

Kinchela Boys Home

healing and the unexpected role
of a
Conservation Management Plan

alan croker

Unlocking the Past to Free the Future



JULY 2017

Kinchela Boys Home - a Conservation Management Plan - Volume 1

**Kinchela Boys Home was built on the stolen land of the Dunghutti.
We would like to acknowledge the Dunghutti and other First
Nations peoples of this country whose boys were kidnapped
under the policies that created the Stolen Generations.**

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this document contains the
names and images of people that have passed away.**

WHY?

Why was I taken from my family
to be stripped of my culture, my identity,
to be told I wasn't black,
I was just darker than the rest
why, tell me why

I was placed in a government home
through no fault of my own even though
with all the other kids I still felt so
alone,
the touch of a mother's love I never knew
why

Why did they tell me oh such lies
to say I had no family,
that I was an only child
the touch of a mother's love I never knew
why, maybe you can tell me why

SECTION 13A, ABORIGINES PROTECTION AMENDING ACT, No.2 of 1915:

The Board may assume full control and custody of the child of any aborigine, if after due inquiry it is satisfied that such a course is in the interest of the moral and physical welfare of such child. The Board may thereupon remove such child to such control and care as it thinks best.

he New South Wales Aborigines Protection
aborigines Welfare Board, boys between the age
aken from across the entire state and beyond
l, as shown on the map below. Many boys had
her institutions since being separated from their

This map was prepared for this CMP using information provided by the KBH survivors and additional records that were made available to this project.

The map is incomplete and further work needs to be done to document where all of the boys who went through KBH were taken from and when (refer to Appendix A, Volume 2 for more detail).

This mapping is an important process that helps describe local Aboriginal community histories and the impact the removal of their children had on families, community relationships and the legacies that continue to be felt today.



**NSW Child Removal
Kinchela Boys Home
1924 - 1962**

KEY

- 1924 - 1929
- 1930 - 1939
- 1940 - 1949
- 1950 - 1959
- 1960 - 1969

Note: Information on this map is based on KBH Admission Records which were incomplete. From these records the location of at least 21 children is not accounted for.

1.4 THE PLACE

The former KBH site is on Dunghutti land. The traditional territory of the Dunghutti extends from the eastern extremity of the Mid North Coast, to the Northern Tablelands in the west around the Macksville area.

A brief description of Dunghutti history prior to European settlement is provided in the chronology of the place in Section 2.3.1 of this CMP.

The location of KBH is shown on the maps below. The former Kinchela Boys Home is sited on low-lying flood plains, and contains two parcels of land that are separated by a parcel of freehold land.

The smaller parcel of land, referred to as the KBH main site, is approximately 2 acres and fronts South West Rocks Road. This parcel of land corresponds with Aboriginal Reserve AR 174 gazetted 23/4/1883, and contains the buildings from the KBH period.

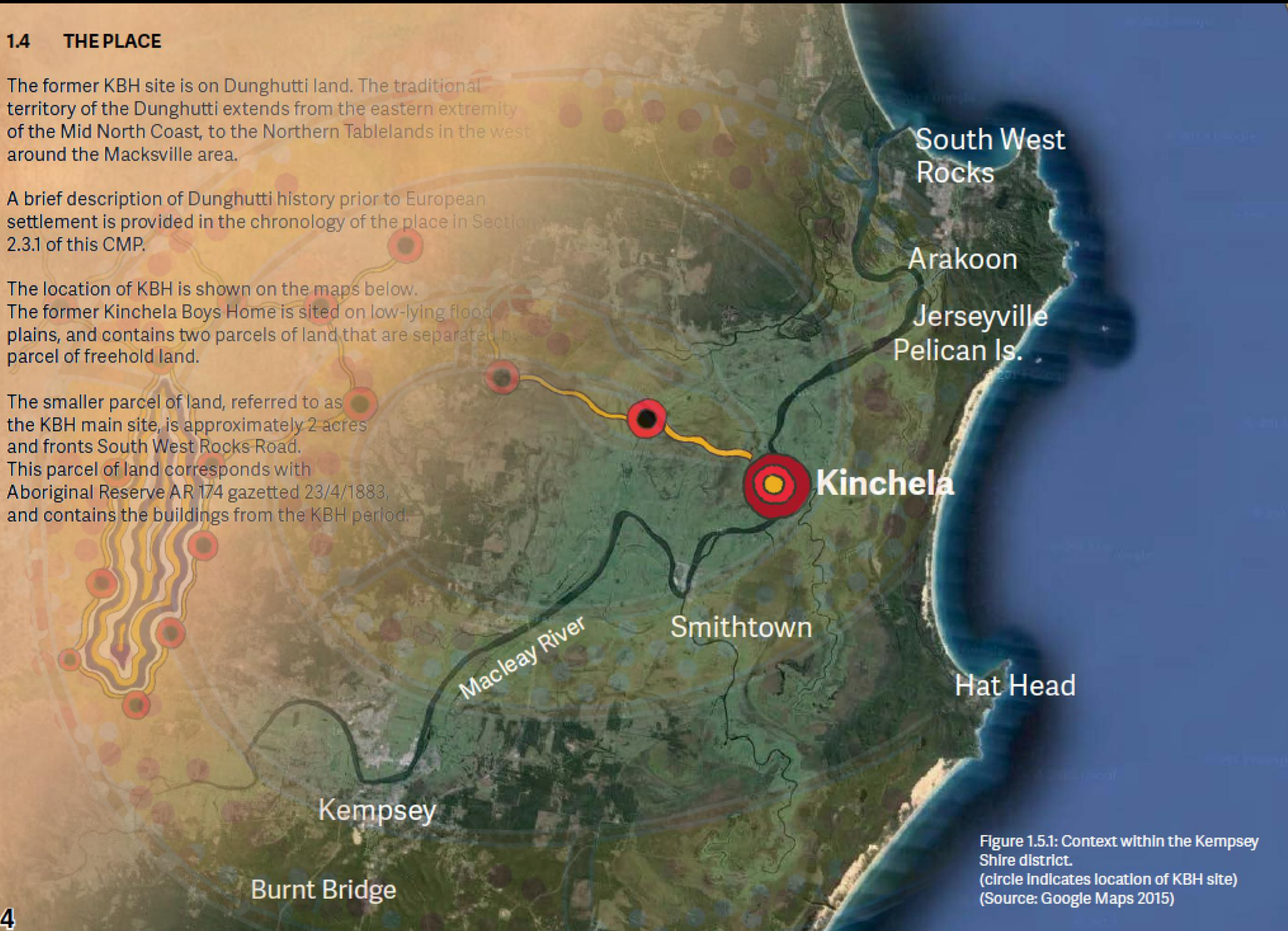
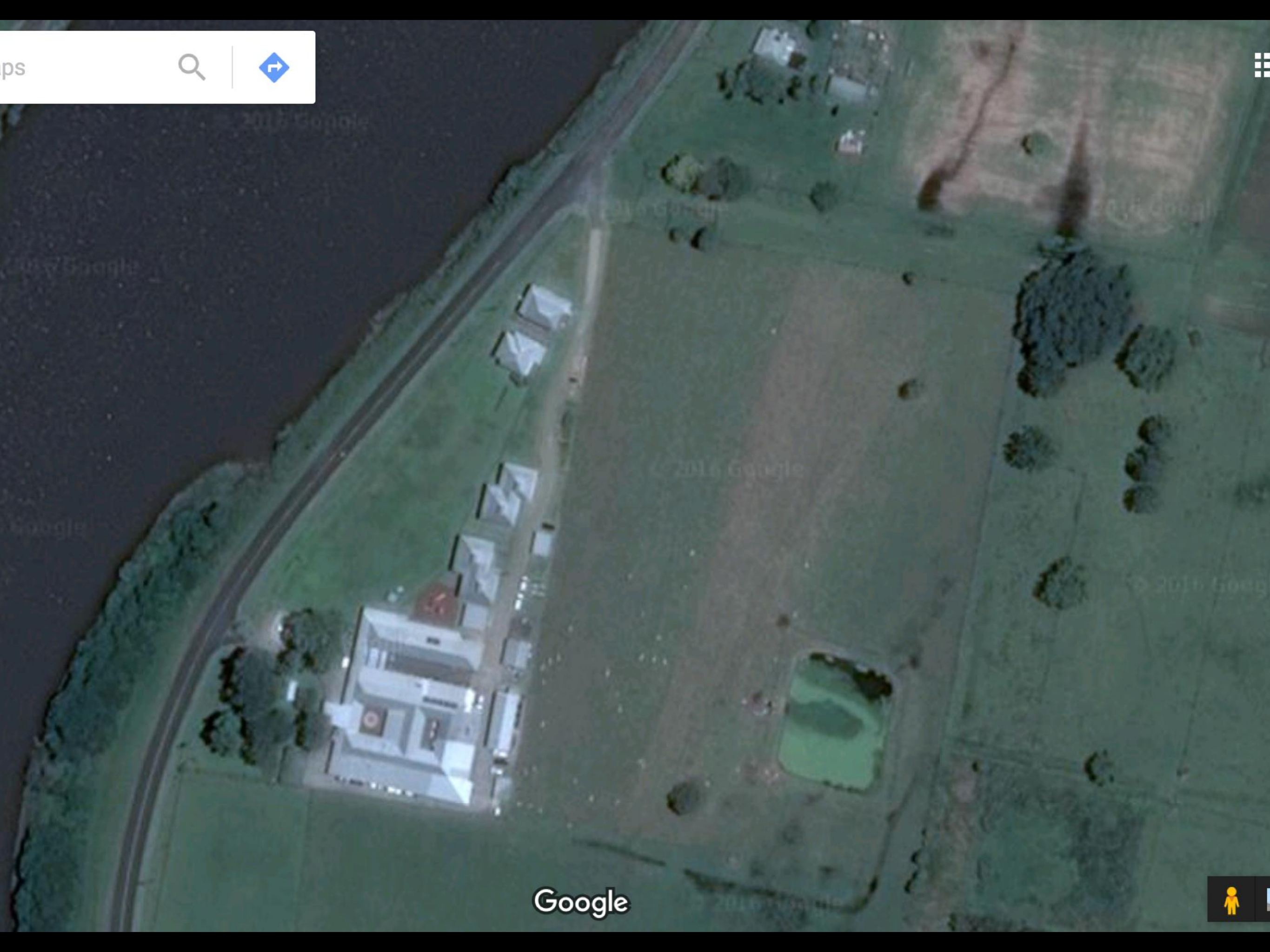


Figure 1.5.1: Context within the Kempsey Shire district.
(circle indicates location of KBH site)
(Source: Google Maps 2015)



Figure 1.5.4: Location of subject site (outlined red) within immediate context, significant sites indicated. (Source: SIX Maps 2016)





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DORMITORIES

"You had two dormitories and one was for the boys 8 to about 11-12, and the other one is from 12 up to 17. Big boys and little boys they called them."

Stephen Maher-Ridgeway (#35)

"Every time it rained you'd hear this moaning, you know and just crying, I wondered why, you know. It was a room where one of the staff members came and stayed so if you hear any noise you were punished. But on these rainy nights they'd cry and ah, you know why, 'cos they'd cry for their mothers all the young ones. I cried my eyes out for my mother."

Stephen Maher-Ridgeway (#35)

"The dormitories used to fit fifty beds on both sides, that's a hundred (...) the only thing used to separate us was a locker."

Manuel Ebsworth (#28)

"Even making your bed you've got to do precise, exact, neat, deadly. Everything had to be neat."

Crow (Ian Lowe, #41)



Figure 3.10.1: Earlier 'tin shed' dormitories at KBH c1925 (demolished 1935)
(Source: NSW State Records)



Figure 3.10.2: Official opening of new dormitories, 18 October 1935
(Source: NSW State Records)



FLAMMABLE GAS

NO SMOKING

NO NAKED FLAME

P. GAS

1075

2YE



EL  GAS











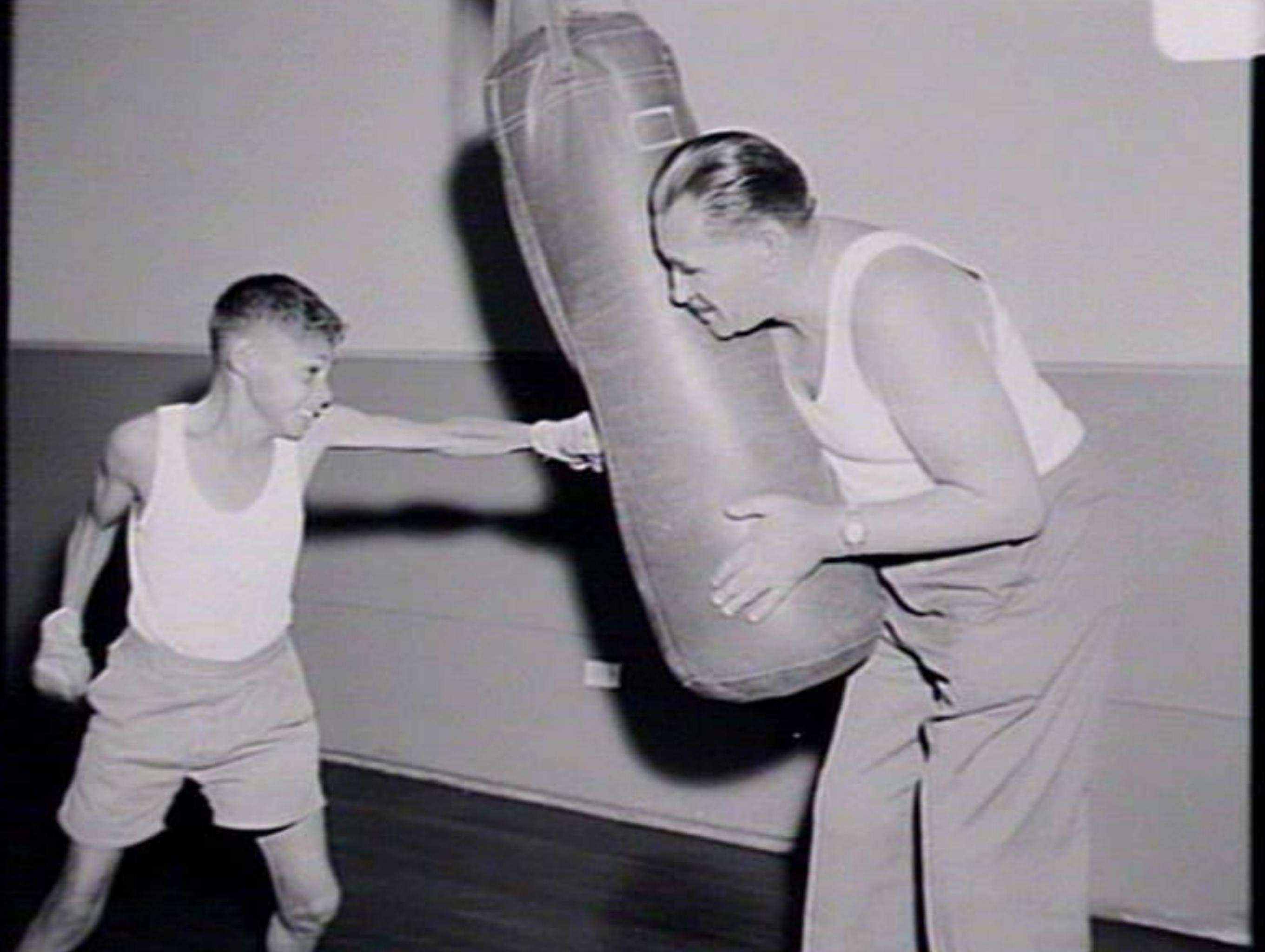












BOYS HOME

OUR PAIN

For we were in Kinchela Boy's Home,
Just little kids,
Taken, away, from our
Families.
Learn to be slaves and soldiers, to
marching
everywhere.

We are the Kinchela Boy's
and you destroy the most innocent people
in the world, us little kids.

We are still the Kinchela Boy's.
Brain wash through,
the years.
And we found out
that we are black,
Not Human.
Now we are still lost,
Today, Tomorrow Yesterday.

Written by Crow (Ian Lowe, #41)









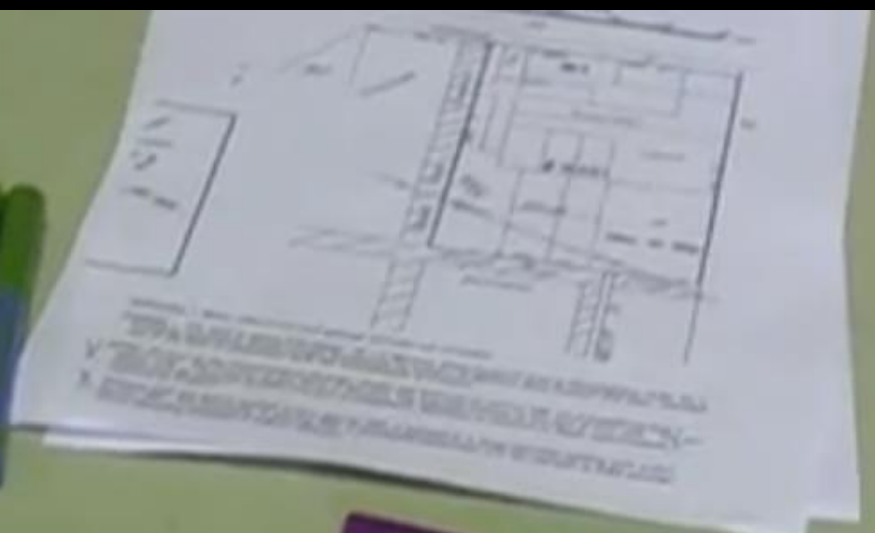
Albert 2024
10/10/2024

LET'S WE...
KATE...
ALBERT 2024
10/10/2024

DECAL

Blue t-shirt with a graphic of a woman's face and a hibiscus flower.





TO A WHOLE AND SEVERAL PARTS OF THE
 V. BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA -
 A BEING PART OF THE PARISH OF ARADON



1972

OF FORM SA

SCALE



Change the site
 After (George) ...
 One (George) ...
 One (George) ...
 One (George) ...

PARISH OF ARADON COUNTY OF WASSARIE
 LAND DISTRICT OF KEMPNEY SHIRE OF KAMLEAY

Street (Riverside) prices are
 shown as alternatives for sale.

at part of us was black, and what part was
All we know was from KKH

BOYS HOME IT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Use

child labour.
deliberate neglect
enforced incarceration

kidnapped

Home is a place of deep significance for former inmates, their
The site and its associated places hold memories, both painful
childhood after being stolen from their families under Government
forced removal, assimilation and training of Aboriginal youths.
records and the memories and stories of former inmates provide
the policies and practices for the education and understanding of all

belief

RECORDS

ence for its long history of Government control over the lives of
and its detrimental effect on their lives. Extant buildings and landscape
chela Boys Home, available records and historical material, and the
e taken there, bear witness to what was effectively cultural genocide,
that "full blood" Aboriginals would die out and that "mixed race"

Statement of Cultural Significance

4.1 WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The former Kinchela Boys Home is a place of deep importance for survivors, their families and communities. The site and its associated places hold memories, both painful and otherwise, of their childhood after being *kidnapped* from their families and deliberately *re-programmed* in order to assimilate into white Australian society. The place itself, historical records and the memories and stories of survivors provide tangible evidence of these destructive past Government policies and practices for the education and understanding of all Australians. The site itself is important for its long history of Government control and intervention into the lives of Aboriginal families in NSW and its devastating effect on their lives.¹ Remaining buildings and landscape elements of the former Kinchela Boys Home, available records and historical material, and the memory of those who were taken there, bear witness to what was effectively cultural

genocide. This was based on the belief that “full blood

Aborigines” would die out and that the “mixed race Aborigines” would soon have their Aboriginality bred out.

innocent

Many survivors continue to experience lasting emotional *trauma*, ongoing health problems, cultural dislocation from their traditional communities and broader Aboriginal community. The deliberate severing of family and cultural ties has left many still searching for

connections to their *cultural birth*

Subsequent generations, including children and grandchildren, continue to live with the *pain* and damage

The former Kinchela Boys Home provides tangible evidence of the entrenched early to mid twentieth century belief that ‘Full Blood and Part Aborigines’ were inferior and only fit to serve the rest of society in limited roles. As a military barracks style institution, children were not treated as individuals and addressed only by an assigned number. They were generally offered only basic education, with no access given to training for labouring and agricultural work.

The institution was essentially *slave labour*, according to the unpaid agricultural production on a commercial scale. The institution, on nearby farms and across the state,





Fred Knight
R. P. Knight
52-37

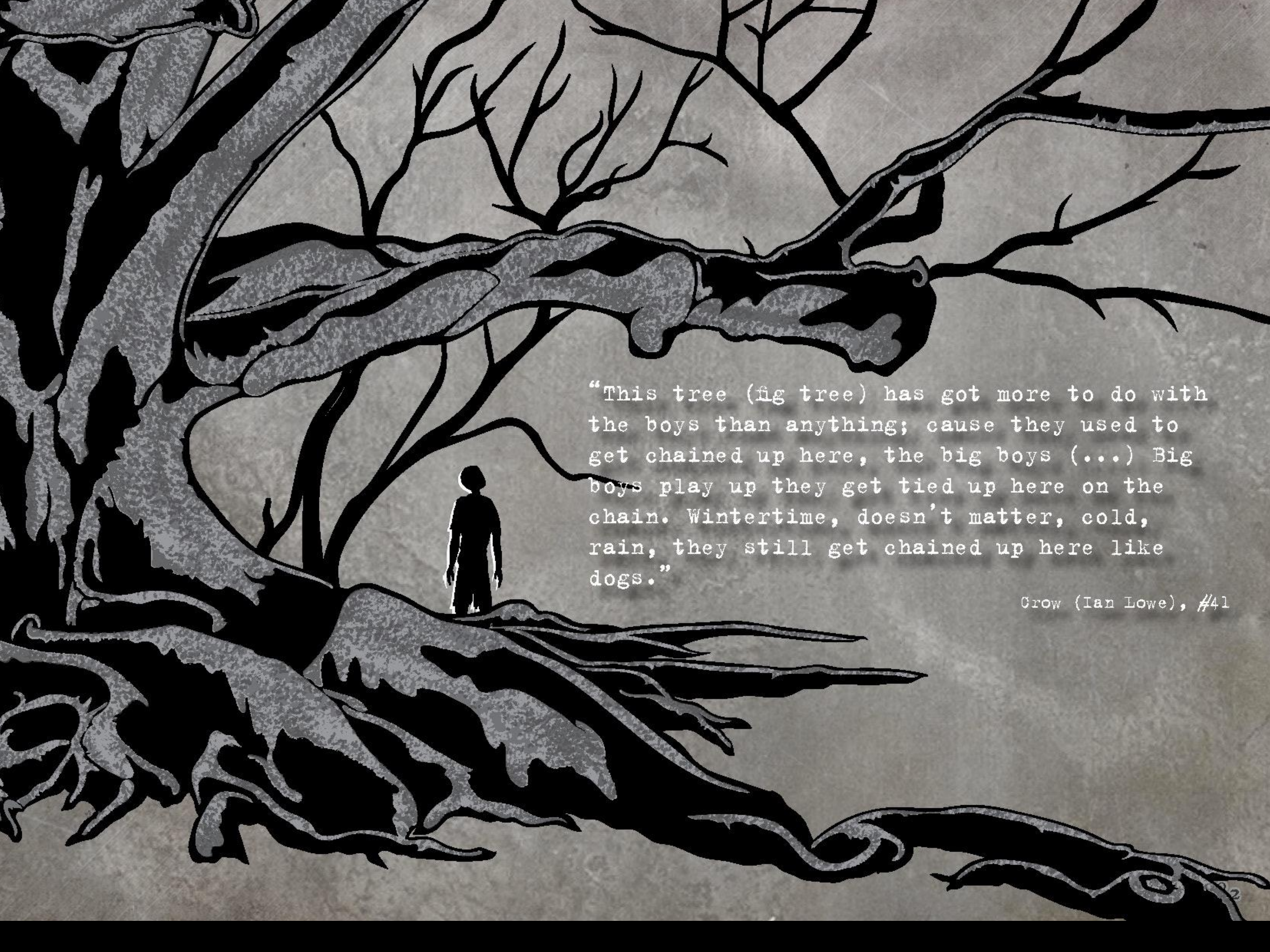
Michael Welsh
93
H. B. H.

Paul Whitten
51
Kamilaroi

LESTER MAHER
11

COWN DAVIS





"This tree (fig tree) has got more to do with the boys than anything; cause they used to get chained up here, the big boys (...) Big boys play up they get tied up here on the chain. Wintertime, doesn't matter, cold, rain, they still get chained up here like dogs."

Crow (Ian Lowe), #41

"This tree (fig tree) has got more to do with the boys than anything; cause they used to get chained up here, the big boys (...) Big boys play up they get tied up here on the chain. Wintertime, doesn't matter, cold, rain, they still get chained up here like dogs."

Crow (Ian Lowe, #41)

"We were beaten, flogged, molested, everything else but I couldn't tell anybody because nobody was allowed to come and visit us in the homes."

Bill Simon (#33)

"They had this thing about when a boy got into strife, they'd line all 70 of us up and the boy had to walk the line. And every kid had to punch that kid hard enough to satisfy those people. Because if they didn't they were threatened they would go down the line after him. And by the end of the line - by the time you got to the end of the line you were bruised and bleeding all over."

Cecil Bowden (#29)

"There was a woodshed and that's where we little boys used to go when we play up. You know, you might be talking or something they'd made you stand out there. Doesn't matter cold, foggy night, raining night.

They still made you stand out there."

Crow (Ian Lowe, #41)




Figure 3.7.2: Remnant of chain attached to fig tree on the dairy site, used for punishment, 2015

SMITHTOWN HALL





4:05

DRIVER/RENTER PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING
7.8

Hertz

BRINCO

SURF VISITORS CLUB

WELCOME

South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club
Boulders
Restaurant & Bar





“Nobody understands this place like we do.”
Michael Welsh (#36)



Figure 3.17.1: Survivors return to the former KBH site for the 90th Anniversary, 2014

5.3 USE OF THE PLACE

5.3.1 Generally

KBH survivors, their families and communities have a deep connection to this place. In accordance with Article 7.2 of the Burra Charter, the former KBH site should have a compatible use that retains and respects the significant values of the place.

During the workshops held in July and November 2015, members of the KBHAC discussed ideas for the future use of the site. A main concern was to find uses that would have a positive impact on the site and 'move the KBH story forward'. A general consensus was reached that the current use of the site by Benelong's Haven was not appropriate.

While it is acknowledged that Benelong's Haven is an important and valuable facility, it is irrelevant to the former KBH site. Use of the site by Benelong's Haven currently restricts access for KBH survivors, their families and communities and their ability to return to the site, which remains a key part of an ongoing and complex healing process. Additionally, it is understood that celebrations, including christenings, have taken place on the site. Survivors feel strongly that this is not a site for celebration. As the focus of pain, suffering and trauma, this place should only be a site for commemoration, reflection and communication of its significant values and stories.

It was agreed that any future use on the site should support the KBH community. It should offer ongoing educational and employment opportunities for survivors' descendants and family members, and ideally be self-sufficient.

The future of the site is still in flux and there are a range of ambitions for appropriate and viable uses, as discussed below. These ideas are a work in progress until the KBH community are able to reach a final decision.

Ultimately, it should be the vision and ambitions of survivors themselves, their families and communities that directs the future use of the former KBH site.

Policy 3.1 – New uses

New uses of the former KBH site should be guided by the policies in this CMP and a consensus for the vision and ambitions of survivors themselves, their families and communities. The use of the place should:

- ***Commemorate the KBH story;***
- ***Retain and enhance its significant values;***
- ***Play a role in communicating the significant values and stories of KBH;***
- ***Support the KBH community; and***
- ***Ensure the site's continued use by the KBH community.***

MACLEAY RIVER

South West Rocks Road

LANEWAY

site of 19th century farmhouse (staff cottage?)

separating shed /haircuts

tractor shed

shed

swimming pool

pump shed

1924 dormitories

1919 school building

main entry & parade ground

garage

1917 manger's house

1948 manger's house

laundry/admin block

wood/coal shed

fig tree

calf shed

chook/pig pen

dairy/ cow bale

machinery shed

chook pen



hay shed

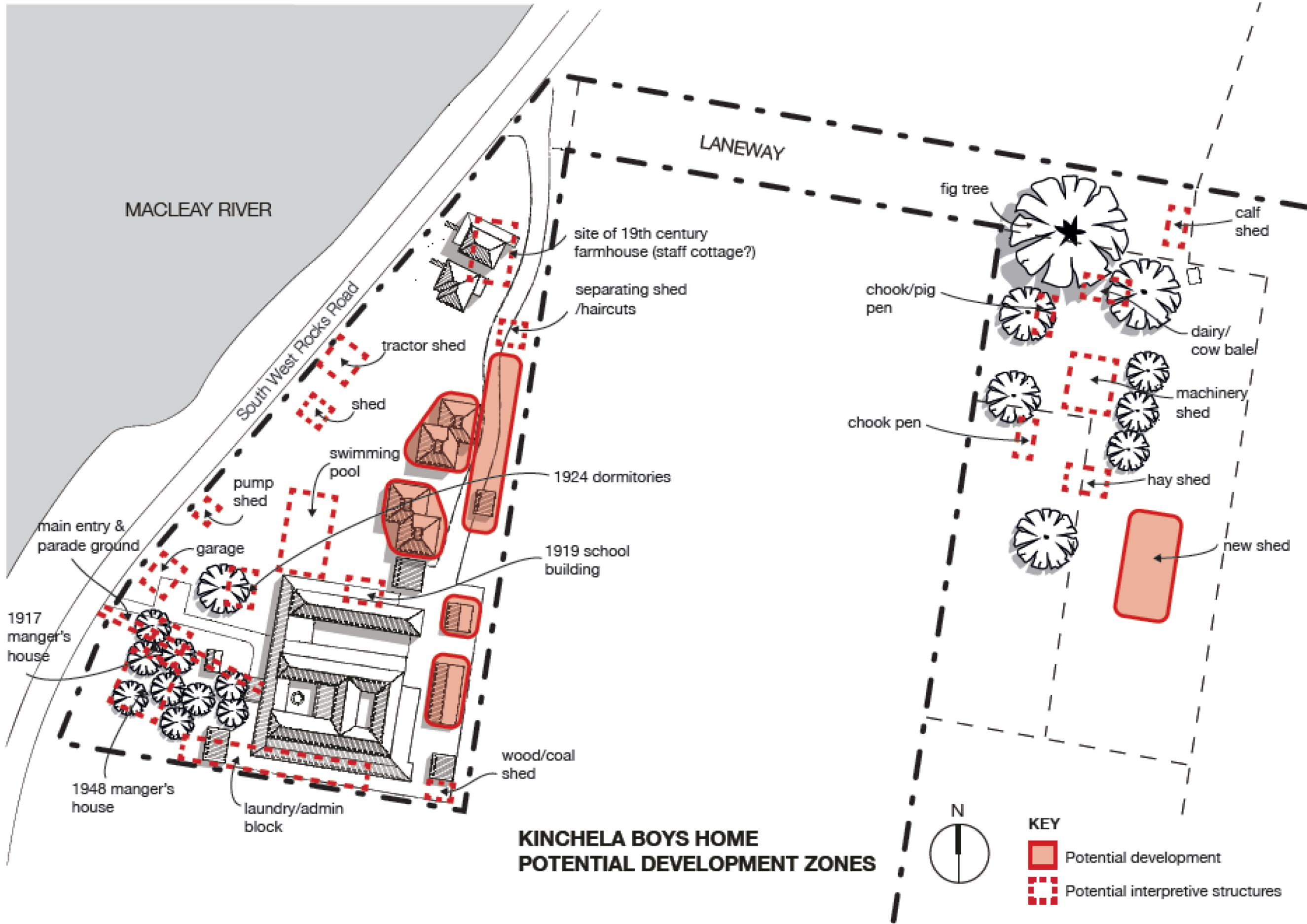
new shed

KINCHELA BOYS HOME POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ZONES



KEY

-  Potential development
-  Potential interpretive structures



KBH HEALING

Specialist Counsellors

Pool

Cleansing Ceremonies

Retreat for people to go & stay

Rememberance memorial

Gym

Educational Centre - Cultural Differences

Developing Educational tool for introduction
into Education Curriculum

New location

Work Shop

Heritage listed

Quiet Retreat Room

Cultural Centre

Artifacts Museum

Video/Film Room

Accommodation

Original

Return of

Ability to

Recording

Arts fac

KBH De

//////

Special

Who sho

Professio

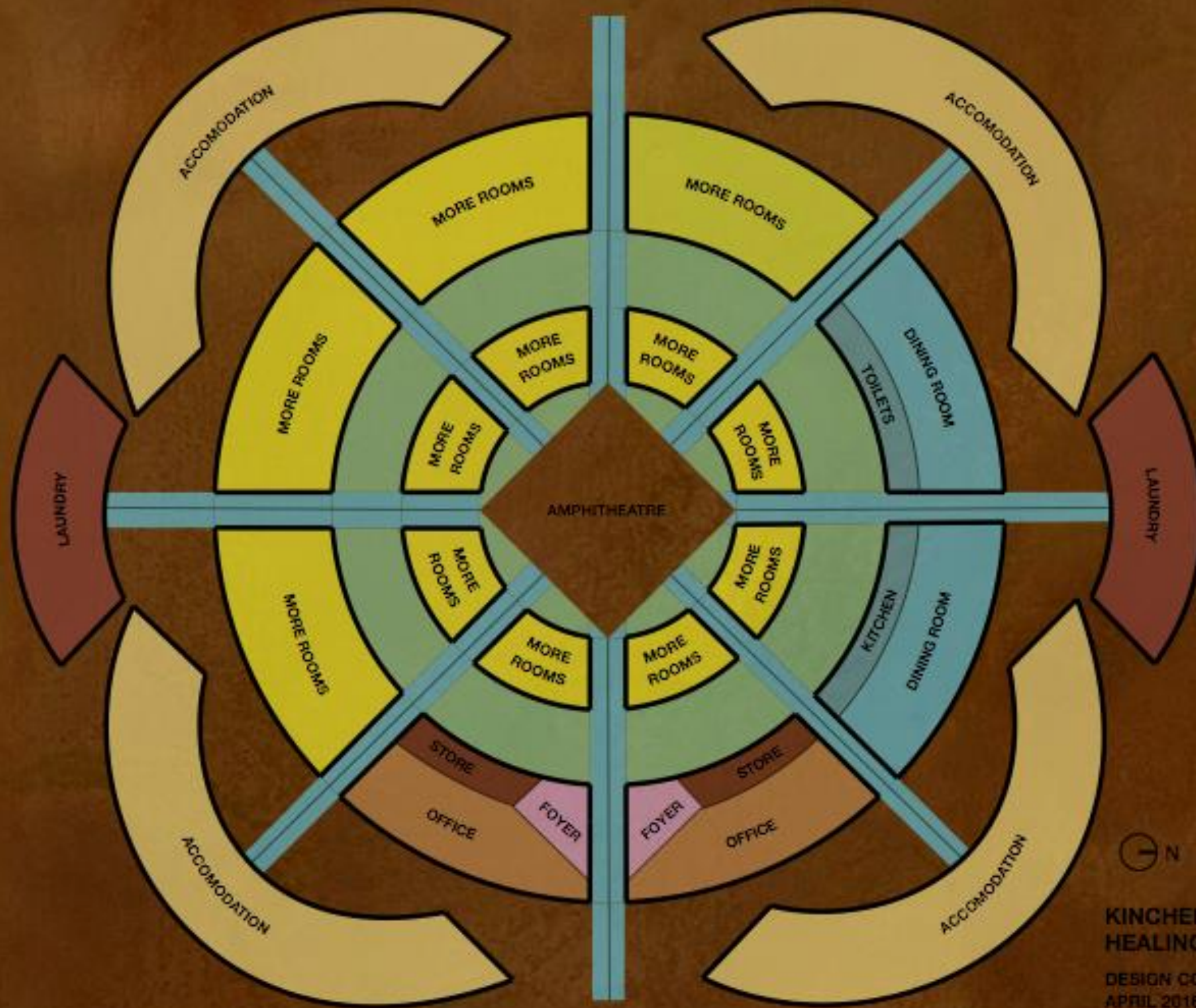
descendo

Sustain

- % of co

KBHAC

revenue



**KINCHELA BOYS HOME
HEALING CENTRE**

DESIGN CONCEPT DIAGRAM
APRIL 2016

Diagram based on original
design by Uncle Richard Campbell



Photograph by Peter Solness, October 2015. KBH Survivors, From Left to Right: Back Row: Uncles Bruce Ellis #37 & 52, Paul Whitton #31, Les Franks #5 & 48, Peter Knight #10, Robert Young #24, Harry Ritchie #56, David Johnson #12 or #14, Roger Jarrett #12, Manuel Ebsworth #28, Greg Thompson #52, Cecil Bowden #29, Gus Wenberg (forgotten). Front Row: Uncles Herbie Nixon #29 (seated), Lester Maher #11 (standing), Colin Davis #50 (seated), Vince Peters #32 (standing), Willie Leslie #46, Trevor Knight #32, Joe Munday #34, Allan Cooper #7, Pat Roberts #21, Peter Monsell #1, James Michael Widdy Welsh #36.