

Heritage Citation

Gaythorne Railway Station

Key details

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| Also known as | Rifle Range Railway Station |
| Addresses | At 349 Samford Road, Gaythorne, Queensland 4051 |
| Type of place | Railway station |
| Period | World War I 1914-1918 |
| Style | Queen Anne |
| Lot plan | L72_CP827254 |
| Key dates | Local Heritage Place Since — 30 November 2012 Date of Citation — January 2010 |
| Construction | Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber |
| Criterion for listing | (A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (G) Social |

Constructed in 1916, the Gaythorne Railway Station was built as a result of the increased military presence in the immediate area and the need for effective troop transport during the First World War. The station was originally called Rifle Range Station due to its close proximity to the Commonwealth Rifle Range in what is now Enoggera (Gallipoli) Army Barracks. The extension of the railway line necessitated urban development in this part of Brisbane and is a reminder of the importance of the railway system. The passenger station building is an intact timber building constructed within the design specifications of the government at the time and as such is rare in Brisbane.

History

The Gaythorne area in the late nineteenth century was predominately rural. Many early farmers grazed cattle or

sheep as well as growing crops such as vegetables and sugar cane. Several farmers in this period introduced vineyards and winemaking to the region. The Pickering family in particular grew grapes and produced a red wine they labelled as 'Rose Hill'. Pickering Street, Gaythorne, was named after this pioneering family. The Nicholson family also had a vineyard and were locally renowned for their underground wine cellar. Along various parts of Kedron Brook Chinese farmers established market gardens and lived in small dwellings along the brook. Their produce was sold at the Roma Street Markets.

The first suburban rail line to the Enoggera area was opened in 1899. Built under a scheme in which the local council met half the costs and the government the other, the rail line was seen as an important means of encouraging urban development in the sparsely populated area, as well as providing effective public transport to those already living there.

From as early as 1908 part of the Enoggera area was acquired by the Commonwealth Government for the establishment of rifle range facilities and defence unit training. The rail line, however, did not stretch far enough to effectively service this military base. With the outbreak of the First World War the rifle range and adjacent paddocks were utilised for the training of recruits and for staging camps for units destined for the overseas conflict. By 1915 there were two thousand men stationed at the base and this number increased as the war intensified. All large unoccupied areas in Enoggera, Gaythorne and Mitchelton were hurriedly converted into large tent cities as the military presence expanded.

An extension of the line to the rifle range was requested by the Enoggera Shire Council and was approved in Parliament in 1914. The construction of the line, however, was accelerated as a result of the war effort and the need for efficient transport facilities for the military.

Named Rifle Range Station after the proximate military rifle range, the extended line was opened on 16 February 1916. Evidence of the need for efficient troop transportation is found in a letter from the Commandant, Military Headquarters to the Chief Engineer's Office, Queensland Railways. It outlined the changing uses of the Rifle Range Station from when it was first proposed for construction in 1912-14 to when it was actually built in 1916. A Memo from the Secretary, Office of the Commissioner for Railways in 1917, this was confirmed and stated:

the line to the Rifle Range was prepared in 1912, at which time accommodation had to be provided for the Rifle Men using the range, and them only...When, however, the work came to be carried out in 1915 conditions had materially changed, the training camps were established, and the accommodation proposed in 1912 was altogether insufficient for the requirements existing in 1915.¹

Trains were extended to the new station that included a passenger station and office, a loop siding that stretched from the station over Samford Road, a 600 ft loading bay and a 300 ft platform. Rifle Range Station was the embarkation point for troops being taken by train to the Pinkenba Wharves to be transported by ship to the overseas conflict.

As the war drew to an end much of the Enoggera Barracks were temporarily converted to military hospitals responsible for the care and repatriation of wounded soldiers. The Rifle Range Station played an important role in the delivery of many wounded to these hospitals.

The Enoggera Barracks continued as a military training facility after the war and the Rifle Range Station continued its important role. When the rail line was further extended to Mitchelton in 1918 the size of the Rifle Range Station was reduced to just one gate with a Station Mistress in charge. In 1921 the Defence Department extended the siding to assist in the transportation of equipment into and out of the base.

In 1923 the area known as Rifle Range was officially renamed Gaythorne and so too was the railway station. During the interwar period the Defence Department's siding fell into disrepair but in 1939 was restored. With the commencement of the Second World War that same year the Gaythorne Station was once again important as a military transport facility.

The *Queensland Rail Heritage Management Study* acknowledges the significance of the railway station, in particular the passenger station, stating:

Gaythorne is considered to be the best surviving example of a B4 station building with unusual building details such as the supporting brackets, louvre vents and coloured glass sash. It is significant for its historical association with the important rifle range nearby during two world wars.²

The Gaythorne Station has played an important role in the history of the Gaythorne/Enoggera area. As well as being important for its long association with the military, it has also been an integral part of the urban life of the area.

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

the Gaythorne Railway Station is an intact station built during the First World War as a terminus for transporting large numbers of troops destined for overseas conflicts in both the First and Second World Wars and is evidence of the importance of the Enoggera/ Gaythorne/ Mitchelton area as a military base in the First and Second World Wars.

Rarity

CRITERION B

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

as a rare surviving and intact example of an early twentieth-century timber passenger station building built to the design specifications of Queensland Railways.

Social

CRITERION G

The place has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

as an important Brisbane site for the transportation of troops in both the First and Second World War.

References

1. Memo, Chief Engineers Office (Southern Division), Queensland Railways, "Amount Paid by Commonwealth for Diverting Line to Rifle Range, 3 February 1917)
2. John Kerr, "Gaythorne Station", *Queensland Rail Heritage Report*, 1993
3. John Kerr, "The Evolving Railways of Brisbane", *Public, Practical, Personal, Brisbane History Group Papers*, 1981
4. Merle McGovern, Daphne Gibson, Des Mulroney, *Cobbers: A History of Suburban and Military Cohesion*, Debut Publishing, Noosa, 2005
5. *Gallipoli Barracks Enoggera: Master Plan Study*, Department of Defence, James Cubitt Architects
6. EPA Cultural Heritage Citation, "Strathern"
7. *Historic Titles*, Department of Natural Resources and Water
8. Queensland Post Office Directories
9. Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Survey Maps 1949
10. Bruce Buchannan Architects *A Heritage Management Survey*, Queensland Railways, 2002.
11. Costings, Chief Secretary's Department – Branch Line to Rifle Range, Enoggera, 13 December 1916
12. Memo, Chief Engineers Office (Southern Division), Queensland Railways, "Amount Paid by Commonwealth for Diverting Line to Rifle Range", 13 December 1916
13. Letter, 10 February 1917, The Commandant, Military Headquarters, Brisbane to Chief Engineer, Queensland Railways

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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.

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