

PART 6: ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

6.1 GENERAL APPROACH

The general approach applied to the assessment of cultural heritage significance is set out in the fifth edition of *The Conservation Plan* (2000) by James Semple Kerr and relies on an understanding of:

- The fabric as evidence
- The associations of the place
- The physical qualities and relationships.

6.2 CITATIONS AND EXISTING LISTINGS

The former School of Artillery is listed as ‘The North Head Artillery Barracks, North Head Scenic Drive, Manly’, Historic Place No. 105431 on the Commonwealth Heritage List (Place File No. 1/13/024/0005)²¹. The listing refers to the entire SoA site, refer **Figure 3 Section 1**, of which the Plan area for this CMP is a part, refer **Figure 4 Section 1**.

As of January 1st 2004, changes to the Commonwealth heritage legislation mean that the EPBC Act now regulates all actions relating to Commonwealth Heritage Places. These controls are described in the section of this Plan dealing with the Statutory Planning Context, refer **Section 6.2.2** below.

North Head is also listed on the Register of the National Estate [RNE] as:

North Head (Place ID: 101621, Place File No: 1/13/024/0019)
North Head Quarantine Station & Reserve (former) (Place ID: 2866, Place File No: 1/13/024/0008)
North Head Artillery Barracks (Place ID:19091, Place File No: 1/12/024/005)
North Head Military Reserve (Place ID: 102495, Place File No: 1/12/024/0005)
North Head Fortifications (Place ID: 2863, Place File No: 1/13/024/0005)
New Quarantine Cemetery (Place ID: 2867, Place File Number: 1/12/024/0009)

The RNE Listing is reproduced in Appendix 1

The Manly Local Environmental Plan [LEP] 1988 lists the following ‘Architectural and Archaeological Items’ at North Head:

North Head Fortifications (Artillery School)
Stone Walls
North Head Scenic Drive
The School of Artillery
The Australian Police Staff College
Quarantine Station (Sydney Harbour National Park)
Cemetery (Sydney Harbour National Park)
Group of Institutional Buildings (Commonwealth Military Reserve)

The following ‘Landscape Items’ located either within or immediately adjacent to the Defence site are listed within the Manly LEP 1988:

North Head Fortifications
Roadway: North Head
Walls: North Head
School of Artillery
Cemetery: North Head

²¹ A Summary Statement of Significance for the North Head site is on the Australian Heritage Database – www.deh.gov.au

Previous Assessments of Significance

A number of statements of significance for the School of Artillery site and for North Head generally have been prepared in recent years. Only those statements dealing with the former SoA site specifically will be discussed here.

6.3 AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE DATABASE: ASSESSMENT & STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Commonwealth Heritage List: Heritage Values

The former SoA has recently been entered within the Commonwealth Heritage List. The full listing is not reproduced here as it replicates the AHDB ENTRY, however the HERITAGE VALUES ascribed to the place are as follows:

- *The site is associated with three phases in the occupation of North Head: the Quarantine Station phase 1833-1930; the public recreation phase 1930-1934; and the defence purposes phase from 1934 to 1998. [Criteria a,d]*
- *The stone walls defining sections of the former School of Artillery boundary are associated with the recreational use of North Head from 1929. The former School of Artillery North Fort is closely associated with the development of the North Fort Barracks from 1935. [Criteria a,d]*
- *The former School of Artillery Barracks are important in illustrating the implementation of Defence policy in the inter-war years before the onset of the Second World War in 1939. [Criteria a,d]*
- *The functional zoning and planning illustrate the continuity of Defence's cultural and social organisation reflected in Commonwealth defence complexes such as the Royal Australian Naval College, 1913-1915, at Jervis Bay. [Criteria a,c]*
- *The use of a fashionable architectural style and permanent construction illustrate the influence of the prevailing Art-Deco style on Commonwealth architects and the Commonwealth's intention to provide modern, permanent buildings in the defence of Australia. This pattern is seen in other major defence projects of the late 1930s and early 1940s. [Criteria a,e]*
- *The permanent nature of the complex and the quality of its planning and architectural design confirm its importance as the Headquarters of Coastal Defence until 1940. [Criteria a,e]*
- *The design and planning clearly continue the Colonial barracks concept established at Victoria Barracks in 1842, and which in turn reflected British design precedent. [Criterion e]*
- *The Artillery Barracks is important for its association with the Coastal Defence of NSW from 1939 to 1945 as part of the Sydney Fire Command and for its use as the School of Artillery between 1946 and 1998. [Criteria a,h]*
- *The Artillery Barracks are important as a rare example of a permanent military Barracks establishment of the immediate pre-Second World War period, as evidenced by the unified planning, and in the fabric of the whole place including buildings, terraces, parade grounds, landscaping and symmetrical layout. [Criterion c]*
- *The planning and formal nature of the Artillery Barracks, and the use of Art Deco and Georgian Revival forms, are important in illustrating the principal characteristics of Defence*

culture and social structure during the Inter-War years in addition to the prevailing use of contemporary architectural style and idiom by Commonwealth architects. [Criteria d]

- *The Artillery Barracks are important to the many Defence personnel who were trained or stationed at the complex in its sixty years of operation for Defence purposes, and to military historians, in particular the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society. [Criterion h]*
- *The formal geometry of the school is set against this wild back-drop, the lurching dune made habitable by benching and forming. Although, each side of the parade ground is faced by substantial buildings and the main entries are aligned with the major axes, the bush works its way in at the corners, so that even here the bush intrudes. Over the years the central area has been planted with species from around Australia, which establish nostalgic links to other bases. [Criterion e]*
- *There is also a dichotomy, common in military bases, between the Barracks in the central area, which at North Head were used by personnel attending training, and the married quarters, established in a suburban pattern. The layout, placement on the high side of the road and lot size of individual houses refer to the external norms of suburbia on the one hand whilst the pattern of the central area is generated from the internal logic of function, ceremony and hierarchy. [Criterion d]*
- *The overall qualities of the School of Artillery are of a formalised habitable space created in a natural environment that has a feeling of quietude, reflection and humility. [Criterion e]*

Issues relating to the comparative significance at a National Level

North Head is included on the National Heritage List, however the Quarantine Station is the only component of the site described in the inventory. This study advocates the addition of the North Head School of Artillery complex as a worthy and logical component of the site, which also meets the criteria for assessment at the level of National Heritage significance.

The criteria for inclusion on the National Heritage List includes criteria that need to be determined by comparative analysis. These criteria are as follows:

Criterion (d) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of:

(i) a class of Australia's natural or cultural places; or

(ii) a class of Australia's natural or cultural environments;

Criterion (e) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;

Criterion (f) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;

The comparative analysis of this study provides overwhelming evidence that the North Head Artillery School is a site of outstanding cultural heritage significance. This outstanding level of significance is demonstrated under each of the above criteria, as follows:

Discussion of Criterion D – (Representativeness)

The complex demonstrates the continued use, in Australia, of military planning that originated in Great Britain in the early eighteenth-century, with the parade ground forming the heart of the complex. The design exhibits the typical characteristics of a barracks, with separate blocks that reinforce the hierarchy of officers and rank and file. This hierarchy is also evident in the level of decorative detail within each individual building.

Of the military training facilities in Australia, the North Fort Barracks was the largest artillery barrack complex built during the interwar years. In contrast to Duntroon, which was substantially redeveloped in the mid 1930s the North Fort Barracks was constructed in preparation for war, in one phase of construction. It would not be until the war years that comparable complexes of this scale were built.

It is one of the last barrack complexes to be planned that can trace its origins back to the layout of the Wynyard and Anglesea Barracks built under Governor Macquarie, retaining a similar relationship to the parade ground and a similar scale of main barrack building. Other aspects of colonial barracks, such as the cross ventilation and verandah access, features that were not widely employed after WWII.

Discussion of Criterion E – Aesthetic themes)

The complex is designed in a restrained Art Deco style utilised by the Commonwealth Architect and the individual Works and Services branches across Australia. This is an early example of the use of the style outside of Canberra, a style which became widely used military buildings across Australia during World War II. It is rare to find an entire complex from the interwar period that retains its stylistic integrity.

The dramatic topography of the site, the native bushland setting and the opportunistic planning to enhance the relationships between the buildings is reinforced by the parade ground which forms the centrepiece for the complex. There is no comparable site in Australia where the aesthetic quality of the environment is as much a product of its setting as the design of the buildings.

Discussion of Criterion F – (Technical / research themes)

Designed by the NSW Works and Services Branch of the Department of the Interior, the complex overlays aspects of English and colonial military planning with current architectural style. Designed by civilian architects, the complex was planned along the lines of a campus, with an ordered road layout and landscaping, and a consistent architectural style, rather than a utilitarian military installation. The overall planning and individual buildings appear to be unique to this site, rather than utilising standard building types as was common in military planning. The comparable examples, Kingston Barracks, Larrakeyah Barracks and the RAAF base in Darwin have all been substantially altered.

Assessment of National Heritage Significance

The North Head School of Artillery is assessed as a site of outstanding significance. It is a rare and intact example of its type under each of the above criteria. It is therefore appropriate that this complex be recognised as a site of National Significance together with the Quarantine Station.

The complex is rare as the national artillery training establishment from 1945 to 1997, and played an important role in the training personnel deployed in the Korean and Vietnam Wars.