

## Heritage Citation



**RAN Station 9 (former)**

### Key details

<b>Also known as</b>	Myrletown Boom Defence and Indicator Loop Control Centre
<b>Addresses</b>	At 51 Sandmere Road, Pinkenba, Queensland 4008
<b>Type of place</b>	Defence site
<b>Period</b>	World War II 1939-1945
<b>Lot plan</b>	L474_M3321
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004
<b>Construction</b>	Roof; Walls
<b>Criterion for listing</b>	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (C) Scientific; (D) Representative; (E) Aesthetic; (F) Technical; (H) Historical association

In early 1942, the site initially comprised a machine gun emplacement on the Brisbane River's north bank built to cover the anti-submarine boom that stretched across the river to Fort Lytton. From February 1943, a submarine indicator loop was added to Pinkenba's defences. In September 1943, a Photo-Electric Beam Receiver Station was added. The site was designated RAN Station No.9 in January 1944.

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## History

The concrete bunkers and other associated ruins in the Boggy Creek Parkland survive as remnants of RAN Station 9, a component of an Indicator Loop system forming a sea-ward defense for Moreton Bay and the Brisbane River mouth during the Second World War. This defence system was located in an arc from Caloundra to Bribie and Moreton Islands and across to Fort Lytton. The system consisted of a series of gun emplacements, command and battery observation posts and a submarine boom across the shipping channel at the mouth of the river.

During 1942 and 1943 Indicator Loops and Harbour Defence ASDICS (anti-submarine detecting systems) were laid

across the entrance to Moreton Bay and the mouth of the Brisbane River. The loop was used to detect the presence of any submerged Japanese submarines entering the Brisbane River. If an indicator loop showed the presence of a vessel the two possibilities were "sub" or "non-sub". If no surface ship was sighted usually a ship would be despatched to drop depth charges. It had to be an enemy submarine as friendly submarines always entered port surfaced. In parts of Moreton Bay, the loops were positioned beside controlled or 'set' minefields in which the mines were connected by electrical cable back to a mine control hut on shore and the mines could be detonated manually.

In February 1943 an Indicator Loop and a Photoelectric Beam were laid across the Brisbane River from Myrtletown (Pinkenba) to Fisherman's Island. This loop across the mouth of the Brisbane River between RAN Station 9 Pinkenba and Fisherman's Island was completed in March 1943 and commenced operation in January 1944. The Photoelectric Beam installation transmitted a light beam from Fisherman's Island to RAN Station 9 Pinkenba and was used to detect the presence of vessels entering the Brisbane River. If a submerged submarine was detected by RAN Station 9 Pinkenba a signal was transmitted to RAN Station 8 Lytton Boom Defence Facility to raise the boom cable.

The Indicator Loop in the Brisbane River was removed in June 1945. RAN Station 8 Fisherman's Island was demolished during the development of the new Port of Brisbane facilities at Fisherman's Island. Some remnants may remain. There was another RAN Shore Station – RAN Station 10 Controlled Mining Base also near Pinkenba, but its location is presently unknown.

### Structures

The larger of the two remaining structures was the Control Building which accommodated the instrumentation and was where the loop cables terminated. The smaller building housed the generator. Concrete foundations between the two structures once supported the living and eating quarters for officers and ordinary ranks. The mess room area was located between the two living quarters. Two small toilet buildings flanked the living quarters.

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## Description

The surviving structures of the former RAN Station 9 Pinkenba stand to the southwest in an area of parkland at the end of Gannon Road bounded by Sandmere Road and Boggy Creek, Pinkenba. A rough dirt roadway continues in line with Gannon Road along the southwest edge of the park. The park contains two concrete bunkers and other ruined concrete structures and concrete slabs associated with the former RAN Station 9.

There is a scatter of trees and picnic furniture to the south-west edge of the park. A loose piece of concrete lies to the far northeast corner on adjacent lot of parkland.

The wreck of a ship lies submerged in the sand edge to Boggy Creek northeast of the east bunker.

### **Bunkers**

The bunkers are single-storey rectangular concrete structures with flat concrete roofs concealed by the parapet edges formed by the perimeter walls. The structures were cast insitu and the walls and ceilings display an off-form finish.

#### **South Bunker (Bunker A)**

This is the larger structure and stands close to the park edge at Boggy Creek. The rectangular plan is divided into even quarters with 3 enclosed rooms and an open entry courtyard. There are two door-ways (to the north and east) off the open courtyard. The door to the north opens into a fully enclosed room which connects to the room in the northeast corner. This room has a single long narrow unglazed opening at eye height to the northeast corner. This narrow opening is sheltered by an external canti-levered tapered concrete awning. The room to the southeast corner has a discrete separate entrance directly onto the courtyard and no openings into the adjacent room. The floor level of this room is below the ground level and is reached by a small flight of concrete stairs. This room to the southeast corner has a large low un-glazed window opening to the east and another to the south. Many of the wall openings in the structure contain remnants of timber framing. A concrete slab and kerbing lie to the south and west of the structure.

#### **West Bunker (Bunker B)**

Standing to the northwest of the larger bunker, this structure consists of a large rectangular room and an adjacent smaller narrow rectangular room both opening onto a small enclosed rectangular entrance corridor with an external door to the south-west. The large room has long narrow unglazed openings at eye height to the northeast and southeast. Both openings have external cantilevered tapered concrete awnings. One opening contains the timber window frame (without glazing). Two rectangular concrete slabs lie northeast of west bunker. A tree is growing out of the south corner of the structure.

### **Other Structures**

There are a number of ruins lying north of the bunkers including a rectangular perimeter of concrete surrounding a grassy mound, a rectangular concrete slab and two manholes on raised concrete plinths.

The external walls of the bunkers show streaking from water shedding. There is crumbling of concrete to the external corners of the bunkers with some exposed steel reinforcement. Water is accumulating in the southeast room of the east bunker. Glazing has been lost to all the window openings and most doors are lost. Mesh security screens have been fixed to the openings. The structures have suffered from vandalism and have been damaged by graffiti. The bunkers do not appear to contain any equipment or fixtures.

Though showing the effects of weathering and neglect, the bunkers along with the other associated concrete ruins are able to demonstrate the layout and operation of the Station.

The concrete bunkers and other associated ruins in the Boggy Creek Parkland survive as remnants of RAN Station 9, a component of an Indicator Loop system forming a sea-ward defense for Moreton Bay and the

Brisbane River mouth during the Second World War. This defence system was located in an arc from Caloundra to Bribie and Moreton Islands and across to Fort Lytton. The system consisted of a series of gun emplacements, command and battery observation posts and a submarine boom across the shipping channel at the mouth of the river.

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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 surviving elements of the former RAN Station 9 forming part of the Indicator Loop and Photoelectric Beam defence system for the protection of Moreton Bay and the Brisbane River.

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## **Rarity**

### CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as the only surviving Indicator Loop and Photoelectric Beam Station remaining on the Queensland mainland.

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## **Scientific**

### CRITERION C

The place has the potential to yield information that will contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the city's or local area's history

as examination of the remnants on the site and interrogation of records and documents associated with the Station may reveal more about the operations of the Station and possible unauthorised entries in the Brisbane River.

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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 a Second World War defence fortification.

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## **Aesthetic**

### CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as a ruin in an isolated flat desolated parkland to the edge of a mangrove lined creek.

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## **Technical**

### CRITERION F

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

as the fortifications accommodating the Indicator Loopdetection system and components of the PhotoelectricBeam technology.

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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

having a strong association with the Second WorldWar Queensland defence efforts of the AustralianMilitary Force and Royal Australian Navy.

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## References

1. Brisbane City Council Heritage Unit History – RAN Station 9, Pinkenba
  2. *Bribie Island Second World War Fortifications*, Queensland Heritage Register Entry 601143
  3. McBride, Frank and Taylor, Helen, *Brisbane Remembers: the Home Front 1939-1945*, Brisbane City Council, Brisbane, 1995
  4. McBride, Frank and Helen Taylor. *Brisbane 100 Stories*. Brisbane: BCC. 1997
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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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