

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT

NAME: Former 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall **PLACE NO.:** 26448

Address: Corner of Strathfield Terrace & Lady Gowrie Drive, Taperoo

1. BRIEF HISTORY OF FORMER 1939 FORT LARGS BARRACKS AND DRILL HALL, TAPEROO

Defence was not an issue in the early decades of South Australian settlement. The new colony's isolated position in the Southern Ocean meant it was a long way from any conceivable military threat. As it was a British possession, defence was a British responsibility. Governor Hindmarsh brought a squad of sixteen marines who formed his bodyguard and the first Adelaide police force. There was a colonial militia formed under Major Thomas O'Halloran's command in 1840, but it attracted few recruits and at times faded away for lack of interest.

The early Australian colonies each had a small British garrison. Between 1841 and 1854 South Australia usually had detachments of a few dozen soldiers from British regiments stationed here as a vice-regal guard. In practice they had very little to do. Some of the more useful of these were a detachment of the Royal Sappers and Miners (later known as Engineers) who did land surveying, and were active in forming roads and digging wells. The British troops were housed in barracks buildings across Kintore Avenue from Government House, later occupied by the Destitute Asylum from 1856 onward.

Fort Largs

Moves toward developing coastal armaments and fortifications were prompted by imperial defence needs. The first Russian scare of the 1850s was prompted by the war in the Crimea. It arose from the theory that Russia might seek to divert British resources from Crimea by threatening Britain's colonies in the Pacific and Indian oceans. Measures taken included the creation of a new South Australian militia by the *Military Forces Act 1854*, and the construction of an Armoury to secure their weapons. More elaborate defence measures were planned, including building three forts for coastal defence at Glenelg and Port Adelaide, but lack of money prevented their construction until the emergency was over. Guns were actually sent from Britain for the forts, but they arrived after the war had finished. Two of the planned forts would eventually be built thirty years later.

The second Russian scare came during the threat of war between Britain's ally Turkey and Russia in 1876. Britain had withdrawn its troops from Australia in 1870, and told the colonies to look after their own defences. The Russian emergency led to a visit by imperial officers Major-General William Jervois (who was later appointed Governor of South

Australia) and Lieutenant-Colonel Peter Scratchley to make recommendations for the defence of all the Australian colonies. They drew up plans for South Australia's first defence infrastructure: two coastal artillery forts to protect the Semaphore and Largs anchorages and the entrance to the Port River.

The earlier idea for a fort at Glenelg was dropped as ships rarely called there, but plans for the other two were drawn in 1878, the basic concept by Scratchley and the detailed drawings and specifications by South Australia's Engineer-in-Chief, Henry Mais. Both forts were to be identical. Fort Glanville at Semaphore was built first, and became operational in 1880. This meant that for the first time South Australia had to maintain a permanent force of gunners, as opposed to the earlier volunteer militia. (Horner 1995, p. 20)

Tenders for the North Battery, later renamed Fort Largs, were called in 1882, and Robert Thompson's offer of £9,089/19/- was accepted. A separate tender for the construction of the associated barracks, outer defences and earthworks was let to Smith and Williams for £6,443/5/-. (Brasse 1990, p. 12) The almost-completed fort was shown to the press in April 1884, and went into service in 1885, its arcs of fire overlapping with Fort Glanville's to cover the gulf approaches to Port Adelaide. (*The Advertiser*, 28 April 1884, p. 7) The government linked the sites of these coastal fortifications with the Military Road, a formed thoroughfare running the length of the metropolitan coast behind the foreshore dunes, and built in a series of episodes between 1876 and 1885.

Fort Largs remained in service for exactly sixty years, and in that time it underwent numerous modifications. Two of the original guns proved to be defective, and were replaced by more sophisticated Armstrong guns in 1889, which involved building larger emplacements. From this time, Fort Largs was considered the more important of the two batteries. In 1903 after Federation, South Australia handed over the two forts to the Commonwealth Department of Defence, and received £31,444 in compensation. (Flightpath 2002, p. 13) There were further new guns in 1910, and the magazines were re-designed to take electric lifts. Fort Largs was fully operational during the First World War, although its role was limited to an occasional warning shot in the path of a ship that failed to identify itself satisfactorily. Further modifications were made to the gun emplacements in 1925, and the Armstrong guns were retired in 1930. (Brasse 1990, pp. 13-14)

Fort Glanville had declined steadily in importance, for reasons to do with the improved shipping facilities of the Port River. Dredging of the river and its bars and the creation of swing basins meant that overseas shipping no longer had to anchor off the Semaphore, but could safely enter the river. The focus of international shipping moved steadily down river to Ocean Steamers Wharf, and eventually to Outer Harbor in 1908. This put Fort Glanville out of range of the busiest shipping areas.

War Preparations

After peace in 1918, Australia allowed the size of its armed forces and defence budget to decline, and the inter-war years saw a small Army and very little spending on military infrastructure. This began to change in the mid-1930s, as Germany and Italy began to engage in aggressive acts in Europe and the Mediterranean.

The inter-war era can be divided into two phases. The first phase was from 1918 to 1935 and was marked by a sharp decline in the defence budget from the wartime levels. The second phase from 1935 to 1939 saw a dramatic increase in defence spending in preparation for the Second World War. (Miller 1994, p. 40)

The tipping points were Japan's invasion of China in 1937, followed by the Munich crisis of 1938. It became obvious that Australia was likely to be involved in another war. In December 1938 Prime Minister Joseph Lyons announced a broad review of defence expenditure. (*The Advertiser* 15 December 1938, p. 23)

Defence preparations turned upward sharply from 1938. Very quickly, the defence budget increased dramatically, the size of the militia was doubled, naval guns were obtained from Britain for coastal defence, ships and aircraft were ordered, airfields were built, and a Command and Staff College was established to improve the quality of officer training. (Grey 2001, pp. 101-102) When hostilities came, all this would prove to have been too little and too late, but it had been better than doing nothing.

There were numerous changes at Fort Largs. It was the home of the 120th Heavy Battery of the Royal Australian Artillery, equipped with two six-inch Mk VII guns. In the Fort itself, the emplacements were strengthened and given better ammunition-handling arrangements, electric searchlights and new rangefinders were fitted, and anti-aircraft guns were added to the defences. At the same time, the size of the resident garrison had to increase, and new barracks huts, an Officers Mess and Drill Hall were added, together with the necessary kitchens, messes and ablution blocks.

In 1939 the Defence Department decided that Fort Glanville would not be upgraded. During the Second World War it was used for proofing munitions, but not regarded as having a defensive function. This made Fort Largs the sole coastal defensive battery, and in 1941 it became known as Adelaide Fixed Defences.

All these preparations were made with the likelihood of war between Britain and Germany in mind, and the enemy they envisaged was German raiders, such as the cruisers that had been active world-wide in the First World War. In December 1941 the situation changed dramatically with the entry of Japan into the war, and in the opening weeks of the Pacific War the Imperial Japanese Navy demonstrated the long range and effectiveness of its Carrier Striking Force. The enemy threat most feared now was a sudden raid by aircraft of the Japanese carrier fleet.

With this far more urgent naval threat presented by Japan, Fort Largs looked very vulnerable. It was conspicuous from the air, and its site had been marked on public maps for nearly 60 years. Hence in April 1942 it was decided to leave Fort Largs as a decoy with dummy guns to keep up appearances, and transfer its six-inch guns to a new concealed coastal battery 600m further north. The new battery was protected by low sandbagged emplacements, and given the code name 'Fort Malta'. (NAA D844/26 73A/1/6; Brook 1986, pp. 203-205) Its site is now within the grounds of Taperoo High School.

By 1944, Japanese aircraft carrier capability had been reduced to the point where there was no longer considered to be a threat to Adelaide. The anti-aircraft guns at Fort Largs were removed, and the fortification became a training school for Volunteer Defence Corps

gunners. In February 1945, Adelaide was no longer regarded as a Defence Port, and Fort Malta was dismantled. Fort Largs' 60 years of guarding against enemy attack were over. In any case, its design and armament were by that time obsolete for modern warfare, and would not be used in any future conflict. The six-inch guns were removed in 1946. Fort Largs would no longer serve as a fortification, and its future usefulness was concentrated on the barracks complex alongside.

Barracks/Officers Mess

During the pre-war preparations, in 1939 the facilities at Fort Largs were greatly expanded by the addition of a two storey barrack block to house 10th Heavy Battery Royal Australian Artillery, a new drill hall and a number of timber P series huts to house 38th Fortress Company Royal Australian Engineers.

The architect responsible for the design of the Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall buildings was most likely CE Davies, Chief Architect of the Adelaide Works and Services Branch of the Department of the Interior. 'Davies was responsible for all for the design of Commonwealth buildings in South Australia and the Northern Territory at the time...' (McDougall & Vines 1992, p 17). Stylistically, the Fort Largs buildings are similar to the 'stripped classical/ art deco' detailing incorporated in Davies' 1936 Torrens Training Depot, Adelaide, but is more transitional in style, combining art deco motifs with a conventional planning form and building features common to the period.

In April 1939 the Department of Works called tenders for 'Erection New Barrack Building and Drill Hall' (*News* 9 April 1939, p. 8), and in May it was announced that older barracks buildings were being demolished to make way for the new construction. The successful tenderer was J Groves & Sons with a bid of £10,275, and the firm took on 35 extra men for the job. (*News* 12 May 1939, p. 3; *The Advertiser* 17 May 1939, p. 26) Both buildings were nearing completion in August 1939, and the gunners arrived in their new quarters in September as the war in Europe began. The Governor inspected the completed barracks in December. (*News* 17 August 1939, p. 20; 4 December 1939, p. 5) Further tenders were let for the addition of timber barracks, mess huts, storerooms and ablution blocks to the complex in May 1940 (*The Advertiser* 23 May 1940, p. 4) At its peak size during the Second World War, Fort Largs was also home to the Port Adelaide Fortress Signals Section, the 12th Anti-Aircraft Battery, the 58th Anti-Aircraft Searchlight Company and a detachment of the Australian Women's Army Service. (Brook 1986, pp. 200-203)

The precise wartime function of the building is not clear. It was usually referred to as 'Barracks', although its large and lofty rooms seem unusually capacious for that function. The Australian War Memorial holds a set of 1944 photographs whose captions describe it as the 'Officers Mess'. Probably the two-storey building was originally the quarters and mess for officers, while other ranks were housed in the timber barrack huts.

Post-war uses of the Barracks are dealt with later, but physical changes to the building have occurred in two phases. First the interior underwent relatively minor refurbishment in 1952 to convert it to barracks for the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps (WRAAC). In 1964 the Barracks building underwent further renovation for use as classrooms and a mess by

the Police Academy. Facilities such as new toilets were added, and the open verandah of the upper storey was enclosed. (Flightpath 2002, p. 17)

Drill Hall

The Drill Hall has the same construction history as the Barrack block, built by the same builder under the same contract, and commenced, finished and occupied at the same times. Tenders were called in April 1939, the tender was let to J Groves & Sons in May 1939. The building was nearing completion in August 1939, and began to be occupied in September. Work was certainly complete by December 1939.

The subsequent history of the Drill Hall is less well documented than the Barracks, but it probably continued to march hand-in-hand with its larger neighbour. A drill hall is used for teaching and practicing drill, weapons training, physical exercise and sport, especially in bad weather. All of these activities would have continued under Artillery, WRAAC and Police regimes, and the building has probably seen little physical change since 1939.

Post-War

Until the Second World War, the Australian Army did not recruit women, except in the role of nurses. Then, because of wartime labour shortage, the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS) was established in 1941 to accept women into military roles. It was disbanded in 1947. During the Korean War there was again a need to expand the defence force at a time of full employment, and women were again recruited. The new organisation was called the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps (WRAAC), established in April 1951.

In June 1952, the first detachment of 32 WRAAC soldiers moved into Fort Largs barracks, with another 20 arriving a few months later. It was the first WRAAC barracks opened in Australia. (*News* 11 June 1952, p. 15) The barracks, with six beds to a room, had been tastefully refurbished in pastel blue and primrose, with duck egg green for the kitchens. (*Sunday Herald* 15 June 1952, p. 18; *The Advertiser* 24 May 1952, p. 12) One letter to the editor from 'An Old Gunner' was amazed that 'the smell of cordite is to be exchanged for the smell of face powder.' (*News* 10 June 1952, p. 10) The women would be based at Fort Largs until December 1960. Most of them worked as drivers, or as administrative staff at Keswick Barracks. (*The Advertiser* 24 May 1952, p. 3) With changing attitudes to women's roles, the WRAAC was disbanded in 1984, and since then the Defence Force has incorporated women into mixed gender units.

After the departure of the WRAACs in 1960, there was debate about what use would be made of the empty barracks complex. On 30 November 1961, the Commander of Central Command handed the keys of Fort Largs over to the Commissioner of Police. The barracks entered into their third role, as the home of the South Australian Police Academy, replacing earlier ad hoc arrangements for police training in buildings scattered around the metropolitan area. One of the first actions by the police was to remount the two six-inch Mk VII guns in 1962 and restore the fort's warlike appearance. SA Police had an 'earnest desire ... to preserve the old Fort in its original trim' (Brief History website)

There was a period of refurbishment before the Police Academy opened. In that interval some of the barracks buildings were occupied by the Weapons Research Establishment and used for electronic testing. (Flightpath 2002, p. 17)

In preparation for use by the Police Academy, the Barracks building underwent another internal makeover, and was converted to classrooms, while retaining its mess facilities of kitchen, dining room and bar. The spartan Drill Hall appears to have undergone little significant change during its police years. The SA Police Academy occupied the Fort Largs Barracks for 50 years, compared to the 22 years it had housed the Army. Police training continued until 2011, when it was moved to a purpose-built complex a few hundred metres further east.

2. DESCRIPTION

Barracks

The 1939 Barracks is a single and two storey red brick building, with an asbestos cement, corrugated sheet hip roof. The facade is detailed with horizontal banded stucco detailing, bordering rows of timber framed windows. Two entrance porches are asymmetrically arranged along the east facade, both finished with stepped render 'art deco' styled detailing. The building incorporates a mess/ kitchen on the ground floor and (now) administration areas upstairs. The original rear colonnade verandah has been enclosed and mess areas modified in the recent past.

Drill Hall

The 1939 Drill Hall building is a substantial, single storey red brick building, comprising a central hall under a gable roof, flanked by ancillary rooms along the west and east facades. The form of the building expresses its function as a hall space, with store rooms, private rooms and kitchens to the sides. Brickwork detailing is utilitarian and the gable is dressed with a render coping. Windows and doors are arranged in a symmetrical manner to all facades. Further horizontal render banding decorates the top of the hall and storeroom walls. A corrugated profile asbestos sheet roof encloses the building.

3. ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Identification of South Australian Historical Themes:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Historical Geography | ▪ n/a – relates to land use/settlement patterns |
| Social History/Development | ▪ n/a – relates to South Australian society |
| Political/Government History | ▪ The 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall illustrate the dramatic shift in South Australian government policy relating to the State's defences, in response to the impending threat of Second World War |
| Economic History | ▪ n/a |
| Notable Event (s) | ▪ The 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall are associated with the historic events and impact of Second World War – an important event in the 20 th Century history of South Australia. Further identified with occupation by WRAAC and Police Academy |

Comparability / Rarity / Representation:

Integrity (quality) against similar Places on the South Australian Heritage Register

Several defensive and administrative barracks were extant in South Australia at the time of the construction of the Fort Largs 1939 Drill Hall and Barracks. Further, other barracks were upgraded/ rebuilt at this time, as a part of urgent, pre-Second World War mobilisation works:

Fort Glanville, Semaphore Park (1880) (SHP #10569)

Constructed in 1880, as a part of a network of early coastal defences for the colony.

Significant fort in the defence history of South Australia, but predates subject buildings by 59 years – so not directly comparable. Also, decommissioned Second World War.



<http://www.weekendnotes.com/fort-glanville-conservation-park/>

Fort Largs Police Academy (Fort Largs and Rifled Muzzle Loading & Breech Loading Guns only), Taperoo (1885) (SHP #10939)

Fort Largs was constructed by 1885 (initially known as North Battery). Significant military/ coastal defence site in the history of SA – from 1885 to post Second World War.

Part of the subject site of nomination, but erected 54 years earlier for coastal defence purposes. Not directly comparable with subject site – different era of history (and themes) of South Australia.



www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/heritage/photodb/imagesearch.pl?proc=detail;barcode_no=rt38379

Headquarters Building (Building 32), Keswick Barracks, Keswick (1912) (SHP 14272)

Erected 1912 as the first purpose built barracks in Australia after the formation of the Aust Army. Erected as the SA Army headquarters. Building 32 was the first of several (unlisted) red brick buildings erected in the post WW1 period. Building works on site stalled in the 1920s and dramatically increased again after 1935 – due to Aust Army mobilisation pre WW11.

There are no State heritage-listed buildings on the Keswick Barracks site dating from the period of construction of Fort Largs Barracks & Drill Hall – so comparison is not possible.



Former Torrens Training Depot, including Drill Hall and Parade Ground, Adelaide (1936) (SHP #14617)

Erected to replace an earlier Drill Hall/Regiment Barracks at the other end of the Parade Ground, in the early period of pre-Second World War mobilisation – partly in response to this concern and also due to changing technology of armaments). Designed by architect C E Davies (architect responsible for all SA Commonwealth buildings at the time) in 'Interwar stripped classical' style (similar - Stripped-art-deco).



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Stylistically similar to Fort Largs Barracks building and similar in period and purpose. Directly comparable in integrity. Note that the Training Depot was a depot, not a barracks – there was no provision for accommodation. Further, Drill Hall internalised in building.

**Former Navy Drill Hall, HMAS Encounter,
Birkenhead (c1919)
(SHP #14366)**

Erected as Navy Drill Hall – but now converted to apartments. Date of erection c1919 predates Fort Largs Drill Hall and period of mobilisation pre-Second World War – so comparison not valid. Further, historic integrity of place has been diminished after conversion to apartments.



Google Streetview

Comparing Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall with other relevant State heritage-listed places in South Australia:

- The 1939 Fort Largs Barracks building is comparable in style, function and period with one other known State heritage-listed place in South Australia – the 1936 Torrens Training Depot building. Both buildings were erected in response to the post-1935 rapid mobilisation of defence facilities prior to the Second World War. The 1939 Fort Largs Barracks was a defensive site though, not a training/administrative site. Further, the 1939 Fort Largs Barracks building is of architectural interest as an early ‘Stripped classical/ art deco’ building for South Australia, but the architecture is considered ‘transitional’ in style, as the ‘art deco’ features – entry porches and render banding - are limited in extent and are considered as features on a predominantly utilitarian, red brick, hipped roof building of the period. The Torrens Training Depot is a more valuable example of the style for the period in South Australia.
- The 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall formed part of a significant upgrade to a defensive barracks site, while the Torrens Depot was not a barracks site. The Fort Largs Barracks was the only South Australian coastal defensive battery and barracks extant at the beginning of the Second World War.
- No other free standing, comparable Drill Halls of the period are entered on the South Australian Heritage Register. The Torrens Training Depot incorporates a Drill Hall, but as part of a larger building. The Birkenhead Drill Hall pre-dates the Fort Largs Drill Hall by many years.

Comparison to Australian Barracks/ Drill Halls of the 1930s period:

Many Barracks were erected/upgraded around Australia in the late 1930s, as a part of urgent, pre-Second World War mobilisation works:

Kingstown Barracks, Bickley Battery Conservation Area, Rottnest Island, WA (1936) (WA Heritage Place #17350)

'Art deco' style buildings, incorporating barracks, accommodation and administration facilities (now youth hostel). Unique art deco tower feature. Substantial scale and representative example of 'art deco' style for period.

Compared with Fort Largs, Kingstown is of a similar era and part of mobilisation efforts, but is more substantial in area and facilities for period and is architecturally superior in style.



North Head Artillery Barracks, NSW (1936-39) (NSW State Heritage #19091)

The site contains an 'art deco' style complex of barracks buildings – administration, barracks, mess, drill hall etc – laid out formally, over a large area.

Compared with Fort Largs, North Head is of a similar era and part of mobilisation efforts, but is substantially larger and incorporates more barracks facilities.

Larrakeyah Barracks, NT (1934-39) (Commonwealth Heritage List #105251)

Low scale complex of army barracks buildings – 'moderne' in styling.

Compared with Fort Largs, Larrakeyah of a similar era and part of mobilisation efforts, but is stylistically more open in design, suited to tropical climate – therefore not comparable.



**Mildura Drill Hall, Kairivu Barracks, Victoria
(1937-38)**

Erected 1938 for use of 8/7 Royal Victorian Regiment – design – Commonwealth Architect George Hallendal. Large scale drill hall – brick construction, gable roof. Side entrance substantial design feature, incorporating ‘quilted brickwork’ and render finish plinth and arch entrance.

Compared with Fort Largs, Mildura is of a similar era and part of mobilisation efforts, but is a larger hall and has higher architectural integrity as an example of ‘art deco’ styling.



**29/22 Battalion Drill Hall, George Street,
Fitzroy, Victoria (1936)
City of Yarra Planning Scheme HO334**

Substantial clinker brick drill hall – erected in mobilisation period.

Compared with Fort Largs, this drill hall is of a similar era and part of mobilisation efforts but is larger in scale and its art deco/ stripped classical styling is of higher integrity. Form of building (hall, with gable roof and lower side rooms) is similar to that of Fort Largs.



Nationally, the Fort Largs 1939 Barracks and Drill Hall buildings are not of sufficient heritage value to illustrate pre-Second World War defence mobilisation in Australia in the mid-late 1930s. The 1939 Fort Largs Barracks mobilisation upgrade resulted in two buildings. Other Australian barracks constructed in this period were larger and contained more facilities, better illustrating the planned dramatic increase in defence facilities.

The rarity (uniqueness) or commonness of the Place in South Australia

Several Barracks and ‘art deco’ styled government buildings were extant in South Australia at the time of the construction of the Fort Largs 1939 Drill Hall and Barracks.

Former Torrens Training Depot, including Drill Hall and Parade Ground, Adelaide (1936)
SHP #14617

Erected in the early period of pre-Second World War mobilisation – partly in response to this concern and also due to changing technology of armaments).. Designed by architect CE Davies (architect responsible for all SA Commonwealth buildings at the time) in ‘interwar stripped classical’ style (similar stripped-art-deco).

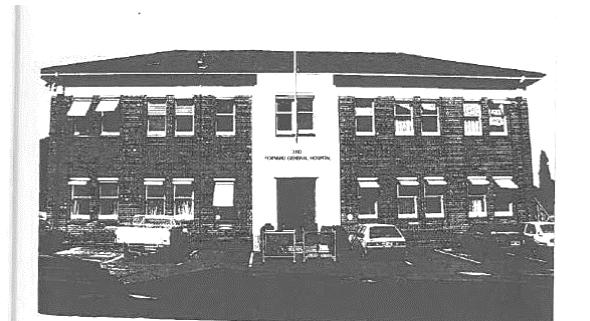


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Stylistically similar, but superior to Fort Largs Barracks building, as stylistic architectural features extend to all facades and function also reflected in planning. Only other known stand-alone defence facility incorporating a Drill Hall and administration/mess of the pre-Second World War mobilisation period in South Australia, but an administrative, rather than defence site.

Building #1 - ‘3 Forward General Hospital’, Keswick Army Barracks (1936-40)
(1936-40 additions designed by architect CE Davies)

The additions to the earlier building were constructed in the Second World War mobilisation period and are stylistically similar to the 1939 buildings at Fort Largs. In particular, the two storey scale, red brick walls, banded render work to facades and central rendered feature entry porch reflect architectural features common to the Fort Largs buildings.



Keswick Barracks CMP 1992

Stylistically similar, but utilitarian in detail and a mix of ‘stripped classical/ art deco’ features of no particular aesthetic merit. Erected as part of an upgrade to Keswick Barracks, established 1912, as part of pre-WW11 mobilisation. Fort Largs Barracks fully rebuilt (excluding emplacements) 1939 – so higher integrity example of pre-WW11 mobilisation.

**Building #34 - 'Chief Engineer', Keswick Army Barracks (1936)
(1936 additions designed by architect CE Davies)**

The additions to the earlier building were constructed in the Second World War mobilisation period and are stylistically similar to the 1939 buildings at Fort Largs. As per Building #1, architectural features are also common to the Fort Largs buildings.

Stylistically similar, but utilitarian in detail and a mix of 'stripped classical/ art deco' features of no particular aesthetic merit.

Erected as part of an upgrade to Keswick Barracks, established 1912, as part of pre-Second World War mobilisation.

Fort Largs Barracks fully rebuilt (excluding emplacements) 1939 – so higher integrity example of pre-WW11 mobilisation.

**Building #60 - 'Live in Accommodation – Male', Keswick Army Barracks (1938)
(1938 by Department of Interior)**

The 'live-in accommodation' building was constructed in the Second World War mobilisation period and incorporates some features which are stylistically similar to the 1939 buildings at Fort Largs. Features such as red brick facades, render banding, and in particular the deep colonnaded verandah are also common to the Fort Largs buildings. The render entry porch has been lost under later entry additions.

Stylistically similar, but compromised in detail by later additions. Features a mix of 'stripped classical/ art deco' features of some aesthetic merit.

Erected as part of an upgrade to Keswick Barracks, established 1912, as part of pre-Second World War mobilisation, but integrity compromised through later additions. Erected for use by Repatriation Hospital as



Keswick Barracks CMP 1992



accommodation for matron and nursing staff, then Australian Women's Army Service.

Fort Largs Barracks fully rebuilt (excluding emplacements) 1939 – and is fully intact, so higher integrity example of pre-Second World War mobilisation.

Building #82 - '48 Field Battery & Building # 84 - Drill Hall, Keswick Army Barracks (1939) (1939 Department Interior – CE Davies) – Artillery Depot and Drill Hall

The Artillery Headquarters building was constructed in the Second World War mobilisation period for the garaging of guns on the ground floor and use of upper floor for offices and messes. A separate Drill Hall was incorporated to the rear.

The Artillery building incorporates some features which are stylistically similar to the 1939 buildings at Fort Largs, but is extremely austere in architectural detail and is not architecturally comparable.

The Drill Hall to the rear is a simple hipped roof, red brick and render banded building, with a monitor roof similar to that found at Fort Largs' Drill Hall.

Stylistically similar, but utilitarian in detail and a mix of 'stripped classical/ art deco' features of no particular aesthetic merit

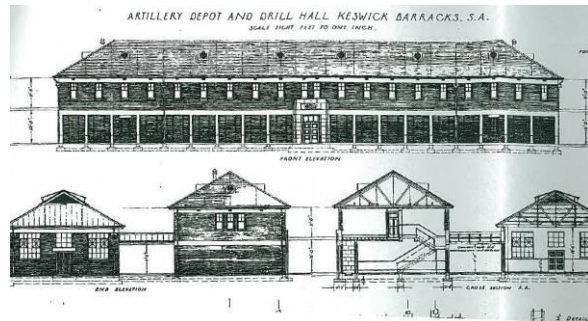
Both the Artillery building and Drill Hall were erected as part of pre-Second World War mobilisation at the 1912 Keswick Barracks. The Artillery Building as used for garaging of motor vehicles during the Second World War – so served an ancillary purpose on the Barracks site

Not of comparable historic significance with Fort Largs Barracks.

The Drill Hall stands as an example of such a facility for the 1935-40 period in South Australia

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Is historically comparable with the Fort Largs Drill Hall, but sits on an administrative, not



defence site and was not the main Drill Hall for Keswick Barracks.

Woodside, Warradale and Hampstead Barracks

Woodside Barracks was established by the Second World War, but a majority of the buildings on the site were temporary structures – sheds and tents. All these facilities were removed in the early 1980s and replaced with barracks buildings contemporary to the era

Not comparable with Fort Largs.

Warradale Barracks – most of the permanent development on the site occurred post Second World War.

Not comparable with Fort Largs.

Hampstead Barracks was established in Greenacres, SA in the 1950s.

Not comparable with Fort Largs.

Former 1941 Finsbury Munitions Factory (Administration Building), Woodville North

The 1941 Finsbury Munitions Factory was established by the Commonwealth Government of Australia to address Second World War manufacturing priorities. Finsbury's role was to provide the metal components for making munitions: cartridge cases, shells, fuses and primers.



While the Second World War government munitions building is stylistically similar, it is more utilitarian in detail than the Fort Largs Barracks building. Further, its function was established at the onset of the Second World War, not in the period of mobilisation before the war.

From a South Australian perspective, the 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall are of architectural interest, but are not an ‘art deco/ stripped classical’ style exemplar for local defence buildings of the period. The architecture is considered ‘transitional’ in style, as the ‘art deco’ features of the Barracks building – entry porches and render banding - are limited

in extent and are considered only as features on a predominantly utilitarian, red brick, hipped roof building of the period. The Torrens Training Depot is a more valuable example of the style for the period in South Australia.

The buildings are of significance though as a remaining example of such buildings of the late 1930s, pre-Second World War mobilisation period in South Australia, still extant, located on a defensive, rather than administrative barracks site.

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 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall are of historic significance to South Australia as an illustration of a purpose built defensive facility, erected in direct response to Commonwealth and State mobilisation initiatives and coastal defence needs directly before the Second World War.

The Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall were built in 1939 as the nucleus of a reconstructed and strengthened Fort Largs – the only remaining coastal defensive battery protecting the coast of Adelaide. Other huts and sheds were also erected on the site during this period, but most are no longer extant. The Barracks were a part of the South Australian mobilisation program, which commenced with the new Torrens Training Depot in Adelaide in 1936. In December 1938 Prime Minister Joseph Lyons announced a broad review of defence expenditure in response to imminent war. Many new buildings and the upgrade of existing buildings were proposed for Keswick Barracks and new barracks sites were also established in suburban and rural South Australia. Other than the buildings at Keswick, the 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall are the only other buildings to remain from this period, illustrating this particular aspect of the military and political history of pre-Second World War South Australia. The Fort Largs buildings are in excellent condition and are high in historic integrity.

The 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall are the only extant South Australian buildings on a defensive Barracks site from the period – purpose-built in response to Commonwealth and State mobilisation initiatives and coastal defence needs immediately before the Second World War.

The later use of the site for the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps (1951-1960) is of note, but still not of sufficient 'historical importance' to the State, as the Corps were also in existence at Keswick Barracks before this date (during Second World War, under another title) and only occupied the Fort Largs site for a brief period – nine years.

The South Australian Police Academy occupied the site for fifty years, in fact longer than the twenty two year occupation of the Barracks and Drill Hall by the Army. The social significance of the site for the SA Police may be relevant, but testing of this significance is beyond the scope of this report. Further, later buildings erected by SA Police on the site are considered to better illustrate their specific occupation and use of the place.

I conclude that the Place meets 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 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall are considered a rare, remaining part of South Australia's pre-Second World War defence mobilisation strategy. The Barracks and Drill Hall were built in 1939 as the nucleus of a reconstructed and strengthened Fort Largs – now the only coastal defensive battery protecting the coast of Adelaide. Other huts and sheds were also erected on the site during this period, but most are no longer extant. Other extant buildings erected during the period include new Torrens Training Depot in Adelaide (not part of Lyons' 1938 program) and many

new/upgraded buildings at Army Headquarters at Keswick Barracks.

The 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall are the only extant South Australian buildings on a defensive Barracks site from the period – purpose-built in response to Commonwealth and State mobilisation initiatives and coastal defence needs directly before the Second World War. The site also contains the 1885 Fort Largs emplacements and quadrangle and these were upgraded in part at the same time. The Parade Ground is also still evident on site and the Barracks and Drill Hall directly face the important barracks space.

Several buildings from this period also remain on the 1912 Keswick Barracks site, but most are either additions to earlier buildings (Buildings 1 & 34) or have been altered since this period, reducing their integrity (Buildings 60, 82 & 48). Further, Keswick Barracks was an administrative, not defensive barracks site.

I conclude that the Place meets 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.

I conclude that the Place does not yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the state's history, including its natural history, and therefore 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 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall buildings belong to a particular class of places – South Australian defence facilities – firstly within a 1836-2014 context, and then, more specifically, as part of the pre-Second World War defence mobilisation period.

Fort Largs is already entered in the South Australian Heritage Register as a State Heritage Place (10939 – *Fort Largs Police Academy (Fort Largs & Muzzle Loading and Breech Loading Guns only)*) - illustrating the early defence needs of the State – as recommended by Jervois and Scratchley's Australian coastal defence strategy of the day. The fort and guns are evidence of these early defence needs. The 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall are not of historic significance as a part of this important theme.

The 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall are clearly a part of South Australia's pre-Second World War defence mobilisation strategy, greatly accelerated by Prime Minister Lyons in 1938. The Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall were built in 1939 as the nucleus of a reconstructed and strengthened Fort Largs – now the only coastal defensive battery and barracks protecting the coast of Adelaide. Other huts and sheds were also erected on the site during this period, but most are no longer extant. The former Parade Ground is still evident on site and the Barracks and Drill Hall directly face the important parade ground space. The Barracks were a part of the SA mobilisation programme, which included a new Torrens Training Depot in the city (not part of Lyons' 1938 programme though), many new/upgraded buildings at Keswick Barracks and also the establishment of new barracks sites in suburban and rural South Australia. Other than the buildings at Keswick, the 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall are the only other buildings to remain from this period, illustrating this particular class of places of importance within the military and political history of pre-Second World War South Australia. The Fort Largs buildings are in excellent condition and are high in historic integrity. Both buildings are outstanding representatives of their particular class of place.

I conclude that the Place meets 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 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall buildings are typical architectural examples of the type of military building being erected at many defence sites during the pre-Second World War mobilisation period in South Australia. The buildings are of high integrity and are relatively intact examples of barracks and drill hall buildings of the period. The buildings (predominantly the Barracks) are 'stripped classical/art deco' in style, but are restrained in architectural design, with stylistic features being mostly contained to entrance porches and eaves banding.

Other, more appropriate examples of buildings of this architectural style, which 'demonstrate a higher degree of creative, aesthetic ... accomplishment' in pre-war South Australia are:

- Savings Bank of South Australia, Adelaide (1938, E McMichael)
- Bank NSW, Adelaide (1937, Claridge & McConnell)
- Torrens Training Depot, Adelaide (1936, CE Davies, of SA Department of Works)
- Hindmarsh, Brighton, Port Adelaide Town Halls, Capri and Semaphore Theatres, Greenways Apartments (all 1930s, Chris Smith)

The Torrens Training Depot is considered an outstanding South Australian example of a 'stripped classical/art deco' military building of the pre-Second World War mobilisation period. The building is symmetrical in plan and elevation, fully rendered and features decoration common to the style (abstracted organic and classical forms and stepped facade articulation) – all executed in a well-resolved manner.

The 1939 Fort Largs Barracks building is simple and utilitarian in design - a face brick,

hipped roof building featuring 'stripped classical/art deco' architectural features only to the entrance porch areas. The Drill Hall building is even more utilitarian in design – the only 'stripped classical' feature being the gable form of the building. The architecture is considered 'transitional' in style, as the few 'art deco' features are limited in extent and are considered as features on predominantly utilitarian, red brick, hipped/ gable roofed buildings typical of the period. The Torrens Training Depot is a more valuable example of the style for the period in South Australia. Both buildings do not exhibit a high degree of creative or aesthetic accomplishment, within the context of pre-war South Australia

I conclude that the Place does not demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment or is an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics, and therefore 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 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall are of some cultural association for a select number of the South Australian community – from the defence forces (inc. the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps) and then the SA Police Academy. It is argued that each of these groups are small in number and that association is not strong, ie:

- Thebarton Police Barracks is considered a more appropriate place of association for the police community of South Australia. The site is substantial and has been operation for many more years.
- Keswick Army Barracks is considered a more important place of association for the defence force community across South Australia. The site was established well before Fort Largs (Barracks) is the SA Army Headquarters at Keswick and is still in active use. Further, Women's Royal Australian Army Corps also had association with the site – under a different name.

I conclude that the Place does not have strong cultural or spiritual associations for the community or a group within it and therefore does not meet with 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.

With respect to 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall the 'person or organisation' is the South Australian defence force and the event is Second World War. This association can be demonstrated for many military sites across South Australia during the Second World War period.

The defence personnel located at the Barracks were typical of such personnel stationed across the State at the time of construction and their actions are not noted of 'historical importance' to South Australia.

The later use of the site for the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps (1951-1960) is of note, but still not of sufficient 'historical importance' to the State, as the Corps were also in existence at Keswick Barracks before this date (during the Second World War) and only occupied the Fort Largs site for a brief period – nine years.

The South Australian Police Academy occupied the site for fifty years, in fact longer than the twenty-two year occupation of the Barracks and Drill Hall by the Army. The social significance of the site for the Police (as an organisation) may be relevant, but testing of this significance is beyond the scope of this report and the buildings erected

by SA Police on the site are considered to better illustrate their specific occupation and use of the place.

I conclude that the Place does not have a special association with the life or work of a person or organisation or an event of historical importance and therefore does not meet with this criterion.

Extent of Listing / Significant Fabric / Curtilage:

The extent of listing includes:

- whole of exterior and interior of 1939 two storey and single storey sections of Barracks building
- whole of exterior and interior of 1939 single storey Drill Hall building
- setting includes retention of part of the open space Parade Ground in front of both buildings, approximately 40m x 60m (240m²) in front of the two buildings

The extent of listing excludes:

Barracks:

- later glazed enclosure of west facing balcony and ground floor verandah
- pergola structure attached to west facade
- later internal floor furnishings, bar fit out, kitchen and ablutions
- Asbestos-based roofing, spouting, vents and other products

Drill Hall:

- later verandah structure to rear (north)
- internal fixed fittings/ wall tiles
- Asbestos based roofing, spouting, vents and other products

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www.army.gov.au/Our-history/Army-History-Unit

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www.amosa.org.au

Australian Artillery Association

www.australianartilleryassociation.com/customs_and_traditions_q&a.htm

Australian Heritage Database

www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/ahdb/search.pl

Manning: Defence of the Colony

www.slsa.sa.gov.au/manning/sa/defence/defence.htm

Manning Index of South Australian History

www.slsa.sa.gov.au/manning/

Brief History of Fort Largs Police Academy

www.sapolicehistory.org/April-10.html

Women's Royal Australian Army Corps

www.awm.gov.au/atwar/structure/awas/

NAME: Former 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall **PLACE NO.:** 26448

SITE RECORD:

FORMER NAME: Fort Largs Barracks, Fort Largs Police Academy

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE: Whole of exterior and interior of 1939 two storey and single storey sections of Barracks building.
Whole of exterior and interior of 1939 single storey Drill Hall building.
Setting includes retention of part of the open space Parade Ground in front of both buildings, approximately 40m x 60m (240m²) in front of the two buildings

DATE OF COMPLETION: 1939

REGISTER STATUS: **Description:** Confirmed
Date: 22 April 2015

CURRENT USE: **Description:** Vacant
Dates: 2011 - 2014

PREVIOUS USE(S): **Description:** Accommodation, mess, administration
Dates: 1939 - 2011

ARCHITECT: **Name:** Adelaide Works and Services Branch of the Department of the Interior – (Chief Architect CE Davies)
Dates: 1939

BUILDER: **Name:** J Groves & Sons
Dates: 1939

SUBJECT INDEXING: **Group:** Military
Category: Barracks

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: **Description:** City of Port Adelaide/Enfield

NAME: Former 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall **PLACE NO.:** 26448

SITE RECORD (Cont.):

LOCATION:

Unit No.:	n/a
Street No.:	n/a
Street Name:	Corner of Strathfield Terrace & Lady Gowrie Drive
Town/Suburb:	Taperoo
Post Code:	5017

LAND DESCRIPTION:

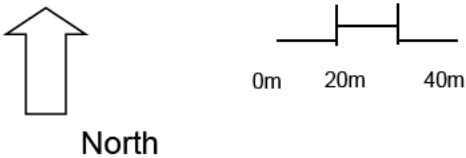
Title Type:	CT
Volume:	6095
Folio:	84
Lot No.:	200
Section:	Deposited Plan 88971
Hundred:	Port Adelaide

OWNER:

Name:	████████████████████
Address:	██
Town/Suburb:	████████
Post Code:	████



SITE PLAN – Former 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall, and portion of former Parade Ground, Taperoo



NAME: Former 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall **PLACE NO.:** 26448



East Façade of Barracks Building, featuring entrance (*Grieve Gillett 2014*)



West Façade of Barracks Building [note later enclosed upper balcony & ground level verandah]
(*Grieve Gillett 2014*)

NAME: Former 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall **PLACE NO.:** 26448



Typical upper floor room (possibly originally dormitory), Barracks Building (*Grieve Gillett 2014*)

NAME: Former 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall **PLACE NO.:** 26448



South Façade of Drill Hall Building, featuring entrance (Grieve Gillett 2014)



Interior of Drill Hall Building (main hall with doors to side rooms) (Grieve Gillett 2014)

NAME: Former 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall **PLACE NO.:** 26448



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

064924

Fort Largs Barracks Building, 1944 'AWM064924 Officers Mess' – Australian War Memorial



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

064925

Fort Largs Barracks Building, 1944 'AWM064925 Officers Mess - Australian War Memorial

NAME: Former 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall **PLACE NO.:** 26448



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

064926

Fort Largs Barracks Building, 1944 'AWM064926 Officers Mess' - Australian War Memorial



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

064932

Fort Largs Barracks Building, 1944 'AWM064932 Officers Mess' - Australian War Memorial

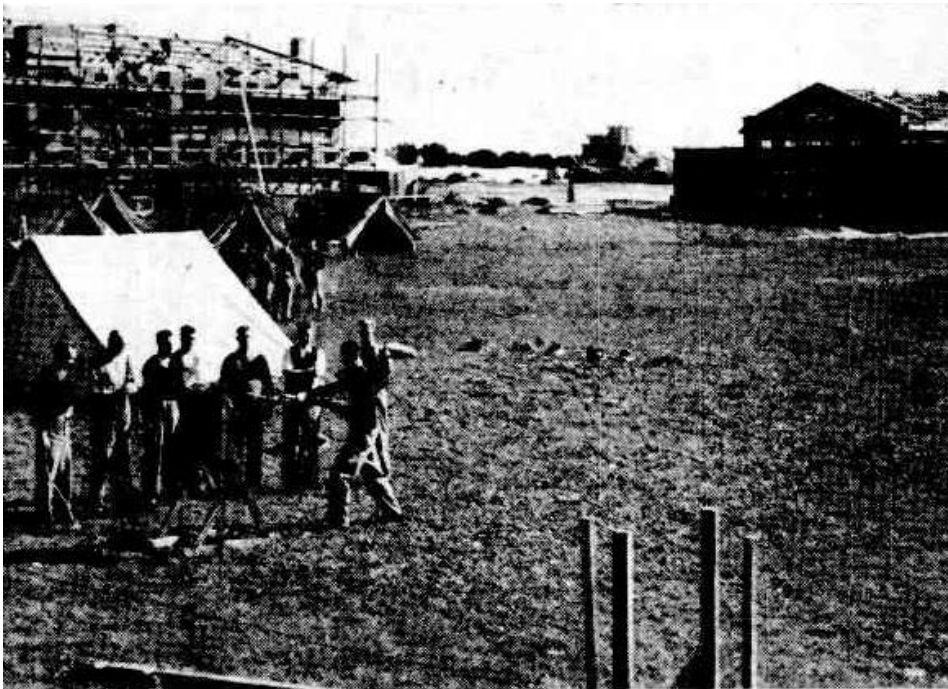
NAME: Former 1939 Fort Largs Barracks and Drill Hall **PLACE NO.:** 26448



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

080115

Fort Largs Barracks Building, 1944 'AWM064932 Officers Mess'- Australian War Memorial



Construction of Barracks and Drill Hall buildings – 1939 News 17 August 1939, p. 20