

## DESKTOP HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT (SHORT FORMAT)

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**NAME:** Wallaroo Turntable and Footings of Associated Structures

**PLACE:** 26504

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**ADDRESS:** Chatfield Terrace, Wallaroo SA 5556

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### DESCRIPTION



#### Wallaroo Turntable

Source: Railmac Publications, 2016

The roundhouse and turntable combinations constructed in South Australia by South Australian Railways (SAR) were a standard design that was based on a motorised 85ft diameter turntable. The Wallaroo turntable is set in a large circular pit with concrete walls and is guided by a circular rail, fixed at the base of the pit and adjacent to the wall.

The turntable is comprised of a substantial metal base fixed to the centre of the pit that supports a platform made from sleepers and rails. A metal gantry is fixed across the centre of the platform and supplies the electricity that once powered the turntable via a catenary fixed to the top of the gantry. A small corrugated-galvanised-iron clad shed, for the turntable driver, sits on one end of the platform. The turntable is in poor condition and has suffered considerable damage to the sleepers and to the railing fixed to the side of the platform. Whether or not it is still operational is unknown, however, it is unlikely given it has not been used in decades.

## HISTORY

In 1851, Walter Watson Hughes and Captain John Duncan took up the 'Tickera' and 'Tiparra' pastoral leases on the land to the north and south of Wallaroo, while the 'Wallaroo' pastoral lease was taken up by Robert Miller in 1854. However, Miller surrendered his lease to Hughes in 1857. Two years later James Boor, one of Hughes' shepherds discovered copper ore and Hughes in partnership with Thomas Elder, Robert Barr Smith and Edward Stirling established the Wallaroo mine. In all, 14 mines were operated in the area including at Moonta and Kadina.

The township of Wallaroo was surveyed by the government in late 1860 and the foreshore allotments were sold to the Wallaroo Mining Company who established a smelter there in 1861. A jetty was also constructed nearby in 1861, heralding the development of one of South Australia's busiest nineteenth-century ports. A private horse-drawn tramway (railway) was built between Wallaroo and Kadina in 1862 and between Moonta and Wallaroo in 1866 to transport the ore to the smelter and/or jetty for transportation to market. The lines were later acquired by the government in 1878.

The government continued to develop railways in the region, initially connecting agricultural and mining areas with ports, for example the line between Port Wakefield and Hoyleton in 1870, and then expanded the network to link the settled areas of the State. Wallaroo was connected to Adelaide via the network in 1880. A railway station was constructed in the 1880s and was replaced by a new station including a locomotive shed in 1914 (the Station is a State Heritage Place SHP 12375).

The merger of the Wallaroo and Moonta companies led to the formation of the Wallaroo and Moonta Mining and Smelting Company in 1890 and resulted in the diversification and adoption of new technology. However by the 1920s the low price of copper, increasing costs and industrial problems resulted in the closure of the mine in 1923. Although stockpiled ore kept the smelter running until the mid-1920s, most of the smelter works were demolished in 1926 to make way for an expansion of the sulphuric acid and fertilizer works then owned by Wallaroo-Mt Lyell Fertilizers Limited. While the copper industry was at an end, Wallaroo remained an important shipping port for grain and fertilizer and in particular wheat.

A new railway yard was constructed at Wallaroo in 1926 as a part of the rejuvenation of SAR that took place during the 1920s under the leadership of Commissioner WA Webb. The conversion of the western portion of the system from narrow to broad gauge resulted in new railway and shipping facilities at Wallaroo, including a new jetty and railway yard comprised of: a one bay roundhouse and turntable; 16 cottages to accommodate SAR employees; the relocation of the goods/running sheds from the station to the new railway yards; coal handling plant; and, a new concrete traffic office.

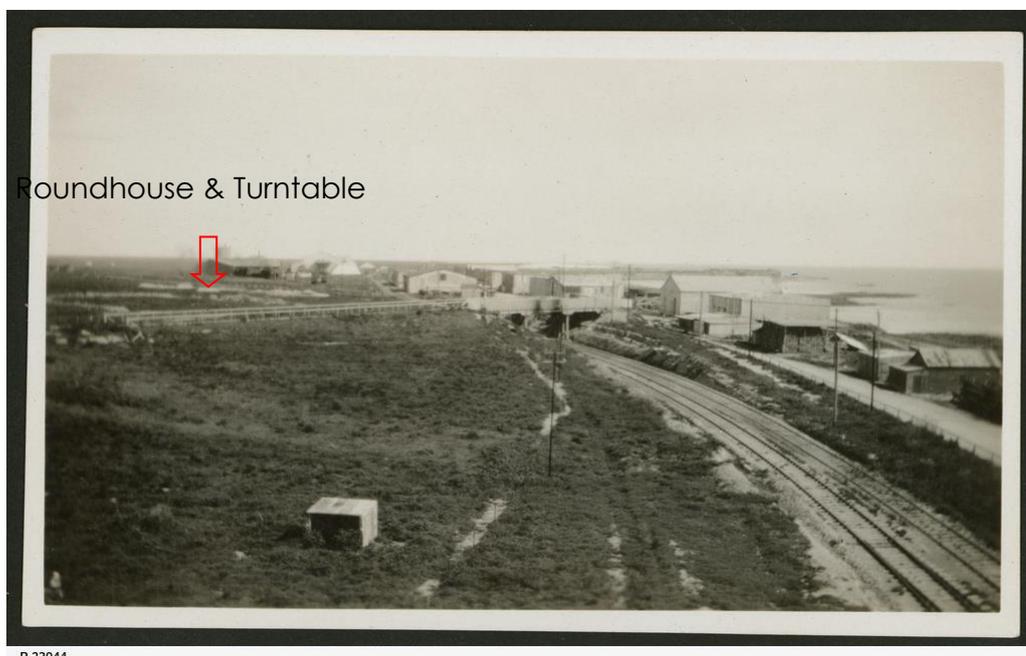
The need for a roundhouse and turntable at Wallaroo was brought into question in 1950, when Mr EH McAlees MLC asked why SAR proposed to remove the roundhouse from Wallaroo and relocate it to Mile End. Mr McAlees further noted that there was

often up to three locomotives that required overnight stabling. The Hon M McIntosh took the question on notice, however, it was 1952 before the matter was reported upon again in the newspapers. It seems that the construction of an additional bay to the roundhouse was to commence in early 1953 and that the delay was due to a shortage of materials and labour. It is not clear why the matter went from removal of the roundhouse to its extension or if the extension eventuated.

In 1958, a deep-sea grain bulk-handling facility was constructed at Wallaroo by the South Australian Harbors Board and increased the speed and efficiency of the port as it removed the need for lightering by enabling larger ships to dock. The deregulation of road freight in 1964 also challenged rail's dominance as the primary means to transport freight and in the context of this report, grain from the surrounding agricultural areas to the bulk-handling facility at Wallaroo.

The increase in private car ownership and use resulted in the closure of passenger rail services to Wallaroo in 1969. The closure of the lines between Moonta and Wallaroo and between Paskeville and Balaklava in 1984 effectively ceased all but very local rail operations to Wallaroo. Six years later, the line between Paskeville and Kadina was also closed. It appears that the line between Kadina and Wallaroo remained in operation until 1993.

What role the turntable and the other associated structures continued to play is unclear. However, aerial imagery taken between 1979 and 1981 shows that the rail yard had been cleared of all structures with the exception of the turntable and barracks (not considered as a part of this assessment).



**New railway facilities at Wallaroo, c1927. The turntable is located in front of the roundhouse.**

Source: SLSA B23944

## ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

### Comparability / Rarity / Representation:

#### South Australian Railways (SAR)

SAR and the railway network it created throughout the State made a vital and ongoing contribution to the economic development of South Australia during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Across the State there are 91 State Heritage Places and 83 local heritage places that represent the various aspects of railway development in South Australia from its first establishment in the 1850s until today.

Of the 91 State Heritage Places, 23 are associated with the development of the railways during the first decades of the twentieth century and/or with the rejuvenation of SAR in the 1920s by Railway Commissioner WA Webb.

A sample of State Heritage Places that represent the Webb era rejuvenation of SAR include:

- Murray Bridge Railway Bridge 1925 (SHP 13826)
- Victor Harbor Railway Station Historic Site 1925 (SHP 11730)
- Port Lincoln Railway Station 1927 (SHP 14608)
- Abminga Railway Station Complex 1928 (only the foundations and locomotive inspection pit remains) (SHP 19146)
- Adelaide Railway Station 1928 (SHP 10844)

#### Turntables

There are eight turntables entered on the Register, four are State Heritage Places and four local heritage places, namely:

- Balaklava Railway Station Complex, including goods shed, passenger station, turntable, silos and crane, Railway Terrace BALAKLAVA, (SHP 12942)
- Peterborough Roundhouse & Turntable (Steamtown Heritage Rail Centre), Railway Terrace PETERBOROUGH, built as a part of Webb's rejuvenation of SAR, (SHP 12694)
- Strathalbyn Railway Station Complex, including Station Building, Goods Shed, Raised Metal Water Tank and Turntable, 20 South Terrace STRATHALBYN (SHP 14088)
- Tailem Bend Turntable, Webb Street TAILEM BEND, built as a part of Webb's rejuvenation of SAR, (SHP 17078)
- Brinkworth Railway Station Complex, Main Street BRINKWORTH, (LHP)
- Railway Turntable, Lacepede Street MOUNT GAMBIER, (LHP)
- Former railway yard, Turntable and Palm Trees (3), Lot 21 Eyre Terrace VICTOR HARBOR, (LHP)
- Former Railway Station, platform, stock ramp, platform crane, water tower, stand pipe, turntable pit and footings, wrought iron gate, strainer posts, and railway iron fencing, 8 Railway Terrace WILLUNGA (LHP)

Although not currently heritage listed, a turntable and roundhouse were constructed during the 1920s as part of Webb's rejuvenation of SAR – namely the Port Lincoln Railway Yard and Workshops (currently being assessed). In comparison to Wallaroo, the Port Lincoln workshops, including the turntable and roundhouse, appear to retain a high degree of integrity and intactness.

## **Wallaroo**

The town of Wallaroo has six State Heritage Places and no local heritage places. One of the places, the Wallaroo Railway Station, John Terrace Wallaroo (SHP 12375) is associated with the development of the railway at Wallaroo during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

### **Past Consideration in Heritage Surveys**

The Railway Heritage of Wallaroo has been considered in two heritage surveys, 'Railway Heritage of South Australia' by Donovan and Associates for the National Trust of SA in 1992 and again in 1998 by Weidenhofer Architects in 'Heritage of the Yorke Peninsula'.

Donovan and Associates noted that there was once a large and busy railway yard at Wallaroo, however, by the early 1990s all that remained was a barracks and turntable (subject of this assessment). Donovan and Associates did not recommend that the barracks or turntable be nominated for consideration for State Heritage listing. The survey predated legislation for local heritage listing (*Planning and Development Act 1993*).

The Wallaroo turntable was not identified in the 1998 survey prepared by Weidenhofer Architects, however, they did recommend the Kadina Railway Complex including the turntable located there for local heritage listing. The Kadina Railway Complex was not listed as a local heritage place, however the Kadina Station building is a State Heritage Place (SHP 10187). The Wallaroo barracks were also not recommended for either local or State heritage listing.

### **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.**

With regard to this criterion, consideration has been given to *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 rail network developed between Wallaroo, Moonta and Kadina in the 1860s to transport copper ore to Wallaroo for smelting and/or transportation by ship to market played a vital role in the economic development of South Australia in the nineteenth century. During the 1870s and 1880s, the rail network was extended across the Yorke Peninsula to link agricultural areas with port facilities, for example at Wallaroo and Hoyleton. Passenger services also commenced and Wallaroo was linked to Adelaide in 1880.

However, by the time new railway facilities were constructed at Wallaroo in 1926, including the turntable and footings of associated structures (subject of this assessment), copper mining had ended and the smelter closed. While a fertiliser plant did operate from the smelter site and grain was transported by rail to the port at Wallaroo, it continued an already established pattern of transportation that was increasingly challenged as road-based vehicles became more prevalent. In 1950, SAR proposed removing the roundhouse and it was only through political intervention that it was retained, suggesting that the railway requirements offered by the site at Wallaroo were already contracting.

In 1958, the construction of bulk-handling facilities at Wallaroo revolutionised the transportation of South Australia's grain exports. Deregulation of road freight in 1964 further hastened the decline of rail services to Wallaroo resulting in its closure in the 1980s. By that time, the roundhouse and other structures had been demolished for a number of years, leaving only the turntable and barracks on site. While the turntable and footings of associated structures were important to the history of Wallaroo, they did not make a notable or influential contribution to the pattern of the State's history but rather continued an existing pattern that went into decline within decades of the turntable's and other structures' construction.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not** fulfil criterion (a).

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

With regard to this criterion, consideration has been given to *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 the future.*

Only eight combinations of a turntable and roundhouse were constructed in South Australia, six during the 1920s rejuvenation of SAR and two in the early 1950s. The turntable, roundhouse and other associated structures were constructed at Wallaroo during the 1920s as a part of an upgrade to the facilities located there due to the conversion of the rail network from narrow to broad gauge. However, while the turntable and barracks (not included as a part of the nomination and this assessment) still remain, the other buildings/structures had been demolished by c1980 and only some of their footings remain. As a consequence, the site cannot be considered to be a rare example of a turntable and roundhouse as the roundhouse no longer exists.

Turntables are more common than the combination of a turntable and roundhouse and currently there are four turntables listed as State Heritage Places and four listed as local heritage places. There are also a variety of railway complexes listed on the Register, namely twelve as state Heritage Places and four as Local Heritage Places. The turntable and associated footings are therefore also not a rare example of a turntable or of a railway complex.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not** fulfil criterion (b).

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

With regard to this criterion, consideration has been given to *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 Wallaroo turntable and footings of associated structures were constructed in the mid-1920s as part of the conversion of the rail network from narrow to broad gauge. There is nothing in the physical fabric, documentary or oral history evidence relating to the turntable and footings of associated structures to indicate that the place is likely to contain physical evidence not currently visible that will contribute meaningfully to an understanding of South Australia's history. The construction of turntables and roundhouses in South Australia during the 1920s is well documented. Furthermore, little remains of the associated structures, including the roundhouse, and their ability to yield information about the site that is not already known is highly unlikely.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not** fulfil criterion (c).

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

With regard to this criterion, consideration has been given to *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 nominated place is not an outstanding representative of the class of places known as turntables, turntables and roundhouses, and/or railway complexes. The intactness of the site has been seriously compromised due to the removal of most structures from the site, with the exception of their footings and the turntable. The removal of the structures occurred in c1980 and since then the turntable and footings have continued to degrade. Consequently, both the integrity and intactness of the site has been compromised to such an extent that the place can no longer be considered to be an outstanding representative of a turntable, turntable and roundhouse, or a railway complex.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not** fulfil criterion (d).

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

With regard to this criterion, consideration has been given to *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 times. 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 Wallaroo turntable and footings of associated structures are typical of the railway infrastructure built in South Australia in the 1920s as a part of Webb's rejuvenation of SAR. Turntables, roundhouses and the other associated structures built at the site, including a coal handling plant, are derived from nineteenth century railway infrastructure. While the use of electricity to power the turntable was new to South Australia in the 1920s, replacing man and horse power, it was not a breakthrough in technology for the time. Further, damage to the turntable has diminished its integrity. Consequently, the turntable and footings of associated structures do not demonstrate a high degree of creative or technical accomplishment and are not an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not** fulfil criterion (e).

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

With regard to this criterion, consideration has been given to *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 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.*

While there may be some members of the community who are passionate about railway infrastructure, there is no evidence to suggest that there is a significant group within the community who has a strong cultural or spiritual connection with the Wallaroo turntable and the footings of the associated structures. On 14 August 2019, the nomination of the turntable was shared on a popular South Australian-based, pro-heritage, social media site and received very little comment from the followers.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not** fulfil criterion (f).

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

With regard to this criterion, consideration has been given to *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 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 turntable and footings of associated structures were built in the 1920s as part of the Webb era rejuvenation of SAR and is associated with both the work of Webb and SAR. While both Webb and SAR made an influential contribution to South Australia's history, the Wallaroo turntable and footings of associated structures are one of many places that represent those associations. Of particular note are the Peterborough Roundhouse and Turntable (SHP 12694) and the Port Lincoln railway workshops (subject of a different nomination). It is

these places that better represent the work of both Webb and SAR, as they were major railway hubs that supported the continued development of the State.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not** fulfil criterion (g).

## **Bibliography:**

### **Books and Reports**

Donovan & Associates (1992), 'Railway Heritage of South Australia', (Adelaide: National Trust of South Australia).

Drew, Greg (1989), *Discovering Historic Wallaroo*, (Adelaide: Department of Mines and Energy & Corporation of the Town of Wallaroo)

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Paterson, Roslyn (ed) (1993), *Thankyou Walter Watson Highes Essays on Northern Yorke Peninsula*, (Akeringa: Roslyn Paterson).

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### **Newspapers**

'Wallaroo Letter', *Southern Cross* 9 January 1929, p.7.

'Reorganizing the Railways', *Register* 9 February 1926, p.9.

'Wallaroo: a Leading Industrial Centre', *Observer* 14 August 1926, p.44.

'General News Railway Alterations', *Register* 16 December 1926, p.13.

'Wallaroo Letter', *Eyre's Peninsula Tribune* 24 June 1927, p.4.

'Removal of Round House from Wallaroo', *Kadina and Wallaroo Times* 29 September 1950, p.6.

'Parliament in Brief', *Advertiser* 6 November 1952, p.5.

'Further Information Sought Regarding Local Needs', *Kadina and Wallaroo Times* 13 November 1952, p.4.

'Transfer of Wallaroo Workmen', *Kadina and Wallaroo Times* 13 November 1952, p.2.

## SITE RECORD

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**NAME:** Wallaroo Turntable and Footings of Associated Structures **PLACE:** 26504

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**DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:** Turntable and footings of associated structures

**DATE OF COMPLETION:** 1926

**REGISTER STATUS:** Nominated  
12 June 2019

**CURRENT USE:** Unused  
1980 to present

**PREVIOUS USE(S):** Turntable, roundhouse and various railway structures  
1926-?

**BUILDER:** South Australian Railways  
1926

**SUBJECT INDEXING:** **Group:** Transport (Rail)  
**Category:** Turntable

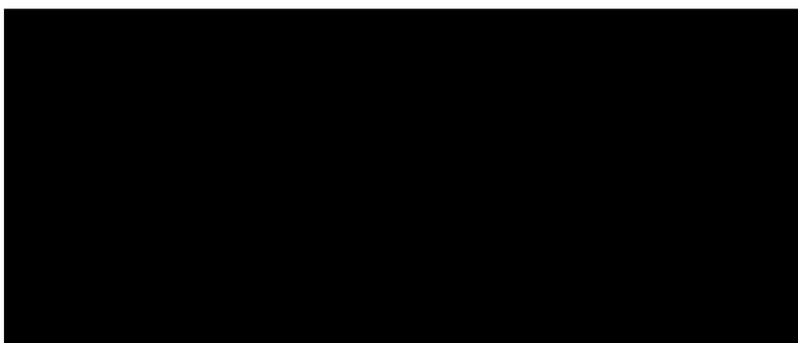
**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** Copper Coast Council

**LOCATION:** **Street No.:** 109  
**Street Name:** Chatfield Terrace  
**Town/Suburb:** Wallaroo  
**Post Code:** 5556

**LAND DESCRIPTION:** **Title Ref:** CT 6170/418  
**Plan No.:** D90525 A30  
**Hundred:** Wallaroo

**MAP REFERENCE:** **MGA Zone** 52  
**Easting (X)** 1297017.2586  
**Northing (Y)** 6211585.2492

**OWNER:**  
(Land and footings of associated structures)



**OWNER:  
(Turntable)**



# SITE PLAN

**NAME: Wallaroo Turntable and Footings of Associated Structures PLACE: 26504**



## Wallaroo Turntable and Footings of Associated Structures

109 Chatfield Terrace Wallaroo, CT 6170/418 A90525 A30 Hundred of Wallaroo

### Legend

-  Parcel Boundaries
-  Approximate extent turntable and footings of associated structures



## PHOTOS

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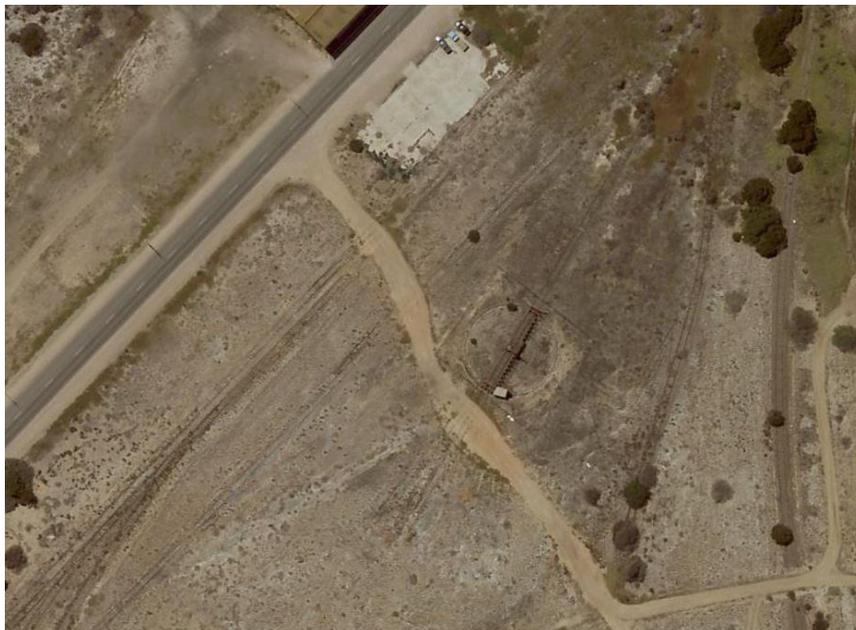
**NAME: Wallaroo Turntable and Footings of Associated Structures**      **PLACE: 26504**

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**Aerial Image showing the site of the turntable and associated railway structures Wallaroo as they appear in 2019**

Source: ENVMaps



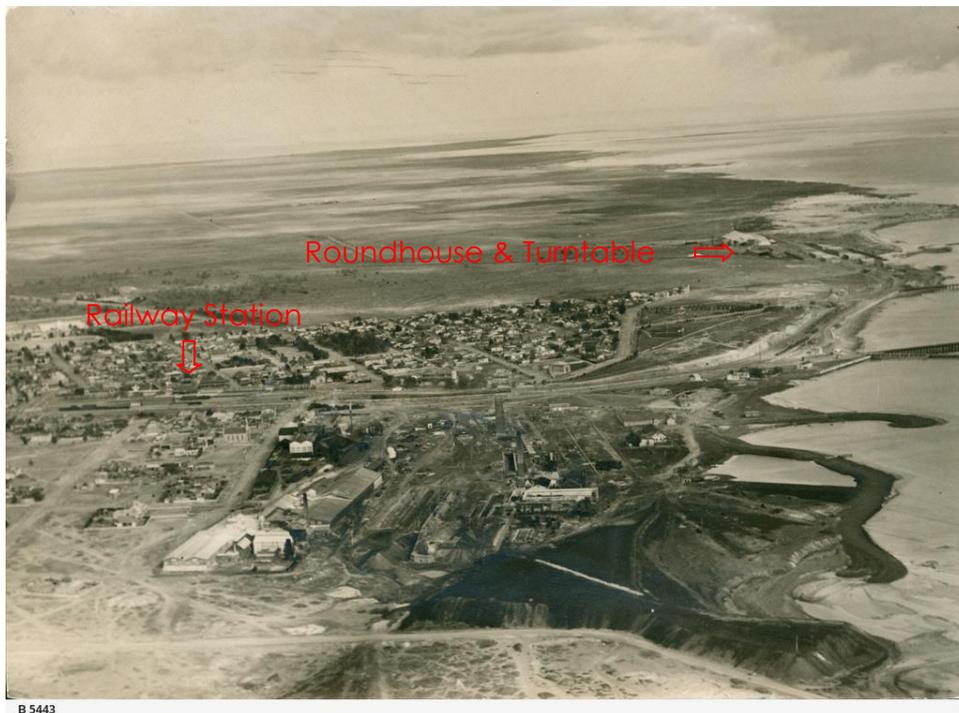
**Aerial image showing the location of the turntable and remaining footings of the roundhouse as they appear in 2019**

Source: ENVMaps

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**NAME: Wallaroo Turntable and Footings of Associated Structures** **PLACE: 26504**

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**Aerial Image of Wallaroo c1929**

Source: SLSA B5443