



NORTH AUSTRALIAN MILITARY
HERITAGE ASSOCIATION INC.

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Phillips Group

**SUBMISSION BY THE NORTH AUSTRALIAN MILITARY HERITAGE ASSN
FOR MUSEUM SITE WITHIN JEZZINE BARRACKS**

Short History and Current Significance of Jezzine Barracks

Following the withdrawal of British forces from the Australian mainland in 1870 and the recurring fears of a possible invasion by foreign powers, especially Russia, a volunteer defence force, the 3rd Queensland Regiment, more commonly called the Kennedy Regiment, was raised in North Queensland in 1886. Initially this unit conducted its training near Cluden and at Queen's Park. The *Defence Report 1887-88* recommended that the land behind Kissing Point be reserved for defence purposes and the area known as Norman Park, an area of about 12 acres, was reserved for defence purposes. Norman Park had been initially reserved for a botanical garden but it was already being used regularly as a training area by the Kennedy Regiment, as Queen's Park and Cluden were too close to settled areas.

In 1878 a detachment of the Volunteer Artillery, Detachment No 4, was raised in Townsville and this detachment established a battery, comprising two 64 pounder guns, at Kissing Point. These guns are still in existence and, until recently, were located in front of the Headquarters of the 31st Battalion The Royal Queensland Regiment in Jezzine Barracks. This unit is presently in the process of relocating to Lavarek Barracks.

The initial artillery battery position was not very substantial with the two guns being mounted on timber platforms. In 1882 LTCOL Scratchley recommended the construction of a more substantial fort to be equipped with two 64 pounder rifled guns and two 20 pounder breech loading guns. Construction commenced in 1889 and was completed in 1891.

By 1904 the fort's armaments were supplemented by two Nordenfeldt machine guns and a second group of artillery pieces comprising two 64 pounder guns and two 9 pounders. A new battery command post was built the following year. In December 1909 Norman Park and the nearby Kissing Point Reserve were purchased by the Defence Department for 1541 pounds (approximately \$3500).

After an official inspection of the coastal defences in 1911 by Lord Kitchener, who declared that the fort was now useless because of the shallow waters of Cleveland Bay (warships of the day would flounder in the shallows), very few changes to the fort were made until 1936. Some of the old guns were replaced by 4.7 inch guns, one of which remained at the fort until 1943.

The Kennedy Regiment continued to use Norman Park as its main training area during the construction of the Kissing Point fort. It established a rifle range on the landward side at the base

of the Kissing Point ridgeline. An officers' accommodation building plus several general buildings were constructed. None of these buildings now remain. The area became known as the Kissing Point Military Barracks and retained this name until the end of World War II. (This explains the confusion nowadays as people still think that "Kissing Point" includes the whole area of Jezzine Barracks.) Volunteers who deployed with the first Queensland contingents to participate in the Boer War trained at the Norman Park Reserve. Elements of the Kennedy Regiment were also involved in putting down the Queensland Shearers' Strike in 1891. At the outbreak of World War I the Regiment was the first unit deployed, moving to Thursday Island, from the Norman Park Reserve. The area became known as Jezzine Barracks following World War II, being named after the Battle of Jezzine in Palestine in July 1941, which involved the 2/31st Battalion, 25th Brigade 2ndAIF. The barracks was used extensively during World War II by both Australian and American forces. In fact, during World War II, the American 5th Air Force was raised in Townsville. This formation operated a number of bases at Townsville while it also had a logistics unit at Charters Towers. The US 5th Air Force has erected a memorial at Kissing Point to commemorate their foundation here in Townsville.

However, as Kissing Point provided no practical defence after World War II, it was in essence abandoned although the property remained in Army hands. In 1967-68 the World War II gun positions were destroyed and the magazine area filled in, primarily because the old fortifications were being vandalized and it had become a "home" for vagabonds. In 1979 a committee was formed and it was agreed to refurbish the old fortification and convert it into a museum. The Chief of the General Staff, LTGEN Sir Donald Dunstan, officially opened the North Queensland Museum on 12th June 1980. Since the end of World War II, Jezzine Barracks has been occupied by Army Reserve formations and units, including 11th Brigade.

In 1998 the Federal Government declared that Jezzine Barracks was surplus to Defence requirements and that the Barracks, less Kissing Point which was already listed on the Commonwealth Heritage List, was to be disposed of. As a result of a vigorous community campaign, the Commonwealth Government decided to handover the majority of Jezzine Barracks to the general community, via Townsville City Council. The Prime Minister, Mr John Howard, MP, made this historic announcement on the Jezzine Barracks Parade Ground on 1 August 2006.

Jezzine Barracks, including Kissing Point, is valued by the Australian military community, by the people of Townsville and by the people in North Queensland in general for its association with the defence of Australia, particularly for the founding role it played in the early defence of northern Australia. The Barracks have witnessed many important activities, including farewell parades for troops deploying overseas, welcoming home parades, medal presentation parades, promotion and demotion parades, military funerals, public displays, musical evenings, numerous weddings, balls and many more.

North Queensland Military Museum

It is acknowledged that some people will argue that there is already a "museum" established within Jezzine Barracks. This is the North Queensland Military Museum which is presently being relocated from the old fortifications, on and in Kissing Point, to the buildings previously occupied by the 31st Battalion, The Royal Queensland Regiment (31 RQR).

However the following points should be considered in conjunction with this "museum":

- a. In this particular case it is suggested that the use of the term “museum” is a misnomer. It would be more accurately described as a collection of Army memorabilia – and a good collection at that. However it does not include any significant RAAF or RAN displays. Nor does it have any significant interactive displays, dioramas and it makes very limited use of technology. It is definitely not a “museum” in the true meaning of the term, and it is certainly not of international standards. I emphasise that these comments in no way reflect on the efforts and work put into arranging the various displays and the workings of the existing facility. The volunteers have done an outstanding job, with limited resources and finances. But the fact remains that, if Townsville wants to establish another world-class tourist attraction to attract the tourists from cruise ships, and it is decided that this could be best achieved with a museum, then the existing facility does not satisfy the necessary standards.
- b. Once relocated the existing facility, or collection, will occupy the old 31 RQR buildings. While these buildings will have been refurbished by Defence, they were constructed over 40 years ago and they will require significant ongoing repair and maintenance.
- c. The 31 RQR buildings will be fenced off from the remainder of Jezzine Barracks. This will pose some additional problems for access. More importantly, however, this will limit any future expansion of the collection.
- d. While the collection has its own Management Committee, this Committee is answerable to the Military History Unit in Canberra, and will remain so. Consequently, while the Management Committee, has the authority to raise funds and to carry out minor works, it must seek approval from Canberra for any major building projects, expansions, acquisitions, etc.
- e. In addition the Management Committee receives the bulk of its annual funding via the Military History Unit. This funding is limited as Defence rightly sets priorities for its *raison d'être*. This will severely limit the existing facility's ability to introduce new technologies as well as preclude the employment of professional staff, such as conservators. Volunteers will continue to provide excellent support but this will primarily be in the form of guides and administrative staff.

In summary the existing collection, even once relocated, has limited potential as a major tourist attraction or as a true military museum.

It is not proposed to absorb the existing facility into any new museum. Rather it could remain as a standalone collection, or it could be incorporated into a new museum, but still controlled by its own Management Committee. In the long term (20 – 50 years), however, it would appear logical, just by a process of osmosis, that the current collection, be absorbed into any purpose built museum

Submission

The North Australian Military Heritage Assn, previously known as the North Australian Armed Forces Museum Assn, was one of the major organizations involved in the campaign to convince

the Commonwealth Government to handover Jezzine Barracks to the Townsville City Council. This Association was initially formed in October 1997 with the primary objective of building an internationally acclaimed military museum within Jezzine Barracks. The rationale for this objective was primarily based on the military significance of the area and the need to establish a centre of military history especially that relating to the northern part of Australia. In addition such a museum would provide another much-needed world class tourist attraction in Townsville. This would become even more important once the cruise ship facility was operational. The motto of the Association is *"TO PRESERVE OUR HERITAGE"*. It would also be a fitting, living memorial to all those who serve our nation.

Townsville became a "garrison city" during World War 11, and it has remained Australia's only garrison city since. Townsville is located closer to many of the nations that were involved in World War 11 than our national capital is/was. The majority of north Queenslanders will probably never visit the Australian War Memorial in Canberra so it is essential that Townsville should be the "home" of North Australia's military heritage.

When developing Jezzine Barracks, it is essential that the planners have a long term vision, not only looking at 10 – 20 years ahead but planning for what will be of importance in 50 years time and beyond. By that time Townsville's population will have grown beyond 300,000 and the region will have expanded to in excess of one million.

It is acknowledged that the majority of Australian museums are subsidized by either State or Commonwealth governments. A stand-alone museum will not be financially viable. However any modern museum is now supported by other money-making businesses, such as restaurants, convention centres, reception areas and most museums now charge an entry fee. It would also be essential to organize other activities to attract tourists and the local community to the museum precinct, such as musical interludes, displays, concerts, military pageantry, beating the retreat, orchestral performances, etc. Approaches for financial assistance could also be made to the American Legion of the US 5th Air Force and to the governments of those close nations that were involved in World War 11, even including Japan.

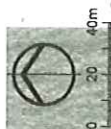
In 2001 the Association successfully applied for funding from both the State and Federal Governments to carry out a Feasibility Study on the proposal to construct a purpose-built museum to international standards. This Study was completed by the Townsville-based Australian Economic Consultants (AEC). The AEC report was most promising, stating that this proposal was one of the projects most likely to succeed. Copies of this Report can be provided to the Phillips Group if required.

The major consideration is to plan for such developments now, thereby ensuring that sufficient and suitable land is available within Jezzine Barracks to facilitate the construction of the museum and supporting facilities in the future.

It is emphasised that the campaign to retain Jezzine Barracks was based on the premise that the area would retain its military significance and would not be available for commercial development.

Consequently the North Australian Military Heritage Association requests that sufficient and suitable land be specifically identified, and put aside, within Jezzine Barracks for the future construction of an international standard, purpose-built military museum plus additional supporting infrastructure. An area of 3 – 4 hectares will be required for this purpose.

PROPOSED MUSEUM PRECINCT KISSING POINT, TOWNSVILLE



This plan is conceptual and for discussion purposes only. All areas, dimensions and land uses are preliminary, subject to investigation, survey, engineering, and Local Authority and Agency approvals.

Drawn: JS

Scale: 1:2000 @ A3

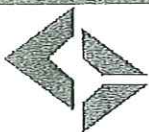
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Job No: 25373/1-1

Date: 14th October, 2008



surveying
project management
town planning
mapping and GIS



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Jezzine Barracks Community Trust

3 November 2008

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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Further to the Submission by the North Australian Military Heritage Association to the Phillips Group, through the Jezzine Barracks Community Trust, dated 14 October 2008 (which formally requested that sufficient land be set aside with the Jezzine Barracks precinct for the development of a purpose built, international standard military museum) the following supporting documentation is forwarded in accordance with the Submission Guidelines:

- a. **Development Plan.** This Plan was prepared by the Townsville-based Australian Economics Consultants (AEC) for the North Australian Armed Forces Museum Association (the forerunner to the North Australian Military Heritage Association) at considerable costs – approximately \$27,000.00. While it is acknowledged that this Plan was developed some years ago, it is contended that the majority of statistics and other information contained within the Plan is still relevant. Besides the Association does not have sufficient funding to cover the costs of having an updated version prepared.
- b. **Submission Guidelines.** The following information is provided in response to the Jezzine Barracks Submission Guidelines:
 1. **Location and Area of Land:** See original submission.
 2. **Proposed Use of Land:** See original submission and Development Plan.
 3. **Proposed Time Frame for Land Development:** There is no proposed time frame. The essential element of our submission is that a suitable area of land be set aside for the future development of a purpose built, international standard military museum, including supporting infrastructure (restaurant, convention centre, restoration area, conservation area, research area, etc).

4. **Budget Costs:** See Page 50 of the Development Plan. It is emphasised that the proposed museum could be built in stages over a number of years. It should be noted that the Melbourne-based firm of Ashton Raggatt McDougall informally indicated that a substantial military museum could be constructed within the specified area for approximately \$20M. Ashton Raggatt McDougall is a national renowned firm that was responsible for the design and construction of the Australian National Museum in Canberra (not to be confused with the Australian War Memorial) and other significant memorials in Melbourne. Representatives of this firm have visited Townsville on a number of occasions to discuss this proposal with our Association.
 5. **Who will pay:** It is suggested that a substantial proportion of the initial costs could be met from the funds allocated to the Jezzine Barracks Community Trust. Contributions could be sought from the local and national industrial businesses, such as Korea Zinc, Mt Isa Mines, BHP, and others on the basis of having one of the museum buildings named in honour of the sponsoring business. Approaches could also be made to the United States of America, particularly to their Legion, in recognition that the US 5th Air Force was raised in Townsville during World War 11 and that many thousands of American troops served in or passed through Townsville during that conflict. Other funding sources could also be examined by experts within this field. Again it is emphasised that construction should be staged over a number of years. In view of the current global financial downturn, initial construction could be delayed until the situation is stabilised.
 6. **Maintenance Costs:** See Development Plan.
 7. **Management of Developed Site:** See development Plan.
- c. **Acceptance of Submission Guidelines.** The North Australian Military Heritage Association formally accepts the Jezzine Barracks Community Trust Submission Conditions as detailed in the Submission Guidelines.



NEIL WEEKES, AM, MC

President

Enclosure: 1. Development Plan Prepared by AEC