
Former Tottenham RAAF Stores Depot

Location

Ashley Street BRAYBROOK, Maribyrnong City

Municipality

MARIBYRNONG CITY

Level of significance

-

Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 23, 2000

The Tottenham RAAF depot is of regional historical significance as a major part of the Second World War defence build-up which was concentrated in the inner Western Suburbs. The place has important historical associations with other Air Force facilities such as Laverton and Point Cook RAAF bases and assists in understanding the function and complex interdependence of the numerous defence and munitions supply facilities. (Criterion A4) The buildings are also of local architectural interest as distinctive examples of functional Commonwealth Department of Works design, adapted to the particular use, in this case storage and inventory control of a vast range of military supplies and equipment. The place has local social significance as a major employer in the district following the Second World War.

(Criterion A3) Surviving rows of Cypress and Eucalyptus trees demonstrate the contemporary landscaping associated with this large Commonwealth utilitarian urban design plan.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Maribyrnong - Maribyrnong Heritage Review, Jill Barnard, Graeme Butler, Francine Gilfedder & Gary Vines, 2000;
Construction dates	1940,
Other Names	West Industrial Park,

Hermes Number 125591

Property Number

Physical Description 1

The Tottenham RAAF Stores comprises a complex of large single level warehouses and other smaller service and administration buildings arranged in a grid plan to the north of the Tottenham rail yards.

Two main building forms are evident. The larger are timber framed with two rows of fabricated riveted iron columns supporting a roof of corrugated asbestos cement sheeting and with perimeter walls of red brick. Timber posts carry the trusses via shear heads and three- and four-way diagonal braces, bolted through. Perimeter walls are load bearing with regular pilasters at each roof truss position. This structure supports a central gabled roof with ridge lantern and flanking skillion roof forms, stepped down from the central roof. This is expressed in the shape of the end walls.

The all-metal stores are constructed of sectional prefabricated panels and components, evidently designed for field erection, ie. the walls are in panels of about 2 metre square, as are the doors, and the trusses and posts are welded and riveted fabricated steel in two metre long sections.

These parts are all bolted together, and each single piece is of a size which could be man-handled, or transported easily. Each steel-framed panel is covered with corrugated iron, again bolted on. The multi-leaf sliding doors of both the steel and brick stores are of an aircraft hangar type, reflecting the RAAF function, but not necessarily designed to accommodate complete aircraft in this case.

The former rail siding branched off the main line just west of Tottenham Station providing direct transport connection to the depot. The Tottenham Yards also included several roads for shunting trains. Some surviving contemporary planting includes Cypress and Eucalyptus species.

The main vehicle entrance was from Ashley Street, with a security office and gatehouse opposite the Barkley Street intersection. For many years a jet aircraft was displayed on an elevated support at the entrance. The buildings are generally red brick with steel truss roofs clad in fibro-cement sheeting. Some smaller amenities buildings are timber framed and clad in either fibro-cement panels or horizontal weatherboard. More modern (c1960s & 1970s) cream brick barracks and messes occupy the north west part of the site. Two Nissen/Quonset huts and a number of small timber 'N' or 'P' type timber barracks buildings area also located in this area.

Recent redevelopment has occurred within the north-east part of the site, which once formed parade grounds and parking areas, but is now generally cleared and new tilt-slab factory buildings proposed. The southern half of the site retains more of the original brick and steel stores which have been converted for commercial use.

Physical Conditions

Generally in good condition and well maintained although the brick walls of some stores are unstable and severely rotating in several cases. Repairs and complete replacement has occurred, with several in need of attention. Building 38 has particular problems with rotation of brick perimeter walls.

Integrity

Some of the complex has been demolished, especially the smaller buildings and timber structures on the northern side of the site and the original gatehouse and office complex. However, the main stores buildings are

generally intact, apart from building no. 44 which has been mostly rebuilt.

Physical Description 2

Located adjacent to the main north west rail line forming the northern limit of the Tottenham industrial zone, with the Braybrook public housing area to the north east. One area of Commonwealth stores facilities remains at the western edge of the site.

Historical Australian Themes

Australian Principal Theme Providing for the common defence

PAHT Subtheme: Going to war

Local Theme RAAF Base

Physical Description 3

Map (Melway) 41 D3

Boundary description Bounded on the east by Ashley Street, north by South Rd and residential lots, on the west by Duke St. and on the south by the Tottenham rail yards.

Veterans Description for Public

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This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>