

Heritage Citation

Brick Residence

Key details

Addresses	At 54 Seventeen Mile Rocks Road, Oxley, Queensland 4076
Type of place	House
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Style	Queen Anne
Lot plan	L1_RP123718
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 November 2012 Date of Citation — January 2011
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Face brick
People/associations	George Leigh Humphreys (Builder)
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity

54 Seventeen Mile Rocks Road was built in 1913-14 by George Leigh Humphreys, a local brick-maker. The brick house is important to the history of the Oxley area as it is evidence of the importance of the brick-making industry on the development of the Oxley area. The early twentieth century masonry house is rare in the Oxley area as the majority of houses built in the district in this period were timber. Its connection with the brick industry is historically significant to the local area.

History

By the late nineteenth century Oxley had two main areas of development. The first was along Ipswich Road where the hotel had been established. Businesses such as a store, a butcher and a blacksmith shop were established as the population slowly increased and the need for services arose. In 1864 a non-denominational

church was built near the corner of Bannerman and Ipswich Roads and the first Oxley school was built in 1873 with 32 enrolments when opened. This area became known as Oxley Central. The second area of development in Oxley was beside the railway station. However, this was slower to develop commercially than the first. Several dairy farms existed in Oxley at this time as well as a creamery. By the turn of the century the Foggitt-Jones bacon factory was established on the banks of Oxley Creek. This successful company produced a wide range of small goods, including ham and bacon as well as butter and cheeses. In 1911 the population in the Oxley area had reached 465.

¹Several large industries moved into Oxley and Darra in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and it was with this that the district moved away from a rural outpost and began to emerge as an industrious sector of Brisbane. The two main industries were Brittain's Brickworks and the Queensland Cement and Lime Company. These large enterprises encouraged employment opportunities for many Brisbane residents and many of the workers built homes in the area close to their place of employment.

In 1912 a nine acre block of land was purchased by William Brittain, owner and founder of Brittain brickworks. At this time Brittain resided at an alternative address in Oxley. From 1912 Brittain subdivided this land. In 1915 George Leigh Humphreys purchased two roods and thirty-seven and two tenths perches of the subdivided land on which he constructed a house. George Leigh Humphreys was first listed in the *Post Office Directories* in Oxley in 1917 and the *Electoral Rolls* in 1913, suggesting the house was built between 1913 and 1914.

George Leigh Humphreys' occupation was as a brick-maker. This, in relation to the house at 54 Seventeen Mile Rocks Road, is significant as the house was constructed of brick. The traditional housing stock throughout the Oxley area at this time was predominately timber and designed in the vernacular 'Queenslander' style. Prior to the establishment of the brick industry in the Oxley/Darra district in the early twentieth century the primary brick-making centre in Brisbane was in the northern suburbs of Lutwyche, Windsor and Albion. However, as the industry in these areas declined and new clay deposits were discovered in the Oxley/Darra district the centre for the industry shifted. The first and most successful brick-maker in the area was William Brittain. The Brisbane Courier published an article in June 1915 stating, "Britian's Oxley Brick and Pottery Works, a very large business undertaking, where every class of brick is manufactured... An inexhaustible deposit of clay and shales exists on the property". It is possible that Humphreys worked at Brittain's brickworks, however, evidence of this is unobtainable.

The brick house built in 1913-14 at 54 Seventeen Mile Rocks Road is representative of the influence of the brick making industry on the development of the district and as a masonry house constructed in the early twentieth century it is rare in Oxley.

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

as the brick house built in 1913-14 by and for George Humphreys, Oxley brick-maker, is important evidence of the development of the Oxley/Darra district as Brisbane's principal brick-making district in the early twentieth century.

Rarity

CRITERION B

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

as a brick house constructed between 1913 and 1914 it is rare in Oxley both in its use of materials and its intactness.

References

1. *The Brisbane Courier*, Wednesday 23 June 1915. p8
2. Fones, Ralph, *Oxley! A Mind of its Own*, Oxley-Chelmer History Group, 2006
3. Grantham, Lona, *Heritage Tour: An Historical Tour of Oxley*, Oxley-Chelmer Historical Group, 2003
4. Judy Gale Rechner, *Brisbane House Styles 1880 to 1940: a guide to the affordable house*, Brisbane: Brisbane History Group Studies No. 2, 1998
5. Historic Titles, Department of Environment and Resource Management
6. Queensland Post Office Directories
7. *Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Survey Maps*
8. Queensland Electoral Rolls

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Note: This citation 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 citation 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.

Citation prepared by — Brisbane City Council (page revised June 2022)



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