

## Bonegilla Block 19



BLOCK 19 SOHE 2008



1 bonegilla migrant camp accommodation huts



h01835 block 19 bonegilla amenities 1 pm1 jun03



h01835 block 19 bonegilla amenities 2 pm1 jun03



h01835 block 19 bonegilla amenities 3 pm1 jun03



h01835 block 19 bonegilla amenities 4 pm1 jun03



h01835 block 19 bonegilla amenities 5 pm1 jun03



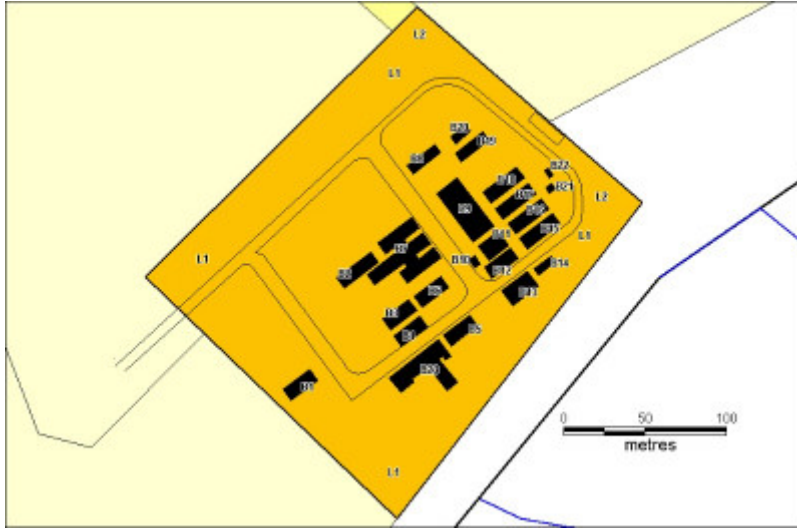
h01835 block 19 bonegilla amenities 6 pm1 jun03



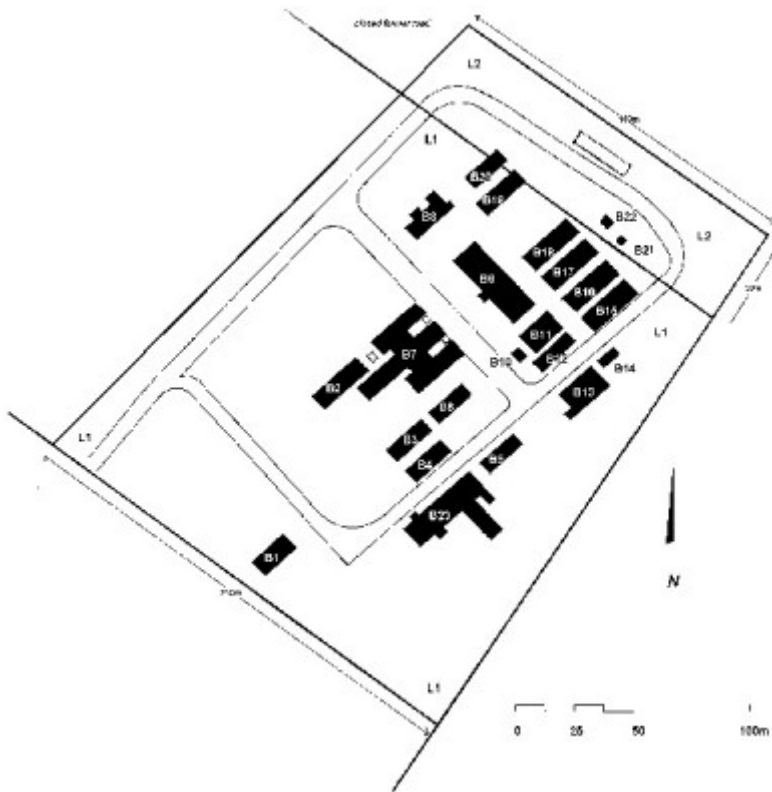
h01835 block 19 bonegilla amenities building pads pm1 jun03



h01835 block 19 bonegilla view up slope to amenities pm1 jun03



h01835 plan



Bonegilla Plan

**Location**

BONEGILLA ROAD BONEGILLA, Wodonga City

**Municipality**

WODONGA CITY

**Level of significance**

## **Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number**

H1835

## **Heritage Overlay Numbers**

HO7

## **Heritage Listing**

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

---

## **Statement of Significance**

Last updated on - May 9, 2002

What is significant?

Block 19, a collection of timber and corrugated iron army huts, is the last remnant of the Bonegilla Army Camp, built by contract labour between July and September 1940, originally as 24 separate blocks and comprising more than 800 buildings. The camp was located on a site chosen for its proximity to the break in the rail gauge between Victoria and New South Wales, its proximity to the regional centre of Albury/Wodonga, and for its nearby water supply. For the rest of the wartime period the camp was altered and enlarged as circumstances required but retained its basic configuration. Block 19 was used during the war as an infantry officers' training school and a small arms school under the direction of Colonel EW Latchford MBE MC.

After the war the Australian Government embarked on an extensive immigration program which included for the first time migrants of non-British origin. Army camps across Australia were converted for use as migrant reception centres and Block 19 was one of the first to receive immigrants in 1947. Bonegilla became the central and most important camp in this program and by the time it ceased operation in 1971, about 320,000 immigrants had passed through its tin sheds.

In the late 1960s as emphasis of the immigration programme shifted away from one which required a concentration of accommodation, the Army was going through a period of expansion during the Vietnam War. As a consequence, those Bonegilla buildings no longer required by the Department of Immigration were taken over by the Army. From 1967 to 1985 Block 19 was used as a cookery school and then as a mapping unit. After 1985 the Army only occasionally used the buildings because the construction of the nearby Latchford Barracks rendered them obsolete.

How is it significant?

Block 19 of the former Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre is of historical and social significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Block 19 is of historical and social significance for its central role as part of the former Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre in the most far reaching demographic change in Australia after the Gold Rush - the post Second World War immigration programme. It was the first, the last and the largest migrant reception centre in a system of camps in all States. Block 19 has the capacity to demonstrate to all Australians the physical environment faced by the hundreds of thousands of migrants who were accommodated in the former army camps utilised as Reception and Training Centres. With its simple and spartan military buildings, its grid layout and its typical plantings of native and exotic trees, it is crucially significant as the last surviving touchstone of the immigrant experience at Bonegilla.

The Block 19 Precinct is historically significant as a now rare remnant of the expansionist phase of defence building activity which took place at the commencement of the Second World War. It was one of 24 separate

accommodation blocks which formed the Bonegilla Army Camp and the camp itself was part of a wider network of camps which included Enoggera in Queensland, Holsworthy in New South Wales, Puckapunyal in Victoria, Northam in Western Australia and Woodside in South Australia. Block 19 is also significant as a remnant of the logistical and organisational expansion of the Army during the Vietnam War.

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Heritage Act Categories | Registered place,  |
| Other Names             | BONEGILLA ARMY CAMP, BONEGILLA MIGRANT RECEPTION CENTRE, BONEGILLA MIGRANT CAMP, |
| Hermes Number           | 125283   |
| Property Number         |  |

## Physical Conditions

State of the Historic Environment survey report - good condition. See Events.

## Veterans Description for Public

Bonegilla Block 19, a collection of timber and corrugated iron army huts, is the last remnant of the Bonegilla Army Camp, built by contract labour between July and September 1940. It was originally twenty-four separate blocks and comprising more than eight-hundred buildings. The camp was located on a site chosen for its proximity to the break in the rail gauge between Victoria and New South Wales, its proximity to the regional centre of Albury/Wodonga, and for its nearby water supply. For the rest of the wartime period the camp was altered and enlarged as circumstances required but retained its basic configuration. Block 19 was used during the war as an infantry officers' training school and a small arms school under the direction of Colonel EW Latchford MBE MC.

Block 19 is historically significant as a now rare remnant of the expansionist phase of defence building activity which took place at the commencement of the Second World War. It is the last remaining block of separate accommodation blocks which formed the Bonegilla Army Camp. Block 19 illustrates the extraordinary logistical achievements within Australia's Second World War mobilisation. The site is also significant as a remnant of the logistical and organisational expansion of the Army during the Vietnam War.

Block 19 is notable as the largest collection of the once ubiquitous P1-type army huts surviving in their original location. Built in 1940 as an Army camp and reused between 1947 and 1967 as a Migrant Reception Centre, it is of historical and social significance at a National level.

Block 19 is of historical and social significance as the last remnant of the much larger Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre which played a central role in the post Second World War immigration programme. It was the first, the last and the largest migrant reception centre in a system of camps in all States and is by far the most well known and remembered. Block 19 demonstrates the physical environment faced by the hundreds of thousands of migrants who were accommodated in the various former Army camps. With its simple and spartan military buildings, its grid layout and its typical plantings of native and exotic trees, it is crucially significant as the last surviving example of the immigrant experience at Bonegilla.

## Extent of Registration

1. All the buildings marked as follows on Diagram 1835 held by the Executive Director:

- B1 Ablutions Block (Building 68)
- B2 Recreation Room (Building 79)
- B3 Accommodation Hut (Building 80)
- B4 Accommodation Hut (Building 81)

B5 Store (Building 82)  
B6 Accommodation Hut (Building 84)  
B7 Mess (Building 85)  
B8 Staff Flat (Building 91)  
B9 Tudor Hall (Building 93)  
B10 Toilet (Building 94)  
B11 Supervisor's Flat (Building 95)  
B12 Accommodation Hut (Building 96)  
B13 Administrative Offices (Building 97)  
B14 Nurse's Quarters (Building 98)  
B15 Accommodation Hut (Building 99)  
B16 Accommodation Hut (Building 100)  
B17 Accommodation Hut (Building 101)  
B18 Accommodation Hut (Building 102)  
B19 Staff Flat (Building 104)  
B20 Staff Flat (Building 105)  
B21 Boiler House (Building 107)  
B22 Laundry (Building 108)  
B23 Hume Club (Building 176)

2. All the land marked as follows on Diagram 1835 held by the Executive Director:

L1 part of the land described as Lot 1 on Plan of Subdivision PS428597Y

L2 part of closed road itself part of Crown Allotment 70A Parish of Bonegilla County of Bogong

3. All of the hard and soft landscaping features and remnants of accommodation or service buildings within the land marked L1 comprising roads, paths, concrete slabs, garden beds and mature native and exotic trees.

*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/>*