

## Heritage Citation



### Oxenham Park

#### Key details

<b>Addresses</b>	At 134 Melton Road, Nundah, Queensland 4012
<b>Type of place</b>	Club house, Sportsground, Park
<b>Period</b>	Federation 1890-1914
<b>Style</b>	Bungalow
<b>Lot plan</b>	L1000_SL6526
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — September 2002
<b>Criterion for listing</b>	(A) Historical; (D) Representative; (E) Aesthetic; (G) Social; (H) Historical association

Associated with the early development of the Nundah district, the landmark Oxenham Park has been a place of

recreation, sport and leisure since the early 20th century. The Park continues to be an important place for the local and wider community to meet, relax, play and engage in organised sport. A collection of dedicated playing fields, Oxenham Park has an important association with the Toombul District Cricket Club, the Mayne Tigers Junior Australian Football Club and the Toombul Croquet Club. Accommodating the Nundah Golden Years Centre, the Park has an important association with the Northern Suburbs District Senior Citizens. The well-tended array of croquet playing greens with associated clubhouse and green side seating and the fenced cricket oval with associated sightcreens and spectator stand, together with the prominent perimeter stands of eucalypts and other vegetation form an important visual element in the streetscape. Named for the Oxenham family the Park is important in recognising the contribution of the family to the district and to cricket in Brisbane.

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## History

The area bordered by Melton Road, Jenner, Duke and York Streets was originally known as the Nundah Recreation Reserve. In 1881 part of this land was owned by the Queensland Railway Carriage Wagon and Tram Car Company and the balance was leased by the Queensland Meat Export Company (QMEC). The QMEC section, known as “bullocks’ paddock”, was used for resting stock unloaded at Nundah railway station prior to being driven overland to the QMEC works at Pinkenba. When the railway line to Pinkenba was completed, stock went directly to the works. Around this time the Carriage Company was downgraded as most of the construction of carriages was undertaken at the Ipswich Workshops.

The park has had a relationship with a number of community organisations and sporting clubs, including the Nundah Cricket Club (Toombul District Cricket Club), the Northern Suburbs District Senior Citizens, the Toombul Croquet Club, Nundah Tennis Club, Toombul United Soccer Club and the Mayne Tigers Junior Australian Football Club, since its establishment.

The Toombul Shire Council purchased the land, now known as Oxenham Park, c.1900 for recreational use and at the time the land was described as being covered in ti-tree scrub. By the end of 1904 the area closest to the railway station was cleared, filled with ash from the Carriage Company, stumped, ploughed and fenced. A pavilion and dressing rooms were erected and a wicket was put down the following year and mains water connected to the site. The oval was ready for the Nundah Cricket Club and the 1906-07 season. The Nundah Cricket Club (now the Toombul District Cricket Club), formed in 1888, had a number of temporary homes before establishing itself at Nundah Recreation Reserve in the early 1900s. In 1921-22 the Nundah Cricket Club amalgamated with the Toombul Cricket Club to form the Toombul Electoral Cricket Club, later renamed the Toombul District Cricket Club.

The Shire of Toombul organised its first Soccer Club in 1922. Together with the Soccer Club, the Toombul Cricket Club petitioned the Shire Council to erect a stand and dressing room accommodation on the oval. The new grandstand was erected in 1923.

The park was known as the Nundah Recreation Reserve until 1939 when, following a request from a deputation representing residents of Nundah, the Toombul District Cricket Club and the Queensland Cricket Association to the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Alderman W.J. Green, the name of the park was changed to Oxenham Park in recognition of Queensland cricketer Ron Oxenham and the work undertaken on the Park by the Oxenham family. Augustus Emanuel (Gus) Oxenham dedicated much time and energy to cricket administration and to

establishing the park and the cricket club. In addition to playing for Toombul Cricket Club, his sons Lionel and Ronald played for Queensland. Ron also represented Australia in seven tests between 1928 and 1932. During 1940-41 the Nundah/Northgate Company of the R.S.L. Volunteer Defence Corps used the area as a training ground.

The overhead railway bridge, later replaced by a tunnel, was used on many occasions as a “free” grandstand to watch the sporting events played on No.1 Oval. On 5 December 1982 this oval was named to honour a Toombul Cricket Club player, Ken (Slasher) Mackay, M.B.E., who played in 100 Sheffield Shield matches for Queensland from 1946-47 to 1963-64 and for Australia from 1956 to 1962-63. Playing in 37 tests he scored 1507 runs, took 50 wickets and 16 catches.

During the 1967-68 season the grandstand was dedicated as the N.J. Plaisted Stand, named in memory of late member Norman Plaisted. Sadly a fire in September 1982 left only the base of the stand.

In 1984 Oval No.2 was named the La Frantz Oval after Sam La Frantz and his son Errold La Frantz, M.B.E., both successful cricketers, Errold representing Queensland in the 1941-42 season, and both men playing for Toombul Cricket Club and active in cricket administration.

The Toombul Croquet Club was founded in August 1928 and successfully applied to the Brisbane City Council for an area of land in the Nundah Recreation Reserve to be set aside for the purpose of constructing two croquet courts. The Club was initially granted a twenty year lease at a rental of £5 per court per annum. The Club members developed the grounds and facilities, undertaking a number of fundraising ventures including bridge parties, dances and interestingly, the issuing of £5 debentures, to fund the work. In 1929 a former school house building was acquired and moved onto the Toombul Croquet Club site to be used as a clubhouse pavilion. Erected as the Hendra Day School in the late 19th century, the building was the schoolhouse for the former private school conducted by the Misses Franz in Dora Street, Hendra. The Club continues to be an important social and recreational organisation in the Nundah area. In 2002 the Club, together with a number of other Brisbane croquet clubs, hosted the Australian Croquet Championships.

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## Description

Oxenham Park stands east of Nundah Railway Station on a flat rectangular grassed block bounded by York, Melton, Jenner and Duke Streets, Nundah. The Park accommodates the Toombul District Cricket Club, the Mayne Tigers Junior Australian Football Club, the Toombul Croquet Club and the Nundah Golden Years Centre. A popular thoroughfare for local residents making their way to/from the Nundah Railway Station, the Park is distinguished by perimeter plantings of tall eucalypts to Melton and Jenner Streets and a prominent poinciana standing to the corner of Duke and York Streets.

### **Toombul District Cricket Club**

Entrance to Toombul District Cricket Club facilities is near the corner of York and Duke Streets through a gateway formed by a pair of stout brick piers supporting a blue-painted metal arch framing “TDCC Oxenham Park” in red-painted metal. A slab on ground masonry kiosk and club pavilion overlook the Ken Mackay Oval which is bounded by a hollow metal tube perimeter fence. A small uncovered tiered timber spectator stand stands to the southwest of the Oval, white-painted timber sightcreens stand to the north and south of the Oval

and practice nets stand to the northwest. The Alan Skuse practice nets are located southeast of the Oval.

Australian Football goal posts stand to the north and south ends of the Oval, the grounds accommodating the Mayne Tigers Junior Australian Football Club during the cricket off season.

A second cricket oval, the La Frantz Oval, available for public use, has a practice net to the southeast of the Oval and a small masonry skillion roofed pavilion to the southwest.

### **Toombul Croquet Club**

The Toombul Croquet Club facilities occupy the southwest corner of Oxenham Park to the corner of York and Melton Streets. The Club facilities include four playing greens and associated lawnside seating and a clubhouse. The area is bounded by a chain wire fence with the main entrance gate off York Street. The clubhouse is a gabled, timber rectangular pavilion set on low timber stumps. A skillion roofed open shelter has been added to the west and a gable roofed open shelter to the east of the clubhouse. A skillion roofed shed attaches to the northwest of the clubhouse. The clubhouse has porch entrances to the east and west and a bank of windows to the south elevation affords views from the clubhouse across the playing greens. A flagpole stands to the east of the clubhouse. A number of skillion roofed timber shelters with bench seats stand to the north and south ends of the playing greens.

### **Nundah Golden Years Centre**

The Nundah Golden Years Centre is accommodated in a large rectangular masonry building standing to the northwest of the Park adjacent to a play area which occupies the northwest corner. The building has a vivid mural painted to the east end facing onto the play area.

The Park is important as a collection of dedicated playing fields that have remained in continuous use since the early 20th century.

A brief inspection of the Park reveals that the Ken Mackay Oval, fencing and sightscreens are in a satisfactory condition however the practice nets to the northwest are in an unkempt state. The Toombul District Cricket Club kiosk and pavilion are looking fatigued and together with the spectator stand require maintenance and painting. The Alan Skuse nets are in good condition.

The Toombul Croquet Club appears to be in good condition. The playing greens are well tended and the associated greenside furniture and clubhouse are well maintained.

The La Frantz Oval is in a satisfactory condition, the rougher surface does not drain well and is more difficult to maintain than the main oval. The Nundah Golden Years Centre suffers from graffiti vandalism but generally appears in a satisfactory condition. The play area appears well maintained.

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## **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:

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## Historical

### CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history as an early twentieth century recreation reserve in the Nundah district.

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## Representative

### CRITERION D

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

as an area of open parkland accommodating the dedicated playing fields and pavilions for the resident cricket and croquet clubs.

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## Aesthetic

### CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as an area of open parkland bounded by distinctive stands of perimeter trees and accommodating dedicated sporting facilities, in particular the timber croquet pavilion with associated well-tended greens and green-side furniture, and areas for general recreation within a suburb setting.

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## 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

for its association with the Toombul District Cricket Club, Toombul Croquet Club, Mayne Tigers Junior Australian Football Club and the Northern Suburbs District Senior Citizens.

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## 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

named for the Oxenham family in recognition of their contribution to the district and to cricket.

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## References

1. Brisbane City Council - City Assets Branch *Conservation Management Study* Stage 1 Report. November 2002
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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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