

SUMMARY OF STATE HERITAGE PLACE

REGISTER ENTRY

Entry in the South Australian Heritage Register in accordance with the
Heritage Places Act 1993

NAME: Former Torrens Lake Police Station **PLACE NO.:** 26365

ADDRESS: Victoria Drive, Adelaide SA 5000
CR 6102/717 Q22 F38386 Sec 509 Hundred of Adelaide

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The former Torrens Lake Police Station is a unique surviving example of a station designed to house water police, as well as an uncommon example of a public building of the inter-War Spanish Mission style. It also has significant associations with both the development of law and order in South Australia, and the cultural development of the Torrens River precinct.

RELEVANT CRITERIA (under section 16 of the *Heritage Places Act 1993*)

(a) *it demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history.*

A timber police station was first built near the Torrens River in 1881. This was staffed by two to three water police officers who managed boat licensing, the river and its banks, and helped at Adelaide Oval when required. The first station was demolished in 1904, and the North Adelaide station was used as a base for water police until the new brick building was constructed in 1928.

The new building was the result of considerable planning, the land having been leased from 1914, and the building designed by the Architect-in-Chief. The building remained in use as a police station until 1956, and is now used by the City Council. Built to address a need in the River location, the building reflects increased boating and other activities on and around the River Torrens and the corresponding changing role of the police service. The Police Station housed the 'Inspector of Boats and Keeper of Swans', a duty carried out until the 1970s when it was taken over by the Park Lands Ranger.

The former Torrens Lake Police Station has important associations with the development of the police service in this state, and in particular, the management of law and order in the vicinity of the Torrens Lake, River and surrounding parklands. The building and its predecessor were constructed in response to a perceived need for policing along and around the river, and the continued police presence helped to maintain law and order in the area for many decades. The place is also a notable local landmark, demonstrating important aspects of the early-20th century development of the Torrens Lake and River.

(b) *It has rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance.*

The former Torrens Lake Police Station is the only example of a water police station in this state. It was constructed in response to the need for increased police presence in the Torrens Lake area, and survives as a unique reminder of both the development of the Torrens Lake precinct and the expansion of law and order services in South Australia.

As a distinctive example of the Inter-War Spanish Mission style, the building also displays an architectural style which is uncommon for public buildings in South Australia. It also has an unusual design which has been little altered since its original construction.

SITE PLAN

Former Torrens Lake Police Station
Victoria Drive, Adelaide

PLACE NO: 26365

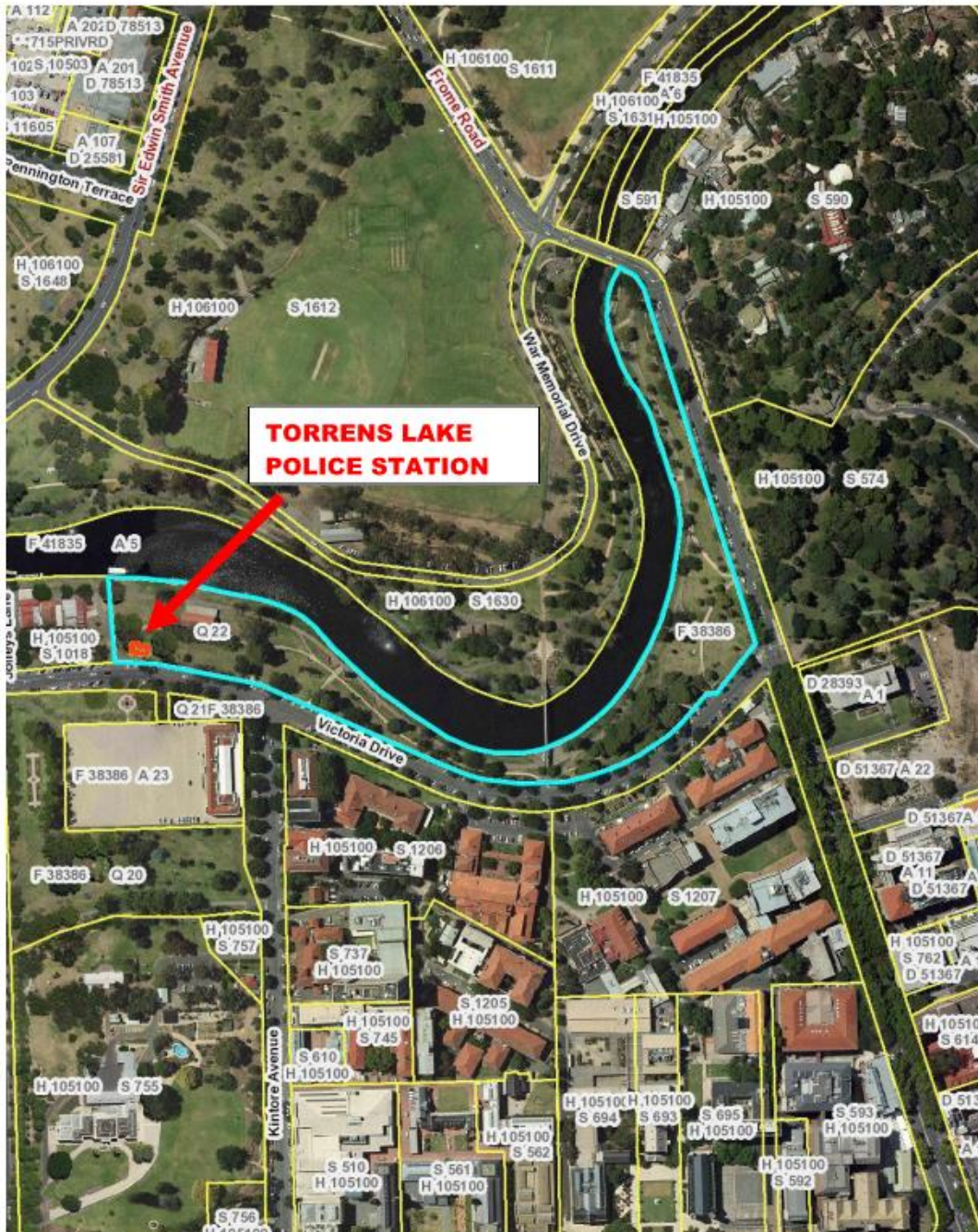


Former Torrens Lake Police Station (Note: Portico obscured by trees)
**Site plan generally indicating the important elements and features of the place
(outlined in red)**

LOCATION PLAN

Former Torrens Lake Police Station
Victoria Drive, Adelaide

PLACE NO: 26365



COMMENTARY ON THE LISTING

Description and notes with respect to a place entered in the South Australian Heritage Register in accordance with the *Heritage Places Act 1993*

Physical Description

This is an asymmetric single storey complex that consists of a hipped Marseilles clad tiled roof over the Charge Room, which leads to an open courtyard (or exercise yard with privy) and to a double holding cell.

The Spanish Mission style of the construction is emphasised by the white painted plastering with clusters of tile inserts, wrought iron window grilles and scalloped parapets. Entry to the station is by means of a round arched loggia, a modestly tiled floor and multi-paned main door. The charge room also has a chimney. Modern services have been added to the building, but its physical integrity remains high.

The former police station is located in Karrawirra / Park 12, close to Victoria Drive on the southern side of the River Torrens and to the east of the Adelaide Bridge.

The components identified as being intrinsic to the heritage significance of the Former Torrens Lake Police Station include:

- Original brick building including loggia, charge room with chimney, double holding cell and exercise yard with privy;
- Spanish Mission detailing including plastered walls, scalloped parapets, wrought-iron window grilles, timber-framed doors and windows, and Marseilles-tiled roof.

The extent of listing excludes later additions (modern services).

History of the Place

South Australia's first water police station was constructed near the Adelaide Bridge in 1881. This timber structure was demolished in 1904, and in June 1914, the Police Department commenced a 42-year lease of the site of the current building. The new water police station was not constructed until 1928. It was designed by the Architect-in-Chief, and built by contractor EVF Dobbie at a total cost of £823 8s 5d.

The police station was constructed in the inter-War Spanish Mission style with an asymmetrical façade and functional layout. The building was constructed of brick with 'white Medusa cement finish', decorative iron work and a gable roof with red shingle tiles. The station comprised a charge room, a double holding cell at the rear of the exercise yard that contained toilet facilities. The Inter-war Spanish Mission style

of the building was not commonly used for public buildings, but reflects interest at the time in developing an Australian vernacular related to warm-climate styles of architecture, rather than English styles. This style was mainly associated with residential buildings, and its use for this police station perhaps reflects an increased interest in architectural trends by the Architect-in-Chief or South Australian Public Buildings Department. The 1920s building was contemporaneous with the now-demolished toilets in Victoria Square and the former Education Building in Kintore Avenue, also designed in the Inter-war Spanish Mission style.

A report on the work of the Water Police at the time appeared in South Australian Parliamentary Paper 53–1926:

Torrens Lake and adjacent gardens have been under the constant supervision of two constables during the year. An additional constable was stationed there during the summer months. Attention was given by them to the protection of the numerous boat houses and other buildings in the vicinity of the lake as well as supervision at all band concerts on the Rotunda, and assisting in the regulation of traffic at functions held on Adelaide Oval. They have been very successful in preventing serious damage to the above-mentioned property, besides attending to the recovery of dead bodies from the lake. They were responsible for detecting 49 persons for various offences.

The station remained in use until 1956 when the lease reverted to the Adelaide City Council. The former Water Police Station continues to be used by the Adelaide City Council as an office and store for its Parks and Gardens officers and a northern office for parking inspectors.

References

- Donovan & Associates, *Adelaide Park Lands Heritage Places*, 2011.
- David Jones, *Adelaide Park Lands & Squares Cultural Landscape Assessment Study*, Corporation of the City of Adelaide, October 2007, pp. 197, 202, 207, 215.
- Patricia Sumerling, *The Adelaide Parklands: a social history*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town, 2011, p. 45, 54.
- *South Australian Parliamentary Papers*, 53–1926; 53–1928; 53–1929
- *Advertiser*, 3.8.1928
- State Records, *Account book*, GRG 38/32/1

SITE DETAILS

Former Torrens Lake Police Station
Victoria Drive, Adelaide

PLACE NO: 26365

FORMER NAME:	Torrens Lake Police Station
DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:	Single-storey rendered brick police station comprising loggia, charge room, double holding cell, exercise yard with privy, and Spanish Mission detailing including scalloped parapets, wrought-iron window grilles, timber-framed doors and windows, and Marseilles-tiled roof.
DATE OF COMPLETION:	1928
SA HERITAGE REGISTER STATUS:	Description: Confirmed Date: 7 March 2014
LOCAL HERITAGE STATUS	N/A
CURRENT USE:	Description: ACC Parks & Gardens store Dates: 1956 to present
PREVIOUS USE(S):	Description: Police Station Dates: 1928 - 1956
ARCHITECT:	Name: Architect in Chief Dates: 1928
BUILDER:	Name: EVF Dobbie Dates: 1928
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:	Description: Adelaide City Council
LOCATION:	Street No.: Street Name: Victoria Drive Town/Suburb: Adelaide Post Code: 5000
LAND DESCRIPTION:	Title Type: CR Volume: 6102 Folio: 717 Plan No.: F38386 Lot No.: Q22 Section: 509 Hundred: Adelaide

PHOTOS

Former Torrens Lake Police Station
Victoria Drive, Adelaide

PLACE NO: 26365



Former Torrens Lake Police Station - View to the north-west showing exterior of the wall to the exercise yard and holding cell with entry to the yard.



Former Torrens Lake Police Station – view to the south-east

PHOTOS

Former Torrens Lake Police Station
Victoria Drive, Adelaide

PLACE NO: 26365



Former Torrens Lake Police Station - view to the south-west



Former Torrens Lake Police Station - interior of former charge room



View to west from the holding cell,
now store to the exercise yard

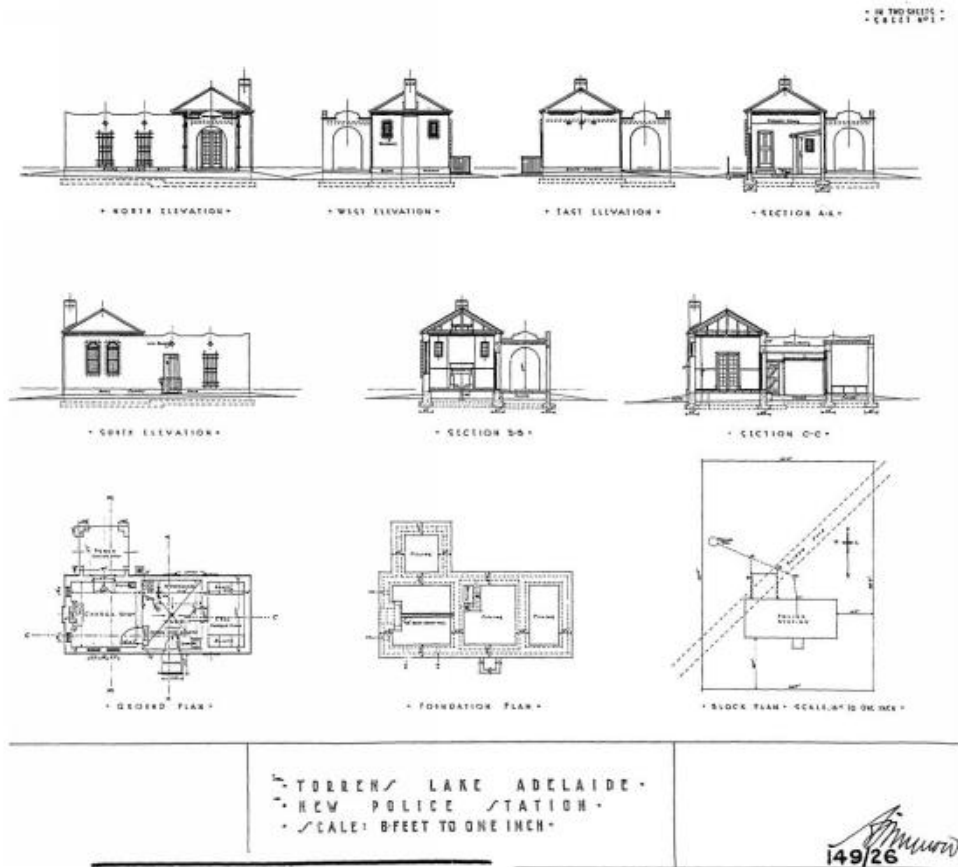


View north from the exercise yard
showing toilet

ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS

Former Torrens Lake Police Station
Victoria Drive, Adelaide

PLACE NO: 26365



Plan of former Torrens Lake Police Station
[Adelaide City Archives, Box 5800 Item 0003]