

## Resolution of Council

**24 August 2026**

### **Item 14.10**

#### **Securing the Bidura Development Site**

Moved by Councillor Ellsmore, seconded by Councillor Thompson –

It is resolved that:

(A) the Council note:

- (i) Bidura House is an important former public building at 357 Glebe Point Road
- (ii) the site is significant to locals, containing the heritage Bidura House at the front of the site, and the former Metropolitan Remand Centre (MRC) and Children's Court at the rear
- (iii) the local community fought for a long time to protect and keep the site in public hands, led by the Glebe Society and supported by the then local MP, Jamie Parker
- (iv) the site was sold to private developers, in 2014
- (v) since the site closed for redevelopment, there have been many concerns raised with Council about potential 'heritage by neglect' at the site, with development delays and concerns about development conditions not being followed
- (vi) in November 2024, the Lord Mayor wrote to the Heritage Council asking them to order Bidura's owners to meet minimum standards of maintenance and repair
- (vii) since the original approval, the developer, Vision Land, has accessed one of the state approval pathways as a State Significant Development assessment, with bonuses for 'In-Fill Affordable Housing' for the Metropolitan Remand Centre only. State pathways mean the NSW Government rather than Council is responsible for development conditions and approvals

- (viii) there have been multiple reports of ongoing illegal access to the site at 357 Glebe Point Road, Glebe, including alleged acts of trespassing, break-ins, vandalism, fires, safety incidents, exposure to asbestos, and anti-social behaviour on the site coming from residents who live next to the site
- (ix) the developer, Vision Land, reportedly commissioned a report that advised of the presence of apparently asbestos-bound materials, which has raised additional concerns from residents
- (x) that Police have at times attended to neighbours' complaints, though neighbours have complained that the Police have denied responsibility for policing these alleged crimes and instead referred residents to the City, and other times have not been able to gain access to the site due to safety concerns

(B) the Council further note:

- (i) that the City has received and responded to residents' complaints over the past 7 years and taken appropriate actions to address the situation, but that they have been limited by its powers in relation to a State Significant Development
- (ii) that the current local MP, Kobi Shetty, has made representations to Police, Council and met on site with residents, actively lobbied Minister for Heritage, Climate Change, the Minister for Planning and the NSW Police around the development decisions and the heritage and safety of the site
- (iii) that although Council is limited in what it can do in relation to the illegal behaviour described, including trespassing, property damage and other potential criminal offences, this is an important site and Council should do what it can to ensure safety and heritage is protected
- (iv) in July 2024, the City of Sydney served a fire safety order on the owners requiring them to, among other things, secure the building against unauthorised entry, remove all combustible items from the building, clear exit paths and to provide the building with surveillance cameras, intruder alarms and external sensor lighting
- (v) in July 2026, City staff met on site with some residents and an owner representative to review conditions and attempt to address residents' concerns
- (vi) in August 2026, the City issued notice of intention to issue an order to address unsafe and unhealthy conditions relating to waste accumulation, stagnant pool water and overgrown vegetation
- (vii) in August 2026, City staff referred the matter to SafeWork NSW to investigate the asbestos concerns as well as the security measures at the Metropolitan Remand Centre
- (viii) the owner has installed external cameras and alarms, carries out site inspections, conducts weekly internal audits and engages contractors who are on site every day to board up access points

(C) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:

- (i) continue to monitor the site and communicate with the owner and local Police responsible for addressing the criminal activity including trespassing, and note that the City staff will continue further enforcement action, including further Orders, if grounds arise to do so
- (ii) provide an update to Councillors on actions being taken by Council.

Carried unanimously.

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