

# Parramatta Female Factory and Institutions Precinct

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## Description

### Property History – Background

Parramatta is situated on the traditional land of the Burrumatta clan of the Dharug people. The Dharug occupied land from Botany Bay to Picton in the south and Springwood in the west for many thousands of years prior to European settlement. The Burrumatta had a close connection with the Parramatta River, which provided fresh water and fish, eels and other riverine resources. The potential World Heritage property represents part of their core territory, on which they hunted, collected resources and materials for tools, and established camps and settlements. The local Aboriginal people have continuing cultural associations over this large area which is now the home to millions of people from many parts of the world. The property also has spiritual significance and intangible cultural heritage, with the riverbanks near the Norma Parker Centre known to have been a site of women's ceremony.

British colonisation of this part of the Australian continent occurred in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The park-like landscape which British settlers encountered had been shaped by Aboriginal fire-stick farming and harvesting traditions. Despite two centuries of destructive European land use practices and the dispossession of the Dharug and other Aboriginal people, they maintain strong connections to this country today. Aboriginal people, convicts and migrants are all present in the histories of this place from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present.

The following history relates to the several institutions and phases which are included within the property.

### Property History – Parramatta Female Factory and Female Asylum

The Parramatta Female Factory was constructed as part of the ongoing British colonial occupation of Australia which was founded through a strategy based on convict transportation. British convicts were sent to Australia and arrived from 1788 as a punishment but also to become a labour force for the colony, consisting mostly of male convicts but including many women as well (the ratio was about 5:1). While Sydney was the focus of initial colonial settlement, Parramatta was a very early inland locality for farming and a town.

In 1821, the Parramatta Female Factory was the first substantial European development by the colonial government in the property now proposed for the Tentative List. It functionally replaced an earlier factory in the nearby Parramatta Gaol site (established 1803). Female factories were a purpose-built institution for the management, discipline and reform of female

convicts transported to Australia. They served a multiplicity of uses as a 'workhouse and labour bureau, marriage bureau and regulator of morality, gaol and hospital' (Salt 1984, p. 44). During construction, the Parramatta Female Factory was modified to segregate women awaiting assignment (a system to allocate women convicts to domestic work within the colony) from women sentenced to punishment.

The construction of a new sleeping ward for criminal class women effectively introduced a three-class system to the Parramatta Female Factory in 1825: first class applied to new convicts and destitute women, second class applied to pregnant or nursing mothers and those who had been returned from assignment because of misbehaviour, and third class applied to repeat offenders. Third class women had their hair close cropped and were subjected to hard labour. A number of riots occurred in the factory as women protested mistreatment and mismanagement, such as insufficient rations.

The Parramatta Female Factory also housed the only hospital for women in the colony, a lying-in or maternity hospital. A new solitary cell block and enclosed yard were built in 1838-1839.

The cessation of convict transportation to New South Wales in 1840 led to the closure of the institution in 1848. Moves to re-use the Parramatta Female Factory buildings as a mental health institution emerged alongside its decline, with the government establishing a new mental health institution (then called an asylum) in its place in 1848 with a mixed population. Its first patients were a small number of convicts with mental health illnesses who remained in the Parramatta Female Factory without suitable accommodation, shortly thereafter joined by male patients from other institutions.

The female section of the Asylum operated out of buildings within the southern part of the former Parramatta Female Factory, until the purpose-built Female Weatherboard Division was constructed to the far north of the property in 1883.

The male section of the Asylum, which occupied most of the buildings in the former Factory area, is not the focus of submission. The expansion of the male section of the Asylum in the 1870s and 1880s led to the demolition of some of the buildings formerly utilised by the Female Asylum population. The mental health institution on the site developed into one of the largest mental health institutions in New South Wales, being subsequently known as the Parramatta Hospital for the Insane, Parramatta Mental Hospital, Parramatta Psychiatric Centre, and Cumberland Hospital.

This part of the property is currently owned by the New South Wales Government, and most of the buildings are vacant.

Property History – Roman Catholic Orphan School, Parramatta Girls Industrial School, Kamballa and Taldree, Norma Parker Centre

The establishment of the Roman Catholic Orphan School, to the south of the Parramatta Female Factory, occurred in 1844 towards the end of the period of the Parramatta Female Factory. Upon its opening the school was comprised of a main building, with kitchen and privies to the rear. Its intended purpose was the care and education of "destitute Roman Catholic children" initially between three and nine years old but later up to aged 14. Most children had lost one or both parents and were without adequate guardians, or were admitted to the school to relieve large families.

The grounds were enlarged in 1849 and 1851 as the school population expanded with children orphaned or abandoned during the Australian gold rushes, with new buildings and

additions to the site erected between 1850 and 1882. Ongoing criticism of the institution, alongside changes in the way the Colonial government managed denominational education and approached institutional care, eventually led to the closure of the school in 1886.

In 1887, the Parramatta Girls Industrial School was established on the site and occupied the former Orphan School buildings, with very little modification. The erection of high brick walls was the only major change to the grounds of the institution, reflecting the perceived need for confinement of the occupants. The Industrial School served as a shelter, reformatory and training school for girls. Girls were removed from their families and admitted to the school for a number of reasons, ranging from being neglected or orphaned, to having committed crimes from minor theft to murder.

The school also housed young Aboriginal women and girls who were forcibly removed from their families and homes, after they had been rejected from their foster homes and other similar institutions. It also accommodated non-Aboriginal women and girls in similar circumstances.

Training aimed to produce proficiency in a limited range of domestic skills and instil moral purity. This was intended to improve the chances of gaining employment for girls once they left the institution. For many, this has been perceived as forced domestic slavery.

The challenging conditions in the institution were reflected in the occurrence of countless riots by girls, beginning in the first year of its opening, continuing throughout the decades until its eventual closure. The conditions also motivated girls to devise creative schemes to escape, with one documented instance of a human pyramid utilised to successfully free a number of girls over the high boundary walls.

Critiques of the institution throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century slated its jail-like appearance, repressive and regimented routines, abusive staff and outdated facilities. Invasive and outdated practices, such as virginity testing, also drew the ire of journalists and the public alike.

In light of increasing media attention and parliamentary awareness of the brutality of the institution, driven in a large part by Bessie Guthrie (a prominent campaigner for women and children's rights), the Women's Liberation Movement and their protests in 1973, the institution finally closed in 1974. Remaining girls were sent to Reiby Training School near Campbelltown, about 30 kilometres to the southwest.

In place of the school and on the same site opened 'Kamballa' a shelter for girls with behavioural problems and 'Taldree', a shelter and temporary detention centre for young boys. These institutions operated until 1983 and 1980 respectively.

The place later became a minimum security/periodic detention centre for women from 1980 until 2008, known as the Norma Parker Correctional Centre for Women (1980-1997) and the Norma Parker Periodic Detention Centre for Women (1997-2008).

The children in these various institutions from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially girls, are now referred to as the Stolen Generations and the Forgotten Australians. Aboriginal children forcibly removed and institutionalised through the 20<sup>th</sup> century are called the Stolen Generations. The Forgotten Australians refers to all children who experienced care in institutions or outside a home setting during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Many women and children, including Aboriginal children, suffered abuse, violence and neglect at the hands of the people charged with their protection and care. The site is a place

that holds these stories and embodied memories that still resonate with the community today. This is therefore a property of difficult heritage and traumatic memory.

This part of the property is currently owned by the New South Wales Government and most of the buildings are vacant. Some are occupied or used by community groups, especially those with important connections to the history of the property.

#### National Historical Context – Introduction

This section provides a national history context to the respective institutions which operated within the property, based predominately on the *Thematic Heritage Study on Australia's Benevolent and Other Care Institutions* (AHC 2016).

#### National Historical Context – Parramatta Female Factory (1821-1848)

The Parramatta Female Factory is firmly positioned in the early, convict era of welfare history in Australia. It was the first purpose-built institution for female convicts to be established in Australia, and possibly the first in the world. As an institution, it demonstrates a relatively static period of views and approaches to providing welfare due to its finite period of operation. Inspired by British workhouses, the Parramatta Female Factory was one of 12 factories (only three surviving) across the country which focused on essentially incarcerating and utilising the labour of convict women. Given its focus on convict women, either awaiting assignment or sentenced to punishment in the colony, the element of incarceration was certainly more pronounced in the form and structure of the institution, but it also maintained a strong focus on extracting their labour. In addition, the Parramatta Female Factory also served an important role as a lying-in hospital.

Across the sections of society in Britain and some of the North American colonies that found themselves destitute, workhouses were the primary means of offering support. However, this was not the case in Australia where colonists were determined not to have workhouses, primarily because of the tax they would have to pay for the operation of Poor Laws. Instead government underwrote voluntary charities to cover the need. None the less, in their earliest days the colonies all had institutions that operated like workhouses, and the workhouse philosophy permeated all the subsequent specialist institutions that evolved from them.

The model of care or management was intended to discourage those who were able to gain some form of employment in the outside world, and the conditions offered in the workhouse-like environment were intentionally poor and basic so that only those desperate would accept them.

The Parramatta Female Factory is a clear product of this ideology and was structured and managed so that only the 'deserving' poor would 'benefit' from its provision of welfare; those who misbehaved or continually offended would be subject to the worst conditions, humiliation, and hard labour in an attempt to discourage their recidivism and the drain on colonial resources.

#### National Historical Context – Female section of the Parramatta Lunatic Asylum (1849-1883)

The Parramatta Lunatic Asylum was opened in the context of the establishment of facilities for the mentally ill across all colonies in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first asylum in Australia was established in 1838 in Tarban Creek, New South Wales, and received patients from across the country. Before its opening the mentally ill had previously been held in gaols.

The establishment and proliferation of asylums across the colonies followed the passage of the British *Lunacy Act* in 1845 and were either purpose-built or utilised existing government buildings. The ethos behind the establishment of these institutions, guided by moral therapy, was to remove suffering individuals from their usual environments and place them in healthy and productive environments beneficial to their rehabilitation. However, in practice, the demand for these institutions meant that they were often overcrowded, gaol-like, underfunded and poorly staffed.

It was not until the later decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that colonial governments, including New South Wales, provided more funding to improve conditions and facilities, and made a more concerted effort to provide the envisioned landscaped, picturesque environments within the institutions.

#### National Historical Context – Roman Catholic Orphan School (1844-1886)

The Roman Catholic Orphan School is illustrative of a wave of development across the country in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, which saw the churches establish their own facilities for orphans (and the Parramatta school was unusual in receiving state funding). The first orphanage in Australia, dedicated solely to girls, had opened decades earlier in 1801. Its emphasis was on steering young women and girls away from immorality and vice, in particular due to fears of them falling into a life of prostitution, foreshadowing the emphasis on 'protection' from moral danger which was to shape the provision of child welfare for much of the next century. The first Roman Catholic Orphan School in New South Wales was established in Waverley in 1836, with orphans from this school transferred to the new institution in Parramatta upon its opening.

Motivated by a desire to provide institutionalised care driven by Catholic principles, it was envisioned that the best upbringing for orphaned children would be one steeped in the faith of their parents. The establishment of Catholic facilities for orphaned and destitute children occurred at a time when the state accommodated destitute and offending children in adult prisons, which were considered deleterious to their welfare. The Australian gold rushes dramatically increased the number of destitute, abandoned or orphaned children, and spurred the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century surge in such accommodation.

#### National Historical Context – Parramatta Girls Industrial School, Kamballa and Taldree (1887-1983)

The Parramatta Girls Industrial School embodies the increasingly concerted effort in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century to 'rescue' those children and young people in 'moral danger' and place them in reformatory or industrial institutions which would shape them into 'productive' citizens. New legislation was introduced by all the colonial governments between the 1860s and 1870s, except for Western Australia which was later, to allow greater control and authority over children.

The earliest industrial school for girls was established in Newcastle, New South Wales, in 1867, before moving to Cockatoo Island (as Biloela) in 1871. Between the 1880s and 1910s, all the colonial or state governments established dedicated agencies which focused on the protection and management of destitute children, although in Victoria this occurred in 1864. These actions spurred the establishment of industrial and reformatory schools for 'neglected' or 'criminal' children, typically catering to one gender, though little was done to separate children who had committed offences from others who were simply poor. Reformatories were gendered but the early industrial schools were not. The perceived moral danger to young girls was a substantive driver for the establishment of female schools.

Life in these schools is described as 'barrack style,' and was generally impersonal, highly structured and regimented. The industrial element of the schooling meant boys and girls were trained in skills deemed desirable in society consistent with their gender roles, centreing mainly around domestic service for girls and trades and farm work for boys.

The later alternative was generally fostering or boarding out from the 1880s, largely as a response to the failure of the schools. A shortage of willing and able carers put that system under pressure in the 1920s when there was a turn back to institutions. While the proportion of those in different forms of care, and timing of these changes is different in different Australian states, the general pattern is the same.

The ultimate goal was to rescue children from poverty, crime or other 'unhealthy' or 'immoral' situations, train them in useful habits and skills, assist them in gaining employment, and then transition them back into society.

The late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century also saw increasing government intervention into the lives of Aboriginal children, with colonies (or later states) all passing legislation which granted them the power to forcibly remove Aboriginal children from their families under the guise of 'protection'. Aboriginal children were then placed in orphanages and industrial schools such as the one in Parramatta, as a means of severing ties to their culture and attempting to 'assimilate' them into white society. In 1915, New South Wales passed legislation allowing the Aboriginal Protection Board to remove older children from their families without any proof of neglect or bad circumstance, resulting in a fairly substantial increase in the Aboriginal population of the institution from around 4% to an average of 12% in subsequent decades.

As noted above, Indigenous children forcibly removed and institutionalised through the 20<sup>th</sup> century are now called the Stolen Generations. More broadly, Forgotten Australians refers to all children who experienced care in institutions or outside a home setting during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, views on institutional care for children began to change, with the advantages of smaller, cottage style homes promoted in the 1950s for the greater level of 'care' and closer relationships they could provide. Despite this the institution remained the predominant form of care well into the 1970s. This decade finally saw a major shift as the state moved away from the institutional model toward deinstitutionalisation and community-based support, with a revived foster care system as a backup.

This era also saw important child welfare controls implemented, such as the mandatory reporting of abuse of children by professionals in contact with them, and a light shone on the long history of abuse and mistreatment in institutional care. Trained social workers also began to take on a more important role.

The Parramatta Girls Industrial School closed in the context of reduced large-scale institutional facilities across the country. The smaller separate institutions of Kamballa and Taldree, opened in its place, represented the New South Wales Government's unique desire to continue to provide institutional facilities for 'hard to place' children.

National Historical Context – Norma Parker Centre (1980 – 2008)

The Norma Parker Centre opened in 1980 was the first low security women's prison in New South Wales, and the second facility in NSW to cater to incarcerated women only. It is one of a small number of women-only prisons that have existed across the country. The establishment of a periodic detention centre at the site in 1997 was likewise one of only a

relatively small number in the country for men or women, limited to New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. The establishment of these institutions was linked to the findings of the Royal Commission into New South Wales Prisons in 1976-1978, which argued for the expansion of periodic detention to divert minor offenders from prison.

### International History Context

The Enlightenment brought a shift in attitude as to the purpose and function of the large, generic institutions that until that time had accommodated the criminal and the poor, a shift that reflected a rejection of a belief in the inherent depravity of man to a focus on the potential of a changed environment to bring about change. This shift was evident in a move from the body to the psyche as the focus of punishment, in the expectation that the inmate as a self-governing subject, would be an active participant in his or her rehabilitation. While care and control remained central to institutional operation, the ways in which these goals were implemented changed as the number and variety of institutions grew.<sup>[1]</sup> The Parramatta Female Factory precinct was established during this period of change and reflects both the possibilities and the failures of the new model.

For reformation to succeed, more specific institutions were established aimed at engaging inmates in bringing about change. This differentiation took place around three key criteria: age, gender and the need to separate offenders from those who had not yet come before the courts. Reformers argued that juveniles had to be separated from adults to avoid contamination and facilitate rehabilitation so that they could fulfil their potential as the future of a society.

Women occupied a contradictory position in the 19<sup>th</sup> century imaginary: as mothers, potential or actual, their chastity was to be closely guarded, but assumed immorality of working-class women left them vulnerable to intervention which blended protection and punishment (Swain and Musgrove 2014, p. 3). Although numerically underrepresented in large institutions such as prisons where they performed valuable domestic work, they came to be recognised as in need of both protection from and of different reform regimes to males. Those who had not yet offended needed to be protected from contamination from 'hardened' criminals, a distinction that was always difficult to achieve given the considerable crossover between these two groups. The specialist female institutions that operated at Parramatta are evidence of the embrace of these principles in Australia.

The story of differentiation was also to some degree a sectarian one. The Catholic Church has been running homes for prostitutes since the 1100s. Designed to shelter rather than reform, they were under male surveillance until 1641 when the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge established a shelter for women and girls under female control, in France. This was the first of many such institutions, differentiated by gender but not by age or status. However, when various governments began to offer funding or support to more specialist institutions, the religious orders did reconstruct their programs to qualify for state support. This was particularly the case in Catholic majority countries but is also evident in jurisdictions such as Australia (Kovesi 2010, pp. 27-36). The Protestants, by contrast, had established fewer institutions in the past and hence were well positioned to be at the forefront of change.

The move to gender segregation was first evident in the prison sector where the English Quaker, Elizabeth Fry, was the most influential voice. Her initial interest was aroused by a visit to Newgate in London where women and their children were confined in a separate section of the prison but were not the focus of any particular treatment. In 1817 she founded an Association for the Improvement of Female Prisoners in Newgate, persuading authorities to allow the group to institute change.

The Association set out rules to which members and prisoners had to agree to abide. Female warders were to be appointed to supervise the female section of the prison, where inmates were to be engaged in productive employment. The more responsible of the prisoners were to be given authority over the other prisoners, who were divided into separate classes on the basis of their acceptance of the behavioural expectations which emphasised orderliness, cleanliness and religiosity, banning the unruliness that had led to women being identified as the most difficult prisoners to this point (Pittman 1884, ch. VII).

The early success of this experiment saw Fry recognised as an expert on prison reform. Elements of her evidence before the House of Commons on prison reform in 1818 were implemented in the 1823 *Gao! Act* which mandated sex segregated prisons and female warders for female prisoners across the British Empire. She also toured extensively in Britain and the Continent and was cited by reformers further afield, including by those involved in the management of female prisoners transported to Australia. Her ideas, however, proved harder to implement in practice.

The first US prison designed specifically for women, Mount Pleasant, New York, 1835, was short-lived, and it was a further 18 years before Britain saw its first sex-segregated facility, Brixton, which opened in 1853 (Rafter 1983, pp. 132-55). However, the particular responsibility that authorities had for female convicts transported to Australia, demanded a response which to some extent predated Fry's reforms, and while some of her principles were apparent in their operation, their failings were also indicative of the impracticability of much of what she had advocated.

The recognition of the need for age segregation produced many institutions across the Western world. The desire to distinguish between offenders and non-offenders was honoured in the nomenclature – reformatories being ostensibly for offenders, industrial schools for those who had not yet reached that point – but less so in daily operations. Initial reform efforts were again focused on the males who dominated the existing institutions but the recognition that girls were less responsive to the new reform focused regimes eventually saw institutions segregated by gender as well.

The key organising principle of these new institutions was the family model with inmates organised in small quasi-family groups, motivated to reform by the 'love' of the 'father' or 'mother' in charge, and provided with training in gender appropriate roles that would equip them to support themselves in adulthood. Despite such lofty goals, the new institutions retained a strong disciplinary strain, with inmates encouraged to report on each other, and punishment rooms included within the family 'homes'.

The earliest examples of this model emerged initially in the philanthropic sector in both Britain and the United States, but it gained international attention from the publicity surrounding two European institutions: the Rauhe Haus in Hamburg which housed boys and a small number of girls in a purpose-built village (1833), and the Mettray Reformatory in France which housed boys within a walled village (1840) (Robbins 2015, pp. 35, 47, 53). These institutions attracted a steady stream of visitors, who went on to use their success in their arguments for change in their own jurisdictions.

The chief propagandist for the family model in the Anglosphere was Mary Carpenter, an English Unitarian with extensive links to international reform networks. Initially Carpenter also focused primarily on boys. Her first book on reformatory schools made only a brief mention of girls, noting that while they were fewer in number, they were more difficult to rehabilitate than boys (Carpenter 1851, pp. 315-7). In the year after the publication of the book Carpenter established Kingswood, a mixed reformatory in Bristol in the United Kingdom. The influence of this experience was apparent in her second book,



published in 1853 which included an entire chapter devoted to girls (Carpenter 1853). In 1854 she was given the opportunity to test out her ideas at Red Lodge, a girls reformatory established in an existing building adapted to accommodate the family model. When philanthropists in other jurisdictions argued for female only juvenile institutions, Red Lodge became the core example they cited.

The industrial and reformatory school movement gained mainstream acceptance with the passage of legislation empowering authorities to commit juveniles to specialist institutions. The English *Youthful Offenders Act* (1854) was followed by similar legislation in other parts of the United Kingdom. The Australian colonies followed suit beginning with Victoria in 1864 (Swain 2014, p. 8). In colonial India, legislation passed in 1876 introduced the reformatory school system although explicitly made no provision for girls who continued to be detained in female penitentiaries (Sen 2004, p. 85). Parallel legislation authorising poor relief authorities to transfer juveniles to industrial schools passed initially in England in 1857 and was quickly replicated across the Empire.

With the passage of this legislation the number of schools of both types (or often the two combined or on adjoining sites) ballooned with existing organisations restructuring to become eligible to accept children admitted through the courts or welfare authorities, and new schools established by local organisations and state authorities. The degree to which such institutions were able to embrace the family model was limited by the buildings they occupied and the way in which they were staffed, but all shared the focus on training to prepare residents to become self-supporting. For girls that training was essentially domestic, conforming with Victorian notions of women's place.

The Lancaster Industrial School for Girls established in Massachusetts in 1856 accommodated family groups in a collection of established and purpose-built cottages in a rural setting, but more often the supposedly new institutions were in repurposed military or prison buildings and often drew staff from a similar background (Brenzel 1975, pp. 40-2). The industrial school within the Parramatta precinct, like the earlier reformatories at Newcastle (1867) and Cockatoo Island (1871), fell into this category, weakening its commitment to the reform rather than punishment model.

Despite their failings, institutions remained the primary means by which women and girls were contained and confined until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, spreading widely beyond their European origins. Advances in psychology during the 20<sup>th</sup> century created a space for a therapeutic rather than a punitive approach, and in the post-war era community-based services replaced institutions as the initial response to females deemed to be at risk, or a risk to themselves or others. However, some institutions remain, particularly in the correctional area, smaller than their predecessors, but similarly struggling to reconcile their treatment goals with practical realities.

## Description – Introduction

The property extends across separate but contiguous institutional sites: the former Parramatta Female Factory and Female Asylum site (now part of the broader Cumberland Hospital (East Campus) site) and the former Roman Catholic Orphan School/Parramatta Girls Industrial School/ Kamballa and Taldree/Norma Parker site (now known as the Norma Parker Centre/Kamballa site). While overall a complex of buildings and landscapes from different periods reflecting different and evolving institutions, it is identifiable as a precinct through its institutional use and character.

The long institutional use of the property has necessitated substantial changes to the landform over the last two centuries, which produced the present generally flat topography.

The original landform may exist under the later fill, but it is likely to be highly disturbed in some areas.

#### Description – Parramatta Female Factory (1821-1848) and Female Asylum (1849-1883)

The Parramatta Female Factory and Female Asylum site presently contains a series of historic institutional buildings arranged around a series of courtyards. Buildings are between one and two-storeys in height, constructed mostly of sandstone. The site has been modified over the last 200 years to adapt to the changing institutional uses of the site and reflects changing philosophies and approaches to incarceration and mental health care.

The former Parramatta Female Factory site is defined by the extent of the Parramatta Female Factory Penitentiary to the north, the former location of the Parramatta Female Factory entry gates to the east (now occupied by the Administration and Visitors Block), the Solitary Cell Block Enclosure to the south, and the former extent of Parramatta Female Factory perimeter walling to the west (now demolished). While inmates did not have a view of the Parramatta River, the institution had a functional relationship with it and the 1826 dam to the west.

The former Parramatta Female Factory site includes four remnants of the Parramatta Female Factory, dating from the original opening (1821) through to its later expansion (1839) before its eventual closure. These remnants represent key elements contributing to the potential Outstanding Universal Value and include:

- the former Northeast and Southeast Ranges, constructed of sandstone, dating to 1821. These buildings, one to two storeys in height, have undergone substantial modification over time being subject to additions, alterations including being raised in height and made two storied at their eastern end. Limited internal fabric remains;
- the Parramatta Female Factory Penitentiary dormitory dates to 1826 and is a two-storey sandstone building, though the structure of the upper level has been removed leaving a double-height space; and
- the high sandstone walls of the Solitary Cell Block Enclosure also provide evidence surviving from the last expansion of the Parramatta Female Factory in 1839, though the cell block they were built to contain has been demolished.

The former Parramatta Female Factory site also includes buildings constructed after the Parramatta Female Factory closed. The Female Asylum, established following the closure of the factory, largely occupied existing Parramatta Female Factory buildings in the southern part of the Factory site. All buildings occupied by female patients were demolished by 1883.

The site also includes buildings constructed during the Lunatic Asylum (1848-1878) and Hospital for the Insane (1878-1916) periods for the male population of the mixed institution, which do not contribute to the core theme. They include the Male Shelter Shed (c1860), Male Wards 2 and 3 Spinal Range (c1876), which extends north of the Penitentiary Dormitory, Male Ward 1 (1883), Male Ward 1 Dining Room (c1885-1888) the Hospital Ward Extension (c1888), Male Ward 5 South/Boiler Room (c1890s) the Male Ward 2 extension (c1897) built on the footing of a former Parramatta Female Factory wall, and the Administration and Visitors Block (c1910) which was also built over a former Parramatta Female Factory wall and the formal entrance to the institution.

No physical cultural landscape elements survive which illustrate the Parramatta Female Factory period. The spatial qualities of former yards have been altered by the demolition of buildings and construction of new buildings.

The site has high archaeological potential relating to the Parramatta Female Factory and Female Asylum phases of development. Archaeological finds have the potential to contribute to and enhance our knowledge of the lives of women in the Factory and Asylum. Potential archaeological evidence could include the discovery of undocumented works to buildings, such as modifications to room layouts, demolished walls, earlier footings, earlier finishes and services. Archaeological evidence may also include discarded objects and other materials and tools.

Description – Roman Catholic Orphan School (1844-1886), Parramatta Girls Industrial School (1887-1974), Kamballa and Taldree (1974-1983), and Norma Parker (1980-2008) site

The Roman Catholic Orphan School, Parramatta Girls Industrial School, Kamballa and Taldree, and Norma Parker site contains a series of historic institutional buildings arranged around a series of open spaces and yards. Buildings are between one and three stories in height, constructed mostly of brick. Most buildings relate to the original institution of the Orphan School on the site, with a small number of buildings and structures from the Parramatta Girls Industrial Phase. Whilst the site at the time of the Orphan School was originally open to the river with views to Parramatta Park beyond, it has since 1887 and at the start of the Industrial School been enclosed by high brick boundary walls.

The southern part of the precinct is defined by the southern wall of the Former Solitary Cell Block Enclosure of the Parramatta Female Factory to the north, the stone and palisade fence along Fleet Street to the east, Eels Place and the high brick perimeter wall to the south and west. The grounds are further divided internally by high brick compound walls.

The southern part of the precinct comprises a large number of buildings associated with the Roman Catholic Orphan School. These buildings represent key elements contributing to the potential Outstanding Universal Value and include the:

- three-storey sandstone and brick Main Building (built in three stages 1844, 1866 and 1880);
- Covered Way (1860);
- Palisade fence (1860);
- two-storey brick Southwest Range (1852);
- double-height brick chapel (1860);
- two-storey brick Laundry (1880);
- brick range of Outbuildings (c1860s-1880s);
- two-storey brick infirmary known as Bethel (c1866); and
- the one-storey stone Gatekeeper's Cottage (1860).

The site also contains a number of structures and buildings constructed during the Parramatta Girls Industrial School phase, which also represent key elements contributing to the potential Outstanding Universal Value and include the:

- high brick perimeter and boundary walls (1887);
- 1930s brick Hospital Block; and
- 1970s brick instructional range.

Little change or new construction occurred during the later occupation of Kamballa and Taldree and the Norma Parker Centre.

Remnants of the cultural landscape established during the Parramatta Girls Industrial School occupation of the site survive, characterised by high walls to the perimeter, though some

spaces have been modified with the insertion of later buildings or altered surfaces. Significant surviving spaces include the front garden, the gated main entry, open southern space around Bethel, the courtyard between the southwest range and the main building, and the open space near the Outbuildings.

The site has high archaeological potential relating to all phases of development. Archaeological finds have the potential to contribute to and enhance our knowledge of the lives of children in these institutions. Potential archaeological evidence could include the discovery of undocumented works to buildings, such as modifications to room layouts, demolished walls, earlier footings, earlier finishes and services. Archaeological evidence may also include objects and personal items secreted into ceiling and wall cavities, and 'graffiti' inscribed on internal and external surfaces.

[1] This argument is informed by the seminal work of Foucault (1975).

### **Justification of Outstanding Universal Value**

"I need to ponder and let go of all that pain and fear inside, so I can become who I really am: a strong and free being."

"Of all the things which occupied my mind about helping people, the most insistent was the issue of the 'stolen children'. I was one myself, and I would never lose sight of this. It was always there, and will always be there until my final hours."

(Parramatta Girls Industrial School residents)

The European Enlightenment (or Age of Enlightenment) saw the evolution of humanitarian, rationalist, liberal and scientific thought in the 17th and 18th centuries CE in Europe. It was an intellectual movement that advocated a new age enlightened by reason, science and respect for humanity to replace centuries of 'darkness and ignorance'. The state and rationality were believed to hold the promise for the freedom and progress of humanity. Enlightenment ideas were influential in the development of rational and scientific approaches to social and political issues through the 19th century CE which was a period of philosophical dynamism.

During the transportation of convicts that underpinned the British colonisation of the Australian continent, Enlightenment ideas influenced the emergence of new systems to manage transported convicts. Later these were also applied to others on the margins of society (including some women and children, Indigenous people and people with mental, cognitive or physical impairments). These ideas also influenced the decline of corporal punishments. These systems saw an increase in institutional confinement, as well as the emergence of ideas about women and children considered at risk or considered a risk to the moral order of society. However, these systems or their implementation also resulted in poor treatment, abuse and trauma.

**Criterion (iv):** The site of the Parramatta Female Factory and Institutions Precinct was traditional land and waterway of the Burrumatta clan of the Dharug people who lived on the upper reaches of the Parramatta River for at least 60,000 years. This land was taken for these institutions but none the less there are continuing connections for Aboriginal people to the land.

The precinct is an outstanding complex of buildings, archaeological evidence and a landscape associated with several important stages in the forced institutionalisation of women and children, noting there was also some institutionalisation described as voluntary.

This is a powerful historical theme tied to the status and roles of women and children in British colonial settler societies, and demonstrates the evolution of both welfare and punishment of women and children from the Enlightenment to the modern age. The precinct is evidence of this evolution in its remarkably rich and complex history with numerous institutions portraying different aspects of this theme over nearly two centuries.

The treatment of people marginalised in European societies evolved from medieval practices following the development of scientific and rational approaches arising from the Enlightenment from the 17th century CE. Medieval prisons were in part replaced by transitional approaches such as houses of correction, workhouses and transportation, and these were subsequently replaced by “modern” prisons and other institutions from the late 18th century CE through into the 19th century CE and beyond.

The differential treatment of women and children was part of this evolution.

This history is reflected in the Parramatta Female Factory for women convicts from 1821, possibly the first women’s prison in the world. Over time this part of the precinct later became a number of institutions for those deemed to have mental health illness, until 1983. In particular, from 1848 until about 1883 a mental health institution occupied the former Parramatta Female Factory. This had men and women residents, but it was still gendered and women were separated in part of the former Parramatta Female Factory.

Similarly, the adjacent Roman Catholic Orphan School for Catholic children established in 1844 became the Parramatta Girls Industrial School from 1887, a home for girls seen as neglected or difficult to control. The Parramatta Girls Industrial School included Aboriginal children from the Stolen Generations. It later evolved into various institutions for children, again including those from the Stolen Generations and the Forgotten Australians, especially girls, and then as the Norma Parker Detention Centre for Women from 1980 to 2010. Together, these institutions were intended to provide shelter, education and oversight of thousands of women and children, including those of the Stolen Generations, Forgotten Australians and child migrants.

The precinct bears witness to the particular experience of women and children subject to forced institutionalisation, based on moral assumptions and judgements imposed on those who lived in poverty or were considered to be outside social acceptability. In addition, the surviving spatial relationships within the institutions reflect attitudes and philosophies about their operations at the time.

In the case of the Parramatta Female Factory this experience included the removal of children from their mothers and their institutionalisation elsewhere, the women being organised in a class system with various privileges, particular categories of work, and some categories of women even receiving payment for work. The asylum phase continued to be based on gendered assumptions, with women separated from men. The orphan school was established for orphaned or destitute Roman Catholic children, and in this context was also linked to the Parramatta Female Factory as a welfare institution for some children of mothers housed in the Parramatta Female Factory. The Parramatta Girls Industrial School continued this welfare approach for girls with a focus on training in domestic work. The Parramatta Female Factory and industrial school shared the philosophical approach of reform through work, embedded within notions of class.

The differential treatment related to these institutions as separate from those for men, to the circumstances leading to institutionalisation, and to the treatment in or operations of the institutions, including the orientation of the reform for women into domestic work. While there

may have been some similarities between the treatment of women and men, there are also distinct differences.

While these institutions were developed in the context of penal reform and welfare approaches for women and children, including Aboriginal children, the actual impact included poor treatment and abuse throughout much of their history, and failures in achieving the purported welfare aims. In the case of children, the impact extended to their forced removal from family, and for Aboriginal children this also included removal from Country and culture as part of a process of assimilation. There are living survivors of these institutional impacts including those affected by intergenerational memories.

**Criterion (vi):** The Parramatta Female Factory and Institutions Precinct is directly and tangibly associated with the evolution of ideas related to the forced institutionalisation of women and children following the Enlightenment, which were to have a profound impact across large parts of the world influenced by Europe.

In the medieval period, punishments were harsh by later standards and not institutionally based, welfare was largely provided through private charity and the work of religious orders, and the treatment of women and children was similar to that of men. The Enlightenment and the subsequent period saw many changes in society, including dramatic changes to the way in which criminals, the poor and those perceived to be vulnerable were treated. There were new approaches to punishment, protection of the vulnerable and a greater emphasis on reform, especially through organised state measures.

Women and children were differentiated from men in this period, strongly influenced by moral assumptions and judgements about gender and age, but also in terms of their treatment in institutions, including systems of care and control at the core of these institutions.

The property provides direct associations with this influential period of social policy, well-intentioned but too often leading to abuse and mistreatment, and through multiple institutions which embody variation and evolution of philosophies through to the modern age. One part of this policy extended to Aboriginal peoples and other Australians, with the forced removal and institutionalisation of children based on prevailing concepts of welfare, and in the case of Aboriginal children this was also based on race. There are living survivors and those affected by intergenerational memories who embody the impacts of these policies.

The Parramatta Female Factory and Institutions Precinct demonstrates a tangible link to these powerful ideas and their evolution, through the complex of landscape, buildings, structures and archaeology from the 1820s to the modern day.

### **Statements of authenticity and/or integrity**

#### **Authenticity**

Overall the property displays a moderate to high degree of authenticity in terms of the truthful and credible expression of the proposed values, as qualified by the comments below.

The precinct continues to occupy its historical location. While the setting has been developed over time, in particular with low-rise buildings immediately to the north, east and south, the setting to the west includes the Parramatta River (within the potential property boundary) and the park landscape of the Domain as sympathetic elements.

The Parramatta Female Factory and Female Asylum site has been impacted by changes over time following these periods. None the less, aspects of the form and design, materials (noting some re-use of materials) and aspects of the feeling of the site remain. This includes three buildings and a walled enclosure from the Parramatta Female Factory. With interpretation, the rich history and values of the site can be fully understood in the context of these changes.

In the case of the Roman Catholic Orphan School, Parramatta Girls Industrial School, Kamballa and Taldree, and Norma Parker site, the form, design, materials and feeling reflect its complete history from initial development to the more recent institutions on site.

### Integrity

The property contains all of the key attributes of the potential Outstanding Universal Value, and it is of adequate size. The collection of buildings demonstrate the long history of welfare institutions which catered for women and children. Together they provide 200 years of evidence illustrating changing philosophies and approaches to the care of women and children. The property with its complex of landscape, buildings, structures and archaeology dating from 1821 to the modern period can be read as an institutional precinct.

The property does not suffer from the effects of neglect or development, noting that conservation work is ongoing. However, development outside the property needs to have careful regard for visual impacts related to views from within the property.

Further detailed comments are provided below.

### Integrity – Parramatta Female Factory

The northern part of the precinct contains three buildings (the Penitentiary Dormitory, the Northeast Range and the Southeast Range), and one substantial walled enclosure (the former Solitary Cell Block) from the Parramatta Female Factory. Together they serve to help illustrate life in the Parramatta Female Factory. They demonstrate the original planning for the institution and subsequent changes and expansion. The substantial modification which the institution underwent as part of its transformation into the Lunatic Asylum and subsequent mental health institutions, led to the alteration of these buildings and substantial changes to their setting which has impacted its legibility and ability to demonstrate key values.

The former Parramatta Female Factory site has undergone a substantial degree of change, owing to the successive mental health institutions which occupied the site from 1848 onwards. The remnants of the Parramatta Female Factory have themselves also undergone varying degrees of change, with the Northeast and Southeast ranges having been remodelled, raised in height and made two-storied at their eastern ends, and the Penitentiary Dormitory having had its upper floor removed. The solitary cell block enclosure has seen modification in the form of the removal of the major Solitary Cell Block Range and Keeper's House which once adjoined the northern wall.

The site has the potential to contain significant subsurface archaeological evidence of former buildings and structures, as well as an array of other objects or relics which illustrate life in the factory.

The surviving physical evidence of the Factory is generally in fair to good condition. The north and southeast ranges have been occupied in recent years, with the northeast range recently refurbished.

## Integrity – Female Asylum

No physical evidence constructed for the Female Asylum period survives. The Parramatta Female Factory buildings which the female section of the Asylum subsequently occupied were all demolished by 1883. However, the enclosing Solitary Cell Block walls which date from the Parramatta Female Factory also share an association with the Asylum phase.

The site has the potential to contain significant subsurface archaeological evidence of former buildings and structures, as well as an array of other objects or relics which illustrate life in the Asylum.

## Integrity – Roman Catholic Orphan School, Parramatta Girls Industrial School, Kamballa and Taldree, Norma Parker Centre

The former Roman Catholic Orphan School/Parramatta Girls Industrial School/Kamballa and Taldree site paints a more complete picture of the life of women and children in institutional care on the site. All of the major Orphan School phase buildings survive with elements of their cultural landscape retained. This is still legible within the successive changes to the grounds such as the addition of high brick perimeter and boundary walls, and a small number of buildings in the south part of the site dating to the later phases of the girls' school. Little evidence survives relating to the Kamballa, Taldree and Norma Parker Centre phases given the limited change these uses required. In this way the site has all of the elements to depict its complete history from initial development to the more recent institutions on site.

The surviving physical evidence of the institutions is generally in fair to good condition.

The legibility of the buildings on the former Roman Catholic Orphan School, Parramatta Girls Industrial School, Kamballa and Taldree site is intact, but the buildings do reflect layers of change over time in finishes and minor modifications to layout and form. A fire damaged a number of the buildings in 2012, however the reconstruction of fabric largely restored the form and materiality of the affected buildings. Additional conservation works are being undertaken (in 2023) that will retain the legibility of that site.

The site has the potential to contain significant subsurface archaeological evidence of former buildings and structures, as well as an array of other objects or relics which illustrate life in the institutions on the site.

## Comparison with other similar properties

The key qualities underpinning this analysis are the combination of values and attributes relevant to the Parramatta Female Factory and Institutions Precinct. These values are briefly summarised as,

[a property] associated with several important stages in the forced institutionalisation of women and children... tied to their status and role in European influenced societies, and the evolution of punishment of and welfare for women and children following the Enlightenment through to the modern age.

The relevant attributes are the fabric of a series of different, if related, institutions portraying or associated with this evolution.

The geo-cultural region for the proposed theme of Outstanding Universal Value includes the United Kingdom, Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand and possibly other countries which were part of the British Empire or influenced by it.



## Similar Properties on the World Heritage List

Forced institutionalisation of people is an existing theme within World Heritage related to convictism, slavery, concentration camps, prisons and agricultural colonies, at least. Some of the potentially relevant property types include prisons, houses of correction, workhouses, asylums, reformatory schools and orphanages. While there is some representation of such properties on the World Heritage List, it is the particular association with women and children that is important to consider and is under-represented on the List.

Amongst the many analyses of the World Heritage List regarding its representativeness and possible gaps, an analysis of gendered or age-related properties has not been completed. There is some recognition that gendered properties exist, or that management and protection roles might be gender specific (see for example the articles on World Heritage and gender equality in *World Heritage*, No. 78, February 2016, UNESCO). But this has not flowed through to a structured and strategic priority for action with regard to encouraging nominations to address a potential gap.

Some World Heritage properties relate to the specific experiences of men, such as monasteries. In a similar way, there are many convents or abbeys included individually or as part of larger World Heritage properties, and these relate to the experiences of women. But apart from religious properties, there would appear to be very few other properties related specifically to women. One example is the Cascades Female Factory component of the Australian Convict Sites World Heritage property, which is discussed separately below.

The specific experience of children does not appear to be represented in the World Heritage List.

In all of this context, the Parramatta Female Factory and Institutions Precinct has the potential to fill a gap in the List addressing the specific life experience of women and children, including Aboriginal children, especially those subjected to forced institutionalisation.

## Other Similar Properties

In many parts of the world, there are buildings that confined women and children from the 19th century that survive, but few that actively draw attention to their historical importance. Many are still in use in justice, community services, mental health or education with contemporary priorities overshadowing heritage (eg. the Ohio Reform School in the USA, Rauhe Haus and Mettray Reformatory, the latter two discussed below). While prison museums are relatively common, the short-lived nature of women-only prisons from the 19th century means that they have left no legacy (short-lived because of the difficulty in retaining staff and the pressure for more places for male prisoners). Rather the focus of heritage interpretation at these sites is on the fact that women and children were confined in mixed prisons in which they were always a small minority (eg. Old Melbourne Gaol, Geelong Gaol Museum and J Ward at Ararat Gaol in Australia, and the Museum of Colorado Prisons in the USA).

The legacy of 19th century industrial and reformatory schools is richer. The Rauhe Haus in Germany from 1833 is still an active Christian welfare organisation with at least some of the original cottages surviving on the site. However, the focus of the organisation is on its contemporary operations rather than its historical importance (<https://www.rauheshaus.de/ueber-uns/about-us/>). The Mettray Reformatory in France closed in 1937 and is now occupied by the ITEP Youth Village (<https://atouts-et-perspectives.fr/en/who-are-we/>). Despite substantial rebuilding, some of the original

buildings survive. While the site is accessible to visitors its heritage is not celebrated by the current occupants.

The two most lauded girls' institutions have fared somewhat better. Mary Carpenter's Red Lodge in Britain survives as part of a museum which celebrates the long history of the building in which it was located, however its role as a reformatory plays only a minor part in the story the museum tells (<https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/red-lodge-museum/whats-at/victorian-school/>). The Lancaster Industrial School for Girls in the USA survives substantially intact. Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1976, it continued to be used by correctional services until 2013 (<https://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/MA-02-027-0007>). Now under the control of the National Park Service, it is not open to the public (<https://www.nps.gov/places/lancaster-industrial.htm>).

The later uses to which industrial school buildings have been put often disguise their heritage. The Connecticut Industrial School for Girls, for example, after a long history as a correctional institution, was purchased by the neighbouring Wesleyan University prior to its closure in 2003, anxious to avoid continued use for a similar purpose (<https://www.ctexplored.org/long-lane-school-remaking-wayward-girls/>). By contrast, the Illinois Industrial School for Girls, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is now a public park in which several of the original cottages survive (<https://www.parkridgehistorycenter.org/on-this-site-the-history-of-the-illinois-industrial-school-for-girls/>).

The Irish National Inventory of Architectural Heritage lists many of the industrial and reformatory schools established by churches during the 19th century (<https://data.gov.ie/dataset/national-inventory-of-architectural-heritage-niah-national-dataset>). Contained within broader convent complexes, many have reverted to their previous educational or medical functions with little appetite to celebrate their heritage in the context of recent inquiries into historical abuse.

The variation in subsequent usage, and the lack of public accessibility means that none of these sites has the integrity or range of experience of the Parramatta Female Factory and Institutions Precinct. Most reflect individual institutions rather than complexes and rarely have they exclusively confined women and girls.

The closest equivalent, Abbotsford Convent, is also to be found in Australia. The site, which was added to the National Heritage List in 2017, contains a series of buildings used to confine women and girls from 1863 to 1974, under the control of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. Containing at different times a school, an orphanage, a reformatory, industrial school and Magdalen laundry, it operated on a monastic model, with a focus on containment and conversion, with some women remaining confined for the rest of their lives. The site is now managed by the not-for-profit social enterprise, the Abbotsford Foundation, and offers a home to a range of artistic and cultural ventures (<https://abbotsfordconvent.com.au/about/>). While the original buildings feature interpretative heritage signage, and the managers host reunions of former residents, this history is no longer the primary focus of the site.

## Female Factories in Australia

Female factories were a purpose-built institution for the management, discipline and reform of female convicts transported to Australia. They were based on bridewells, prisons and workhouses in the UK.

A system of nine female factories were established in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land (later Tasmania) in the period of 1804 to 1856 (the Parramatta Female Factory in

1821). Female factories were multi-functional institutions that operated as: a prison; a place of punishment; a labour hiring depot; a nursery; a lying-in hospital for pregnant female convicts (as well as free settlers); a workplace; and temporary accommodation and refuge for female convicts until they were 'married' or assigned as domestic servants. Convict women undertook various forms of work.

Women and their infants were subjected to intensive surveillance and often harsh conditions. Female convicts sentenced to secondary punishment at the factories were placed in different classes. Well-behaved women could progress through the classes while women who breached the rules were given solitary confinement.

The factories were in the colonies of:

- New South Wales – Parramatta, Newcastle, Port Macquarie, Moreton Bay; and
- Tasmania – Hobart Town, George Town, Cascades, Launceston and Ross.

The Cascades Female Factory was previously considered the most intact surviving example of the female factories that once existed, although in the case of Parramatta there is also substantial surviving evidence which may now possibly rival Cascades in the extent of surviving fabric. The other sites have either been totally destroyed, or at best consist of archaeological remains and one minor building.