

Historic Heritage Evaluation

Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) Hobsonville Headquarters and Parade Ground (former)

135 and 214 Buckley Avenue, Hobsonville



Figure 1: RNZAF Headquarters (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)

Prepared by Auckland Council Heritage Unit

July 2017

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to consider the place located at 135 and 214 Buckley Road, Hobsonville against the criteria for evaluation of historic heritage in the Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part) (AUP).

The document has been prepared by Emma Rush, Senior Advisor Special Projects – Heritage; and Rebecca Freeman – Senior Specialist Historic Heritage, Heritage Unit, Auckland Council. It is solely for the use of Auckland Council for the purpose it is intended in accordance with the agreed scope of work.

2.0 Identification

Site address	135 Buckley Avenue, Hobsonville (Parade Ground) and 214 Buckley Avenue, Hobsonville (former Headquarters)
Legal description and Certificate of Title identifier	135 Buckley Ave - LOT 11 DP 484575 214 Buckley Ave - Section 1 SO 490900 Road reserve – Lot 15 DP 484575
NZTM grid reference	Headquarters – Northing: 5927369; Easting: 1748686 Parade Ground – Northing: 5927360; Easting: 1748666
Ownership	135 Buckley Avenue – Auckland Council 214 Buckley Avenue – Auckland Council Road reserve – Auckland Transport
Auckland Unitary Plan zoning	135 Buckley Avenue (Parade Ground) Open Space – Informal Recreation Zone 214 Buckley Avenue (former Headquarters) Residential - Mixed Housing Urban Zone
Existing scheduled item(s)	Hobsonville RNZAF Base – Mill House (UID 235) Hobsonville RNZAF Base - Married Quarters (UID 233)
Additional AUP controls	135 Buckley Avenue (Parade Ground) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hobsonville Point sub-precinct C • Natural Resources: High-Use Aquifer Management Areas Overlay - Kumeu Waitemata Aquifer • Controls: Macroinvertebrate Community Index • Controls: Stormwater Management Area Control - WEST HARBOUR, Flow 1 • Designations: Airspace Restriction Designations - ID 4311, Defence purposes - protection of approach and departure paths (Whenuapai Air Base), Minister of Defence 214 Buckley Avenue (former Headquarters)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hobsonville Point sub-precinct C • Natural Resources: High-Use Aquifer Management Areas Overlay - Kumeu Waitemata Aquifer • Control: Macroinvertebrate Community Index • Designations: Airspace Restriction Designations - ID 4311, Defence purposes - protection of approach and departure paths (Whenuapai Air Base), Minister of Defence
Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga listing	Royal New Zealand Air Force Headquarters and Parade Ground (former) #9711 (Cat 2) Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) Institute Building (former) #9710 (Cat 2)
Pre-1900 site (HNZPT Act 2014 Section 62a)	The place is the site of human activity before 1900 but is not recorded as an archaeological site and has not been assessed to determine if it has archaeological values.
CHI reference/s	CHI Places Number 19907. Building – Old Headquarters and Parade Ground
NZAA site record number/s	NA

3.0 Constraints

This evaluation is based on information that was available, or was able to be sourced, at the time of writing. The primary and secondary sources that were available provided sufficient information to complete this evaluation, but additional research may yield new or further information.

This evaluation does not include an assessment of archaeological values or of the importance of the place to Mana Whenua.

The structural integrity and condition of the building have not been addressed. Any comments on the structure or condition are based on visual inspection only.

Site visits were conducted on 16 August 2016 and 5 July 2017. The interior of the building was not viewed and was not assessed as part of the evaluation.

4.0 Historical summary

Refer to Appendix 1 for further historical research

Hobsonville

The land at 135 and 214 Buckley Avenue, Hobsonville is part of a large block bought by the Crown from Ngati Whatua in 1853. This land parcel of about 1,000 acres was labelled 'Waipareira' and was divided into four blocks and sold off in 1854 and 1855. The area later became known as Hobsonville after Captain William Hobson, first Governor of New Zealand.

Rice Owen Clark, the first European to settle at Hobsonville, purchased Block 21 of Waipareira in 1854. He built a house and cleared and drained the land, eventually developing about 30 acres. Clark grew vegetables on the land and supplied them to the rapidly developing town of Auckland.

Hobsonville Air Base

The New Zealand Permanent Air Force was founded in 1923, with the first military aerodrome established at Wigram, Christchurch. By 1924, there was a desire for an air base to be established near Auckland, and that it be suitable for both land and sea planes. After consideration of several sites, Hobsonville was selected and, in 1925, the New Zealand Government purchased 167 acres of land from Henry Clark (son of Rice Owen Clark).

Little was done with the land until 1927, when work began to establish an airfield for both Navy and Army use. By 1929, runways had been prepared, hangars constructed, and offices, ablutions, mess-rooms and kitchens established. With the onset of the Depression in the late 1920s, government spending on military was curtailed. However, by the mid-1930s, with the effects of the Depression easing, work resumed at Hobsonville; further hangars and accommodations for staff were constructed and work was carried out to re-level and extend the airfield. In 1936, a further 55 acres of land was purchased and added to the base. In 1937, the status of Hobsonville Air Base had changed to that of an exclusively military base, allowing for the storage of munitions, and by 1938 the base was operating primarily as a repairs and stores base, with nearby Whenuapai being developed as a new air base.

With the outbreak of war in 1939, Hobsonville Air Base was made ready for enemy attack, with black-out measures introduced and anti-aircraft batteries established around the perimeter of the base. The war years revealed the shortcomings of the grass runway, which at 750 yards was satisfactory for smaller aircraft but was inadequate for some of the larger aircraft that were assembled at Hobsonville (they were not able to be test flown from the airfield).

By 1962, the end of Hobsonville as an operational Air Force Base was approaching. Existing aircraft were coming to the end of their useful life and the replacement found was a land-based plane, so a seaplane station was no longer required. In September 1965, Hobsonville was amalgamated with Whenuapai to form one operational unit.

In 2000, the Government announced that Hobsonville was no longer required for defence purposes and would progressively be closed. New industries began moving onto the land, notably boat building companies. By 2005, most of the land that formed the air base had been transferred to Housing New Zealand, with a subsidiary, Hobsonville Land Company, established to develop the former base to provide homes for 10,000 people.

Hobsonville Administration/Station Headquarters Building

In 1937, correspondence between the Royal New Zealand Air Force (**RNZAF**) and the Public Works Department indicated a desire for buildings at the Flying Training School at Wigram Aerodrome to be replicated at Hobsonville, including an Administration Building (Station Headquarters). By 1938, a decision had been made to provide a new station headquarters at Hobsonville identical to the Administration Building that was in the course of being constructed at Wigram. Estimates of cost for the building were £6,000.

The former RNZAF Headquarters Building (**former Headquarters**) was designed in 1938 by John Thomas Mair, who was Government Architect for the Public Works Department at the time. Plans of the building were labelled 'RNZAF Flying Training School Hobsonville Aerodrome Administration Building'. This label gave rise to the building originally being known as the Administration Building. The title 'Headquarters' is shown on the plans of the building, written on the building above the front entrance.

A tender notice for the construction of 'RNZAF Base, Hobsonville – Administration Building' was published on 5 January 1939. The successful tenderer for the Administration building was A J Grinter, at a price of £5,940. The building was constructed under the guidance of Mair between 1939 and 1940.

The former Headquarters was affected by fire in August 1947, and suffered damage that was estimated to cost £170 to repair.

In 1952, approval was sought from the Minister of Defence for £3,300 for additions to the former Headquarters. This request was approved and plans were drawn up by R A Patterson, Government Architect, and G L Price, District Architect. Revised plans were drawn up by F Gordon Wilson, Government Architect, and Graham Dawson, District Architect. In 1953, the former Headquarters was extended with an additional wing for a conference room constructed on the northern side of the original structure. The construction was completed by Strid Brothers and overseen by the Ministry of Works Architectural Division.

In 2014, the Headquarters and nearby RNZAF Institute Building were transferred to Auckland Council for community purposes, and in 2016 the land parcel was surveyed off and vested in the council.

Parade Ground

The area of open space opposite the former Headquarters, across Buckley Avenue, is known as the Parade Ground. The triangular-shaped area contains a flagpole that was erected in 1947, surrounded by a small semi-circular garden, established in 1955. A memorial, erected in 2012, that recognises the nearly 75 years of war- and peace-time service of personnel based at Hobsonville Air Base is located within the garden, to the west of the flag pole.

Development of the New Zealand Air Force

The expansion of Hobsonville Air Base in the late 1930s was part of a rapid expansion of New Zealand's defensive air power that occurred for three years from early 1937. This expansion occurred in three phases, with the first phase involving the reorganization of Wigram into a flying training school for the training of pilots for the RNZAF and the Royal Air Force, and the conversion of Hobsonville into a stores and repair base. The second expansion phase saw land purchased at Whenuapai and Ohakea for the establishment of an additional two air stations, and further expansion of Wigram and Hobsonville. The final stage saw additional buildings constructed at Hobsonville, the establishment of the Territorial Air Force (TAF). At New Plymouth, Hastings and Invercargill, and the establishment of a regular squadron at Woodbourne in Blenheim.

During this time of expansion, Station Headquarters/Administration Buildings were built at Wigram and Ohakea. As detailed above, the Wigram Administration Building was the model for the Station Headquarters at Hobsonville. The Ohakea Station Headquarters followed a very similar design, only on a larger scale. The building was two storeys, but features many of the same design elements, including the stepped parapet, windows and central entry porch (refer to comparative analysis below).

A station headquarters was also constructed at Whenuapai around the same time. Aerial photographs confirm the building is still present, albeit modified, but further information on the design of style of the building was not able to be obtained for this evaluation. Likewise, no information has been found to confirm if a station headquarters was ever constructed at Woodbourne.

Architect: John Thomas Mair

“John Thomas Mair (1876-1959) was born in Invercargill and began his career with the New Zealand Railways on the staff of the Office Engineer, George Troup. In 1906 he travelled to the United States of America where he studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania. He then worked in the office of George B. Post in New York before travelling to England where he was admitted as an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects. He became a Fellow in 1940.

On his return to New Zealand he entered private practice, one of his first buildings being the Presbyterian First Church, Invercargill (1915), a prominent building of Romanesque character. He then practised in Wellington, carrying out largely domestic commissions.

In 1918 he was appointed Inspector of Military Hospitals by the Defence Department, and in 1920 he became architect to the Department of Education. Following the retirement of John Campbell in 1922, Mair was appointed Government Architect, a position which he held until his retirement in 1942. During this period he was responsible for a variety of buildings, including the Courthouse, Hamilton, the Post Office in High Street, Christchurch, Government Life Office and the Departmental Building, both in Wellington, and the Jean Batten Building, Auckland. Such buildings show a departure from tradition, with the emphasis on function, structure and volume as opposed to a stylistic treatment of the building fabric.

A Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Architects, Mair was made a Life Member in 1942. His son John Lindsay Mair also practised as an architect.”¹

5.0 Physical description

Site and context

The land on which the former Headquarters and Parade Ground is situated is part of the site purchased in 1925 by the New Zealand Government (Proclamations 6224, 6990, 8624, 8670, 9200, and 9245) from Henry Clark for the Hobsonville Air Base.



Figure 2: 135 and 214 Buckley Avenue, Hobsonville (Auckland Council Geomaps)

The former Headquarters is located at 214 Buckley Avenue, a rectangular-shaped land parcel described as Section 1 SO 490900. Directly opposite, across Buckley Avenue, a triangular parcel of land (135 Buckley Avenue, Lot 11 DP 484575) forms the area that served as the air base's parade ground.

¹ Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga. (2017). *Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) Institute Building (former)*. <http://www.heritage.org.nz>



Figure 3: RNZAF Headquarters and Parade Ground (Auckland Council Geomaps 2015-2016)

Former Headquarters Building

The former Headquarters is located in a rectangular site and directly opposite Buckley Avenue from the Parade Ground and flagpole.

The former Headquarters is a single-storey, elongated rectangular building constructed of reinforced concrete with a textured plastered exterior. The building is influenced by the Art Deco architectural style. The building's rectilinear form, lack of ornamentation, stepped parapet above the entry and the surrounds to the entry recess are all characteristic of the Art Deco style.

The original section of the front façade is symmetrical and subtly stepped in three sections. The central entry porch projects furthest forward, and the main body of the building recesses back in two steps. The flat roof of the building was designed to allow for sandbagging and anti-aircraft air defence. The simple parapet is stepped above the entry porch and features a restrained dentil detailing on the lowest step on each side.



Figure 4: Stepped facade (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)



Figure 5: Stepped parapet (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)

The entry porch has raised plaster detailing in a stepped pattern around it, and dentil ornamentation immediately above the entry. Short plinths are located on either side of the doorway. Beyond these, the front façade has a stringcourse under the windows along its entire length, with the area above recessed slightly from the area below. The wooden, casement-hung, double doors inside the entry

porch have fluted glazing on each of their five panes and long curved brass bar handles. A rectangular, six-light transom is positioned above the double doors.



Figure 6: Plaster detailing around entry porch (5 July 2017); Auckland Council)



Figure 7: Plinths (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)



Figure 8: Stringcourse under windows (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)



Figure 9: Front doors (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)

On either side of the door on the front façade is a group of three windows. These windows, constructed of steel, are each divided into ten equal-sized rectangular panes. Simple recessed horizontal detailing in the plaster between the windows mimics the mullions. A recessed horizontal line extends beneath each set of windows.



Figure 10: Windows front facade (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)

The furthest stepped back sections of the original façade each contain a ten-light steel window in the same style as the windows located on the central façade. A recessed horizontal line sits beneath each window.

The southern elevation of the building contains a flat façade with simple horizontal plaster detailing that is slightly raised under the windows. This elevation features two sets of paired steel windows, oriented vertically, with five equal-sized panes of glass. The same recessed horizontal plaster detailing as on the front façade is set between each set of windows.



Figure 11: Southern elevation (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)

The rear of the building is more utilitarian, with a simple façade containing the same recessed horizontal plaster detailing that is evident on the front façade. Multi-light windows are spaced along the façade, interspersed by a doorway with three concrete steps leading up to it and a single-paned rectangular transom above. A large bush obscures the windows to the right of the doorway, and several ventilation and utility pipes extend vertically up behind and around the bush. The fenestration along the façade is not symmetrical, although the window panes are all the same size. A corrugated iron awning containing a simple entrance and wooden steps has been added at the northern end of the original building at some stage. The awning is detracting, as it cuts across the original windows, but it is likely easily reversed. At the northern end of this façade, the 1953 extension juts out to the east. The windows in the extension are wooden and have a different fenestration pattern, namely shorter windows and fewer panes of glass in each window.



Figure 12: Eastern (rear) elevation (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)



Figure 13: Eastern (rear) elevation (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)



Figure 14: Eastern (rear) elevation (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)



Figure 15: Eastern (rear) elevation showing the 1953 extension (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)

In the early 1950s, the airbase was reorganised and expanded. As part of this effort, in 1953 an extension was added to the northern side of the original Headquarters building. The original symmetry of the building has been compromised by this addition, however it appears efforts were made to integrate this addition with the original building through its simple form and detailing.

The addition to the building is L-shaped; made up of a simple rectangle for the conference room and adjoining rectangular entrance area connecting the original building and conference room. The exterior of the building is finished in textured plaster and the windows are wooden. The entrance door, accessed up a flight of five concrete steps, is casement hung, made of wood, and contains four panes of glass. Adjacent is a fixed side-light, also with four panes of glass. The conference room has two windows on the eastern and western elevations, each containing one casement hung window and one fixed pane, with an awning window above the casement, and a fixed pane above the fixed pane. The northern elevation contains six sets of windows of the same style, with the southern elevation containing three.



Figure 16: Southern elevation of the 1953 extension (5 July 2017, Auckland Council)



Figure 17: Eastern and northern elevations of the 1953 extension (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)



Figure 18: Western elevation of the 1953 extension (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)

The landscaping around the Headquarters building is relatively simple. A low hedge defines the front façade of the original building, and four magnolia trees, growing in planter boxes, are symmetrically placed in front of the original façade. The southern and northern elevations have grassed lawn, which extends around to the front façade of the 1953 extension. The rear of the buildings has less formal, more ad hoc landscaping, including a large bush located near the center of the building, and a small palm tree at the corner of the eastern elevation of the 1953 extension.



Figure 19: Hedge and magnolia trees along the front facade (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)



Figure 20: Bush and palm tree along the rear elevation (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)

Parade Ground

Directly opposite the Headquarters, intersected by Buckley Avenue, is the area of land which served as the Hobsonville Air Base parade ground. The Parade Ground was developed in the 1950s, and the Phoenix palms were in place by 1959. This triangular-shaped area is grassed and has four

mature Phoenix Palm trees along its southern boundary, interspersed with two sculptures. The sculptures reference the landscape, the military heritage of the area and the present-day development. These sculptures were installed as part of the Hobsonville Point development.

The section of road between the Headquarters and Parade ground has become a shared space, and features stormwater pits with stones and native plants.



Figure 21: Parade grounds, memorial and phoenix palms (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)



Figure 23: One of the sculptures *Heart of Stumps* (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)



Figure 22: Memorial and flagpole (5 July 2017; Auckland Council)

A flagpole, erected in 1947, is located directly opposite the Headquarters. A memorial, unveiled in April 2012 in remembrance of the Air Force personnel who served on the base from 1928 to 2002, is located to the west of the flagpole and surrounded by a small hedge and hebe bushes (these gardens were established by 1955). This memorial, planned and built for the Hobsonville Old Boys' Association, the RNZAF, and the Hobsonville Land Company Ltd., was designed by Architectus. It is constructed of dark stone and contains the following tribute:

From 1928 to 2002, in wartime and in peace, NZ and overseas personnel were based at Hobsonville for training and in provision of support services to New Zealand Defence Forces.

This memorial was created by the Hobsonville Old Boys' Association, Royal New Zealand Air Force and Hobsonville Land Company Limited and was dedicated on 28 April 2012 by Air Vice-Marshal Peter Stockwell, Chief of Air Force.




Summary of key features




- 1939 Station headquarters
- 1953 extension
- Parade ground, including flagpole, memorial and garden
- Phoenix palms
- Shared space between the building and parade ground

6.0 Comparative analysis



The following comparison is of a selection of buildings that were, or still are, located on existing and former RNZAF bases around New Zealand. The comparison demonstrates the former Headquarters building is a representative example of RNZAF buildings dating from the construction/development

phase of the RNZAF in the 1930s, and is a representative example of Government architect John Mair's body of work, at the time.

RNZAF Buildings		
Address	Photo and Description	Current Heritage Status
<p>Former Administration Building</p> <p>Wigram Flying Training School / RNZAF Base Wigram</p>	 <p>Figure 24: RNZAF Central Branch during a presentation in front of the Administration Building at Wigram, 12 July 1945 (Source: Dawson, 2012)</p> <p>Constructed in 1938, the Administration/Headquarters Building at the Wigram Flying Training School was designed by John Mair. The same plans were used for the Hobsonville Station Headquarters (subject site). The Wigram Headquarters was demolished circa 2014.</p>	<p>Demolished 2014</p>
<p>No. 1 Officers Mess, RNZAF Base Wigram</p> <p>Springs Road, Wigram</p>	 <p>Figure 25: No. 1 Officer's Mess, RNZAF Base Wigram (Source: http://rnzaf.proboards.com/thread/20499/photos-wigram-officers-mess)</p>  <p>Figure 26: No. 1 Officer's Mess, RNZAF Base Wigram (Source: www.wigrambase.co.nz)</p> <p>Based on a standard RNZAF design, this Art Deco-style building was constructed out of reinforced, blast-proof concrete that was standard for all</p>	<p>Scheduled as a Group 3 protected building in the Christchurch City District Plan</p>




	<p>concrete buildings on the station at that time. Work began on this building in August 1938 and it was complete by November 1939.² The building has been modified at some stage with a pitched, tiled roof added and is now used as a wedding and conference venue.</p>	
<p>Bristol Block, RNZAF Base Auckland</p> <p>Tainui Crescent, Whenuapai</p>	 <p>Figure 27: Bristol Block (Source: Auckland Council Heritage Property Files)</p> <p>The Bristol Block comprises a 1930s Art Deco-style barracks building complex with concrete render cladding and steel windows. The building is currently used for officers' accommodation, a mess, and other uses.</p>	<p>Scheduled as a Category B place in the Auckland Unitary Plan – Operative in Part (#231)</p>
<p>Officer's Mess, RNZAF Base Auckland</p> <p>Kupe Road, Whenuapai</p>	 <p>Figure 28: Officer's Mess, RNZAF base Auckland (Source: https://www.flickr.com/photos/adelaide_archivist/8285545910)</p> <p>The Officer's Mess comprises a 1930s Art Deco-style barracks building complex with concrete render cladding and steel windows.</p>	<p>Scheduled as a Category B place in the Auckland Unitary Plan – Operative in Part (#232)</p>
<p>Station Headquarters, RNZAF Base Auckland</p> <p>Tainui Crescent, Whenuapai</p>		<p>Appears to still be present on site based on aerial images; no heritage protection</p>

² Dawson, Bee, 2012. *Wigram. The Birthplace of Military Aviation in New Zealand*. Random House, Auckland



	<p>Figure 29: Station Headquarters, RNZAF Base Auckland (Source: Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, 1370-4-19)</p> <p>Little is known about this building. From the 1953 photo of the rear of the building above, it appears to be Art deco in style with a rendered finish. The windows are steel and appear to be similar to the windows used in other buildings in this analysis.</p>	
<p>Station Headquarters, RNZAF Base Ohakea</p> <p>Kororareka Avenue, Ohakea</p>	 <p>Figure 30: Station Headquarters, RNZAF Base Ohakea, 1963 (Source: Air Force Museum; accessed on nzdf.mil.nz)</p>  <p>Figure 31: Station Headquarters, RNZAF Base Ohakea, 1939 (Source: nzhistory.govt.nz)</p> <p>Little is known about this building. From the photos above, it appears to be Art deco in style with a rendered finish. The windows are steel and appear to be similar to the windows used in other buildings in this analysis.</p>	<p>Appears to still be present on site based on aerial images; no heritage protection</p>

The following comparison is of a selection of buildings designed by Mair of a similar scale and era. The comparison demonstrates the former Headquarters Building is a representative example of Mair's work, particularly his reputation for an emphasis on function and structure, opposed to a stylised design. The former Headquarters incorporates many design features Mair favoured, and demonstrated in much of his work, including simple design, and a combination of Art Deco and Stripped Classical design elements.

Buildings designed by John Thomas Mair		
Address	Photo & Description	Current Heritage Status

<p>Rangiora Post Office</p> <p>Corner of High and Percival Streets, Rangiora</p>	 <p>Figure 32: Rangiora Post Office (Source: Google Streetview)</p> <p>Constructed in 1936, the design of the building is Art Deco with a chamfered corner. The design and size of this building is considered unusual, originally housing postal facilities, the telephone exchange and the postmaster's residence upstairs.³</p>	<p>Not protected</p>
<p>Post office (former)</p> <p>122 Main Street, Pahiatua</p>	 <p>Figure 33: Post office (Source: www.heritage.org.nz)</p> <p>Completed in 1937, this building has Stripped Classical features and Art Deco detailing, and is a characteristic example of the work of John Thomas Mair in his role as Government Architect. The building features design elements typical in Mair's work at the time, such as Stripped Classical pilasters and symmetry on the front façade, with some Art Deco inspired panels above its sizeable windows.</p>	<p>Scheduled as a Category B heritage resource in the Tararua District Plan (#37)</p> <p>Category 2 historic place on the New Zealand Heritage List / Rārangī Kōrero (#4022)</p>
<p>Ashburton Courthouse</p> <p>Corner of Baring Square West and Cameron Street, Ashburton</p>	 <p>Figure 34: Ashburton Courthouse (Source: Google Streetview)</p> <p>Constructed in 1938, the design of the building is Inter-War Stripped Classical.</p>	<p>Scheduled as a Group B heritage item in the Ashburton District Plan</p>

³ Source: <http://landmarks.waimakariri.govt.nz/rangiora-heritage/rangiora-post-office>

<p>Palmerston North Police Station (former)</p> <p>351-361 Church Street, Palmerston North</p>	 <p>Figure 35: Palmerston North Police Station (Source: www.heritage.org.nz)</p> <p>Constructed in 1938, the design of this building was a departure from the Victorian-era wooden buildings and reflected a new architecture and a modernism in design that was a signature of the Government Architect's work. The building is an Art Deco design with highly decorative and bold elements, the most important being the kowhaiwhai pattern around the parapet of the front elevation and the hand sculpted Royal Coat of Arms.</p>	<p>Scheduled as a Category 2 historic building in the Palmerston North City District Plan (#81)</p> <p>Category 2 historic place on the New Zealand Heritage List / Rārangī Kōrero (#9534)</p>
<p>Otorohanga Post Office</p> <p>32 Maniapoto St, Otorohanga</p>	 <p>Figure 36: Otorohanga Post Office (Source: Google Streetview)</p> <p>Constructed in 1940, and Art Deco-styled building with a chamfered corner.</p>	<p>Scheduled as a Category II place in the Otorohanga District Plan (#4264)</p>

7.0 Significance criteria

(a) Historical

The place reflects important or representative aspects of national, regional or local history, or is associated with an important event, person, group of people or idea or early period of settlement within the nation, region or locality.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have considerable historical significance at a national level because they demonstrate an important event, theme and phase of the nation's history. The former Headquarters and Parade Ground were constructed at a time of increased Government investment in the military, coinciding with the outset of World War II. As one of a number of air and army bases developed during this time, the Hobsonville Headquarters and Parade Ground also demonstrates an important pattern of development of the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

The former Headquarters and Parade ground also have historical significance for their strong association with the Royal New Zealand Air Force. The Air Force was founded in 1913, became

permanent in 1923, and became independent in 1937. Following over 100 years of service, the Air Force continues to provide defence during both war- and peace-time.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have historical value as part of a place that is nationally rare, unusual or unique. The Hobsonville Air Base was developed as New Zealand's only purpose-built, combined land and sea air base. Although both the wider base and the Headquarters building no longer serve their original purposes, their ongoing retention and function as part of the Hobsonville residential development contributes to their historical importance.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have **considerable national** significance.

(b) Social

The place has a strong or special association with, or is held in high esteem by, a particular community or cultural group for its symbolic, spiritual, commemorative, traditional or other cultural value.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have considerable social significance as a place of increasing public esteem. Although the base was originally off-limits to civilians, the redevelopment of this area for housing has meant more people come into contact with the headquarters and choose to buy into this area because of its heritage values.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have social value because they represent important aspects of communal identity and remembrance. The place is directly connected to the thousands of men and women who served at the RNZAF Air Base at Hobsonville, and their service is remembered through a memorial on the Parade Ground.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground also have social value for the role they play in defining the distinctiveness of the Hobsonville community. Hobsonville was redeveloped for housing and, to the greatest extent possible, the original air base and its buildings and structures have been retained to add identity and uniqueness to the area, and also to respect the heritage values of the former use of the place.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have **considerable regional** social value.

(c) Mana whenua

The place has a strong or special association with, or is held in high esteem by, mana whenua for its symbolic, spiritual, commemorative, traditional or other cultural value.

An assessment of the place's value to Mana Whenua has not been undertaken as part of this evaluation.

(d) Knowledge

The place has potential to provide knowledge through scientific or scholarly study or to contribute to an understanding of the cultural or natural history of the nation, region or locality.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have moderate knowledge value for their potential to play an important role in enhancing public understanding or appreciation of history. Hobsonville

provides opportunities for on-site interpretation on a number of themes, including land and sea air bases, the RNZAF, and New Zealand's role in World War II, among others.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground, as components of the wider air base, also represents a nationally rare or unique place. As discussed under (a) Historical above, Hobsonville is New Zealand's only combined land and sea air base.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have **moderate regional** knowledge values.

(e) Technological

The place demonstrates technical accomplishment, innovation or achievement in its structure, construction, components or use of materials.

The former Headquarters was constructed of blast-proof concrete, and has a flat roof for sand-bagging. While these aspects of its design are interesting, they do not represent a technical innovation or achievement as they were in common use by the government at the time.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have **no** technological value.

(f) Physical attributes

The place is a notable or representative example of a type, design or style, method of construction, craftsmanship or use of materials or the work of a notable architect, designer, engineer or builder.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground at Hobsonville have considerable physical attributes values as the work of a notable architect. The Headquarters building was designed by Government Architect John T Mair who served in this role for 20 years. His works is characterised by a departure from tradition, with the emphasis on function, structure and volume as opposed to a stylistic treatment of the building fabric. The Headquarters building represents his design ethos and is a good example within his body of work.

The Headquarters is also a representative example of a station headquarters building, constructed in the late 1930s, as the government prepared for World War II. Five air bases were established or upgraded at this time, with development including the construction of new station headquarters. The Headquarters at Hobsonville appears to be the last of its design still standing, though it originally had a "twin" at Wigram.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground, as components of the wider air base, also represent a nationally rare or unique place. As discussed under (a) Historical above, Hobsonville is New Zealand's only combined land and sea air base.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have **considerable national** physical attributes values.

(g) Aesthetic

The place is notable or distinctive for its aesthetic, visual, or landmark qualities.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have moderate aesthetic value for their aesthetic appeal that derives from the relationship between components of the place and the setting, reinforcing the quality of both. The Headquarters and the Parade Ground are a cohesive interconnected place; this association has endured for 70 years.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have **moderate local** aesthetic value.

(h) Context

The place contributes to or is associated with a wider historical or cultural context, streetscape, townscape, landscape or setting.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have considerable context significance for their collective value as part of a group of inter-related heritage places. The former Headquarters and Parade Ground were an integral component of the Hobsonville Air Base and are part of a historic landscape of rare structures associated with the base. Taken together, the Headquarters, Parade Ground and other remaining military buildings in Hobsonville have coherence because of their shared age, history and use.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground are one component of the wider base, which is a key part of a small, but important collection of pre-World War II air bases in New Zealand. This wider historical context adds further value to the place.

As part of the recent Hobsonville residential development, the Headquarters and Parade Ground now contribute to the character and sense of place of the region. The re-use of the historic air base has been an exercise in place-making, revealing new ways to meaningfully incorporate heritage into the identity of a new place.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have **considerable regional** context significance.

8.0 Statement of significance

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have considerable significance because they demonstrate an important phase of the nation's history. The place was constructed at a time of increased Government investment in the military, coinciding with the outset of World War II. As one of a number of air and army bases developed during this time, the Hobsonville Headquarters and Parade Ground also demonstrate an important pattern of development of the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Although a number of air and army bases were developed at this time, the former Headquarters and Parade Ground are nationally unique. The Hobsonville Air Base was developed as New Zealand's only purpose-built, combined land and sea air base.

The Headquarters and Parade Ground also has value for their strong association with the Royal New Zealand Air Force. Founded over 100 years ago, the Air Force continues to provide defence during both war- and peace-time. The place is also directly connected to thousands of men and women who served at the RNZAF Air Base at Hobsonville, and represents important aspects of communal identity and remembrance. The place, and their service, is remembered through a memorial on the Parade Ground.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground at Hobsonville have considerable value as the work of a notable architect. The Headquarters building was designed by Government Architect John T Mair, who served in this role for 20 years. His works is characterised by a departure from tradition, with the emphasis on function, structure and volume as opposed to a stylistic treatment of the

building fabric. The Headquarters building represents his design ethos and is a good example within his body of work.

The former Headquarters and Parade Ground have considerable significance as a place of increasing public esteem. Although the base was originally off-limits to civilians, the redevelopment of this area for housing has meant more people are exposed to the headquarters and these places have become key to the success of the development. The re-use of the historic air base building has been an exercise in place-making, revealing new ways to meaningfully incorporate heritage into the identity of a new place.

9.0 Extent of the place for scheduling

The identified extent of the place for scheduling is the area that is integral to the function, meaning and relationships of the place. In the case of the former Headquarters Building and Parade Ground, the identified extent of place for scheduling includes the rectangular area of land on which the Headquarters is located at 214 Buckley Avenue (Section 1 SO 490900), the entire site at 135 Buckley Avenue (LOT 11 DP 484575), and that portion of Buckley Avenue that runs between the two areas of land.



Figure 37: Proposed extent of place (Auckland Council Geomaps)

The public realm is included in the extent of place to recognise the historic and visual relationship between the headquarters and the parade ground. The two spaces were planned together, though the parade ground and flagpole were not constructed until 10 years later. The memorial is more recent, but still a supporting feature due to its commemoration of the history of the place.

Heritage New Zealand's extent of listing covers less of the public realm between the headquarters and parade ground than the extent of place proposed above. The road acts as an interface between the two spaces, and therefore including a larger portion of the road reserve is in keeping with Council's evaluation methodology.

The primary feature of the place is the 1939 station headquarters building.

A number of exclusions should be listed:

- Interior of building(s)
- Corrugated iron awning (at the rear)
- Wooden steps
- Sculptures in parade ground.

10.0 Recommendations

The Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) Headquarters and Parade Ground (former) meets the thresholds for scheduling as a Historic Heritage Place Category B, having considerable Historical, Social, Physical Attributes and Context values. The overall significance is determined Considerable.

The extent of place is indicated in Section 9.0 above.

11.0 Table of Historic Heritage Values

Significance Criteria (A-H)	Value* (None, Little, Moderate, Considerable, Exceptional)	Context (Local, Regional, National, International)
A- Historical	Considerable	National
B- Social	Considerable	Regional
C- Mana Whenua	n/a	n/a
D- Knowledge	Moderate	Regional
E- Technological	No	n/a
F- Physical Attributes	Considerable	National
G- Aesthetic	Moderate	Local
H- Context	Considerable	Regional

*Levels of significance or value:

Exceptional: of outstanding importance and interest; retention of the identified value(s)/significance is essential.

Considerable: of great importance and interest; retention of the identified value(s)/significance is very important.

Moderate: of some importance and interest; retention of the identified value(s)/significance is desirable.

Little: of limited importance and interest.

NA/None: none identified

12.0 Overall Significance

Place Name and/or Description	Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) Headquarters and Parade Ground (former)
Category	B
Primary Feature	1939 station headquarters building
Known Heritage Values	A, B, F, H
Extent of Place	Refer to planning maps
Exclusions	Interior of building(s); corrugated iron awning; wooden steps; sculptures in the Parade ground
Additional Controls for Archaeological Sites or Features	
Place of Maori Interest or Significance	

Author (and position)

Emma Rush – Senior Advisor Special Projects

Rebecca Freeman – Senior Specialist Historic Heritage

Date

July 2017

Reviewer

Cara Francesco

Principal Specialist Built Heritage

Date

July 2017

Appendices

Appendix 1 Historic research

Appendix 2 Survey plans

Appendix 3 Historic Photographs

Appendix 4 References

Appendix 1 – Historical Research

Hobsonville

The land at 135 and 214 Buckley Avenue, Hobsonville is part of a large block bought by the Crown from Ngati Whatua in 1853. This land parcel of about 1,000 acres was labelled 'Waipareira' and was divided into four blocks and sold off in 1854 and 1855. The area later became known as Hobsonville after Captain William Hobson, first Governor of New Zealand.

Rice Owen Clark, the first European to settle at Hobsonville, purchased Block 21 of Waipareira in 1854. He built a house and cleared and drained the land, eventually developing about 30 acres. Clark grew vegetables on the land and supplied them to the rapidly developing town of Auckland.

Hobsonville Air Base

The New Zealand Permanent Air Force was founded in 1923, with the first military aerodrome established at Wigram, Christchurch. By 1924, there was a desire for an air base to be established near Auckland, and that it be suitable for both land and sea planes. After consideration of several sites, Hobsonville was selected and, in 1925, the New Zealand Government purchased 167 acres of land from Henry Clark (son of Rice Owen Clark).

Little was done with the land until 1927, when work began to establish an airfield for both Navy and Army use. By 1929, runways had been prepared, hangars constructed, and offices, ablutions, mess-rooms and kitchens established. With the onset of the Depression in the late 1920s, government spending on military was curtailed. However, by the mid-1930s, with the effects of the Depression easing, work resumed at Hobsonville; further hangars and accommodations for staff were constructed and work was carried out to re-level and extend the airfield. In 1936, a further 55 acres of land was purchased and added to the base. In 1937, the status of Hobsonville Air Base had changed to that of an exclusively military base, allowing for the storage of munitions, and by 1938 the base was operating primarily as a repairs and stores base, with nearby Whenuapai being developed as a new air base.

With the outbreak of war in 1939, Hobsonville Air Base was made ready for enemy attack, with black-out measures introduced and anti-aircraft batteries established around the perimeter of the base. The war years revealed the shortcomings of the grass runway, which at 750 yards was satisfactory for smaller aircraft but was inadequate for some of the larger aircraft that were assembled at Hobsonville (they were not able to be test flown from the airfield).

By 1962, the end of Hobsonville as an operational Air Force Base was approaching. Existing aircraft were coming to the end of their useful life and the replacement found was a land-based plane, so a seaplane station was no longer required. In September 1965, Hobsonville was amalgamated with Whenuapai to form one operational unit.

In 2000, the Government announced that Hobsonville was no longer required for defence purposes and would progressively be closed. New industries began moving onto the land, notably boat building companies. By 2005, most of the land that formed the air base had been transferred to Housing New Zealand, with a subsidiary, Hobsonville Land Company, established to develop the former base to provide homes for 10,000 people.

Hobsonville Administration/Headquarters Building

In 1937, correspondence between the Royal New Zealand Air Force (**RNZAF**) and the Public Works Department indicated a desire for buildings at the Flying Training School at Wigram Aerodrome to be replicated at Hobsonville, including an Administration Building (Station Headquarters). By 1938, a decision had been made to provide a new station headquarters at Hobsonville identical to the Administration Building that was in the course of being constructed at Wigram. Estimates of cost for the building were £6,000.

The former RNZAF Headquarters Building (**former Headquarters**) was designed in 1938 by John Thomas Mair, who was Government Architect for the Public Works Department at the time. Plans of the building were labelled 'RNZAF Flying Training School Hobsonville Aerodrome Administration Building'. This label gave rise to the building originally being known as the Administration Building. The title 'Headquarters' is shown on the plans of the building, written on the building above the front entrance.

A tender notice for the construction of 'RNZAF Base, Hobsonville – Administration Building' was published on 5 January 1939. The successful tenderer for the Administration building was A J Grinter, at a price of £5,940. The building was constructed under the guidance of Mair between 1939 and 1940.

The former Headquarters was damaged by fire in August 1947, and suffered damage that was estimated to cost £170 to repair.

In 1952, approval was sought from the Minister of Defence for £3,300 for additions to the former Headquarters. This request was approved and plans were drawn up by R A Patterson, Government Architect, and G L Price, District Architect. Revised plans were drawn up by F Gordon Wilson, Government Architect, and Graham Dawson, District Architect. In 1953, the former Headquarters was extended with an additional wing for a conference room constructed on the northern side of the original structure. The construction was overseen by the Ministry of Works Architectural Division.

In 2014, the Headquarters and nearby RNZAF Institute Building were transferred to Auckland Council for community purposes, and in 2016 the land parcel was surveyed off and vested in the council.

Parade Ground

The area of open space opposite the former Headquarters, across Buckley Avenue, is known as the Parade Ground. The triangular-shaped area contains a flagpole that was erected in 1947, surrounded by a small semi-circular garden, established in 1955. A memorial, erected in 2012, that recognises the nearly 75 years of war- and peace-time service of personnel based at Hobsonville Air Base is located within the garden, to the west of the flag pole.

Development of the New Zealand Air Force

The expansion of Hobsonville Air Base in the late 1930s was part of a rapid expansion of New Zealand's defensive air power that occurred for three years from early 1937. This expansion occurred in three phases, with the first phase involving the reorganization of Wigram into a flying training school for the training of pilots for the RNZAF and the Royal Air Force, and the conversion of Hobsonville into a stores and repair base. The second expansion phase saw land purchased at Whenuapai and Ohakea for the establishment of an additional two air stations, and further expansion of Wigram and Hobsonville. The final stage saw additional buildings constructed at Hobsonville, the establishment of the Territorial Air Force (TAF). At New Plymouth, Hastings and Invercargill, and the establishment of a regular squadron at Woodbourne in Blenheim.

During this time of expansion, Station Headquarters/Administration Buildings were built at Wigram and Ohakea. As detailed above, the Wigram Administration Building was the model for the Station Headquarters at Hobsonville. The Ohakea Station Headquarters followed a very similar design, only on a larger scale. The building was two storeys, but features many of the same design elements, including the stepped parapet, windows and central entry porch (refer to comparative analysis below).

A station headquarters was also constructed at Whenuapai around the same time. Aerial photographs confirm the building is still present, albeit modified, but further information on the design of style of the building was not able to be obtained for this evaluation. Likewise, no

information has been found to confirm if a station headquarters was ever constructed at Woodburne.

Architect: John Thomas Mair

“John Thomas Mair (1876-1959) was born in Invercargill and began his career with the New Zealand Railways on the staff of the Office Engineer, George Troup. In 1906 he travelled to the United States of America where he studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania. He then worked in the office of George B. Post in New York before travelling to England where he was admitted as an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects. He became a Fellow in 1940.

On his return to New Zealand he entered private practice, one of his first buildings being the Presbyterian First Church, Invercargill (1915), a prominent building of Romanesque character. He then practised in Wellington, carrying out largely domestic commissions.

In 1918 he was appointed Inspector of Military Hospitals by the Defence Department, and in 1920 he became architect to the Department of Education. Following the retirement of John Campbell in 1922, Mair was appointed Government Architect, a position which he held until his retirement in 1942. During this period he was responsible for a variety of buildings, including the Courthouse, Hamilton, the Post Office in High Street, Christchurch, Government Life Office and the Departmental Building, both in Wellington, and the Jean Batten Building, Auckland. Such buildings show a departure from tradition, with the emphasis on function, structure and volume as opposed to a stylistic treatment of the building fabric.

A Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Architects, Mair was made a Life Member in 1942. His son John Lindsay Mair also practised as an architect.”⁴

⁴ Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga. (2017). *Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) Institute Building (former)*. <http://www.heritage.org.nz>

Appendix 2 – Survey Plans

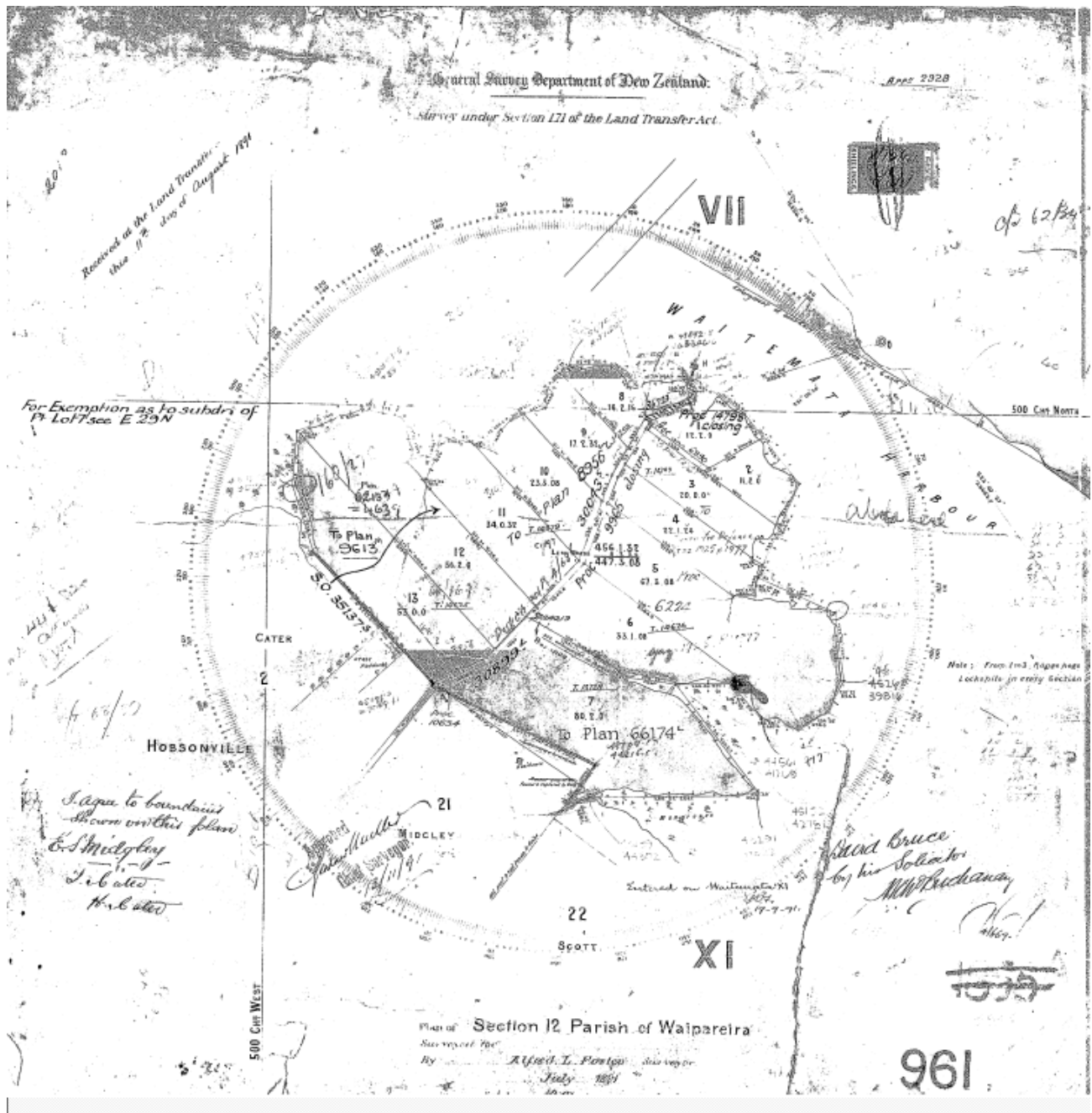


Figure 38: DP 961 showing the Hobsonville Peninsula, dated 1891

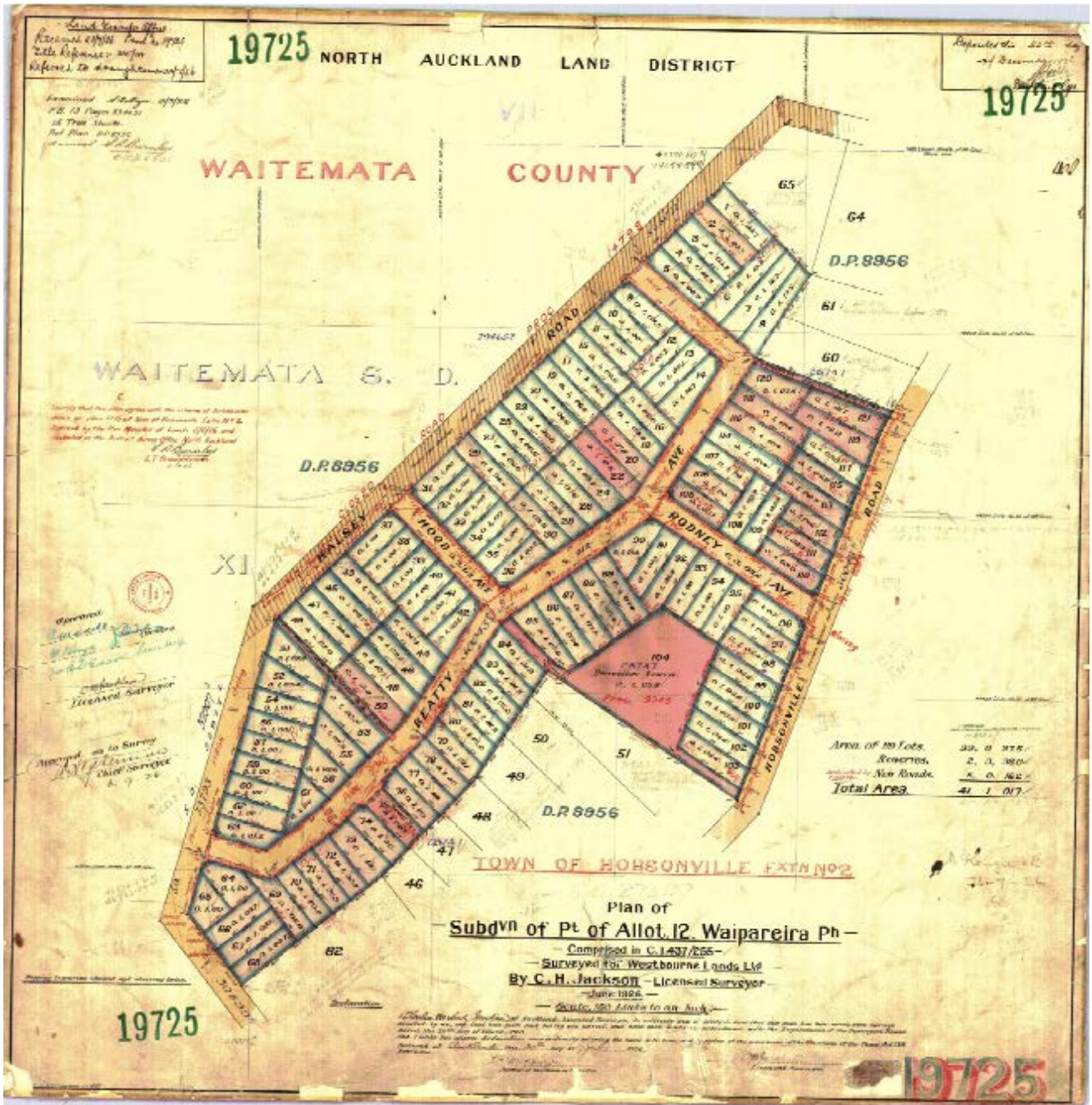


Figure 39: DP 19725 showing Hobsonville subdivision prior to Defence acquisition, dated 1926

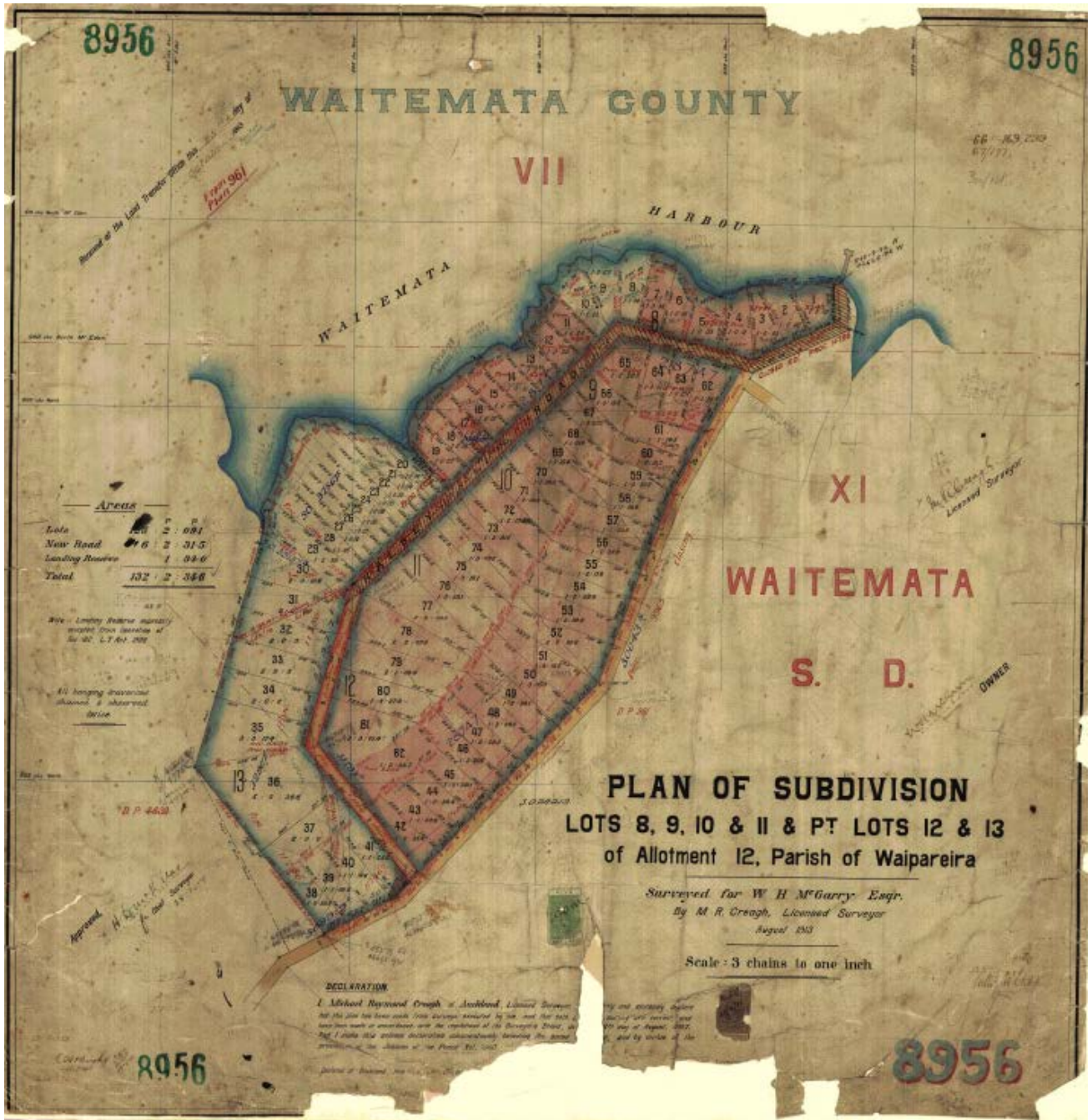


Figure 40: DP 8956 showing the Hobsonville subdivision prior to Defence acquisition, dated 1913

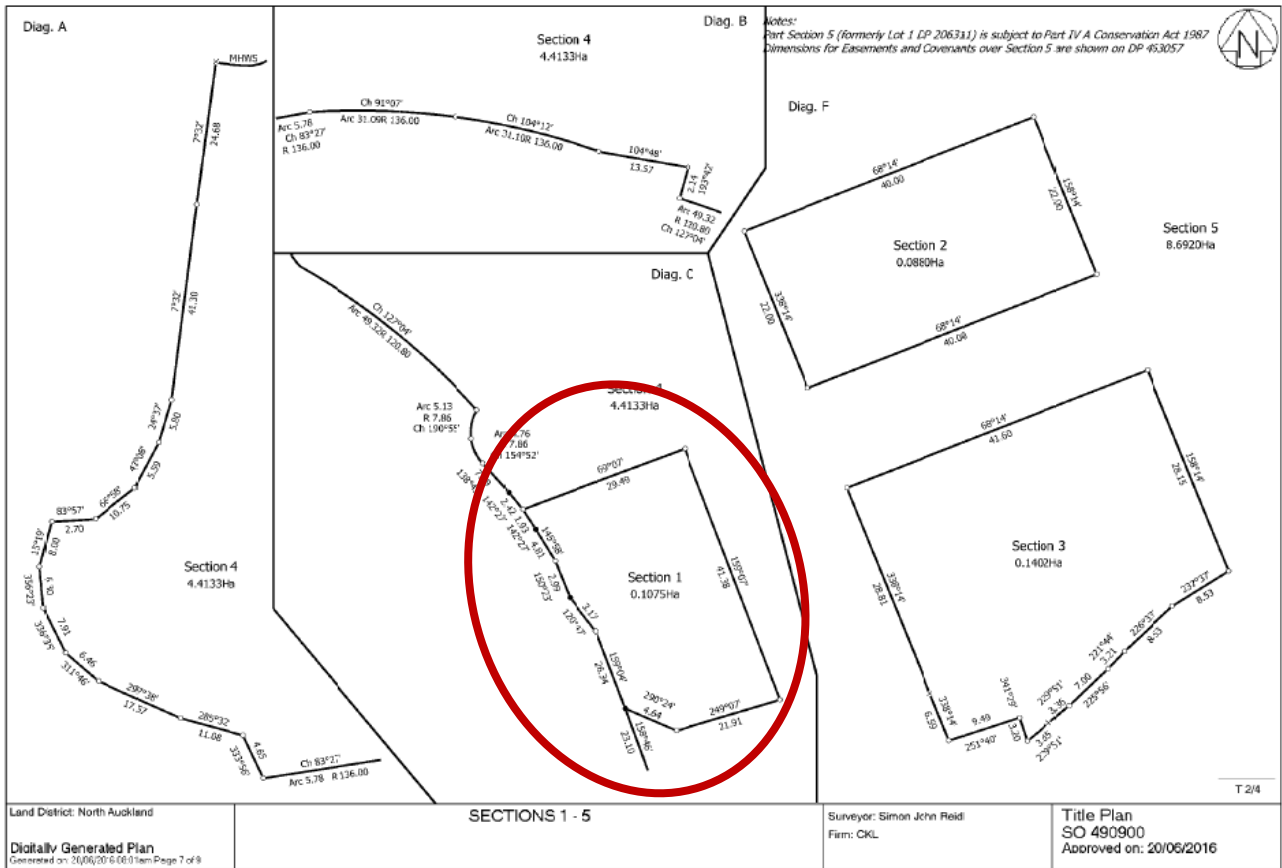


Figure 41: SO 490900 showing the headquarters land parcel, dated 2016

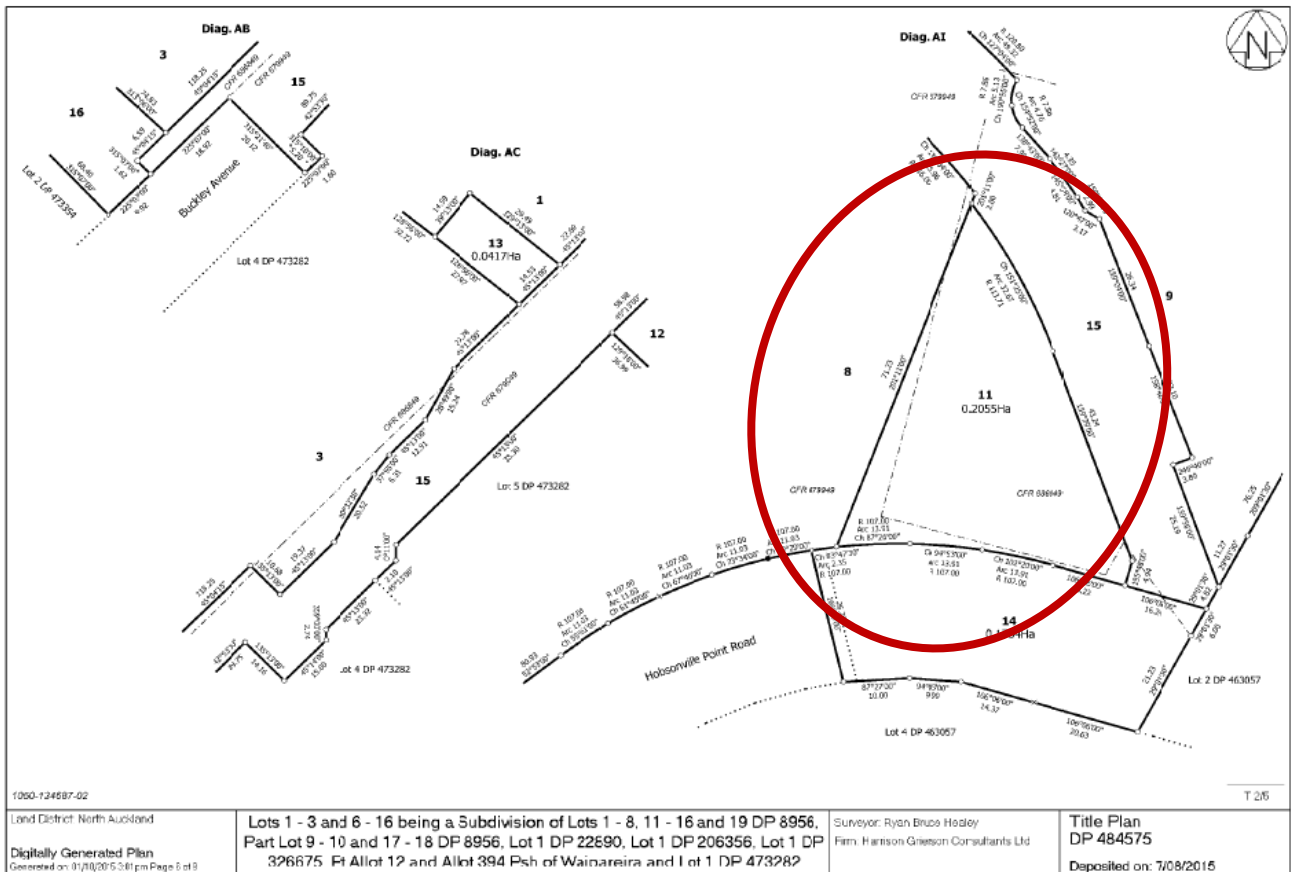


Figure 42: DP 484575 showing the Parade Ground parcel, dated 2017

Appendix 3 – Historical Photographs



Figure 43: Hobsonville Station Headquarters and Parade Ground, post WWII (Source: Air Force Museum; accessed on stuff.co.nz)

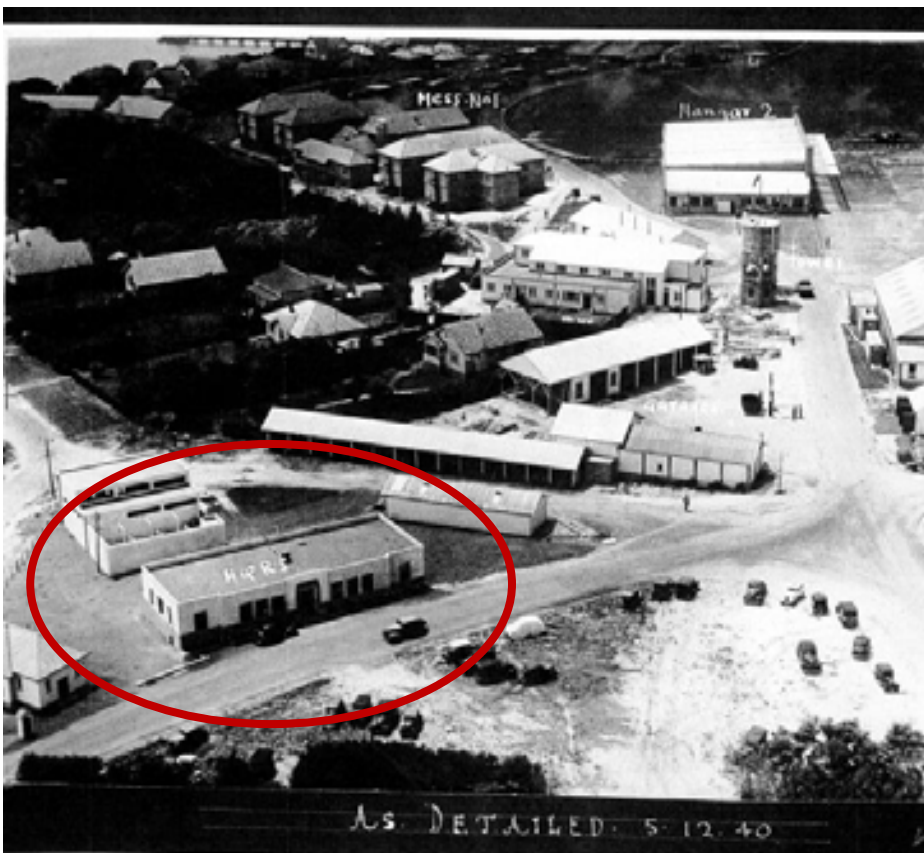


Figure 44: Hobsonville airbase (Air Force Museum; 5 December 1940)

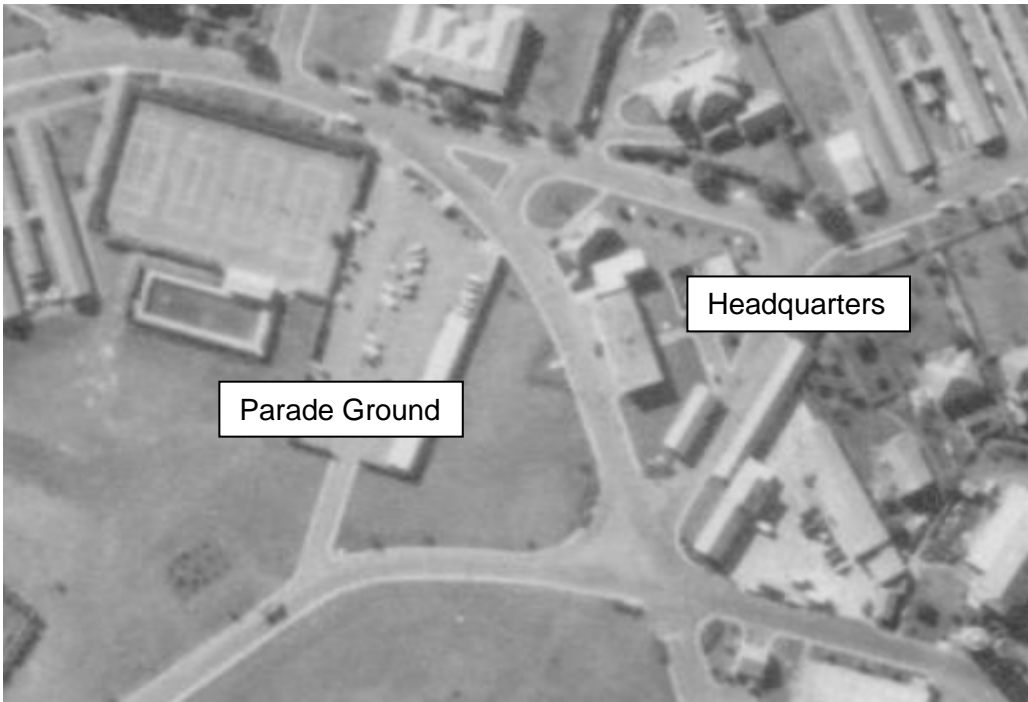


Figure 45: 1959 aerial photo of Hobsonville Air Base (Source: Auckland Council Geomaps)

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