



**HERITAGE  
COUNCIL**  
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

### Register Entry

1. **DATA BASE No.** 526
2. **NAME** World War II Buildings, Oliver Hill Battery and Signal Ridge, Wadjemup/Rottnest Island  
  
FORMER NAME (or OTHER NAMES) Oliver Hill Battery, Signal Hill, Signal Ridge at Wadjemup Hill, Lighthouse Ridge, Signal Station, Battery Observation Post (BOP), Fortress Observation Post (FOP), Fire Command Post, WRANS House
3. **LOCATION** Oliver Hill and Signal Ridge, Wadjemup/Rottnest Island
4. **DESCRIPTION OF PLACE INCLUDED IN THIS ENTRY**  
Part of Reserve 16713 comprising portion of Lot 10976 on Deposited Plan 216860 being part of the land contained in Crown Land Title Volume LR3096 Folio 976; Lot 10613 on Deposited Plan P187203 being all of the land contained in Crown Land Title Volume LR3053 Folio 552; Lot 10614 on Deposited Plan P187203 being all of the land contained in Crown Land Title Volume LR3053 Folio 553; Lot 10750 on Deposited Plan 187203 being all of the land contained in Crown Land Title Volume LR3053 Folio 573 together as shown on Heritage Council Curtilage Map P526-2.
5. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA** City of Cockburn
6. **OWNER AT REGISTRATION**  
State of WA (Responsible Agency: Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions; Management order: Rottnest Island Authority)
7. **HERITAGE LISTINGS**
  - Register of Heritage Places:

Amended	10/01/2025
Interim	03/07/1992
Registered	14/06/2021
Classified	08/02/1980
  - National Trust Classification:
  - Town Planning Scheme:
  - Municipal Inventory:
  - Register of the National Estate: Permanent 28/09/1982
  - Aboriginal Sites Register
  - Engineering Heritage Australia

Engineering Heritage	From 2009
National Landmark	

## 8. ORDERS UNDER SECTION OF THE ACT

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## 9. HERITAGE AGREEMENT

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## 10. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

*World War II Buildings, Oliver Hill Battery and Signal Ridge, Wadjemup/Rottnest Island* comprising two World War II sites located at Oliver Hill Battery and Signal Ridge, including two 9.2 inch (9.2") breech loading guns (1937; 1938), and their emplacements (1937), and underground facilities; Engine Room; Fortress and Battery Plotting Room (1938); railway lines and paths; remnant structures; and archaeological elements associated with the 1936 to 1944 operation of the battery at Oliver Hill; and the Battery Observation Post (1939); (Post War) Signal Station (1939); WRANS House (1940); and archaeological deposits and other structures associated with the World War II operations at Signal Ridge, has cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

the place was a site of strategic importance in Australia's coastal defences during World War II, and is representative of the military defence initiatives considered necessary to adequately defend the Port of Fremantle leading up to and during the War;

the place is representative of the breech-loading gun batteries established to protect strategic defence positions during World War II in Commonwealth countries. As part of the Rottnest Fortress, *World War II Buildings, Oliver Hill Battery and Signal Ridge, Wadjemup/Rottnest Island* is representative of places commandeered by the military during wartime and adapted for the purposes of national defence and was an integral component of the network of Fremantle Fortress coastal defence batteries developed to protect the Port of Fremantle and Western Australia during World War II;

the place is a discontinuous precinct comprising intact and understandable remnants of the Fremantle Fortress, demonstrating distinctive method of coastal defence that is no longer relevant in the age of modern warfare. The two 9.2 inch guns at Oliver Hill, manufactured in 1901 and 1902, are the last of this type remaining in position in Australia, and the place is one of only five locations in the world where 9.2 inch guns remain in position. The Battery Observation Post and Signal Station at Signal Ridge are rare remnants of a combined observation and fire command post and a Port War Signal Station in Australia;

the place comprises two prominent landmarks within the natural landscape of Wadjemup/ Rottnest Island. The functional requirements for elevated and panoramic views from both Oliver Hill and Signal Ridge necessitated the situation of Oliver Hill Battery, Signal Station and Battery Observation Post amid the highest points of Wadjemup/Rottnest Island. The two H1 and H2 9.2 inch guns at Oliver Hill are significant landmarks;

the place displays considerable technical accomplishment, and remains an engineering feat due to its large size and inaccessible location. The transportation of equipment from the harbour to Oliver Hill and Signal Ridge, the construction of the facilities, and the successful installation of high

precision artillery equipment demonstrates a considerable technical innovation at the time;

the place has scientific value in its potential for demonstrating the complexity of a military defence establishment and the range of technology and military specialities necessary to adequately carry out the artillery defence role, as well as contributing information and archaeological material leading to a wider understanding of the military history of the place, Wadjemup/ Rottnest Island and Western Australia;

the site is highly valued by the community of war veterans, engineers and the broader community because of its major role in the defence of Western Australia and because of the men and women who worked there as evidenced by the continuing support for its preservation by the existing service and retired military associations and the community at large; and

as the World War II workplace of the members of the Australian Women's Army Service, who operated the plotting rooms at Oliver Hill Battery, and the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service who operated the Port War Signal Station between 1943 and 1945, the place is important in demonstrating the role of women in World War II.

The toilets; lookouts; modern train station, shading and picnic structure; and signage; and site furniture located at Oliver Hill Battery, and the toilets on Signal Ridge, are of little significance.

The *Rottnest Island Light Station* comprising Wadjemup Lighthouse and Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage, at Wadjemup Hill does not form part of *World War II Buildings, Oliver Hill Battery and Signal Ridge, Wadjemup/Rottnest Island*