

LOTON PARK TENNIS CLUB, PERTH



PLACE INFORMATION

Place name	Loton Park Tennis Club
Other names	
Place type	Individual building or group

HERITAGE LISTING

inHerit ID:	3536
State Heritage Register:	7 Oct 1997
Other Listing:	Municipal Inventory Adopted 13 Nov 1995 Register of the National Estate Nominated 17 May 1991 Register of the National Estate Registered 27 Oct 1998 Classified by the National Trust Classified 05 Dec 1988

SITE LOCATION

Street address	27 Bulwer St
Locality	Perth
Survey	LOT: 50 D/P: 182
Vol/folio	2064/391
Reserve	—

SIGNIFICANCE

Level of significance	Exceptional Essential to the heritage of the area. Rare or outstanding example. Consider for nomination for State Register of Heritage Places if not already included.
Management category	Category 1 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.
Statement of significance	<p>Loton Park Tennis Club has some aesthetic value for its interpretation of the Inter War Arts and Crafts style in a simple utilitarian building.</p> <p>The place has a strong contextual relationship with the tennis courts and together the two elements are a landmark in the streetscape.</p> <p>The building has historic significance as one of the oldest clubhouses still in operation in Western Australia.</p> <p>The place has historic value for its association with the former extensive property holdings of Sir William Thorley Loton, politician, merchant and landowner and for his association with the development of Loton's Paddock as Perth Oval and Loton Park.</p> <p>The building has social value as a demonstration of the importance of recreational sport to the Australian community throughout the 20th century and is a modest yet representative pavilion typical of a suburban tennis club.</p>

PLACE USE	
Original use	Social/Recreational: Other Sports Building
Current use	Social/Recreational: Other Sports Building
Other use	

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS	
Construction date	1905; 1922
Walls	Fibrous cement sheeting
Roof	Metal cladding
Architectural Style	Federation Arts and Crafts
Physical description	<p>The pavilion has a gable roof with a gable facing south (over the tennis courts), and a verandah. The timber framed building is set into the bank so that it sits above the tennis courts. The wide verandah has timber posts with a simple timber valance, and a simple rail that allows spectators to watch games.</p> <p>The original cladding has been replaced with fibre cement sheeting. The roof is slate, with terracotta ridge capping and finials. Timber stairs lead from each end of the verandah to the courts. The building faces south with the rear elevation facing Bulwer Street. The tennis club consists of six turf courts and two concrete courts and several mature palm trees around the perimeter.</p>
Condition	Good
Integrity	High
Authenticity	High

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Loton Park, an area of land at Location 114, was originally owned by William Thorley Loton, Mayor of Perth (1901-2), MLC and well-known pastoralist. Loton, who was knighted in 1923, had his home 'Dilhorn' across the road at No. 2 Bulwer Street. The 1897 City of Perth & Suburbs PWD sewerage plants indicated a shed or small building near the tennis club site and four more on the north-western side of what later became Perth Oval. Loton offered the land to the Perth City Council on 12 September 1904 with the stipulation that it be used for public recreation and named Loton Park.

Residential subdivisions were being carried out on the northern side of Perth at the time and it is possible that one of the reasons for the sale was the low lying nature of the ground which meant it would have required very expensive filling to make it suitable for residential purposes. By the time of the sale the land that became Loton Park Tennis Club had been excised and was no longer part of Loton's Paddock. By 1910 the recreation area was known as Perth Oval. Among the recreation facilities provided by the City were four tennis courts, constructed in 1913-14. Lawn tennis was first played in Western Australia at Government House and Sir John Forrest's house were early courts were constructed. Lady Forrest was a keen player and was often involved in the competitions held at Government House.

The first club formed was the Perth Tennis Club in 1896 with courts on the Perth Esplanade, adjacent to the Perth Bowling Club. Others soon followed and the Loton Park Tennis Club was established in 1916 after City of Perth agreed to allow a private group, whose spokesman was Mr Hatfield, to use three of the courts. The club held its inaugural meeting on 4 December 1916 where the Hon. R. J. Robinson was elected as the inaugural president and J. Broadway as secretary. It chose blue and white as its official colours and adopted the South Perth Tennis Club's rules. (These changed over the years to purple and green in the 1920s and then stripes were added.) The official opening of the club's courts was held on 16 December 1916.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

In 1917 it was granted the use of two more courts and in 1919, it joined the Western Australian Lawn Tennis Association. This had been inaugurated in 1899, reformed in 1902, and finally established in 1903 with seven founding clubs as members. The club applied twice for permission to build a pavilion. This was granted in 1920. It was erected in 1922, to one of two designs proposed by architects Eales & Cohen, and consisted of two rooms and a wide verandah to accommodate spectators. Exotic planting along the bank at the rear was carried out at this time and the pavilion was officially opened on 5 June, with a mixed doubles tournament being held in celebration.

In 1932, the pavilion was extended to provide extra changing facilities. New wire fences were erected in 1937, again with assistance from the City of Perth. In 1939 it was connected to the sewer and toilets and showers installed in 1953. Details appeared on the 1953 revised MWSS & DD plans for the area. A tea-tree hedge, first planted in 1939, was extended in 1955 to complete the area's division from Perth Oval. In 1995 a Conservation Management Plan was commissioned with the aid of Lotteries money for repairs. Renovations were carried out with the aid of a Lotteries Commission heritage grant of \$26,425, included re-stumping, re-roofing and re-wiring and the replacement of a number of exterior wooden features. The tea-tree hedge, which was on the Town of Vincent's Trees of Significance Register, was replaced in 2006 at a cost of \$1,200. New fencing and a retaining wall were also erected at a cost of \$14,000.

In more recent times members of the Polish community played there regularly and donated the Polish Cup. In 1995 the Loton Park Tennis Club altered its constitution to be a LGBTI managed club. Many of the clubs members have been from Perth's LGBT+ communities, though it is not an exclusive tennis club, accepting anyone from any background. The club's motto is 'Diversity is Our Advantage'.

Aerial photographs from the mid 20th century onwards show the building on the subject site has changed little since its construction. As mentioned above, a new roof was installed in the late 1990s which was then replaced again in 2021 which used a product which replicates a slate profile. There have been no visible changes since that time.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Historic theme	Cultural Life: Recreation - Sport Cultural Life: Recreation - Arts, Culture and Entertainment	
Associations	William Thorley Loton Hon. R. J. Robinson J. Broadway Eales & Cohen	Original land owner and Perth Lord Mayor Inaugural club president Club secretary Architects
Sources	Municipal Heritage Inventory 2006. Landgate Aerial photographs 1953-2024. P3536 Loton Park Tennis Club Assessment Documentation, DPLH, 1997.	

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS



ARCHIVAL IMAGERY



Loton Park Tennis Club 1924. Courtesy City of Vincent Local History Collection, image 101491. PH 03445.