

# Camp Columbia Sewerage Treatment Works: Research Questions and Goals

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## Background

During WWII, Camp Columbia was a major staging ground for US and Dutch forces and authorities in the Pacific. The site saw extensive development and expansion over time, and post-war served as immigration housing and a training ground for National Service. Remnants from the WWII Camp are few, some of the largest and best preserved being the now abandoned sewerage treatment facilities. This research project aims to explore the historical context within which these facilities reside, focusing on how they interact with Camp Columbia at large, and how they can be leveraged to educate the public about the site.

## Research Goals

The research project has three key goals it seeks to achieve:

1. **To determine the developmental history of the sewerage treatment plants within a local and state context.**
2. **To identify the sewerage treatment plants' association, as key infrastructure, with the wider expansion and use of Camp Columbia.**
3. **Identify human stories and narratives which link the remnant features to themes of technological development, conflict and migration.**

## Research Questions

Inferior to each research goal are several research questions, designed to direct effort and energy. While some of these research questions may never be answered fully, any information gathered will form a fuller understanding of the material.

1. **To determine the developmental history of the sewerage treatment plants within a local and state context.**
  - a. What features remain from the treatment plants? Can they be identified and what condition are they in?
  - b. What timeline can be established regarding the treatment plants? When were they planned, constructed, upgraded and abandoned?
  - c. What companies, military units and individuals were associated with the history of the treatment plants?
  - d. How do the treatment plants compare to similar facilities around Brisbane and Queensland? Can any trends be identified between sites?

2. **To identify the sewerage treatment plants' association, as key infrastructure, with the wider expansion and use of Camp Columbia.**
  - a. How does the development of the treatment plants align with the wider expansion and reuse of Camp Columbia?
  - b. Were the treatment plants integrated into the immigration housing and National Service sites, or abandoned?
  - c. Who was responsible for the maintenance of the treatment plants? Did this duty fall to a stationed unit or specific individuals?
3. **Identify human stories and narratives which link the remnant features to themes of technological development, conflict and migration.**
  - a. What other features and artefacts have been identified around the treatment plants? Are these associated with specific individuals or groups?
  - b. Are there personal accounts regarding the sewerage plants? If so, what do they reflect about how people experienced and perceived them?
  - c. How do the treatment plants fit into the wider timeline of sewerage infrastructure in Brisbane and Queensland? How was this perceived by people?
  - d. How do the treatment plants reflect the wartime experiences of civilian and military populations?
  - e. How do the treatment plants reflect the experiences of migrants and displaced peoples, in times of both peace and war?