# **APPENDIX**

**HERITAGE ASSESSMENT AND  
ADAPTABILITY ASSESSMENT,  
ROBERTSON & HINDMARSH, OCT 2017**

# FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S COURT & METROPOLITAN REMAND CENTRE

Report for the  
Council of the City of Sydney



ROBERTSON & HINDMARSH PTY LTD  
VERSION 3.3  
23 OCTOBER 2017



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

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View of the Bidura complex from the  
Ferry Lane. Photo: Noni Boyd 2017

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building has historical significance as one of a series of purpose-designed combined children's court and remand centre buildings in New South Wales, forming part of the legacy of the former NSW Department of Public Works Government Architect's Branch (GAB), providing an example of how the GAB retained historic buildings and designed new buildings to be sympathetic to those and other surrounding nineteenth century buildings. The design of the court building and remand centre is significant aesthetically because of its location within the Glebe Conservation Area (1974), for its sensitive treatment of the curtilage around Bidura house and its preservation of the major part of the historically important views from the rear verandah of Bidura house to Glebe Island and the city.

Bidura house and the former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre have associative significance because of their association with significant architects, NSW Colonial Architect Edmund Blacket who designed the house for his family, and the successive NSW Government Architects during the 1970s who impacted on the development of New South Wales and Australian architecture and introduced the restoration of historic public buildings across the state.

Since the early decades of the 20th century, the site has been associated with community service institutions, namely the Metropolitan Shelter for Girls, a Remand Centre, and the Bidura Children's Court for the then Department of Youth & Community Services. The site illustrates the successive re-use of the original residential structures for community related activities including child welfare, serving as a reminder, including to former staff and clients, of past regimes and policies, some of which have now been discredited.

Bidura house is a fine example of a Victorian Regency style villa in a garden setting designed by renowned architect E. T. Blacket which significantly contributes to the streetscape of Glebe Point Road.

The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building is a well-executed and relatively intact example of late 20th century institutional architectural design which occupies almost the entire former site of the Bidura rear garden and is significant at a State level under this criterion for the excellence of its Modernist design as a Brutalist building that embodies honesty of expression of its materials, boldness of form and massing, excellence of construction detailing, and its use of light and shade both within and on the exterior of the building.

The interior of the building is a masterful composition of form and light in the greatest tradition of modern architecture. The cast in-situ concrete ceiling beams of the multi-purpose hall create a masterful play of shadow and light across the ceiling of the room and add a high degree of architectural interest.

The court and remand centre building has a high degree of research potential in terms of researching attitudes towards juvenile justice, incarceration, rehabilitation and the constructive use of time (learning, workshops, sports facilities) and the change in attitudes towards such buildings compared with nineteenth century and early twentieth century examples.



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The former Bidura Children's Court & remand Centre is a rare surviving example of a purpose-built remand centre and children's court house. The building provides evidence of the original extent of the grounds of Bidura.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations take into account the heritage significance of the former Children's Court building and the assessment of the building's ability to be adapted to new uses without detrimentally affecting that significance.

- The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building, together with Bidura house, should be listed as an item of environmental heritage on Schedule 5 of the Sydney LEP 2012. The boundary of the listing should follow the legal lot boundary and include the pocket park at the end of the site. The interiors of the building should be included in the listing, especially those of Exceptional and High Significance.
- The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building should be listed on the State Heritage Register for its State significance as part of the child welfare precinct with Bidura house. The former Children's Court & Remand Centre was an integral part of the child welfare process and Bidura house could not have performed its child welfare functions without the former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building. To list one without the other under this criterion does not reflect the historical facts and the functionality of the site.
- A detailed dossier on the design of the building should be prepared that includes the available architectural documentation, ie presentation drawings of both schemes and the sun shading diagrams (if they exist) as well as a full set of the architectural plans. A statement of design should be obtained from the design architect.
- The building height and setback controls for the site should follow the outline of the existing buildings and should not be increased beyond these limits, as the current form of the building still permits intended views towards the city and towards Glebe Island and the Glebe Island Bridge from Bidura (Mr Blacket's house) and relates to the scale and character of the Glebe Conservation Area.
- To protect the amenity of the surrounding dwellings in the conservation area the floor area of the buildings should not be increased, with the exception of any additional floor area created through excavation under the former Children's Court & Remand Centre building and the stage / back of house area or the roofing over of the Boy's recreation yard on Level F. The remaining terraces should remain as terraces but there is potential to increase their usability and their landscaping should be reintroduced after repairs to the waterproofing are carried out.
- The buildings could be adaptively re-used for any of the uses listed as being able to be approved with consent (or a combination of them) as the building construction and planning would enable the building to be used by one tenant or be subdivided into two separate areas (utilising the two lifts) or into a number of separate areas for use by multiple tenants(section 7.0).



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Such uses may include:

commercial uses,  
educational uses including student accommodation.  
medical uses,  
day spas,  
recreation uses,  
community uses (such sporting activities using the auditorium or pool,  
meeting rooms, adult education classes, etc),  
Penthouse accommodation on the upper floors (eg one penthouse per  
residential floor),  
or any combination of these.

Apartment use is problematic other than on the upper levels and the building  
is more suited to student accommodation with shared common rooms.

Penthouse style apartments could however be created on the upper levels.

- Internal layouts relating to the use as a remand centre can be altered after having  
been recorded, however the principal characteristics of the major public spaces  
should be retained.

Examples of the revitalisation of the urban terraces of major Brutalist complexes in  
London, such as the Barbican Centre and the National Theatre on the London South  
Bank, provide an indication of what can be achieved (section 8.0).





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## **I.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **I.1 COMMISSIONING & BRIEF**

In September 2017 Robertson & Hindmarsh Pty Ltd, Architects was engaged by the Council of the City of Sydney to prepare an urgent heritage assessment and adaptability assessment, as set out below, for the former Bidura Metropolitan Remand Centre at 357 Glebe Point Road, Glebe. The report has been divided into two discrete sections, the heritage assessment and the adaptability report, followed by conclusions.

A brief inspection of the premises was held on the 12th of September however access was not available to certain areas.

### **I.2 LOCATION**

The Bidura complex is located at 357 Glebe Point Road, Glebe and comprises two distinct sections, the former residence of the architect Edmund Blacket fronting Glebe Point Road and the Metropolitan Remand Centre which opened in 1983 to the rear. The study area is highlighted on the aerial photograph below (figure I.1).

### **I.3 AUTHORS**

This report has been written and researched by

Dr Scott Robertson, B.Arch (Hons), M. Built Environ, PhD  
Director, Robertson & Hindmarsh Pty Ltd

Dr Noni Boyd, BArch, MSc Arch Cons, PhD  
Architectural Historian & Heritage Consultant



Figure I.1 Study area overlaid on a current aerial photograph of 357 Glebe Point Road.

Source: SixViewer with Robertson & Hindmarsh Pty Ltd overlay, 2017





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#### **1.4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The authors of this report would like to thank

Council of the City of Sydney

Sally Peters

Claudine Loffi

John Poulton

&

Nigel Fox

Development Manager, Vision Land who provided  
access to the complex.

#### **1.5 KEY REPORTS & STUDIES**

The following existing studies, listings and correspondence were made available:

AIA NSW Chapter Register of Significant Architecture item 4703577

Bidura Children's Court (former)

Bidura Children's Court (f)[former], 357 Glebe Point Road,  
National Trust to the Council of the City of Sydney, 2 June 2017

Extract from (former) Metropolitan Remand Centre, 357 Glebe Point Rd  
Lucas, Stapleton, Johnson Heritage Planning & Architecture, July 2016

Note to Consider Listing on the State Heritage Register of  
Bidura House Group, 357 Glebe Point Road

Extract from the CMP prepared by GB&A Architects Heritage  
Consultants, September 2015

#### **1.6 AVAILABLE PROJECT DOCUMENTATION**

Only a portion of the original project documentation is available today:

Drawings

CW20/301, CW20/302, CW20/303 July 1979

CW20/306, CW20/307, CW20/308, CW20/309, CW20/310, CW20/311

CW20/312, July 1979

Landscape Drawings

CW20/268, CW20/269, CW20/270, CW20/271, CW20/272, CW20/273 198?

School Buildings Project File SB 5902/16 (which only goes up to the DA submission).



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## I.7

## ABBREVIATIONS

AIA	Australian Institute of Architects
AR	Annual Report
ATCJ	Australian Town & Country Journal
CMP	Conservation Management Plan
CW	Child Welfare, abbreviation used by the GAB for drawings
DCP	Development Control Plan
GAB	Government Architect's Branch, subsequently GAO
GAO	Government Architect's Office, formerly GAB
GBA	Graham Brooks & Associates, Heritage Consultants
GG	Government Gazette
GPO	Government Printer's Collection of images Videodisks held at the Mitchell Library
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LSJ	Lucas, Stapleton Johnson, Heritage Planning & Architecture
ML	Mitchell Library
MRC	Metropolitan Remand Centre (ie Bidura Children's Court & Metropolitan Remand Centre)
PWD	Public Works Department
SB	School Buildings, abbreviation used by the GAB for files
SHR	State Heritage Register
SLNSW	State Library of NSW
SMH	Sydney Morning Herald
SRNSW	State Records of NSW
YACS	Department of Youth & Community Services



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# HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

## 2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1 BRIEF CHRONOLOGY

Pre 1788	Gadigal territory
1788	Arrival of the First Fleet
1790	Grant of land to the Church of England by Governor Phillip
1828	Subdivision and retention of Glebe
	Sale to William Dumaresq
1840-50s	Sale of lots in the Bossier Estate
1853	Blacket family move to Glebe
1857	Blacket purchases land parcels
c 1857-60	Erection of Mr Blacket's house (later named "Bidura")
1865	Sketch of the house by Edith Blacket
1869	Death of Sarah Blacket
1870	Sale of Bidura to the Fitz Stubbs
By 1871	Name "Bidura" in use
By 1876	Ballroom erected
c.1877	Sale to the Perks family
	Fitz Stubbs move to "Lynwood"
1904	Child Welfare Home opened in "Avona"
1907-08	Sale to Dr Walter Burfitt
1911	Albion Street Children's Court opened
c 1916	Burfitts move elsewhere but do not sell the house
	House operated as an upmarket boarding establishment
	By Mrs Rowley Walker
1920	Burfitt sells "Bidura" to the State Relief Board
1923	"Strathmore" opened as a Home for Girls by the Church of England
1925	Welfare Shelter at "Ormond House" in Paddington disestablished. Construction of the Metropolitan Girls' Shelter fronting Avon Street. Other hostels at Waverley, Marrickville and Willoughby
1931	Published image of the Metropolitan Girls' Shelter
By 1933	known as Bidura Depot
1939	Installation of heating
c. 1942	Erection of an Air Raid Shelter
1946	Calls for more suitable facilities than former residences
1956	Classroom added
1966	Child Welfare Shelter at "Worimi" opened
1967	"Kedumba", Katoomba (part of the Clairvaux complex) & Adult Metropolitan Remand Centre at Long Bay
1969	Formation of the Glebe Society
1970	Masterplan for Glebe by Bernard Smith
1970	Additional classroom added to the complex
1970/71	Proposal to build an expressway through Glebe
1973	Publication of <i>The Architectural Character of Glebe</i> by Kate & Bernard Smith
1974	First two Urban Conservation Areas classified by the National Trust; Hunters Hill and Glebe

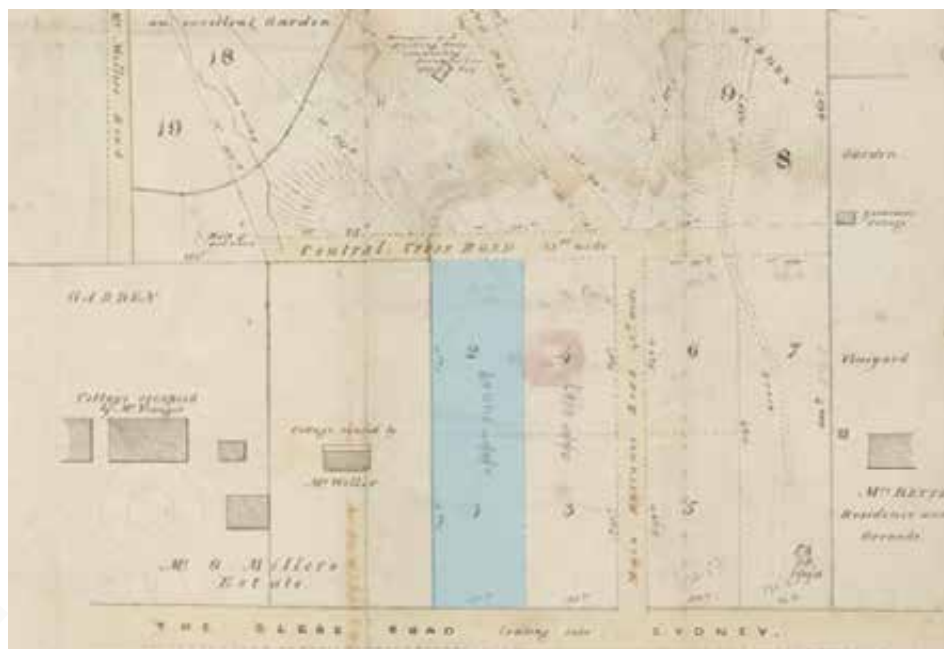


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1974	International Women's Year protest march to "Bidura"
1974	Closure of the Hay Institution for Girls after protests
1975	Opening of "Minali" at Lidcombe (adjacent to the existing "Minda" complex)
1976	Article - <i>Is Bidura Edmund Blacket's residence?</i>
1976/77	Proposals for site redevelopment to be proceeded with
October 1976	Brief from Dept of Youth & Community Services
December 1976	Report from the PWD Historic Buildings Group Regarding Blacket's house
1977	Closure of the Child Welfare Home at "Bidura"
April 1977	Report by the Acting Government Architect & meeting with the Minister
May 1977	Auditorium added to the brief Detailed planning to be proceeded with
January 1978	National Trust to classify "Bidura"
February	Letter from Minister Landa to Minister Jackson expressing concern regarding the scale of the proposal
July 1978	Excavation proposed to commence
mid 1978	DA 746 submitted to Leichhardt Council
Sept 1978	Shadow Diagrams sent to Council (as requested)
October 1978	Resident's petition to Neville Wran Town Planning Report Article in the SMH Wran requests preparation of a model Ministerial to the GAB
Date 1978	DA approved by Leichhardt Council
November 78	Critique by residents & Letter from L J Fergusson Foundation Stone laid by the Minister
1978	Keelong Remand Centre at Unanderra opened
c. 1980	"Bidura" and ballroom restored
1983	Children's Court transferred to Glebe from Albion Street
1983	Exhibition to mark the centenary of Blacket's death at the National Trust's S H Ervin Gallery
1984	Leichhardt Council lists the Glebe Conservation Area Under LEP 20.
1985-86	Began to use "Bidura" as staff training centre
1990	Glebe Heritage Study
1991	Main Street Study - Glebe Point Road
c2003	Demolition of "Minda" and "Minali" except for the earlier Superintendent's Residence. Site redeveloped as the Juniperina Juvenile Justice Centre
2004	'Forgotten Australians' report includes reports of treatment at Bidura
2009	Transfer of property to State Property and sale to Visionland
2015-16	The Brutalism project by Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarship awardee, Glenn Harper
?2014-date	SOS Brutalism - International Survey of Brutalism
2016	Land & Environment Court Case
2017	Building vacated but occasional use by film crews Available for lease



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## 2.2 HISTORICAL OUTLINE

Figure 2.1 Extract from the sale plan of the Bossier Estate showing lots 1 & 2 purchased by Blacket in 1857. The lots are shaded blue.

Source: ML Glebe Subdivision plans

The road to Glebe Point was for many years known simply as Glebe Road and houses were referred to as being at the Glebe rather than by their street number. In 1828 nine portions of land were sold and the remainder was retained by the Church as Glebe lands, after which the suburb takes its name. George Allen purchased three lots on the western side of the road to the point. His substantial purchase became the Toxteth Estate, extending north from Wigram Road. The estate owners who chose to live at the Glebe commissioned John Verge to design or improve their residences including the now demolished Hereford House, Toxteth House (now much altered) and Lyndhurst.

The land at the point was purchased by the Sydney merchant A B Spark. William Dumaesq purchased 18 acres on the eastern side of the road to the point that became known as the Bossier Estate reflecting a family connection. This lot originally extended from the ridge to the water's edge. Spark and Dumaesq both had substantial holdings elsewhere and did not build houses on their estates in Glebe. The Dumaesq's main Sydney estate was Tivoli at Rose Bay.

During the Depression of the 1840s many land owners attempted to subdivide and sell their land. In May 1840 the sale of 'Nineteen Splendid Suburban lots' within Dumaesq's Bossier Estate were advertised for sale.

In consequence of the high estimation in which portions of land in this neighbourhood are held which are suited for the erection of villas, the small genteel Box &c or for the purpose of the Market Garden the proprietor has, after long consideration, yielded to the proposition of subdividing it. <sup>1</sup>

To provide an indication of the character of the area ten residences with grounds were listed in the vicinity, two of which survive: George Allen's Toxteth and Dr Bowman's Lyndhurst. The 1840 subdivision plan of the Bossier Estate shows that a series of residences had been built set well back from Glebe Point Road including the Kew Cottage (by 1829, demolished) to the south of the Bossier subdivision and the residences of Mr Weller and Mr Younger were on Mr G Miller's Estate to the north of the site of Bidura. Amongst the lots for sale was the land that the architect Edmund Blacket would later purchase as the site of his new family home.





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Lots 1, 3, 5 & 7, embracing the whole frontage of the estate to Glebe Road are all first rate allotments for Villa residences. They are opposite Mr George Allen's pleasant lawn and grounds, and command pretty views.<sup>2</sup>

Figure 2.2 The Glebe Our House, Edith  
Blaket

Source: ML PXD 925 Box 3

By 1848 much of the Bossier Estate remained unsold and a subdivision plan prepared by Mr Armstrong with villa lots and smaller lots "suitable for the erection of small cottages for the working classes" was prepared.<sup>3</sup> This plan has not been located. From the mid 1840s substantial houses began to be erected on the lots that had sold including Rothwell Lodge (c. 1846) and Lynwood (by the 1850s, demolished). The series of villas and large cottages erected on the eastern side of the road to Glebe Point all had views towards Pymont and the city beyond (as did Toxteth). Some indication of this view can still be gained from the surviving houses, albeit curtailed by the later suburban development of Glebe. The architectural historian Joan Kerr noted that Edmund Blaket was responding to the character of these earlier substantial houses in the house he designed for his family (now known as Bidura).

Additional attempts were made to sell 'building blocks for villas at the Glebe' in the early 1850s that the Dumaresqs had been unable to sell.<sup>4</sup>

To those who are seeking a healthy and retired spot for a building site, where the comforts of the country can be had with the advantages of a residence close to the city, these spacious allotments are recommended. The Omnibuses pass daily and the access to Sydney by water is easy and sheltered.<sup>5</sup>

The two lots that Edmund Blaket eventually purchased in 1857 consisted of one lot fronting Glebe Point Road and one lot to the rear. Today the majority of this lot survives intact, with only a small portion having been subdivided for housing in the late nineteenth century in the north eastern corner fronting Avon street. The majority of the other lots on Glebe Point Road had been re-subdivided, making the villa subdivision hard to discern.

2 Sydney Monitor 6 May 1840

3 SMH 21 Dec 1848

4 SMH 25 Feb 1851

5 SMH 4 March 1851



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Figure 2.3 View from Mr Blacket's,  
Conrad Martens, [probably June 1863]  
Source: reproduced on the Glebe  
Society website



### MR BLACKET'S HOUSE

The house that Edmund Blacket designed for his family was larger than the other houses he designed in Glebe in the 1850s. The villa he designed was in keeping with the intended villa subdivision proposed for the Bossier Estate. Villa subdivisions were common on the Parramatta River and Sydney Harbour; however, few of the intended 1840s subdivisions were carried out as intended. In many cases the land was re-subdivided.

Edmund Blacket received his training in England, arriving in Australia in 1842. He initially worked from a residence in the vicinity of College Street and Stanley Street and later from his residence in South Head Road. Prior to accepting the position of Colonial Architect, Blacket's constant flow of commissions had allowed him to open an office in Mort's Chambers in Pitt Street. Thomas Sutcliffe Mort was a close friend and Blacket would subsequently undertake commissions that included the now demolished woolstore at Circular Quay (first stage 1870). By 1853 the Blacket family were living in Glebe, however, exact street addresses were not given for most of the suburb during the 1850s. The move co-incided with Blacket's resignation from the position of Colonial Architect in order that he could design the University to be erected on the Grose Farm. The Blacket family initially lived in a house erected by George Allen.

Blacket designed a series of other villas with a similar form to his own residence in Glebe Point Road including the Old Rectory, Holy Trinity Church, Dubbo, the initial scheme for the Randwick Asylum (not built), Berkeley in Wollongong and William Farmer's house on Darling Point. In each of these houses the service areas were placed in the basement (a common practice in London), with living rooms on the ground floor and bedrooms above. In each the staircase is placed to a side elevation, allowing for large rooms across the rear of the house. In his own house the ground floor is raised above the ground level, creating a formal entry and providing more light and air in the basement rooms. His third family house in Balmain (1870) and a house he designed for his brother Russell were both smaller versions of Bidura.<sup>6</sup>

Joan Kerr found Blacket's own house to be a "comfortable old-fashioned Regency house", with only the roof brackets and iron pilasters marking the house as being from the 1850s however the surviving drawings also show innovations such as the use of large panes of glass to the upper floor windows, rather than the small paned windows of earlier villas, a sheet

<sup>6</sup> Kerr, Edmund T Blacket, Architect, Sydney exhibition catalogue entry on Bidura  
Architectural historians disputed which house was which. Kerr gives a different house in Balmain + one designed for his brother Russell Blacket (See Glebe Soc and Kerr exhibition catalogue).  
But this can probably be confirmed from street view.



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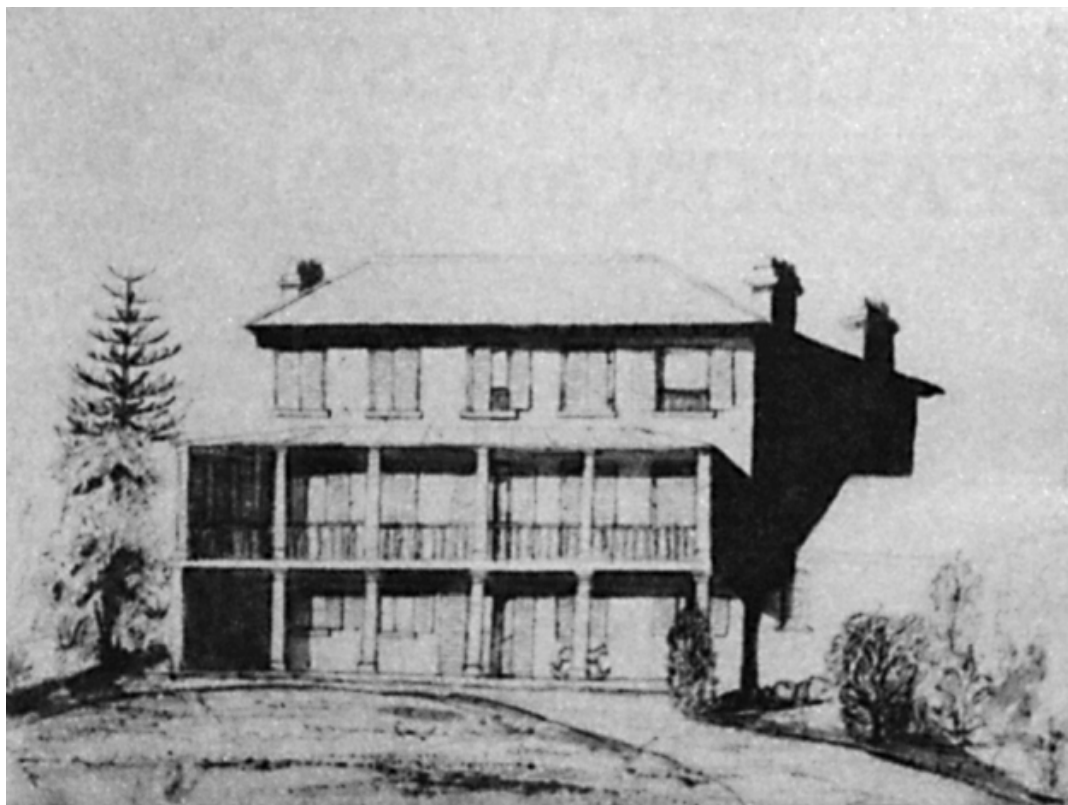


Figure 2.4 Edith Blacket's view of the house showing the annex to the north but not the Ballroom.

Source: Reproduced in MacDonnell

metal roof to the verandah (possibly Morwell and Rodgers).<sup>7</sup> None of these elements were particularly common in the 1850s.

No tender notices have been located for the erection of the villa in Glebe Point Road. A series of houses on the Bossier Estate are shown on Reuss & Browne's 1857 map indicating that building on this site had commenced. The views obtainable from the rear of Mr Blacket's house can be seen in sketches and paintings by Conrad Martens who taught drawing to both Edmund and later Edith. Edith Blacket's sketches of family homes and various other houses in Glebe during the 1850s and 1860s were retained by the family for generations but have now been donated to the Mitchell Library. Not all of the buildings have been identified however the sketches by Edith Blacket appear largely to be of buildings her father designed and she is believed to have produced perspectives for some of his projects. Edith's sketches show the front and rear of their house including the annex building but not the ballroom.<sup>8</sup> The circular lawn, sections of which survived until the Child Welfare phase, can also be seen.

Rather than place the kitchen immediately to the rear, where it would impede views, Blacket placed the now demolished kitchen block along the northern boundary. This was an unusual placement for a kitchen block, as separate kitchen blocks were usually placed to the rear and connected by a covered way. The separate site of the kitchen block has been obliterated by the drive to the Metropolitan Remand Centre complex to the rear; however, the series of plans prepared by the Public Works Department show that the kitchen block had survived until the 1970s. The current curtilage of the site for the recent State Heritage Listing does not relate to the historic pattern of use of the house and grounds during the phase of occupation as a family residence (until World War I).

Following the death of his wife Sarah in 1869, Blacket sold the house and moved with his children to Balmain. He designed a smaller version of the villa at Glebe that survives (probably Manor House, now substantially altered). No sale notice has been located for the house in Glebe Point Road. When the initial urban conservation area listing and the subsequent Register of the National Estate essay, were prepared Bidura had not been

7 Edith Blacket's 1865 sketch confirms the external configuration (which was not as reconstructed). Another sketch dated 1870 just before the family moved to Balmain also confirms these details.

8 RAHS and sketch identified by Freda MacDonnell in the mid 1970s. One & the same?



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Figure 2.5 Bidura Garden front, as it appeared whilst owned by the Fitz Stubbs family

Source: ML Pinhey & Fitz Stubbs photographs PXE 1017 folio 30

identified as being Blacket's own house. Blacket's architectural work was highly regarded, the press coverage for the first stage of Thomas Mort's woolstore at Circular Quay praised 'This last addition to the many architectural works with which he has beautified the city.'<sup>9</sup>

Commercial pressures have seen the destruction of the majority of his commercial buildings. Glebe retains the largest collection of Blacket's architectural work, including both residences and churches, not all of which were identified when the conservation area was first listed in 1974. An article by Freda MacDonnell that appeared in the Glebe Society Bulletin entitled *Is Bidura Edmund Blacket's Residence?* states

"Bidura" was built on the land which Edmund Blacket bought from Stewart Donaldson, upon which he built his own home. The Old System title is quite explicit. Blacket bought 1 acre 25 ½ perches from Donaldson, for which he paid £1,200. The deed was dated September 10, 1857. The long description, necessary in Old System titles, makes it amply clear that the same description was given when Blacket sold his house in 1870 to Robert Fitz Stubbs.<sup>10</sup>

### **FITZ STUBBS & THE BIDURA WALTZ**

It was the Fitz Stubbs family who renamed the house Bidura, the residence having previously simply been known as Mr Blacket's house. The new name was in use by the beginning of 1871.<sup>11</sup> The ballroom appears to have been added to the house by the Fitz Stubbs family, and it is listed in the sale notice of 1876. A photograph of the rear of the house taken during the Fitz Stubbs occupation is held in the Mitchell Library. This view shows the now demolished billiard room to the east of the ballroom, the ballroom itself, the verandah to the rear of the house and the annex to the north (figure 2.5).

The Fitz Stubbs were a musical family and the ballroom addition would have been as much for their performances as for balls. Percy Fitz Stubbs 'Bidura Waltz' (1874) was written during the family's residence at Bidura. Bidura was not the only residence in Glebe with a private ballroom. Following the death of George Allen a substantial ballroom was added to Toxteth House by George Wigram Allen, who inherited the property. Allen had already made substantial alterations to Strathmore to the north of Bidura, adding an additional floor.

9 ATCJ 27 August 1870

10 Glebe Society Journal 07/1976

11 The 19 January 1871 birth notice records At Bidura, Glebe Point, Mrs R F Stubbs, a daughter: Bidura was also the name of a substantial pastoral property on the Darling River and it was not uncommon for Sydney houses to be named after runs.





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

Bidura was sold shortly after the marriage of Laura Anne Fitz Stubbs to Mr Pinhey. The Pinheys resided at nearby Lynwood. When the house was sold in 1877 a detailed description was published.

A MOST FAITHFULLY-BUILT and very COMMODIOUS FAMILY RESIDENCE, of brick with MASSIVE STONE BASEMENT and FOUNDATION, and containing the following accommodation:-

GROUND FLOOR.-Fine wide verandah in front, with marble floor; spacious tessellated hall, off which are large drawing and dining rooms, sitting-room and library, opening on to a very wide and handsomely-tiled balcony ; and approached by a covered way from the front verandah is a magnificent highly decorated ballroom, with classically designed vestibule, and adjoining are well-proportioned billiard-room, day nursery, and bedroom.

THE UPPER FLOOR is reached by a fine staircase, has a roomy landing, and the 6 BEDROOMS are all well arranged apartments, the views from which are unsurpassed. In the BASEMENT are BREAKFAST ROOM, WORK-ROOM, large marble-floored BATH-ROOM (with shower and plunge bath, and all necessary conveniences), STORE-ROOM, PANTRY, WINE ROOM, and LARDER, the four latter having cement floors.

DETACHED are very large and well ventilated kitchen, with large cooking apparatus, and self-acting stove for supplying hot water to the house : SCULLERY (with every convenience), SERVANTS' HALL, STORE, and SERVANTS' BEDROOM. LAUNDRY, fitted with tubs, plugs, copper boiler, &c. MANGLE and IRONING-ROOM, with gas stove. 2 SERVANTS' BEDROOMS. At rear of the property are WORKSHOP, TOOL HOUSE, TWO BEDROOMS, GARDEN-HOUSE, CARRIAGE-HOUSE, GIG-HOUSE, STABLES, HORSE-BOXES, HAY-ROOM, and several outbuildings. Water and gas laid on to the whole of the premises.

THE GROUNDS, about 1 ¾ acres, front the MAIN GLEBE POINT ROAD, with a depth of nearly 500 feet, extending back to Avon-street, on the eastern side of the property. They are tastefully laid out into well formed grassy lawns, garden of choice fruit-trees and flowering shrubs, with here and there stately well matured ornamental trees and evergreens ; and at the eastern end there are also drying lawn, and small paddock for cows, &c.

BIDURA is a highly finished FAMILY MANSION, with fine lofty apartments and superior accommodation. The elevation is handsome and bold, and the interior in every respect corresponds, being tastefully and elegantly finished. This MAGNIFICENT MANSION combines both the advantages of a CITY and a SUBURBAN SEAT, being within easy walking distance of the business thoroughfares, and at the same time enjoying the peaceful retirement of a distant suburb. The position is very beautiful, it enjoys an eastern aspect, is surrounded by first class well-known valuable properties, and commands unsurpassed extensive HARBOUR VIEWS,



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

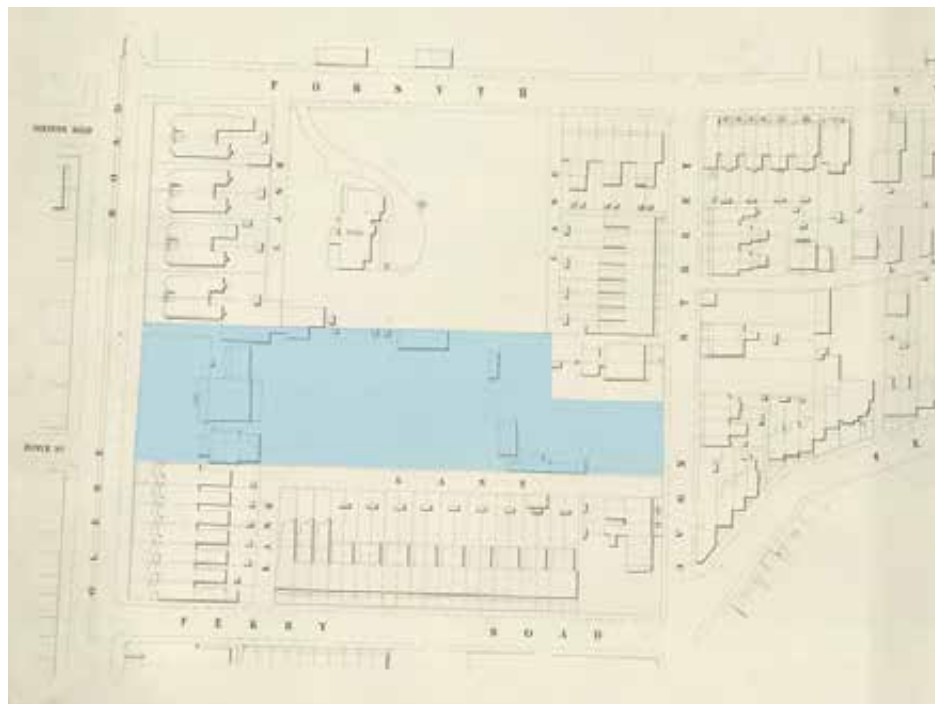


Figure 2.6 Extract from the Metropolitan Detail series map showing the buildings on the Bidura site and the pair of houses fronting Avon Street. Dated 1889

Source: SLNSW Metropolitan Detail Series maps, Glebe Sheet 17

To GENTLEMEN in search of a beautifully situated and in every particular a very desirable residence, this is an opportunity that should not be lost sight of for securing the same, and every opportunity will be afforded to intending purchasers for inspecting the property, for which purpose cards to view may be obtained at the Rooms.

Despite the addition of the Metropolitan Remand Centre to the rear, Bidura still retains part of its views from the rear verandah, including views towards the city and a glimpse of the Glebe Island Bridge.

#### THE PERKS FAMILY

The next family to occupy Bidura was the Perks family, who were in occupation from 1877 until shortly after the death of Frederick Perks in 1906. The Misses Perks utilised the ballroom for private balls.

The Misses Perks, of Bidura, Glebe Point, gave a delightful dance on Friday evening August 27. There was a large and fashionable company present, and dancing was kept up vigorously until an early hour on Saturday morning. The arrangements were perfect ; the large ballroom – one of the largest private ballrooms in Sydney – was tastefully decorated with flags and standards by Messers Sale & Dare, and the refreshments, under the management of Compagnoni & Co, were of the choicest kind. Some of the dresses were exquisite, the Misses Perks wearing pink silk with pearls.<sup>12</sup>

The Metropolitan Detail series block plan of 1889 shows that part of the site fronting Avon Street had been subdivided and a semi detached pair of houses erected. Frederick Perks remained at Bidura until his death in May 1905. His sons then advertised the house, ballroom and timber billiard room for sale. The range of suggested uses indicate that there was a declining market for substantial family residences.

To Doctors, Private Hospital proprietors & suitable for Nurses home, high class boarding establishment or Scholastic institution. Long known as the home of the late Mr F Perks, Esq.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Daily Telegraph 4 Sept 1886

<sup>13</sup> SMH 14 Feb 1906





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

#### **DR WALTER FITZMAURICE BURFITT**

Although large enough to have accommodated a new use, the property was purchased for use as a residence. In 1908 Bidura was purchased by a member of a long standing Glebe family, the Burfitts. At the time of his wedding it was noted in Melbourne papers that "Dr Burfitt has purchased Bidura, a very fine home at Glebe Point, and at one time the residence of the Fitz Stubbs family"<sup>14</sup>. Shortly after his purchase of Bidura Dr Walter Burfitt married Esme Mann.

Dr Walter Burfitt had been running a general medical practice at 311 Glebe Point Road, Glebe since 1901. His sister Dr Mary Burfitt (Mrs Williams) and his brothers were also doctors. Bidura was also briefly occupied by another physician, V J McPhee, who initially shared Bidura with Dr W Burfitt. In 1912 Walter opened a consulting practice in Macquarie Street and his sister Mary, one of the first female doctors in Australia, continued to work as a GP in Glebe. Her practice was initially at her parents home Elmsville, at 333 Glebe Point Road, however, by 1915 Mary had moved her practice to 222 Glebe Point Road, a house that she shared with her other brother, the NSW Valuer CT Burfitt. This house was almost opposite her brother's property Bidura. After her marriage to Dr Grosvenor Williams, Dr Mary Burfitt resumed practice at 222 Glebe Point Road using her maiden name. Mary and her husband were both listed at No 222, and there were two physicians in adjacent houses.

In 1933 three of the substantial houses opposite Bidura were still occupied by medical practitioners. The use of the substantial houses north of Wigram Road as medical practices continued for decades and was probably due to the proximity of a number of hospitals. The homeopathic hospital was established in the villa Ben Ledi. Ben Ledi was later purchased by Leichhardt Council and forms part of the Glebe Library complex. Another medical facility, Diphtheria Cottage had been established in Kew Cottage, much to the dismay of the community however this use ceased in 1907 with the construction of the Children's Hospital in Camperdown. Kew Cottage was demolished and shops built, forming a commercial strip at the intersection of Glebe Point Road and Wigram Road. George Allen had forbidden the erection of shops or public houses within the Toxteth estate, so that the commercial strip extended along the eastern side of Glebe Point Road, with gaps between such as the grounds of Bidura.

Dr and Mrs Burfitt moved to the Eastern Suburbs, however, Dr Burfitt retained ownership of the house until 1920. Mrs Burfitt's family, the Manns owned Dennarque at Mt Wilson and Dr and Mrs Burfitt divided their time between Mount Wilson and Sydney. When the Burfitts occupied Bidura, the houses between Ferry Road and Forsyth Street were all substantial residences. The pair of houses to the north retain this character (359-361 Glebe Point Road). Two more pairs of similar substantial houses are concealed behind interwar shops. The present sloping drive to the court complex retained the character of the streetscape and is barely noticeable between the two nineteenth century buildings. This is the placement of the drive as shown on the 1889 Metropolitan Detail series. Both of the schemes for the Metropolitan Remand Centre, the 1976/77 scheme (figure 3.1) and the 1978 revision (figure 3.3) have the drive in this location and the extent to which the scheme was set back and below from the Glebe Streetscape can be seen in the model (figures 2.10, 3.4 & 3.5).



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**MRS ROWLEY WALKER**

Figure 2.6A  
Location of the Charlton Boys Home  
(Avona and Strathmore) and the Bidura  
complex.  
City of Sydney Historic Atlas, Building  
Surveyors Detail Sheets c. 1949,  
with colours added by Robertson &  
Hindmarsh

During the First World War Bidura became a residential or boarding house run by Mrs Rowley Walker. Mrs Rowley Walker had previously run a 'fashionable boarding house' at Durham Court in Glebe. The advertisements for the sale of the furniture by Lawson's indicate that the establishment had been of a high standard, with verandah furniture, an aviary and a piano. Mrs Rowley Walker held fund-raising Card Parties for the AIF, possibly utilising the ballroom.

Dr Burfitt still owned the house, when it was sold in 1920 to the Crown. Mrs Rowley Walker sold the contents of the house in July 1920 and she and her husband moved to Coogee. The use of substantial houses as boarding houses was typical of the inner ring of suburbs, however, Bidura seems to have been at the upper end of the scale. Large houses with grounds in Potts Point were also utilised as upmarket residential. Substantial nineteenth century residences in Glebe continue to be utilised as residential today, one of the few suburbs where this type of use continues. Some of these facilities operate as half-way houses.

#### STATE CHILDREN'S DEPOTS IN GLEBE

By 1905 two of the substantial houses nearby had already been turned into shelters. A Rescue Home for Girls had already been established at Avona in 1904 (shaded green in figure 2.6A), the house having been purchased the previous year. Strathmore, adjacent to Avona, was operating as a Home for Women (also shaded green in figure 2.6A). Income from the laundry and needlework undertaken by the women was funding the debts incurred in purchasing the houses. In 1923 Strathmore, then described as being a 'fine old house' opened as an additional home for Girls by the Church of England. Photographs of the house during the interwar years survive. By 1921 135 girls were accommodated at the Church of England homes at Glebe and 60 boys at Carlingford. The existence of these existing child welfare facilities may have influenced the State's decision to purchase Bidura.

Some months prior to Mrs Rowley Walker "'giving up housekeeping'" at Bidura, the house had been purchased by the State Children's Relief Department from Dr Burfitt as a depot for 'State Children'.<sup>15</sup> The Public Works Department carried out repairs to the building, however no drawings relating to works carried out in the 1920s have been located. In



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Figure 2.7 View of the Metropolitan  
Girls Shelter taken in 1931 which fronted  
Avon Street.

Sourced from the Dictionary of Sydney  
entry on Bidura



preparation for the new occupants the chimneys were swept. Some idea of the layout can be gained from the 1970s demolition plan and the mid twentieth century plans of additions which show a circular walk and lawn to the rear. The section of grounds immediately to the rear of the house is all that remains.

#### Bidura, Glebe Point, State Children Relief

Bidura was a privately-owned building and was purchased by the State Children Relief Department and was handed over to this department to effect alterations and renovations to meet the requirements of the Department for which it was intended. This involved extensive alterations and renovations externally and internally, extension of the electric lighting, and installation of an efficient hot water system to the existing offices, and additional lavatory accommodation. This work was carried out at an estimated cost of 1,602 pounds.<sup>16</sup>

By April of the following year there were at least 40 children in residence.<sup>17</sup> In 1923 it was intended that a shelter for boys be built at Bidura however this did not eventuate, rather a shelter for girls was built.<sup>18</sup> Several Acts were combined into one Child Welfare Act in 1923, which resulted in the provision of new facilities. The same year the State Government purchased another property in Glebe, a substantial house known as Wahroonga, 270 Glebe Point Road. The Dictionary of Sydney entry for this house notes that it too was a substantial residence with large rooms, substantial grounds and a ballroom.

#### THE METROPOLITAN GIRL'S SHELTER

In 1925 the Shelter at Ormond House in Paddington was disestablished and a new shelter to be known as the Metropolitan Girls Centre was established at the corner of Avon Street and Ferry Lane Glebe in accordance with the Child Welfare Act. Ormond House, like Bidura, was a substantial nineteenth century villa which had also been utilised as a children's court until the opening of the new purpose-designed court in Albion Street.

Under the supervision of the Child Welfare Department exist four Hostels (at Waverley, Marrickville, Glebe and Willoughby), established to help mothers through a critical period. None of the hostels bear any indication of their purpose - there is no plate or sign on the building. These hostels are particularly used for girls who are in trouble and have no resources. They constitute for them a refuge. After the birth of the child, the Department practically insists on the mother

<sup>16</sup> PWD AR 1921

<sup>17</sup> The Sun 28 April 1921

<sup>18</sup> SMH 19 Dec 1923



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stopping with the child for four months in order to give it a chance of growing- up healthy and strong. The mother rests in quietude with the least possible trouble on her mind, and the child has the benefit of this. When the mother must leave the hostel the child becomes the care of the Child Welfare Department (if the mother cannot maintain it herself entirely or with some allowance from the Department); the Department boards it out in a private house until it reaches the age of fourteen.<sup>19</sup>

A more detailed article that appeared in *Building* in 1928 also mentioned the four hostels in Waverley, Marrickville, Glebe and Willoughby. The Gosford Training School and the Mittagong Farms were also discussed. The importance of sport was noted, and it was not just a leisure pursuit, but was a means of instilling discipline and following of rules.

Sport is encouraged on lines equal to any great State school or college, and cricket, football and swimming are part of the curriculum, to be indulged in with the strictest precision and attention to the honours of the game. Thus boys whose nomadic lives have taken them away from the discipline of the great British games grow more amenable to the rules of life and the requirements of society by learning them. By breaking a rule in sport they incur a penalty, and it is impressed upon their minds when leaving the institution to take up life afresh that a definite penalty awaits any kind of wrong doing.<sup>20</sup>

The Government Architect's Branch designed and upgraded facilities for the Child Welfare Department, including the integrated school facilities, which did not come under the control of the Department of Education until the 1980s.

The original design of the Metropolitan Girl's Shelter has not been located whereas there are a series of drawings of the Childrens Court and Metropolitan Boy's shelter dating from the 1920s. A later plan shows the building to have contained dormitories and bedrooms, a kitchen, laundry and dining room, a detention room, and a doctor's room and office. Staff presumably slept on site, and two of the bedrooms have observation windows into the dormitories. The drawings confirm press reports that the verandah was secured. The Girls Shelter was 'surrounded by a high fence in Avon Street and has high verandahs covered with wire'. The building, which included a basement, was at a lower level than the grounds of the house and a retaining wall is shown on the 1941 plan.

Newspaper references provide some indication of the use of the site by the Child Welfare Department. The children were looked after by a matron and employed governesses who were experienced teachers.<sup>21</sup> Church groups visited the children on Sundays and groups from the YWCA distributed sweets and gifts at Christmas. Gifts were distributed to both Bidura and Royleston by the Catholic Women's Association during the 1930s.

The Department of Youth and Community Services believed that the existing facilities on the site erected by the Child Welfare Department such as a detention cell, meant that there was no change of use, arguing that a DA for the proposed redevelopment in 1978 would not be needed. Leichhardt council disagreed, citing various legal precedents.<sup>22</sup>

19 The Land 25 September 1925

20 Building January 12 1928

21 SMH 4 Feb 1933

22 Advice from Leichhardt Council, SRNSW SB5902/16 part 1



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### 1939-1950s

In 1939 works to Bidura Depot included the installation of heating stoves and replacement of the dividing fence.<sup>23</sup> During the war an air raid shelter was erected at Bidura and there were six public shelters in Glebe. There is possibly more detail in the ARP series at SRNSW. The erection of air raid shelters was overseen by the Public Works Department and the designs were standardised. The shelter continued to be used after the war and in the late 1950s plans were prepared to turn the building into a shelter shed for the children. After the war came calls for a different type of accommodation for children, accommodation with a less institutional character. The practice of utilising substantial existing residences in preference to erecting new facilities was criticised. It was not just the children who suffered, but also the live-in staff.

#### Wards In Grim State Homes

A new deal for staffs and children in homes for State wards is demanded by the Health Standard, Hospital Employees' Union paper. HEALTH Standard quotes the example of Bidura, a Child Welfare Depot for State girl wards at Glebe. For several years, the paper says, the Department has been buying old private residences and converting them into State homes. Little discrimination is used, and most of these homes are "extremely unsuitable."

Bidura, Health Standard declares, is a glaring example of this—its two floors and basement provide sleeping accommodation for 44 children ranging from one to 18 years of age. The dormitories are on the ground and first floors, but the bathrooms are in the basement, which means that the children have to climb at least one flight of stairs after their evening bath.

#### Beds Almost Touching

The sleeping quarters themselves are so crowded that the beds are almost touching. The babies' room, about 21 feet by 14, contains 12 cots and three beds, while two other rooms, 14 by 12 and 20 by 14, contain six and 10 beds respectively. It is almost impossible to walk between the beds in these rooms. The basement, a dark and dingy hole, contains the children's dining room and bathroom and staff pantry. The whole home is old and dirty. There is no lino on the floors.

On the ground floor, containing the babies' room, the hospital room, verandah, matron's office and bedroom and the staff dining room and sitting room, there is no running water, while there are no toilet facilities for the babies' room and the hospital room.

#### Dingy Staff Quarters

Staff quarters, the Health Standard says, are dingy and uncomfortable. "There is an urgent need in these institutions for the atmosphere of a real home, a place where children can receive individual attention and where there are facilities for amusement after school hours," says the union paper. The Hospital Employees Union asks for increased funds for more and better homes, for abolition of the "institutional atmosphere," for improved amenities for staff and children, increased staffs and improved working conditions and pay in keeping with their responsible work.





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Class room blocks were progressively added to the site and part of the complex was used as a store. From 1947 clothing is recorded as being issued. The grounds between the back of the house and the dividing fence with the Girls Shelter were utilised by the children. Freda MacDonnell recalls the character of Bidura shortly before the site was redeveloped:

In the heart of Glebe Point is a spacious Colonial Georgian house remembered in the neighbourhood as the home of the popular medical practitioner, Dr. Water Burfitt who purchased the property from Frederick John Perks, a Sydney solicitor. The house, which had been kept in excellent repair, was later purchased by the Crown and is now the property of the Child Welfare Department. Part of its charm used to be the long back garden, stretching down to Avon Street. It is an unusual sight in present day Glebe to see such an area of land left vacant all these years. And it was like this when I saw it about 1974. The lawns, open space and complete privacy were ideal for tiny tots who played there under careful supervision.

Photographs of the children at lessons were published in the Youth & Community Services Annual reports. Lessons were sometimes held outdoors.

#### **THE GLEBE URBAN CONSERVATION AREA (1970s)**

Resident groups were formed in the late 1960s to protect the character of suburbs such as Glebe and Paddington. Community concern in the early 1970s at the proposal to build a road through the centre of Glebe and destroy early houses such as Lyndhurst resulted in protests by residents action groups. These groups worked steadily to ensure that development proposals and infrastructure did not impact on the character of their suburbs. University of NSW's publication *Tharunka* reflected on the success of attempts to halt the demolition of older suburbs

The only two successful moves in NSW were essentially middleclass ones — moves by professionals to defend their new turf. In Paddington, the Jersey Road scheme was successfully shelved, while in Glebe the academics etc in the Glebe Society were successful in driving the proposed expressway into an underground tunnel beneath the high status Toxteth Estate... The continued construction of urban expressways is set within an institutional mould which constrains effective evaluation of or reaction to alternatives. Social protest appears to be seen by the DMR as a social nuisance to be overcome in the interests of progress rather than a basis for serious consideration of alternatives.

Examples of Bernard Smith's advocacy to protect Glebe can be found in the Sydney Morning Herald.

A highway through your front door? A marina at the bottom of your garden? An airport in the local parkland? You don't have to stand for it. Bureaucracy can be beaten. Read "A plain man's guide to defence of home and neighbourhood."<sup>24</sup>

Kate and Bernard Smith's *The Architectural Character of Glebe* was first published in 1973, shortly before the conservation area was first proposed by the National Trust. Bernard Smith had prepared a masterplan for Glebe in 1970. In the third edition it was noted





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The character of Glebe depends not on the preservation of a limited number of houses that might be regarded as a good example of their kind. It is the totality of the built environment, the streetscapes and settings that really matter. Official recognition of an urban townscape with significant historic and architectural merit, and built up over a century and a half, was given in 1976 when Glebe was declared a conservation area by both the National Trust and the National Estate. This classification has also been adopted by Leichhardt Council in their planning controls and this gives some degree of protection.<sup>25</sup>

During 1974 the National Trust's Urban Conservation Committee proposed listing two substantial Urban Conservation Areas: Hunters Hill and Glebe and they were both approved for listing by the National Trust Council the same year. The Glebe Urban Conservation Area was the second listed in inner Sydney and was followed by The Rocks (approved 1978), Annandale (approved 1981), Leichhardt (approved 1981), Woolloomooloo (approved 1980), Balmain (approved 1981), Haberfield (approved 1981) and Pyrmont/Ultimo (approved 1981). By 1976 the proposal to build an expressway through Glebe had been abandoned and the Commonwealth Government had purchased large tracts of housing from the Anglican Church. The entire suburb of Glebe was declared a conservation area, one of the first urban conservation areas to be established in Australia.

The National Trust Urban Conservation Listing was prepared by A C Strahan in 1974 and was revised by David Sheedy in 1976. The reason for listing was given as

Glebe is a history of early Australian urban architecture ; as a townscape it is handsome, coherent and largely completed. The scale and character have been little disturbed by modern intrusion. About one-fifth of the houses have recently been acquired by the Australian Government and will be restored.<sup>26</sup>

The description noted the topography of the ridge dominated, but also that views outwards formed significant elements in the environment. The lack of modern intrusions within the conservation area was also discussed in the listing of the Glebe Conservation Area in the *Illustrated Register of the National Estate (1984)*.

Bidura had not yet been identified as Blacket's own house however shortly after the Public Buildings Section of the Public Works Department had been briefed regarding the proposal to redevelop the Bidura Depot, the Historic Buildings Group informed the project team of the National Trust classification of the Glebe Conservation Area listing and the recent research by Mrs Connell and Freda MacDonnell in identifying the location of Edith Blacket's sketches. The National Trust undertook a separate classification report for Bidura in 1978. The initial plan to demolish the house fronting Glebe Point Road was soon abandoned.

#### **NOT BIDURA**

The child welfare facility at Bidura was officially closed in 1977 and plans were already underway to redevelop the site. Bidura had achieved some notoriety in 1974 when the complex had been the target of a protest march. Bessie Guthrie, who had established the

<sup>25</sup> Kate & Bernard Smith, *The Architectural Character of Glebe*, Sydney: University Co-operative Bookshop, third edition, 1989

<sup>26</sup> Glebe UCA listing form, NT Australia, NSW



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Figure 2.8 View of the International Women's Day protest march to Bidura. Sourced from the Bidura Dictionary of Sydney entry

women's refuge centre in Glebe was instrumental in arranging the protest march with the theme "Women against the Violent Society". The call was to "Close Hay Girls' Prison; Stop violence in institutions; Community controlled shelters, NOT Bidura and "welfare homes"; Free women, free children, free childcare". The Tribune reported the Bidura protest march in detail

Out of the 16,000 men and women who go through NSW prisons each year, 70% have been in child welfare institutions, and 56% will go back to prison a second time. For many, life in institutions begins at Bidura (a child welfare shelter for children in Sydney) or at the Metropolitan Girls' Shelter in Glebe.

A march and demonstration next Saturday, March 9, initiated by Sydney Women's Liberation International Women's Day Campaign, 1974, will focus attention on these facts. In a press statement issued last week by Sydney Women's Liberation, concern was expressed for the fundamental premises of which "child welfare" was established and is maintained and the demonstration will challenge these and the violence which permeates our society.

A leaflet issued about the demonstration describes the way in which children are treated at Bidura, which includes being shouted at, pushed and pulled around, being slapped and having their heads banged on the wall. The leaflet goes on to state that many of the children in Child Welfare Institutions are the victims of broken families, or lower income families. Many are Aborigines. Children from higher income families generally escape being put into institutions; their parents or legal representatives usually satisfy the courts that the children will undergo some other form of "treatment".

Welfare homes are described as a system of punishment for the overwhelming majority of young people (most of whom are there through no fault of their own) who are sent to them. The leaflet finishes with a number of community alternatives to the present system and calls for participation in the march and protest meeting which will assemble at Victoria Park (near Sydney University) at 10.00 a.m. on Saturday.<sup>27</sup>

The protest received considerable publicity as a number of protesters were arrested.

Following the meeting outside Bidura, the group moved around to the Metropolitan Girls' Shelter to chant and sing outside the shelter in an act of



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solidarity with the girls inside. Although the front sections of both Bidura and the Girls' Shelter are nicely kept garden areas with low fences, once off the main street the shelter turns into high walls completely blocking out any view of the inside. As the demonstrators moved past these fences, groups of people began to bang on the walls chanting "Two, four, six, eight, open up the prison gate." Suddenly, young women, (and one young man) began to scale the fence onto the roof, where they continued to chant and beat on the roof. After symbolically planting a women's liberation flag on the roof they decided to come down. The police by this time, had formed a line against the wall, but despite this the demonstrators moved in to help the others down. In the course of this action, by which time numerous paddy waggons had arrived, along with many more uniformed and plain clothed police, including a particularly active and aggressive woman in white, three people were arrested.

#### BRUTAL ARREST

Although many were incensed by a particularly brutal arrest of one young man, the group moved on to a park where the arrests were discussed, the names of witnesses taken and money collected for bail.<sup>28</sup>

Mid-1974 saw the closure of the notorious Hay Institution for Girls that had been established within the Hay Gaol in the early 1960s. The protest march to Bidura features in Feminist chronologies, and the suburb of Glebe generally was home to campaigners and facilities for women. Policy had already been changing, with a move towards the provision of more domestic scale accommodation. The two facilities in Glebe, Royleston and Bidura, were described in the Child Welfare Department's Annual Report in 1972-73 as Receiving Homes where children taken into care were initially sent to be observed and assessed.

The two main receiving homes for wards, "Bidura" and "Royleston", are old buildings which are in many ways unsuitable for the purpose. Because of the need for better additional facilities for the reception, observation, and assessment of boys and girls newly admitted as wards or committed to the care of the Minister, a new complex of Receiving Homes has been planned for erection on land which is available adjacent to Minda Remand Centre.<sup>29</sup>

The Government Architect's Branch was already designing facilities that were more residential in character. Kedumba, a new facility for mentally handicapped children, was opened at Katoomba, as part of the Clairvaux project, the Department having purchased a boarding school from St Bernard's Catholic School in 1967. Despite having erected additional accommodation at Katoomba, YACS noted that the

provision of this and other additional accommodation for wards has not eased the situation in most establishments nor relieved the serious overcrowding at "Bidura". In particular, the pre-school group at "Bidura" has caused considerable concern since intake remains constant. There has been an approximate average of thirty pre-schoolers in residence throughout the year, with no sign of any decline in intake.<sup>30</sup>

28 The Tribune, 12 March 1974

29 YACS AR 1972-73

30 YACS AR 1972-73



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This annual report also noted that Bidura contained an 'internal school', classrooms having first been added to the complex by the PWD in 1956, prior to that, the ballroom was used as a classroom. The Bidura complex was also utilised for "regional training courses" during the 1970s and for youth skills seminars during the International Year of Youth (1985). The youth seminars were on the topics Sex, Cars, Legal Ages, Drugs and Statements.

#### **THE METROPOLITAN REMAND CENTRE**

In October 1976 the Government Architect was advised that

The Minister has indicated that planning should proceed during the 1976/77 financial year on the development of a Central Metropolitan Remand Centre to replace the Metropolitan Boy's Shelter; which, for many years has been declared unsuitable for the accommodation and general care of young persons. Although no special provision was made in the 1976/77 Loan Program Forecasts for expenditure in this area, a letter has been forwarded to the Treasury advising of the Minister's proposal and seeking supplementation, but as yet no reply has been received. The general concept is the utilisation of the present Bidura depot site situated at Glebe for this purpose and to this end it would be appreciated if an immediate site inspection could be made in conjunction with Senior Officers of this department to discuss the feasibility of developing this facility on a restricted site of 1 acre, 1 rood & 18 ½ perches.<sup>31</sup>

In 1978 the head of the Tertiary section in the Government Architect's Branch Les Reedman informed the minister that

Over the last 5 years or so there has been much thought given to possible sites in the Central Metropolitan areas. The kinds of sites available and locations imposed great difficulties. This site is ideal from the point of view of both accessibility of the public, traffic and is integrated into a mixed use area.<sup>32</sup>

The 1977-78 PWD Annual Report notes that sketch designs were prepared for demolitions and alterations at Bidura, Glebe as well as sketch plans for the Bidura Remand Centre. Sketch designs were also prepared for additional classrooms at Minali and an administration building at Mt Penang. The sequence of designs is discussed in detail in Section 3.

Acting on the advice of the Historic Buildings Group that Bidura was most likely the residence of the former Colonial Architect Edmund Blacket, a decision was made to retain the house. The Girl's Shelter to the rear was to be demolished rather than renovated. Geoff Griffiths' of the Historic Buildings Group had also advised the Public Buildings section that Bidura was located within the area of Glebe classified by the National Trust. The report the Historic Buildings Section prepared in late 1976 has not been located.

Whilst the Minister and the departmental officers were in favour of the design, the residents of Avon Street and the Glebe Society were not. In August 1977 the Glebe Society expressed their

Concern at the recent announcement that a six-storey complex is to be built at the

31 Bidura Centre and House, REdevelopment of the Site, SRNSW SB5902/16 Pt 1

32 Les Reedman, Principal Architect, report on the Metropolitan Remand Centre in response to the Report in the SMH 6 October 1978. State Records School Building files S5902/16



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
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site of the Bidura Girls Shelter in Glebe Point Road. Such a massive development, if the drawings published are any guide, would dominate the area and be quite out of character with the style and townscape of Glebe. We certainly support the restoration of Bidura and the improvement of conditions in Child Welfare institutions, but ask that you reconsider the style and scale of this proposed development.<sup>33</sup>

The Town Planner's Report on the proposal quotes the letter from the Hon Paul Landa, the Minister for Planning and Environment to the Hon H F Jackson, the Minister for Youth & Community Services in January 1978

Bidura is a large mid-Victorian house reputedly built by the Architect Edmund Blacket, flanked by an attractive single storey service wing on one side and an Italianate ballroom on the other side. The ballroom and its lobby have distinctive timber ceilings, which the committee considers to be architecturally significant.

The buildings together with the mature trees in the front garden and the picket fence are a very important element of the streetscape of Glebe Point Road. This street is part of the Conservation Area classified by the National Trust of Australia (NSW).

In the light of significance of the "Bidura" Group, I would be most grateful in having your support in having the house, the Ballroom and the existing front garden retained in any future development proposals for the site. Any future development should reflect the scale and character of these important buildings.

The committee that had raised the concerns is likely to have been a National Trust committee and is not named in full in the correspondence or in the Town Planners Report to Leichhardt Council. Minister Jackson replied

You will be pleased to learn that the architects responsible for the designing of the new complex have given particular attention to the retention of the buildings which you have been concerned. They have been carefully integrated into the overall design so as to retain their distinctive architecture and yet at the same time providing an overall structure which is pleasing in design and functional in its concept...

The Department of Youth & Community Services seeks to construct a Remand Centre which will provide accommodation for 50 children, both boys and girls. The complex will retain all facilities for children on remand, and contain two courtrooms, and a large multi-purpose recreation/meeting room and auditorium.<sup>34</sup>

Residents continued to express their concern in letters to the editor of the Sydney Morning Herald

...retain the character of the area and using traditional forms such as verandahs. Residents of Glebe have not been so lucky, the Department had designed the new

33 Jim Coombs, Secretary of the Glebe Society. SRNSW SB5902/16 part I  
34 Town Planning report, SRNSW SB5902/16 part I



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

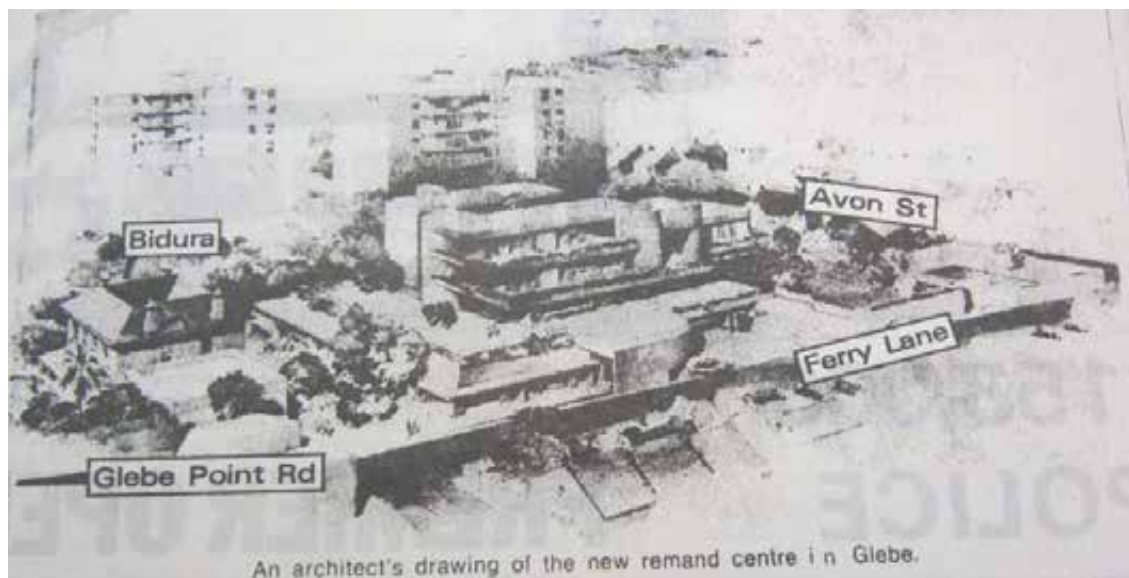


Figure 2.9 An architect's drawing of the new remand centre in Glebe published in the SMH. SMH 6 October 1978

Bidura Remand Centre (Herald 6 October 1978) as a bush-hammered concrete building, six storeys higher than surrounding residential streets. Why does the department take such inconsistent attitudes towards two areas of similar character and scale? H. HEWITT, Avon Street, October 27 Glebe.<sup>35</sup>

Hilary Hewitt was a local architect. Concerned residents addressed their "very vocal opposition" to the project to the Premier and Minister for Public Works. One resident asked that the objections not be dismissed as reflex opposition to any development in their area and sought modifications to the scale and design before the proposed remand centre could be considered an acceptable plan in keeping with the surrounding residential development.<sup>36</sup> In replying the Deputy Premier and Minister for Public Works Jack Ferguson advised that he

would firstly assure you that the proposed development of this project was undertaken by my Department acting in close liaison with the Department of Youth & Community Services and other authorities and that every effort has been made in the design of this complex structure to achieve a quiet, low profile integrating with the building's surroundings. The domestic scale of the dwellings in Avon Street and Ferry Lane have been sensitively appreciated and efforts have been made to preserve this scale by stepping the building back and limiting its height to a much lower level than the existing adjoining tower buildings.

I am also advised that the matter of parking in Avon Street has been examined and it is considered that the loss of any parking space can be avoided and turning movement facilitated by rounding off the corner of what is now the property of the Department of Youth & Community Services. The officers responsible for the development of the project are currently considering the feasibility of this action and if possible, will amend the scheme accordingly.

In conclusion I am assured that every aspect of this development has been thoroughly explored in an endeavour to arrive at solutions which will have the least effect on the environment and the quality of life of the local residents.<sup>37</sup>

The Glebe Society petitioned the premier Neville Wran who requested that a model be made to show the impact on the Glebe townscape. Leichhardt Council had already approved the DA, but had requested that shadow diagrams be prepared. Council noted that

<sup>35</sup> SMH 30 October 1978

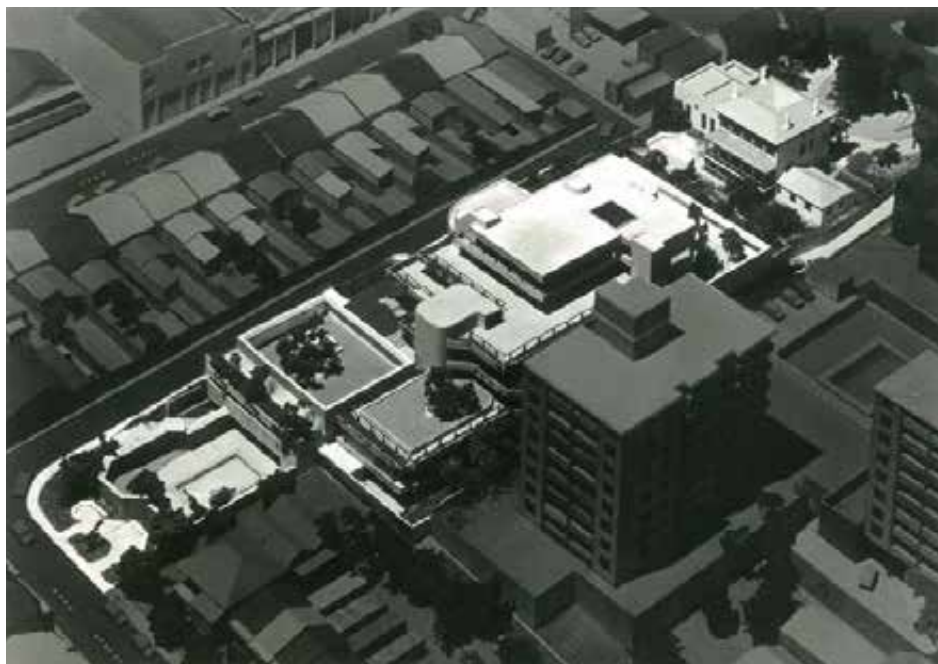
<sup>36</sup> J H Ashton to the Minister for Public Works, 24/10/1978, SRNSW SB5902/16 part I

<sup>37</sup> L J Ferguson, Deputy Premier & Minister for Public Works to Mr J H Ashton 27 November 1978. SRNSW SB5902/16 part I





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
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As questions are likely to be raised by nearby residents relative to the standing effect of the proposed building on their properties, would you please furnish a shade diagram so that the Council can answer any queries in this regard.<sup>38</sup>

Figure 2.10 Close up of the model showing how the building stepped down the site.  
Sourced from the former GAO

These diagrams have not yet been located but may still be on file at Leichhardt Council.

The PWD advised the Minister No Action Groups in the area participated in the project however it was standard procedure to keep projects such as police stations and gaols confidential. In response to the adverse press coverage the PWD had informed Leichhardt Council in October 1978 that

the department never regarded this project as being of a secret nature, however the project contains elements of a security nature as the Client, the Department of Youth & Community Services wishes to protect the privacy of the juveniles together with those working in the complex in the future...the Department [PWD] supports the Client in not making the detailed plans of the scheme available and considers that the exhibition of the coloured perspective provides a clear picture of the proposal....This department generally places no restriction on Councils for the full exhibition of its building proposals, however projects involving security must be treated accordingly.<sup>39</sup>

The Minister for Youth & Community Services provided the Premier Neville Wran with a detailed schedule of when announcements had been made to the community regarding the proposed redevelopment and the restoration of the former home of Edmund Blacket, Colonial Architect, including an interview on Channel 10.

I believe that the internal arrangements for functioning are the responsibility of my department and should be known only to those who are required to make use of the services provided.<sup>40</sup>

The design intention of the scheme is discussed in more detail in Section 3.0. Detailed views of the model were retained by the PWD until recently (figure 2.10). Additional views are contained in the GPO collection at the State Library (Sections 3.4 & 3.5).

38 Leichhardt Council to the PWD, 1 August 1978, SRNSW SB5902/16 part 1

39 Secretary of the PWD to Town Clerk, Leichhardt Municipal Council  
SRNSW SB5902/16 part 1

40 Ferguson to Wran, SRNSW SB5902/16 part 1



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The project file records attendees at a meeting held at Parliament House in November 1978 that included the Minister for Youth & Community Services, the project architect and members of the Glebe Action Group including P Ashton and the architect P Coupe (both of whom were resident in Avon Street). Other members of the Glebe Action Group had been shown the site plan and model. The head of the Tertiary Section, Les Reedman also reported the extent to which the design had responded to the townscape. As the design had already been reduced in scale due to community concerns and had related to the townscape of Glebe as Landa requested, few further major design changes appear to have been made and the scheme as built is largely as published in the SMH in October 1978, with the exception of the rounded corner to Avon Street and the small community park created there.

The Metropolitan or Glebe Remand Centre was officially opened in 1983 and cost considerably more than the initial cost estimates prepared by the PWD in 1976-77. The complex was constructed by the J U Polletti Group who were associated with the PWD on projects such as the Sydney Entertainment Centre, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney Police Centre, Remand Centre Glebe, Wentworth Park Grandstand and Westmead Hospital works.<sup>41</sup>

Whilst providing the Department with its requirements in terms of character the building proved difficult to secure and there were frequent escapes. The typical gaol or remand centre wall, sterile area and observation posts utilised in the design of secure facilities in NSW since the erection of Darlinghurst Gaol in the 1840s were not present. Rather than utilise the house for staff accommodation, the villa was used as an open remand facility.

Around the time that the Bidura complex opened a seminar was held on *The Conservation of Historic Buildings in their Landscape*, part of a Continuing Education in Architecture given by Howard Tanner and Michael Lehany. This seminar aimed to expand on the neglected relationship between buildings and their landscaped setting which had been identified by Tanner and Lehany. The site visits were to Thomas Walker & Yarralla, Bidura, the Mint and Vaucluse House.

The classification of the Glebe Conservation Area in 1974 and the statutory planning controls for the conservation area implemented in 1984, a decade later than the initial National Trust listing, resulted in the reversal of the trend to acquire substantial nineteenth century houses and demolish them and build blocks of flats, as occurred with Lynwood, Avona and Strathmore. The Glebe Society has remained vigilant in this regard for over 45 years, seeking to retain the character of the Glebe townscape now designated as Conservation Areas. Attempts were made by the Council of the City of Sydney to adopt an FSR that was in keeping with the surrounding conservation area.

In 2010, council adopted a maximum height of 9m for the entire site and a floor space ratio of 1:1 to be incorporated into the Draft Sydney Local Environmental Plan (Draft LEP). The proposed controls were based on an urban design study prepared in 2006.<sup>42</sup>

41 J U Polletti Advert in various State Works issues, 1983

42 Vision Land Glebe Pty Ltd v Council of the City of Sydney [2016] NSWLEC 1488



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#### **CHANGING PATTERNS OF USE**

The use of the complex as a remand centre lasted until 1985, with the role transferred to Yasmar (another nineteenth century residence) in Haberfield which had been operating as a remand centre by at least the 1970s. YACS desire that the Bidura complex be less forbidding in character resulted in more opportunities for absconding than in a facility with the gaol-type of sterile area and perimeter fence.

The facilities at Royleston and Bidura were used by YACS for training purposes, although a proposal to utilise Royleston as a Remand Centre appears not to have proceeded. The children's court aspect of the complex was far more successful and continued to operate until 2017 when it finally closed. The auditorium was on occasion used by community groups including the Glebe Society. The building also provided a JP service for the local community.

The Government Architect's Branch was involved in the recent reworking of the Albion Street Children's Court, so that it could once again function as a children's court.

State of the art facilities will transform the 105-year-old building into a court for young people, many of whom are the victims of crime or in care and protection cases. Children's Court President Judge Peter Johnstone said it was exciting to see the old Metropolitan Children's Court return to its former important role.

"It's exciting to see a building which hasn't sat as a court in more than three decades returning to its original purpose in a way that incorporates the best of the old and the new," Mr Johnstone said.

The redevelopment will include four courtrooms, twice as many as Bidura Children's Court, Audio Visual Link facilities, a private room for vulnerable witnesses to give evidence via closed-circuit cameras, alternative dispute resolution facilities, a holding cell complex and interview rooms for the legal profession and rooms for support agencies...

When announcing the development, Attorney General Gabrielle Upton said that the children and young people who come before the Children's Court "are often some of the most vulnerable members of our community."

"They need extra care and attention. State-of-the-art facilities ... will help reduce the stress of being part of the justice process."

Since the building closed in 1983, it has been used by Sydney City Mission and other tenants and community organisations. Bidura Children's Court was sold for \$33 million in January, 2015, funding the purchase of the Metropolitan Children's Court. It will close in 2017.<sup>43</sup>

#### **#SOS BRUTALISM, A GLOBAL CAMPAIGN**

Today there is a growing interest in Brutalist architecture via social media and the international web site SOS Brutalism includes Sydney examples under threat of redevelopment including Sirius & Bidura.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Daily Telegraph, April 3 2016

<sup>44</sup> <http://brutalism.online/brutalist-buildings/19-australia/469-bidura-children-s-court-sydney-australia>



FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S COURT & REMAND CENTRE

# PROJECT DETAILS

## Public Works Department of New South Wales (Andrew Milcz): Bidura Children's Court (Metropolitan Remand Centre), 1977–1983

Sydney, Australia [View on map](#)

©EDU / Stepped / Rescue Campaign / Ocular

The Bidura Children's Court is a multi-storey, white off-form concrete building.

The building sits on a podium with two levels set below the ground. The upper levels step back from three of the site's boundaries, further reducing the building's mass and scale. Expressing each level are wide, cantilevered terraces edged with reinforced concrete balustrades and tubular railings. Juxtaposed against the floating horizontal terraces are several semi-cylindrical vertical elements that express stairwells.

The original scheme included landscaping in planter boxes around the edges of each terrace to further soften the building. From a distance, it would have been substantially clad in green, with an almost 'Babylonian' appearance. (Special thanks to Jenna Reed Burns)

The building has undergone only minor alterations over the three decades since it was built. It has suffered from a lack of maintenance and neglect over the years.

It has continued to function as the Children's Court for Sydney since its completion in 1983, and is still in operation today. (The remand centre function of the building ceased in 1985.) However, the Department of Juvenile Justice will vacate the premises in early-mid 2017, by which time the developers hope to have approval to demolish the building, further associate the site and erect new 7-8 storey apartment towers and ten 3-storey townhouses. The [Save Bidura](#) campaign is trying to rescue the building.

[HELP US](#)
[SHARE](#)

Photo: Jenna Reed Burns 2016

Figure 2.11 | SOS Brutalism entry on Bidura. SOS Brutalism Website, October 2017

#SOSBrutalism is a growing database that currently contains over 1000 Brutalist buildings. But, more importantly, it is a platform for a large campaign to save our beloved concrete monsters. The buildings in the database marked red are in particular jeopardy. This is an unprecedented initiative: #SOSBrutalism is open to everyone who wants to join the campaign to save Brutalist buildings! It is a powerful tool that allows fans of Brutalism to communicate with one another across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr and so on. You can follow our social media feeds...

The SOS Brutalism citation for Bidura reads

The Bidura Children's Court (previously known as NSW Children's Court and Metropolitan Remand Centre), in the Glebe area of Sydney, is a multi-storey, white off-form concrete building which sits on a podium with two levels set below the ground. The upper levels step back from three of the site's boundaries, further reducing the building's mass and scale. Expressing each level are wide, cantilevered terraces edged with reinforced concrete balustrades and tubular railings. Juxtaposed against the floating horizontal terraces are several semi-cylindrical vertical elements that express stairwells.

The building was designed by the NSW Government Architect's Office, which at the time was led by J.W.(Ian) Thomson. The project architect, who was responsible for the design and documentation of the building, and who also supervised construction, was Andrew Milcz.

The original scheme included landscaping in planter boxes around the edges of each terrace to further soften the building. From a distance, it would have been substantially clad in green, with an almost 'Babylonian' appearance.

The existing has undergone only minor alterations over the three decades since it was built. It has suffered from a lack of maintenance and neglect over the years. It has continued to function as the Children's Court for Sydney since its completion in 1983, and is still in operation today. (The remand centre function of the building ceased in 1985.) However, the Department of Juvenile Justice will vacate the



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

premises in early-mid 2017, by which time the developers hope to have approval to demolish the building, further excavate the site and erect two 7-8 storey apartment towers and ten 3-storey townhouses.

In addition there has been a detailed local study of Brutalist architecture by the Sydney architect Glenn Harper who notes that

In the last three major brutalist projects all by the NSW Government Architect, highly modelled architectural forms were adjusted specifically in response to their historic urban settings, of which the Newcastle Police Station (1975-82), Bidura Children's Court house (1984) and the Sydney Police Centre (1975-85) are cited. With the over sailing terraces, blade walls and civic elements, a highly modelled and rich architectural landscape was developed that adjusted to the scale of their surroundings without resorting to contrived ornamentation. Each of these recall work by the British 'Brutalist architects' Sir Denys Lasdun and Patrick Hodgkinson.

In particular the urban landscape of the South Bank in London seems to have been influential on the evolution of Brutalism, developed progressively after World War II as the site of the Festival of Britain and the home of new venues, including the National Theatre designed by Denys Lasdun.

#### **TRANSFER & SALE (2014)**

In 2014 State Property indicated that the site could be redeveloped to accommodate residential 100 units. No feasibility studies have been located that would indicate how this would be achieved within the then current planning controls, minimum apartment sizes and requirements for daylighting.

The NSW Government is calling for interested parties looking to purchase a significant land holding in the heart of Glebe. Minister for Finance and Services Dominic Perrottet is hoping that the sale of the former juvenile detention centre in the heart of Glebe will deliver dividends for NSW taxpayers as the NSW Government continues its commitment to ensuring that government owned property assets are put to the best possible use.

"The substantial 5,556 square metre property located at 357 Glebe Point Road, which has three street frontages and views over Blackwattle Bay and the city skyline, is expected to generate significant interest as a residential redevelopment site," Mr Perrottet said.

"Whilst it is occupied by staff from Family and Community Services and the Department of Justice, the site is significantly underutilised in its current state.

"One of the reasons for this is that it was built for a completely different purpose than its current use and it has become unsustainable.

"The sale of Bidura is in line with the NSW Government's commitment to unlock capital and reinvest the funds raised into strengthening government services.

"We want to ensure that all our capital assets work as hard as possible for the NSW taxpayer and where they aren't, that other suitable options are found."



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

The sale of Bidura will be by public tender and will be sold with a leaseback agreement to the government for a period of two years to accommodate construction of the new court house and relocation of staff.

"We will continue to investigate all possible options that maximise the delivery of improved services and infrastructure to the people of NSW," Mr Perrottet said.

The sale of the site is being managed by Government Property NSW, a division of the Office of Finance and Services, leased back to the State Government to 2017.<sup>45</sup>

#### **DA & LEASE**

An initial DA for the redevelopment of the site as units by Visionland was refused by the Council of the City of Sydney and the refusal was upheld by the Land and Environment Court. The court determining that

..the distribution of height and FSR in the Concept Application would have an adverse effect on the heritage significance of Bidura House, impacts on solar access to the open space of the properties in Ferry Road and does not provide adequate separation to the residential flat building at 2A Forsythe Street. Consequently, the Concept Application does not satisfy the heritage requirements in cl 5.10 or objective (b) of the height control in cl 4.3 of the [Sydney] LEP, or the requirements for solar access in s4.2.3.1 of the DCP..<sup>46</sup>

Similar sun control and amenity issues are what drove the changes to the form of the MRC and the resulting design protected the amenity of the residents and sat well within the conservation area.

The property has been vacated but is currently advertised for commercial lease, indicating that the current owners also recognise that there is potential for the building to continue to be utilised in its current form.

#### **Affordable Office and Iconic Retail in a Landmark Location**

Ideally positioned, this iconic offering would suit a variety of businesses or organisations looking to be situated in an inner city landmark location. Providing a multitude of fit out options, rarely available city views, flexible lease terms and competitive rental rates in this ideal fringe location, this opportunity will appeal to a wide array of business uses. The landmark nature of the Historic Bidura house will without doubt provide an iconic environment for any business or organisation.

#### **Features include:**

- Office/alternative floor spaces available between 250 - 4,400sqm
- Office/retail space between 80 - 460sqm in the Iconic Bidura House
- Outstanding city views of the Anzac and Harbour Bridge
- Versatile floor areas ideal for office or class rooms
- Fully fitted and open plan options available
- Fully self-contained offices available with private bathrooms
- Ample off street undercover secure parking (50+ Car spaces)
- Showers, changing rooms

<sup>45</sup> Ministerial Press Release 11 August 2014

<sup>46</sup> Vision Land Glebe Pty Ltd v Council of the City of Sydney [2016] NSWLEC 1488





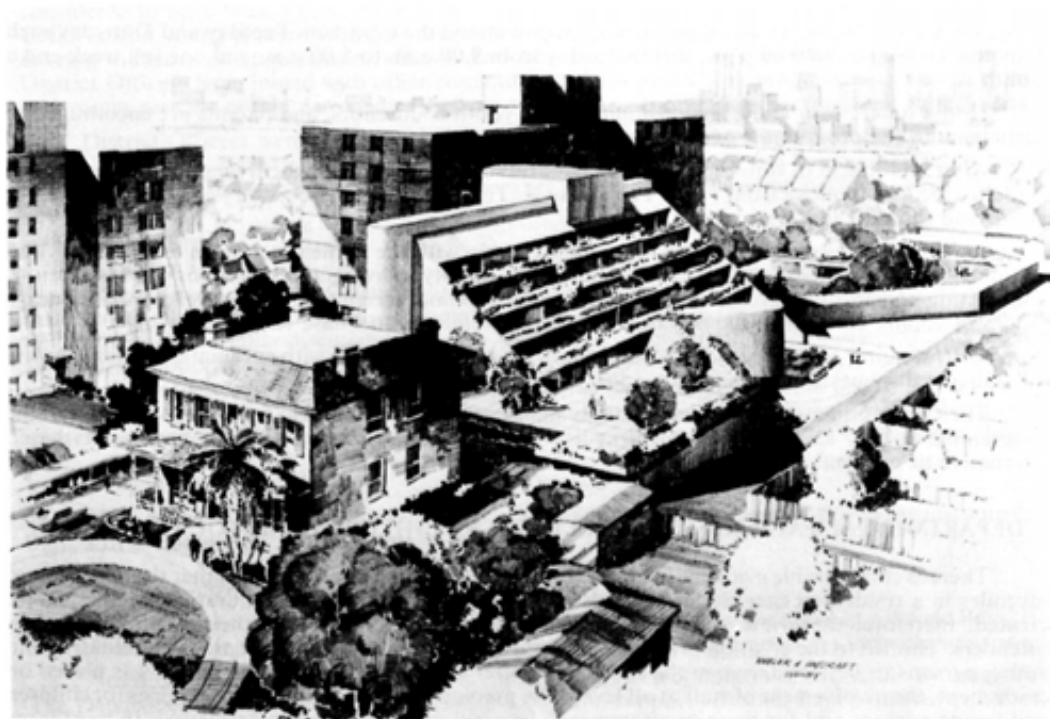
**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
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Multiple break out areas available  
Including Auditorium and indoor Basketball court  
Ramps and lift access throughout complex  
Picturesque leafy garden areas surrounding complex  
Multiple break out areas available  
Including Auditorium and indoor Basketball court  
Ramps and lift access throughout complex  
Picturesque leafy garden areas surrounding complex.<sup>47</sup>





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



### 3.0 THE METROPOLITAN REMAND CENTRE

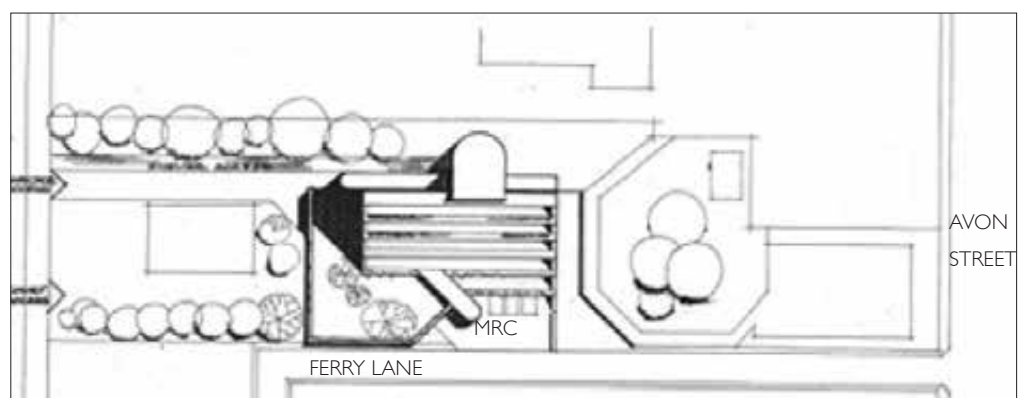
#### 3.1 THE DESIGN BRIEF (1976-77)

A very detailed brief was supplied to the Government Architect's Branch by YACS, the client department, indicating the number of children to be accommodated and the number of staff as well as the range of facilities required and their complex interrelationships. The general objectives of the Metropolitan Remand Centre which accommodated children prior to sentencing

The provision of a residential facility on the Bidura depot site, Glebe Point Road for the accommodation of boys (16) years of age and girls from (12) to (18) years from the central catchment areas, who have been remanded in custody on delinquent matters or awaiting assessment after committal. It is proposed to provide a fully-integrated professional service to both sexes from the date of placement, through court proceedings to release or transfer and consequently a number of departments will be involved with the various processes. Their functional relationship to each other and to the shelter will need to be considered in planning and it is envisaged the whole complex will be in the charge of a Superintendent assisted by a Deputy Superintendent both of whom will require live in accommodation.

Elaborate standards are not sought by this department either in respect of the type of building, its fittings and finish but as it is basically custodial in nature great attention should be paid to security in the general layout without the use of rugged or formidable buildings which would be out of character with present day

Figure 3.2 Site plan prepared in 1977 of the first scheme showing the retained house (Bidura) and Girl's shelter with the proposed MRC between. The Ballroom was not proposed for retention. PWD CW20/277 extracted from the GBA CMP





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
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Departmental concepts of custodial care...

This facility will replace the Metropolitan Boy's Shelter, Albion Street, Sydney and incorporate the Girl's Shelter, which is situated on the same block as Bidura Depot. The present Boy's Shelter has a maximum capacity of (35) and its counterpart for females can accommodate up to (25).<sup>1</sup>

The full brief is included as an Appendix to this report. Drawings of the proposed facility are held by the former PWD plan room. The upper three levels were to contain bedrooms (levels 3 to 5). The dining and recreation areas were to be on level 1. The design, which was lower than the adjacent block of apartments, stepped down from north to south (figures 3.1 & 3.2). All of the facilities were concentrated in the centre of the site. In this scheme the position of the pedestrian and vehicle entries from Glebe Point Road were as in the second scheme.

### **3.2 THE INITIAL SCHEME & DA (1977-78)**

The project architect, Andy Milcz, and the head of the Tertiary Section of the GAB, Les Reedman, met with the Minister in April 1977 to discuss the sketch plans and to "show the Minister a perspective of the whole site. He gave a very satisfactory response to the proposals".<sup>2</sup> An official response from the Department of Youth and Community Services was received by the GAB on the 26th of May 1977

The proposed plan of the Metropolitan Remand Centre to be constructed on the Bidura site meets with this Department's approval and you may now proceed with the detailed planning...The general concept of the design is acceptable and it is understood that your quantity surveyor's cost estimate of \$2.8 million is based on the preliminary sketch and investigation but could in fact exceed this amount. The artist's impression of the new Remand Centre has been widely circulated and created extremely favourable impressions not only with the officers from those Departments who will be involved in the functioning of the facility but also at Ministerial level.

The artist's impression of the initial scheme appeared in the 1976-77 Annual Report of the Department of Youth and Community Services (figure 3.1). As previously noted in Section 2, this sketch caused much local concern, particularly with the residents of Avon Street and the Glebe Society.

In May 1977 the brief was amended to include an auditorium or multi-purpose hall seating 200. Similar facilities could already be found at other institutions such as Lidcombe Hospital. The site plan CW 20/277 prepared in 1977 shows that the initial proposal to demolish the house fronting Glebe Point Road had been abandoned in favour of retention of the house and also of the Girls shelter complex to the rear. The floor plans of the first design prepared by the GAB in 1977-78 were not made public due to security concerns (as outlined in Section 2).

The Department of Youth & Community Services advised Leichhardt Council that

<sup>1</sup> Brief include with a letter to Mr Russell Government Architect L2 Essex House 10.12.76  
State Records School Building files S5902/16

<sup>2</sup> A Milcz, Project Architect, 29 April 1977 State Records School Building files S5902/16



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Figure 3.3 Perspective published in 1979 of the revised scheme, which is the same image that appeared in the SMH in October 1978 but without labels.

Source Constructional Review Feb 1979

A deliberate and successful effort has been made to harmonise with and preserve the scale of the surrounding area. The proposal will not dominate the surroundings or form an obtrusive element in the townscape of Glebe.

It is unlikely that the proposed structure will be at all visible from the footpath of Glebe Point Road as the top of the existing Bidura is approx 11.35 metres above the footpath level on Glebe Point Road. The top of the roof of the new building, 60 metres distant from the footpath is only 13.3 metres above the footpath level. The new building is arranged with stepped landscaped terraces which maintain a low profile in respect of Ferry Lane & Avon Street.<sup>3</sup>

The initial scheme was revised to lessen the bulk of the upper floor; and in doing so certain accommodation requested in the original brief had to be omitted from the DA submission. The GAB advised Leichhardt Council that there would be no loss of amenity due to shading and the new complex was an extension of the present use not a change of use. A coloured perspective of this scheme was all that was made publicly available. Published versions of the perspective dating from 1978 have been located as the design appeared in the SMH in October and subsequently in Constructional Review but not the coloured original (figures 2.9 & 3.3).<sup>4</sup>

### 3.3 THE MODEL (1978)

A note on the Bidura survey file dated 26 October 1978 requested a 1:200 plot model was to be made by the Government Architect's Office at the request of Neville Wran, the then Premier. A series of photographs of the model are contained in the GPO collection held at the Mitchell Library, with some views retained (until recently) by the Government Architect's Office (figures 2.10, 3.4 & 3.5). The model was of the entire block, including surrounding streets and houses. Neville Wran's response to the model has not been located however the form of the current building is similar to the model, indicating that the scheme as described in the October 1978 report and as approved by Leichhardt Council had been agreed to.

Every effort has been made in the design of this complex structure, to achieve a quiet and low-profile integration with the building's surroundings. The domestic

3 General Brief Report on the Existing Site & The Proposed Structures, June 1978, State Records School Building files S5902/16

4 Leichhardt library has been emailed but no response has been received to date. DA files may remain with council. The shadow diagrams have not been located.



FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE



Figure 3.4 & 3.5 Views of the Model erected by the GAO to show the Premier the scale of the proposed MRC in relation to the surrounding townscape. ML GPO 4 stills 11061 & 11062







**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



Figure 3.6 The restored Blacket residence with the remand centre behind, set below the eaves line. Note also the similarity in colour.

ML GPO 4 still 17412

scale of the buildings in adjacent Avon Street and Ferry Lane has been very sensitively appreciated, and the profile of the Centre has been arranged to preserve this scale by stepping the building back and limiting its height much lower than the existing adjoining tower buildings.

In fact the earliest scheme....was reduced in height and form, in response to general criticism and in particular informal reaction from the Glebe Society. The new building, it is considered, will be far less obtrusive than the old buildings which have been demolished. In addition the existing BIDURA building (designed by Edmund Blacket) is to be carefully restored, and it is a continuing presence, together with that of its garden and large trees, will mean that the new shelter will be scarcely visible from Glebe Point Road.

The concept of the new building could be simply stated as that of a large residence resting on a low podium. The occupants have access to the outside on the balconies which step down the site to a ground level playcourt at Avon Street. As in desired Residential planning, privacy is preserved for both the occupants and for the surrounding residents. The expression of the building reflects the concern of the client Department and designers that the occupants have some external views and contact with the outside air which had proven to be entirely valid from experience with other recently completed shelters. The building thus will tend to look like a normal building and will avoid a severe institutional expression.<sup>5</sup>

A description and perspective of the revised scheme appeared in Constructional Review in February 1979 (figures 3.3 & 3.7).

The Department of Public Works NSW is at present calling tenders for Stage 1, bulk excavation contract, for a new Metropolitan Remand Centre at Glebe. It is to be constructed for the Department of Youth & Community Services and will accommodate 50 boys and girls. Attached to the centre will be two Children's Courts with full justice and public facilities.

Additional accommodation includes a clinic, multi purpose hall, children's dining, recreation and educational areas, general office facilities and basement parking for 50 cars. The building is set in a mixed medium/high density neighbourhood. The stepped profile essentially reduces scale as well as providing maximum sunlight to the surrounding dwellings. The terraces are generally landscaped and will be



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## SURVEY

### Master of Science (Building)

Applications are invited from graduates involved in the building industry (including Architects and Engineers), for the Master of Science (Building) course, University of New South Wales.

This two year part-time course provides opportunity for advanced study in the areas of:

Building Construction and Services  
Management of Construction and Property  
Building Economics and Valuation  
Building Science and Information Systems

Students are offered flexibility of subject choice, and may commence their studies in March or July of each year.

For full details and information regarding admission requirements contact:

The School of Building,  
University of New South Wales,  
Kensington N.S.W. 2033,  
Telephone 663 0351, Ext. 2189 or 3335

### Metropolitan Remand Centre

The Department of Public Works, N.S.W., is at present calling tenders for Stage 1, bulk excavation contract, for a new Metropolitan Remand Centre at Glebe. It is to be constructed for the Department of Youth and Community Services and will accommodate 50 boys and girls. Attached to the centre will be two children's courts with full justice and public facilities.

Additional accommodation includes a clinic, multi purpose hall, children's dining, recreation and educational areas, general office facilities and basement parking for 50 cars. The building is set in a mixed medium/high density neighbourhood. The stepped profile essentially reduces scale as well as providing maximum sunlight to the surrounding dwellings. The roof terraces are generally landscaped and are turfed in certain instances. They will be utilised as external recreation areas.

The building is to be reinforced concrete framed structure with ribbed floor slabs spanning 8.1 m supported by main beams. Walls to the liftwells and stairs are load bearing concrete and all exposed concrete surfaces will have a bush hammered finish.

#### Architects

Design — Government Architect

Project Architect — Andy Milcz, Public Works

Department

Design Development & Documentation —

Behne, Ritche & Hart Pty. Ltd,

Consulting Engineers

Structural — Lehmann & Talty Pty. Ltd.

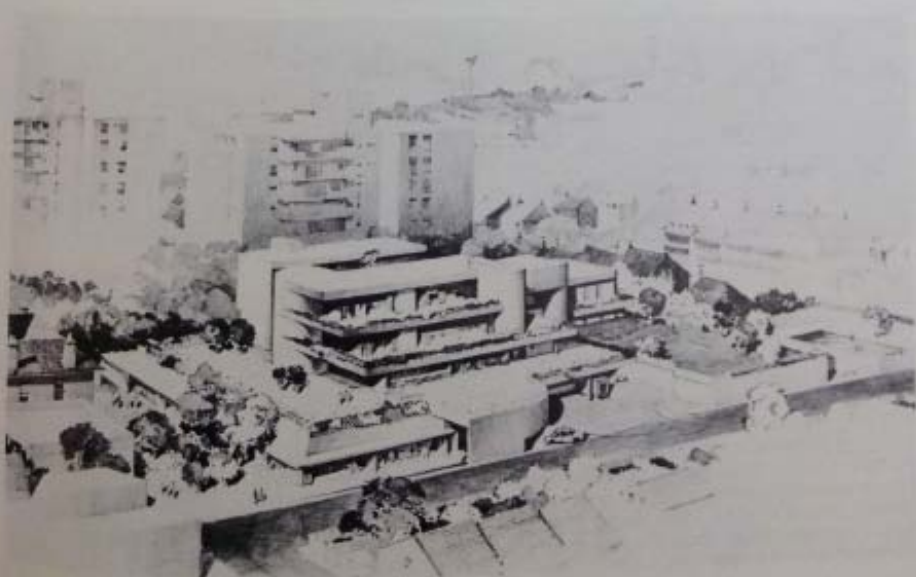
Mechanical — E. Sheldermine & Partners

Electrical — Public Works Department

Hydraulics — Tourle, Greenlees & Associates  
Pty. Ltd.

Acoustics — Wilkinson-Murray Consulting  
Pty. Ltd.

Quantity Surveyors — Keith Richmond &  
Partners



9 Constructional Review February 1979

Figure 3.7

Constructional Review, February  
1979, showing the artist's  
impression of the revised scheme  
(ie the DA submission)



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

turfed in some instances. They will be utilized as external recreation areas.

The building is to be reinforced concrete framed structure with ribbed floor slabs 8.1m supported by main beams. Walls to the liftwells and stairs are load bearing concrete and all exposed concrete surfaces will have a bush hammered finish.<sup>6</sup>

The floor areas of the proposal were calculated in 1978.<sup>7</sup>

Child Welfare Building Area Analysis								
By Percentage					By m3			
	Net Functional	Circulation	Associated Travel	Total	Net Functional	Circulation	Associated Travel	Total
Parking	42	52	6	100	795	997	103	1895
Storage	93*	1	7	100	272	-	20	292
Plant	88	-	12	100	487	-	65	552
Auditorium	85	-	15	100	642	-	113	755
Office	67	12	21**	100	832	148	257	1237
Clinic	77	17	6	100	141	32	12	185
Court	68	24**	8	100	513	187	57	757
Kitchen/Rec	81	9	10	100	656	76	84	816
Bedroom	82	1***	17	100	670	4	143	817
Totals	69		12	100	5008	1444	854	7306
UCA								907
TOTAL M3								8213
*Excludes specialist storage in kitchen **Includes entry foyers								
***Circulation and travel generally UCA = unenclosed floor area								

### 3.4 AS ERECTED (1979-1983)

A photograph of the restored Blacket residence and an interior of the completed Metropolitan Remand Centre at Glebe was included in the Annual Report of the PWD for 1982/83. A further series of photographs of the completed building are contained in the Government Printers Office collection and have been used to illustrate this section (Section 3.4) and for comparison in the following section (Section 3.5).

The \$6.5 million Metropolitan Remand Centre will accommodate 50 boys and girls. The facilities include a clinic and assessment unit, kitchen and dining room, educational recreational areas, general office and basement parking for 50 cars. Accommodation is also provided for two children's courts with legal aid, police prosecution and Department of Youth and Community Services court offices. A multi-purpose hall with stage and gymnasium adjoining an external courtyard pool is also accessible for community use. During the early stages the community co-operated with the Department in the design of a small park which was allocated for neighbourhood use.

The building is a reinforced concrete framed structure with a stepped profile

6 Constructional Review Feb 1979

7 Keith Richmond & Partners, 31 May 1978, State Records School Building files S5902/16





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

Figure 3.8

The new Glebe High School  
erected on the foreshore, with  
the recently completed Bidura  
beyond (circled).

ML GPO 4 still 20544



Figure 3.9

Photos of the largely completed building,  
taken from the park on the corner of  
Avon Street, showing the lower scale in  
comparison to the adjacent apartment  
towers.

ML GPO 4 still 17399



Figure 3.10

View from the adjacent apartment  
block showing the terraces as originally  
landscaped. Note the planter boxes and  
ground cover. Steps up create the depth  
of soil.

ML GPO 4 still 13758





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

reducing the scale and providing maximum sunlight to the surrounding dwellings. The roof terraces are generally landscaped and are turfed or paved for recreation purposes. Internally, bush-hammered concrete walls combine harmoniously with green carpeted floors and views to the city skyline. The historical Bidura homestead, designed by Blackett, has been sympathetically restored to house the [judicial] Escort Services and specialist accommodation. The detached old Ballroom Wing is to be used for regional meetings.<sup>8</sup>

The colours for institutional complexes were carefully selected. Further research may reveal the rationale behind the colours selected, however the surviving colours are more muted and restrained than contemporary surviving examples at the Teachers colleges.

An indication of the staging of the works and the project cost can be obtained from the Annual expenditure reported by the Public Works Department in their Annual Reports

Sketch Design 1977-78  
Bidura Glebe, Demolitions & Alterations  
Bidura Remand Centre

Working Drawings 1978-79  
Remand Centre, Glebe  
Stage 1 \$ 176,000

Working Drawings, Glebe Remand Centre 1979-80  
Stage 2 \$5,500,000  
Restoration of Bidura \$220,000

1980-81  
Metropolitan Remand Centre Glebe Stage 2 \$ 5,889,700  
Bidura \$ 267,000

1981-82  
Bidura Youth & Community Child Life Unit \$ 310,000  
Works commenced prior to 1 July 1981 and still in progress  
Stage 2 Metropolitan Remand Centre 1981/82 \$6,999,000

An indication of the scale of the completed building can be gained in distance photographs of the then recently completed Glebe High School erected on the foreshore at the bottom of Ferry Road (figure 3.8) and in the photos of the complex from the surrounds (figure 3.9 & 3.10). The completed building was well received, the journalist John Haskell's article titled 'Distinguished designing for a new remand centre' appeared in the SMH on the 25th of June 1984.

A certain labyrinthine complexity in the planning is inevitable in a building of this type, with its diversity of activities and mesh of interrelated functions - for instance, an internal stair directly connects the children's living areas upstairs with



FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND C



Figure 3.11

View taken when the court complex was completed in 1983 showing the entrance to the carpark. ML GPO4 still 13877

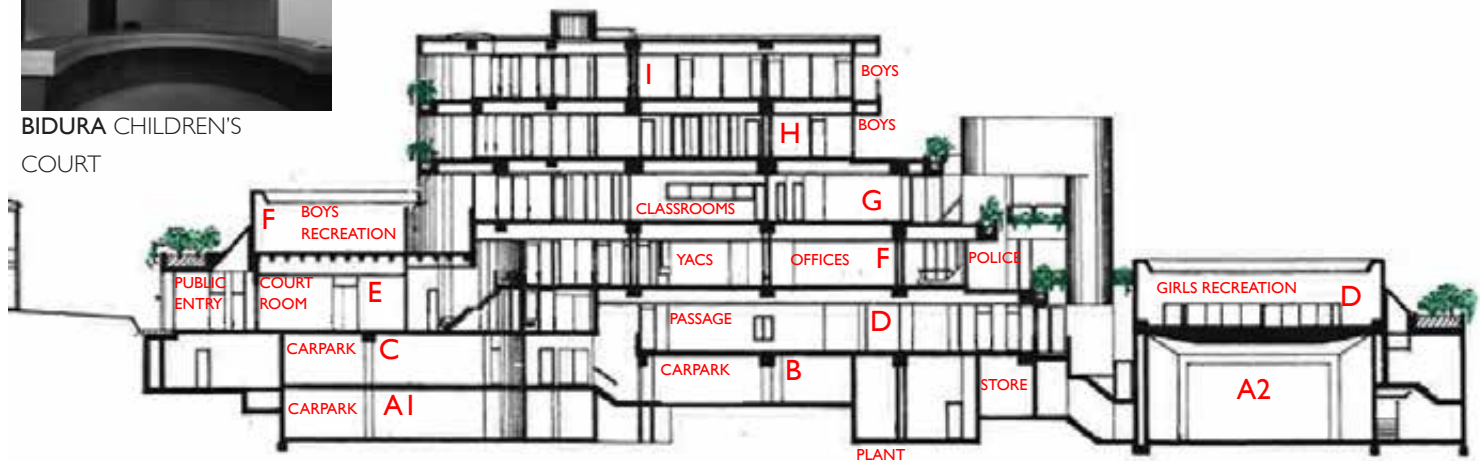


Figure 3.12

The driveway from Glebe Point Road showing the degree to which the court section of the complex was set back and below the annex. Photo: Noni Boyd, March 2016



BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT



the magistrates' chambers below. Security and safety must also be maintained, while ensuring a kind and caring environment within.

Figure 3.13  
Long Section through the Metropolitan  
Remand Centre (looking north)  
1979, GAB Tertiary Section, Project  
Architect, A Milcz PWD CW 20/313

Designing within such a formidable set of constraints, it is a wonder any architecture emerged at all, let alone architecture of the calibre and distinction that is here evident... Sensible planning and sensitive design have resulted in the harmonious integration of a fine example of current architecture into a long established neighbourhood.<sup>9</sup>

The caption notes that the "new complements the old in Sydney's new juvenile remand (above) behind the restored 19 century home Bidura" (figures 3.6, 3.11 & 3.12).

The building is considered to be an excellent exponent of concrete Brutalist architecture which some consider a style of architecture. However, Brutalism is part of mainstream Modernism as an honest expression of materials and a determined attitude towards geometry and bold detailing. The MRC adds a quality to these bold forms and details which is present in great architecture, ie a skilful use of light and shadow to model both interior and exterior forms.

### 3.5 AS INSPECTED (2017)

In preparing this report only one short inspection of the building was permitted on 12/9/2017. Not all of the areas were accessible and current floor plans were not available. This section has been compiled based on that inspection and photographs. Detailed architectural drawings were not available and only a partial set of microfilmed DA drawings has been supplied however changes to the layout appear to have been made during construction.

#### PLANNING

The planning of the building reflects the complicated functions that had to be accommodated on a constricted, sloping site within an area of predominantly small nineteenth century houses. The predominant structuring element was the division of the building into two major components. The first section comprised the juvenile justice court complex with associated offices, holding cells, police accommodation, judges rooms, court rooms and public spaces. The second section was the Youth & Community Services section that comprised YACS offices, accommodation for boys and girls, exercise yards for boys and girls, multi-purpose hall, swimming pool, dining and library facilities (long section, figure 3.13).

The building was structured over a series of half levels that accommodated the sloping site as well as the differing heights of the spaces within the building.

Level A1 was the lowest half-level of car parking which led up to Level B (car parking) and





FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE

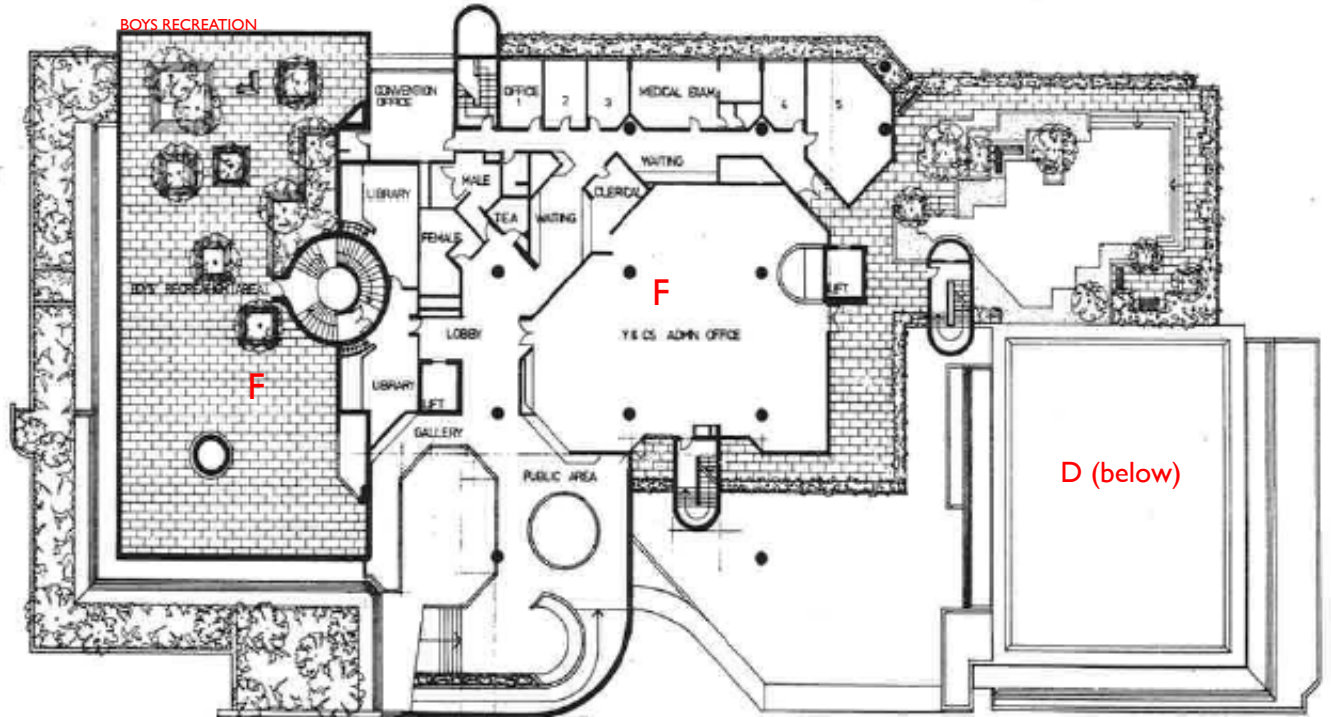


Figure 3.14 Plan of the YACS office level (Level F)

1979, GAB Tertiary Section, Project Architect, A Milcz PWD CW 20/304

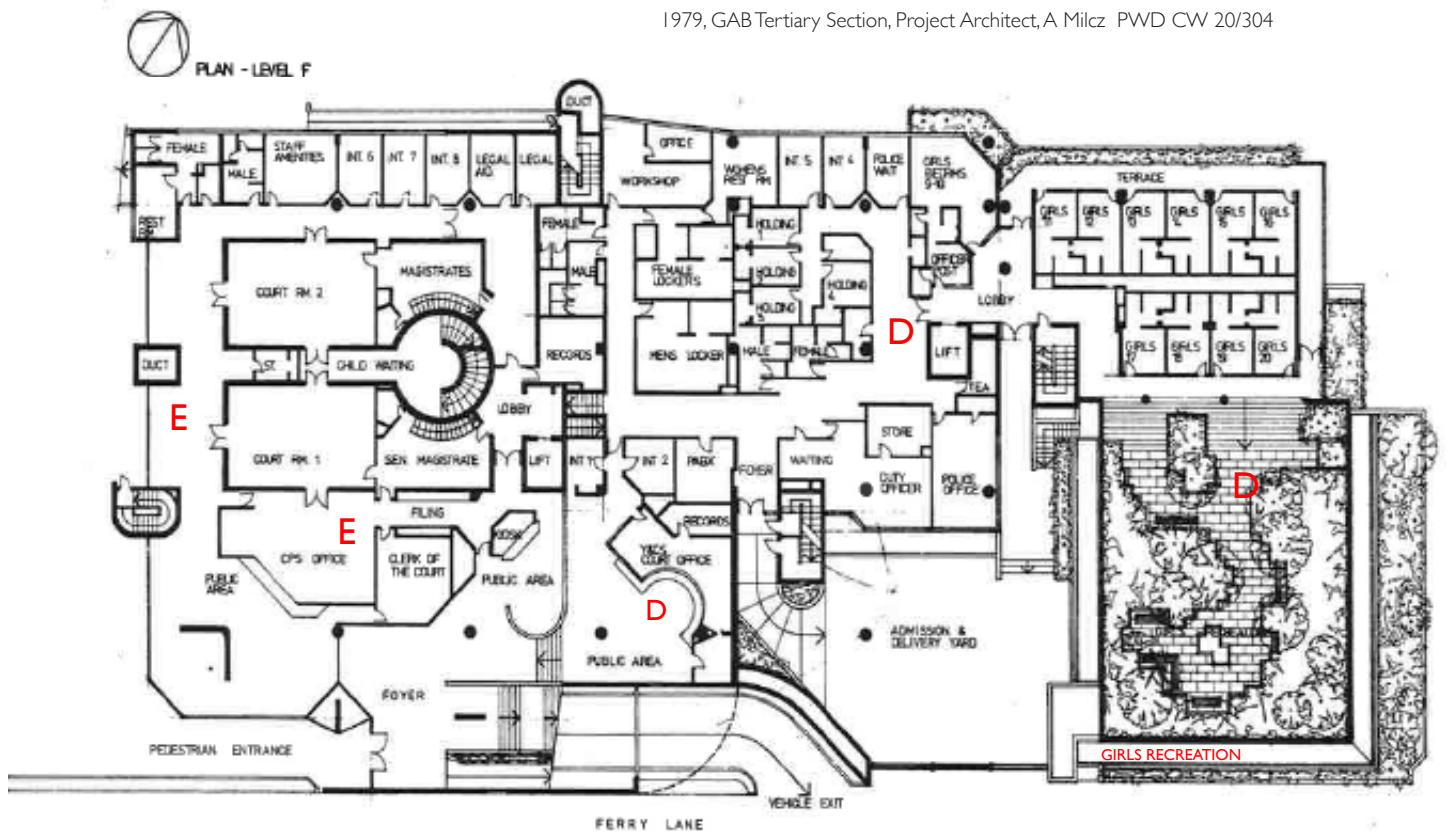


Figure 3.15 Plan of the court, public entry and admissions yard level (Levels D & E)

1979, GAB Tertiary Section, Project Architect, A Milcz PWD CW 20/303



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



Figure 3.16 Public entrance to the Auditorium.  
Photo: Noni Boyd March 2016

thence to Level C (car parking). From level C ramps led up to Glebe Point Road and out to Ferry Lane, thus permitting a one-way vehicle circulation pattern through the car park.

Level A2 is at the same level as A1 and is the floor level of the double height multi-purpose hall (the roof of which is used as the Girls' recreation yard) (figure 3.15). The hall opens out onto the rear garden which contains a small swimming pool. On a mezzanine above the hall boys' and girls' change rooms are located.

Level D was designed as a YACS complex of court offices, girls' accommodation, girls' recreation yard, holding cells and interview rooms. Level E, a half level above Level D, is the main court room level consisting of two court rooms, interview rooms, Clerk of Petty Sessions office and public waiting and circulation areas. Level E contains the main pedestrian entry from Glebe Point Road.

Level F was designed to contain the YACS office, medical examination rooms, legal library and boys' recreation yard (figure 3.14).

The plan of Level G has not been sighted but the available sections indicate that Level G contained the Library, Dining Room and interview rooms. Levels H and I contains boys' bedrooms and dormitories as well as mechanical plant and a dining room.

The public entry to the complex was from Glebe Point Road via a path that led between Bidura house and the house's former ballroom, down steps to a courtyard and then down further steps to the entry of the modern building. Prison vans accessed the building via Ferry Lane into a secure courtyard from where prisoners were admitted to the building and holding cells. There is a secondary entry to the building that leads directly from Ferry Lane into the multi-purpose hall, thus allowing community use of the hall (which has a sign in Ferry Lane stating "Bidura Auditorium").

#### **EXTERIOR**

The building is a cast in-situ reinforced concrete building with an exposed aggregate finish. The finish has been described as "off white" but the cleaned patches of the façade reveal a light sandstone coloured finish (figure 3.26 external, 3.42 internal).

The location and height of the building ensure that it remains almost invisible from Glebe Point Road and it is only by standing directly in the driveway that leads from Glebe Point





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COURT & REMAN



Figure 3.17 View of the Court section of the MRC and the apartment building beyond. Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017



Figure 3.18 View from the first floor of the residence showing the staggered terraces and the lower scale of the MRC in relation to the apartment buildings beyond. Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017



FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE



Figure 3.19 Garden beds separating Blacket's house and the MRC at time of completion. ML GPO 4 still 13773



Figure 3.20 Current garden beds separating Blacket's house and the MRC. Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



Figure 3.21  
View of the public forecourt separating the  
two buildings, with the ballroom beyond..  
Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017



Figure 3.22  
View from the first floor of the residence  
showing the staggered terraces and the  
view of the skyline beyond. Photo: Noni  
Boyd, 2017



FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CE



Figure 3.23 View of the public entrance when the complex was completed. ML GPO4 still 17420



Figure 3.24 View from Ferry Lane looking over the planter box to the perimeter wall. Photo: Noni Boyd, March 2016





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



Figure 3.25 View from Ferry Lane, including the one section of concrete that is clean. Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017



Figure 3.26 Details of the wall/planter box showing the exposed aggregate to the concrete.  
Photo: Noni Boyd, March 2016



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



Figure 3.27 View of the main foyer when completed showing the skylights, planting and the mural.

Photo: ML GPO 4 still 13848

Road to the car park that a glimpse of the building is possible. The Ferry Lane elevation of the building is also a masterpiece of composition that breaks down the scale of the building where it interfaces with the small houses that lie between Ferry Lane and Ferry Road. The horizontality of the south and east elevations is emphasized with long spandrels and large cantilevered eaves/terraces as well as strip windows where there are no terraces. The lower portion of the north elevation and part of the west elevation are predominantly windowless because of the proximity to the side boundary and the functions contained behind those facades. Sloping glass skylights admit light into rooms where windows in walls are inappropriate and the cylinders of stairwells enliven the facades.

The series of photographs at figures 3.11 to 3.50 shows the current situation. Explanatory captions have been added. In some cases a similar view from the time when the building was completed has been added.

#### INTERIOR

It is in the interior that the masterful play of light against the walls and cylindrical surfaces demonstrates the high level of design skill. The main foyer with its skylight and curved walls is a space to the equal of the best of the Government Architects Office's buildings (such as the indoor street of the former Ku-ring-gai College of Advanced Education at Lindfield) (refer to Section 4). The indirect lighting of the multi-purpose hall shows an understanding of providing non-glare sources of light for sports halls and suffuses the space with a sublime quality of light from the two long sides of the hall. The Multi-Purpose Hall was designed to accommodate 200 people. Elements of the details such as the timber slats were used by the GAB in other multi-purpose halls by the GAB Tertiary Section.

The exposed aggregate of the main structural concrete walls of the interior in the public and common areas are contrasted with timber screens and joinery of a very high standard. The screens of the multi-purpose hall are particularly noteworthy. A large number of the interior walls appear to be lightweight walls sheeted in plasterboard.

Original furniture with its coloured upholstery or finish also survives. The mural in the main foyer also survives. Examples of current interiors are shown in the photographs on the following pages.





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

Figure 3.28 (right)  
Corridor to court rooms. This area was accessible to the public. Photo: Noni Boyd 2017



Figure 3.29 (below left)  
Main entry from the interior. The external steps passed between the house and the ballroom, creating a separate public entrance from Glebe Point Road. Photo: Noni Boyd 2017

Figure 3.30 (below right)  
One of the court rooms  
Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

Figure 3.31 (right)  
Entry level. Photo: Noni Boyd

Figure 3.32 (below left)  
Down to lower foyer. The white wall to  
the LHS is a later addition.  
Photo: Noni Boyd

Figure 3.33 (below right)  
Skylight/light well bringing light into the  
public areas  
Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017

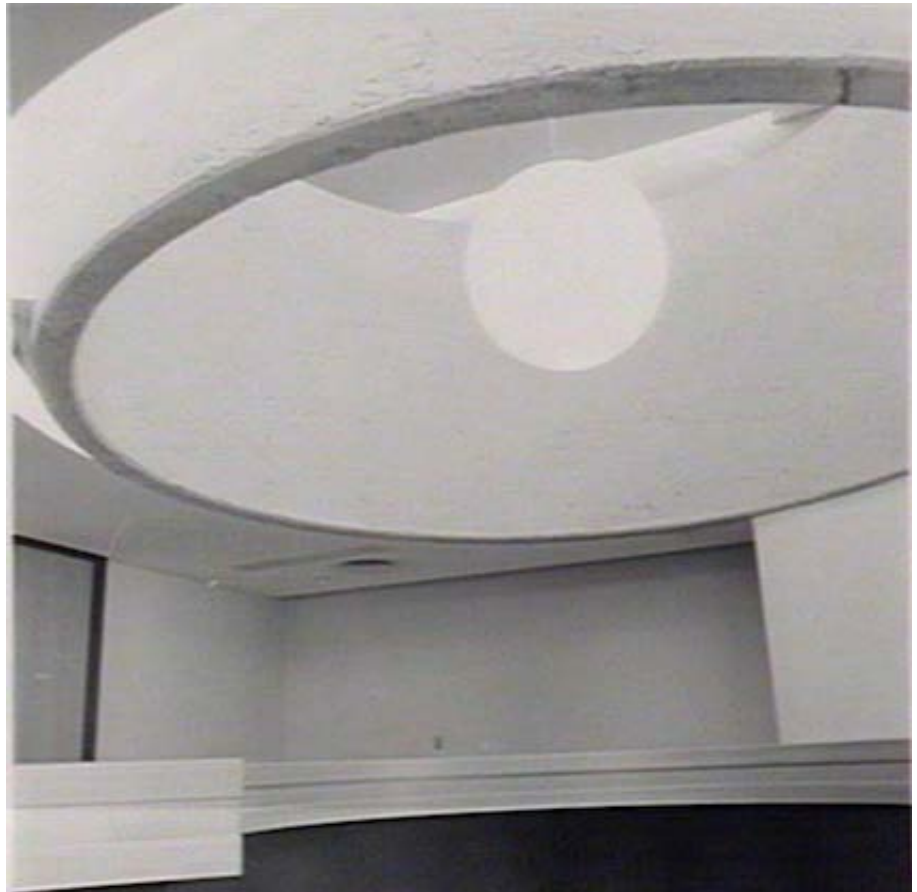




**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

Figure 3.34 (right)  
Skylight over the main foyer as first erected.  
ML GPO4 still 13861

Figure 3.35 (below)  
Current view of the skylight over the main  
foyer with the original light fitting and  
curved counter:  
Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

Figure 3.36 (right)  
Current view of the skylight over the stair  
to the Children's courts  
Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017

Figure 3.37 (below)  
Skylight over the stair to the Children's  
courts  
ML GPO4 still 17411







FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE



Figure 3.38 Multi-purpose hall  
Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017



Figure 3.39 Multi-purpose  
hall.  
Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017



FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE



Figure 3.40 Multi-purpose hall as it appears today Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017

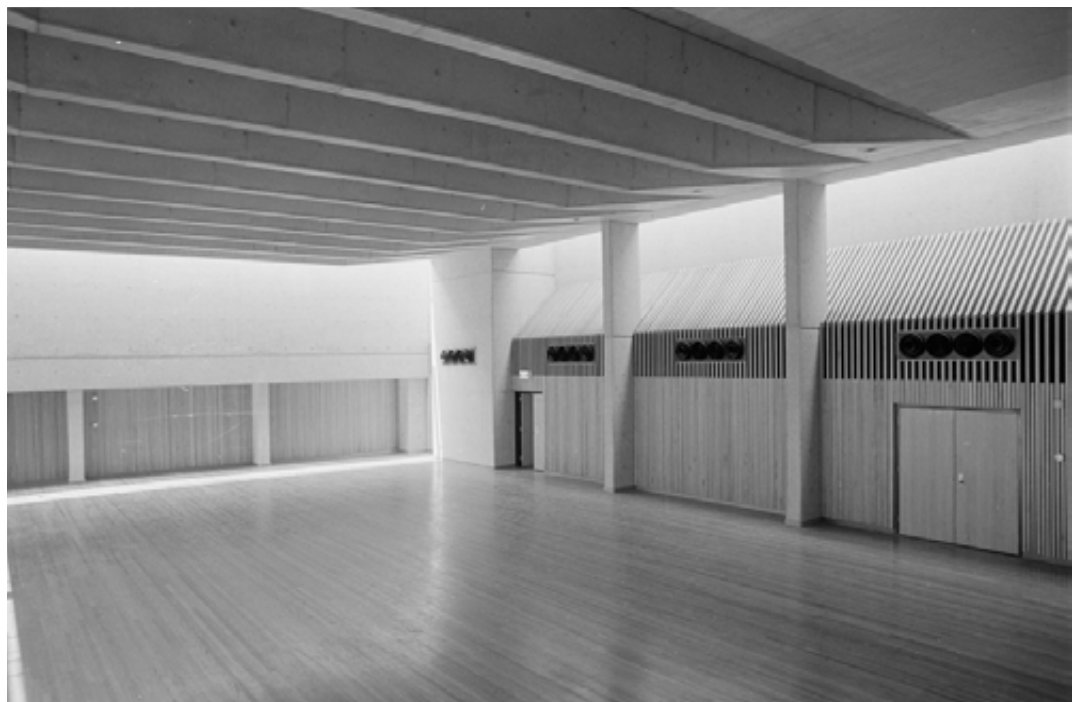


Figure 3.41 The multi-purpose hall as completed (1983) Photo: ML GPO4 still 13805





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

Figure 3.42  
Multi-purpose hall mezzanine leading to the  
change rooms  
Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017



Figure 3.43  
Multi-purpose hall mezzanine leading to the  
change rooms soon after completion.





FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE



Figure 3.44  
Multi-purpose hall public  
entry from Ferry Lane.

Figure 3.45  
Swimming pool viewed  
from the multi-purpose hall.  
The walls were to provide  
privacy as well as security.  
Photos: Noni Boyd, 2017





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

Figure 3.46  
Current view of eastern  
terrace.  
Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017



Figure 3.47  
View of eastern terrace soon  
after completion



Figure 3.48  
Girls Recreation Area today showing  
the remnants of the planter boxes  
Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



Figure 3.49 Terrace and skylight.

Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017

#### **CONDITION VS POOR MAINTENANCE**

The main issue with the condition of the building is that the planter boxes and roof terraces have not been maintained. Attempts to prevent water ponding in the empty planter boxes has worsened the problem. The view that the water entry is a serious building defect or a result of bad design is prevalent amongst those who want to see the building replaced. Rather it is symptomatic of a lack of maintenance and can be rectified.

Likewise the stained concrete can be cleaned, and there are already areas where this has occurred (see figure 3.26).

#### **EGRESS & SERVICES**

The fire egress from the building was carefully considered, with advice obtained from the Board of Fire Commissioners. Sections of the building are air conditioned. The complex was also intended to have a back up power supply in the form of batteries in case of a power black out.

Additional egress was required to be provided from the carpark. The fires stair occurs beneath the terrace that separates the restored house from the remand centre.





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



Figure 3.50 View of the car parking level C  
Photo: Noni Boyd, 2017



FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE

## 4.0 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The Government Architect's Branch, which succeeded the Colonial Architect's Office in 1890 was responsible for the design of public buildings across the state, including police stations, gaols, remand centres and psychiatric hospitals. Many institutional complexes had begun life as complexes erected for the management of convicts, such as the series of institutions at North Parramatta (Orphan School, Female Factory and later Lunatic Asylum and Gaol) and Darlinghurst Gaol. During the twentieth century the Government Architect's Branch was responsible for the design of new facilities and extensions to existing complexes.

An interest in listing and restoring historic buildings within the Public Works Department had been fostered by the Government Architect Ted Farmer. This interest included the work of Edmund Blacket who had served as Colonial Architect between 1849 and 1854. The 1991 *Guide to the History of the Public Works Department* noted that

Most notably since the 1960s, restoration and heritage planning achieved prominence as a function of the Government Architect's Branch. The formation of the Historic Buildings Group in the Branch has provided a more systematic approach to this work, involving historical, architectural and engineering research into major buildings such as the older court houses, the NSW Parliament House, psychiatric hospitals, schools and many others. This work involves conservation and sometimes conversion to new usage, such as the Hyde Park Barracks and Mint Museums, and the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney<sup>1</sup>

During the 1970s the PWD had been engaged on the 'restoration and recycling of buildings with historic merit and useful old buildings'.<sup>2</sup>

The initial focus had been on Georgian era buildings including the NSW Supreme Court and the two remaining Rum Hospital pavilions in Macquarie Street (the Mint and Parliament House), however, this expanded to include Victorian era buildings particularly courthouses. Early restoration projects included Macquarie Fields House and Windsor Court House. The establishment of the Historic Buildings Group resulted in internal pressure to retain and restore historic buildings, particularly courthouses, rather than demolish the buildings, as occurred at Parramatta Courthouse. The Bidura complex is an example of the intervention of the Historic Buildings group, resulting in the restoration of Blacket's house and the careful siting and scaling of the building beyond. This pressure to retain buildings predates planning controls identifying heritage items and the PWD compiled its own heritage register which included Bidura in the 1980s.

The GAB maintained Child Welfare facilities as well as designing new facilities such as shelters, farm cottages and dormitories. This was a role of the Government Architect's Branch held since at least 1910, when the Children's Court and Boys Shelter at Albion Street was designed. Only the child welfare facilities that included reception / remand have been discussed in this section. Other facilities with similar forms and construction methods have also been included.

1 Administrative history section of *A Guide to the History of the Public Works Department*, PWD 1991 p71

2 1976-77 PWD AR





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



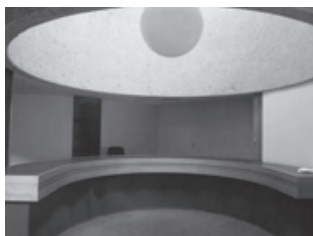
**"Minda"—showing the main entrance**

Figure 4.1  
Minda Remand Centre,  
showing the main entrance  
(now demolished).  
YACS AR

Figure 4.2  
Courtyard of the Minali Receiving Home,  
at Lidcombe (now demolished).  
YACS AR



**"Minali" Receiving Home, Lidcombe**



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



Figure 4.3  
Lidcombe recreation Hall & Chapel.  
ML GPO Collection

#### **LIDCOMBE STATE HOSPITAL GROUNDS**

From the 1960s onwards additions were made to the substantial existing state hospital complex at Lidcombe. The initial design of the complex dates from the late nineteenth century and was by the NSW Government Architect.

#### Lidcombe Recreation Hall & Chapel (1962)

Multi-purpose halls had long been a feature of institutional complexes. Chapels used by more than one denomination were transformed into recreation halls and chapels in the twentieth century. The sculptural chapel and hall at Lidcombe, designed by the renowned Sydney architect, the late Ken Woolley, whilst he was working with the GAB in the early 1960s survives today (figure 4.3). The building is now utilised by a church group.

#### Minda Remand Centre (1966)

Part of the former hospital grounds, which was separated from the main portion of the hospital, was selected as the site for a juvenile remand centre. The two complexes Minda and Minali were built adjacent to the earlier Superintendent's residence. The residence is all that survives. A more substantial Juvenile Justice centre has been erected. Minda was single storey and can be characterised as being of the 'Sydney school' design aesthetic, utilising brickwork and narrow floor to ceiling windows (figure 4.1). In his thesis on the work of the Government Architect's Branch, Russell Jack attributes the design of the Minda Child Welfare Remand Centre to E A Ralph in 1964. Ralph was involved in the early stages of planning for the MRC in Glebe.<sup>3</sup> In the Public Works Annual reports the complex was initially referred to as the Lidcombe Remand Home and Court House. Photographs of the complex survive in the GPO collection.

#### Minali Receiving Home (1975)

A separate receiving and assessment complex was built nearby in the mid-1970s (figure 4.2). This complex, including the landscaping, was also designed by the GAB. YACS AR noted

The construction of a new purpose designed facility Minali at Lidcombe in 1974-75 at Lidcombe was intended to improve the situation. This facility incorporated some of the reforms that the Bidura protests had been about. The inadequacies of Bidura and Royleston in coping with the fragmentation of family groups of children during remand periods prompted the planning, construction and opening of Minali at Lidcombe in March, 1975. The Minali complex is comprised of four cottage-type residences, which can accommodate a total of 60 children, each cottage having a Married Couple in residence to care for the children. Professional staffing includes a full-time Psychologist. A teamwork approach involving a comprehensive assessment is carried out to determine future casework plans and it has been found that the older children also have been very supportive of their younger brothers and sisters, at times being "substitute parents"... The opening of Minali has enabled population pressures at Bidura and Royleston to be reduced to a maximum level of 22 children and 27 children respectively. AR 1974-75 Minali had been gazetted in December 1974 as (a) a Depot for the temporary accommodation and maintenance of children and young persons; and, (b) a Hostel for the reception, retention, maintenance, care, education and training of Intellectually Handicapped Persons.

3 Possibly Eric Anthony Ralph who registered as an architect in 1961. In the mid 1960s he spent some time in London before returning to NSW.



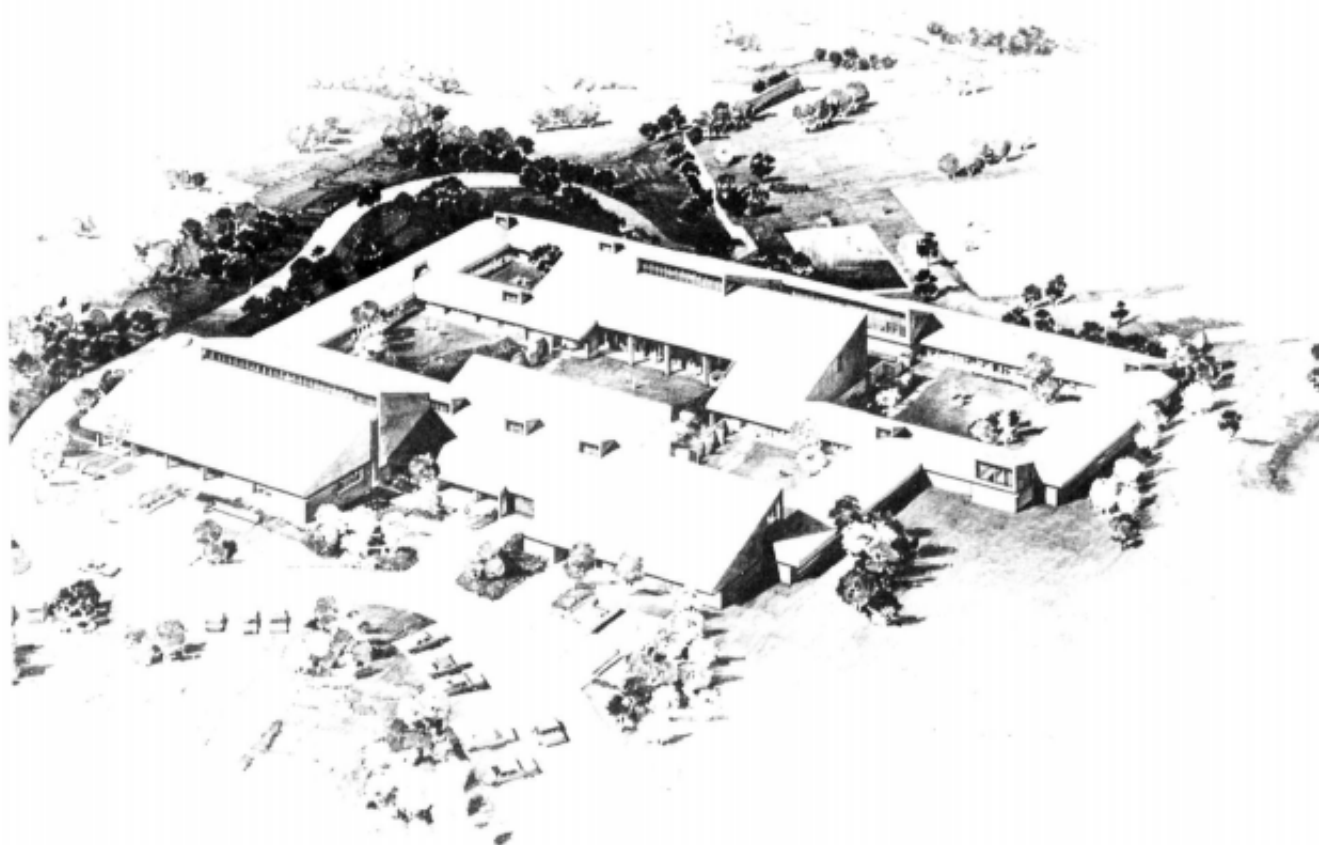
FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE

Figure 4.4

Cobham Remand Centre soon after  
completion.

Figure 4.5

Cobham Remand Centre artist's  
impression



COBHAM REMAND CENTRE  
J.W. THOMPSON  
GOVERNMENT ARCHITECT

An artist's impression of the proposed regional remand and assessment centre at St. Mary's for the care of juvenile offenders who have been remanded in custody or are awaiting an appearance before a Children's Court. The complex is called Cobham and will provide modern, secure accommodation for 56 young persons.



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

The Premier opened the 'Minali Receiving and Assessment Centre' (or receiving home) in March 1975. The complex contained both residential 'cottages' and classrooms. A view of the courtyards appeared in the PWD Annual Report dated 1974/75. The landscaping works were not completed until the following year.

The State Records summary of the records of the complex notes that Minda Juvenile Justice Centre closed prior to 16 May 2003 as the land was compulsorily acquired by the Minister for Public Works and Services. The site of both Minda and Minali was then reused for the Juniperina Juvenile Justice Centre.

The similarities between these centres and Bidura are the inclusion of outdoor recreation areas that could be supervised. Overall the cottage layout is a form utilised at sites where more land was available and it not used in facilities in Inner Sydney due to the lack of space.

#### **WORIMI, BROADMEADOW**

The 1997/98 Annual Report of the Public Works Department noted that

An accommodation block known as "Worimi" is being constructed at Broadmeadow to house children under remand conditions. The \$1 million project includes a courtroom, clinic, classrooms, library, manual training areas and recreation areas.

More recently a new children's court has been constructed. It has not been determined if the earlier complex is now the adjacent healthcare facility. Photographs of the complex in the GPO collection have captioned Worimi as being at Wollongong, making it difficult to locate material. The photographs show the complex was single-storey in scale with courtyards.

The Worimi Shelter at Broadmeadow, near Newcastle opened in 1966 and catered to 23 boys and girls. The Worimi Children's Court closed in 2006. The Cobham Centre at Werrington Park (figures 4.4 & 4.5) was intended as a remand and assessment centre to eventually replace Worimi.

#### **COBHAM REMAND CENTRE & COURT, WERRINGTON**

The 1997/98 Annual Report of the Public Works Department noted that

A contract worth \$2.6 million was let for the construction of a new children's court and remand centre at Werrington Park, in Sydney's outer western suburbs. The centre will meet the future needs of the outer western region, including Penrith, the Blue Mountains and the Lithgow area. Individual accommodation is being provided for 56 boys and girls during short term remand periods. The centre is to be known as "Cobham". "Cobham Hall" was the ancestral home of Governor William Bligh who, in 1806, made a grant of the site of the remand centre at Werrington Park to his daughter.

Cobham and Worimi were both mentioned in briefings to the GAB as including approved layouts. The Cobham Remand Centre opened in 1980 and the facility remains in operation and the facilities have been expanded considerably





Figure 4.6

Hall at Keelong soon after completion. ML GPO 3 still 44407

FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND



Figure 4.7 Hall at Keelong after refurbishment. Features such as the trusses and air conditioning ducts have been retained.

Bermagui Constructions website





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

Figure 4.8

Keelong soon after completion.

ML GPO 3 still 4412



Cobham Juvenile Justice Centre is the principal remand centre in NSW for males aged 15 years and over. The centre accommodates up to 105 young people and is located at Werrington in Western Sydney. Opened in June 1980, it houses young people predominately from the Sydney metropolitan area and offers a range of services, programs and interventions to address individual needs and reduce offending.

Cobham contains similar facilities as at Bidura including courts for basketball and other sport and supervised recreation areas. Architecturally the forms employed at the complex are not similar, as they are spread out across the site rather than being stacked. The artist's impression shown in figure 4.5 should be compared with the artist's impressions of the MRC in Glebe (figure 3.1).

#### **KEELONG REMAND CENTRE, UNANDERRA (1978)**

The description of this complex that appeared in the internal GAB newsletter noted that

##### **Design Philosophy**

To design the building to fit in with the landscape and to look more like a rock extrusion than a remand centre.

Site: A slip site, set in the foothills of Mt Kembla at Unanderra

Extremely steep site varying from 1:2 to 1:4. The building hugs a spur which is the area of maximum resistance to slip.

##### **Design of the Building**

The building costing \$ 1.6 Million of brick and tile construction has been terraced into the landscape to provide optimum views over the valley whilst still maintaining security. The pitches of the roofs [sic] reflect exactly the mean average grade of the site and although the building is large the scale is small and articulated. Accommodation in single bedrooms caters for 23 children

There are three internal and 2 external courtyards All allowing views over the surrounding hills and valleys.

##### **Landscaping**

The whole of the monies allocated were used within the building of the remand centre together with a separate residence for the superintendent. It is to be hoped



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

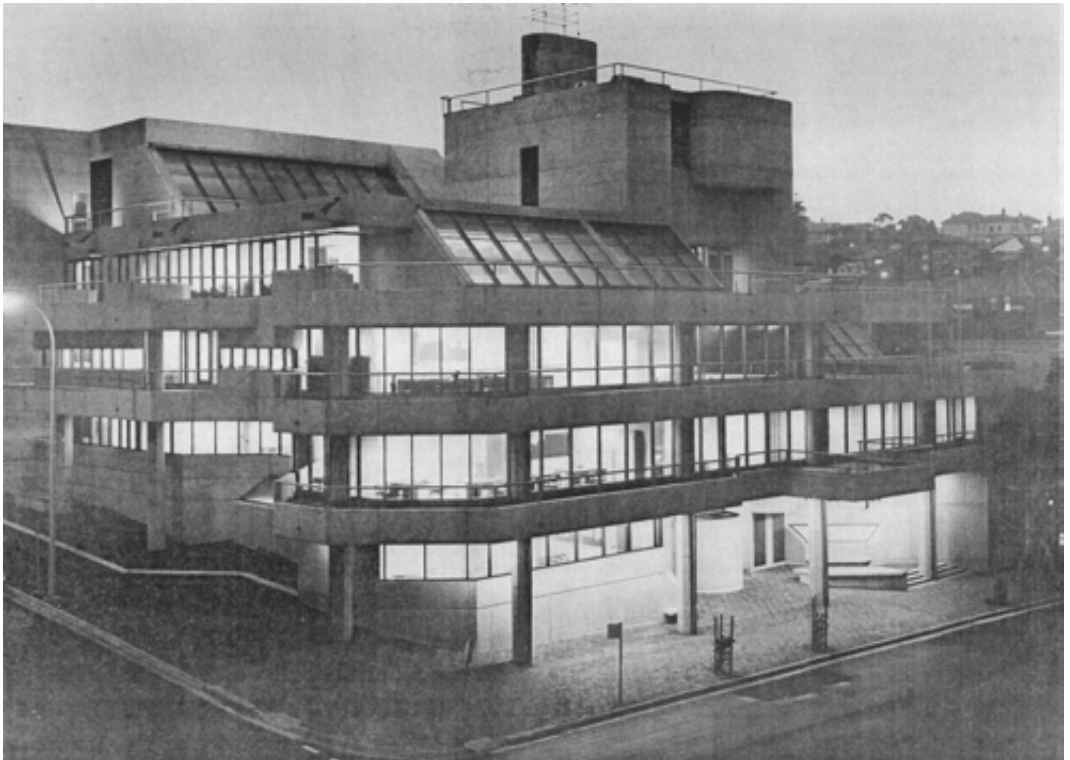


Figure 4.9  
Newcastle Police Centre soon  
after completion.  
GAB Newsletter



Figure 4.10  
Public foyer of the Newcastle  
Police Centre photographed  
soon after construction.  
GAB Newsletter



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

that in the future landscape work can be carried out on the remainder of the site at a later stage.<sup>4</sup>

The form of the building and the provision of views over the landscape has some similarities to the facilities at the University of East Anglia designed by the British architect Denys Lasdun. The creation of views across the landscape had not been a feature of the training farms or the Minda/Minali complex. Keelong opened in August 1978 and was commissioned and operated by the Department of Youth & Community Services (figures 4.6 & 4.8). Its regime is less harsh than Mt Penang (formerly the Gosford Boys Home) and former clients recalled that the recreation room and the grounds were able to be used during visits. Keelong was intended for first offenders. In 1990 the complex became the Keelong Juvenile Justice Centre and was operated by the Department of Juvenile Justice until 2009. The facility was closed as a cost cutting exercise and the clients transferred to Mt Penang (Frank Baxter Centre). Recently Keelong has been transformed into a youth centre by Father Chris Riley as part of his Youth of the Streets program to "provide young people with the support, skills and opportunities they need to turn their lives around."<sup>5</sup> The buildings were refurbished and the centre is now known as the Cordeaux Heights (figure 4.7). Works included a new access ramps and water storage.

#### **NEWCASTLE POLICE STATION**

A detailed description of the Newcastle Police Station appeared in the internal newsletter of the GAO.

The new District Headquarters, officially opened in February 1983 is the largest police station outside the metropolitan area. Accommodating staff of nearly 400, the new building has made possible the consolidation of various district police administration previously scattered throughout Newcastle. Concept design took place during 1975-76 and it was decided to split construction into two stages, the first involving demolition and site excavation; the second construction. The first contract was let in 1977, the second in late 1978; building occupation took place in June 1992.

With a site area of approximately 2,400m<sup>2</sup>, and a client accommodation requirement in the order of 11,000m<sup>2</sup>, a comparatively intense site development was necessitated. While this resulted in a design involving full site coverage for basements, ground and first floors, the upper three floors have been progressively set back in terraces, thus reducing the apparent building height and enhancing the relation with the surrounding lower-scaled historic buildings.

Externally, the resulting building is three to four storeys high with a lively roofscape, a canopied street entry with adjacent colonnade, and solid vertical elements of fire stairs and lift shafts. Permanently occupied areas generally have full floor to ceiling glazing except for eastern and western facades where glazing areas are reduced.

4 GAB Tertiary Newsletter 1978

5 <https://youthofthestreets.com.au/programs/cordeaux-heights-centre-for-youth/>  
accessed October 2017





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



Figure 4.11  
Grafton Courthouse with the  
1975 police station to the rear  
ML GPO Collection.



Figure 4.12  
National Herbarium at the  
Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney,  
showing the modern building  
set back from the nineteenth  
century building. This building  
was under construction at the  
same time as the Newcastle  
Police Centre and Bidura.  
ML GPO Collection



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

The external appearance of the building resulted not only from the expression of the various functions within but was also influenced by the various surrounding buildings and features. There are visual links between the jagged coastline, highly articulated east elevation, the elegant row of Victorian terraces to the north is echoes in the smooth and linear treatment of the Church Street façade while the solidarity of the adjacent Court House building influenced the western elevation.

The interior of the building comprises 7 floors – 2 basements, a split level ground floor; the lower part incorporating public entry and enquiry areas, the mezzanine and three upper levels contain general office areas and specialist police section in addition to a pistol gallery, staff amenity areas and a gymnasium linked to a large external roof terrace. The upper plant room (incorporating a roof-top heli-port) and a communications tower, complete the skyline. Particular attention has been paid to spatial organisation, the upper floors divided into zones by voids, the principle void being a central atrium extending down through the three upper levels. These voids are all top lit by large skylights, and enhance the working environment by providing natural light and enlivening the spaces. They also give identity to the various office zones and facilitate awareness of what is happening in other parts of the building.

The structure of the building, and most masonry elements, both externally and internally, are of bush-hammered, in situ off-white reinforced concrete of high quality. This material, which was chosen for its minimal maintenance qualities in the context of marine proximity comprises a major visual element in the building. Thus the success of concrete placement and treatment was of utmost importance.

The insitu reinforced concrete structure consisted of 600mm by 600mm octagonal columns on an 8.1m by 8.1m grid. Floors are 225mm flat slabs with 2.7m by 2.7m by 400mm drop panels where concrete walls occur; particularly at ground level. Self-supporting concrete blade walls were used structurally as the larger cantilevers and for spanning the internal voids. Bush-hammering was performed with a nine headed bush-hammer generally operated by one man.

Internally the building is generally grey carpeted, partitions white with highlight colours (burgundy, blue and greens) restricted to doors and prominent internal rendered walls. Ceilings are a combination of fibrous acoustic tiles and white painted pressed metal slats to define the circulation areas. Externally, balustrades and external downpipes are stainless steel, glazing is generally tinted, framing anodised aluminium.

Many aspects of this design are similar including the use of off-form concrete, the expression of the staircases as curves on the exterior; the grid of columns at an 8.1m spacing and the use of light wells to bring light into the circulation area. This building, which contains a remand section, was also designed to respond to the historic buildings in the vicinity, including the 1890 court house and the 1950s addition.





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



Figure 4.13  
Ku-ring-gai College of Advanced Education.  
Photo: Noni Boyd, 2016

Figure 4.14  
Ku-ring-gai College of Advanced Education  
soon after completion showing the  
sculptural forms of the composition.  
Web (view by Max Dupain?)





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

The LSJ Heritage Assessment of Bidura (2016) notes that

in terms of siting however, only the Newcastle Police Centre is comparable to the MRC, for its location on a corner, inner city site constraining the size and form of the building and limiting long range views of the place located within the setting.

The surviving documentation from the GAB newsletters indicates that it was the scale and character of the setting that was being responded to by the architects. Other buildings by the GAB such as the extensions to the Herbarium in the Royal Botanic Gardens and the new police station added to the Grafton Court House complex in 1975 also carefully respond to the scale and character of their setting, but are uncompromisingly modern buildings that utilised concrete (figures 4.11 & 4.12). In the case of the police station, erected within the existing public buildings group, at Grafton the double brackets of the historic courthouse were reinterpreted

At Grafton interesting and successful attempts were made to integrate and relate a new office building with the existing small police station and court house. The existing buildings were renovated and the original police station used for the Crown Prosecutor's Office. The office building was designed by Ian Bailey and documented in 1967. Subsequently in 1973 C. Still designed a new police station to form a related civic group. The new buildings, whilst expressing the usual monumentality associated with the majority of the Branch's government offices, were also related to the domestic scale and detail of the existing buildings by the introduction of quite fine and sensitively detailed vertical sun-control louvres.<sup>6</sup>

#### **KU-RING-GAI COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION (CAE)**

The Government Architect, Peter Mould, described the award-winning design of the William Balmain Teachers College / CAE at Ku-ring-gai as a

strong, confident response to its brief is expressed by organising its program along an internal street, which provides opportunity for informal meeting in spaces that vary in size and character while allowing exploration and surprise.

But its greatest strength is its response to the site. The original design concept was for a close interaction between architecture and landscape, with a desire to preserve as much of the natural vegetation as possible. Settled on a rocky outcrop above the Lane Cove National Park, the college is staggered over five levels and its geometric forms visually tie it to its setting. They step up the site reinforcing the topography with the strength and harmony of an evolved hilltop village. Landscape design by Bruce Mackenzie reinforces the relationship of the college to its setting, reflecting the Sydney School preoccupation of responding to the bush. The use of native species, capable of flourishing in the harsh environment, was a pragmatic decision as well as an ideological one, and the dense planting of the roof terraces helped to moderate the bulk of the building. These terraces also encouraged a relationship from inside to outside.

The former College of Advanced Education at Lindfield is currently being converted into an educational campus from Kindergarten to Year 12. As there were not the same security requirements as for a remand centre there are external terraces and staircases that extend the complex into the bushland setting (figures 4.13 & 4.14).

Each of these complexes designed by the Tertiary and Public Buildings sections of the GAO are individual responses to the detailed requirements of the client department and the site. None can be described as being typical examples, rather they represent the high standard of output by the GAB which was the largest architectural office in Australia at the time.



FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE

## 5.0 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The previous heritage listings and register entries for Bidura concentrate on the Blacket residence. More recently the former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building has been included on the Australian Institute of Architect's Register and has been the subject of a heritage analysis by Lucas Stapleton & Johnson.

### 5.1 PREVIOUS ASSESSMENTS

#### Non Statutory

##### Australian Institute of Architects NSW Chapter

The former Bidura Children's Court (vacated in mid-2017) is the only cast in-situ concrete Brutalist court house in NSW. As a unique Brutalist period building, undertaken by the NSW Government Architect's Office during the height of its creative output, it reveals how the tenet of Brutalism, that recognised important social and public uses built with an attention to detail, was applied in the design of a contextual response to its historic urban setting. This is a rare and relatively intact late modern architectural building that meets the criteria of state heritage listing.

##### National Trust of Australia

Bidura Children's Court, 357 Glebe Point Road is of historic significance as a major civic building in the late Twentieth century Brutalist style that has played an important role in the provision of child welfare and juvenile justice in NSW.

The entire Bidura site has been associated with the provision of child welfare and juvenile justice in this state for over 97 years, and the construction of the Children's Court in 1983 re-inforced this role. The Bidura Children's Court is one of a very small number of still-functioning purpose-built children's court buildings in the state: an aspect of the history of the place that is considered rare.

It is also historically significant as an accomplished example of the late 20th Century work of the NSW Government Architect's Branch. A boldly composed, reinforced concrete building displaying many of the typical characteristics of the Brutalist style it was constructed at a time when the GAB was at its zenith in terms of staffing, output and breadth of influence, undertaking major projects across the state. With regard to its size, bulk, urban setting and architecture, the Bidura Children's Court is considered to be unique among contemporary remand centres designed by the GAB.

While the stepped form of the building and the integration of the landscape are hallmarks of Brutalist architecture in NSW, at the same time the building's design was a sensitive and sympathetic response to the fine-grain Victorian residential streetscapes of the surrounding conservation area, and the existing heritage item (Edmund Blacket's 'Bidura') at the front of the site. The architect successfully integrated a large-scale building into its urban setting by using the expressed structure to break down its scale, and a unique factor of its design is that it is relatively unobtrusive within its locality. The auditorium/recreation hall on the lower level is of particular aesthetic significance as a well-executed and highly intact example of late Brutalist interior architecture.



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The site is also of social significance for Aboriginal and European communities whose children have passed through the shelter, remand centre and court as well as for the staff who worked there.

The Bidura Children's Court may provide an opportunity to research the socially progressive views underpinning the design of the building, and assist in a better understanding of the rationale of this style of architecture.

#### Twentieth Century Heritage Society of NSW

The Twentieth Century Heritage Society of NSW supports<sup>1</sup>

the retention of the 1983 Bidura Children's Court Building in Glebe, which is the subject of a development application that proposes its demolition. We believe the building, which is substantially intact, to be a fine example of the Brutalist style and an accomplished example of the work of the NSW Public Works Department's Government Architect's Branch. The building was constructed at a time when the Government Architect's Branch was undertaking major projects across the state. This building bears favourable comparison with outstanding Brutalist works in the City of Sydney such as the Sydney Police Station in Surry Hills, which was designed by the Government Architect's Branch, and the Sydney Masonic Centre in Goulburn Street, designed by Joseland & Gilling. Buildings in the City of Sydney that share some of the Bidura Centre's outstanding architectural qualities include the Sirius Apartments building in The Rocks, which is under consideration for inclusion on the State Heritage Register and is classified by the National Trust of Australia (NSW), and the former Reader's Digest Building in Surry Hills, which is listed as a heritage item by the City of Sydney. There are few examples of this important architectural idiom within the City of Sydney, which has seen the attrition of many notable buildings of state and even national architectural significance that were designed and constructed during the second half of the twentieth century.

It is noted that the building is identified as a contributory item on Sydney Development Control Plan 2012 Building Contributions Map sheet 008 and is included in the State Heritage Inventory database entry for 357 Glebe Point Road. Here it is described as having aesthetic significance - "a well executed and relatively intact example of late 20th century institutional architectural design." Its architectural quality, successfully fulfilling a challenging brief, was certainly recognised when the building was completed in 1984. The building is also identified in the SHI database entry as contributing to the social significance of the site - "The site is of social significance for its lengthy association with community service institutions since the latter decades of the 20th century." Bidura Children's Court has undoubted social significance for Aboriginal and European communities. In addition to this, the building is identified as having historical significance as part of the ongoing use of the Bidura site for child welfare purposes. Bidura Children's Court fits unobtrusively into the surrounding urban fabric because of its well modulated form and careful detailing. It contributes to the architectural richness and diversity of Glebe. The architectural, historical and social significance of the building, along with its potential for ongoing adaptive reuse, are strong arguments for its retention, which we strongly encourage.





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

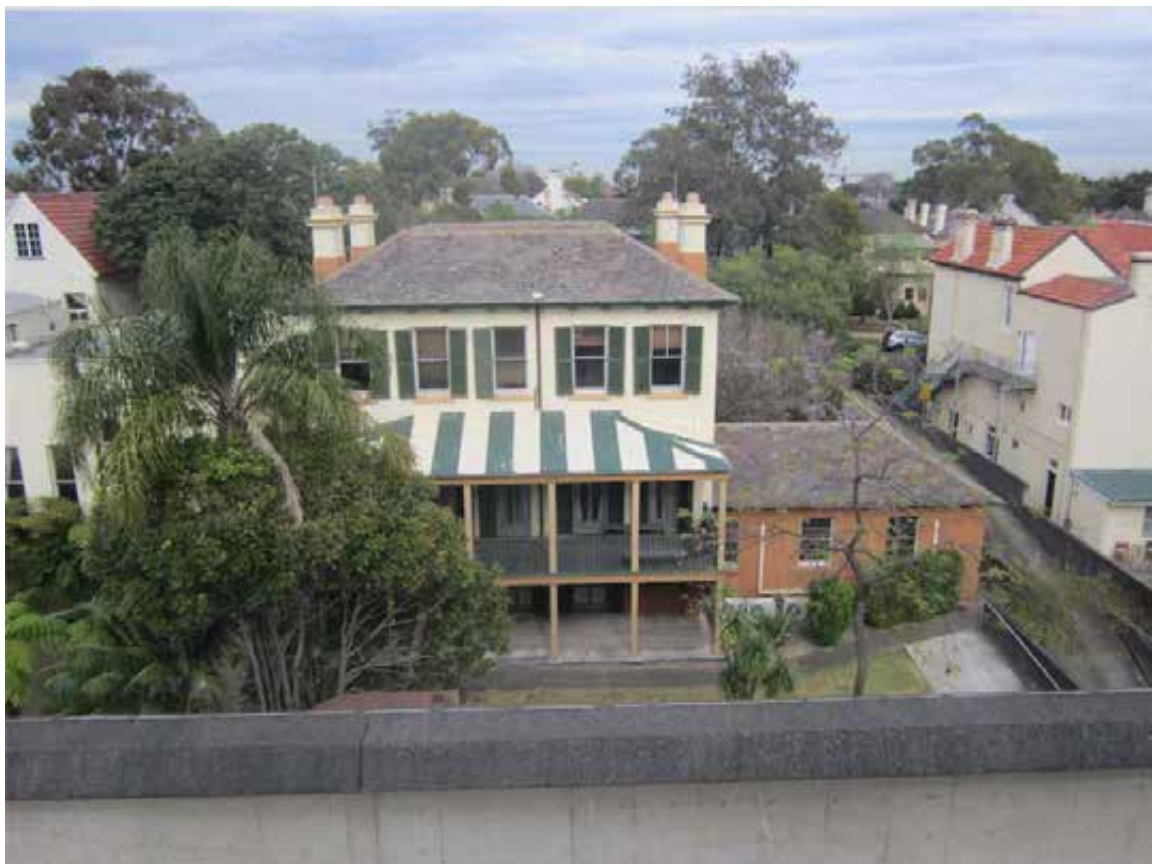
Figure 4.15

View back towards the Blacket residence.  
Note the careful placement of the  
wall of the Boys recreation yard in  
relation to the elevation of the garden  
front.

Figure 4.16

View from the upper levels of Bidura  
showing the scale and character of the  
Glebe Point Road buildings in the Glebe  
Conservation Area.

Photos: Noni Boyd, 2017







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#### Lucas Stapleton & Johnson Heritage Assessment (2016)

The former Metropolitan Remand Centre, Glebe is of historical significance as part of the broader history of the administration of juvenile justice and child welfare in NSW, dating from the mid-1800s through to today's Children's Court of NSW, as one of a small number of remand centres built in the late 1970s to early 1980s to meet changing attitudes and legislation in the management of children in the juvenile justice system of NSW and one of a very small number of still functioning purpose-built children's court buildings.

The building is an example of the work of the NSW Government Architect's Branch and is considered to be a representative example of late Brutalist architecture in NSW, displaying many of the typical characteristics of the architectural style. However, the siting and stepped form of the building has resulted in the loss of visual impact typical of Brutalist buildings; although it remains a sympathetic development within the surrounding 19th century residential precinct.

The Auditorium/Recreation Hall is of aesthetic significance as a good example of a c.1980s Brutalist style interior with folded plate beam ceiling, timber detailing and skylights.

The place would also hold social significance for former inmates and staff in relation to its past and current uses as a remand centre and children's court.

#### **ROBERTSON & HINDMARSH PTY LTD COMMENT ON THE EXISTING ASSESSMENTS**

The LSJ findings appear to have been based without reference to the surviving correspondence on file at State Records NSW. The interview with the design architect was not included in full. The LSJ assessment makes little reference to the design being reworked to be more sympathetic to the Glebe Urban Conservation Area (1974) or to the deliberate siting below the restored house. The assessment also uses emotive phrases and makes conjectural statements. For instance the building is noted as having 'failed' and having 'design defects', which are terms used in the press by detractors of the design. The study did not include the brief which required that the facility not be forbidding like a gaol.

The MRC was designed as required by the very detailed brief provided by YACS. Limited staffing numbers for such a large complex were cited as the reason for the later transfer of remand facilities from the site. The initial good reception of the design in the press was also not mentioned. The LSJ Statement of Significance refers to architectural style, yet style was not a concern of the GAB, and the discussion of significance should have considered the design in relation to the detailed brief and the response to the advice provided by the Historic Buildings Group regarding Blacket's residence and community concern. The GAB designed each building fit for purpose, resulting in such a wide variety that describing a unique response as a representative example is problematic.

The State Heritage Inventory Listing for the Glebe Point Heritage Conservation Area gives the Statement of Significance as:

Glebe Point has historic significance for its grand residential development which evidences Glebe Point as a prestigious address in the mid 19th century. The



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
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development reflects the effect of the Allen family on this precinct in its early development. The subdivision and residential development of the Marine Villa Estates, following the exodus of the upper classes to the suburbs in the late 19th century and early 20th century is evidenced in the early Federation period development. The area has historic values in its evolving relationship to the water, evidenced through natural landscape reclamation, industrial development, residential and landscape reinstatement.

Glebe Point has aesthetic significance for its landscape qualities and relationship to the water, for its ability to illustrate various periods of development and architectural styles and building types, and its predominant Victorian and Federation character. The diverse social mix is reflected in the building stock and inherent to the character of the suburb.

In particular, Bidura is mentioned under rarity.

SHR Criteria f)

[Rarity] Glebe Point Road has rarity significance as a rare surviving example of an important Victorian streetscape that developed from 1828, and includes fine examples of early residential buildings including Bidura, terraces such as Elphinstone Terrace and Palmerston Terrace, and grand houses such as Monteith and Hartford.

The recent State Heritage Register listing (SHR 01994) for the portion of the site fronting Glebe Point Road including the residence designed by Blacket gives the cultural significance as being:

The Bidura House Group is of state heritage significance as a key point in a broader network of places associated with child welfare and juvenile justice in NSW. It functioned from 1920-1977 as the NSW receiving home, under various names. It is of state historical significance as during this period all wards of the state came to Bidura House before being fostered out or transferred to other institutions. It also functioned between 1920 and the 1940s as accommodation for children on remand awaiting trial in the Metropolitan Children's Court. It is therefore historically and socially significant for its impact on children and their families who were affected by child welfare and juvenile justice systems including the Forgotten Australians and Stolen Generations for a period of almost sixty years. Bidura House Group is also of state significance aesthetically as a good example of Victorian regency design, and via its strong association with prominent NSW architect Edmund Blacket.



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## **5.2 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT**

This section sets out an assessment of the heritage significance of Bidura in accordance with the standard criteria identified in the Office of Environment & Heritage, Heritage Office guidelines. The evaluation includes consideration of the original and subsequent layering of fabric, uses, associations and meanings of the place as well as its relationship to its immediate and wider settings.

Blacket's residence has been included in the assessment as the use of the entire group for Child Welfare included the residence.

The following sub-statements of significance take into account the existing sub-statements of significance associated with State Heritage Register item, House "Bidura" (SHR item no 01994, gazetted on 28 August 2017) but modify them following research undertaken for this report.

### **NSW STATE CRITERION (a) (Historical Significance)**

An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

#### **Discussion:**

Bidura house was one of a series of nineteenth century villas located along the prominent ridges flanking the City of Sydney and is one of the few remaining such villas along Glebe Point Road. It is an example of the architectural output of the prominent architect, Edmund Blacket and remains as physical evidence of his output as well as evidence of the villas that once graced this part of Glebe Point Road, part of an intended villa subdivision.

The former Bidura Children's Court building and Remand Centre is one of a small series of combined children's court and remand centre buildings constructed by the NSW government. The Bidura building at Glebe was a deliberate attempt to humanize juvenile incarceration by YACS and design and erect a non-threatening, non-traumatic environment for the juvenile prisoners undergoing trial.

The former Bidura Children's Court building is part of the significant legacy of government-designed and constructed buildings in New South Wales and remains part of the important legacy of the Government Architects Office. It is also important because the Government Architects Office deliberately retained the house designed by a former Colonial Architect and designed the new building to be respectful of that house (by siting it behind and below the house so that it is only glimpsed from Glebe Point Road) and to the surrounding residential area by stepping it down to preserve sunlight and to reduce the scale of the new building and ameliorating the dominating scale of the adjacent apartment buildings.



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

**Statement of Significance under Criterion (a) (Historical Significance):**

Bidura house is an early (c. 1858), surviving example of the substantial homes of the prosperous middle classes that once occupied part of the Glebe Point ridge. The building has historical significance for its ability to evidence early villas and villa subdivision and reflects the development of Glebe Point Road as a prestige address.

The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building is significant at a State level under this criterion as one of a series of purpose-designed combined children's court and remand centre buildings in New South Wales (the first being the Albion Street complex designed in 1911), each reflecting current thinking in the treatment of remanded children.

The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building is significant at a State level under this criterion as part of the legacy of the former NSW Department of Public Works Government Architects Branch (GAB) and as an example of how the GAB retained historic buildings designed by the Colonial Architect and designed new buildings to be sympathetic to those and other surrounding nineteenth century buildings.

**NSW STATE CRITERION (b) (Associative Significance)**

**An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).**

**Discussion:**

Bidura house is associated with the former NSW Colonial Architect, Edmund Blacket, who designed the house for himself and his family, as well as numerous buildings of all categories in his capacity as NSW Colonial Architect and in the period of his private architectural practice.

Bidura house and the Bidura Children's Court are associated with the NSW Government Architects of the 1970s and the NSW Government Architect's Branch, for the conservation of Bidura house and the design and construction of the modern building behind the house. Both architects are significant figures in the design and construction of significant buildings in the history of both NSW and Australian architecture. The impact of the Historic Building Group in ensuring the house and ballroom were restored and that the complex was scaled to fit in with the townscape of the Conservation area.

Since the early decades of the 20th century, the site has been associated with community service institutions, namely the Metropolitan Shelter for Girls, a Remand Centre, and the Bidura Children's Court for the Department of Community Services. The site illustrates the successive re-use of the original residential structures for community related activities.



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

**Statement of Significance under Criterion (b) (Associative Significance):**

Bidura house and the former Bidura Children's Court have significance under this criterion at a State level because of their association with significant architects, NSW Colonial Architect Edmund Blacket, and the successive NSW Government Architect during the 1970s who impacted the development of New South Wales and Australian architecture and introduced the restoration of historic public buildings.

Since the early decades of the 20th century, the site has been associated with community service institutions, namely the Metropolitan Shelter for Girls, a Remand Centre, and the Bidura Children's Court for the then Department of Youth & Community Services. The site illustrates the successive re-use of the original residential structures for community related activities including child welfare, serving as a reminder, including to former staff and clients, of past regimes and policies, some of which have now been discredited.

**NSW STATE CRITERION (c) (Aesthetic Significance)**

**An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).**

**Discussion:**

The aesthetic significance (at a State level) of the Edmund Blacket-designed villa has already been recognised in the current State heritage Register listing of Bidura house. The current SHR listing also recognises the aesthetic significance of the twentieth century building to the rear of Bidura house, which was designed in the late 1970s and completed in the early 1980s.

The twentieth century building is scaled to relate to the nineteenth century housing of the surrounding Heritage Conservation Area as well as being a transition in scale from the overbearing apartment buildings to the north of the site. The bold forms, the cantilevered terraces and roof and the sandstone colour of the aggregate finish create a non-institutional feel to the building which is an attempt to humanise the trial and incarceration of juveniles, as required by the brief from YACS. The interiors of the building are also a masterful composition of space, curves and introduced natural light which animate the interiors and reveal the excellence of the design by the Government Architects Branch (GAB). The cast in-situ ceiling beams of the multi-purpose hall and the reinforced concrete walls, the finely detailed timberwork and metalwork throughout the building was typical of the GAB's approach to designing a rich interior with minimal means.

At the time of its design and presentation to the community the Deputy Premier, Jack Ferguson, extolled its design virtues as having a "quiet, low profile" that was deliberately calibrated to relate to the small residences in the surrounding streets.





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**Statement of Significance under Criterion (c) (Aesthetic Significance):**

Bidura house is a fine example of a Victorian Regency style villa in a garden setting designed by renowned architect E.T. Blacket which significantly contributes to the streetscape of Glebe Point Road.

The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building is a well-executed and relatively intact example of late 20th century institutional architectural design which occupies almost the entire former site of the Bidura rear garden. The building is significant at a State level under this criterion for the excellence of its Modernist design as a Brutalist building that embodies honesty of expression of its materials, boldness of form and massing, excellence of construction detailing, and its use of light and shade both within and on the exterior of the building.

The interior of the building is a masterful composition of form and light in the greatest tradition of modern architecture. The cast in-situ concrete ceiling beams of the multi-purpose hall create a masterful play of shadow and light across the ceiling of the room and add a high degree of architectural interest.

Its sophisticated modeling of the exterior of the building breaks up the mass of the building and imbues the building with a Humanist approach to what could have been a foreboding place of incarceration. The choice of internal colours also reflected the desire to create a calming interior. At the time of its design its "quiet, low profile" was recognized as an important design attribute in fitting the building into its urban context.

**NSW STATE CRITERION (d) (Social Significance)**

**An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.**

**Discussion:**

The existing State Heritage Listing of Bidura house recognises the State significance of the entire site for its social significance.

In addition, the extent of the public concern and objections regarding the recent high-rise proposals for the site indicates that the site has current social significance for the current residents of Glebe in much the same way as the past proposals for an expressway through the suburb galvanised the residents to a new level of appreciation for their built environment. The community organised and presented a petition with 1500 signatures opposing the redevelopment of the former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building.



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
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**Statement of Significance under Criterion (d) (Social Significance):**

The site is of social significance at a State level for its lengthy association with community service institutions, with a focus on child welfare, since 1920.

The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building is of social significance to the current local community as evidenced by their strong opposition to the demolition of the building.

**NSW STATE CRITERION (e) (Research Potential)**

**An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).**

**Discussion:**

The existing State Heritage Register listing of Bidura house recognises the high archaeological potential of the villa site. However, due to the excavation required to construct the remand centre and children's court, in this part of the site there would be no subterranean archaeological potential and, because of the method of construction of the building, there would be no potential for archaeology of occupation.

In terms of the design and planning of the building and the provision of facilities in the building, the building has a high degree of research potential in revealing the mid-twentieth century approach to juvenile justice and the potential to rehabilitate and educate those convicted of crimes.

**Statement of Significance under Criterion (e) (Research Potential):**

The site has high archaeological potential as an early villa site.

The building has a high degree of research potential in terms of researching attitudes towards juvenile justice, incarceration, rehabilitation and the constructive use of time (learning, workshops, sports facilities) and the change in attitudes towards such buildings compared with nineteenth century and early twentieth century examples.

**NSW STATE CRITERION (f) (Rarity)**

**An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).**

**Discussion:**

The existing State Heritage Register listing of Bidura house recognises the rarity of Bidura house as an 1850s villa set within its garden. However, the villa sits within its front garden and setting on Glebe Point Road, the rear garden having been redeveloped in different stages since the 1920s. Other adjacent sites have seen a higher density of development as terrace houses, with shops added to the front at a later date.

The former children's court and remand centre is also rare at a State level as the purpose-built series of children's courts and remand centres in NSW is a small series, located at Albion Street (Surry Hills), Bidura (Glebe), Minda (Lidcombe) and Yasmar (Haberfield).



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Other general courts were used in regional areas of the state as children's courts. A number of the child welfare complexes have been redeveloped with larger scale facilities including Minda/Minali and Mount Penang. Other complexes erected around a nineteenth century residence have been sold off.

**Statement of Significance under Criterion (f) (Rarity):**

The building is a rare example of an early villa. This is the last remaining 1850s villa within a partial garden setting on the eastern side of Glebe Point Road

The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building is a rare surviving example of a purpose-built remand centre and children's court house. The building provides evidence of the original extent of the grounds of Bidura

**NSW STATE CRITERION (g) (Representativeness)**

An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments, (or a class of the local area's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments).

**Discussion:**

The existing State Heritage Register listing of Bidura house recognises the representative nature of the building in its garden setting, however many other Glebe examples have now been demolished.

The planning of the court house contains standard groups of rooms related to either court houses or gaols and remand centres, such as court rooms and judges chambers with separate facilities for the judges and the multi-purpose hall and supervised recreation areas. Other facilities are only found in facilities for children, such as the dorm rooms.

**Statement of Significance under Criterion (g) (Representativeness):**

Bidura house is an outstanding example of a Victorian Regency style villa in a garden setting that contributes to the streetscape.

The entire Bidura complex meets the criteria for listing at a state level in a number of criteria.

**5.3 INTEGRITY/INTACTNESS**

The existing State Heritage Register listing of Bidura house states that its degree of intactness is High. Likewise, the former Children's Court & Remand Centre building is highly intact but is suffering from neglect in terms of leaking planter boxes and roof as well as some areas around skylights. The building still retains the wall mural in the main foyer area and some of the court paraphernalia, evidence of the carefully thought out calming colour scheme and other interior decoration such as the muted coloured carpets.



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#### **5.4 SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building has historical significance as one of a series purpose-designed combined children's court and remand centre buildings in New South Wales, forming part of the legacy of the former NSW Department of Public Works Government Architect's Branch (GAB), providing an example of how the GAB retained historic buildings and designed new buildings to be sympathetic to those and other surrounding nineteenth century buildings. The design of the court building and remand centre is significant aesthetically because of its location within the Glebe Conservation Area (1974), for its sensitive treatment of the curtilage around Bidura house and its preservation of the major part of the historically important views from the rear verandah of Bidura house to Glebe Island and the city.

Bidura house and the former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building have associative significance because of their association with significant architects, NSW Colonial Architect Edmund Blacket who designed the house for his family, and the successive NSW Government Architects during the 1970s who impacted on the development of New South Wales and Australian architecture and introduced the restoration of historic public buildings across the state.

Since the early decades of the 20th century, the site has been associated with community service institutions, namely the Metropolitan Shelter for Girls, a Remand Centre, and the Bidura Children's Court for the then Department of Youth & Community Services. The site illustrates the successive re-use of the original residential structures for community related activities including child welfare, serving as a reminder, including to former staff and clients, of past regimes and policies, some of which have now been discredited.

Bidura house is a fine example of a Victorian Regency style villa in a garden setting designed by renowned architect E. T. Blacket which significantly contributes to the streetscape of Glebe Point Road.

The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building is a well-executed and relatively intact example of late 20th century institutional architectural design which occupies almost the entire former site of the Bidura rear garden and is significant at a State level under this criterion for the excellence of its Modernist design as a Brutalist building that embodies honesty of expression of its materials, boldness of form and massing, excellence of construction detailing, and its use of light and shade both within and on the exterior of the building.

The interior of the building is a masterful composition of form and light in the greatest tradition of modern architecture. The cast in-situ concrete ceiling beams of the multi-purpose hall create a masterful play of shadow and light across the ceiling of the room and add a high degree of architectural interest.

Its sophisticated modeling of the exterior of the building breaks up the mass of the building and imbues the building with a Humanist approach to what could have been a foreboding place of incarceration. The choice of internal colours also reflected the desire to create a calming interior. At the time of its design its "quiet, low profile" was recognized as an important design attribute in fitting the building into its urban context.





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The court and remand centre building has a high degree of research potential in terms of researching attitudes towards juvenile justice, incarceration, rehabilitation and the constructive use of time (learning, workshops, sports facilities) and the change in attitudes towards such buildings compared with nineteenth century and early twentieth century examples.

The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre Building is a rare surviving example of a purpose-built remand centre and children's court house. The building provides evidence of the original extent of the grounds of Bidura.

## 5.5 GRADING OF SIGNIFICANCE

Grading reflects the contribution the element makes to overall significance of the item (or the degree to which the significance of the item would be diminished if the component were removed or altered). The former MRC at Bidura has been assessed to determine a relative grading of significance into six levels. This process examines a number of factors, including:

- Original design quality
- Degree of intactness and general condition
- Relative age and authenticity (original, replaced)
- Extent of subsequent alterations
- Association with important people or events
- Ability to demonstrate a rare quality, craft or construction process

This conservation management strategy utilises the widely recognised standard gradings published by the NSW Heritage Division for assessing local or state significance. To this has been added a 'neutral' grading to include modern fabric that has no heritage significance but has been installed in a similar configuration.

The gradings used are as follows:

**TABLE 5.1**

GRADING	DEFINITION	STATUS
<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>	Rare or outstanding element directly contributing to an item's Local and State significance	Fulfil criteria for Local or State listing
<b>HIGH</b>	High degree of original fabric. Demonstrates a key element of the item's significance. Alterations do not detract from significance	Fulfil criteria for Local or State listing
<b>MODERATE</b>	Altered or modified elements. Elements with little heritage value, but which contribute to the overall significance of the item	Fulfil criteria for Local or State listing
<b>LITTLE</b>	Alterations detract from significance. Difficult to interpret	Does not fulfil criteria for Local or State listing



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<b>NEUTRAL</b>	Altered, modified or new elements which do not detract from the significance of the item and which do not confuse interpretation	Does not affect criteria for Local or State listing accorded by non-neutral elements
<b>INTRUSIVE</b>	Damaging to the item's heritage significance	Does not fulfil criteria for Local or State listing

These gradings have been established as a tool to assist in developing appropriate conservation measures for the treatment of Bidura and the various elements. Good conservation practice encourages the focusing on change or upgrading of historical buildings to those areas or components that make a lesser contribution to significance. The areas or components that make a greater or defining contribution to significance should generally be left intact or changed with the greatest care and respect.

The actions required for elements of each level of significance are:

**TABLE 5.2**

<b>GRADING</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>	Maintain, preserve and restore. Any change is to be minimal and retain significant values or fabric.
<b>HIGH</b>	Maintain, preserve and restore. Minor change is allowed so long as significant values and fabric are retained and conserved.
<b>MODERATE</b>	Maintain, preserve and restore or remove, subject to approval. Change is allowed so long as it does not adversely affect values and fabric of exceptional or high significance.
<b>LITTLE</b>	Maintain, preserve and restore or remove, subject to approval. Change is allowed so long as it does not adversely affect values and fabric of exceptional or high significance.
<b>NEUTRAL</b>	Maintain, preserve and restore or remove, subject to approval. Change is allowed so long as it does not adversely affect values and fabric of exceptional or high significance.
<b>INTRUSIVE</b>	Removal or alteration should be considered, subject to approval.

## 5.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF COMPONENTS

The diagrams on the following pages summarise the assessment of areas of the building based on the brief and incomplete inspection of the interior of the building carried out on 12 September 2017.

The items of Exceptional significance are those that contain a high degree of original material, express the design intent of the original architects and contribute to the historic and aesthetic significance of the building as an important exemplar of Modernism expressing the ethos of Brutalism with its honesty of expression of materials, its bold forms and manipulation of light and shade both inside and on the exterior of the building. In summary, the exterior of the building is of Exceptional significance because of the amount of original fabric, the modelling of the building that was skilfully crafted to settle into the conservation area in terms of scale, massing and stepped profile to maximise sun penetration into the surrounding streets and



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
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houses. Internally, all the public areas are of Exceptional significance because of their high degree of design excellence, external crafted detailing and the condition of the finishes and spaces.

Items of High significance are those that embody the same characteristics as elements of Exceptional significance but which have suffered degradation through lack of maintenance. These areas predominantly comprise the roof terraces, landscaped exercise yards, and the landscaped areas around the building. However, these spaces can have their significance restored through a program of repairs and maintenance and replanting in accordance with the extant landscape plans.

The remainder of the building has been graded as of Moderate significance. The original fabric is largely intact but they are functional, service spaces which were necessary for the functioning of the building. These spaces could be reconfigured in support of new functions without the loss of significance to the overall building.



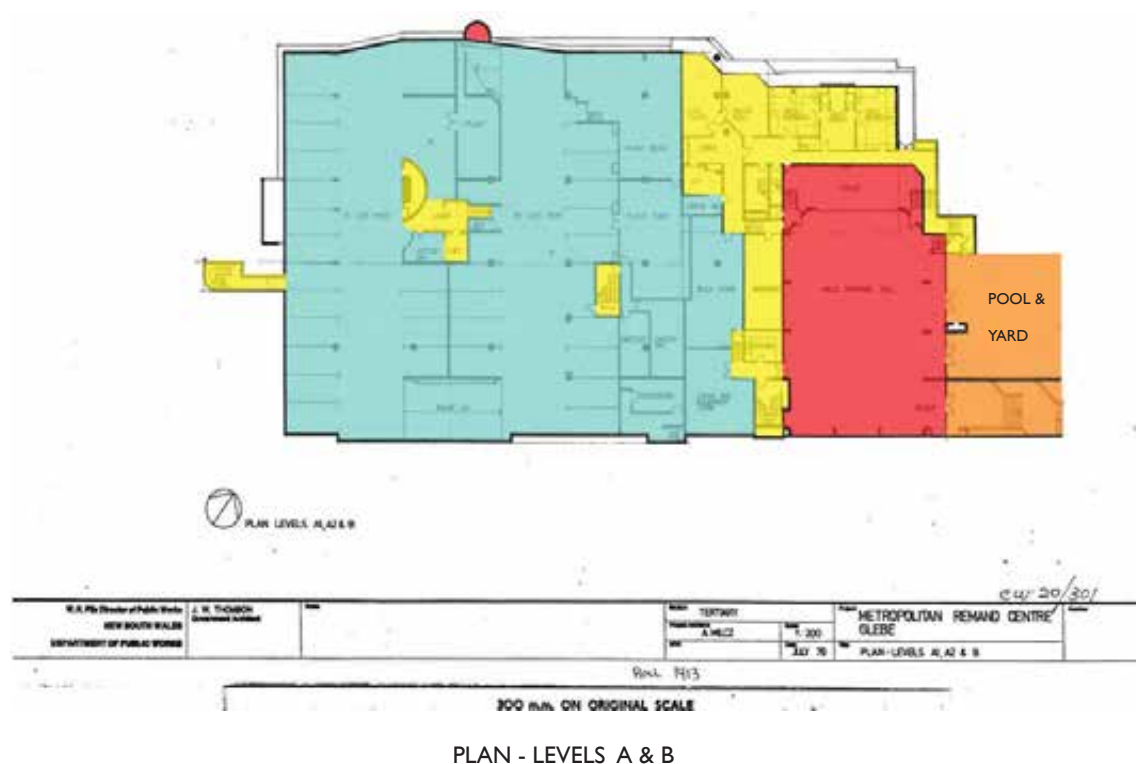
FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S COURT & REMAND CENTRE

## SIGNIFICANCE OF COMPONENTS

Note: Exterior walls, skylights & glazing of building are of Exceptional Significance

## LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE

<span style="color: red;">■</span>	E EXCEPTIONAL
<span style="color: orange;">■</span>	H HIGH
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>	M MODERATE
<span style="color: lightblue;">■</span>	L LOW
<span style="color: grey;">■</span>	I INTRUSIVE





FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S COURT & REMAND CENTRE

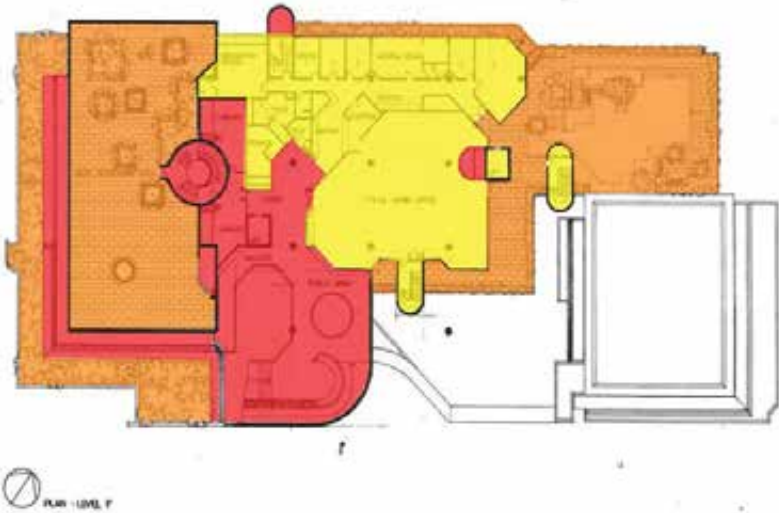
SIGNIFICANCE OF COMPONENTS

Note: Exterior walls, skylights & glazing of building are of Exceptional Significance

LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE

- E EXCEPTIONAL
- H HIGH
- M MODERATE
- L LOW
- I INTRUSIVE

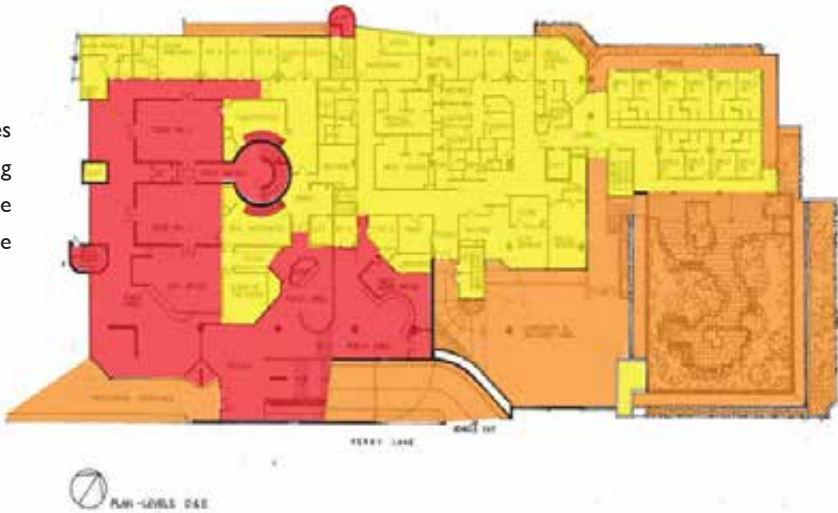
Repair of the terraces, yards planter boxes and reinstatement of the landscaping to those elements would reinstate the Exceptional level of significance to those spaces



N.S.W. Public Works NEW SOUTH WALES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS		J. W. THOMSON Government Architect	Date 1902	Title TERTIARY A. HILL 1902	Scale 1/200 1/200	Project METROPOLITAN REMAND CENTRE QUEBEC PLAN - LEVEL F
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PLAN - LEVEL F

Repair of the terraces, yards planter boxes and reinstatement of the landscaping to those elements would reinstate the Exceptional level of significance to those spaces



N.S.W. Public Works NEW SOUTH WALES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS		J. W. THOMSON Government Architect	Date 1902	Title TERTIARY A. HILL 1902	Scale 1/200 1/200	Project METROPOLITAN REMAND CENTRE QUEBEC PLAN - LEVELS D & E
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PLAN - LEVELS D & E





## LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Note: Exterior walls, skylights & glazing of building are of Exceptional Significance

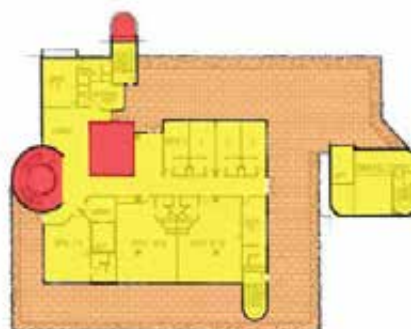
-  E EXCEPTIONAL  
 H HIGH  
 M MODERATE  
 L LOW  
 I INTRUSIVE

Repair of the terraces, yards planter boxes and reinstatement of the landscaping to those elements would reinstate the Exceptional level of significance to those spaces



PLAN - LEVEL 1

Repair of the terraces, yards planter boxes and reinstatement of the landscaping to those elements would reinstate the Exceptional level of significance to those spaces



PLAN - LEVEL H

(note the plan of Level G was not available)



FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S COURT & REMAND CENTRE

## SIGNIFICANCE OF COMPONENTS

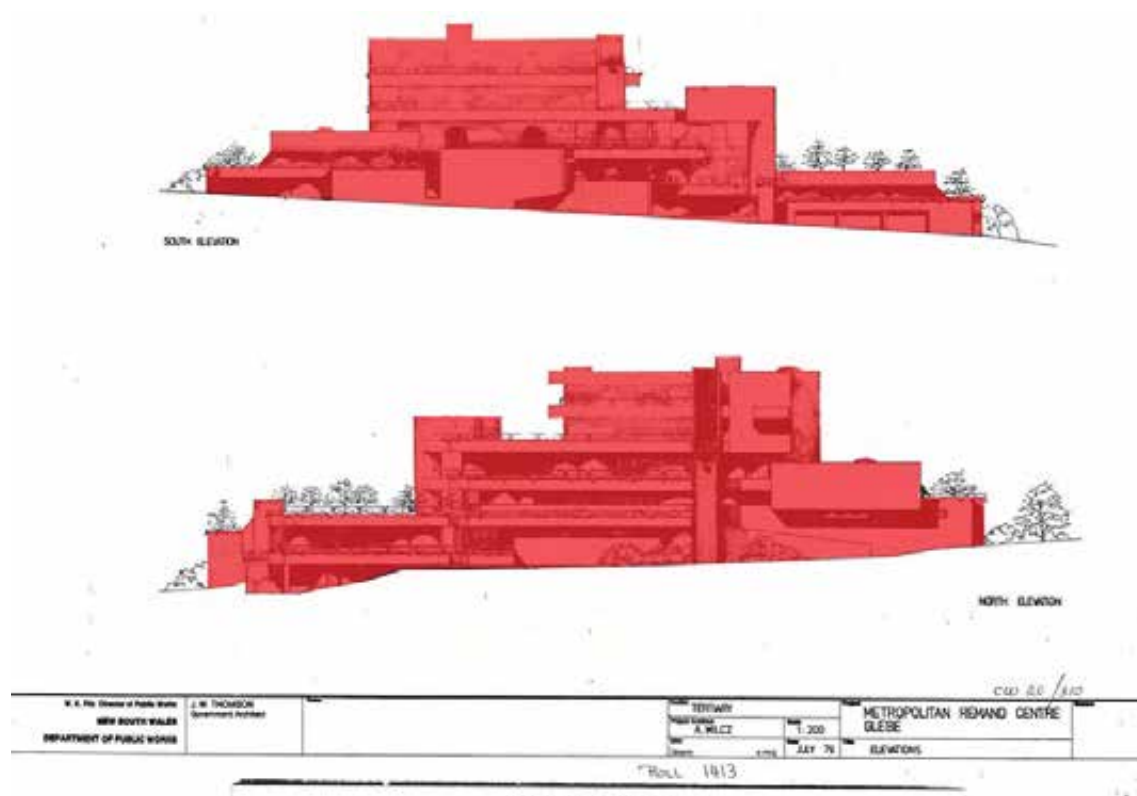
Note: Exterior walls, skylights & glazing of building are of Exceptional Significance

## LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE

<span style="color: red;">■</span>	E EXCEPTIONAL
<span style="color: orange;">■</span>	H HIGH
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>	M MODERATE
<span style="color: lightblue;">■</span>	L LOW
<span style="color: grey;">■</span>	I INTRUSIVE



WEST & EAST ELEVATIONS



SOUTH & NORTH ELEVATIONS



FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S COURT & REMAND CENTRE

# ADAPTABILITY ASSESSMENT

## 6.0 HERITAGE PLANNING ISSUES

### 6.1 USES PERMITTED WITH CONSENT

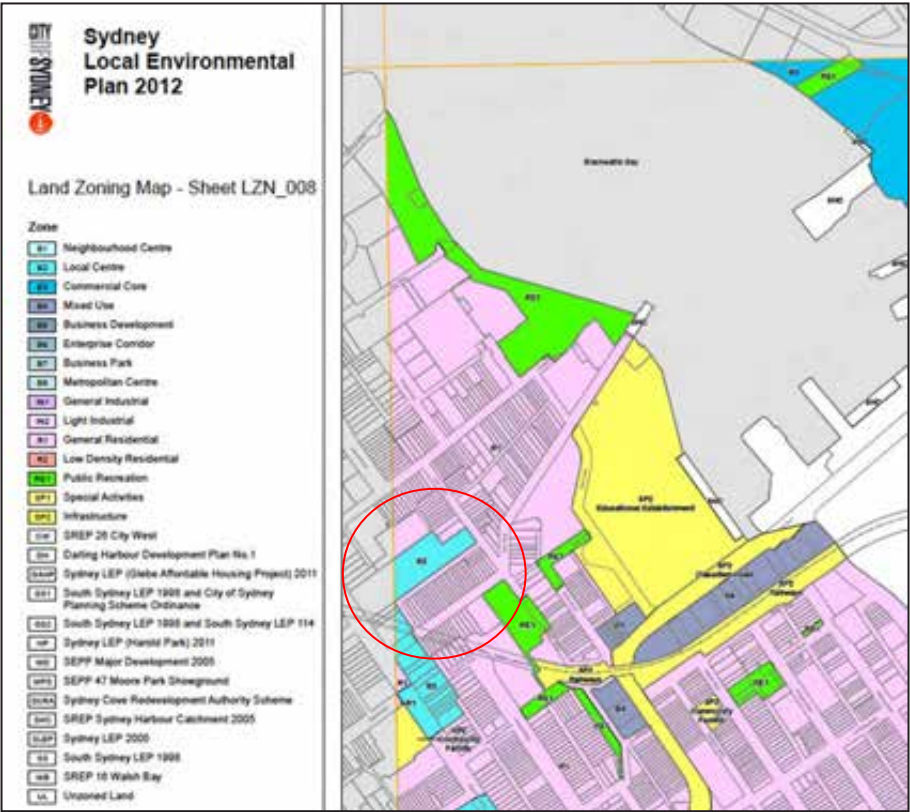
The current LEP map shows the item to be zoned B2 - local centre (figure 6.1), whereas the surrounding area is zoned R1 General Residential. The range of permitted uses for B2 are as follows, some of which uses were included in the MRC as designed:

Boarding houses; Centre-based child care facilities; Commercial premises; Community facilities; Educational establishments; Entertainment facilities; Function centres; Home industries; Information and education facilities; Medical centres; Passenger transport facilities; Recreation facilities (indoor); Registered clubs; Respite day care centres; Restricted premises; Roads; Service stations; Shop top housing; Tourist and visitor accommodation; Any other development not prohibited.

Prohibited uses are

Depots; Extractive industries; Freight transport facilities; Heavy industrial storage establishments; Industrial retail outlets; Industries; Storage premises; Transport depots; Truck depots; Warehouse or distribution centres

Figure 6.1  
Extract from the Land Zoning Map with Bidura highlighted.  
Council of the City of Sydney, with location marked by Robertson & Hindmarsh





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



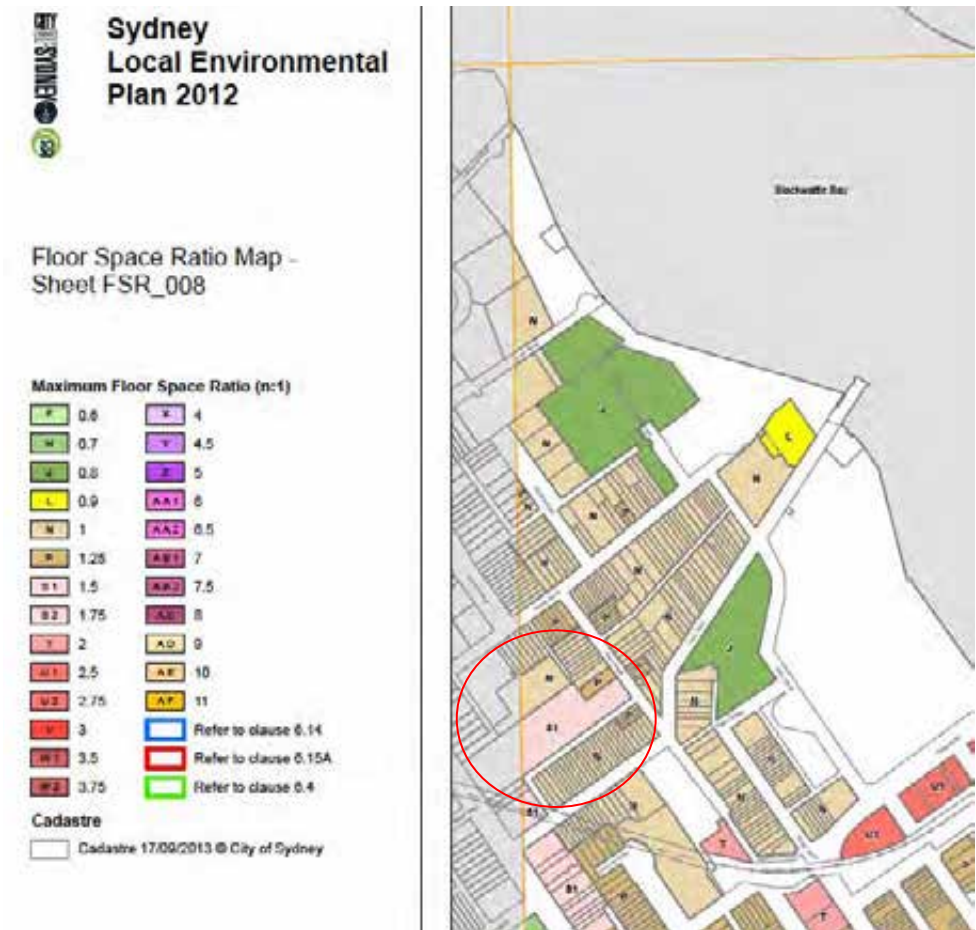
Figure 6.2  
Extract from the Land Zoning Map with the Maximum FSR alongside.  
Council of the City of Sydney

### 6.2 FLOOR SPACE RATIO

The current permissible FSR (from FSR maps) is 1.5:1 for this site (as Zoned B2 Local Centre), however this FSR is shown for the entire site, including the house, ballroom, front garden, and the community park to Avon Street. The front portion of the house is now on the State Heritage Register and has very limited potential for the construction of new structures. The drive and public access to the rear of the site both pass through the area now designated as a State Heritage Register Item, making any alteration problematic.

The FSR of 1:5:1 corresponds to the areas zoned Local Centre whereas the surrounding residential areas have an FSR of 1:1 or 1.25:1. A change in the permitted use of the site to residential should be accompanied by the corresponding FSR. The justification for reducing the FSR to a residential FSR (between 1:1 & 1.25:1) is to protect the character of the conservation area, the amenity of the local residents, and maintain the existing building envelopes of a recommended heritage item.

Figure 6.3  
Extract from the floor space ratio map.  
Council of the City of Sydney







**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

Detailed measured drawings or as-built drawings of the MRC building have not been located which would give precise floor areas. The 1978 floor area figures gave 5008 square metres of functional area within the MRC, and a further 2298 square metres of circulation and associated travel space. Figures for the landscaped areas and the house were not given. Figures provided by the State Government give an overall area 6,069 square metres for Bidura House & the MRC. The amount of internal circulation space within the MRC could be reduced, with a corresponding increase in functional area, as part of a redesign and careful replanning of the interiors. There is some potential to cover the western end of the two recreation areas to create more space, and also to excavate in the area between the multi-purpose hall and the entry to the former remand section of the complex. Plant area could also be rationalised.

### **6.3 EMPLOYMENT AND RESOURCES**

Ministerial planning directives, under Section 117 of the EP & A Act for Business and Industrial zones note that planning proposals must

- (a) give effect to the objectives of this direction,
- (b) retain the areas and locations of existing business and industrial zones,
- (c) not reduce the total potential floor space area for employment uses and related public services in business zones,
- (d) not reduce the total potential floor space area for industrial uses in industrial zones, and
- (e) ensure that proposed new employment areas are in accordance with a strategy that is approved by the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment.

This direction seeks to:

- (a) encourage employment growth in suitable locations,
- (b) protect employment land in business and industrial zones, and
- (c) support the viability of identified centres.

This study advocates the retention and adaptive re-use of the buildings on the site, including an increase in floor area of parts of the building. This planning directive supports the adaptive reuse option, as this would retain the existing Local Centre B2 zoning for the site and would retain employment in the area.

### **6.4 GLEBE CONSERVATION AREA**

As previously noted in the historical outline, the Glebe Conservation area was classified by the National Trust in 1974 but it was not until 1984 that the Conservation Area was incorporated into a planning scheme.

The Sydney City Council has undertaken studies to further define and manage the conservation areas. Draft Glebe Conservation Area Study 2006 mapped

buildings as being contributory, neutral or detracting to the heritage significance of the area, classifies all streets and lanes, provides heritage inventory sheets for Glebe Point Road Heritage Items and nominates eleven additional potential heritage items. The study also recommends that the existing single heritage conservation area is divided into eight conservation areas to more accurately respond to the historical subdivision, form and heritage significance of these areas.





**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**



Figure 6.4  
Extract from the draft Building Contributions  
map for Glebe and Forest Lodge, showing the  
number of heritage items on the ridgeline.

There continues to be considerable community opposition to the erection of larger scale buildings within the long established conservation area. The community's desire to see the scale and character of the Conservation Area retained is evidenced by the *Save Bidura from Over Development* campaign.

In views of the building from a distance, particularly from between the Fish Market and the old Glebe Island Bridge, the trees on the ridge line of Glebe Point Road can be seen beyond Bidura. In contrast the adjacent apartment towers project well above the ridge line. Almost the entire ridge is now composed of heritage items which contribute considerably to the character of Glebe (figure 6.4). Any increase in scale of building on the Bidura site will have a significant impact on the conservation area as a whole. Retention of the existing building will substantially lessen such an impact.



**FORMER BIDURA CHILDREN'S  
COURT & REMAND CENTRE**

## **7.0 IDENTIFICATION OF THE RANGE OF POTENTIAL USES**

The detailed brief for the MRC reveals that the building was intended to incorporate a range of different functions. Any adaptive re-use of the building could take advantages of the different characters that these areas already have in terms of views, terraces, daylighting &c. The lower scale of the surrounding area results in extensive views which could be capitalised on.

### **7.1 EDUCATIONAL USES**

The Bidura site was in use for staff training purposes prior to this complex having been erected. The house, the ballroom and the remand centre have all been used for training purposes, with classrooms proposed for remedial teaching and areas for crafts. Glebe contains a range of educational facilities, including state schools, Catholic schools and private schools including the International Grammar School. In addition, Sydney University occupies a number of buildings, including a research laboratory in a former commercial building at Glebe Point (431 Glebe Point Road), administrative facilities in a former printing works (71-79 Arundel Street), warehouses including the former Grace Furniture Repository at 1-3 Ross Street (partially occupied by Office Works) and a former Neon Sign factory in Forest Lodge (now the department of Peace & Conflict Studies). Notre Dame Campus in Broadway, the Performing Arts School and the International Grammar School (IGS) have all located some or all of their facilities in existing commercial buildings and warehouses. IGS utilises sporting facilities in the vicinity.

### **7.2 STUDENT HOUSING / HALLS OF RESIDENCE**

There is also demand in the Glebe area for student housing, as witnessed by the replacement of the motel in Arundel Street with an Urban Nest. Parts of this building are already configured as accommodation, of a modest scale, comparable with student housing. Other facilities within the building such as the terraces and gym and pool would make this a more attractive option than some of the other recent blocks of student housing. Sydney University has a number of accommodation options in the vicinity, whilst other forms of student housing are run by private operators.

An example of the conversion of a building to student housing is the conversion of the Queen Mary building at the rear of RPAH from a Nurses Home to Student Hall of Residence (refer to Section 8.) The use of the building for student housing would require internal reconfiguration and upgrading of the external terracing. If Bidura house is let separately then a new entrance in Ferry Lane would need to be established, as currently the pedestrian entrance is via the pathway between the house and the ballroom. This would be detrimental to the rear building as it would lose its Glebe Point Road address.

The site is in the vicinity of UTS / the Sydney Institute of Technology, the Notre Dame campus in Broadway and the University of Sydney. Student residences is a use that could be accommodated within the upper levels of the building, taking advantages of the terraces and existing bed rooms. This use could occur in conjunction with the separate operation of the multi-purpose hall, the court rooms as seminar or meeting rooms and the car park.



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### **7.3 COMMERCIAL OFFICE SPACE**

The courts and the upper floors of the MRC have a higher level of daylighting than commercial office space with a regular floor plate. There are extensive city views and terrace and internal light wells bringing daylight into the corridors and larger rooms. There is also potential for the inclusion of a café that could utilise both internal and terrace areas. The second secure recreation area located between the house and the remand centre (former Boys' recreation yard) could potentially be roofed, in such a manner that does not limit light into existing rooms. Associated facilities such as end of journey facilities for cyclists could easily be provided.

The advantage of utilising the building for commercial purposes is that the outlook is to the south and east, with views to the city skyline. In residential design a southern outlook is not desirable. As there are more than one bank of lifts, the complex could be divided into zones and utilised for separate uses.

### **7.4 CREATIVE SECTOR**

Non-traditional spaces with good daylighting are sought after by what has become termed the creative sector, which includes architects, designers, advertising &c. Sections of the building could also be utilised as an art gallery with associated café/shop. In a more global market there may be a corporate use seeking an unusual building as their corporate headquarters or flagship office. Refer to the examples in Section 8.0.

### **7.5 MEDICAL CENTRE**

Medical centre usage is permitted under the Local Centre Zoning. This is a use that might fill part of the complex, in particular the lower court room areas which are more private than the upper levels. Refer to the examples in Section 8.0.

### **7.6 RESIDENTIAL APARTMENTS**

The form of the building and the location of the lift towers is more suited to subdivision into a series of commercial tenancies than into apartments. The original brief was to include two three bed room flats, one for the superintendent and one for the deputy and a bed sitter for the matron. In the final scheme the residential accommodation was provided in the house (since altered), with the sleeping accommodation for boys on the upper levels. The building is more suited to accommodation in small rooms with shared facilities (as found in student halls of residence) rather than apartments. The use of light wells bringing light down through the building is also problematic in apartments, creating privacy issues. That being said, the upper floors could be converted to penthouses, one per floor.

### **7.7 CAR PARKING**

The Bidura complex contains some 50 car parking spaces and a drive from Glebe Point Road with an exit to Ferry Lane. There is stair and lift access from the carparking levels to the public foyer. The drive and part of the fire exit stair is included in the State Heritage Register curtilage but is an existing feature. Any commercial use of the carparking would require public access to the public foyer. There are a number of car share pods in the area. Relocating this facility into the existing car parking at Bidura would remove the pressure on street parking. In large European cities it is not uncommon to garage a car separately from a residence. The upper level of car parking could function as a car or bicycle sharing depot (as occurs in the car sharing pod in the Trio apartments). Many older style apartment buildings in Kings Cross and Potts Point had little or no provision for car parking.

### **7.8 MULTI – PURPOSE HALLS**

The multi-purpose hall in the Bidura Complex was utilised for public functions during the 1990s. The built-up character of the area has resulted in the sporting facilities being located



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on the reclaimed foreshore areas.

Currently there is not a direct connection between the Multi-Purpose Hall and the car parking, the two functions are separated by large areas of plant room. Rationalisation of the plant room to include more compact plant could allow connections between these areas, allowing the vehicular entry from Glebe Point Road to effectively serve all of the building. Additional floor space could also be excavated between these two areas without impacting on the architectural form of the building.

A portion of the complex could be divided off to form a recreation centre, utilising the pool area and the terraces at the western end of the building, including the large terrace over the multi-purpose hall. To accommodate this use a connection would need to be made with the car park and changes would need to be made to accommodate additional change rooms, administration &c as well as providing equitable access to those facilities. The change facilities are on an upper level and are currently only accessible via stairs. Yoga or dance studios could also be created and the smaller rooms could be used as additional change rooms or for sports massage or even a day spa.

The Bidura complex is in close proximity to more than one school which may also be able to make use of the pool and the adjacent multi-purpose hall.

## **7.9 SUSTAINABILITY**

The adaptive re-use of substantial twentieth century buildings is a sustainable approach to the long term conservation of the built environment, a view which treats building stock as an asset. Elements of this building such as the multi-purpose hall and the swimming pool are scarce resources that the suburb of Glebe as a whole lacks. To demolish the hall would be an enormous waste of resources and would entail massive disruption to the local area due to the scale and complexity of the existing building. The adaptive re-use option would entail far less disruption. The approach of stripping and retaining the frame of a building is now being undertaken for commercial buildings in the city, the cost of, and time involved in, the demolition of the concrete work has not made total demolition worthwhile.

## **7.10 COMPLIANCE**

The former MRC is a modern building that was constructed in accordance with the building regulations under either Ordinance 70 or 71. The standards set by those regulations are the basis of current regulations embodied in the National Construction Code. With regard to fire safety of materials and type of construction the former MRC would meet the requirements for Type A construction. Compliance with egress standards would depend on the use or uses to which the building is put, but there is already a generous provision of fire isolated stairs from all the levels of the building and paths of travel would also most likely be able to be met.

The presence of hazardous materials in the building would have to be investigated but it was constructed before the ban on the use of asbestos in buildings and building materials in 2003 (and the phasing out of asbestos from 1990).

The major area of change between when the building was constructed and standards today is in the field of accessibility and accessible facilities. Whilst all levels of the building (with the exception of some service areas and the mezzanine of the multi-purpose hall) could be accessed because of the provision of ramps and the two elevators, there are no toilet facilities that comply as accessible toilets. However, these could be constructed in areas of lesser significance.





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Figure 8.1  
Landscaping upgrade to the terraces of  
the National Theatre on the Southbank  
in London.  
[www.gardenbuilders.co.uk/p/5225/  
royal-national-theatre-garden](http://www.gardenbuilders.co.uk/p/5225/royal-national-theatre-garden)



Figure 8.2  
Revitalised terraces National Theatre,  
London. Tripadvisor

Figure 8.3  
Night time view showing the new  
lighting scheme to the Royal National  
Theatre Garden.  
[www.gardenbuilders.co.uk/p/5225/  
royal-national-theatre-garden](http://www.gardenbuilders.co.uk/p/5225/royal-national-theatre-garden)







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## **8.0 ADAPTIVE REUSE EXAMPLES**

This section includes international examples of the upgrading of Brutalist buildings that include urban terraces in their design as well as some Sydney examples of adaptive reuse.

### **8.1 NATIONAL THEATRE ROOF GARDEN, SOUTH BANK LONDON**

Recent upgrading works to the National Theatre in London have seen the careful integration of new facilities associated with productions and the upgrading of public areas. The upgrading achieved considerable press coverage and awards.

Completed in 1976, the Royal National Theatre stands on the South Bank of the Thames, just downstream of Waterloo bridge. It is formed from two fly towers rising from layered horizontal terraces that wrap around the building, cascading to the river level. The design for the building was based on Lasdun's idea of "architecture as urban landscape."

"The National Theatre is one of the last great buildings of the age of public sector architecture," said architectural historian Kester Ratterbury, "of a really ambitious public facility which sought to be itself, not a poor copy of commercial work."

"Though labelling things is always unsatisfactory, it exemplifies some of the best aspects of Brutalism: its dynamism, its visceral sense of shock, and the rich, complex and highly contextual spaces it creates."...

On the river side, a series of interconnected foyers make up the main public area, in an L-shape around the two larger theatres. Admiration of the National Theatre tends to focus on the magic of these internal spaces, which tower in sections to their full height. It has come to be thought of as one of the city's key communal spaces, described as "the nation's sitting room". Lasdun himself described these spaces as a "fourth theatre". He said "I feel that all the public areas of the building, the foyers and terraces, are in themselves a theatre with the city as a backdrop."

These public interior spaces merge with the terraces outside, or what Lasdun describes as the "geological strata" of his architecture of "urban landscape"...

The National Theatre gained a Grade II heritage listing in 1994, only 18 years after it was built.<sup>1</sup>

Many of the areas within the MRC have the city skyline as a backdrop.

### **8.2 THE BARBICAN**

The Barbican in London was a substantial post war reconstruction of an area of East London that had been destroyed by bombs during 1940. The scheme was designed by the London architectural firm of Chamberlin, Powell and Bon in the late 1950s. A new city quarter was envisaged which separated pedestrians from other modes of transport. During the master planning phase



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Figure 8.4  
Pedestrian terraces and balconies of  
at the Barbican, London. Photo Noni  
Boyd 2015

Figure 8.5  
Former Hastings Deering building in  
East Sydney which now contains a  
supermarket, cafe and medical centre.  
Original elements of the design such as  
the ramps have been retained.  
Photo Noni Boyd 2017





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the partners travelled extensively, sometimes with members of the Barbican Committee. They visited Italy to view new housing developments in Milan, theatres in Verona and the City of Venice.

In 1958 they toured European architectural sites and visited Stockholm, which had extensive pedestrian walkways and podia, and which was seen as a possible model for the kind of city the architects had in mind.<sup>2</sup>

The ambitious scheme included a large arts and learning centre, public plazas and fountains, including over 2000 apartments. The complex was finally

...opened by The Queen in 1982, who declared it 'one of the modern wonders of the world' with the building seen as a landmark in terms of its scale, cohesion and ambition. Its stunning spaces and unique location at the heart of the Barbican Estate have made it an internationally recognised venue, set within an urban landscape acknowledged as one of the most significant architectural achievements of the 20th century.<sup>3</sup>

The project is now a leading example of conservation of modern buildings in general and Brutalist architecture in particular. Conservation Guidelines have been prepared for the complex which identify details and the types of works that can be undertaken.

### **8.3 ADAPTIVE REUSE OF TWENTIETH CENTURY BUILDINGS IN SYDNEY**

#### **8.3.1 HASTINGS DEERING / CITY FORD, EAST SYDNEY**

Designed In 1936 as as a car show room, car service centre and offices for British distributors and completed in 1938, Harold Hastings Deering's flagship in East Sydney featured an innovative series of ramps connecting each level. The complex now contains a supermarket and a private hospital for day surgery, as well as offices and residential on the upper levels. The floor area of this building has been slightly increased by the addition of another level, however the bowstring roof trusses were retained. Internally significant elements such as the ramps and signage have been retained, with large format images in the car park showing the building when completed.

#### **8.3.2 READER'S DIGEST BUILDING, SURRY HILLS**

An example of multiple tenancies within a non-conventional building with a roof terrace is the Reader's Digest building in Surry Hills. This building, which recently received the NSW Chapter of the Australian Institute of Architect's Enduring Architecture Award (the 25 year award), features a substantial roof garden. Individual tenancies have had modern fitouts inserted without impact on the form of the building. The roof terrace, intended to form an urban oasis, as parks were in short supply in Surry Hills, remains in use today.

#### **8.3.3 VALHALLA CINEMA IN GLEBE**

The Valhalla is currently marketed as: containing

- Natural light & operable windows
- Timber floors & air conditioning
- Free access to meeting room
- Architectural design throughout

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.barbicanliving.co.uk/barbican-story/rival-schemes/venice-in-concrete-the-1959-scheme/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.barbican.org.uk/our-story/our-building/our-history>





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Figure 8.6 (top)  
Former Readers Digest building, Surry Hills, Sydney. Photo Noni Boyd 2017



Figure 8.7 (right)  
Former Readers Digest building, Surry Hills, Sydney. Stair and view to the roof terrace. <http://cpgasiadesk.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Readers-Digest1.jpg>



Figure 8.8 (right)  
Former Readers Digest building, Surry Hills, Sydney. Commercial tenancy adjacent to the roof terrace. [http://cpgasiadesk.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Readers-Digest\\_21.jpg](http://cpgasiadesk.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Readers-Digest_21.jpg)



Figure 8.9 (below)  
The internal lightwell and external terrace of the former Valhalla Cinema in Glebe, now office suites. <http://www.awsaustralia.com.au/elevatealuminium/project-valhalla-cinema>





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Quality creative community  
End of trip and accessible amenities

Figure 8.10  
Roof terrace of the former Queen  
Mary's Nurses Home in Camperdown,  
now Student Housing

With Glebe's cafe and artisan culture on your doorstep, this stylish suite offers more than just an office space.

An internal light well and circulation space has resulted in all of the offices having good natural lighting (figure 8.9). The toilet facilities in this block are shared. The series of cafes and shops at ground floor level predate the conversion to strata offices.

#### **8.3.4 QUEEN MARY BUILDING**

Roof terraces are gaining popularity as usable areas for community gardens and recreation areas and examples can now be found in Sydney and Melbourne. Examples of usable roof terraces include the St Marys' Nurses Home in Camperdown, converted into a student residence (figure 8.10). The design architects statement reads

The Queen Mary Building forms part of the University of Sydney's masterplan to provide future accommodation for 4,000 students. The project involves the adaptive re-use of an historic nurses' home into high rise community accommodation for 800 students. The original building, designed by Stephenson and Turner, is a good example of late modernism including elements of the 'International Style'. The austere architecture of the exterior belies the subtle detailing of the domestic yet functional interior that clearly places the building in a mid 20th century context.

The refurbished building distributes accommodation from levels 1 to 11 with each floor containing common bathrooms, kitchenettes, lounges and studies. Basement, ground and roof levels contain common areas including a communal kitchen & dining facility, gallery, entertainment lounge, theatrette, gymnasium, laundry and music rooms. External terraces are located on level 1, level 11 and the roof.

The University of Sydney provided a comprehensive Sustainability Framework tool with which the design team was able to appropriate to meet a strict budget. Although not a formal rating or certification system, the building was designed to meet the criteria related to adaptive reuse and adopted environmentally sustainable measures.<sup>4</sup>

The small austere rooms that characterised the Nurses' home have been retained as

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.nettleontribe.com.au/projects/queen-mary-building/>





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single bedrooms which have been supplemented by generous shared facilities including entertainment lounge, theatre, meeting rooms, study rooms, kitchenettes on each floor; shared bathroom facilities on each floor wing, sky lounges, rooftop terrace/ garden, common laundries, fully equipped common kitchen, bike storage and music rooms. On the terrace discrete glazing has been installed to increase the height of the handrail/barrier.

All of these examples are located within the Sydney LGA and have all been carefully designed so as to not impact on the character of the surrounding building stock.



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## CONCLUSION

### 9.0 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 9.1 BUILDING ENVELOPE

The most appropriate building envelope for the site is that which follows the existing buildings however the building is also capable of being adaptively reused. The building design was amended, by the architects of the Public Works Department, from the original design to respond to the scale of the surrounding terrace housing (later designated a conservation area) and not the scale of the apartment buildings.

When the Remand Centre and Court building was proposed for the site the then Leichhardt Municipal Council insisted on sunshade studies to preserve the amenity of the housing to the south of the site. Indeed, the Premier, Neville Wran, insisted that a physical model be constructed of the second design proposal to show the impact of the new building on the surrounding areas. This was undertaken before the surrounding area was listed as a conservation area and shows the determination of the then government to safeguard the amenity of its citizens. The Department of Public Works had already altered the design from the first design in order to better insert the building into the urban fabric.

The existing building ensures that the small-scale terrace housing to the south retains its access to sunlight whilst providing a transition from the scale of the apartment buildings to the north of subject site. The addition of more floors to the existing building will jeopardise this carefully crafted, sympathetic design's impact on the surrounding housing in the conservation area. An increase to the bulk of the building would also affect the views that still can be obtained from the rear of the Blacket house. Views of the city from the rear of the Blacket house are an important part of that house's significance because of the paintings made by Conrad Martens from the rear verandah and the importance of Martens in teaching both Blacket and his daughter to draw. The care with which the new building was modelled to preserve a great part of the views from the rear of the Blacket house is worthy of note and those views should be preserved by not increasing the bulk of the building to the rear.

#### 9.2 FLOOR AREA

With regard to the Gross Floor Area (ie the internal floor area of the building), the only increase to the floor area within the existing envelope that could occur without detrimental impact on the surrounding area would be to roof over the former Boys' recreation yard on Level F. In addition, excavation under the building could be undertaken to increase accessible change rooms and facilities if required to service the multi-purpose hall and provide a link to the carparking. Such additional floor area would have no detrimental impact on the surrounding area or on the design of the building.

#### 9.3 HERITAGE LISTING

The former Children's Court & Remand Centre building and the entire site (including the Blacket house) should be listed, at a minimum, as a Local heritage item on the Sydney LEP as one item because of the long association of the entire site with the care of children. It is not logical to isolate the Blacket house as the only element on the site to have significance because of the use of the site for the care of children when this use was for the entire lot. The Remand Centre is associated with the Child Welfare phase of use of the site, which began in 1920.



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The Heritage Council of NSW has already recognised the Blacket-designed house as having State significance for its association with the care of children and the administration of juvenile justice. The Blacket house could not have performed those functions without the former Children's Court & Remand Centre building and it is logical that the SHR listing be extended to cover that building. In addition, the former Children's Court & Remand Centre building meets a number of criteria for listing at a State level and should be added to the State Heritage Register.

#### **9.4 USES**

With regard to the future use of the building, not only does the zoning permit a range of uses, the building itself also is suitable for a range of uses (not just office and not just residential) that could be justified by the Glebe catchment area. In other words, the Glebe area lacks certain facilities that could be provided in the building (eg medical centre, educational, meeting rooms, community facilities/commercial facilities such as gymnasium and wellness centres, etc).

#### **9.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations take into account the heritage significance of the former Children's Court building and the assessment of the building's ability to be adapted to new uses without detrimentally affecting that significance.

- The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building, together with Bidura house, should be listed as an item of environmental heritage on Schedule 5 of the Sydney LEP 2012. The boundary of the listing should follow the legal lot boundary and include the pocket park at the end of the site. The interiors of the building should be included in the listing, especially those of Exceptional and High Significance.
- The former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building should be listed on the State Heritage Register for its State significance as part of the child welfare precinct with Bidura house. The former Children's Court & Remand Centre was an integral part of the child welfare process and Bidura house could not have performed its child welfare functions without the former Bidura Children's Court & Remand Centre building. To list one without the other under this criterion does not reflect the historical facts and the functionality of the site.
- A detailed dossier on the design of the building should be prepared that includes the available architectural documentation, ie presentation drawings of both schemes and the sun shading diagrams (if they exist) as well as a full set of the architectural plans. A statement of design should be obtained from the design architect.
- The building height and setback controls for the site should follow the outline of the existing buildings and should not be increased beyond these limits, as the current form of the building still permits intended views towards the city and towards Glebe Island and the Glebe Island Bridge from Bidura (Mr Blacket's house) and relates to the scale and character of the Glebe Conservation Area.



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- To protect the amenity of the surrounding dwellings in the conservation area the floor area of the buildings should not be increased, with the exception of any additional floor area created through excavation under the former Children's Court & Remand Centre building and the stage / back of house area or the roofing over of the Boy's recreation yard on Level F. The remaining terraces should remain as terraces but there is potential to increase their usability and their landscaping should be reintroduced after repairs to the waterproofing are carried out.
- The buildings could be adaptively re-used for any of the uses listed as being able to be approved with consent (or a combination of them) as the building construction and planning would enable the building to be used by one tenant or be subdivided into two separate areas (utilising the two lifts) or into a number of separate areas for use by multiple tenants (section 7.0). Such uses may include:
  - commercial uses,
  - educational uses including student accommodation.
  - medical uses,
  - day spas,
  - recreation uses,
  - community uses (such sporting activities using the auditorium or pool, meeting rooms, adult education classes, etc),
  - Penthouse accommodation on the upper floors (eg one penthouse per residential floor),
  - or any combination of these.

Apartment use is problematic other than on the upper levels and the building is more suited to student accommodation with shared common rooms. Penthouse style apartments could however be created on the upper levels.

- Internal layouts relating to the use as a remand centre can be altered after having been recorded, however the principal characteristics of the major public spaces should be retained.

Examples of the revitalisation of the urban terraces of major Brutalist complexes in London, such as the Barbican Centre and the National Theatre on the London South Bank, provide an indication of what can be achieved (see section 8.0).





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Minda & Minali

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## APPENDIX A

### YACS Brief to the NSW Government Architect

School Buildings files held at State Records  
S5902/16 Bidura Child Welfare Depot – Glebe  
Redevelopment of the site  
12 October 1976

#### To the secretary of the Dept of Public Works

The Minister has indicated that planning should proceed during the 1976/77 financial year on the development of a Central Metropolitan Remand Centre to replace the Metropolitan Boy's Shelter; which, for many years has been declared unsuitable for the accommodation and general care of young persons. Although no special provision was made in the 1976/77 Loan Program Forecasts for expenditure in this area, a letter has been forwarded to the Treasury advising of the Minister's proposal and seeking supplementation, but as yet no reply has been received. The general concept is the utilisation of the present Bidura depot site situated at Glebe for this purpose and to this end it would be appreciated if an immediate site inspection could be made in conjunction with Senior Officers of this department to discuss the feasibility of developing this facility on a restricted site of 1 acre, 1 rood & 18 ½ perches.

Brief guidelines of the Department's needs are attached for discussion and these will be incorporated into the detailed brief when required...originally signed L M McAuley [?]  
Secretary and stamped 6 October 1976

Attached is a detailed brief for the development of a Central Metropolitan Remand Centre, Glebe

#### Preamble

The minister has given a direction that planning proceed during the current financial year towards the construction of a Central Metropolitan Remand Centre to replace the Metropolitan Boys Shelter which is considered unsuitable for this purpose.

#### Site

That area of land upon which the Bidura Depot and the Metropolitan Girl's Shelter are located, bounded by the Glebe Point Road in the west, Avon Street in the east, a landway adjacent to the Toxteth Hotel in the South and residential development including high rise units in the north. The area is approximately 1 acre, 1 rood & 18 ½ perches.

#### Objective

The development of a residential complex for male and female offenders or those charged with offences in the 16-18 years and 12-18 years age categories respectively. The complex would also contain Children's courts, Assessment Clinic, Executive Accommodation, classrooms and a number of ancillary offices.



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#### Immediate Requirements

An intensive examination of the site to determine the feasibility of the development of the following

#### Preparatory Work

(a) Demolition of the present Bidura Building & Laundry. Determination of demolition or utilisation of the classroom block.

#### Accommodation & Associated Requirements

- (b) Provision of accommodation for a maximum of 30 males in the 16-18 years category.
- (c) Incorporation of the present Girls' Shelter in the total complex. This facility currently provides accommodation for a maximum of 25 females in the 12-18 years age category. Renovations as necessary
- (d) Common kitchen and store to cater for the needs of approximately 80 people comprising staff and young people in custody
- (e) Two (2) dining rooms, male and female with flexibility to provide an integrated service if desirable
- (f) Two (2) recreation rooms, male and female with flexibility to provide an integrated service if desirable.
- (g) Two (2) classrooms and one general activity room again with the flexibility to provide an integrated service.
- (h) Two (2) outdoor secure recreation areas including hard and soft surfaces if possible
- (i) Swimming pool
- (j) Live in accommodation for a Superintendent and his family as it is considered the total complex would be under the charge of an officer at this level.
- (k) Live-in accommodation for the Deputy Superintendent & his family
- (l) Superintendent's office with waiting vestibule
- (m) Deputy Superintendent's office
- (n) Reception areas/clerical office to accommodate at least two officers
- (o) Provision of clinic facilities for physical & mental assessment
- (p) Provision of at least two (2) Children's Courts with consideration being given to the need for a third court if necessary, all to be equipped with sound recording rooms.
- (q) Chambers for three magistrates
- r) Clerk of the Court Office to accommodate a minimum of five (5) officers with interviewing facilities and a records room.
- (s) 1. Amenities room for the justice department staff  
2. Female and Male toilet facilities and a general purpose room (auditor, casual staff &c)
- (t) Two (2) offices for the Departmental Court Officers and clerical staff; one should be large enough to permit a third court officer to be accommodated, if necessary.
- (u) Amenities room for Departmental Officers and others
- (v) Office for the duty District Officer
- (w) Two (2) interview rooms for legal aid solicitors
- (x) Police rooms with adequate accommodation for a least five (5) officers together with facilities for the preparation of morning tea &c
- (y) Two holding rooms
- (z) Adequate public waiting space with adequate heating and cooling





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- (aa) Adequate toilets male and female (public)
- (bb) Ladies' Retiring Room leading to Ladies toilet for mother's with babies &c
- (cc) Adequate off street parking
- (dd) Provision of Laundry

#### General Statement

Security Should be built into the design and current security wall arrangements at the Girls Shelter be examined for necessary modification.

Staff Establishment has not been determined but no live-in accommodation additional to the above would be required.

#### **Copy of Memo sent to A Ralph by G Griffiths on 13.12.1976**

Bidura Child Welfare Centre

The areas in which 'Bidura' stands was designates as a classified conservation area by the National Trust of Australia (NSW) 25.10.74. The house with outbuilding on the southern side appears on the Toxteth Park Subdivision Sale Plan of 15th May 1886 , and according to a member of the Glebe Historical Society there is evidence in the local Rate records that it was owned by a solicitor named Perks in 1876.

In 'Glebe – Portraits of Places' by Fred[a] McDonald [sic] 1975 there is a sketch of a house that might well be 'Bidura' from the sketch book of Edith Blacket (copy attached). It is known that Edmund Blacket, Colonial Architect 18459-1854 purchased land off Glebe Road on September 10th 1857 and according to McDonald [sic] the sketch was titled 'Our House'.

Trust this is of interest  
Geoff Griffiths

Brief to Mr Russell Government Architect L2 Essex house

Development of a Central Metropolitan Remand Centre  
General Objective

The provision of a residential facility on the Bidura depot site, Glebe Point Road for the accommodation of boys (16) years of age and girls from (12) to (18) years from the central catchment areas, who have been remanded in custody on delinquent matters or awaiting assessment after committal. It is proposed to provide a fully-integrated professional service to both sexes from the date of placement, through court proceedings to release or transfer and consequently a number of departments will be involved with the various processes. Their functional relationship to each other and to the shelter will need to be considered in planning and it is envisaged the whole complex will be in the charge of a Superintendent assisted by a Deputy Superintendent both of whom will require live in accommodation.

Elaborate standards are not sought by this department either in respect of the type of building, its fittings and finish but as it is basically custodial in nature great attention should



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be paid to security in the general layout without the use of rugged or formidable buildings which would be out of character with present day Departmental concepts of custodial care.

#### Size

This facility will replace the Metropolitan Boy's Shelter, Albion Street, Sydney and incorporate the Girl's Shelter, which is situated on the same block as Bidura Depot. The present Boy's Shelter has a maximum capacity of (35) and its counterpart for females can accommodate up to (25).

There have been considerable fluctuations in populations over recent years and during the last (12) months a "high" of 40 was achieved at the Boys' shelter and the highest figure accommodated at the Girls' shelter was (24). For the same period ie July 1975 to June 1976 the average daily population using figures from the first Monday of each month were as follows:

MBS	28.5 per day
MGS	15.7 per day

It is unlikely the opening of Cobham and the Keelong centre will have any material effect on the intake of these two facilities since their catchment areas will not be varies but Minda should certainly be affected in a positive way by a reduction in population particularly if Juvenile Aid panels begin to function.

Research carried out by the Senior Project Officer dates 7 June 1976 demonstrates that 43.3% of juveniles currently appearing before the Minda Children's Court would be diverted to Aid panels. However Minda serves the outer Western Suburbs and as the sample studied comprises children only (under 16 years of age) ...2

It is unlikely that Minda would be able to provide any substantial relief for the Central Region and only at considerable inconvenience because of the distance involved. The Metropolitan Boys' Shelter meets the needs of males over (16) years of age and the majority of girls held in Custody at the Girl's Shelter are in the 15+ age bracket. On this basis and having regard to the above mentioned figures and the unpredictability of future demands it would be prudent to provide accommodation for

20 girls

30 boys

Accommodation – Sleeping

#### Males

a) Fifteen (15), single unites which will incorporate sleeping, storage, toilet and shower facilities. Each would be approximately 113 ½ m2 in area

b) dormitory type accommodation for (15) residents with adjacent ablutions section containing (3) showers, (3) closers, (3) hand basins and (1) urinal. Beds should be separated from each other by a low timber structure which will not obstruct the vision of the supervisory officer and a built-in locker will be required beside each bed.



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c) A "post" for the night officer should be located between the two sleeping areas since he will be responsible for the oversight of the dormitory and cabins which should have "call" buttons connected to an "enunciator" board in the supervisory post.

d) the door from the dormitory to the ablution section should be operable from inside the night post without the need for the Officer to emerge.

#### Females

a) Ten (10) single units which will incorporate sleeping, toilet, storage and shower facilities. Provision should be made for "call" buttons.  
Each would be 13 1/2 m<sup>2</sup> in area.

b) Dormitory type accommodation for (10) girls with adjacent ablution section containing (2) showers, (2) closets and (2) incinerettes, (2) hand basins. Beds should be separated similar to the male section.

c) A "post" for the female night officer should be situated between the two sleeping areas and have an enunciator board connected to all 'call' buttons as for the males

The provision of dual type accommodation will permit greater flexibility and enable the management to isolate individuals for medical, disciplinary, age or other reasons.

#### Kitchen

(i) one kitchen will service the whole complex and should be equipped in such a way as to be able to provide approximately (80) meals per sitting which would be inclusive of young persons, staff and any extraneous requirement such as escorts or young persons in other than Departmental custody and who would require meals during the sitting of the Court.

The kitchen should be situated in a central position and have attached to it:

- a) Day food store (including bread)
- b) Fruit and vegetable room
- c) Serveries (2) – male and female with roller shutters
- d) hand basin and toilet (cook)
- e) Cool room if considered more necessary than a large two door commercial refrigerator

A scullery for general purposes with a small commercial washing machine will be to be located outside the kitchen but analogous to it. A small store for cleaning materials will be necessary.

#### Stores

(ii) A loading dock for the effective management of stores is an essential and the following store rooms would be required in close proximity to it

- a) Bulk food store 8.30m<sup>2</sup> in area )
- b) Hardware store 8.30m<sup>2</sup> in area ) This area at least [applies to all 3]
- c) Clothing store 8.30m<sup>2</sup> in area )



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- d) Small fuel store (swimming pool chemicals &c)
  - e) Outdoor attendants store (garden implements &c) ...4
- Dining / Recreation

(iii) Separate dining rooms are to be provided for the males and females, each opening onto its own section. These rooms should be large enough to comfortably accommodate the maximum numbers of (30 ) and (20) respectively with a minimum of two staff in each section. However they could be connected by a folding door which would permit integrated dining if considered beneficial or desirable.

Similar provisions should be made for (2) recreation rooms, each of which will only open onto the respective male or female section, separated by a folding door for combined activities when or if required.

Each recreation room should be large enough to accommodate the maximum anticipated population and be so designed as to double for library purposes. Consequently adequate shelving will be necessary and a section planned as a "quiet" area for letter writing, reading &c

#### Activity Centre

It is vital that a meaningful program of occupation be instituted and to achieve this the following separate accommodation would be required.

- a) An activity room where boys could be engaged in a variety of occupations including light metal work / woodwork, leatherwork &c. Provision for a maximum of (12) persons, at any one time, would be necessary.
- b) An activity room where girls could be meaningfully occupied with needlework, art &c. Provision for a maximum of (10) at any one time, would be necessary.
- c) A room which could be utilised for a number of purposes including remedial teaching, social training, lectures by visiting specialists &c. Provision should be made for a maximum of (15) at any one time.

Each activity room should have a store room attached and a small office for the Educational Officer / Activity Officer-in-Charge would need to be provided in this building. A single male and female toilet with hand basins would be required.

#### Outdoor Recreation

It is evident from the foregoing that the male and female sections are to be separate and each would require, as far as space will permit, one "hard" and one "soft" area for outdoor recreation activities.

An in-built swimming pool sufficiently large to accommodate a maximum of (30) persons at any one time should be included in the overall plan and be located in such a position as to be accessible to both the male and female sections.



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## Administrations

This section of the development should, if possible, be the focal points, and command an overview of the whole establishment. The following accommodation is required:

- a) Superintendent's office no less than 13 ½ m<sup>2</sup> in area [note this one in metric]
- b) A vestibule adjacent to (a) of the same dimensions
- c) Deputy Superintendent's Office
- d) A clerical office adjacent to the Superintendent's Office to accommodate a minimum of (2) Offices.
- (e) One interview room no less than 10ft by 8ft in area
- (f) Female and Male toilet with a handbasin in each
- g) An alcove with tea preparation facilities
- h) Cleaner's store
- i) Staff change amenities room, male & female toilet

Other office accommodation relates to the functions of (2) particular officers the Matron and the Male Duty officer:

### Matron

This officer who is required to work only an (8) hour shift but who would be relieved for the remainder of the (24) hours is responsible for staff supervision, the general functioning of the female section and admissions both day and night. There for an office of standard dimensions with immediate access to the female section will be required with (2) other adjacent rooms, one to enable admissions procedures to be carried out privately and the second for interviews by District Officers, Social Workers &c

### Duty Officer (Male)

This officer's role is similar to that of the Matron. He is responsible for the overall male staff supervision/ control, administration/discharge of inmates, programming and the smooth functioning of the male section. Consequently his officer must be located in such a position as to permit direct contact with Officers carrying out those various functions. Two additional rooms one for admissions purposes and the other for interviews by District Officers, Social Workers &c should be provided adjacent to the Duty Officer's room.

The abovementioned accommodation need not be sited in the Administration section but as the majority of admissions are Police cases, it should be immediately adjacent to the external access for Police Vehicles.

### Clinic

Provision is to be made for the carrying out of Physical and Mental surveys ordered by the Court and the assessment of cases committed to an institution. Therefore the following accommodation will be required.

- a) Two (2) offices for Psychologists. One office should be large enough for case conferences





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- b) An office for (1) Social Worker; large enough to accommodate a family group parents and child
- c) An office for receptionist / typist
- d) A medical room adequately equipped to carry out physical examinations together with a small adjacent waiting area
- e) Staff male and female toilet with hand basin
- f) public waiting area
- g) An alcove for tea making purposes
- h) Cleaner's store

It is important in the design of this area that provision can be made for adequate security for custody cases attending the clining and for suitable access for members of the public.

#### 9. Courts and Magistrate's Chambers

At the present time (1) Children's court functions full time, (1) three days per week and occasionally a magistrate sits part time. Having regard to the length of time deferred matters tie up courtroom, the provision of additional magisterial services when such case loads are heaving and the possibility of overall growth in caes, it would appear desirable to make allowances for three courtrooms and consequently the following accommodation will be necessary.

- a) three courtrooms each 30 ft by 20 ft approximately
- b) Three magistrates offices with separate toilet facilities and handbasin
- c) A small ante room or alcove adjacent to (b) where Solicitors and others could wait.
- d) General clerical office not less than 450 square feeet with a public counter 12-14 feet long
- e) interview room/alcove for the clerk of the court
- f) Records room no less than 200 square feet
- g) A legal profession room approximately 12 ft by 10 ft
- h) Two (2) interview rooms say 10' by 8' in dimension for Solicitors &c
- i) Small amenities room for tea making purposes

#### Police Accommodation

The area for Police in other developments of this nature had proven totally inadequate.

Police require space for multiple functions including interviewing of witnesses, taking typewritten statements, preparation of court documents &c and there is often a concentration of no less than (10) people in (1) room. Consequently at least two (2) large offices would be required each of no less than 15ft by 12 ft, with a small amenities room and a toilet and hand basin should also be provided.

#### 11. Departmental Accommodation (Courts)

Departmental Court Officers area required whenever Children's Courts are functioning and their principle reponsibility is to assist the court in reaching a decision which is in the best



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interests of the young people concerned. As a consequence they spend a larger proportion of each day in Court but this does not cancel the need for office accommodation which is essential to their effective functioning. A policy decision has recently been taken to have the district officers on duty during the sittings of Children's Courts to advise the parents and children both before and after court hearings and this officer also requires accommodation. Consequently provision of the following is recommended:

- a) One office to accommodate a Court Officer and Typist. A small switchboard will be located here.
- b) One office to accommodate a second Court Officer with built in cupboard for office stationery &c.
- c) An interview room for use by the Duty District Officer
- d) An alcove for tea making facilities
- e) Male and Female toilet with handbasin for use by Justice Department and Youth & Community Services officers
- f) Male and Female toilet with hand basin for use by Justice Department and Youth & Community Services officers.

## 12 Accommodation for Public

The following is required in close proximity to the Courts and Justice Department Clerical Office.

- a) A large waiting area for members of the public
- b) Male and Female toilets with handbasins
- c) A room for mothers with small children
- d) Adequate heating and cooling

A room with the necessary appliances for the preparation of the "Church Group" which attached itself to the Children's Courts.

## Live-in Accommodation

Both the Superintendent and the Deputy Superintendent will be required To live on the premises and consequently the following accommodation will be required.

- (i) Superintendent
  - (a) vestibule
  - (b) one double bedroom
  - (c) two smaller bedrooms with built in wardrobes
  - (d) one lounge/dining room
  - (e) bathroom and separate toilet
  - (f) kitchen
  - (g) Linen and broom cupboard
  - (h) Laundry
- (ii) Deputy Superintendent  
as for (i)



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- (iii) Matron  
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This officer will also be required to live in but the extensive accommodation above will not be necessary. The following is recommended:

- (a) bed/sitting room
- (b) bathroom/toilet
- (c) kitchenette
- (d) Small laundry

#### 14. Staff Establishment

The following is a summary of the estimated staffing requirements

- 1 Superintendent
- 1 Deputy Superintendent
- 1 Matron
- 1 Nurse (to assist in Clinic part time)
- 1 Clerk
- 1 Typist
- [?] Senior Youth Workers (female)
- [?] Senior Youth Workers (male)
- 8 Youth Workers (female)
- 9 Youth Workers (male)
- 1 Activities Officer (male)
- 1 Activities Officer (female)
- 1 Domestic Assistant (principally to assist in the kitchen)
- 1 Cook
- 1 Cook Part-time (16 hours a week)
- 1 Outdoor Attendant
- 1 Court Attendant

#### 15 General

Action should be taken towards provision of the following:

- a) Off-street parking for the public up to (25) spaces
- b) Off-street parking for Departmental officers including resident and non resident staff up to (20) spaces – Department of Youth & Community Services, Justice, Legal Officers &c
- c) Access and parking spaces for police vehicles (3)
- (d) Access and parking space for Departmental Court Cars (2)
- (e) A clearly identified entrance for Admission away from the main vestibule
- (f) Air conditioning of the Courts, Magistrates' Chambers and sleeping accommodation
- (g) Pollution Controlled incinerator
- (h) It is proposed to have bulk laundry carried out by contractors but space and washing machines will be required for light work.

[signature unreadable] 10.12.76



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Amendments [to brief]

Accommodation (Sleeping)

Single Accommodation only is required

Security

Provision should be made for six single cabins (three boys and three girls\_ or available for use by either. At least two should be without showers and toilets.

Swimming Pool

Should be designed in such a way for the use by boys and girls simultaneously if required.

Administration & Reception

(a) The Clerical office should be large enough to accommodate four personnel.

(b) Senior officers (male and female) will function from the same office but separate charge rooms for staff and admission facilities for boys and girls should be provided adjacent to the general office.

Clinic

Consideration should be given to adapting the present Girl's Shelter

Courts

Advice has been sought from the Department of the Attorney General and of Justice in this regard but initially provision for three courts would be desirable.

Kitchen

The kitchen should be sited in such a way so that it can be staffed by female cooks and assistance provided by the Girls section.

Other amendments were made to the brief including the addition of a multi-purpose hall.