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# Truganina Explosives Magazine Complex (Former) and Trees



Truganina Explosives Magazine Complex (former) and trees, Hobsons Bay Heritage Study 2006



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## Location

276 Queen Street ALTONA, Hobsons Bay City

## Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO261

## Heritage Listing

Hobsons Bay City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant?

The Truganina Explosives Reserve complex, comprising the two keepers residences, the corrugated iron boundary fence, remnant tramways, mature exotic plantings and buildings and infrastructure associated with the use and development as an explosives reserve constructed between 1897-1906, at 276 Queen Street, Altona.

How is it Significant?

The Truganina Explosives reserve complex is of local historic, social, aesthetic and scientific (horticultural and geological) significance to the City of Hobsons Bay.

Why is it Significant?

Historically, it is significant for its strong associations with the early defence of Victoria as only the second surviving major land-based powder magazine serving the Melbourne area (AHC criteria A4, B2 and H1)

Scientifically, it is significant for its rare remnant natural landscapes including trees and geological features that provide evidence of the appearance of this area in pre-contact times. (AHC criterion B2)

Socially, it is significant for its strong associations with the local community as a place that is highly valued for its cultural and natural heritage values. This connection is expressed by various press articles, research projects and the recent acquisition by Council of the reserve to be developed as part of the regional parklands in this area. (AHC criterion G1)

Aesthetically, it is significant as an extraordinarily evocative cultural landscape, which is notable for the mixture of mature native and exotic plantings, the relatively sophisticated design of the keepers houses, the remnant mounds and structures that are all enclosed by a corrugated iron fence along almost the whole of the perimeter boundary, which lends an air of mystery and danger and evokes the original use of the place. (AHC criterion E1 and F1)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Hobsons Bay - Hobsons Bay Heritage Study, Hobsons Bay City Council, 2006;
Construction dates	1897,
Hermes Number	22242
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

This complex includes two government designed Magazine Keepers' Quarters, a brick late Victorian-era (1897) house and an Edwardian-era (or later) weatherboard house. Landscape includes mature exotic trees including pepper trees, Monterey pines, yuccas, aloe or century plants on bunkers, many dead trees; and it is assumed also that some early native landscape survives. Surrounding the site is a corrugated iron fence with a serrated top and large early timber fence posts.

Since the complex was constructed, the course of the Skeleton Creek has been altered to form a drain which has bisected the reserve and the Doug Grant reserve reclaimed from the Bay. The corrugated iron fence runs around the perimeter of the remaining part of the explosives reserve between Queen Street and the Truganina Swamp outlet (Truganina Creek). This reserve formerly extended south to the edge of the Skeleton Creek salt marshes, and contained many magazine buildings, some surrounded by earth blast protection mounts, connected by a series of 2 foot gauge tramway lines running parallel to Queen Street. At some stage, probably around World War II a total of 61 magazines were included. Five parallel lines ran along the side of the magazines, with a further line running south, and a connection to the jetty. Some of the lines south of Truganina Creek can still be recognised from their raised permanent ways between the salt marsh. The sites of magazines are also evident as cleared

areas, some with concrete slabs.

Within the surviving enclosure, there are several surviving blast mounds and at least one timber building, possibly a magazine. This is in the south east corner, and is about 4 metres square with corrugated iron roof. Remnants of a blast mound exist around it. Another complete blast mound, but without its building, is located about 50 metres west of this.

Two substantial original gates survive in the fence, one on Queen Street, the other at the tramway exit on the south side. Here a concrete culvert built on a curve has extant rail tracks with the impression "WIW Australia, and a crown symbol, (Waratah Iron Works?) probably indicating Commonwealth construction). The tramline disappears under recent earthworks for a new pedestrian path.

Summary of elements:

- perimeter corrugated iron fence
- blast mounds 3 or more
- 2 keepers houses
- magazine remnants
- entrance gates
- tramway remnants and embankments- such as that on the south side with bridge and gates, with 'WIW Australia' (or Waratah Iron Works) on tram rail;
- mature specimen ornamental exotic trees, mature succulent clumps.

## **Integrity**

External Condition

Fair

External Integrity

Moderate

## **Physical Description 2**

Context

Contributory part of Altona & Laverton Foreshore Precinct, on flat coastal strip, isolated by parklands and golf club.

## **Historical Australian Themes**

Utilising mineral resources, Quarrying

## **Physical Description 3**

*Associations*

Victorian Colonial Government, Commonwealth Government

*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/>*