

Heritage



Arcade

Key details

Addresses	At 28 Radburn Lane, Moorooka, Queensland 4105; At 201 Beaudesert Road, Moorooka, Queensland 4105
Type of place	Shop/s
Period	Postwar 1945-1960
Style	Modernist
Lot plan	L69_RP54159; L68_RP54159
Key dates	Date of Citation — June 2025
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (E) Aesthetic; (H) Historical association

The arcade at 201 Beaudesert Road was designed in 1959 by the noted south-east Queensland architectural firm of Douglas and Barnes. The building is a rare surviving example of a mid-Century Modernist retail arcade built to

serve the local area's needs in the late-1950s and early-1960s. Built as an adaptation and extension to an existing traditional 1940s commercial property, the arcade's interior layout and design has distinctive aesthetic qualities and spatial composition. The development of 201 Beaudesert Road also demonstrates Brisbane's continued growth and suburbanisation in the years following the Second World War up to the 1960s.

History

The development of Moorooka

Moorooka has been described as a post-Second World War suburb. Early settlement of the area began in the 1860s when the land was sold off and used for agricultural purposes. The arrival of the railways in the 1880s saw the development of residential estates such as the Moorooka Railway Station Estate. However, this land speculation overestimated the desire to live in the suburbs and commute into central Brisbane. By 1911, the population of Moorooka stood at just 350 residents.

Moorooka continued to grow between the First and Second World Wars and slowly transformed from a rural area into a residential suburb. The population of Moorooka, including Salisbury and Rocklea, grew to 8,364 residents by 1947 due to Brisbane's increased suburbanisation. Brisbane's suburbanisation was driven by several factors, including economic issues, infrastructure developments, population increase and the role of government. For example, between the First and Second World Wars, Moorooka's transport infrastructure development included replacing horse-drawn transport by trains, trams, and eventually the motor car. These changes in Moorooka's transport infrastructure encouraged further residential settlement as new modes of transport provided better links to central Brisbane.

Suburbanisation and the development of the Moorvale Shopping Area

While suburbanisation in Moorooka had begun between the First and Second World Wars, after 1945, this process continued with further residential development caused by population increase. The population of Moorooka, including Rocklea and Salisbury, increased to 12,163 by 1954. By 1971, the area's population stood at 17,246. This growing population created an increased demand for local shops and services. The Moorvale shopping area on Beaudesert Road that emerged in the 1950s illustrates this increased demand. By the mid-1960s, the Moorvale shopping area, which included the arcade at 201 Beaudesert Road, was an important commercial area for the local community in Moorooka.

The site on which the arcade at 201 Beaudesert Road resides can be traced back to a land purchase in 1862 by a Charles Bushell who purchased portion 157B in the parish of Yeerongpilly for £20 and 10s. The land measured 20 acres and two roods. In 1888, under Edwin Campbell and James Sidle's ownership, portion 157B began to be subdivided. In May 1888, subdivision 11 of portion 157B, which measured one acre, two roods, 32 perches, and seven-tenths of a perch, was transferred to an Alexander Smith Leslie who owned the land until 1914.

In 1914, subdivision 11 transferred to a Paul Logan, who, in 1937 subdivided his land further. In December 1938, resubdivisions 68 and 69 of subdivision 11 of portion 157B – the subject site – transferred to a Norman Joseph Henry Goy and Valmai Olive Goy. At the same time, the Goys took out a mortgage for an undisclosed amount. In 1944, the land transferred to William Harry Griffith and ownership was subsequently split between the former and Russell McIntosh Williams in 1954. By 1946, a commercial property had been erected on site. While owned by Griffith and Williams, Brisbane City Council received an application to extend and adapt the existing commercial property into an arcade in 1959. In 1963, the site was transferred to Audley Claude and Vera Grace Burton.

Significantly, the adaptation and extension of the previous commercial property into an arcade is indicative of the continued suburbanisation of Moorooka and the emergence of the Moorvale shopping area in the 1950s. Developments, such as the role of the car and local population growth, increasingly saw Brisbane's shopping experience pushed out to the suburbs. This development is best illustrated by the opening of the Chermside shopping centre in 1957. However, the adaptation of 201 Beaudesert Road into an arcade and the erection in the 1950s of the Hughes Centre across from the subject site at 204 Beaudesert Road, demonstrates the continued development of local suburban commercial centres after the Second World War. These forms of shopping experience are now largely uncommon in Brisbane as the move towards large format shopping centres has seen the gradual decline of smaller and more localised developments, such as arcades.

The development and use of the Arcade at 201 Beaudesert Road

Built by 1962, the mid-Century Modernist arcade at 201 Beaudesert Road is an adaptation and extension of a two-storey commercial property built initially in the 1940s. When the building application was made to erect the arcade, the commercial property contained three shops with a shed near the site's rear. Throughout the 1950s development application records recorded several changes made to the original property, including an awning in 1950, and alterations and additions to establish a sport and cycle shop in 1956. The 1959 application to develop the arcade recorded that the intention was to 'erect a building containing additional shops and squash court'.

The arcade was designed in 1959 and is an early example of the work of the architectural practice of Douglas and Barnes. William Douglas graduated in 1955 with a Diploma in Architecture from the Brisbane Central Technical College and entered private practice. Barry Barnes graduated in 1956 with a Diploma in Architecture from the University of Queensland. Douglas and Barnes established their practice in 1957. Barnes was responsible for Gold Coast-based projects, while Douglas oversaw Brisbane projects. Thus, Douglas was more closely involved with the arcade's development at 201 Beaudesert Road than Barnes. While Douglas and Barnes' practice was relatively short-lived – they parted ways amicably in 1972 – they were well known for 'a wide range of innovative houses, churches, shopping centres, community and club buildings, and schools, including a number of houses they built for themselves.' A significant example of Douglas and Barnes's work is the modernist styled Church of the Holy Family in Indooroopilly. Douglas and Barnes designed several commercial buildings. However, the practice's architectural drawings, held at the Fryer Library at the University of Queensland, illustrates that they only designed four shopping arcades. Two were built on the Gold Coast, while one in Brisbane was described as a 'development' in Mount Gravatt. As such, 201 Beaudesert Road is a rare example of their work in the area of shopping arcades.

In 1971, ownership of the site was split between the Burtons and the City Merchants Pty. Ltd. Throughout its history, the arcade has been home to several different businesses. For example, from the early 1960s, the Totalisator Administration Board of Queensland (TAB) became a long-term presence within the arcade. The TAB was initially established in Queensland in 1962 to provide, regulate and control betting off a racecourse. The TAB used devices (totalisators) that registered bets and divided the total amount bet among those who won. Over time, this role evolved, and by the time the TAB was privatised in 1999, its role was to conduct gambling activities. Other businesses located within the arcade have included a grocer, pharmacy, and a 'frock salon' that went bankrupt in the early 1970s.

Description

Sited at the intersection of Beaudesert and Mayfield Roads and backing onto Radburn Lane, the suburban shopping arcade at 201 Beaudesert Road forms part of the Moorvale shopping centre. It is a rare surviving

example of a mid-century modernist arcade-style commercial architecture that incorporates retail tenancies on the ground and basement levels, and a double storied atrium with helical staircase, decorative balustrading, and conical skylight.

General description

Two primary structures comprise the whole of 201 Beaudesert Road. The first is the original two-storey brick building fronting Beaudesert Road. This building has street-facing shop frontages and a centrally located entry into the newer arcade at ground level. The first floor located above the shops was not accessed. The second structure is the 1959-designed, two-storey blockwork arcade designed by Douglas and Barnes. Using the original two-storey brick building as its entrance and façade, a shopping arcade extends to the property's back. A helical staircase with overhead skylight connects to a lower, basement level of similarly arranged arcade-style tenancies.

From Beaudesert Road, the rendered brick façade of the c.1940s original building has little stylistic embellishment except for a finish of contemporary black and white tiles (chequered) on shop frontages oriented to the footpath. A deep awning overhangs the footpath and is anchored into the rendered brick façade using standard tie rods and eyebolts.

The upper level of the Beaudesert Road façade consists of 5 windows, two of which are configured in a bay-window arrangement with corrugated iron hoods.

The roof of the older, original building is hipped at its south end while to the north there is no hip, and the roof directly abuts a stepped firewall. The roof over the arcade extension is flat.

The rear of the 1959 arcade development (along Radburn Lane) comprises largely unfinished blockwork facades. The Radburn Lane façade has basic fenestration, allowing natural light to penetrate the rear-most tenancies. Windows are configured in basic 4-pane horizontal arrangements, with simple timber framing. A loading bay provides access for services and is internally accessible from the basement level of the arcade.

The commercial tenancies are evenly arranged either side of the arcade walkway on the ground and basement levels. Most of the shop frontages retain their original timber and glazing detailing (although painted). Original frontages are arranged with sheeting above shop entrances for signage and a single, large pane of timber-framed glazing extending to the floor. Shops have sliding doors comprised of two large panes of glazing, timber framing, and a single horizontal rail (timber). As of 2020, the hardware appears contemporary.

Contemporary alterations to some shop frontages, particularly those at the arcade's entrance, include the installation of aluminium framed glazed shop facades.

The most prominent internal features of 201 Beaudesert Road are the light-filled atrium and helical staircase. Visible from the entry to the arcade the atrium is located at the end of the arcade. The atrium consists of a large, circular penetration in the ground floor slab edged by a stylised balustrade of alternating rail heights (now covered over). The atrium has a unique skylight overhead which allows natural light to penetrate through to the basement level arcade.

The skylight comprises a deep, circular opening corresponding to the circumference of the ground floor slab penetration. The opening is lined with vertical clear finish timber battens with a central column supporting a conical glass skylight above. Just below the skylight, and radiating from the column, are decorative thin rectangular arms that are evenly spaced at approximately 15-degree intervals.

The concrete helical staircase is self-supported, with stair treads lined with distinctive chequered black and white linoleum. Flat-profile balustrading folds under each stair tread, so the fixings are not visible. The outermost handrail cleanly curves back into the final riser rather than fixing into the floor. The innermost balustrade turns

sharply, continuing to the column. A similarly styled balustrade is installed on stairs leading down to the loading dock from the basement level.

A secondary internal staircase is located inside the arcade directly behind the original building. This staircase connects all three levels – from the basement arcade, the ground-floor arcade, and the original building's first floor. The staircase has open risers and a balustrade the same style as on the helical staircase and a full-height decorative feature wall.

Extending from the basement level up to the stuccoed stairwell ceiling (three storeys), the feature wall utilises horizontal and vertical blockwork, in an alternating pattern. A single, standard blockwork course sits atop two 'stack bond' courses. Vertical blocks alternate between each of the stack bond courses and are extruded from the face of the wall. A similar but much smaller feature wall can also be found beneath the stairs.

The most prominent and significant view of the place is from the Beaudesert and Mayfield Roads intersection. Unobstructed views into the arcade from the footpath are also significant.

Significant features

Features of cultural heritage significance include:

- Beaudesert Road façade / original two-storey brick structure, including:
 - Awning
 - Hip roof profile
 - Bay-window arrangements (not including contemporary window frames)
 - Original brick windowsills (accessible from roof of 1959 addition)
 - Use, and proportion, of tenancies on ground floor of original two-storey brick structure.
- Radburn Lane façade, including:
 - 4-pane horizontal window arrangements
- Overall internal form, including:
 - Arcade layout of ground and basement-level tenancies
- Original commercial tenancy frontages, including:
 - Sheeting above shop entrances for signage
 - Large timber-framed glazing
 - Timber-framed sliding door, including:
 - Glazing proportions
 - Horizontal rail
- Atrium space and elements, including:
 - Skylight
 - Circular opening in ceiling and corresponding proportions with ground-floor slab penetration
 - Unfinished, vertically aligned timber battening
 - Conical skylight, with expressed mullions
 - Column
 - Radiating, rectangular profiles, including count and spacing
 - Circular penetration in ground-floor slab
 - Stylised balustrading, including:
 - Flat profile
 - Handrail style and dimensions
 - Alternating rail heights
- Helical staircase to basement level
 - Stylised balustrade, including
 - Flat profile
 - Handrail style and dimensions
- Elements of secondary staircase, including:
 - Flat-profile balustrade
 - Handrail style and dimensions

- Elements of staircase to loading dock, including:
 - Flat-profile balustrade
 - Handrail style and dimensions
- Feature wall(s), including:
 - Overall size and proportions (for both walls)
 - Use of horizontal and vertical blockwork in various, alternating patterns and orientations (as described)
- Original surface treatments:
 - Wall and floor linings where original
- Views, including:
 - View to place from Beaudesert and Mayfield Roads intersection
 - View into arcade from footpath.

Non-significant features

Non-significant features include:

- Non-original sliding window arrangements, including aluminium frames
- Non-original shop frontages, including aluminium frames, glazing and hardware
- Roller door to loading dock
- Screens over Radburn Lane window arrangements
- Sheet metal concealing balustrade in atrium.

Statement of significance

Relevant assessment criteria

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*. It is significant because:

Historical

CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

The arcade at 201 Beaudesert Road, Moorooka, contributes to our understanding of Brisbane's continued growth and suburbanisation in the years after the Second World War. A redevelopment of an existing c.1940s building on Moorooka's main shopping street, the arcade demonstrates the growth in suburban commerce and shopping in Brisbane in the years between 1945 and the 1960s.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage

The arcade at 201 Beaudesert Road, Moorooka, is a rare surviving example of a mid-century Modernist suburban shopping arcade that demonstrates a now uncommon local suburban shopping experience.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

The mid-century Modernist arcade at 201 Beaudesert Road in Moorooka is important for its evocative attributes expressed through its architectural design and detailing. Entered from the street, small scale shop spaces with simple timber-framed glazed shop fronts line a central arcade that culminates in a striking, light-filled atrium space. Double height and circular in volume, the atrium space features a self-supporting helical staircase that visually and physically connects the shopping arcade's two levels. Overhead, a large drum skylight with detailed decorative features, including timber lining, radiating struts and a glazed conical lantern, admits abundant natural light. Stylised handrails and a chequered vinyl floor complete the striking composition of the atrium. A secondary stairwell with matching stylised handrails and a decorative blockwork feature wall is also of note. The Beaudesert Road façade/original two-storey brick structure and deep awning contribute to the streetscape of the principal shopping street in Moorooka.

Historical association

CRITERION H

The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organization of importance in the city's or local area's history

The mid-century Modernist arcade at 201 Beaudesert Road has a special association with the south-east Queensland based architectural practice of Douglas and Barnes who were well known for their innovative architectural designs.

Note: This information has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this information is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

prepared by — Brisbane City Council (page revised September 2025)



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