

Heritage Citation



Ex RAAF Barracks (Two) - Sandgate RAAF Training Base (former)

Key details

Also known as	Sandgate RAAF Training Base
Addresses	At 16 Twenty-Fourth Avenue, Brighton, Queensland 4017
Type of place	Work residence, Defence site
Period	World War II 1939-1945
Lot plan	L23_SP233993
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — June 2010
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber
People/associations	Commonwealth Government (Architect)

Criterion for listing

(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (D) Representative; (F) Technical; (H) Historical association

These two former barracks, built in a similar style to the 'Sidney Williams' huts, are all that remains of the Sandgate RAAF Training Base which was built just prior to the Pacific War in 1941. Constructed to house RAAF and WAAF trainees, the barracks were prefabricated and designed for ease of construction, and were only meant to be temporary structures. Postwar, the base was used as a demobilisation unit before becoming part of the Eventide Nursing Home.

History

Information from the RAAF Historical Section in Canberra shows that RAAF Station Headquarters, consisting of No 3 Initial Training School and No 3 Embarkation Depot were formed on 16 December 1940 (Signals A1 18/12 & A3 20/12). Sandgate base was used purely as a training base until it became a demobilisation unit post war.

The advance party was instructed to proceed to Sandgate, arriving 9 December 1940. On arrival it was discovered no buildings had been constructed due to an intense wet season. This group was temporarily based at Amberley Part were sent to the base site with the orderly room, transport section and stores being in operation by July 1941. An opening ball was held at Sandgate Town Hall to mark the event.

Out of the initial trainees, twenty were air crew. Of this number only 3 returned alive.

In fact the official date given for the full occupation of the base is given as 18 April 1941. By April 1942 the breakdown of staff consisted as follows

Station Headquarters

RAAF 17 Officers, WAAF 4 Officers

RAAF Airman 162 + 1 male nurse

WAAF Airmen 22

No 3 Initial Training School

RAAF Officers 23

Nurses 1, Airmen 57, WAAF Airmen 4

No 3 Embarkation Depot

Officers 2, Airmen 5

It would appear that their service life began at Sandgate and then progressed to more advanced training bases such as such as Wagga Wagga.

A rifle range and an observation post was located on a nearby farm at Brighton

While the RAAF base at Sandgate was operative, another base was operating in the Petrie Strathpine area (there were three in this area). At this area fighter squadrons were active, with the 80th Fighter Squadron of the USAAF flying P39 Airacobras. Also based in this locality were Vultee Vengences of No 12 Sqn, Boomerangfighters of No 83 Sqn and Spitfires of 548 and 549.

The design the barrack most closely resemble are the "Sidney Williams" huts. However the Sandgate huts were produced prior to American involvement in the war. Therefore they are not strictly pre-fab in origin and being of British or Australian design, are considerably rarer. Although they are not placed in their original position circa 1941, they are still within the original perimeter of the base.

This company previously constructed 'Comet' brand windmills and was founded in Rockhampton in 1879. It is possible prefabricated sections of the building may have been constructed there or at their Dulwich Hill factory in Sydney.

Prefabricated WWII Structures in Queensland did not identify the structures at Eventide, however it displays an identical structure in its preliminary inventory of surviving WWII buildings on the Atherton tablelands. Part of the Atherton Camp Barracks, it has been moved off site to Beantree Rd, Tolga and is in a dilapidated state.

After 1946 the base became known as Eventide Aged Persons home after the transfer of elderly persons from Dunwich. The converted RAAF base has gradually had its structures demolished or removed with facilities significantly upgraded. These remaining two structures are all that remains of the former base.

Statement of significance

Relevant assessment criteria

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*. It is significant because:

Historical

CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

as remnant structures of a former military base constructed prior to Japan's entry into the Second World War in 1941; and, as evidence of Brisbane's role in the Second World War.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage

as the only remaining structures of the Sandgate RAAF Base; and as the last known examples of pre-Pacific War 'Sidney Williams' style huts in Brisbane.

Representative

CRITERION D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places

as their form displays a design characteristic of prefabricated wartime barracks huts that were basic and temporary in nature; and, as an example of a World War II RAAF training base.

Technical

CRITERION F

The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technological achievement at a particular period

as they were designed to be easily erected using prefabricated sections incorporating new, mass-produced materials such as fibro.

Historical association

CRITERION H

The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organization of importance in the city's or local area's history

as the first place of training for men and women who served in the RAAF and WAAF during World War II.

Copyright Brisbane City Council

Note: This citation has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this citation is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

Citation prepared by — Brisbane City Council (page revised June 2022)



Dedicated to a better Brisbane