

I am a long term resident of the Southern Highlands and have family whom were born and raised in the village of Berrima dating back to the 1830's.

The village of Berrima NSW, as visitors would realise, is one of few truly historic colonial places in Australia. Many visitors travel here to Berrima, and overseas to visit similar sites with great historic value.

Many sites overseas have protective historic classifications and have been listed with a World Heritage status.

Prisons, locations of encampments for prisoners of war, and more honoured sites are to be found. A most striking feature of these sites is the integrity of the buildings and surrounds showing well preserved sites for the visitor to experience all of what previous generations and civilisations had endured and lived through.

The proposed excessive development of the Berrima Gaol site by BlueSox is not only disrespectful to those of our forebears, it will detract from the educational opportunities and history the site holds.

Other gaols in Australia, of a similar age, are on the World Heritage list, Fremantle Gaol for example.

Why is Berrima Gaol, an older site, not worth the same classification?

Minister Roberts, the man responsible for the Gaols selling into private hands, should be asked, where was the due process for the tender for the sale?

Where is the transparency?

Why was it your friend whom won the bid of sale Minister Roberts?

Berrima village has strong heritage guidelines and restrictions on development.

The question as to why would a hotel be appropriate to be built on the curtilage and narrow delicate riparian zone of the Wingecarribee river.

The historic Gaol site and surrounds should be for education and reflection, not beauty treatments.

To quote from the Conservation Management Plan (The Berrimagaoil.com.au) by Urbis for BlueSox, the sites' now owner and developer.

'Historic Gardens

2.6.2

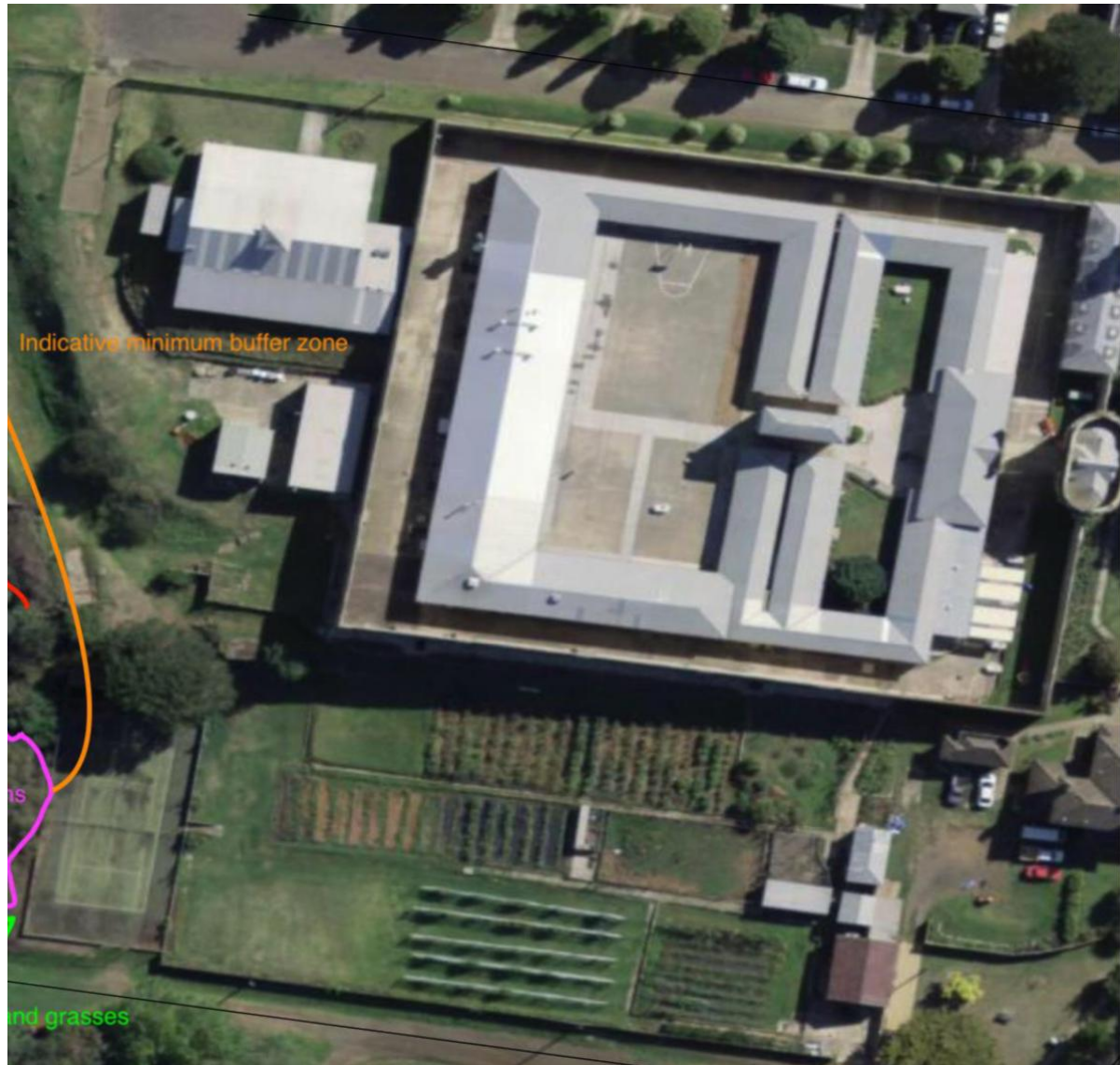
These areas are now open, and little evidence survives above ground of their former use. (*This statement is a misrepresentation of the existence of past gardens*).

2.6.3

The sheds include the sandstone garden sheds and timber garden sheds, as well as aluminium sheds and garages to the rear of the site.'

Well 'sandstone and separate timber garden sheds' is very significant evidence as to the existence of definite working gardens. The gardens are especially of colonial and war time significance. The vegetable gardens are to be understood to have provided vegetable crops not only for the inmates but to the village residents during the First World War.

I also have verbal evidence from family who witnessed the prisoners working the gardens on the southern side of the Gaol site during the last century. To illustrate this I have also included an aerial image showing the garden rows and orchard below, also the multiple garden sheds near the lower right hand corner of the image.



These gardens were also tended by the female inmates of the facility right up to the time of its closure as a remand facility approximately 14 years ago 2011. Again used as a Gaol 4-5 years on the gardens continued until approximately 5 years ago.

I question the development plans with the following:

To suggest placing a multi story car park, albeit dug down into what is ancient sandstone springs, and what was historic colonial gardens, within the heritage site of the Gaol Curtilage, is insulting.

You don't need a hotel to make visitors come.

A historic site, is an historic site, a site of value.
NOT A HOTEL OR MOTEL

NOT A WELLNESS CENTRE
NOT A RESTAURANT

Sincerely
Katie Locke