

DRILL HALL, LEEDERVILLE



PLACE INFORMATION	
Place name	Drill Hall, Leederville
Other names	RAAF Barracks & Drill Hall Leederville Mechanics' Institute
Place type	Individual building or group

HERITAGE LISTING	
inHerit ID:	8764
State Heritage Register:	22 Jan 2002
Other Listing:	Municipal Inventory Adopted 13 Nov 1995

SITE LOCATION	
Street address	177 Oxford St
Locality	Leederville
Survey	LOT: 1 STR: 43228
Vol/folio	2537/707
Reserve	—

SIGNIFICANCE	
Level of significance	<p>Exceptional</p> <p>Essential to the heritage of the area. Rare or outstanding example. Consider for nomination for State Register of Heritage Places if not already included.</p>
Management category	<p>Category 1</p> <p>The place should be retained and conserved. Any alterations or extensions should reinforce the significance of the place and be in accordance with a Conservation Plan if one is in place.</p>
Statement of significance	<p>Drill Hall, Leederville is a good example of the Federation Free Classical style of public building constructed in the early years of the development of North Perth and Leederville.</p> <p>Drill Hall, Leederville is a landmark at the intersection of two important roads and marks the western edge of the Leederville Town Centre along Vincent Street.</p> <p>The evolution of the Drill Hall, Leederville site provides an understanding of the changing nature of the Department of Defence training sites over a period of more than eight decades.</p> <p>Drill Hall, Leederville was adapted from a 1909 Mechanics' Institute in 1913 and demonstrates the manner in which the emerging defence training needs of the country had to be satisfied in parts of metropolitan Perth at that time.</p> <p>Drill Hall, Leederville was one of numerous drill halls that were established in metropolitan Perth during the pre and early years of World War One.</p> <p>Drill Hall, Leederville contributed to the local community's sense of place; firstly, with the establishment of a Mechanics' Institute for the edification of young men and, secondly, as a focus for the defence training needs of the locality during a time of international war.</p>

PLACE USE

Original use	Social/Recreational: Mechanics Institute
Current use	Health: Other
Other use	Military: Drill Hall

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Construction date	1908; 2004
Walls	Brick
Roof	Corrugated metal sheeting
Architectural Style	Federation Free Classical

Physical description	<p>The Mechanics Institute developed the Hall behind the street front annexe. The annexe is built to the footpath in a Federation Free Classical style. The parapeted façade of the annexe has a tripartite composition. Above the parapet is a central pediment, which has carried the consecutive names of the hall. The annexe is designed around a large entry hall with offices and lounge. The front offices have pressed tin ceilings in a number of different designs.</p> <p>The hall was a functionalist brick hall with a high pitched galvanised iron roof. Its northern end was a temporary wall behind a raised stage with side wings. These were removed following the change from Mechanics Institute to Drill Hall. Subsequently offices were constructed along the western wall requiring the original high level windows to be filled in. The change from Drill Hall to Air Training Corp brought minimal change.</p>
-----------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Physical description	During 2004 extensive redevelopment was conducted on the site, involving the Drill Hall's original structure being converted into residential and commercial use. The site's old parade ground has been landscaped to reflect the cultural heritage significance associated with the site. Zero front setback to Vincent Street, and very close to the Mitchell Freeway off ramp along the side.
Condition	Good
Integrity	High
Authenticity	Moderate

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Part of the subject site, at the corner of Vincent Street (this portion was formerly known as Redan Street) and Stamford Street (then known as Frogmore Gardens), was initially owned by James Stewart Bennet in 1896. The land was transferred to Maria Burges in 1901 and the Leederville Mechanics Institute in 1908.

The building now known as Drill Hall was the then Leederville Mechanics Institute. Mechanics Institutes were established to provide the working man with uplifting and educational reading material, and a place to meet for lectures. The first Leederville Mechanics Institute was part of the Municipal Chambers, built at another site on Oxford Street in 1898. The building quickly proved too small for both functions and a new Leederville Mechanics Institute was built at the subject site along Redan Street. The building was designed by architect Edgar J. Henderson and the contract for construction was awarded to Franklin and Finlay.

The foundation stone was laid on 8 December 1908. With the introduction of compulsory military training in Australia in 1911 prior to World War One, the Commonwealth Defence Department needed extra drill halls. Leederville Mechanics Institute was acquired by the Defence Department for use as a drill hall in 1913 and was then known as Leederville Drill Hall.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

This building consisted of a large single space, approached through an entry annexe of hallway, opened to Vincent Street and flanked by four offices. Following the outbreak of World War One, the Leederville Drill Hall was used for recruiting and training. Extra land was acquired adjoining the hall site, which provided an area for a parade ground. There was a weatherboard cottage on the land at time of acquisition. This was removed in 1922-23.

In 1919, there were 13 drill halls in Perth and another 17 in country areas. Use of the drill halls fluctuated over the years. Various other structures were added to the site at Leederville, resulting in some 15 structures, many of them temporary or transportable. In 1960, the site was referred to as the Western Command Signal Squadron Depot. Circa 1979, Leederville Drill Hall was taken over by the RAAF (Royal Australian Air Force) for use by the Air Training Corps. In recent years a number of suburban drill halls have been sold. Leederville Drill Hall was offered for public tender in 2000.

During 2004 the site underwent extensive redevelopment in which a number of buildings at the site have been demolished, including a house at No. 2 Stamford Street, a commercial shop 'Cooling Brothers' at No. 177 Oxford Street and several demountable buildings and shed. These works included the removal of paint on the front façade and enclosure of the alcoves on the front entrance.

The original Drill Hall has been retained and the whole site converted to residential and commercial use. The project's success was recognized with a Town of Vincent 2003 Building Design and Conservation Award win. The building continues to be use for a commercial purpose.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Historic theme	Social Services: Education	
	Governing: Law, Order and Defence	
	Economy: Commerce	
Associations	Edgar J. Henderson	Architect
	Franklin and Finlay.	Builder
Sources	P8764 Drill Hall, Leederville Assessment Documentation	

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS



ARCHIVAL IMAGES



Drill Hall, 1968. Courtesy SLWA b2450036_1.