

Application for exclusion



Before you start

You are logged in with the below email address. Once you submit this form the below email address will be used for all future correspondence:



Please call Heritage Victoria to discuss your application prior to its lodgement

Telephone: (03) 7022 6390

Email: heritage.registrations@transport.vic.gov.au

What does exclusion from the Victorian Heritage Register mean?

Exclusion from the Victorian Heritage Register will result in a 5-year period during which Heritage Victoria will be unable to accept nominations for the place or object for the Victorian Heritage Register. For more information refer to the Heritage Victoria website.

Who can apply for an exclusion?

Exclusions can only be applied for by a government asset manager, a government Department Head, a public authority, or an Administrative Office Head when the application is in facilitation of a major development which costs at least \$5 million.

If you don't know whether you are able to make this application, please contact us on the above details.

Who can complete this form?

This form must be completed a person with an appropriate level of knowledge and experience in the identification and assessment of places, objects, or land in order to determine heritage significance or value, being a person with a relevant tertiary qualification and/or extensive relevant experience.

What is the fee for applying?

An application for exclusion requires a fee payment. For all fee details visit [Heritage Victorias's website](#)

Your details

Please confirm or update your details before proceeding.

First name Jackie

Last name Chen

Business or organisation name VIDA Rail

Position title Senior Planning and Environment Specialist

Contact number [REDACTED]

Please see the *Privacy collection statement* for information on how the details you provide will be used.

Contact details

Who is the applicant for this Exclusion Determination? The applicant is a government asset manager or public authority

Please provide the contact details for the person acting on behalf of the public authority / government asset manager for this application below.

Details for the government asset manager or public authority

Name of *Minister/*entity /*public authority Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority (VIDA)

***ABN/*ACN/*ARBN** 69 981 208 782

Position title Program Director, Integration and Interface - Sunshine Superhub Project

First name Andrew

Last name Pepplinkhouse

Email [REDACTED]

Contact number [REDACTED]

Postal address Level 9, 121 Exhibition Street

Suburb Melbourne

State VIC

Postcode 3000

Country Australia

I am also the owner of this place No

Owner or Government asset manager

First name	Mel
Last name	Saric
Business or organisation name	Hampshire Automotive Centre Pty Ltd
ABN	65 064 799 328
Position title	Director
Email	[REDACTED]
Contact number	[REDACTED]
Postal address	134 Hampshire Road
Suburb	Sunshine
State	Victoria
Postcode	3020
Country	Australia
Do you have other relevant contact details you want to provide us	No
The works involve common property	No

Pre-application details

Have you had a pre-application discussion with Heritage Victoria in relation to this application? No

Major development

Provide a brief description of the major development to which the application relates

The Sunshine Superhub Project (the Project) Project proposes major changes to the rail network around Sunshine Station to enable a rail line to Melbourne Airport and pave the way for electrification to Melton. These upgrades will untangle this complex section of the rail network between Albion Station and West Footscray Station, allowing future airport trains to travel through and preparing the station for future upgrades to increase train services for the growing communities of Melton and Wyndham Vale.

Estimated cost of the major development (\$)



Impact of major development on place or object

The project is likely to require the land the object is located on

Details of the place or object

Type

Object

Place or object details

Place or object name

Quonset Warehouse

Address

134 Hampshire Road, Sunshine

Responsible Authority

BRIMBANK CITY

Victorian Heritage Inventory number (if any)

National Trust reference number (if known)

Has the place or object previously been identified in a heritage study? If yes please give details.

The object has previously been assessed by Landmark Heritage on behalf of Council as meeting the threshold for local significance. Assessment attached.

Briefly describe the object/s and their nature

The object is described in the attached assessment by GJM Heritage.

If your application relates to an object or collection of objects, you will need to provide an inventory in the Supporting Documents. This must include the details below for each object including each object within a collection. Details required may include:

- Object name (if known)
- Object description
- Object dimensions (if known)
- Object location

Heritage Council criteria

Assessment of State-level significance

Include reasons why the place or object should not be included in the Heritage Register. These must be reasons based on the assessment criteria published by the Heritage Council. This means you must provide reasons why the place or object does not meet the threshold of State-level cultural heritage significance in relation to each of the criteria selected. For further information on the Heritage Council criteria and thresholds please refer to [their guidance](#).

CRITERION A	Criterion A is likely to be satisfied (but not necessarily at the State-level). See attached assessment by GJM Heritage.
CRITERION B	Criterion B is likely to be satisfied (but not necessarily at the State-level) See attached assessment by GJM Heritage.
CRITERION C	Criterion C is not likely to be satisfied. See attached assessment by GJM Heritage.
CRITERION D	Criterion D is likely to be satisfied (but not necessarily at the State-level). See attached assessment by GJM Heritage.
CRITERION E	Criterion E is not likely to be satisfied. See attached assessment by GJM Heritage.
CRITERION F	Criterion F is not likely to be satisfied. See attached assessment by GJM Heritage.
CRITERION G	Criterion G is not likely to be satisfied. See attached assessment by GJM Heritage.
CRITERION H	Criterion H is not likely to be satisfied. See attached assessment by GJM Heritage.

Other Information

Information in this section should demonstrate why the criteria selected for assessment are the relevant criteria. It should provide the evidence that supports the assessments. Information should be based on robust research and analysis. Exclusion determinations can be overturned if significant new information is identified.

Physical description

The Quonset Warehouse is a prefabricated building with curved roof form developed for use by the US military during World War II. The following description is taken from the Heritage Citation for the “Quonset Warehouse (Hampshire Panels), 134 Hampshire Road, Sunshine” prepared by Landmark Heritage for Brimbank Council, dated 4 October 2022: The Quonset warehouse-type hut is situated on the east side of Hampshire Road, adjacent to the new Sunshine Railway Station and the overpass over the railway line. The site is paved, to allow for the display of parked cars, and surrounded by a high chain-link fence that allows clear views into the site. The site is surrounded by roads on three sides, making the building a prominent element of this intersection with views to all

elevations. The warehouse has the semi-cylindrical, bow-roofed form typical of the Quonset hut. It is clad in corrugated steel – installed with the corrugations vertical to the two end walls. The bow roof has horizontal sheets to the bottom two-thirds of the walls, with curved sheets in a vertical orientation on the top – a typical configuration for Quonset warehouses. At the crest of the roof is a row of whirly-bird metal ventilators. The building has a long, rectangular plan of about 13 by 31 metres. The north end wall has a central vehicular door clad in corrugated steel, set between two horizontal-format steel windows (each with eight lights). The rear (south) end wall has a similar arrangement of openings, but the windows have been covered over. This configuration of openings, as well as the eight-light steel windows, corresponds to the original configuration of Quonset warehouses, as seen in the c1954 Charles Pratt aerial photo (see History). The join between the end walls and the bow roof is covered with a crimped metal flashing. There are a number of skillion-roof additions to the east and west sides of the warehouse. The addition on the west side is finished in render. On the east side there is a gable-roofed projection allowing for a large roller door. Beside it is a small gabled office extension. Both are clad in corrugated steel. Details see attached assessment by GJM Heritage.

History of the place or object

Prior to World War II From the construction of the railway line between Melbourne and Sandhurst (Bendigo) in the 1850s, the area now known as Sunshine (previously known as Braybrook Junction) has its development inextricably linked to the railway. When the line to Ballarat and Western Victoria opened in 1889, Braybrook Junction became the junction of this new line and the existing northern line to Bendigo. The meeting of these two lines, along with the provision of a direct route to Williamstown Pier, saw Braybrook Junction develop into one of Victoria's busiest railway junctions and an industrial centre from the late 1880s. Local industry was consolidated in the early twentieth century by H V McKay who established his Combine 'Sunshine' Harvester Factory and industrial complex on 21 acres (8.5 hectares) east of the railway corridor (VHR H0667). Early development around the turn of the century was gathering pace east of the railway corridor and station – spurred on by H V McKay's factory establishment – while development west of the railway had mostly yet to occur. Prior to the construction of the overpass, Hampshire Road crossed the railway at-grade, just north of the station platforms (west of the railway corridor, now part of City Place) and immediately south of the Sunshine Railway Signal Box (HO39; Brimbank PS). Commercial activity in Sunshine was initially centred on Hampshire Road in the vicinity of the railway level crossing where 18 shops had been constructed by the late 1920s.³⁵ South of the commercial precinct, the 1930s Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Plan indicates that no development had taken place between the goods platform and siding of the railway complex and Hampshire Road. World War II and postwar development During World War II and prior to the relocation of the two Quonset warehouses to Hampshire Road, local press reporting and aerial imagery suggests the land beside the railway at this location remained vacant³⁶. The land, close to the goods platform, was owned by the Victorian Railways. It is unclear when the pair of Quonset warehouses were relocated to Sunshine: the 1945 aerial photograph indicates the site was vacant; however by 1954 an aerial photograph shows both warehouses in situ. A significant change in the immediate vicinity of the site occurred with the construction of the Hampshire Road overpass, which formed part of the works to bring a standard gauge railway into Melbourne from the north, opening for goods traffic on 3 January 1962³⁷. An aerial photograph of the overpass in 1962 shows one of the Quonset warehouses had been removed from Hampshire Road by this time, leaving the extant Quonset Warehouse. No evidence has been found to indicate the former use of the Quonset Warehouse or its location of origin. Additions extending east and west from the northern end of the warehouse have been constructed, the most recent in early 2013³⁸. Details see attached assessment by GJM Heritage.

Comparative analysis

The Quonset Warehouse is one of a large number of prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts and warehouses imported and repurposed in the early postwar period when Australia was experiencing high demand for accommodation and shortages of materials due to World War II. Initially principally used to house the substantial number of post-war arrivals into Australia, large

numbers of these huts were soon relocated and repurposed for other uses. Over time many of these structures have been dismantled or demolished while others have been altered – sometimes substantially – to accommodate new uses. While a number of examples of variable integrity and intactness continue to exist, it is clear that their numbers overall have declined significantly. While acknowledging that prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts are a diminishing building typology, some examples remain highly intact to clearly illustrate the form and function of this building typology. Of particular note are those that are retained in their wartime or immediate post-war location, including the huts remaining at the Former Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel (VHR H2190), Beersheba Barracks (HO1; Wangaratta PS, Commonwealth Government land), the Former Army Radio Station (HO49; Melton PS) and the Former Ararat Migrant Hostel (HO1; Ararat PS). These structures allow the particular military and post-war immigration history of Victoria to be readily understood. In addition, other highly intact examples remain to illustrate the theme of the reuse of these structures for various purposes from the late 1940s, including the Victorian Railway Institute Building (HO22 – Wycheproof Township Heritage Precinct; Buloke PS) and the Former Our Lady of the Ark, Morningside Commune (No HO, Mitchell Shire). In contrast, the Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine falls within the tranche of buildings that remain legible as prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts, but whose specific history is unknown and which have been subject to a level of alteration that has impacted their original form. These buildings are generally included in the Heritage Overlay of the relevant planning scheme, such as the Former Scout Hall (HO335; Moonee Valley PS), 15th Essendon Sea Scout Complex (HO405; Moonee Valley PS) or St Albans Community Hall Youth Club / Tin Shed (HO103; Brimbank PS). Details see attached assessment by GJM Heritage.

You can view recent Heritage Council decisions through [Austlii](#).

Aboriginal cultural heritage values (where known)

Who are the traditional Aboriginal owners of this place or object?

Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation

Does this place or object have Aboriginal cultural heritage values in addition to non-Aboriginal cultural heritage values (shared values)?

No

Note: If the place or object is of cultural heritage significance only on the grounds of its association with Aboriginal tradition, Aboriginal traditional use, or Aboriginal archaeology, it may be appropriate for registration in the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register. Please contact [First Peoples – State Relations](#)

Key sources See attached assessment by GJM Heritage.

Condition of the place or object

Condition	Fair
Is there any damage to the fabric (the materials from which the place or object is made)?	Yes
Please specify which materials and the extent of damage:	No inspection of the object has been undertaken. Openings have been made into the sides of the structure. Details see attached assessment by GJM Heritage.

Intactness and integrity

How much of the original form or appearance remains?	The Quonset Warehouse is a substantially intact example of a prefabricated semi-cylindrical military hut dating from World War II. Additions and openings have been made to the east (prior to 2009, possibly c.2008) and west elevations (early 2013) of the northern end of the building, along with other insertions for ventilation and other services; however, these do not diminish the overall legibility of the curved, semi-cylindrical form, which is the key characteristic of this type of building. Details see attached assessment by GJM Heritage.
What alterations are present and why was the place or object altered?	Additions and openings have been made to the east (prior to 2009, possibly c.2008) and west elevations (early 2013) of the northern end of the building, along with other insertions for ventilation and other services; however, these do not diminish the overall legibility of the curved, semi-cylindrical form, which is the key characteristic of this type of building. Details see attached assessment by GJM Heritage.
Have the changes or alterations affected the heritage value of the place or object?	While the building has undergone some changes, the ability to understand and appreciate the object as a representative example of a prefabricated semi-cylindrical military hut of the type developed and used by British and American armed forces during World War I and World War II remains clearly legible. Details see attached assessment by GJM Heritage.

Supporting documents

You must provide all required documents before submitting your application

Cost of works SSP Quonset Warehouse - Cost Plan.pdf

Declarations

I state that the information I have given on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge.

I declare that the application has been made to facilitate the development or delivery of a project where the cost of the project is no less than \$5 million.

Privacy statement

Heritage Victoria is a branch of the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP). Heritage Victoria is committed to protecting personal information provided by you in accordance with the principles of the Victorian privacy laws. The information you provide, and anything provided in relation to this process or any subsequent decision pertaining to the site card, will be used for the following purposes:

- correspond with you about your application
- to inform Heritage Victoria in making a recommendation or a decision as to the matter.
- the material may be made available to the public through a public notice process as required under the Heritage Act 2017, to the Heritage Council of Victoria for use in a public hearing, or to the Minister for Planning in making a determination.
- to provide information about the site card, including the initial application and subsequent regulation of that site card, where requested by successive owners of the property or consultants engaged in relation to the property

Your contact details may be used by DTP or its contracted service providers under confidentiality agreements to survey you about your experience with DTP.

The information you provide may be made available to:

- any person who may wish to inspect your proposal until the process is concluded. In this instance, the 'process' includes not only the current site card application but also any further aspects of Heritage Victoria regulation under this site card process.
- relevant officers in DTP, other Government agencies or Ministers directly involved in the heritage process.

If all requested information is not received, DTP is unable to process your request.

You may access the information you have provided to DTP by contacting heritage.victoria@transport.vic.gov.au

STATE-LEVEL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT:

QUONSET WAREHOUSE

134 HAMPSHIRE ROAD, SUNSHINE



Figure 1. Quonset Warehouse, 134 Hampshire Road, Sunshine, northeast oblique view (GJM Heritage, November 2025).

DATE: 10 January 2026

FILE: 2025-048

QUONSET WAREHOUSE, 134 HAMPSHIRE ROAD, SUNSHINE

INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Level Crossing Removal Project, AECOM GHD Joint Venture Technical Advisory Services has engaged GJM Heritage to prepare a state-level heritage assessment of the Quonset Warehouse at 134 Hampshire Road in Sunshine. The assessment has been prepared to inform decision-making in respect of the Sunshine Superhub Project.

The Quonset Warehouse is a prefabricated building with curved roof form developed for use by the US military during World War II. The Quonset Warehouse was one of a pair relocated to Hampshire Road by 1954, surplus to Commonwealth Government requirements and one of many prefabricated semi-cylindrical military buildings imported into Australia during the early postwar period. By the end of the 1950s one warehouse had been removed and the site was occupied by a used car business, which continued in the decades that followed. The Quonset Warehouse is currently occupied by a panel beating business.

The Quonset Warehouse was recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay of the Brimbank Planning Scheme; however, in June 2025, the Department of Transport and Planning, under delegation, removed the place from the authorisation of Planning Scheme Amendment C219brim, which sought (in part) to include the warehouse in the Heritage Overlay.

This assessment considers whether the Quonset Warehouse is likely to meet the threshold of state-level heritage significance and inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). It is noted that should an Exclusion Determination for the building under s.36A of the *Heritage Act 2017* be made, this report may be used for the purpose of seeking such an application and that Heritage Victoria will publish this assessment on its website alongside any Exclusion Determination issued for the required statutory period.

This assessment considers the Quonset Warehouse as an object as it is a pre-fabricated, relocatable building whose history and potential significance is not linked specifically to the land on which it is located.

Limitation

It is noted that internal access to the Quonset Warehouse was not available to inform this assessment. As such, the extent of openings into the east and west sides of the structure are unknown.

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Object Type: Prefabricated semi-cylindrical military building	Architect: Otto Brandenberger (Head Designer), Robert McDonnell, Tomasino Secondino & Dominic Urgo at George A Fuller Company, for the US Navy Department
Construction Date: c1941-c1945 (Quonset warehouse); c1945-1954 (relocation to current site)	Builder: Unknown, a number of construction firms were contracted by the US Navy to manufacture Quonset huts and their design variants

ASSESSMENT FINDING

Developed during World War II for use by the United States of America (US) military, the Quonset hut was based on the prefabricated semi-cylindrical design of the Nissen hut first used by the British in World War I. Variations of prefabricated semi-cylindrical huts were developed, based on wartime requirements, including the larger Quonset warehouse form. At the conclusion of World War II, prefabricated military huts which had become surplus to British and American military requirements in the south-pacific area were sold and imported into Australia, in particular to provide temporary shelter for a large number of postwar migrants entering the country. In migrant reception centres these buildings were replaced over time by permanent structures and the huts were subsequently relocated and adapted for other uses, including industrial, agricultural and community uses during a time of significant materials shortages.

Given the history of the importation and subsequent reuse of these structures, it is almost impossible to know how many continue to exist in Victoria. This assessment seeks to identify those that continue to remain based on available records; however, it is unlikely to be a complete list. It is clear that the number of these structures that remain extant is declining, with the number of those remaining substantially intact being more limited.

The particular provenance of the Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine is also unknown. It is unclear whether it was used within a migrant reception centre or for another Commonwealth Government use prior to its erection in Sunshine. It is also noted that the Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine has been subject to alteration, including openings and additions to the east and west at the northern end of the building.

Given the level of alteration, combined with the lack of specific historical background, it is our assessment that Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine does not meet the state-level threshold for inclusion in the VHR. It is acknowledged that prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts are a diminishing building typology with only limited numbers now remaining in Victoria; however, other extant examples appear to remain more highly intact to clearly illustrate the form and function of this building typology. Of particular note are those that are retained in their wartime or immediate post-war location, including the huts remaining at the Former Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel (VHR H2190), Beersheba Barracks (HO1; Wangaratta PS, Commonwealth Government land), the Former Army Radio Station (HO49; Melton PS) and the Former Ararat Migrant Hostel (HO1; Ararat PS). These structures allow the particular military and post-war immigration history of Victoria to be more readily understood. In addition, other more highly intact examples remain to illustrate the theme of the reuse of these structures for various purposes from the late 1940s, including the Victorian Railway Institute Building (HO22 – Wycheproof Township Heritage Precinct; Buloke PS) and the Former Our Lady of the Ark, Morningside Commune (No HO, Mitchell Shire).

The Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine falls within the tranche of buildings that remain legible as prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts, but which have been subject to a level of alteration that has impacted their original form and/or where their particular history of use is unknown. These buildings are generally included in the Heritage Overlay of the relevant planning scheme, such as the Former Scout Hall (HO335; Moonee Valley PS), 15th Essendon Sea Scout Complex (HO405; Moonee Valley PS) or St Albans Community Hall Youth Club / Tin Shed (HO103; Brimbank PS).

CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

Use of prefabricated semi-cylindrical huts during World War I and II

With the mass mobilisation of troops following the proclamations of World Wars I and II came the need to accommodate troops at scale. Existing barracks were not up to the task, it was difficult to adapt existing buildings for the purposes required, and tents did not provide adequate shelter from the elements, particularly in the European winter.¹ In response the Nissen hut was designed by Major Peter Norman Nissen in 1916, while serving with the British Royal Engineers. The Nissen hut was formed of a semi-cylindrical steel-framed hut clad in vertically orientated, overlapping sheets of 26-gauge corrugated galvanised iron, the ends typically infilled with timber. It was designed to be portable and to make economic use of available materials.² The prefabricated huts spanned 16ft (4.8m) or 24ft (7.3m) wide and could be extended lengthways as required. The Nissen hut was deployed to bases around the world for a range of military uses including accommodation, storage, field hospitals, mess halls, communication stations or training of soldiers.³ The prefabricated manufacture, replicability and ease of assembly saw variations on the original design emerge, of which the Romney hut was one such example. Developed by the British during World War II, the Romney was larger than the Nissen hut with a span measuring 35ft (10.7m) wide and 96ft (29.3m) long, which could be joined together to form a large warehouse, recreation halls for soldiers, workshops or aeroplane hangars⁴.

During World War I, Nissen huts were in use in France (Figure 4, below) and Britain, where Australians would have first been acquainted with these structures. Nissen huts were again encountered by Australians fighting overseas in World War II, where they were used extensively for the armed air forces, so members of the RAF and RAAF in particular would have been familiar with their use.⁵ Nissen was given credit for the design of the hut, which he patented in a number of countries including the United Kingdom, United States, New Zealand, Australia Canada, Russia, Argentina, South Africa, France and Belgium. The Government of the United Kingdom went on to sell the huts to other countries, with consent or compensation to Nissen.⁶ Between World War I and World War II, and prior to his death in 1930, Nissen attempted to sell the design as a means to house workers cheaply, however there was little interest at this time.⁷

Preparations for potential involvement of the US in World War II commenced in 1937 under President Franklin D Roosevelt. This included the construction of additional air bases, including one at Quonset Point in Rhode Island.⁸ Following the entry of US troops in World War II in response to the surprise aerial bombing attack by Japanese forces at Pearl Harbour, Hawaii, the US quickly mobilised both in Europe and the Pacific. Making use of available materials and technology, the US military saw the need to design a standardised, prefabricated building to go into mass production, providing support facilities for the US Navy which would require supplies, repair, hospital and training facilities in temporary bases around the world.⁹ In summary:

¹ Iain Stuart, 'The Diffusion of the Quonsets to Australia (1942-1948)', *CHS Newsletter* (2005), 12-14.

² Ian Innes, 'Unloved modern', *Museums of History NSW* [website], published 5 December 2022, <https://mhns.wa.gov.au/stories/conservation/unloved-modern/>; accessed 20 November 2025; Stuart, 'The Diffusion of the Quonsets to Australia'.

³ Iain Stuart, 'Of the hut I bolted: A preliminary account of prefabricated semi-cylindrical huts in Australia'. *Historic Environment*, Volume 19, Number 1 (2005).

⁴ Stuart, 'The Diffusion of the Quonsets to Australia'.

⁵ Stuart, 'Of the hut I bolted'.

⁶ Fred Mc Cosh, *Nissen of the Huts* (BD Publishing, 1997), in *Quonset Hut: Metal Living for a Modern Age*, ed Julie Decker and Chris Chiei (Princeton Architectural Press, 2005), 6.

⁷ Stuart, 'The Diffusion of the Quonsets to Australia'.

⁸ Chris Chiei, 'How the hut came to be', Chapter 1 in *Quonset Hut: Metal Living for a Modern Age*, ed Julie Decker and Chris Chiei (Princeton Architectural Press, 2005).

⁹ Stuart, 'The Diffusion of the Quonsets to Australia'.

*These buildings would need to be designed for mass production, able to be portable, erected and knocked down quickly and easily, adaptable to any climate and geography, and provide soldiers with the most protection and comfort possible.*¹⁰

The need to establish US Navy bases in Scotland and Northern Ireland – in areas depleted of the necessary building resources – initially provided the rationale for developing the Quonset hut.¹¹ The George A Fuller Company, based in West Davisville, Rhode Island, was contracted by the US Navy to design and manufacture a prefabricated military hut to the Navy’s specifications within two months. A team led by architect Otto Brandenberger promptly commenced work on the design. Quonset Point in Rhode Island was the chosen location for manufacturing a new semi-cylindrical military hut. Taking its name from the place of manufacture, a 1941 memo approved the name ‘Quonset hut’ “in order to avoid possible difficulties, which might arise over the continued use of the designation ‘Nissen’ Huts, in view of existing patents”¹². The Quonset hut:

*... was an example of the potential of new materials and innovative production techniques that were being advanced as a part of the war effort and that were also inspiring architects and designers... building professionals were encouraged to develop ideas and make proposals that used this new knowledge and capitalized on America’s rapidly expanding industrial capacity.*¹³

Based on the design and bearing similarities to the half-cylindrical curved roof form of the British Nissen hut and making use of Nissen’s T-section rib and hook bolt design, the American version had a span of 16ft (4.8m) and came in two lengths, 20ft (6.1m) or 36ft (11.0m). The Quonset hut was formed of curved corrugated metal sheets attached to curved metal T-section steel ribs and, unlike the Nissen hut, was supported by a raised metal frame above a plywood floor.¹⁴ This was to be the first of many redesigns of the Quonset hut as World War II progressed. Contractors for the US Navy would go on to manufacture a total of 8,400 Quonset huts to the initial design specifications (which came to be known as the T-Rib Quonset, Figure 6 below).¹⁵ To increase the amount of usable interior space, an early redesign introduced 4ft (1.2m) vertical side walls, while keeping the arched roof form, reduced from three to two sections which reduced the time required in assembly.¹⁶

Of the various types of huts based on the original T-rib Quonset hut design (Figure 6), the ‘Pacific Hut’ made use of a timber rather than steel frame. Steel was a critical material to the armed forces and the use of timber avoided diverting steel from other wartime uses as well as avoiding the issues of rust in the tropics and cold temperature migration in the Arctic bases.¹⁷

In 1943 the last major redesign of the Quonset hut, the ‘Stran Steel Quonset’ made use of a Stran-steel lightweight framing system, requiring less materials in manufacture and resulting in a lighter Quonset hut overall, even with an increase in size. The Steel Stran Quonset came in two sizes, 20ft (6.1m) by 40ft (12.2m) and 20ft (6.1m) by 56ft (17.1m) and was manufactured by the Great Lakes Steel Corporation in Detroit, Michigan. Established in the 1930s, the company provided lightweight steel framing for high-end homes.¹⁸ In the Homes of Tomorrow exhibit at Chicago’s World Fair of 1933, the ‘Good Housekeeping-Stran-Steel House’ was billed as “the home of a new era” and

¹⁰ Chiei, ‘How the hut came to be’, 3.

¹¹ Stuart, ‘The Diffusion of the Quonsets to Australia’.

¹² Chiei, ‘How the hut came to be’, 13.

¹³ Brian Carter, ‘War, Design and Weapons of Mass Construction’, Chapter 3 in Julie Decker and Chris Chiei (eds), in *Quonset Hut: Metal Living for a Modern Age*, ed Julie Decker and Chris Chiei (Princeton Architectural Press, 2005), 50.

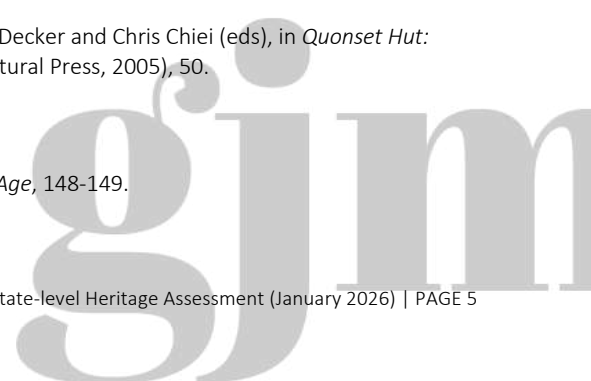
¹⁴ Stuart, ‘Of the hut I bolted’.

¹⁵ Stuart, ‘The Diffusion of the Quonsets to Australia’.

¹⁶ Chiei, ‘How the hut came to be’.

¹⁷ Decker and Chiei, ‘Appendix: Hut Types’, *Quonset Hut: Metal Living for a Modern Age*, 148-149.

¹⁸ Chiei, ‘How the hut came to be’.



illustrated how the lightweight steel framing system “could be more flexible than wood, lighter, and twice as strong”¹⁹.

Utilising the lighter weight design and providing a larger interior space, the Quonset warehouse was manufactured with a span 40ft (12.2m) wide and 100ft (30.4m) long. There were 11,800 Quonset warehouses manufactured to these dimensions during World War II. A larger version of the Quonset warehouse or ‘Utility Building’ was required for large, advanced based supply functions at US bases and this was made of multiple-arch-unit warehouses, the ribs of which were exposed and a large bank of windows provided light along both walls.²⁰ These were often referred to as ‘Elephant Houses’ or, in Australia, ‘SAAR Huts’ (possibly a reference to ‘Stran Steel Arched Hut’)²¹.

Other prefabricated military huts were also manufactured, including the ‘P1’ hut in Australia; however, these were not semi-cylindrical huts.²²

Wartime use in the Asia-Pacific region and Australia

The battle fronts fought by the British and its Empire in World War I were far from Australia and the South Pacific. In World War II the British committed troops to its imperial outposts – including the Asia-Pacific region – following Japanese attacks on British and American positions. However, with the fall of Hong Kong, Malaya, Singapore, Burma, Borneo and other British territories, attention turned back to the British Isles and the fight with Germany. With the battle fronts being fought elsewhere, no evidence suggests that prior to the end of World War II Nissen huts had made their way to Australia during hostilities for military use.²³

Prior to World War II, the US military had relied on local labour to construct and provide defence for American bases in locations outside of the contiguous United States. These civilians received no military training, were unarmed and – prohibited by international law – unable to fight should a conflict arise. The need for prefabricated military buildings which could be manufactured in the United States, exported around the world, and assembled by troops became more urgent as the Imperial Japanese Army advanced through the Pacific, killing local workers at US bases at Wake Island in the North Pacific, Cavite Island in the Philippines, and in Guam.²⁴

Following the Japanese air raid on Pearl Harbour in 1941, US troops were deployed to bases throughout the Asia-Pacific, from Alaska in the North Pacific to Australia and the South Pacific Islands (Figure 8). With the southwards advance of the Imperial Japanese Army, by 1942 it was becoming apparent to US military leaders that the war may be fought on Australian soil. In support of the US, the Australian Army provided what materials and labour was available to establish US bases in the north of Australia as well as repair and maintenance dock facilities (in Brisbane, Sydney and Fremantle) and air bases (Brisbane and Perth) further south. Material shortages were hampering US base construction in Australia, The Seebies (based at ‘Camp Seabee’ in Brisbane) were tasked with constructing storage warehouses and huts to support US and allied forces engaged in the battle fronts further north. In 1942 the naval headquarters had relocated from Melbourne to Brisbane, closer to the battle fronts in the region.²⁵

As 1942 was drawing to a close, at the naval headquarters in Brisbane:

¹⁹ *The Good Housekeeping Stran-Steel House, Chicago World's Fair 1933* [postcard], reproduced in ‘History of Cold Formed Steel’, Don Allen, *Structure Magazine*, November 2006, 28, <https://www.marekbros.com/sites/default/files/C-BB-History-AllenLowndes-Nov06.pdf>; accessed 21 November 2025.

²⁰ Stuart, ‘The Diffusion of the Quonsets to Australia’.

²¹ Stuart, ‘Of the hut I bolted’.

²² Victorian Heritage Database, Place ID 196487 – *Former Benalla Migrant Camp, 1 & 57 Samaria Road, Benalla, Benalla Rural City* (VHD H2358), 19 May 2016.

²³ Stuart, ‘Of the hut I bolted’.

²⁴ Chie, ‘How the hut came to be’.

²⁵ United States Government Navy Department Library, ‘Bases in the Southwest Pacific’, *Building the Navy's bases in World War II; history of the Bureau of Yards and Docks and the Civil Engineer Corps, 1940-1946*, Part III, Chapter 26 (U.S. Government Printer, 1947), 280, <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/b/building-the-navys-bases/buidling-navys-bases-vol-2-chapter-26.html>; accessed 24 November 2025.

... the Seabees built an advance base construction depot, containing 90,000 square feet of warehouse space and 53 acres of open storage; established a naval magazine at the mine depot by erecting 52 storage huts, 20 by 50 feet.²⁶

Based on these measurements it is possible these were 'Armco' huts, often used for storage. In addition to these storage huts:

Mobile Hospital 9 arrived at Brisbane with sufficient prefabricated buildings to set up 500 beds; it was later expanded to accommodate 1,000 beds, and subsequently 3,000. All buildings were of prefabricated metal, with the exception of a storehouse, theater-recreation building, laundry, and a sewage pumphouse, and the power plant. All construction was performed by Seabees, with the assistance of station personnel.²⁷

A naval magazine approximately 70km from Townsville was completed on 23 August 1943 and this, along with two hospitals established in the area, made use of Quonset huts. The base was dismantled in July 1944 and materials shipped out to where they were required. Records indicate Quonset huts or warehouses were in use at US Naval bases set up in Darwin, Cairns and Palm Island near Townsville, and there may have been others in Australia.²⁸

During World War II, there were several types of standardised military huts in use by the military in Australia, including the semi-cylindrical wooden 'Bow Hut' another made of 'Fibrolite' and the larger 'Armco Hut' with a span 60ft (18.3m) wide and 100ft (30.5m) long, among others.²⁹

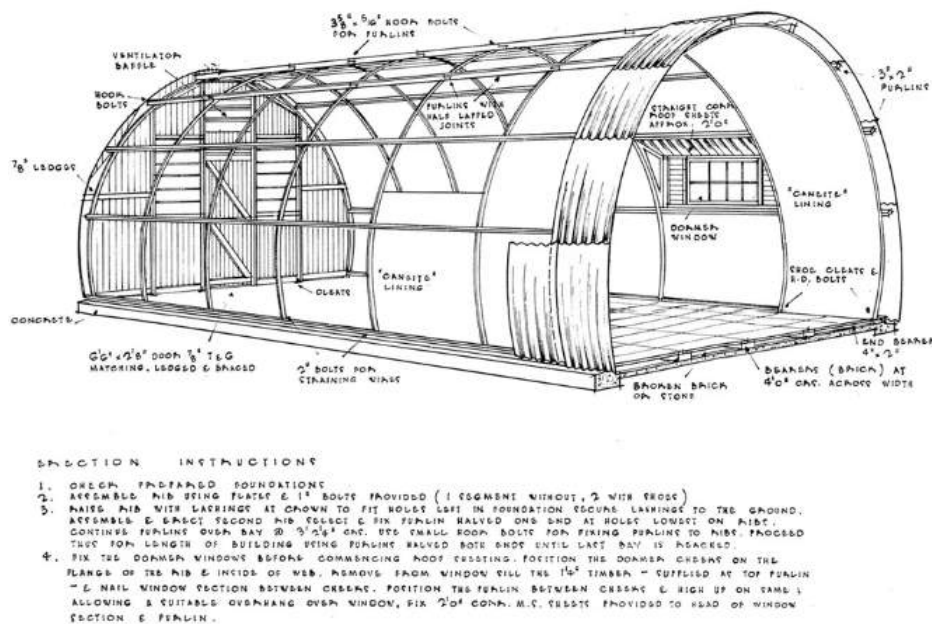


Figure 2. 16-foot span Nissen hutting, perspective view showing general construction. (Source: Department of Works and Housing, Commonwealth of Australia, 1943; reproduced in 'Unloved Modern', Museums of History NSW, 2022)

26 US Navy Department Library, 'Bases in the Southwest Pacific'.
 27 US Navy Department Library, 'Bases in the Southwest Pacific', 281.
 28 Stuart, 'The Diffusion of the Quonsets to Australia'.
 29 Stuart, 'Of the hut I bolted'.



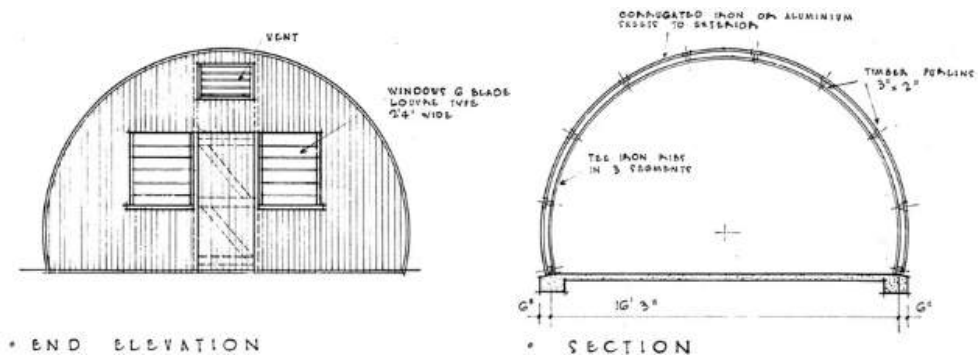


Figure 3. Specification of Work – Nissen Huts 16' and 24' spans Erection Diagrams and Specification Notes. (Source: Department of Works and Housing, Commonwealth of Australia, 1943; reproduced in 'Unloved Modern', Museums of History NSW, 2022)



Figure 4. Group portrait of the members of the transport section of 3 Squadron, Australian Flying Corps, in front of a Nissen hut, Villers-Bretonneux, France, 1918. (Source: National Library of Australia, Bib ID 4902598)



Figure 5. Interior of a Nissen hut in London, which was lived in by the airmen of the RAAF and RAF, c.1943. (Source: Australian War Memorial, Accession Number P10140.012)

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P10140.012



Appendix: Hut Types



1. QUONSET HUT - T-RIB
 16' x 36 and 16' x 20
 The original Quonset hut, which came to be known as the T-Rib Quonset, was developed in response to the Navy's desire to produce a new prefabricated hut system during World War II to shelter troops abroad. At Quonset Point, Rhode Island, George A. Fuller and his design team, under the direction of Otto Hunselberger, created the T-Rib Quonset, an adaptable building for mass production that would be portable, erected and knocked down quickly and easily, adaptable to any climate and geography, and provide soldiers with the most protection and comfort possible.



2. QUONSET HUT - REDESIGN
 16' x 30 and 28' x 50
 The basic strategy of the Quonset Redesign was to keep the footprint of the T-Rib design but to introduce a lighter I-shaped steel arch with four-foot vertical sidewalls. The new arch, assembled in two sections instead of three, reduced erection time and required fewer fasteners. More impor-

tantly, counter-weight equipment could now be installed close to the wall without any residual loss of floor space.



3. QUONSET STRAIN-STEEL HUT
 20' x 48 and 20' x 56
 The third and final generation of the Quonset hut was produced by Strain-Steel of Detroit, Michigan. This design reverted back to the full arch profile and used many of the same structural components as the Redesign, but now appeared lighter, thinner, or painted to greater spans. Initially introduced with corrugated panels, similar to the T-Rib, it was later modified to use the factory-curved panels only at the ridge. The remaining sidewall and end wall panels were zoned with corrugated metal oriented in the opposite direction.



4. PACIFIC HUT
 18'-6" x 37'-4"
 Frank Habbe, a mechanical engineer who later formed the Pacific Hut Company in Seattle, took blueprints of his all-wood Quonset design, the Pacific hut, to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in summer of 1942. It was designed to overcome the major short-

coming of the Quonset: its all-steel construction. Steel was not only a critical material during the war but also rusted quickly in the tropics and, in the Arctic, permitted cold temperature migration across metal structures. Wood structures greatly reduce thermal transfer. The Pacific hut is easily recognizable by the celotex, a waterproof form of masonite, exterior and the triangular ridgeless vent cover.



5. BUTLER HUT
 16' x multiple of 4 and 24' x multiple of 4
 Developed by the Butler Manufacturing Company of Kansas City, Missouri, the Butler hut was an all-steel arched hut—profile slightly more than half a circle—with U-shaped arched ribs around an eight-foot radius. End walls were framed with steel and end walls and sidewalls were enclosed with two-foot-wide standing seam metal sheets. Not long after World War II, however, Butler abandoned the curved-roof approach, although they still produce metal prefabricated buildings today with gabled roofs.



6. JAMESWAY
 16' x multiple of 4 and 20' x multiple of 4
 The James Manufacturing Company of Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, created a version of the Quonset hut with wooden ribs and an insulated fabric covering for the Army Air Corps. This portable and easy-to-assemble hut was designed for Arctic weather conditions when personnel were wearing bulky clothing and mittens but needed shelter construction to process quickly. Insulated blankets in four-foot-wide lengths were made with glass fiber insulation faced with flame-proof mastic and enclosed in plastic-treated olexin that was water, vermin, and fire proof. The hardware (nails, fasteners, and connecting bars) was the only metal component, and the whole package weighed 1,200 pounds for a 16' x 16' hut. Its wooden packing crates were designed in reverse as the hut floor.



7. ARMCO HUT
 20' x 50
 During World War II, the Armco International Corporation of Middletown, Ohio, produced arched corrugated iron bunkers, ammunition magazines, and personnel shelters. The heavy steel buildings were modeled on earth-shaking structures

such as culverts and storm sewers. The heavy iron (8- to 14-gauge) had an I-beam supporting ribs that were curved and corrugated much like a Quonset hut. Arrows were strong enough to be completely buried in up to six feet of dirt.



8. FORTABEE HUT
 18' x 37
 The Fortabee hut, frequently used along the Alaska Highway and CANAL pipeline, is a Canadian version of the wood-framed, plywood-clad structure. These huts were shipped in prefabricated sections, could be erected quickly, and were heated with impregnated oil drums. Identifiable features include a two-piece front-sided stop plywood materials and walls with large windows, and wide bottom-type trim boards atop the end walls' vertical panel joints. Some surviving examples have been observed with six-inch sheathing strips in lieu of plywood.



9. EMKAY HUT
 20' x 48
 Marston-Kneass Company designed the Emkay (M-K) hut to absorb their crews for their large and weight-intensive construction contracts. While they

credit the origin of the design, inspired by a chicken shed, to their engineer G. D. Pearson, the similarities to the Quonset and Pacific huts are undeniable. Built in Boise, Iowa, beginning in 1941, the Emkay had laminated wood ribs. Its distinct "two-sided arch" appears pointed, or gabled, in profile. The huts look peaked from outside after the exterior sheathing is applied. All styles were built entirely of wood and, westward, could be built to any lengths in multiples of twelve feet, and could accommodate different climates.



10. COWIN HUT
 36' x 80
 The large, steel semicircular warehouses were designed by Cowin and Company, Inc. for the Air Corps at Wright Field. Cowin called their structure a 36' x 80' Steelhouse. To resist uplift on the arch caused by snow loads, Cowin used a truss system of horizontal steel bracing and vertical steel hangers. Not many Cowin huts were shipped to Alaska after 1943 because they were inadequate for Alaskan snow loads. A number of them remained in their first version of use.

Figure 6. (above) Quonset hut types (Source: Quonset Hut – Metal Living for a Modern Age Appendix, pp 148-149)

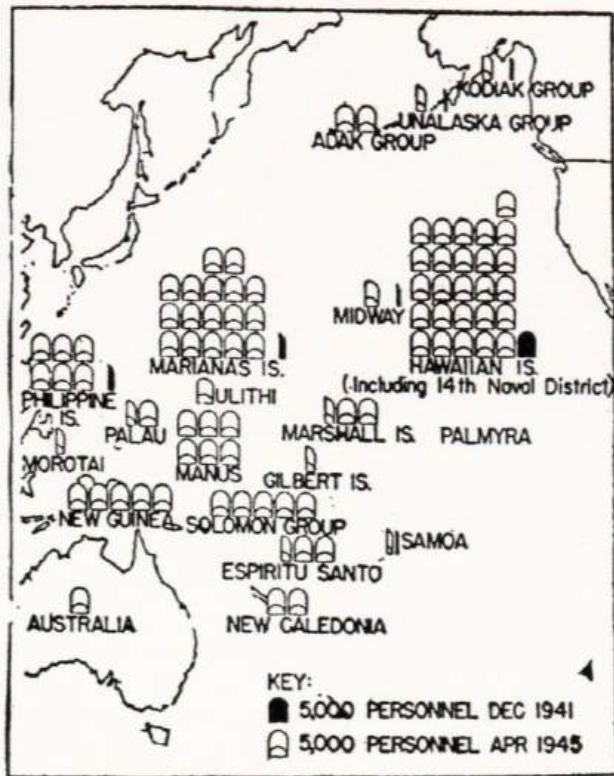


Figure 7. (above) Constructing officers' quarters, Russell Island, South Pacific, 10 November 1943. (Source: Quonset Hut – Metal Living for a Modern Age, p 65)

Figure 8. (left) Image taken from a 1945 newspaper article using Quonset huts to represent the number of US Naval troops stationed in the Pacific, including Australia. (Source: Quonset Hut – Metal Living for a Modern Age, p 41)



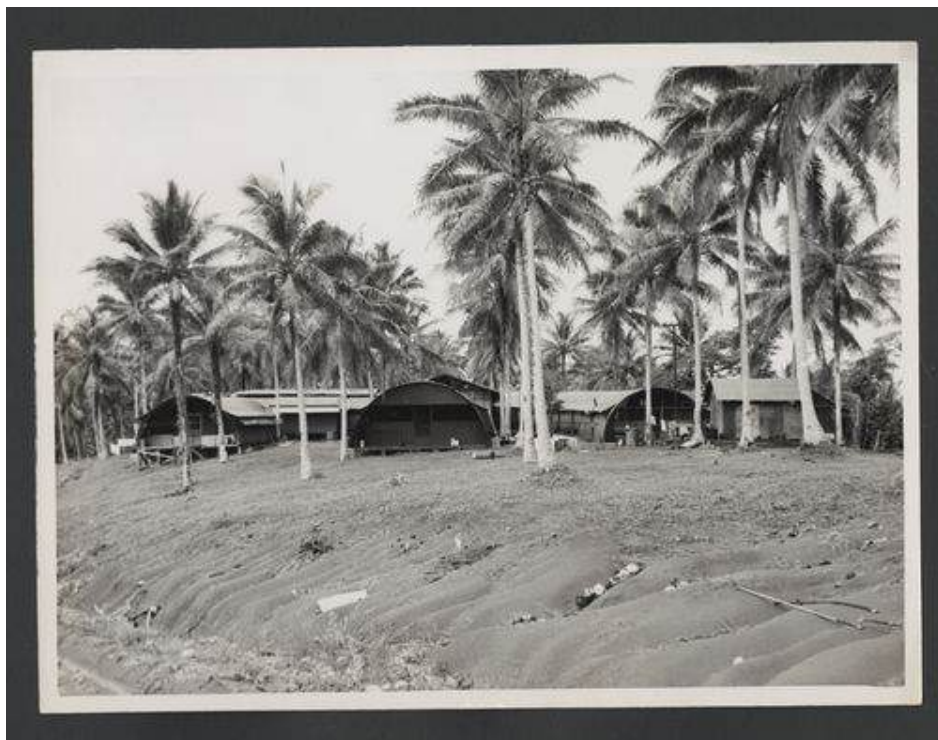


Figure 9. Quonset huts from the Second World War, Lorengau, Manus Island, Papua New Guinea, September 1949. (Source: Jack Keith Murray collection at the University of Queensland, UQFL91, Album 2, Item 86)

Use of prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts in Australia and Victoria following World War II

To help alleviate postwar shortages of building materials following World War II, surplus military structures were purchased by the Commonwealth and repurposed to meet the demand for housing, which became more acute when changes to Australia's immigration programme saw large numbers of people arriving from war-torn Europe. Migrant reception centres were hastily erected in response, including in metropolitan and rural areas of Victoria. To accommodate these new arrivals, in 1949 the Commonwealth Government purchased 660 small (36ft/11.0m by 16ft/4.9m) Nissen huts at £90 each, 200 large (60ft/18.3m by 24ft/7.3m) Nissen huts at £147 each as well as 100 Romney huts (96ft/29.3m by 35ft/10.7m) at £430 each from the British Ministry of Works.³⁰ In addition, at least 50 Quonset huts were imported from Manus Island where the US had a military base, arriving by January 1950. A further 1500 Nissen huts and 50 Romney huts were bought from the British Ministry of Works for £20,000 that same year and 2000 prefabricated huts of various sizes and types were bought from private dealers.³¹ In Victorian migrant facilities, Nissen huts were typically used for family accommodation and the larger Romney huts for recreation halls and similar.³²

From the 1950s, surplus military huts were sold off to non-government organisations and private businesses or individuals. With materials and labour shortages continuing to have an impact on construction at the time, these huts found many uses including community and scout halls, churches, light industry and warehousing, agricultural uses or accommodation.³³

³⁰ British Ministry of Works Memo to Director General, Works and Housing, dated 22 April 1949, '[Australian Department of Immigration] – purchase of Nissen and Romney Huts [Box 46]', National Archives of Australia, Item ID 1974502.

³¹ Stuart, 'Of the hut I bolted'.

³² Hermes Record No.162623 – *Former Quonset Warehouse, 175-185 Marong Road, Golden Square, Greater Bendigo City.*

³³ Stuart, 'Of the hut I bolted'.



Figure 13. (left) Interior of Nissen hut, Library at Nunawading Migrant Hostel, 1969. (Source: National Archives of Australia, Item ID 7454968)

Figure 14. (right) Nissen huts at Nunawading Migrant Hostel, 1969. (Source: National Archives of Australia, Item ID 7454960)



Figure 15. Opening of Fletcher Jones Factory Site, Warrnambool, 1948. Inscribed on reverse: 'Ex Qantas Hut Milne Bay'. (Source: Fletcher Jones Business and Family Records at University of Melbourne Archives, Identifier UMA-ITE-2012003100661)



Figure 16. St John's Church, Whitehorse Road, Mitcham, 1953. (Source: Peter Wilie Collection of architectural slides, State Library Victoria, Record ID 9917006733607636)



Figure 17. Ashwood High School, 1958. (Source: Herald & Weekly Times Limited Collection, State Library Victoria, Record ID 9917901983607636)



Figure 18. Monash Hall, Yallourn North [undated]. (Source: Yallourn North Action Group [website], 2021)



Figure 19. Trans Otway Bus Terminal, 36-44 Ryrie Street, Geelong, 3 August 1951. Half-cylindrical roof form formed of two Quonset warehouses behind bus terminal entrance/offices and façade to Ryrie Street. (Source: Gordon F. De Lisle Collection at State Library of NSW, File call number ON388/Box 015/Item 062)

OBJECT HISTORY

Prior to World War II

From the construction of the railway line between Melbourne and Sandhurst (Bendigo) in the 1850s, the area now known as Sunshine (previously known as Braybrook Junction) has its development inextricably linked to the railway. When the line to Ballarat and Western Victoria opened in 1889, Braybrook Junction became the junction of this new line and the existing northern line to Bendigo. The meeting of these two lines, along with the provision of a direct route to Williamstown Pier, saw Braybrook Junction develop into one of Victoria's busiest railway junctions and an industrial centre from the late 1880s. Local industry was consolidated in the early twentieth century by H V McKay who established his Combine 'Sunshine' Harvester Factory and industrial complex on 21 acres (8.5 hectares) east of the railway corridor (VHR H0667).³⁴

Early development around the turn of the century was gathering pace east of the railway corridor and station – spurred on by H V McKay's factory establishment – while development west of the railway had mostly yet to occur.

Prior to the construction of the overpass, Hampshire Road crossed the railway at-grade, just north of the station platforms (west of the railway corridor, now part of City Place) and immediately south of the Sunshine Railway Signal Box (HO39; Brimbank PS). Commercial activity in Sunshine was initially centred on Hampshire Road in the vicinity of the railway level crossing where 18 shops had been constructed by the late 1920s.³⁵ South of the commercial precinct, the 1930s Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Plan indicates that no development had taken place between the goods platform and siding of the railway complex and Hampshire Road (Figure 20).

World War II and postwar development

During World War II and prior to the relocation of the two Quonset warehouses to Hampshire Road, local press reporting and aerial imagery suggests the land beside the railway at this location remained vacant³⁶ (Figure 21). The land, close to the good platform, was owned by the Victorian Railways.

It is unclear when the pair of Quonset warehouses were relocated to Sunshine: the 1945 aerial photograph (Figure 21) indicates the site was vacant; however by 1954 an aerial photograph shows both warehouses in situ (Figure 22). A significant change in the immediate vicinity of the site occurred with the construction of the Hampshire Road overpass, which formed part of the works to bring a standard gauge railway into Melbourne from the north, opening for goods traffic on 3 January 1962³⁷. An aerial photograph of the overpass in 1962 shows one of the Quonset warehouses had been removed from Hampshire Road by this time, leaving the extant Quonset Warehouse (Figure 23).

No evidence has been found to indicate the former use of the Quonset Warehouse or its location of origin.

Additions extending east and west from the northern end of the warehouse have been constructed, the most recent in early 2013³⁸.

³⁴ Robert Lee, *The Railways of Victoria 1854-2004*, (Melbourne University Publishing, 2007), 110-111.

³⁵ Olwen Ford and Gary Vines with Graeme Butler and Francine Gilfedder, *Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study*, 2000.

³⁶ *Sunshine Advocate*, 31 May 1940, 2.

³⁷ Victorian Railways, *Report of the Victorian Railway Commissioners for the year ended 30th June, 1962* (A C Brooks, Government Printer).

³⁸ Nearmap, aerial photograph dated 14 February 2013, <https://www.nearmap.com/au>; accessed 20 November 2025.

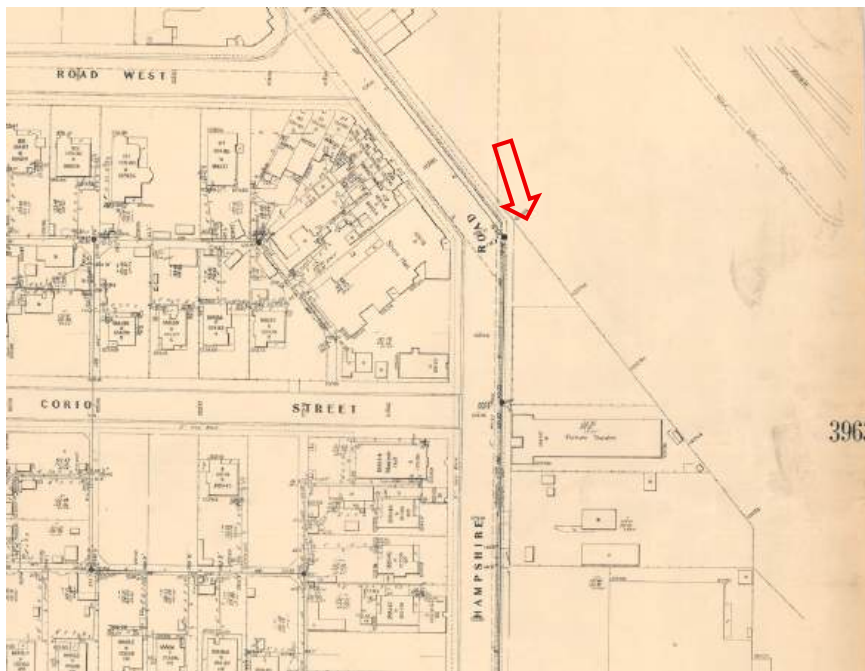
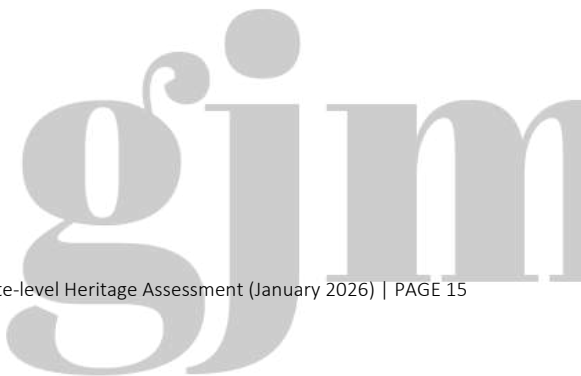


Figure 20. Excerpt of MMBW Detail Plan no. 3964, Municipality of Braybrook, dated 6 April 1934. Approximate present-day location of Quonset Warehouse indicated by red arrow. Sunshine Railway Station towards top right of image (beyond extent of map). (Source: State Library Victoria, Record ID 9912653593607636)



Figure 21. 1945 aerial photograph of Sunshine Railway Station and environs, just prior to relocation of Quonset warehouse pair. Approximate present-day location of Quonset Warehouse indicated by red arrow. (Source: University of Melbourne Map Collection)



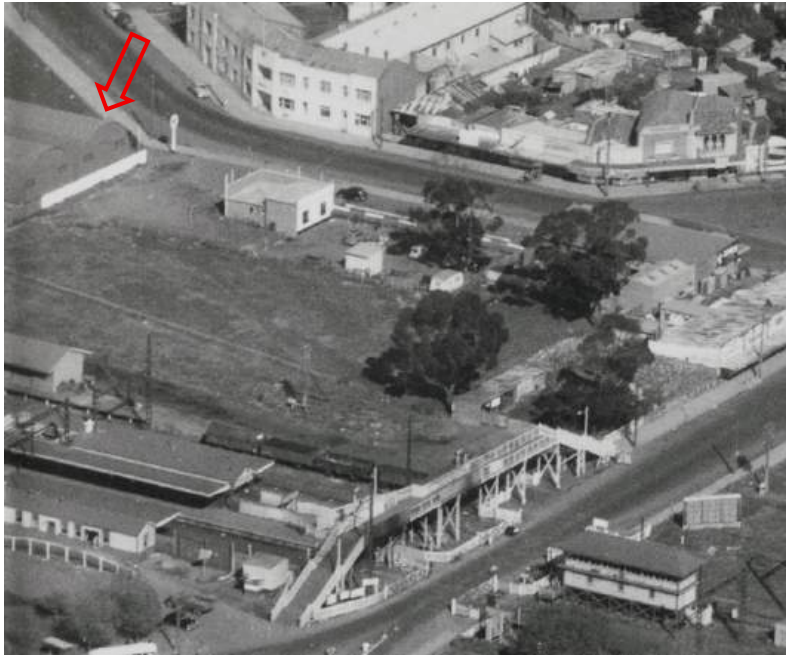


Figure 22. Aerial view of Sunshine, c1954. North-facing ends and part of Quonset Warehouses indicated by red arrow. Sunshine Railway Station and Hampshire Road level crossing in foreground. (Source: Charles Pratt [photographer], State Library Victoria, Record ID 9934085663607636)

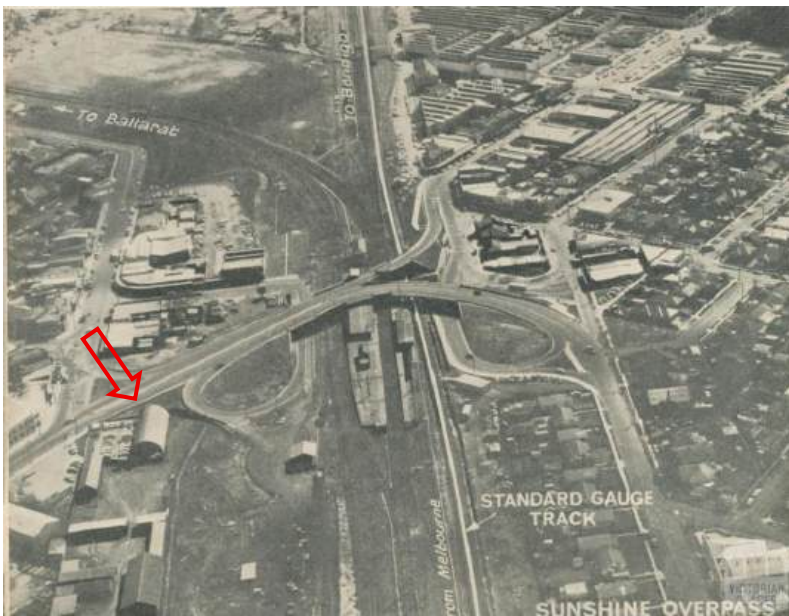


Figure 23. Aerial view of Sunshine Overpass, 1962. Location of retained Quonset Warehouse indicated by red arrow. (Source: Victorian Railways Through '62, Victorian Railways Public Relations and Betterment Board, 1963; electronic copy at victorianrailways.net)



Figure 24. Quonset warehouse in 2008, prior to addition extending west (approximately in same location as parked cars at right of image). (Source: Figure 63, Midway Migrant Hostel: Supplementary Heritage Assessment, Heritage Alliance, 2008)



HISTORICAL THEMES

The Quonset Warehouse, Sunshine demonstrates the following historic theme included in *Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes* (Heritage Council of Victoria, 2010):

- Historic Theme 6: Building towns, cities and the garden state
 - Sub-Theme 6.3: Shaping the suburbs

DESCRIPTION

The Quonset Warehouse at 134 Hampshire Road, Sunshine, is located to the southeast of the intersection of City Place and Hampshire Road, which meet at a roundabout with Sun Avenue.

The following description is taken from the Heritage Citation for the “Quonset Warehouse (Hampshire Panels), 134 Hampshire Road, Sunshine” prepared by Landmark Heritage for Brimbank Council, dated 4 October 2022:

The Quonset warehouse-type hut is situated on the east side of Hampshire Road, adjacent to the new Sunshine Railway Station and the overpass over the railway line. The site is paved, to allow for the display of parked cars, and surrounded by a high chain-link fence that allows clear views into the site. The site is surrounded by roads on three sides, making the building a prominent element of this intersection with views to all elevations.

The warehouse has the semi-cylindrical, bow-roofed form typical of the Quonset hut. It is clad in corrugated steel – installed with the corrugations vertical to the two end walls. The bow roof has horizontal sheets to the bottom two-thirds of the walls, with curved sheets in a vertical orientation on the top – a typical configuration for Quonset warehouses. At the crest of the roof is a row of whirly-bird metal ventilators. The building has a long, rectangular plan of about 13 by 31 metres.

The north end wall has a central vehicular door clad in corrugated steel, set between two horizontal-format steel windows (each with eight lights). The rear (south) end wall has a similar arrangement of openings, but the windows have been covered over. This configuration of openings, as well as the eight-light steel windows, corresponds to the original configuration of Quonset warehouses, as seen in the c1954 Charles Pratt aerial photo (see History). The join between the end walls and the bow roof is covered with a crimped metal flashing.

There are a number of skillion-roof additions to the east and west sides of the warehouse. The addition on the west side is finished in render. On the east side there is a gable-roofed projection allowing for a large roller door. Beside it is a small gabled office extension. Both are clad in corrugated steel.





Figure 25. Aerial photograph of 134 Hampshire Road, Sunshine, (Source: Nearmap, aerial dated 15 October 2025)



Figure 26. 134 Hampshire Road, Sunshine, looking south from opposite side of City Place to the northern elevation of the building. (Source: GJM Heritage, November 2025)



Figure 27. 134 Hampshire Road, Sunshine, northeast oblique view from City Place. (Source: GJM Heritage, November 2025)



Figure 28. 134 Hampshire Road, Sunshine, looking west to the east elevation from the railway station parking. (Source: GJM Heritage, November 2025)



Figure 29. 134 Hampshire Road, Sunshine, looking east to the west elevation from Hampshire Road. (Source: GJM Heritage, November 2025)

INTEGRITY/INTACTNESS

The Quonset Warehouse is a substantially intact example of a prefabricated semi-cylindrical military hut dating from World War II. Additions and openings have been made to the east (prior to 2009, possibly c.2008) and west elevations (early 2013) of the northern end of the building, along with other insertions for ventilation and other services; however, these do not diminish the overall legibility of the curved, semi-cylindrical form, which is the key characteristic of this type of building. The arrangement at each end of the structure – comprising a door at the centre, flanked by a window either side – appears to retain the original arrangement (or original to its installation on-site). The steel windows at each end also appear to be original (or original to its installation on-site).

While the building has undergone some changes, the ability to understand and appreciate the object as a representative example of a prefabricated semi-cylindrical military hut of the type developed and used by British and American armed forces during World War I and World War II remains clearly legible.

COMPARISONS

No detailed analysis has been undertaken to date in respect of semi-cylindrical military huts imported into Australia in the early postwar-era³⁹, including the identification of building types, where these were located and – of these – which remain. Given the temporary and portable nature of their construction, a comprehensive inventory of Nissen, Quonset and other military huts in Victoria is a significant challenge to compile; however, recent assessments of these types of buildings note that the overall numbers in Victoria are diminishing. The following articles and assessments suggest numbers of Nissen and Quonset-type military huts that may remain and have been used to inform this analysis:

- In the 2005 article, 'Of the hut I bolted: A preliminary account of prefabricated semi-cylindrical huts in Australia', Iain Stuart identified approximately 20 Nissen and Quonset huts, approximately 10 Quonset warehouses and one or two Romney huts that remained in New South Wales and Victoria that he was aware of at the time.⁴⁰ It is noted that some of the examples provided in the article have been subsequently demolished.
- A supplementary heritage assessment of the Former Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel (VHR H2190) was prepared for the City of Maribyrnong in 2008 by Heritage Alliance and provides a list of "surviving Nissen and Quonset huts in Victoria that have been recorded by the present consultants through desktop research, site investigation and personal knowledge"⁴¹. The assessment identified 14 locations where these buildings were thought to exist, of which there are six Quonset huts and eight Nissen huts. It is noted that some of the examples listed have been subsequently demolished.
- In responding to the nomination of the Former Quonset Warehouse at 175-185 Marong Road, Golden Square in 2012, Heritage Victoria noted that "Twenty-five other Quonset warehouse buildings have been located in Victoria, and there are probably others to be found"⁴²; however, these are not all listed. Of the Victorian examples cited in the comparative analysis, it is noted that a number have since been demolished, their condition substantially deteriorated or possibly relocated (where current location details are unknown).

The following comparators include military Nissen or Quonset-type prefabricated huts and warehouses in Victoria, of which two are included in the VHR as part of broader heritage places and 12 are included in the Heritage Overlay of various planning schemes. Six other places containing semi-cylindrical prefabricated huts have been identified that are not subject to heritage controls.

³⁹ Stuart, 'Of the hut I bolted'.

⁴⁰ Stuart, 'Of the hut I bolted', 56.

⁴¹ Heritage Alliance Conservation Architects and Heritage Consultants, *Former Midway & Phillip (Maribyrnong) Migrant Hostels: Supplementary Assessment of Heritage Significance*, prepared for the City of Maribyrnong, February 2008 (revised March 2008, twice), 48.

⁴² Hermes Record No. 162623, *Former Quonset Warehouse, 175-185 Marong Road, Golden Square, Greater Bendigo City*.

VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER

The following sites include prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts adapted for non-military use, which have been identified as contributing to the significance of the place in which it is registered:

Fletcher Jones Factory and Gardens (VHR H2101)

61-81 Flaxman Street, Warrnambool

The Fletcher Jones Factory and Gardens are of historical, social and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria. The Statement of Significance for the place notes under 'What is significant', the Fletcher Jones Factory and Gardens are "of historical and social significance ... for the unusual and successful integration of surplus military structures, buildings and modernist facade in a factory setting. They reflect the resourcefulness and dynamism of Fletcher Jones in the use of war surplus structures and objects during a time of building material shortages"⁴³.

In 1949 a Quonset hut was relocated to this site and used to house a dry-cleaning plant and alterations department for Fletcher Jones. It was one of a number of war surplus structures purchased by the company when establishing the factory complex in Warrnambool following World War II.⁴⁴



Figure 30. Aerial image of Fletcher Jones Factory and Gardens, location of Quonset hut indicated in red. (Source: Google Maps, aerial image dated 25 August 2024)

Former Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel (VHR H2190)

61-71 Hampstead Road, Maidstone (also known as *Former Phillip (Maribyrnong) Migrant Hostel, Midway Migrant Hostel, Nissen Hut, Romney Hut*)

The Former Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria and includes a Nissen and Romney hut within the Extent of Registration. The Statement of Significance for the place notes under 'What is significant?', "The Nissen and Romney huts within the Former Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel are of architectural significance as the only prefabricated structures remaining. Although thousands of these structures were brought into Australia after World War II for migrant hostel accommodation, few are believed to survive"⁴⁵.

The Phillip Centre was constructed in 1971 to replace the Nissen huts at the camp. Prior to its inclusion in the VHR, the "presence of the only surviving Nissen hut associated with a former migrant hostel site in Victoria"⁴⁶ was assessed as contributing to the place's State-level significance.



Figure 31. Nissen Hut (centre left) and Romney Hut (centre right), Former Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel [part]. (Source: Google Maps, aerial image dated 2005)

⁴³ Victorian Heritage Database Report, *Fletcher Jones Factory and Gardens, 61-81 Flaxman Street, Warrnambool, Warrnambool City* (VHR H2101), 3 August 2006.

⁴⁴ VHD Report, *Fletcher Jones Factory and Gardens*.

⁴⁵ Victorian Heritage Database Report, *Former Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel, 61-71 Hampstead Road, Maidstone, Maribyrnong City* (VHR H2190), 12 February 2009.

⁴⁶ Heritage Alliance, *Former Midway & Phillip (Maribyrnong) Migrant Hostels*, 58.

HERITAGE OVERLAY

The following heritage places include prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts that have been assessed as having cultural heritage significance at the local level and are included in the Schedule to Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay of the relevant planning scheme. Of these, nine are included as an individual heritage place (or part of an individual heritage place) and three form part of a precinct. Of these places, two – The Beersheba Barracks and Former Army Radio Station – are also included in the Victorian War Inventory. Where identified in heritage documentation, the type of prefabricated military hut is noted.

The Beersheba Barracks (HO1; Wangaratta Rural City, located on Commonwealth Land)

83-85 Sisley Avenue, Wangaratta (also known as: *4th/19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse Depot*)

The Beersheba Barracks are of local historical and technical significance to the Rural City of Wangaratta and also have considerable rarity value as a relatively large collection of semi-cylindrical military huts, which were once common.

The 2011 citation for the place notes the Barracks were erected c1940 and contain 16 Nissen huts⁴⁷. A 2004 inventory of the Barracks includes “2 large size Nissen/Quonset style huts”⁴⁸, which appear to have been retained in recent aerial and street view (2019) images.

The huts are still in use by the Australian Army and appear to be highly intact.



Figure 32. Nissen Huts at Beersheba Barracks, Wangaratta. (Source: Hermes; image by Context)

Former Army Radio Station (HO49; Melton City)

107-207 Diggers Rest-Coimadai Road, Diggers Rest

(also known as: *107 - 207 Diggers Rest-Coimadai Road, Diggers Rest; Australian Army Transmitting (or Sending) Station*)

The former Army Radio Transmitting Building is historically significant at the local level for its association with the US presence in Australia in 1942 and as part of the Australian Army's international radio communication during and after World War II. The Statement of Significance for the place attributes the significance of the building, in part, “as an apparently rare surviving example of this type of building; and as the only significant wartime building remaining on the Army's Diggers Rest and Rockbank radio transmitting and receiving stations”⁴⁹.

The building was erected in 1944 and is architecturally significant at the local level for demonstrating the original design qualities associated with semi-cylindrical military huts. The hut is thought to be an example of an ‘Armco Hut’ manufactured in Australia during World War II⁵⁰.



Figure 33. Former Army Radio Station, Diggers Rest [undated]. (Source: Victorian Heritage Database; copyright Melton City Council)

⁴⁷ Context Pty Ltd, ‘Beersheba Barracks Heritage Citation Report’, *Rural City of Wangaratta Heritage Study Review (Part 1) and Urban Precincts 2011*, Final Report 3 June 2013.

⁴⁸ C & MJ Doring Pty Ltd. ‘Precinct: The Beersheba Barracks, 83 Sisley Avenue, Wangaratta’, *Rural City of Wangaratta - Heritage Study Inventory*, May 2004, Study Item No 248.

⁴⁹ David Moloney, David Rowe & Pamela Jellie. ‘Former Army Radio Station Diggers Rest’ heritage citation, dated 2007, Citation no. 080 in *Shire of Melton Heritage Study Stage 2: Volume 6 - Statements of Significance*, March 2009.

⁵⁰ Moloney, et. al., ‘Former Army Radio Station’.

Former Scout Hall (HO335; Moonee Valley City)

41 Glenbervie Road, Strathmore

The Former 1st Strathmore Scout Hall is of local historical significance to the City of Moonee Valley. The Scout Hall was erected between 1957 and 1960 and comprises a Nissen-type semi-cylindrical hut with skillion-roofed brick wing across the street front.

The Statement of Significance prepared in 2005 notes “Surviving examples of Nissen, Quonset and other ex-army huts of barrel-vaulted form, whether adapted to other purposes or still in military or government use, are becoming increasingly rare. Since the recent demolition of comparable huts at Essendon Airport, it appears to be unique in the City of Moonee Valley”⁵¹.



Figure 34. Former 1st Strathmore Scout Hall, Strathmore, dated 24 October 2003. (Source: Hermes; copyright Moonee Valley City Council)

15th Essendon Sea Scout Complex (HO405; Moonee Valley City)

22 & 26 Woods Street, Ascot Vale (also known as: Nissen Hut, SSS Shakleton, Boat Deck, Fairbairn Park, Scout hall)

The 15th Essendon Sea Scout Complex is of local historical and social significance to the City of Moonee Valley. The complex comprises two adjacent buildings, a Nissen or Quonset-type hut and gabled building clad in ribbed metal.

The place history included in the citation for the place states the Nissen hut was erected in Fairbairn Park on the banks of the Maribyrnong River for the Sea Scouts in 1954, having been obtained from the Mordialloc Sea Scout Group. From the 1950s to the 1970s approximately ten scout halls were erected in Moonee Valley, many of these were repurposed army or government buildings, such as Nissen huts.⁵²

A brick end wall with stepped parapets has been added to the semi-cylindrical form of the hut.



Figure 35. 15th Essendon Sea Scout Complex, 2013. (Source: Hermes, copyright City of Moonee Valley)

⁵¹ Heritage Alliance, *City of Moonee Valley Gap Heritage Study*, 2005; Victorian Heritage Database, Place ID 29721, *1st Strathmore Scout Hall (Former)*, 41 Glenbervie Road, Strathmore Vic 3041.

⁵² Context Pty Ltd, '15th Essendon Sea Scouts Complex, 22 & 26 Woods Street, Ascot Vale' Heritage Citation Report, *Moonee Valley Heritage Study 2015*, Final Report, revised 11 January 2017.

St Albans Community Hall Youth Club / Tin Shed (HO103; Brimbank City)

309A Main Road East, St Albans

St Albans Community Hall Youth Club / Tin Shed is of local social and historical significance to the City of Brimbank. The Statement of Significance for the place refers to a “former Army Nissen (or Quonset) hut” erected on Errington Reserve in 1956 for the St Albans Youth Club. The buildings internal span of 30 feet would suggest that this is a Nissen hut.⁵³ The Youth Club was established in the 1950s, as a direct response to the shortage of local facilities and activities for young people following the War.⁵⁴

Following a fire in 1974 which destroyed part of the building, a new bluestone façade with large, replica Federation-style verandah was added to the northern end of the original building.⁵⁵ Other external alterations include a rear toilet block addition and side timber door and window frames.



Figure 36. St Albans Community Hall Youth Club / Tin Shed. (Source: Google Maps, dated 17 October 2023)

Standard Steel (HO111; Brimbank City)

12-16 Market Road, Sunshine

Standard Steel is of local historical and architectural significance to the City of Brimbank. The building was constructed in the 1950s and the Statement of Significance notes it is a “representative large steel-fabricating works expressing the maturation of Sunshine as a significant industrial and manufacturing centre in the post-war period”⁵⁶.

Standard Steel is a large steel-framed factory complex, of which the main building comprises two joined Nissen hut forms, clad in vertically aligned corrugated iron sheeting, joined by a taller central bay with lantern roof. The citation suggests “recycling of buildings”⁵⁷ in the description of the place. It is unclear if the buildings are Nissen huts which have been adapted. A brick skillion addition along the east side allows for windows and a corrugated iron shed addition is to the west.⁵⁸

The overall form is similar to the larger Quonset Multiple Utility Building, of which until recently one example existed in the City of Greater Bendigo.



Figure 37. Standard Steel building [undated]. (Source: Hermes)

⁵³ Landmark Heritage Pty Ltd, ‘Quonset Warehouse (Hampshire Panels), 134 Hampshire Road, Sunshine’ Heritage Citation Report, 4 October 2022.

⁵⁴ ‘HO192 St Albans Community Hall Youth Club / Tin Shed’ (2000 Study Site No. 098) in Gary Vines, with Olwen Ford, Graeme Butler & Francine Gilfedder, *City of Brimbank Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study, Volume 3 – Place Reports*, 2007, 349-350.

⁵⁵ Vines, et al. ‘St Albans Community Hall Youth Club / Tin Shed’.

⁵⁶ ‘HO111 Standard Steel, 18 Market Road Sunshine’ (2000 Study Site No. 110) in Gary Vines, with Olwen Ford, Graeme Butler & Francine Gilfedder, *City of Brimbank Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study, Volume 3 – Place Reports*, 2007, 283-284.

⁵⁷ Vines et al, ‘HO111 Standard Steel’.

⁵⁸ Landmark Heritage, ‘Quonset Warehouse (Hampshire Panels)’.

Former Migrant Hostel (HO1; Ararat Rural City)

24 Albert Street, Ararat

The Statement of Significance for the Former Migrant Hostel in Ararat notes place is of local significance historically as part of Ararat's participation in the postwar migrant influx and architecturally as an example of prefabrication used for expediency.

The Migrant Hostel was established in 1950 and 37 Nissen huts were brought by road from the central migrant camp in Bongella to accommodate the four hundred migrants expected to arrive.⁵⁹

Of the extant buildings once part of the hostel, a recent (November 2025) aerial photograph of the site indicates two Nissen huts remain with apparently little exterior alteration.



Figure 38. Aerial photograph of two Nissen huts, part of Former Migrant Hostel, Ararat. (Source: Nearmap, dated 15 November 2025)

House (HO29; Manningham City)

81 Brushy Park Road, Wonga Park

The House on Brushy Park Road in Wonga Park is significant at the local level to the City of Manningham for its associations with Henry Pearson, a Croydon gardener.

The house was constructed c1920. On the property there is an outbuilding which, noted in the citation for the place, appears to be a Nissen hut.⁶⁰ No further details are provided in the citation. Aerial photography indicates that as of 2025⁶¹ the outbuilding is extant.



Figure 39. House (in foreground) and outbuilding (thought to be a Nissen hut, behind) at 81 Brushy Park Road, Wonga Park. (Source: Google Maps, dated 18 October 2023)

⁵⁹ Timothy Hubbard and Dr Margaret Pawsey, 'Former Migrant Hostel, Albert Street, Ararat' Heritage Citation Report in *Ararat Heritage Study*, commissioned by the City of Ararat, 1994.

⁶⁰ Context Pty Ltd, 'House' (Place No. 266) in *Manningham Heritage Study Review 2005, Volume 2: Heritage Place & Precinct Citations*, Final Draft 16 February 2006, 581-582.

⁶¹ Nearmap, image dated 15 October 2025 <https://www.nearmap.com/au>; accessed 21 November 2025.

Boolarra Soldier's Memorial Park (HO11; Latrobe City)

Park Road, Boolarra

The Boolarra Soldiers' Memorial Park is of local historical, social and aesthetic significance to Latrobe City. The heritage values of the place are derived, in part, as a monument commemorating those from Boolarra and the district in World War I and other conflicts.

A Nissen hut was obtained by the park's Committee of Management sometime after 1975, and it remains in the park. The Nissen hut is not identified as contributing to the heritage values of the place in the Statement of Significance.⁶²



Figure 40. Nissen hut, Boolarra Soldiers' Memorial Park (Source: Google Street View, August 2023)

Victorian Railway Institute Building (HO22 - Wycheproof Township Heritage Precinct; Buloke Shire)

Railway Place, Wycheproof (Township)

A substantially intact Nissen hut used by the Wycheproof Railway, it is architecturally and historically significant at the local level. The Statement of Significance for the place attributes heritage significance to the Victorian Railway Institute Building for "contributing to an understanding of the importance of the adjacent Wycheproof Railway Station complex [VHR H1601] to the Wycheproof Township"⁶³.

The Nissen hut retains its legibility, although it has been subject to some minor alterations.



Figure 41. Victorian Railway Institute Building, Wycheproof, viewed from Railway Place. (Source: Hermes; copyright Buloke Shire)

Garage (HO11 - Rowan Street Precinct; Greater Bendigo City)

116 Lily Street, Bendigo

The entry for the Rowan Street Precinct (HO11) identifies Lily Street under 'Contributory streets and sites'; however, no specific reference is made to the building located at 116 Lily Street. The description of the precinct included in the *Eaglehawk & Bendigo Heritage Study* from 1993 refers to the "gold-era village centre" and "19th century urban development"⁶⁴. No significance is attributed to later periods of development, including the postwar period.

In response to the nomination of the Quonset Warehouse (175-185 Marong Road, Golden Square), it was noted the prefabricated building at Lily Street (along with 134 Hampshire Road, Sunshine) are examples which have high levels of intactness and integrity.⁶⁵



Figure 42. 116 Lily Street, Bendigo. (Source: Google Maps street view, dated 2019)

⁶² Context, Pty Ltd, 'Boolarra Soldier's Memorial Park' Heritage Citation Report in *Latrobe City Heritage Study 2005*, Final Report December 2008.

⁶³ Jacobs, Taylor, Rowe, Johnson and Ballinger, 'Victorian Railway Institute Building, Railway Place, Wycheproof' Heritage Citation Report (File No. WYC(T)-79) in *Buloke Shire Heritage Study Stage 2*, May 2011.

⁶⁴ Graeme Butler & Associates, Greater Bendigo – Eaglehawk & Bendigo Heritage Study, 1993.

⁶⁵ Hermes Record No. 162623, *Former Quonset Warehouse, 175-185 Marong Road, Golden Square, Greater Bendigo City*.

Prefabricated Arched Hut (HO316 – Clifton Hill Eastern Precinct; Yarra City)

20 Reeves Street, Clifton Hill

The prefabricated hut is included in the Clifton Hill Eastern Precinct (HO316), which is of local aesthetic and historical significance to the City of Yarra.

A citation for the ‘Prefabricated arched hut’ was prepared in 2007 in which no grading within the precinct was included. The integrity of the structure at this time was noted as “fair”⁶⁶. In 2009 the building was described as “arch segment span hut, with added dormers? corrugated iron clad, sited off Reeves St, c13m x23m long, isolated as only one of Reeves St address in heritage overlay; unusual type for area and now rare in the State as a prefabricated building type”⁶⁷. The history of the hut was noted as unclear.

The building is now of low integrity, having recently being entirely reclad and original window openings lost.



Figure 43. Prefabricated arched hut, Clifton Hill, 2010. (Source: Hermes)

NO HERITAGE CONTROLS

Nissen Hut, Grangefields (Melton City)

1232-1290 Beattys Road, Grangefields

The Nissen hut was assessed in 2023 and recommended to be included in the Heritage Overlay of the Melton Planning Scheme (recommendation not yet progressed to inclusion in the Heritage Overlay). The assessment found the Nissen hut is of local historical, rarity and representative significance to the City of Melton. Its heritage values relating to postwar agricultural use, demonstrating the semi-cylindrical form and features of a Nissen hut, thought to be the last known hut of its type in the area.⁶⁸



Figure 44. Nissen Hut, 1232-1290 Beattys Road, Grangefields. (Source: Plate 1, Heritage Citation Report: Nissen Hut, 1232-1290 Beattys Road, Grangefields)

⁶⁶ Hermes Record No. 103704, *Prefabricated arched hut, 20 Reeves Street, Clifton Hill Vic 3068.*

⁶⁷ Hermes Record No. 103704, *Prefabricated arched hut.*

⁶⁸ Ecology & Heritage Partners, *Heritage Citation Report: Nissen Hut, 1232-1290 Beattys Road, Grangefields, Victoria, 2023.*

Quonset Hut (Horsham Rural City)

46 Kalkee Road, Horsham

The Quonset hut was identified in the *Rural City of Horsham Heritage Study Stage 1* in 2012⁶⁹ but did not progress in the Stage 2 study in 2014, which deemed the hut to be a 'medium priority' for further assessment of heritage significance.⁷⁰

Aerial and street view images indicate there has been additions along the extent of both sides of the hut, extending to include and part of the end facing Kalkee Road. Currently the hut and surrounding site is occupied by 'SJR Demolition & Earthmoving'.⁷¹



Figure 45. Quonset Hut, 46 Kalkee Road, Horsham, 2011. (Source: Horsham Rural City Council Heritage Study Stage 1, Grieve Gillett & Associates, June 2012)

Glenroy Wesleyan Methodist Church Hall (Merri-bek City)

55 Leonard Avenue, Glenroy

The Glenroy Wesleyan Methodist Church Hall comprises a semi-cylindrical building similar to a Nissen hut, but of a slightly different profile (slightly more than semi-circular cross-section), adapted for use as a church hall in 1957 for the Hilton Street Methodist Church in Glenroy.⁷² The place was included in the *City of Moreland [now Merri-bek] North of Bell Street Heritage Study 2013* and was found to not meet the threshold of local significance and not recommended to be included in the Heritage Overlay.⁷³

The hut has been substantially altered, with a cream brick façade added at the Hilton Street end of the elevation with window and door openings to match the adjacent church to the east, which appear more recent.



Figure 46. Wesleyan Methodist Church Hall, 2010. (Source: Hermes, copyright Context Pty Ltd)

⁶⁹ Grieve Gillett & Associates, *Horsham Heritage Study Stage 1, Heritage Places Summary Report*, prepared for Horsham Rural City Council, 27 June 2012.

⁷⁰ Grieve Gillett & Associates, *Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2, Volume 2 – HO Places and Precincts*, prepared for Horsham Rural City Council, August 2014, 4.

⁷¹ Google Maps, dated January 2024; accessed 10 November 2025.

⁷² Heritage Alliance, *Former Midway & Phillip (Maribyrnong) Migrant Hostels*, 48.

⁷³ Context Pty Ltd, *City of Moreland North of Bell Street Heritage Study*, 2013.

5th Keilor Scout Hall (Moonee Valley City)

300 Fullarton Road, Airport West

The 5th Keilor Scout Hall is comprised of two Nissen huts side-by-side separated by an open courtyard. Alterations and additions include a covered walkway between each, new façade treatment and associated verandah to join the two huts together.

The Scout Hall was identified in the *Moonee Valley Gap Study Stage 1 2014*⁷⁴, and was not recommended for detailed assessment in the *Moonee Valley Heritage Study Stage 2 2015*, noting “Nissen huts were used for various community uses after World War II but are not of themselves, significant. 15th Essendon Sea Scouts (assessed in Stage 2) [HO405] is a better example of a post-war Nissen Hut conversion.”⁷⁵.



Figure 47. 5th Keilor Scout Hall, 2013. (Source: City of Moonee Valley Heritage Gaps Study Stage 1, Context Pty Ltd)

Former Our Lady of the Ark, Morningside Commune (Mitchell Shire)

769 Strath Creek Road, Tyaak

The Former Our Lady of the Ark, Morningside Commune in Tyaak was identified in the *Mitchell Shire Heritage Study Stage 1* in 2002 which identified Nissen huts in the description of the property. At this time the place was not assessed for significance at the local level for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay.⁷⁶

The property was sold in November 2024, which identified five Nissen huts, at least four of which appear in photographs advertising the property appear to be highly intact.⁷⁷



Figure 48. Nissen huts, part of the Former Our Lady of the Ark, Morningside Commune, Tyaak. (Source: realestate.com.au)

⁷⁴ Context Pty Ltd. *Moonee Valley Gap Study, Stage 1*, prepared for the City of Moonee Valley, Final Report, October 2014.

⁷⁵ Context Pty Ltd. *Moonee Valley Heritage Study 2015*, prepared for the City of Moonee Valley, Final Report, revised 11 January 2017, 19.

⁷⁶ Lorraine Huddle and Ian Wright, *Mitchell Shire Stage 1 Heritage Study Report 2002*, prepared by Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd for Mitchell Shire, June 2002.

⁷⁷ realestate.com.au [website], 769 Strath Creek Road, Tyaak, Vic 3658, <https://www.realestate.com.au/sold/property-house-vic-tyaak-146086796>; accessed 20 November 2025.

Former Williamstown Migrant Hostel (Hobsons Bay City)

300 Fullarton Road, Airport West (*also known as: Wiltona Migrant Hostel, Altona Migrant Hostel*)

The Williamstown Hostel housed recently-arrived migrants, opening in the early postwar period on the former Williamstown Racecourse site. Early accommodation was provided in Nissen huts. Following flooding of the Kororoit Creek in April 1950 the camp relocated to the old racecourse carpark north of the creek, the Nissen huts were mostly replaced by the late 1960s with concrete and brick units.⁷⁸ The hostel was closed sometime in the 1970s, reopening for a time to house Vietnamese refugees from the late 1970s until the mid-1980s, when the Hostel was permanently closed and the land sold.⁷⁹

Today the site is used for light industry, known as Williamstown Techno Park' and one Nissen hut has been retained.⁸⁰



Figure 49. Single Nissen hut remaining from Williamstown Migrant Hostel. (Source: Google Street View, dated January 2023)

SUMMARY OF COMPARISONS

The Quonset Warehouse is one of a large number of prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts and warehouses imported and repurposed in the early postwar period when Australia was experiencing high demand for accommodation and shortages of materials due to World War II. Initially principally used to house the substantial number of post-war arrivals into Australia, large numbers of these huts were soon relocated and repurposed for other uses.

Over time many of these structures have been dismantled or demolished while others have been altered – sometimes substantially – to accommodate new uses. While a number of examples of variable integrity and intactness continue to exist, it is clear that their numbers overall have declined significantly.

While acknowledging that prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts are a diminishing building typology, some examples remain highly intact to clearly illustrate the form and function of this building typology. Of particular note are those that are retained in their wartime or immediate post-war location, including the huts remaining at the Former Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel (VHR H2190), Beersheba Barracks (HO1; Wangaratta PS, Commonwealth Government land), the Former Army Radio Station (HO49; Melton PS) and the Former Ararat Migrant Hostel (HO1; Ararat PS). These structures allow the particular military and post-war immigration history of Victoria to be readily understood. In addition, other highly intact examples remain to illustrate the theme of the reuse of these structures for various purposes from the late 1940s, including the Victorian Railway Institute Building (HO22 – Wycheproof Township Heritage Precinct; Buloke PS) and the Former Our Lady of the Ark, Morningside Commune (No HO, Mitchell Shire).

In contrast, the Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine falls within the tranche of buildings that remain legible as prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts, but whose specific history is unknown and which have been subject to a level of alteration that has impacted their original form. These buildings are generally included in the Heritage Overlay

⁷⁸ Altona-Laverton Historical Society Inc. 'Migrants' (research: Graeme Reily [ALHS] 2019), *Altona Homestead* [website], https://alhs.com.au/local-history/migrants/#_ftn2; accessed 21 November 2025.

⁷⁹ Hobsons Bay City Council, 'Williamstown Racecourse Site (Former) and Canary Island Palm Tree' Heritage Citation Report in *Hobsons Bay Heritage Study Amended 2017 - Volume 3 – Heritage Precinct and Place Citations, Part 2 – Heritage Places*, 905-910.

⁸⁰ Altona-Laverton Historical Society, 'Migrants'.

of the relevant planning scheme, such as the Former Scout Hall (HO335; Moonee Valley PS), 15th Essendon Sea Scout Complex (HO405; Moonee Valley PS) or St Albans Community Hall Youth Club / Tin Shed (HO103; Brimbank PS).

ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

The Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine has been considered against the Heritage Criteria adopted by the Heritage Council of Victoria and tests set out in *The Victorian Heritage Register Criteria and Thresholds Guidelines* (2022) to determine if it potentially warrants inclusion in the VHR.

CRITERION A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria’s cultural history.

STEP 1: TEST FOR CRITERION A

The place/object has a clear association with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life in Victoria’s cultural history.

AND

The event, phase etc is of historical importance, having made a strong or influential contribution to Victoria.

AND

There is evidence of the association to the event, phase, etc.

Assessment

The Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine has clear associations with World War II military infrastructure and the early postwar-period in Victoria when many prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts were imported into Australia to address an urgent shortage of accommodation and construction materials.

First imported into Australia by the Commonwealth Government principally for use in migrant reception camps following World War II, by the late 1940s these huts were repurposed for a range of other uses as they became surplus to government requirements. In Victoria, reuses included a bus terminal, scout and community halls, sports pavilions, light industry, churches, warehouse storage, garages and workshops, and agricultural uses among others.

The Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine has been in use from the late 1950s as a used car and motor repairs business, demonstrating one way in which this type of surplus military building was used in Victoria. The fabric of the warehouse remains sufficiently intact to demonstrate the association of the object with its postwar history and use.

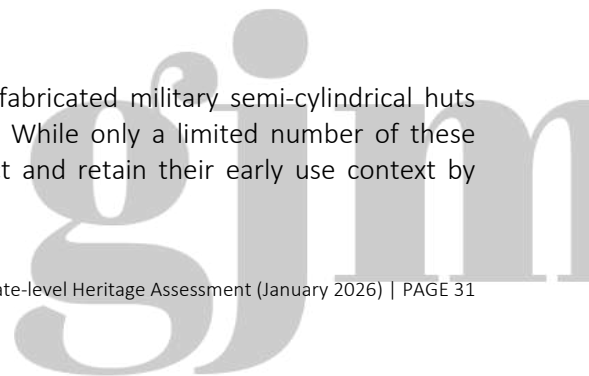
Criterion A is likely to be satisfied (but not necessarily at the State-level).

STEP 2: STATE LEVEL TEST FOR CRITERION A

The place/object allows the clear association with the event, phase etc. of historical importance to be understood better than most other places or objects in Victoria with substantially the same association.

Assessment

The Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine is one of a limited number of prefabricated military semi-cylindrical huts imported into Victoria following World War II and which remain extant. While only a limited number of these structures now appear to remain, other examples are more highly intact and retain their early use context by



continuing to be located on military barracks sites or on former migrant reception sites. These include the huts remaining at:

- Former Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel (VHR H2190);
- Beersheba Barracks (HO1; Wangaratta PS);
- Former Army Radio Station (HO49; Melton PS); and
- Former Ararat Migrant Hostel (HO1; Ararat PS).

Other examples that appear to remain highly intact include:

- Victorian Railway Institute Building (HO22 – Wycheproof Township Heritage Precinct; Buloke PS); and
- Former Our Lady of the Ark, Morningside Commune (No HO, Mitchell Shire).

The reuse of the Quonset hut within the Fletcher Jones Factory and Gardens (VHR H2101) is also noted in the Statement of Significance as a specific response by the company to adapt to materials shortages in the postwar period.

The more altered Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine does not allow an understanding of the historical association with the early postwar period and the use of prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts during material shortages in Victoria to be understood better than most other places or objects with the same association, specifically those identified above.

Criterion A is not likely to be satisfied at the State level.

CRITERION B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria’s cultural history.

STEP 1: TEST FOR CRITERION B

The place/object has a clear association with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life of importance in Victoria’s cultural history.

AND

There is evidence of the association to the event, phase etc.

AND

There is evidence that the place/object is rare or uncommon, or has rare or uncommon features.

Assessment

The Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine has clear associations with World War II military infrastructure and the early postwar-period in Victoria when many prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts were imported into Australia to address an urgent shortage of accommodation and construction materials.

First imported into Australia by the Commonwealth Government in large numbers principally for use in migrant reception camps following World War II, by the late 1940s these huts were beginning to be repurposed for a range of other uses as they became surplus to government requirements. In Victoria, reuses included a bus terminal, church, scout and community halls, sports pavilions, light industry, warehouse storage, garages and workshops, and agricultural uses among others.

The Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine has been in use from the late 1950s as a used car and motor repairs business, demonstrating one way in which this type of surplus military building was used in Victoria. The fabric of the warehouse remains sufficiently intact to demonstrate the association of the object with its postwar history and use.

Once found in high numbers in Victoria, in the 80 years following World War II the number of these prefabricated military huts has substantially declined and the typology now increasingly rare or uncommon with a more limited number identified as remaining extant.

Criterion B is likely to be satisfied (but not necessarily at the State-level).

STEP 2: STATE LEVEL TEST FOR CRITERION B

There is evidence that:

The place/object is rare or uncommon, being one of a small number of places/objects remaining that demonstrates the important event, phase etc;

OR

The place/object is rare or uncommon, containing unusual features, and these features are of note and these features were not widely replicated in Victoria;

OR

The existence of the class of place/object that demonstrates the important event, phase etc is endangered to the point of rarity due to threats and pressures on such places/objects in Victoria.

Assessment

The Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine is one of a large number of prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts and warehouses imported and repurposed in the early postwar period when Australia was experiencing high demand for accommodation and shortages in materials due to World War II. Initially principally used to house the large number of postwar migrants into Australia, the majority of these huts were soon relocated and repurposed for other uses.

Over time many of these structures have been dismantled or demolished while others have been altered – sometimes substantially – to accommodate their new uses. While a number of examples of variable integrity and intactness continue to exist, it is clear that their numbers overall have declined significantly. The Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine is now one of a limited number of prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts remaining extant in Victoria.

Notwithstanding that the Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine is one of a limited number of remaining huts, approximately 42 have been identified as remaining – with others likely – to demonstrate this class of object. It is therefore considered that the numbers are not so “small” or that the class is “endangered to the point of rarity” such that Criterion B is satisfied at the state-level for the Quonset Warehouse.

Importantly, it is also noted that more highly intact examples remain to clearly illustrate the form, function and history of this diminishing building typology. This includes huts at the Former Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel (VHR H2190), Beersheba Barracks (HO1; Wangaratta PS), the Former Army Radio Station (HO49; Melton PS), the Former Migrant Hostel (HO1; Ararat PS), the Victorian Railway Institute Building (HO22 – Wycheproof Township Heritage Precinct; Buloke PS) and the Former Our Lady of the Ark, Morningside Commune (No HO, Mitchell Shire). Examples that are not currently included in the VHR could be considered for their potential for inclusion in order to appropriately recognise and manage this diminishing typology.

Criterion B is not likely to be satisfied at the State level.



CRITERION C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria’s cultural history.

STEP 1: TEST FOR CRITERION C

The:

- physical fabric; and/or
- documentary evidence; and/or
- associated oral history and cultural narratives,

relating to the place/object indicates a likelihood that the place/object contains evidence of cultural heritage significance that is not currently visible and/or well understood or available from other sources.

AND

From what we know of the place/object, the physical evidence is likely to be of an integrity and/or condition that it could yield information through detailed investigation.

Assessment

The Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine does not contain physical evidence of historical interest that is not currently visible or well understood.

Criterion C is not likely to be satisfied.

CRITERION D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects.

STEP 1: TEST FOR CRITERION D

The place/object is one of a class of places/objects that has a clear association with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, important person(s), custom or way of life in Victoria’s history.

AND

The event, phase etc is of historical importance, having made a strong or influential contribution to Victoria.

AND

The principal characteristics of the class are evident in the physical fabric of the place/object.

Assessment

The Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine has clear associations with World War II military infrastructure and the early postwar-period in Victoria when many prefabricated semi-cylindrical military huts were imported into Australia to address an urgent shortage of accommodation and construction materials. Initially used to house the large number of postwar arrivals into Australia, the majority of these huts were soon relocated and repurposed for other uses. Once found in high numbers in Victoria, the number of these prefabricated military huts has substantially declined and only limited examples now remain extant.



The physical fabric of the Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine displays characteristics typical of this class including its distinctive semi-cylindrical, bow-roofed form clad in corrugated steel.

Criterion D is likely to be satisfied (but not necessarily at the State-level).

STEP 2: STATE LEVEL TEST FOR CRITERION D

The place/object is a notable example of the class in Victoria.

Assessment

The Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine is one of a limited number of extant prefabricated military semi-cylindrical huts imported into Victoria following World War II. While retaining the key physical characteristics of the class, the Quonset Warehouse has been subject to alteration through the construction of additions and openings to the east and west of the northern end of the building. These alterations diminish the intactness of the building such that it cannot be considered a “fine example” of its type. Other examples, including huts at the Former Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel (VHR H2190), Beersheba Barracks (HO1; Wangaratta PS), the Former Army Radio Station (HO49; Melton PS), the Former Migrant Hostel (HO1; Ararat PS), the Victorian Railway Institute Building (HO22 – Wycheproof Township Heritage Precinct; Buloke PS) and the Former Our Lady of the Ark, Morningside Commune (No HO, Mitchell Shire), remain more highly intact to illustrate this class of object.

The specific history of the Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine is unknown, however it was one of a very large number of prefabricated military semi-cylindrical huts mass-produced during World War II. The Quonset Warehouse is not an “influential” or “pivotal” example of its class.

Criterion D is not likely to be satisfied at the State level.

CRITERION E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

STEP 1: TEST FOR CRITERION E

The physical fabric of the place/object clearly exhibits particular aesthetic characteristics.

Assessment

The Quonset Warehouse is a simple, mass-produced prefabricated semi-cylindrical military hut. It does not exhibit any particular aesthetic characteristics.

Criterion E is not likely to be satisfied.

CRITERION F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

STEP 1: TEST FOR CRITERION F

The place/object contains physical evidence that clearly demonstrates creative or technical achievement for the time in which it was created.

AND

The physical evidence demonstrates a high degree of integrity.

Assessment

The Quonset Warehouse in Sunshine does not contain physical evidence that demonstrates any particular creative or technical achievement for the time in which it was created.

Criterion F is not likely to be satisfied.

CRITERION G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

STEP 1: TEST FOR CRITERION G

The place/object demonstrates social value to a community or cultural group in the present day in the context of its cultural heritage significance. Evidence must be provided that the following three facets of social value are all met as follows:

- a) Existence of a community of cultural group
- b) Existence of a strong attachment of a community or cultural group to the place or object
- c) Existence of a time depth to that attachment.

Assessment

There is no evidence that those who currently live or work in the vicinity of Sunshine have a strong or special attachment to the Quonset Warehouse in the context of its cultural heritage significance. A private business has operated from the Quonset Warehouse from the late 1950s and its use is characterised as functional and commercial, rather than one which frames the community’s beliefs or cultural practices.

Criterion G is not likely to be satisfied.

CRITERION H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria’s history.

STEP 1: TEST FOR CRITERION H

The place/object has a direct association with a person or group of persons who have made a strong or influential contribution in their field of endeavour.

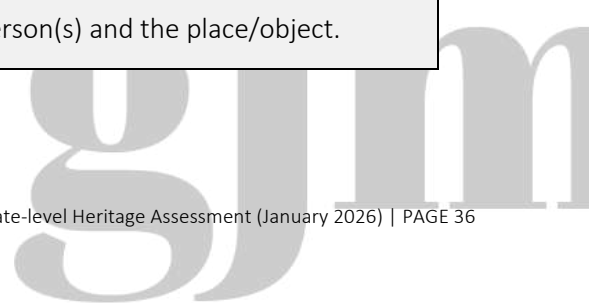
AND

There is evidence of the association between the place/object and the person(s).

AND

The association relates:

- directly relates to achievements of the person(s); AND
- to an enduring and/or close interaction between the person(s) and the place/object.



Assessment

The Quonset Warehouse does not have a direct association with any person or group of persons who have made a strong or influential contribution in their field or endeavour.

Criterion H is not likely to be satisfied.



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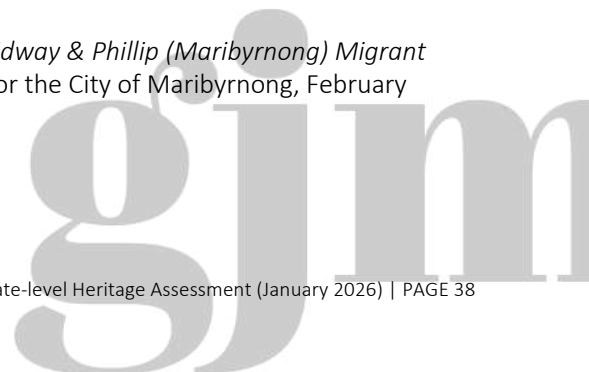
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