

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT

NAME: Norwood Primary School Soldiers
Memorial Obelisk

PLACE NO.: 26452

Address: 96 Beulah Road, Norwood, SA, 5067

1. BRIEF HISTORY OF NORWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL SOLDIERS MEMORIAL OBELISK

In July 1916, Headmaster Joseph Kennedy (1854-1940) began efforts to raise a memorial to the old scholars who had lost their lives, following heavy losses in World War One, including the severe wounding of his own son. Kennedy himself designed the obelisk, and raised funds with a scheme that has become known as 'Pennies for Bricks'. The school emphasised student participation in the obelisk's construction by having them lay the bricks. School staff, parents and locals likely undertook the more difficult and skilled tasks such as scaffolding, levelling the brickwork and so forth. The obelisk was rendered in 1918, but was never officially launched.

In building the memorial, Headmaster Kennedy skirted a War Precautions Act regulation that prohibited, from October 1916, appeals for monuments costing more than £25. The regulation was intended to direct all available funds towards funding the War. Nonetheless, at least forty places across Australia ignored the regulation, assuming the authorities would not prosecute such an activity.

2. DESCRIPTION

The Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk is a simple but handsome monument, four metres tall with four sides on a squared base. It has rendered brick construction and is painted white. Two plaques are affixed to its lower sides. One reads:

In memory of The Brave Lads who attended this school and who died for liberty and country in the Great War 1914 – 1918. Erected by the children of Norwood school and built with their own hands.

And the other reads:

In memory of former students, who attended this school and who died for liberty and country in World War II. 1939-1945. Lest We Forget.

The immediate surrounding area was later paved and enclosed by a short wall of an unknown date.

3. ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Comparability / Rarity / Representation:

How the Place compares with the quality of other similar places:

- entered in the South Australian Heritage Register
- entered in the heritage registers of jurisdictions of other Australian States

War memorials are well represented in South Australia's heritage registers, with sixty-one (61) registered war memorials, including twenty-five (25) entered in the South Australian Heritage Register, thirty-two (32) in lists of Local Heritage Places in Council Development Plans and four (4) listed as contributory places (ie located within Historic Conservation Areas). While the design and meaning of each memorial differs, the majority were originally erected in memory of those involved with World War One.

Nineteen (19) of twenty-five (25) war memorials entered in the South Australian Heritage Register originally relate to World War One. The form of these memorials is very diverse, including trees, avenues, large archways and gateways, buildings including a hospital and an institute, a bandstand, and a number of large or very large stone and/or bronze monuments. Most of these places are physically large, requiring significant capital investment. Most are dedicated to a wide group of people, such as the soldiers of South Australia, Australia or Australasia. Two exceptions of note are monuments to the Boer War in Williamstown (SHP #10291) and Jamestown (SHP #19042), which are of a scale similar to the Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk, but are from a period much less represented in the State. The Hamley Bridge Institute and Soldiers' Memorial (SHP #12997) also features a World War One obelisk similar to the nominated place, but it is part of a larger complex including the institute building and honour roll.

The Norwood Soldiers' Memorial (SHP #14149) is instructive on the heritage significance threshold of memorials in the South Australian Heritage Register. Similar to the Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk, the Norwood Soldiers' Memorial is dedicated to those who died in World War One service from the district. However, the monument, while also an obelisk, was architecturally designed, built in granite, and prominently heads a section of Osmond Terrace at Norwood. It was opened by his Excellency the Governor in 1923. This memorial was designed and continues to be recognised as a focal point for war remembrance activities in the area and is one of the more prominent of its kind in the State.

The Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk compares much better with memorials represented in lists of local heritage places in Council Development Plans. Almost the entire group of these memorials were started in memory of those serving in World War One. They tend to be a more modest scale and relate to those who served from the local area. There is a smaller range of design, mostly obelisks and pillars, arches, walls, plaques and military hardware. At least eight (8) of these places are of a very similar simple obelisk design and scale as the nominated memorial, which was common across Australia. Over half these places are columns of some kind. Most of

these memorials relate with the immediate local community.

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

Excluding honour rolls, obelisk memorials are the most common memorial type in Australia, the great majority of which were first raised in memory of World War One. The Returned and Services League (RSL) recognises 1,760 memorials in South Australia, many of which are understood to be obelisks relating with World War One. Modest World War One obelisks, such as that at the Norwood Primary School, are well represented in Adelaide and surrounds, including but not limited to those at Norton Summit, Carey Gully, Mount Barker, Marion and Morphett Vale. The Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk is not a distinguished example of its kind in South Australia.

The Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk is one (1) of at least forty (40) World War One memorials built in defiance of the 1916 War Precautions Act regulations, restricting appeals for monuments costing more than £25. While it is not known how many of these were constructed in South Australia, this aspect of the history of the nominated place cannot be understood to be rare, nor exemplar of its kind.

The nominated obelisk appears to be a rare example of a World War One memorial with funds raised through, and partly constructed by, school children. This aspect of the obelisk's history is important at the local level but not of exceptional interest or a notable part of the State's history.

World War One memorials at State public schools are not rare, with a number of honour rolls displayed by them. That a public school maintains a memorial obelisk is not an exceptional aspect of the history of the State's war memorials. South Australia (and Australia generally) did not have a centralised approach as to the 'appropriate' location of a war memorial. Most of the State's memorials were erected by individual groups or communities in their own preferred way. For instance, the Stirling East Primary School dedicated a grove of trees on the school grounds and created an honour roll in memory of past pupils who had enlisted in World War One. The memorial obelisk at Norwood Primary School is one of many examples of its kind with historical importance to local communities

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.

Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk is associated with World War One, an enormously important event in the history of Australia and that of South Australia. The Obelisk, however, is a reasonably common memorial to the War, replicated many times in towns and communities across South Australia. It is one (1) of at least forty (40) World War One memorials in Australia built in defiance of the 1916 War Precautions Act regulations.

The obelisk was designed by the school Headmaster, Joseph Kennedy, with money primarily raised through the school's students. The students played a prominent role in erecting the memorial, with assistance from school staff, parents and locals. World War One memorials were erected by local groups and communities throughout the State, each in their own preferred way. The erection of the Norwood Primary School Obelisk was fairly commonplace to the state at that time and did not play a prominent part in South Australia's history. The erection of the obelisk is important in a local context.

The Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk 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 Returned and Services League (RSL) recognises 1,760 memorials in South Australia, many of which are understood to be obelisks relating with World War One. The Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk is not considered to be rare uncommon or endangered.

There are a number of war memorials that have been constructed in or by South Australian schools, and the nominated obelisk is not uncommon in that respect. However there are few known examples of obelisks being erected on school grounds. The fact that it is an obelisk is not considered to demonstrate rare qualities of outstanding significance to the State. That a public school maintains a memorial obelisk is not an exceptional aspect of the State's history or of World War One memorialisation.

The Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk 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 Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk will not yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the State's history.

The Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk 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 Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk has a simple, handsome design, similar to many such memorials across South Australia. This Obelisk does not have design or historical characteristics that distinguish it as an outstanding representative of this group.

The Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk 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 Returned and Services League (RSL) records 1,760 memorials in South Australia, including honour boards. Obelisks were the most popular design of war memorial in the Australian landscape (excluding honour boards). They were relatively easy and cheap to construct, non-sectarian and readily recognisable as a symbol of death or glory. South Australia has a number of obelisk memorials to World War I, including at Norton Summit, Pinnaroo, Melrose, Terowie (with soldier standing atop), Tumby Bay, to name a few. The Norwood Primary School Soldiers

Memorial Obelisk's simple, handsome design, it typical of its kind in South Australia.

The Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk 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 Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk may have a strong association with the families of past students who lost their lives in World War One, past and current students, and members of the local community. This group is small in comparison with that of some other memorials that are the focus of State-wide or Regional remembrance.

The Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk 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 Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk is associated with the past staff, students and associated community of Norwood Primary School. This group has interest to the local area rather than to South Australia.

The Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk 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:

Files of the State Heritage Unit, DEWNR

Inglis, K. S. and Jan Brazier: *Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape* (The Miegunyah Press, Melbourne, 2008)

Norwood Public School, *Norwood Public School Jubilee* (c.1927)

Schumann, Denise (Compiled), *Pennies for Bricks: The Story of the Norwood Primary School Soldiers' Memorial Obelisk 1914-1918* (Norwood Public School, Norwood, 2011)

NAME: Norwood Primary School Soldiers
Memorial Obelisk

PLACE NO.: 26452

SITE RECORD:

FORMER NAME: Not Applicable

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE: 4 metre tall memorial obelisk to World War One

DATE OF COMPLETION: c.1918

REGISTER STATUS: **Description:** Nominated
Date: 8 April 2015

CURRENT USE: **Description:** Memorial
Dates: Not Applicable

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

ARCHITECT: **Name:** Joseph Kennedy
Dates: 1916

BUILDER: **Name:** Norwood Primary School
Dates: 1916-1918

SUBJECT INDEXING: **Group:** Monuments and memorials
Category: War memorial

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: **Description:** City of Norwood Payneham and
St. Peters

LOCATION: **Unit No.:** Not Applicable
Street No.: 96
Street Name: Beulah Road
Town/Suburb: Norwood
Post Code: 5067

NAME: Norwood Primary School Soldiers
Memorial Obelisk

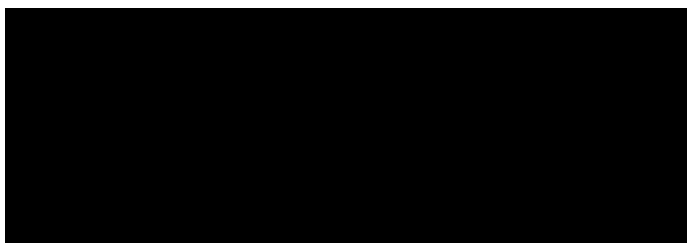
PLACE NO.: 26452

SITE RECORD (Cont.):

LAND DESCRIPTION:

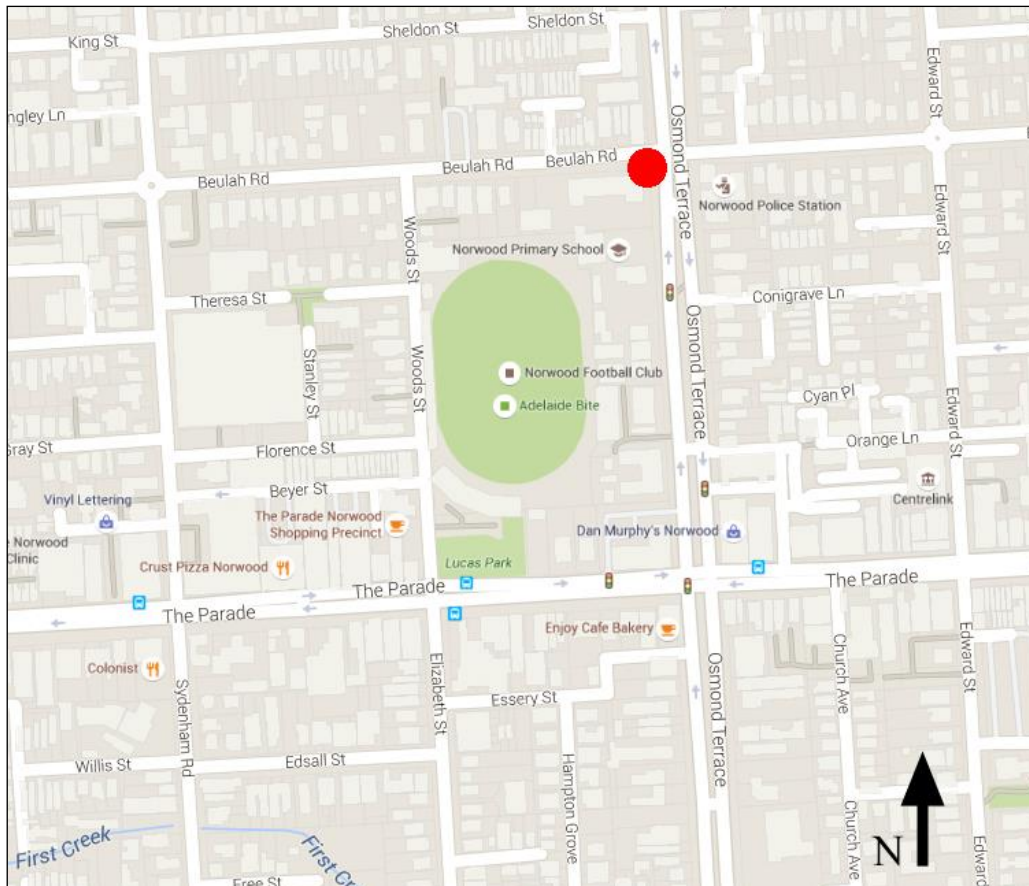
Title Type: CT
Volume: 5167
Folio: 694
Lot No.: 2
Section: Filed Plan 3710
Hundred: Adelaide

OWNER:



NAME: Norwood Primary School Soldiers
Memorial Obelisk

PLACE NO.: 26452



**Location of the Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk,
96 Beulah Road, Norwood (shown as a red dot)**

NAME: Norwood Primary School Soldiers
Memorial Obelisk

PLACE NO.: 26452



**Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk,
96 Beulah Road, Norwood (Looking west)**

NAME: Norwood Primary School Soldiers
Memorial Obelisk

PLACE NO.: 26452



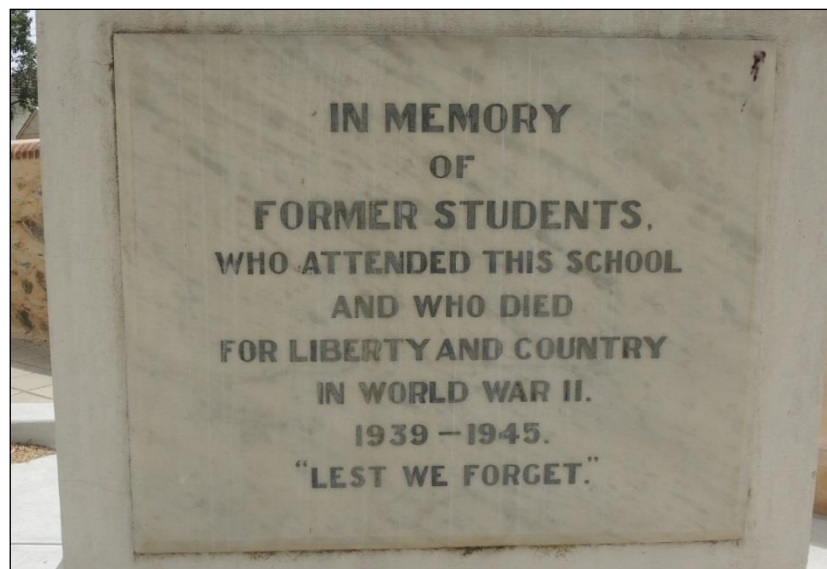
**Norwood Primary School Soldiers Memorial Obelisk,
96 Beulah Road, Norwood (Looking east)**

NAME: Norwood Primary School Soldiers
Memorial Obelisk

PLACE NO.: 26452



Plaque on the south side of the Norwood Primary School
Soldiers Memorial Obelisk, 96 Beulah Road, Norwood



Plaque on the south side of the Norwood Primary School
Soldiers Memorial Obelisk, 96 Beulah Road, Norwood