

# *Heritage Data Form*

ITEM DETAILS							
<b>Name of Item</b>	Blowhole Point Tennis Courts						
<b>Other Name/s Former Name/s</b>							
<b>Item type (if known)</b>	Built						
<b>Item group (if known)</b>	Recreation and Entertainment						
<b>Item category (if known)</b>	Other—Recreation and Entertainment						
<b>Area, Group, or Collection Name</b>							
<b>Street number</b>							
<b>Street name</b>	Terralong Street						
<b>Suburb/town</b>	Kiama				<b>Postcode</b>	2533	
<b>Local Government Area/s</b>	Municipality of Kiama						
<b>Property description</b>	Part Lot 7009, DP 1074322						
<b>Location - Lat/long</b>	<b>Latitude</b>	-34.671329			<b>Longitude</b>	150.861397	
<b>Location - AMG (if no street address)</b>	<b>Zone</b>		<b>Easting</b>		<b>Northing</b>		
<b>Owner</b>	Public Land						
<b>Current use</b>	Tennis Courts						
<b>Former Use</b>	Quarry						
<b>Statement of significance</b>	<p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts have cultural significance for historic, associative and social values at a local level as the first tennis courts in Kiama and as the site of the quarry used in the construction of the nearby Robertson Basin. From c1850 to 1876, the stone and spoil from the site was used in the construction of the basin, leaving a depression in the landscape of Blowhole Point. The construction of the basin led to a boom in Kiama's agricultural and blue-metal industries in the 1880s. The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts, which are in the quarry pit, have historical significance as evidence of the construction of this basin.</p> <p>In 1892, the quarry pit was repurposed by the Kiama Lawn Tennis Club, which built the tennis courts on site. These were the first tennis courts and one of the earliest sporting facilities in Kiama. The courts have been in almost continuous use by residents and visitors since construction, except for a brief period in the 1940s and 1950s. Clubs like the Kiama Lawn Tennis Club were an important type of social group in Kiama in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, providing recreational opportunities to residents and influencing the development of the town. The courts are also held in esteem by the local community, not only as a sporting facility but due to their longevity of use. For these reasons, the courts have historical, associative and social significance at a local level.</p>						
<b>Level of Significance</b>	State <input type="checkbox"/>				Local <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

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DESCRIPTION						
<b>Designer</b>	Unknown					
<b>Builder/ maker</b>	Unknown					
<b>Physical Description</b>	<p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts are two open-air synthetic tennis courts located on the western slope of Blowhole Point, facing towards Kiama Harbour and the town centre. The courts are on levelled land, within the slope of the Blowhole Point topography, in a former quarry pit associated with the construction of Robertson Basin.</p> <p>The courts are the standard hardcourt style of tennis court popular in Australia. They are slightly offset and surrounded by high metal fences, including an internal divider. The surface of the courts has recently been painted blue and is in good condition. Access to the courts is from a door on the west.</p> <p>An embankment approximately 6 metres high surrounds the tennis courts to their north and east, and to the west, which was the former quarry pit face. This embankment is now planted with a range of shrubs and trees, including a row of Norfolk pines along its ridge. To the west of the courts is an area of open lawn where the land levels out. A small brick clubhouse built in the 1970s is also located here. Between the courts and the clubhouse is an original Norfolk pine that dates from before the construction of the tennis courts in 1892.</p> <p>The Kiama Visitor's Centre and Pilot's Cottage Museum overlook the courts from the south and are accessible via a steep pathway and steps to the west of the tennis courts.</p>					
<b>Physical condition and Archaeological potential</b>	<p>The tennis courts have recently been resurfaced and are in good condition.</p> <p>The archaeological potential of the site is unknown.</p>					
<b>Construction years</b>	<b>Start year</b>	1892	<b>Finish year</b>	1892	<b>Circa</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Modifications and dates</b>	<p>2009—courts resurfaced.</p> <p>2016—courts repainted.</p>					
<b>Further comments</b>						

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HISTORY	
Historical notes	<p>Kiama is part of the traditional land of the Wodi Wodi, a clan of the Dharawal people. The Wodi Wodi are a coastal people whose traditional Country includes Lake Illawarra, Shellharbour and Minnamurra.</p> <p>On 25 April 1770, Captain James Cook observed Aboriginal people along the coastline of the Illawarra and recorded the event in his log book. Bass and Flinders later encountered Aboriginal people at Port Kembla in March 1796. The following year, Bass anchored his whaleboat in the sheltered bay (now known as Kiama Harbour) and 'found' the Kiama Blowhole, calling it 'a deep ragged hole and on one side of it the sea washed in through a subterraneous passage with a most tremendous noise'.</p> <p>The name Kiama is of Aboriginal origin, with several possible meanings. One explanation is that the word derives from the name of the father spirit of Eastern NSW, 'Kiahma' or 'Baiaime'. Alternative meanings are 'fish caught from rocks' or 'where the seas roar' (referring to the Kiama Blowhole).</p> <p>Red cedar logging and rainforest clearing began in 1812 and a port was established at Kiama for the shipment of cedar from the district. The cedar cutters were soon followed by European settlers and their animals. David Smith is said to have been the first permanent European settler, arriving in 1821. Aboriginal people were gradually displaced from their traditional land as it was cleared for farms and towns were established. In the mid-1830s, Aboriginal people resorted to raiding the farms of the settlers, stealing crops and pigs. In 1835, nine local farmers accused 'Black Harry' and 'Captain Brooks' of leading these raids. Within a century of European settlement of the district, there were few Aboriginal people living in Kiama. Those who remained lived in camps at Brown Street and elsewhere in the district. Some of the Aboriginal men worked in the quarries and sawmills of the area.</p> <p>The townsite of Kiama, reserved in 1826, was surveyed in 1839—town allotments were sold the following year. By 1848, there were 18 permanent houses, two inns (Gum Tree Inn and Fitzroy Inn), two stores, a wooden church (the first Church of England) and a jetty in the harbour.</p> <p>The cedar forests of the district were logged out by the 1850s, paving the way for the development of a thriving dairy farming industry. A new breed of dairy cow, the Illawarra Shorthorn, was developed in the area. Local farmers and pastoralists joined the Kiama Agricultural Society in 1848, signalling the importance of agriculture to the district.</p> <p>Basalt (blue metal) quarrying flourished in and around Kiama from the 1870s, and the quarries were a major employer in the district. The quarries supplied large amounts of 'blue metal' demanded by Sydney's expanding network of roads, tramways and railways.</p> <p>Kiama developed as a service and shipping centre for local industry centred on the harbour, where local produce and blue metal was shipped to Sydney and beyond. The wealth generated from the pastoral and quarrying industries led to an economic and social boom in Kiama in the 1880s. The town also became a popular seaside holiday resort—the opening of the railway in 1888 and Kiama station in 1894 made it more readily accessible from Sydney.</p> <p>The municipality of Kiama was gazetted in 1858. The present Kiama local government area (LGA) comprises the former Gerringong, Jamberoo and Kiama councils. The population of Kiama rose from 741 in 1861 to 19,973 in 2006. There are 21,464 people living in the LGA at the present time.</p> <p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts are located on part of the public recreation reserve originally gazetted in March 1904 and re-gazetted in September 1964.</p> <p>The tennis courts were made in 1892 in the depression formed from the excavation of earth during construction of the coffer dams (now Robertson Basin) from the 1850s to 1876. The <i>Kiama Independent</i> reported in August 1892 that members of the Kiama Lawn Tennis Club successfully applied to Kiama Council to form tennis courts on that site 'so as to escape the effects of the north east and southerly winds'. In return, the club was to pay the annual sum of £1. The agreement was slightly premature as the Blowhole Point Recreation Reserve had not yet been handed over to the Council. When this did occur, the agreement was formalised. Two A1 clay tennis courts were formed, the area was fenced, and seats erected, with the costs of improvements totalling £20. Early photographs show the courts in the same arrangement as they are today, including the Norfolk Island pine.</p>

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	<p>At this time, 41 of the 58 members of the club were playing members. They played regularly on the courts and hosted matches with other tennis clubs in the Illawarra district. In September 1896, the <i>Kiama Independent</i> published a feature on Kiama by anonymous writer 'Esperance'. He described the town in detail. Of the Blowhole Point tennis courts, he wrote: 'The tennis courts are made in a hollow close by [the lighthouse] and are tolerably good ones. Here the ladies of the town meet on certain days and refresh the tired players with a cup of afternoon tea'.</p> <p>In 1900, the Blowhole Point Trustee's received information from the Department of Lands that the tennis club's permissive occupancy of a portion of the recreation reserve was terminated and the club would need to arrange a new agreement with the trustees for the ongoing sum of £1 per year. The Blowhole Point Tennis Club remained active through the 1910s and 1920s following the establishment of the rival Central Park Tennis Club in Kiama. During 1928, £20 was spent on improvements to the courts.</p> <p>Kiama Council questioned the viability of the Blowhole Point Tennis Courts in April 1934. Alderman King reported that the club 'would probably not go on and another one wished to get the court and would take it over if the Council would put it in order'. The mayor indicated the site was leased to the club that owned the court. No further action was taken by the Council, pending further information on the matter. The tennis club held a meeting one month later, and contrary to Alderman King's belief, it decided to repair one of the courts via voluntary labour. It also hoped to have increased membership when both courts were in good playing condition.</p> <p>The Blowhole Tennis Club notified Kiama Council in December 1937 they were relinquishing tenancy of the court in Central Park. It appears that the club had abandoned play on the Blowhole Point Tennis Courts by this time as in 1939 alderman Phillips advised that Council's caretaker 'should pay some attention to the tennis courts on the Blowhole Point [as] they are going to ruin at the present time'. Phillips advocated repairing the courts and allowing the holiday campers on the point to use them for free. The Council resolved to repair and straighten the fences, take the spoil from around the courts to provide additional space behind the base lines, surface the courts with metal and bitumen, and to top dress them with emolium and sand, repair and paint buildings, and hire the courts to visitors at a nominal rental.</p> <p>The tennis courts lay unused through the 1940s and 1950s. Following the closure of the Catholic Club tennis courts, players returned to the old Blowhole Point Tennis Courts. After years of neglect, members of the group repaired and refurbished the courts and club house and installed lighting, power poles and fencing.</p> <p>Since that time, the tennis club has actively used the courts. They were resurfaced in 2009, when the club received a grant towards the work from the NSW Department of Sport and Recreation. The club continues to lease the courts and pay for the upkeep and maintenance of the property.</p>
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<b>THEMES</b>	
<b>National historical theme</b>	Developing Australia's cultural life
<b>State historical theme</b>	Sport—activities associated with organised recreational and health promotional activities

# Heritage Data Form

APPLICATION OF CRITERIA	
<b>Historical significance</b> SHR criteria (a)	<p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts have historical significance as the site of an early quarry associated with the construction of Robertson Basin and as one of the earliest sports facilities in Kiama. Between c1850 and 1876, stone and spoil were quarried from the site to construct the coffer dam walls of Robertson Basin. The landscape of the Blowhole Point tennis courts has historical significance as evidence of the construction of this basin, which greatly improved shipping capacity in Kiama and led to the boom in the region's agricultural and blue-metal industries in the 1880s.</p> <p>The quarry pit was later repurposed in 1892 by the Kiama Lawn Tennis Club for two tennis courts, which have been in near-continuous use by residents and visitors to Kiama since. The courts are the first tennis courts in Kiama and one of the earliest sporting facilities constructed in the town. Their layout has remained unchanged since 1892. The tennis courts continue to be used today, representing nearly 130 years of near-continuous use for the sport on the site.</p> <p>The site has historical significance at a local level for both evidencing the construction of the Robertson Basin and for its long historical use for tennis.</p> <p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts has cultural significance at a local level under this criterion.</p>
<b>Historical association significance</b> SHR criteria (b)	<p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts have an association with the Kiama Lawn Tennis Club and its successors that is significant at a local level. The Kiama Lawn Tennis Club was the first tennis club in Kiama and was the original applicant for the construction of the courts on Blowhole Point. This group dissolved in 1937 after relinquishing its tenancy of the courts, which are now used by the Kiama Tennis Club. Sporting clubs such as the Kiama Lawn Tennis Club were important social groups in rural and coastal towns in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, providing residents with avenues for leisure, recreation and competition. These clubs often had a tangible influence on the development of their towns by advocating for the creation of sporting facilities, many of which still exist today—as is the case with the Kiama Lawn Tennis Club and the Blowhole Point Tennis Courts.</p> <p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts has cultural significance at a local level under this criterion.</p>
<b>Aesthetic significance</b> SHR criteria (c)	<p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts are functional in design, though the surrounding landscaping of the embankments provides a pleasant backdrop to the site. While the site has some aesthetic qualities, it is primarily utilitarian and is not considered to have aesthetic significance.</p> <p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts does not meet the threshold of significance under this criterion.</p>
<b>Social significance</b> SHR criteria (d)	<p>A detailed social values assessment has not been undertaken, but the Blowhole Point Tennis Courts are held in high regard by the local community and the Kiama Tennis Club. The Blowhole Tennis Courts have been in almost continuous use by the local community since the 1892, most recently being upgraded in 2009. The social significance of the courts is almost certainly related to their status as community tennis courts and because they are the oldest tennis courts in Kiama. The courts' location on Blowhole Point may also figure into their significance.</p> <p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts has cultural significance at a local level under this criterion. A detailed social values assessment should be undertaken to better understand the community's attachment to the Blowhole Point Tennis Courts.</p>
<b>Technical/Research significance</b> SHR criteria (e)	<p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts are highly unlikely to furnish new information or insight into the process of quarrying or to have significant archaeological deposits.</p> <p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts does not meet the threshold of significance for this criterion.</p>
<b>Rarity</b> SHR criteria (f)	<p>Tennis courts are commonly found throughout Kiama.</p> <p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts does not meet the threshold of significance under this criterion.</p>
<b>Representativeness</b> SHR criteria (g)	<p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts are a typical example of a hardcourt style tennis court found throughout Australia and the world. The courts do not demonstrate any outstanding features, nor are they particularly fine examples of their type. Any hardcourt tennis court in a similar condition elsewhere in Australia would demonstrate the same characteristics as the Blowhole Point Tennis Courts.</p> <p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts does not meet the threshold of significance for this criterion.</p>
<b>Integrity</b>	<p>The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts have a high degree of integrity. The layout of the courts has remained unchanged since 1892. Since that time, the courts and associated infrastructure (i.e. clubhouse) have been upgraded and repaired to enable their continued use—the primary source of their significance. Evidence of the quarry pit the tennis courts are in is still legible in the landscape, as the topography of the site have remained almost wholly unchanged.</p>

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HERITAGE LISTINGS	
Heritage listing/s	N/A

INFORMATION SOURCES				
Include conservation and/or management plans and other heritage studies.				
Type	Author/Client	Title	Year	Repository
Article	<i>The Kiama Independent and Shoalhaven Advertiser</i>	Local News	16 Aug 1892	Trove, via National Library of Australia
Article	<i>The Kiama Independent and Shoalhaven Advertiser</i>	A few Notes on a Trip to Kiama	15 Feb 1896	Trove, via National Library of Australia
Article	Helen Laidlaw, Blowhole Tennis Club Inc	Heritage of the Blowhole Tennis Club & Courts 1872-2014	2014	Kiama Library
Book	William A Bayley	Blue Haven: history of Kiama Municipality	19	Kiama Library
Article	<i>Kiama Independent and Shoalhaven Advertiser</i>	Kiama celebrates	12 Feb 1938	Trove, via National Library of Australia
Article	<i>Kiama Independent and Shoalhaven Advertiser</i>	Works committee	22 Feb 1939	Trove, via National Library of Australia
Article	<i>Kiama Independent and Shoalhaven Advertiser</i>	'Going to ruin' Blowhole Tennis Courts	4 Feb 1929	Trove, via National Library of Australia
Article	<i>Kiama Independent and Shoalhaven Advertiser</i>	Blowhole Point Reserve, meeting of the trustees	21 Jul 1900	Trove, via National Library of Australia
Minute	Kiama Council	Minute Book, minute 35	30 Jun 1929	Kiama Council

RECOMMENDATIONS	
Recommendations	The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts should be included as an item of local significance in Schedule 5 of the <i>Kiama Local Environmental Plan 2011</i> .

SOURCE OF THIS INFORMATION			
Name of study or report	Kiama Town Centre Heritage Review	Year of study or report	2021
Item number in study or report	37		
Author of study or report	GML Heritage Pty Ltd		
Inspected by	GML Heritage Pty Ltd		
NSW Heritage Manual guidelines used?		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
This form completed by	GML Heritage Pty Ltd	Date	27 May 2021



# *Heritage Data Form*

## **IMAGES - 1 per page**

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

<b>Image caption</b>	The Blowhole Point Tennis Courts, facing east.				
<b>Image year</b>	2020	<b>Image by</b>	GML Heritage	<b>Image copyright holder</b>	GML Heritage



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## **IMAGES - 1 per page**

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

<b>Image caption</b>	The clubhouse (right) and the 1892 Norfolk Island pine (centre) to the west of the Blowhole Point Tennis Courts				
<b>Image year</b>	2020	<b>Image by</b>	GML Heritage	<b>Image copyright holder</b>	GML Heritage





# *Heritage Data Form*

## **IMAGES - 1 per page**

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

<b>Image caption</b>	View to the Blowhole Point Tennis Courts, facing northeast from the nearby Pilot's Cottage, showing the 1892 Norfolk Island pine.				
<b>Image year</b>	2020	<b>Image by</b>	GML Heritage	<b>Image copyright holder</b>	GML Heritage



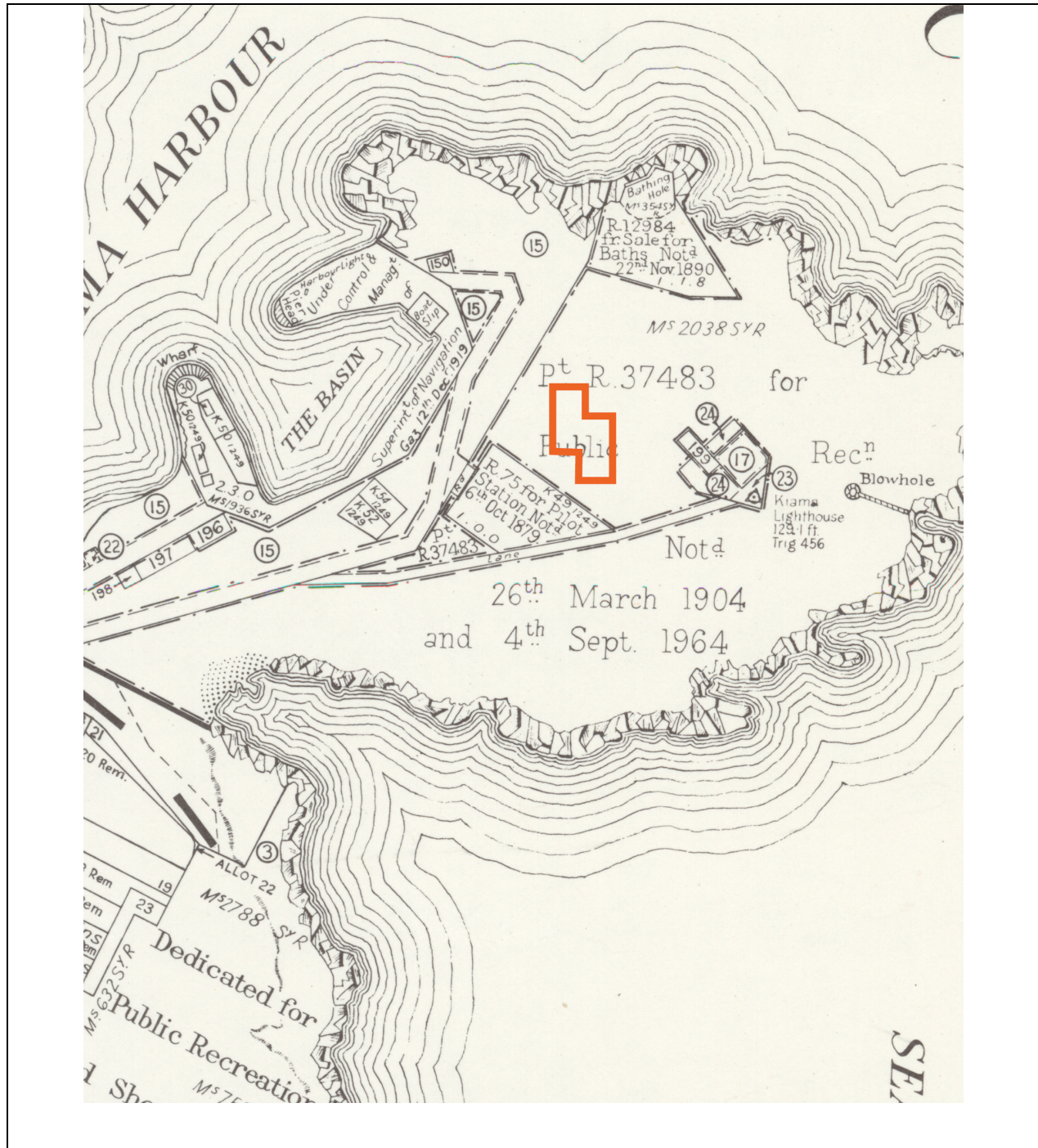


# Heritage Data Form

## IMAGES - 1 per page

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

<b>Image caption</b>	Approximate location of the Blowhole Point Tennis Courts on the Town of Kiama Plan (1972 copy of the original 1840s drawing).				
<b>Image year</b>	1972	<b>Image by</b>	Department of Lands NSW	<b>Image copyright holder</b>	Department of Lands NSW



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## IMAGES - 1 per page

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

<b>Image caption</b>	A c1880s photo of Robertson Basin, showing the quarry pit on Blowhole Point where the tennis courts were built soon after.				
<b>Image year</b>	c1880s	<b>Image by</b>	Charles H. Kerry	<b>Image copyright holder</b>	N/A





# Heritage Data Form

## IMAGES - 1 per page

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

<b>Image caption</b>	The tennis courts c1940s–1950s when they were in disuse, shown used as a camping spot.				
<b>Image year</b>	c1940s-1950s	<b>Image by</b>	Unknown	<b>Image copyright holder</b>	Kiama Library

