



## REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

### 11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

#### PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 7.6.6 Providing Services and Welfare

#### HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 404 Community Services and utilities
- 408 Institutions

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

The Main Building and former Nurses' Quarters, both showing characteristics of the Federation Bungalow architectural style, and adjacent landscaped areas addressing Walcott Street provide a pleasing group of buildings typical of a government institution of the inter-war period. The domestic scale, use of materials and architectural details typical of residential buildings of the period together with domestic landscaping treatments including timber framed woven wire fencing and hedges, give the place a homely quality appropriate to the use of the place for the accommodation of children. (Criterion 1.4)

#### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

*Walcott Centre* has played a significant role in the development and implementation of Child Welfare practices by the State government, particularly in the areas of adoption, foster care and institutional care, and in the treatment of neglected, orphaned and delinquent youths from the 1920s to the 1980s. (Criterion 2.1)

*Walcott Centre* provided a residential welfare service for boys and girls from 1921 until 1984, as a government reception home for children who were in need of protection, care and accommodation. It was the only fully government funded institution until 1960, and the first reception and assessment point for children entering the care of the State from 1921 to 1984. (Criterion 2.2)

*Walcott Centre* has close associations with those people who lived and worked at the place between 1921 and 1984. In particular the place is associated with

\* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, R., Irving, R. & Reynolds, P., *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

the various matrons and nurses who provided dedicated service to children over the years. (Criterion 2.3)

The corrugated iron security fence demonstrates an innovative use of curved corrugated galvanized iron sheets for preventing escape from detention. (Criterion 2.4)

### **11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

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### **11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE**

*Walcott Centre* has strong associations for those people who, as children, for family or other reasons spent time living in the institution, and for the staff who worked and lived there. (Criterion 4.1)

*Walcott Centre* played a role in the welfare of State wards of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal origin from the 1920s to the 1980s and is significant to all sectors of the wider community for its role in child welfare services in Western Australia. (Criterion 4.1)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

*Walcott Centre* is the oldest government run institution providing child welfare services in the State. (Criterion 5.1)

The security fence is the only known example of a curved corrugated galvanized iron fence of its type, and as such is a rare structure. (Criterion 5.1)

*Walcott Centre* was the only government receiving home from 1921 until 1984. It demonstrates the way of life experienced by children who were separated from their original families for various reasons and were in the process of assessment for adoption or transfer to other institutions. The practices of the home are no longer carried out in the same manner by contemporary child welfare services. (Criterion 5.2)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Walcott Centre* is a representative example of a group of institutional buildings designed by the Public Works Department in the 1920s to provide community health and welfare services. (Criteria 6.1 & 6.2)

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

The buildings and site features at the *Walcott Centre* are generally in fair to good condition as a result of ongoing maintenance and use. The exception to this is the former Nurses' Quarters which is currently unoccupied and in poor condition, however the building is capable of conservation. The former Detention Centre is in very good condition as a result of a recent program of adaptation, however that program of works also considerably reduced the extent of authentic fabric.

The site contains various timber-framed outbuildings that are also in fair to good condition as a result of ongoing maintenance. The Wood and Metal Workshops both have zincalume roofs of recent origin.

#### 12.4 INTEGRITY

From 1921 to 1984, the *Walcott Centre* was a short stay residential centre for the protection, care, and assessment of children before they were discharged to other institutions. Since 1984 *Walcott Centre* has provided non-residential Community Based Services for juvenile, and more recently also adult, offenders, offering training courses, counselling and other methods of corrective management. The continued use of the place providing community services to young people and children, although no longer residential, gives the place moderate integrity.

The current use of the building, as a branch of Community Based Services for the Ministry of Justice's Offender Management Department, is compatible with the former use of the place. The viability of this to sustain the integrity of the place in the long term is not known.

#### 12.5 AUTHENTICITY

*Walcott Centre* generally has moderate authenticity. The Main Building remains substantially as constructed. Although several minor extensions and alterations have been added, the extent of the original building remains evident. The building retains a definite institutional atmosphere.

The former Nurses' Quarters has moderate authenticity. Although a substantial classroom block has been constructed onto the southern side of the building, the original structure remains intact. Various alterations have been made to the classroom block, however, which has low authenticity

The former Detention Block has low authenticity, having lost the internal walls between the original cells in recent alterations. Most internal and a substantial amount of the external fabric of the building has been altered. The extant section of the security fence increases the authenticity of the Detention Block area of the site.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Carmel Gosper, Historical Research Assistant. The physical evidence has been compiled by Annabel Wheal, Architect. The assessment has been edited by Rosemary Rosario, for Heritage and Conservation Professionals.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Walcott Centre* comprising the Main Building (1921), former Nurses' Quarters (1921), former Detention Ward (1921), Security Fence (1950), Wood and Metal Workshops, and various ancillary buildings located on a site at the intersection of Lord and Walcott Streets in Mount Lawley was built as a Government Receiving Depot<sup>1</sup> for the State Children Department<sup>2</sup> in 1921.

In nineteenth century Western Australia, concern for the welfare of children living outside a two-parent family was left to religious bodies, with a minimum of government interference. Juvenile offenders received special treatment through the development of the Children's Panels in 1847. Penalties were limited to three months imprisonment, with whipping as an

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<sup>1</sup> Various called the State Children Receiving Home/Depot; Government Receiving Home/Depot; Mt Lawley [Children's] Receiving Home/Depot.

<sup>2</sup> This Dept became Child Welfare Dept (1927-1972), Community Welfare Dept (1972-1985), Community Services (1985-1993), Community Development (1993-1995) and is now (2000) Family & Children's Services.

alternative for boys. In the second half of the nineteenth century, increased population as a result of the discovery of gold combined with other social forces to increase the numbers of children needing care, and a number of private institutions were set up. In 1874, the *Industrial Schools Act* allowed for the care and education of orphans and destitute children, and also allowed for the State to place juvenile offenders in places other than prison. Industrial Schools were essentially reformatories for delinquent children, and children were sent to a School appropriate to their religion. Industrial Schools came under the jurisdiction of the Public Charities Department until the *State Children Act, 1907* created the State Children Department.<sup>3</sup>

With the growth of the city of Perth, the government was drawn into providing welfare services, and in 1894 the first Government Receiving Depot was established in Subiaco, for the reception of all classes of children, but principally those under detention for a short period, or while waiting to be transferred to one of the subsidised institutions.<sup>4</sup> These were institutions controlled by various religious organisations, however, they were subject to the Act and supervised by the Department.<sup>5</sup> The Receiving Depot was the only institution under the direct control of the Department.<sup>6</sup>

The Government Receiving Depot moved from Subiaco when its buildings were converted to the State's first maternity hospital, King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women (KEMH), opened on 14 July 1916.<sup>7</sup> The Government Receiving Depot was relocated to Marquis Street, West Perth.<sup>8</sup>

A Royal Commission into the workings of the State Children and Charities Department in 1919, prompted the construction of new facilities for the Government Receiving Depot in Mt Lawley. The Interim Report read as follows:

The Government Receiving Depot at Marquis Street can best be described by saying that the Department must have searched the city for the most unsuitable building, and succeeded in finding it. It is impossible to imagine a more undesirable place ... the place has been condemned by the Health Department. Yet some 30 infants and the staff looking after them are compelled to live there ... Your Committee recommends that this place be immediately vacated, and more suitable premises with ample grounds away from the dust and traffic secured before the approach of hot weather. Your Committee desires to place on record its appreciation of the good work being done at the existing depot by Nurse Tilly and her staff, under very adverse conditions.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> 'History of the Department for Community Welfare' in Community Welfare Dept Annual Report 1979, pp. 8-9.

<sup>4</sup> Public Charities Dept Annual Report 1907, in *V&P 1908-9*, Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 13; State Children Dept Annual Report 1913, in *V&P 1913*, Vol. 2, No. 28, p. 8; 'History of the Department for Community Welfare' in Community Welfare Dept Annual Report 1979, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Subsidised Institutions included: Castledare; Clontarf; Parkerville Children's Home; Seaforth Salvation Army Boys' & Girls' Homes, Gosnells; St Joseph's Orphanage, Wembley; Home of the Good Shepherd, Leederville; St Vincent's; Perth Girls' Orphanage; Swan Boys' Orphanage; to name a few of the long-standing ones.

<sup>6</sup> State Children Dept Annual Report 1927, in *V&P 1927*, Vol. 1, No. 9, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Medical Dept Annual Report 1917/18, in *V&P 1917-18*, Vol. 2, No. 10, p. 2; Spillman, Ken, *Identity Prized: A History of Subiaco*, City of Subiaco, UWA Press, 1985, pp. 165-167.

<sup>8</sup> 'Interim Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly appointed to Inquire into the State Children and Charities Department,' Royal Commission of State Children and Charities Departments 1921, in *V&P 1921-22*, Vol. 2, No. 18, p.12.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, p. 4.

By the time the final report of the Royal Commission was tabled in parliament in November 1920, the government had already commenced the erection of new premises for the Government Receiving Depot 'in another portion of the city, and in a more suitable locality.'<sup>10</sup> This location was on the corner of Lord and Walcott Streets, Mt Lawley.<sup>11</sup>

By the end of the financial year in 1923, expenditure on public works for the new Government Receiving Depot had amounted to £301/9/2.<sup>12</sup> The State Children Department Annual Report for the year ended 1922 recorded:

The new buildings have been occupied for twelve months and the change from the old site has proved beneficial in many directions, and has undoubtedly tended to reduce the mortality amongst the young infants. The location of the Detention Wards adjacent to the main building has reduced overhead charges. The matron has the power to grant bail, and this is being freely exercised when there is no serious objection.<sup>13</sup>

The Child Welfare Department<sup>14</sup> dealt with adoptions, wards, unmarried mothers and their children, foster children, industrial schools and the Children's Court. The Government Receiving Depot at Mt Lawley was the only receiving centre where the department dealt with admission and discharge of wards of the state, foster children, orphans, destitutes and delinquents.

By 1932, the Receiving Depot also took in children whose mothers had no other means of caring for their children, while they were seeking care at King Edward Memorial and other hospitals.<sup>15</sup> The institution dealt with up to 700 admissions and discharges in a year, and on average, about 40 children were in residence at any one time.<sup>16</sup> The ages of the inmates at the Government Receiving Depot varied from just a few days old to seventeen years. Those charged with misdemeanours and awaiting trial in the Children's Court, and delinquent or uncontrollable children were housed in the Detention Wards, separated from the orphans and other wards of the State.<sup>17</sup>

Initially, accommodation proved ample, and the separate Detention Wards were often unoccupied, as bail was granted in many cases.<sup>18</sup> However, by 1928, the Annual Report of the Child Welfare Department recorded the following:

The accommodation in the ordinary section was often taxed to its utmost. This institution is called upon to provide accommodation for wards of the Department awaiting medical and dental treatment, and is also the temporary residence of children who are dealt with under the boarding-out system or awaiting transfer to institutions. The detention wards are also situated there ... Plans have been prepared and approval given for the erection of a new receiving ward which will permit of the temporary isolation of new admissions. It is hoped that the new building will be erected soon. The authority to proceed with the construction is

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10 *ibid*, p.12.

11 In some records the place is recorded as Highgate Hill, since the boundary between the two suburbs is Walcott Street.

12 Public Works & Labour Dept [PWD] Annual Report 1922/23 in *V&P* 1923, Vol. 2, No. 23.

13 State Children Dept Annual Report 1922, in *V&P* 1923, Vol. 2, No. 28, p. 3.

14 State Children Dept changed its name to Child Welfare Dept in December 1927.

15 Child Welfare Dept Annual Report 1932, in *V&P* 1932, Vol. 1, No. 9, p. 5.

16 Figures collated from Child Welfare Dept Annual Reports 1922-1940.

17 State Children Dept Annual Report 1930-31, in *V&P* 1930-31, Vol. 2, No. 16, p. 15.

18 State Children Dept Annual Report 1924, in *V&P* 1924, Vol. 2, No. 23, p. 4; State Children Dept Annual Report 1927, in *V&P* 1927, Vol. 1, No. 9, p. 4.

awaiting the passing of the building estimates.<sup>19</sup> However, construction was delayed due to lack of funds, and the situation caused serious health risks to the children, as infectious diseases spread due to a lack of space to isolate infants.<sup>20</sup>

In 1924, installation of hot water was carried out at a cost of £222.6.10.<sup>21</sup> In 1926, works totalling £631/6/0 suggest that substantial additions or new building occurred at that time.<sup>22</sup>

During the Depression years, the maintenance of public buildings was often neglected. From 1933 a program of works began to return public buildings to proper order, at least externally, and in 1937, £112/1/5 of government funds was spent on the Government Receiving Depot.<sup>23</sup>

In 1934, the Government Receiving Depot began caring for 'subnormal' and 'backwards' children.<sup>24</sup> During the same year, kindergarten work was inaugurated under the voluntary supervision of a Miss Gollan.<sup>25</sup>

The Depot operated with 14 staff. Apart from the matron and 3 nurses, there were five attendants (four female, one male), a male clerk, a cook, laundress, seamstress and an 'outside man.'<sup>26</sup> The seamstress, assisted by the older girls, was engaged to make outfits for children.<sup>27</sup> These were issued to foster parents when a child was boarded out. The clothing was made 'as near the prevailing styles as possible, in order that the children ... appear no different from any other child.'<sup>28</sup> A typical outfit for an infant consisted of 2 dresses, 2 nightgowns, 2 bonnets, 2 pair booties, 4 petticoats, 2 singlets, 1 coat and 2 bottles, amounting to £2.19.5. Older children were provided with a similar array of clothes, as well as a brush, comb and toothbrush. Service girls had, in addition to the standard issue, 5 aprons and 2 working dresses, which in total cost the Department £6.6.11/2. The Department found that making the outfits on the premises, with materials from the Government Stores, was the most economical method of providing for the children.<sup>29</sup>

The 1938 Annual Report of the Child Welfare Dept records that the Government Receiving Depot was able to accommodate 64 children as follows: 16 cots (babies), 31 beds (aged 2 up), 9 beds (girls aged 14 up) and 8 beds (detention ward). The daily average of inmates at this time was only 37, however, plans were being prepared for a new dormitory for 'big girls.'<sup>30</sup> It was a room 10' x 8' [3m x 2.4m], containing twelve smaller divided rooms. The Lotteries Commission had also been approached, and agreed, to provide costs for a recreation room. In the previous year the Lotteries Commission had donated a large refrigerator, a weighing machine and baby scales, and a

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19 Child Welfare Dept Annual Report 1928, in *V&P* 1928, Vol. 2, No. 18, p. 5.

20 *ibid.*, 1929, in *V&P* 1929, Vol. 2, No. 21, p. 4-5.

21 PWD Annual Report 1924, in *V&P* 1924, Vol. 2, No. 15, p. 35.

22 *ibid.*, 1926, in *V&P* 1926, Vol. 2, No. 22, p. 44. Original drawings of the place would help to determine what these additions were, however they are unavailable.

23 *ibid.*, 1937, in *V&P* 1937, Vol. 2, No. 21, p. 25.

24 Child Welfare Dept Annual Report 1934, in *V&P* 1934, Vol. 2, No. 8.

25 *ibid.*

26 *ibid.*

27 *ibid.*, p. 7.

28 State Children Dept Annual Report 1925, in *V&P* 1925, Vol. 2, No. 22.

29 *ibid.*; photographs of these outfits can be seen in Battye Library Pictorial Collection, 816B/A 1400-1402, 1407; 816B/B 887-892, 895-896, January 1930.

30 Child Welfare Dept Annual Report 1938, in *V&P* 1938, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 8.

height recording outfit. Gifts for the Home had also been received from the adjacent Norwood State School, through the Junior Red Cross.<sup>31</sup>

In 1938, Miss Isabella Borwick, Matron of the Government Receiving Depot at Mt Lawley for 13 years, and previously an Inspector within the Department, retired. Miss Borwick was replaced by Miss Tait, who was previously employed at KEMH.<sup>32</sup>

During World War Two, numbers at the Government Receiving Depot remained steady, though the amount of outfits being issued decreased by half. This was due in part to the fact that fewer children were fostered out to homes, and more were adopted. Prior to the war, the Department had to advertise children available for adoption, but during and immediately after the war, the number of people wanting children increased to such an extent that by 1946, there were over 150 applicants waiting to adopt children.<sup>33</sup>

In 1940, improvements were made to the home in the way of furnishing, and the use of white tablecloths instead of lino tabletops in the dining room.<sup>34</sup>

In 1946, the Child Welfare Dept announced that a new Receiving Home at Point Heathcote in Applecross, with the capacity to accommodate 100 children, was in the planning stages.<sup>35</sup> However, this did not eventuate for another 23 years.

In 1947, Miss Vera Gill was Matron at the Government Receiving Depot. Miss Gill had been employed by the Health Department in various capacities since the 1920s, as Matron at the Infectious Diseases Hospital in Subiaco, and matron of Perth Public Hospital (RPH) for many years.<sup>36</sup>

In 1950, the high picket fence surrounding the Detention Wards began to decay, and the building could be seen from Lord Street, which caused public concern. The place was dubbed 'The Gaol in the City,' and an erroneous newspaper reported that young children and babies were kept in the Detention Wards. However, the Child Welfare Department assured that only children over 14 were housed there, and even then for very short periods of time, usually one day or less. The newspaper article reported that the picket fence was in the process of being replaced.<sup>37</sup> A report to the Hon. Minister for Child Welfare from the Acting Secretary reads:

Prior to renovations being made to the detention block, children frequently escaped by breaking through the plaster ceilings and removing tiles off the roof, or unpicking the cyclone wire and removing verandah boards. Figures show that the amount of damage perpetrated by children, who have had to be detained on account of abscondings and serious offences, whilst inmates of the institution, has been considerable.<sup>38</sup>

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31 *ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

32 *ibid.*, p. 7.

33 Child Welfare Dept Annual Report for Five Years ended 30 June 1946, in *V&P* 1947, Vol. 2, No. 10, p.3.

34 *ibid.*, 1940, in *V&P* 1940, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp. 3-7.

35 Child Welfare Dept Annual Report for Five Years ended 30 June 1946, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

36 Wise's Post Office Directories, 1920, 1925, 1927, 1947.

37 *Daily News*, 26.1.50.

38 Report to Hon. Minister for CWD from Acting Secretary, 23.1.50, in 'Government Receiving Depot General Correspondence,' Acc 1031 AN 145/1 Item 67/76 Vols.1-2, 1926-1950, SRO.

Between 1955 and 1957, works on the site included the installation of hot water services, and additions and alterations to the laundry.<sup>39</sup> Additions to the original building prior to 1955 included two ablution blocks, and the extension of the covered ways on the south and west sides of the building. Other changes included the removal of double doors and a ramp to the southwest verandah.<sup>40</sup> By 1955, this verandah had been enclosed and the doorway blocked.<sup>41</sup>

In 1955, the east wing was the nursery, and the girls' side. The west wing was the boys' side. The south wing was the dining room, kitchen and scullery. The north wing was the matron's residence, sewing and clothing rooms. An area where the four wings intersect was originally an open, play area, surrounded by verandahs. The separate building to the north west of the main building, containing its own bathroom and laundry, was for nurses' quarters.<sup>42</sup> At some stage before 1955, the north wing of the main building had been extended to accommodate doctors' rooms and an administration area, and the nurses' quarters had also been extended, with three additional rooms and enclosed verandahs on the west and east sides.<sup>43</sup>

In 1957, a new laundry unit, further south than the existing laundry, was proposed. The existing wood workshop to the southeast of the main building, adjacent to the security fence, was the original laundry. The existing metal workshop directly to the rear of the kitchen was originally three rooms; used as a fuel store, staff dining room, and cook's room. The two storerooms to the north of the detention ward were used as a workshop and boys' flat. There was also a bathroom south of the cook's room, and latrines further to the southwest. Also in this area was a large shelter shed and gardener's shed.<sup>44</sup> Later, the three rooms to the rear of the kitchen were joined into one, and the shelter/gardener's shed was removed.<sup>45</sup>

Changes in government departmental structures between the 1960s and 1990s resulted in changes of use at *Walcott Centre*. The Child Welfare Reception Home, as it was called from the late 1950s, was the only government reception centre for State wards, and also the only institution run solely by the Child Welfare Department. This changed in 1960 when the Child Welfare Department built Riverbank at Caversham, followed by Longmore Remand and Assessment Centre in Bentley in 1965. A farm school in Stoneville, called Hillston, was also opened in 1964, and, among other things, provided produce for these government institutions. Subsidised institutions, run by religious organizations, continued to provide accommodation for State children. In the 1960s, non-denominational institutions such as Ngal-a Mothercraft Home and Training Centre, *Fairbridge Farm School* and Sister Kate's, also added to the various institutions which were under the supervision of the Department.<sup>46</sup>

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39 PWD File 1003/34 Dwg HW3, Sheet 1, 24-8-1955; PWD File 1003/34, Dwg L.2, Sheet 1, 1957; Aside from these drawings relating to the laundry and hot water services, CAMS has no records of 3 Walcott Street, Mt Lawley, as the file has been missing since 1971.

40 PWD File 1603-25, Dwg of floor plan showing hot water pipes, no date.

41 PWD File 1003/34 Dwg HW3, Sheet 1, 24-8-1955.

42 *ibid.*; PWD File 1603-25, Dwg of floor plan showing hot water pipes, no date.

43 These additions are shown on 1955 PWD drawings [*ibid.*], however are not original; See Physical Evidence.

44 PWD File 1003/34, Dwg L.2, Sheet 1, 1957.

45 PWD File 875/63, Dwg MI3, 28-5-74.

46 Child Welfare Dept Annual Report 1964, p. 20.



Longmore and Ngal-a contributed to the reduction of numbers at the Reception Home. Longmore housed those children that had been arrested, and were awaiting court appearances,<sup>47</sup> and Ngal-a cared for children between 0-3 years of age on behalf of the Department.<sup>48</sup> The Reception Home housed less children to reduce the risk of infectious disease. While the home had a capacity for 64 children in 1938, by the late 1960s and 1970s, it held no more than 40-45 children at one time. By 1967, the Reception Home held only 30 of the 178 wards of the state, the rest being held at Longmore, Hillston and Riverbank.<sup>49</sup> Bridgewater Care and Assessment Centre in Duncraig Road, Applecross was opened in 1969, over twenty years after first being proposed in 1946.<sup>50</sup> This institution further reduced the demand on the Reception Home.

In the 1960s, the Walcott Street Reception Home<sup>51</sup> took wards between the ages of 3 and 18 years. Most were neglected or deprived children, awaiting permanent placement elsewhere. Their stays at the Reception Home were short term, 1-8 days, in comparison to Riverbank and Hillston, where children stayed for between 6 months and one year, for intensive rehabilitation programs. However, gradually the nature of the Home changed to accommodate some longer-term inmates for periods of 3-6 months, for whom the Department had encountered difficulties in finding placements elsewhere.<sup>52</sup>

The 1966 Annual Report of the Child Welfare Dept read:

The wide age range of the inmates and the variety of the emotional adjustments consequent upon their disordered home lives makes this a difficult facility to manage.<sup>53</sup>

Another change in Departmental practice to affect the Reception Home involved Aboriginal children. Aboriginal children had previously been housed with other wards of the State.<sup>54</sup> However from 1 July 1964, Aboriginal wards of the State were transferred into the care of the Native Welfare Department. This practice continued until 1970, when the Child Welfare Department regained control of Aboriginal wards of the State living south of Carnarvon.<sup>55</sup> The following year, the Community Welfare Department was formed, embracing both the areas of Child Welfare and Native Welfare.<sup>56</sup> During the 1970s, Aboriginal children comprised between one third and one half of all residents at the Reception Home.<sup>57</sup>

In 1971 and 1972, extensive repairs and renovations were carried out at the Reception Home, which impacted on social activities and visiting hours for most of the year. The sewing room, now called the Central Clothes Store, outfitted residents as it had done since the early 1920s, also supplying clothes

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47 *ibid.*, 1966.

48 *ibid.*, 1965, p. 13.

49 *ibid.*, 1967.

50 'History of the Department for Community Welfare' in Community Welfare Dept Annual Report 1979, pp. 16-18.

51 Name changed in 1968.

52 Child Welfare Dept Annual Report 1969, p. 12.

53 *ibid.*, 1966, p. 19.

54 Aboriginal children appear in photos in Battye Library Pictorial Collection, 816B/A 1400-1402, 1407; 816B/B 887-892, 895-896, January 1930.

55 Child Welfare Dept Annual Report 1970, p. 7.

56 *ibid.*, 1971, p. 7.

57 Child Welfare Dept Annual Reports 1970-1978.

to other government institutions.<sup>58</sup> In 1979, the outdoor area with seating and barbeque facilities was added, assisted by the staff and children at the Home.<sup>59</sup>

The trend towards the Reception Home being a treatment centre for selected children in the 1960s resulted in special education programs being introduced.<sup>60</sup> A kindergarten had operated within the Walcott Street Reception Home since 1934, and school age children attended Maylands Primary School or Mount Lawley Senior High School. Wards of working age went to their jobs and returned to the Home at night.<sup>61</sup> In the late 1960s, remedial schooling began at the Reception Home. This involved 'programs to stabilize moderately difficult young children.'<sup>62</sup> The original nurses' quarters was used as a school.<sup>63</sup> In 1975, it was officially classed as a special school, and came under the jurisdiction of the Education Department.<sup>64</sup> The inmates received classes in social skills, sex education and work training programs.<sup>65</sup> In 1973, a full time staff member was employed to find employment for inmates at the Reception Home, of whom 85% were teenagers.<sup>66</sup>

From the mid 1970s, the centre aimed to provide a resource facility for wards needing employment, and began to focus more on training programs. Camps, social activities and outings were included as part of education of the residents. An addition to the staff was a specialist recruited to assist with rehabilitation of Aboriginal inmates.<sup>67</sup> By 1978, community based training programs began at the nearby government hostel, Stuart House, and a year later at Tudor Lodge. Both these hostels in Mt Lawley were under the control of the Reception Home, and catered to working-age wards.<sup>68</sup> The Reception Home helped other government institutions assess inmates, and devised training programs for them. The development of the place as a resource centre, with the two hostels as annexes, resulted in a further name change to *Walcott Centre* in 1980. The *Walcott Centre* continued to care for and protect children, however, focusing more on their assessment and planning for their future.<sup>69</sup> This focus was a natural progression into corrective management, which is the current function of *Walcott Centre*.

In 1983, the Department of Community Welfare<sup>70</sup> carried out a program of decentralization and de-institutionalisation. Hillston and Bridgewater were closed. In early 1984, two existing Community Service programs were relocated to *Walcott Centre*, at which time the place, after 62 years, ceased its function as a residential reception centre.<sup>71</sup>

From 1984 until 1993, *Walcott Centre* was the headquarters for a new government initiative, Community Based Offenders' Program (C-BOP), a program designed to meet the justice needs of offending youths. It facilitated

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58 Community Welfare Dept Annual Report 1972, pp. 15–16.

59 *ibid.*, 1979, p. 51.

60 *ibid.*, 1969, p. 43.

61 Child Welfare Dept Annual Report 1966.

62 *ibid.*, 1969, p. 12.

63 Conversation with Jeff Kozak, 20 July 2000.

64 Community Welfare Dept Annual Report 1975, pp. 44-45.

65 *ibid.*, 1977, p. 44.

66 *ibid.*, 1973, p. 44.

67 *ibid.*, 1977, p. 44.

68 *ibid.*, 1978, p. 33.

69 *ibid.*, 1980, p. 37.

70 Name change from Child Welfare Dept in 1972.

71 Community Welfare Dept Annual Report 1983 & 1984; Information from file courtesy of Jeff Kozak .

work programs for juvenile offenders as alternatives to incarceration, such as onsite workshop activities, and cleanups and maintenance of public buildings and parks. C-BOP also conducted self-esteem and confidence building courses, such as camping and adventure trips. In the early 1990s, the eastern section of the east wing was used by Worksyde, an Employment and Training Support Program. This was a program funded jointly by the Ministry of Justice and YMCA, which was devoted to finding work for juveniles that had come through the system.<sup>72</sup> C-BOP closed in 1993, when the adult and juvenile services amalgamated under the new Department of Community Development.<sup>73</sup>

During C-BOP's occupation of the site, the two workshops to the south of the kitchen were used as metalwork and woodwork shops. The front verandah was enclosed in 1988 for a public waiting area, and the original open play area was converted into four offices on each side of a central passage, with skylight windows. The adjacent former nurses' quarters was used as a clothing store, with a loading ramp attached to the east side. The southern side of the former nurses' quarters was renovated to create public toilets.<sup>74</sup>

In April 1987, the Mt Lawley College of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) began its proposed redevelopment program, which included acquisition of the compound area and western carpark portion of the *Walcott Centre* site.<sup>75</sup> This move had been agreed upon in February 1984, after several years of negotiation between the Education and Community Welfare Departments.<sup>76</sup> *Walcott Centre* vacated the former detention ward and laundry buildings in 1988, and in 1989 most of the iron fence surrounding the detention ward was removed, and the area redeveloped as car parking space.<sup>77</sup> The existing timber store and carport were relocated to another area of the *Walcott Centre's* site, and an automotive garage/workshop and adjacent store were replaced by a transportable structure.<sup>78</sup> A fence was erected to divide the TAFE area from the Ministry of Justice area.<sup>79</sup>

The laundry building (1957) and former detention ward (1921) were taken over as TAFE classrooms by c1990. The detention ward was substantially renovated and altered in 1997, by architects Baverstock Murphy & Associates. The walls that divided the building into eight cells were removed. Other changes to the TAFE portion of the site include the installation of a demountable building on the southwest side.<sup>80</sup>

In February 2000, disability facilities (toilets and parking) were installed in the main building.<sup>81</sup>

Historically, the site has always been a centre for child welfare and corrective management. Until the early 1990s, these areas were managed by the same government department (Community Services). Currently, (2000), Family

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72 Conversation with Jeff Kozak, 20 July 2000.

73 *ibid.*; information from file courtesy of Jeff Kozak.

74 Letter from BMA to Dept for Community Services, 6 October 1988, & floor plan, in file courtesy of Jeff Kozak.

75 File Note, 7 April 1987, in file courtesy of Jeff Kozak.

76 Letter from Director of Facilities, TAFE to Director, Dept for Community Services, 23 March 1987, in file courtesy of Jeff Kozak.

77 BMA Dwg SK.1, Proposed Car Parking Layout, Mt Lawley TAFE, January 1989, in file courtesy of Jeff Kozak.

78 Letter from Office of Govt Accommodation to TAFE, 26 April 1988, in file courtesy of Jeff Kozak.

79 BMA Dwg SK.1, Proposed Car Parking Layout, Mt Lawley TAFE, January 1989, in file courtesy of Jeff Kozak.

80 Site inspection, 20 July 2000; Conversation with Phil Bianchi, TAFE staff, 24 July 2000.

81 Conversation with Jeff Kozak, 20 July 2000.

and Children's Services deals with child protection, adoption, foster care and crisis accommodation. The Ministry of Justice deals with the area of Court and Community Based Services (Adult and Juvenile), as well as Aboriginal Policy and Services.<sup>82</sup>

*Walcott Centre* is vested with the Ministry of Justice.<sup>83</sup> Half the site is occupied by the Mount Lawley College of TAFE. Since 1993, the Ministry of Justice has operated out of the main building as a branch of Community Based Services. The centre deals with offenders in the Mt Lawley area, which stretches from Noranda to Maylands. It offers counselling services and rehabilitation courses for adult and juvenile offenders. Prisoners on parole make their regular check-ins at the centre.<sup>84</sup>

The former nurses' quarters has been vacant since a fire there in the early 1990s. The two workshops to the south of the kitchen are used for community programs such as making play blocks for children. The eastern section of the east wing is the Court Diversion Service, which deals specifically with offenders that have a history of drug abuse.<sup>85</sup>

Occasionally, ex-inmates of the Children's Home visit the place, and ask to be shown around the building.<sup>86</sup>

## 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

### The Site

The *Walcott Centre* is located on the north west corner of the intersection of Lord and Walcott Streets, Mount Lawley. The site, comprising an area of 1.0547 hectares, is owned by the Ministry of Justice. The site has been divided into two sections with the area facing Walcott Street used by the Ministry and the area facing Lord Street used by TAFE.

The Ministry of Justice site contains the Main Building with additions, Former Nurses' Quarters, Metal Workshop, Wood Workshop and Woodshed.

The TAFE site contains the Former Detention Ward, Former Boys' Flat, Former Workshop, Former laundry and the TAFE Demountable.

Part of the 1950 security fence is located on the boundary between the Ministry of Justice and the TAFE sections. The remainder of the site is divided by a Super-Six profile asbestos cement fence.

### The Ministry of Justice Site

The Main Building is located on the north west portion of the site with the former Nurses' Quarters located adjacent in the extreme north west corner. An area of bitumen parking and driveway is located to the north of the main building, accessed from Walcott Street. A garden area, located on the Walcott Street boundary contains shrubs and trees including Australian Natives and the remnants of a previous hedge. There is a timber and woven wire fence along the Walcott Street boundary.

The north east corner of the site is vacant and is surrounded by high asbestos and metal clad fences. Several medium to large eucalypt trees are located within this area which is covered with rough, unsealed ground which is

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82 Telstra White Pages, 1999.

83 Title Deeds show the purpose of the site as 'Supervision of Offenders.' [Conversation with Tina Arthur, Asset Manager, Ministry of Justice, 24 July 2000.]

84 Conversation with Jeff Kozak, 20 July 2000.

85 *ibid.*

86 *ibid*; conversation with staff members at *Walcott Centre* during physical inspection, 20 July 2000.

grassed in parts. There is a sealed access driveway from Lord Street across the southern part of this area adjacent to the TAFE boundary.

The area to the rear or south of the main building is bitumen sealed. Two workshops and the woodshed are located beyond this bitumen area to the south, on the TAFE boundary. A paved barbecue courtyard is located between the kitchen wing and the western toilet block of the main building. A gravel parking area with scattered eucalypt trees is located between the main building and the timber picket fence on the western boundary.

### **The TAFE Site**

A bitumen sealed parking area faces Lord Street with a row of date palm trees on the road verge. A corrugated steel fence separates the parking area from the remainder of the site.

The former Detention Ward is located to the west of the parking area and is surrounded by sealed bitumen areas and recent landscaping including border plantings of small shrubs and brick paved pathways. To the north of the former Detention Ward is the Former Boys' Flat and the Former Workshed. These buildings are bounded to the north by the extant part of the 1950 security fence. The Former Laundry and the TAFE Demountable buildings are located to the west of the Detention Ward. The ground around these buildings is unsealed.

Recent Mount Lawley TAFE buildings are located to the south of the site.

### **1950 Security Fence**

Sections of the 1950 corrugated galvanized iron sheet security fence remain extant and form part of the boundary between the TAFE and Ministry of Justice areas of the site. The fence is constructed of vertical panels of heavy gauge cgi, approximately 2.5–3 metres high with a distinctive curved section to the top. The cgi panels are supported on steel frames located on the Detention Ward side of the fence. A cgi security door with steel bars to a viewing window remains extant. The fence is in good condition although some panels have been replaced with zincalume which is reacting with the adjacent original cgi and causing some deterioration.

## **MINISTRY OF JUSTICE SITE – BUILDINGS**

### **Main Building**

The main building was constructed in 1921 and has undergone several additions and alterations throughout the years. The style of the building can best be described as Federation Bungalow, although the building dates from the early 1920s. The original building plan was a 'T' shape. The main part of the building is rectangular in plan and runs in an east west direction. Two wings run off this main section, the entry wing to the north and the kitchen wing to the south.

Additions and alterations have included the construction of two toilet blocks to the rear of the building, the Court Diversion Service offices (timber framed addition) to the east, enclosure of the verandahs to the south, tea preparation area and toilets to the west, enclosure of the front verandah and construction of two new rooms to the west of the north wing and the store room to the east of the north wing.

The original building is brick with a Marseilles profile tiled roof with limestone footings evident at the base of the walls. The walls are generally red brick to approximately 1m, with white, rough-cast render above. The roof is hipped and gabled with rough-cast render and timber louvred vents to

the gable ends. The eaves overhang is lined with white painted timber slats. The gutters are generally ogee profile with round downpipes.

The windows are generally timber framed double hung sashes or timber framed with both fixed panes and awning windows, as noted on the plan. The doors are generally timber-framed and panelled with the front door having a stained glass panel and two stained glass sidelight panels.

The toilet block extensions are of rough-cast rendered masonry walls painted white with a hipped tiled roof, ogee gutters, round downpipes and timber framed double hung windows.

The Court Diversion Service offices extension is a timber framed and weatherboard and asbestos clad structure with a tiled gable roof and timber slats covering the timber stumps and area beneath the floor. The windows are both aluminium framed sliding and timber framed double hung sashes.

The enclosure to the verandahs to the south has asbestos walls and timber framed sliding windows or glass louvred windows.

The tea preparation area and toilets to the west are also a later asbestos addition. The toilets have concrete floors and a tiled gable roof linking with the original roof.

The front verandah is enclosed with the same materials as the original building, with red brick to the base and rough-cast render above. The windows are also timber framed double hung sashes.

The two newer rooms added to the west of the north wing are also of the same construction as the original.

The storeroom to the east of the north wing is a timber framed asbestos clad extension with the original tiled roof extended at the same pitch. The windows are aluminium framed sliding and louvred.

Generally the interior fabric is consistent throughout. The floors are timber boards covered with either carpet or carpet squares. There is lino to the kitchen areas and painted concrete to the toilets. The walls are painted and rendered brick and are generally plain, however some of the offices to the entrance wing have picture rails. New walls are timber stud and plasterboard clad.

Most of the rooms have the original ceilings, however the ceilings to some rooms have been replaced with new, lower level flush plaster ceilings. Clerestorey windows are located in the central area of the building, with large steel trusses, fixed window panes and glass louvres above. This area was originally one large space which has recently been divided into a central corridor, an open space and four small offices. The partitions are not full height and the original volume of the space is still clearly evident.

Many of the original internal doors remain, including the internal doors in the entrance wing with leadlight panels and leadlight sidelights.

Several fireplaces were located in the building. These have now been either filled in or fitted with oil heaters.

Internally the enclosed verandahs to the south side of the building have T&G timber boards lining the walls and timber boards lining the raked ceiling.

The kitchen areas have commercial grade kitchen equipment, a disused coolroom and a large exhaust hood.

Generally both internally and externally the main building is in a good condition, has a high authenticity and integrity. Most of the alterations and additions are either reversible or have been carried out in such a manner that leaves the original intent and spaces easily identifiable.

### **Former Nurses' Quarters**

The former Nurses' Quarters comprises an original rectangular building addressing Walcott Street to which an addition was added to the rear at right angles. The front, original, section of the building comprises two rooms with a verandah to the Walcott Street elevation. The rear addition comprises enclosed verandahs either side of three classrooms. The ground level of this building is higher than the site. Concrete steps and a concrete ramp lead up to the building which is located on an area of banked and retained ground with landscaping.

The original part of the building is timber framed with external walls of rough cast render to the top sections of the wall and timber weatherboards below sill height. The verandah to the Walcott Street elevation has no floor and has an unlined, tiled, skillion roof supported by 100x100 timber posts.

The roof is gabled with clay roof tiles with timber battens to the eaves.

The east elevation of the addition comprises an enclosed verandah with asbestos panels and louvred windows. The south elevation has asbestos panels on a five-course brick base and the northern elevation is red face brickwork. The construction of the classroom walls is similar to the original section of the building comprising rough-cast and weatherboard cladding on a timber frame. The windows to the original section are timber framed double hung sash windows with aluminium flyscreens. The addition has louvred windows to the east elevation and timber framed awning windows to the south. The doors are generally timber-framed flush panel doors. The addition has a tiled, broken pitched, gable roof. The gutters are ogee profile with round downpipes. There is evidence of some of the rainwater goods having been replaced.

The internal walls to the original section of the building are vertical timber panels to dado height with battened painted plasterboard above. The classroom block has weatherboards to sill height with roughcast render above to the enclosed verandah area and asbestos sheets to the classrooms. The floors are timber boards with timber skirtings.

The former Nurses' Quarters and classroom additions are generally in a fair to poor condition. The building generally has a high degree of authenticity. It is currently unused.

### **Metal Workshop**

The metal workshop is a rectangular building with walls partly of brick, flat asbestos cement sheets and weatherboards. The roof has been recently replaced and is a zinalume gabled roof with square profile gutters and round downpipes. A steel framed, zinalume clad shed is attached to the rear, south, of the workshop. The windows to the workshop are timber framed double hung sashes and timber framed highlight windows.

The condition is fair, authenticity high and integrity high.

### **Wood Workshop**

The Wood Workshop is a rectangular building with a replacement corrugated zinalume gabled roof with square gutters and round downpipes. There is a brick chimney with a simple corbelled detail. The walls are of painted Jarrah

weatherboards. A lean-to is attached to the south side of the workshop and is a timber framed, zincalume clad structure under an extension of the main roof. The windows are timber framed double hung sashes. The doors are ledged and braced timber doors.

The condition is fair, authenticity high and integrity high.

### **Woodshed**

The Woodshed is located in the south west corner of the Ministry of Justice site and is a simple shed, rectangular in plan, sitting on timber stumps. The walls are clad with a square-ribbed profile metal sheets and the roof is a low pitched gable of the same material. The building has aluminium sliding windows and a set of double doors also clad with the squared profile metal sheets.

The condition is fair.

## **TAFE SITE – BUILDINGS**

### **Former Detention Ward**

The former Detention Ward is rectangular in plan with the original cells located in the centre. The building probably contained eight cells originally, however many of the internal walls have been removed. The cell block is surrounded by verandahs that have been infilled.

The original section of the building has brick walls with rough-cast render. The recent walls are painted brickwork and timber framed with weatherboard cladding. The roof is a tiled, gabled roof with hipped sections to each end. The gutters are replacement ogee gutters with round downpipes. There is a timber pergola to the west elevation. The windows are aluminium framed sliding to the enclosed verandah and timber framed double hung sash windows to the original cell block.

Internally the ceiling is of new acoustic ceiling tiles. The walls are painted plaster and the floor is vinyl on concrete. The doors are generally timber panelled with a ledged and braced detail. The external doors to the enclosed section are powder-coated aluminium.

Having been recently renovated the condition is good, authenticity and integrity are low.

### **Former Boys' Flat**

The Former Boys' Flat is a timber framed asbestos clad building. The building comprises three rooms in an 'L' Shape with a verandah to the southern elevation. The roof is a corrugated galvanised iron, hipped roof with ogee gutters and round downpipes. The posts to the verandah are 100x100 timber posts. The building has possibly been relocated from another location. The condition is fair to poor, authenticity medium and integrity medium.

### **Former Workshed**

The former workshed is a simple timber framed, weatherboard clad building with a rectangular plan with two rooms. It has a hipped cgi roof, ogee gutters and round downpipes. The floors are timber. The building is in a fair to poor condition, authenticity medium and integrity medium.

### **Former Laundry**

The former laundry is a rectangular building with rendered panels and face brick infills. It has high level timber framed windows, a parapet wall at the eastern and western ends with a simple metal deck, gabled roof. The floor is



concrete. A steel framed verandah is located to the north and west ends. The condition of this building is good.

### **TAFE Demountable**

This building is a typical fibre cement sheet clad demountable classroom building. It has aluminium windows and doors, a simple metal deck gabled roof and is in good condition.

## **13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION**

The *Walcott Centre* was the only Child Welfare Department institution from its inception in 1921 until Riverbank opened in Caversham in 1960. This was followed by Hillston (1964),<sup>87</sup> Longmore (1965) and Bridgewater (1969). However, *Walcott Centre* was the only receiving home, where children were assessed before being discharged to the other institutions.

Of the State government institutions relating to child welfare, the only place on the Register of Heritage Places is *Hillston Boys' Farm (fmr)* [4038].

Of subsidised institutions that have been children's homes and orphanages, *Castledare Boys' Home (fmr)* [4579] and *Perth Girls' Orphanage (fmr)* [2159] are on the Register of Heritage Places.

Of places specifically for Aboriginal children, neither Sister Kate's (now called 'Manguri'), East Perth Girls' Home or Clontarf are on the State Register of Heritage Places. Manguri is entered on the City of Canning's Municipal Inventory. The original cottages have been demolished, although the Chapel (1937) and Kindergarten (1939) are extant.<sup>88</sup>

The first Government Receiving Depot and Industrial School at Subiaco (1894-1916) is on the Register of Heritage Places as part of the *King Edward Memorial Hospital Group* [2438]. It is now the WA Medical Museum.

## **13.4 REFERENCES**

No key references.

## **13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

There was very little information and knowledge available on this place, and time constraints have meant that further research is needed, including:

Consultation with Aboriginal Affairs Department to determine the extent of significance of the place to Aboriginal people; and,

Research into the history of the site prior to the development of *Walcott Centre*.

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<sup>87</sup> Hillston Boys' Farm was originally an Anglican farm school for boys, established 1946. It operated as Hillston from 1964-1984. [See *Hillston Boys' Farm* Assessment Documentation, Heritage Council of Western Australia, Database No. 4038.]

<sup>88</sup> City of Canning Municipal Inventory, April 1995.