

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT

NAME: Kensington and Norwood Pool
(Now Norwood Swimming Centre)

PLACE NO.: 26455

Address: 26-28 Phillips Street, Kensington, SA, 5068

1. BRIEF HISTORY OF KENSINGTON AND NORWOOD POOL:

The upcoming 1956 Melbourne Summer Olympics apparently inspired Mayor F.W.N. White of the then Town of Kensington and Norwood to construct an Olympic sized pool by Second Creek. Built with the assistance of State Government funds and a public subscription, the pool was designed to the then standard 55 yards long and constructed in concrete with underwater lights lining its sides. It was the first chlorinated fresh water pool in the Adelaide metropolitan area, with a state-of-the-art filtration plant costing £10,000. Its instalment required diverting Second Creek into underground pipes. The then Premier (Sir) Thomas Playford opened the pool on the 23 February 1957.

In January 1977, the Town of Kensington and Norwood gave tentative approval to the demolition of the swimming facility and an adjacent motel and caravan park, which ran at a financial loss, to make way for other recreational facilities and a residential development. The Premier Don Dunstan, Mayor John Richards and much of the local community opposed the plan and the Australian Building and Construction Workers Federation placed a black ban on the complex. Council reversed its decision and the pool was reopened to the public. The future of the pool remained in doubt until around 1987 when Council began to invest substantially to improve the site.

Since that time, Council has steadily invested in upgrading the facility, by heating and tiling the pool, adding shade and artwork.

Short Chronology:

23 rd February 1957	Opened by the then Premier of South Australia, Sir Thomas Playford.
January 1977	Kensington & Norwood Council gave tentative approval for its demolition and to redevelop the site.
1988	Pool water heated.
1993-95	3 year upgrade program for the pool: The pool was tiled, a new diving board installed, pool seats painted, new BBQ tables and general upgrading works.
More recently	A new shade structure, artwork and mosaic mural has been added.

2. DESCRIPTION:

The Kensington and Norwood swimming complex comprises a 55 yard heated pool, a shaded heated children's wading pool, women's and men's change rooms, a shop, and 2 auxiliary sheds for maintenance and storage.

The main building, consisting of the change rooms and shop, are constructed of concrete block and timber and feature alternating skillion roofs that perhaps modestly reflects the international style. The other sheds are of very simple timber or metal construction. The pool is surrounded by grassed lawn and shaded by large Red River Gum trees. A lengthy painted mural runs much of the south eastern boundary and a mosaic mural stands on its south western boundary.

3. ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

Comparability / Rarity / Representation:

Comparison of the place with the quality of other similar places:

- entered in the South Australian Heritage Register

There are no swimming pools entered in the South Australian Heritage Register as State Heritage Places

The Kensington and Norwood Pool was included in a list of local heritage places in the Norwood Payneham and St Peters Development Plan in August 2000. There are two other swimming pools that are regarded as local heritage places, namely:

- **Tusmore Park - Bridges and Wading Pool [Burnside #8353]**. A public park flanking First Creek featuring a shallow wading pool.
- **Naracoorte Swim Lake [Naracoorte #25588]**. An artificial lake holding 11 million litres of water located adjacent the Naracoorte Creek and Nature Park. The lake accommodates a broad range of swimming activities.

The Kensington and Norwood Pool is unique in South Australia for being the only full length swimming pool in a heritage register.

Rarity (uniqueness) or commonness of the Place in South Australia

Swimming facilities such as the Kensington and Norwood Pool are common features in local communities across South Australia. The range of buildings, pools and natural features are commonplace for facilities of this kind.

The Kensington and Norwood Pool appears to be the last representative of a 55 yard (50.3 metre) pool, once the standard length for a swimming pool of this kind.

Assessment against Criteria (Under Section 16 of the *Heritage Places Act 1993*):

(a) it demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the state's history.

In considering this criterion, I have had regard to the provided Guidelines for State Heritage Places that note:

The place should be closely associated with events, developments or cultural phases which have played a significant part in South Australian history. Ideally it should demonstrate those associations in its fabric.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion if they are of a class of things that are commonplace, or frequently replicated across the State, places associated with events of interest only to a small number of people, places associated with developments of little significance, or places only reputed to have been the scene of an event which has left no trace or which lacks substantial evidence.

The Kensington and Norwood Pool has a broad association with the introduction of community leisure facilities across the State, particularly following World War Two. Community pools are commonplace features in South Australian communities. To a limited extent, the design of this pool expresses the evolving approach to community pool design, but the changing length of a standard swimming pool cannot be considered an important development in the history of the State.

The Kensington and Norwood Pool does not meet this criterion.

(b) it has rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance.

In considering this criterion, I have had regard to the provided Guidelines for State Heritage Places, that note:

The place should demonstrate a way of life, social custom, industrial process or land use which is no longer practised, is in danger of being lost, or is of exceptional interest. This encompasses both places which

were always rare, and places which have become scarce through subsequent loss or destruction.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion if their rarity is merely local, or if they appear rare only because research has not been done elsewhere, or if their distinguishing characteristics have been degraded or compromised, or if they are at present common and simply believed to be in danger of becoming rare in future.

The length of the Kensington and Norwood Pool, 55 yards, is a rare survivor of what was once the typical length for such a swimming pool. This characteristic is more a local curiosity than being of exceptional interest to the State.

The Kensington and Norwood Pool does not meet this criterion.

(c) it may yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the state's history, including its natural history.

In considering this criterion, I have had regard to the provided Guidelines for State Heritage Places, that note:

The place should provide, or demonstrate a likelihood of providing, information that will contribute significantly to our knowledge of the past. The information should be inherent in the fabric of the place. The place may be a standing structure, an archaeological deposit or a geological site.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion simply because they are believed to contain archaeological or palaeontological deposits. There must be good reasons to suppose the site is of value for research, and that useful information will emerge. A place that will yield the same information as many other places, or information that could be obtained as readily from documentary sources, may not be eligible.

The Kensington and Norwood Pool has structures and facilities typical for swimming pools in the State. It does not yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the State's history.

The Kensington and Norwood Pool does not meet this criterion.

(d) it is an outstanding representative of a particular class of places of cultural significance.

In considering this criterion, I have had regard to the provided Guidelines for State Heritage Places, that note:

The place should be capable of providing understanding of the category of places which it represents. It should be typical of a wider range of such places, and in a good state of integrity, that is, still faithfully presenting its historical message.

Places will not be considered simply because they are members of a class, they must be both notable examples and well-preserved. Places will be excluded if their characteristics do not clearly typify the class, or if they were very like many other places, or if their representative qualities had been degraded or lost. However, places will not be excluded from the Register merely because other similar places are included.

The Kensington and Norwood Pool is a fairly typical example of a community swimming pool facility. While it is the only example of a 55-yard swimming pool left in South Australia, this does not constitute a significant class of places to South Australia.

The Kensington and Norwood Pool does not meet this criterion.

- (e) it demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment or is an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics.**

In considering this criterion, I have had regard to the provided Guidelines for State Heritage Places, that note:

The place should show qualities of innovation or departure, beauty or formal design, or represent a new achievement of its time. Breakthroughs in technology or new developments in design would qualify, if the place clearly shows them. A high standard of design skill and originality is expected.

Places would not normally be considered under this criterion if their degree of achievement could not be demonstrated, or where their integrity was diminished so that the achievement, while documented, was no longer apparent in the place, or simply because they were the work of a designer who demonstrated innovation elsewhere.

The Kensington and Norwood Pool has typical swimming pool buildings and facilities, fabricated in cheap, standard materials (concrete, timber and metal). The facility has very few architectural design elements and does not contain an outstanding example of construction technique.

The Kensington and Norwood Pool does not meet this criterion.

(f) it has strong cultural or spiritual associations for the community or a group within it.

In considering this criterion, I have had regard to the provided Guidelines for State Heritage Places, that note:

The place should be one which the community or a significant cultural group have held in high regard for an extended period. This must be much stronger than people's normal attachment to their surroundings. The association may in some instances be in folklore rather than in reality.

Places will not be considered if their associations are commonplace by nature, or of recent origin, or recognised only by a small number of people, or not held very strongly, or held by a group not widely recognised, or cannot be demonstrated satisfactorily to others.

The Kensington and Norwood is important to its local community and has been the focus for considerable local activism. However, this is more because of its local qualities than its state qualities. .

The Kensington and Norwood Pool does not meet this criterion.

(g) it has a special association with the life or work of a person or organisation or an event of historical importance.

In considering this criterion, I have had regard to the provided Guidelines for State Heritage Places, that note:

The place must have a close association with a person or group which played a significant part in past events, and that association should be demonstrated in the fabric of the place. The product of a creative person, or the workplace of a person whose contribution was in industry, would be more closely associated with the person's work than would his or her home. Most people are associated with many places in their lifetime, and it must be demonstrated why one place is more significant than others.

Places will not generally be considered under this criterion if they have only a brief, incidental or distant association, or if they are associated with persons or groups of little significance, or if they are associated with an event which has left no trace, or if a similar association could be claimed for many places, or if the association cannot be demonstrated. Generally the home or the grave of a notable person will not be entered in the Register unless it has some distinctive attribute, or there is no other physical evidence of the person's life or career in existence.

The 1994 Heritage Survey of the Kensington and Norwood Council notes a number of local identities associated Kensington and Norwood pool, including Reg Nurse (Mayor), S. R. Applebee (Town Clerk) and A. W. Baulderstone, who urged on the development. These people have significance to the local community, not to the State as a whole.

The nomination notes that Dawn Fraser swam exhibition laps at the pool during a swimming carnival. This does not constitute a close association with the swimming champion.

The nomination also notes that Mrs Nora Nelligan taught swimming at the Kensington and Norwood Pool from 1957 to 1985, and was later awarded the Order of Australia Medal for her services to swimming and lifesaving. This association is important at the local level, not at the State level.

The Kensington and Norwood Pool does not meet this criterion.

Extent of Listing / Significant Fabric / Curtilage:

The extent of listing includes:

Not Applicable

The extent of listing excludes:

Not Applicable

REFERENCES:

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary, Norwood Swimming Centre 1957 – 1982, 25th Anniversary Reception booklet (Norwood, 1982)

Nomination for South Australian Heritage Register - Kensington and Norwood Pool (dated 26 May 2015)

Files of the State Heritage Unit, DEWNR

NAME: Kensington and Norwood Pool
(Now Norwood Swimming Centre)

PLACE NO.: 26455

SITE RECORD:

FORMER NAME: Kensington and Norwood Pool

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE: Swimming complex comprising a 55 yard swimming pool, children's wading pool, change rooms, a shop and auxiliary sheds.

DATE OF COMPLETION: 1957

REGISTER STATUS: **Description:** Nominated
Date: 28 May 2015

CURRENT USE: **Description:** Swimming Pool
Dates: 1957 - present

PREVIOUS USE(S): **Description:** Not Applicable
Dates: Not Applicable

ARCHITECT: **Name:** Unknown
Dates: 1956

BUILDER: **Name:** Unknown
Dates: 1956-57

SUBJECT INDEXING: **Group:** Recreation & Entertainment
Category: Sports Venue

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: **Description:** Norwood Payneham and St Peters

LOCATION: **Unit No.:** Not Applicable
Street No.: 26-28
Street Name: Phillips Street
Town/Suburb: Kensington
Post Code: 5068

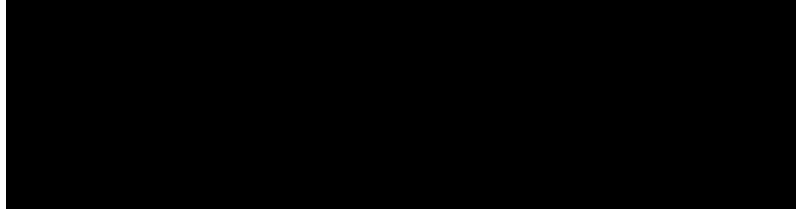
LAND DESCRIPTION: **Title Type:** CT
Volume: 5759
Folio: 406
Lot No.: 102
Section: Filed Plan 16233
Hundred: Adelaide

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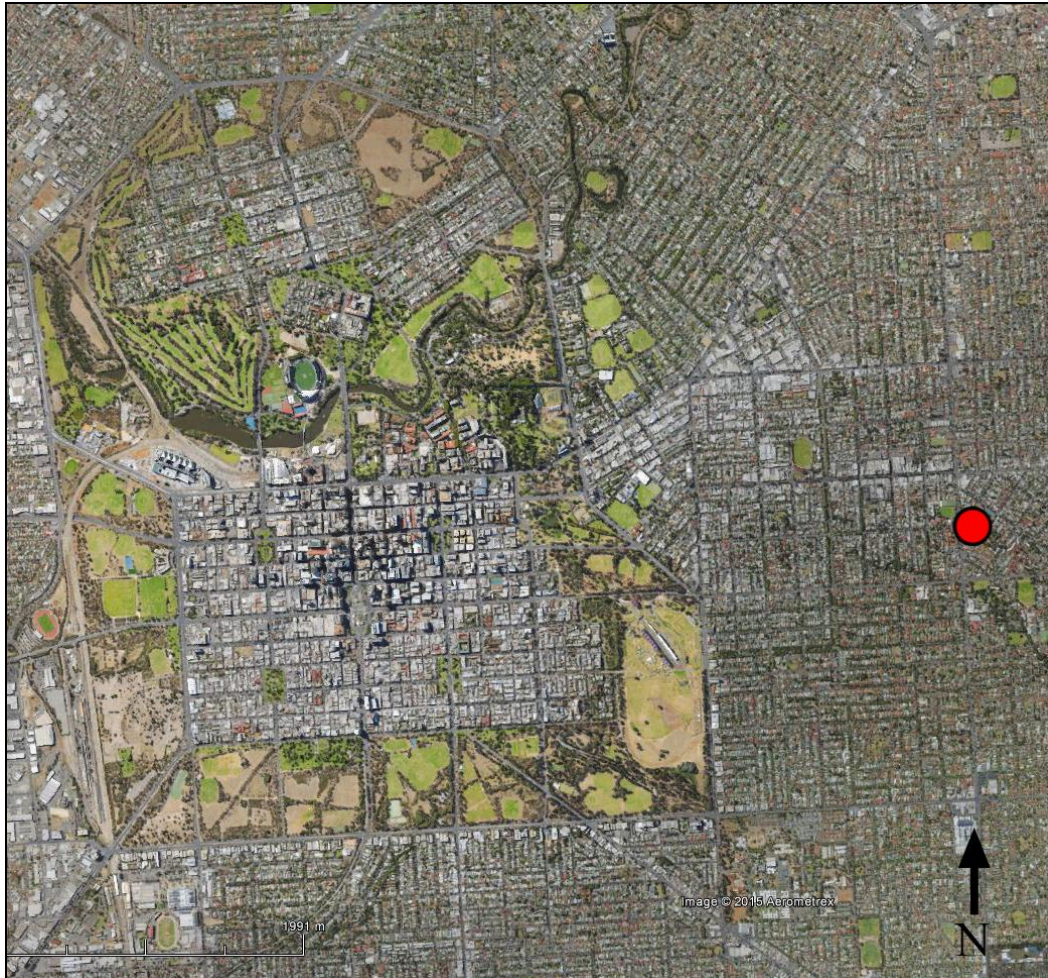
SITE RECORD (Cont.):

OWNER:



NAME: Kensington and Norwood Pool
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**Location of the Kensington and Norwood Pool, 26-28 Phillip Street, Kensington
(shown by a red dot)**

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Site Plan of the Kensington and Norwood Pool, 26-28 Phillip Street, Kensington
(Source: Nomination for South Australian Heritage Register)

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Kensington and Norwood Pool, 26-28 Phillip Street, Kensington (Looking north)



**Kensington and Norwood Pool, 26-28 Phillip Street, Kensington (Looking south)
[The 55 yard swimming pool with wading pool in the background]**

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**Kensington and Norwood Pool, 26-28 Phillip Street, Kensington
[The change rooms wooden shop]**



**Kensington and Norwood Pool, 26-28 Phillip Street, Kensington
[The brick chemical store and attached wooden pump house]**

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**Kensington and Norwood Pool, 26-28 Phillip Street, Kensington
[Metal first aid hut and attached storage shed]**



**Kensington and Norwood Pool, 26-28 Phillip Street, Kensington
[A long painted mural along the north east boundary]**

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**Kensington and Norwood Pool, 26-28 Phillip Street, Kensington
[An artistic mosaic mural on the south western boundary line]**