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# Brooklyn Migrant Hostel (Former)



Brooklyn Migrant Hostel  
(former), Hobsons Bay  
Heritage Study 2006

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## Location

431 Francis Street BROOKLYN, Hobsons Bay City

## Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

## Level of significance

Not Recommended

## Heritage Listing

Hobsons Bay City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant?

The Brooklyn Migrant Hostel (former) comprising the Nissen hut (via Gate 1) and two early wool stores (84, 85) and land within nominally 5m of their perimeters, which operated between 1949-70, at 431 Francis Street, Brooklyn.

How is it Significant?

The Brooklyn Migrant Hostel (former) is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Hobsons Bay.

Why is it Significant?

Historically, it is significant for its strong associations with immigration in the post World War 2 era which was the foundation of a population surge in the Altona area (AHC criterion A4)

Socially, it has strong associations with the local community, many of whom were migrants or are related to immigrants and the memory held by local people of the place and its function as celebrated in the publication *The Ten Quid Tourists*. (AHC criterion G1)

Heritage Study/Consultant Hobsons Bay - Hobsons Bay Heritage Study, Hobsons Bay City Council, 2006;

Construction dates 1949,

Hermes Number 15063

Property Number

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## Physical Description 1

Three rows of wool stores (17 total) and Nissen or Quonset huts, and possibly army 'N' or 'P' huts were used by the migrant hostel. The book, *Ten Quid Tourists* has pictures of these and there are oral histories which may also mention the building types. The Nissen huts appear to have been erected after 1951, and were all but gone, along with all the other army huts by 1982 (Aerial Photo). The huts in the 1951 Aerial may be "P" and "N" huts, similar to the standard Army Barrack huts - or the oral recollections in the book are wrong. The 1954 aerial seems to show both Nissen and P or N-type huts.

One Nissen hut (clad with corrugated iron) survives in the north east part of the site as part of the Brooklyn Estate (431 Francis Street, gate 1). It can also be viewed through Gate 2 of the estate in Millers Road. Another of these Nissen huts is said to have been moved to Pier Street Altona for use by the Olympic tyre business.

Most of the timber framed wool stores had been demolished by the mid 1990s (Vines, 2000). In their place are clear-span stores, dominating the Millers Road frontage, but two of the old gabled stores on the east end of the two northern rows (numbers 85, 84) have survived (shown in 1998 aerial views) reclad with cement sheet (Brooklyn Estate, 431 Francis Street). The contemporary photographs of the 1950s show similar scaled buildings generally clad in timber boards with corrugated iron roofs.

The environment once created by these structures has been largely dissipated, with extensive new structures in their place as part of the industrial estate. Other sites in the City which relate to immigration include the Wiltona complex which has also been largely renewed since its inception, although for the purpose of more immigrant housing.

## Integrity

External Condition

Fair

External Condition

Low - Most of the original buildings have been demolished.

## Historical Australian Themes

Peopling the continent, Migrating

## Physical Description 3

### *Associations*

Commonwealth Government

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*