

Heritage Citation



Drinan Residence

Key details

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| Addresses | At 9 Carmody Road, St Lucia, Queensland 4067 |
| Type of place | House |
| Period | Interwar 1919-1939 |
| Style | Old English |
| Lot plan | L24_RP23343; L23_RP23343 |
| Key dates | Local Heritage Place Since — 17 May 2013 Date of Citation — January 2013 |
| Criterion for listing | (A) Historical; (E) Aesthetic |

9 Carmody Road was built in 1936 by Leo Joseph Drinan for his own residence. As the Brisbane manager and principal architect of the architectural firm Hennessy and Hennessy, Drinan played an integral role in the design and construction of the University of Queensland's St. Lucia campus; the close proximity of this house that was built at the same time as the University reflects this. The striking home that is sited on the top of a ridge line in St. Lucia is an excellent example of a highly fashionable architect designed interwar home. It is representative of the area's development as one that attracted the successful, affluent and fashionable in Brisbane at the time.

History

The interwar period heralded a new wave of residential development in the St. Lucia area. Much of Brisbane at this time saw a dramatic increase in home building to cater for an increased population; the majority of housing stock constructed at this time was the 'traditional' timber and tin character house. In a move away from this some Brisbane residents, mainly professionals, purchased land in the slowly developing St. Lucia area on which to build architecturally designed houses. Several fashionable houses were built in the area in the interwar period, including 9 Carmody Road.

In 1935 Leo Joseph Drinan purchased a 1 rood and 3 perch block of land on the ridge of a hill at St. Lucia. Drinan was the manager and principal architect for the Brisbane office of the respected architectural firm Hennessy and Hennessy & Co. Drinan played an important role in the building of the Great Court Complex at the University of Queensland St. Lucia Campus in the 1930s and 1940s and is credited with many of the sculptural designs throughout the earliest part of the Great Court Complex.

Leo Drinan's decision to construct a house at St. Lucia may have been influenced by the proximity to the University of Queensland campus. What is certain, however, is that the design of his house was intended to be a step away from the more common house designs of the time and an example of architectural individualism.

Drinan was an advocate for creativity in architecture and believed that the common house design in Brisbane in the 1930s was monotonous. In an article in the Courier Mail in July 1934, Drinan commented on this. He believed that "avenue after avenue of houses, built in monotonous rows... and conforming generally to a particular type, must have a deadening influence upon good taste... though physically comfortable enough, they were aesthetically paralysing". Drinan continued by encouraging the construction of architect designed homes in Brisbane, "[w]ith a wider range of good homes now being erected in some parts around Brisbane it would appear that the people are realising that wisely-planned, well-grouped, artistic homes were not only a financial asset to the individual or community, but a spiritual inspiration".¹ The design Drinan created for his home was very unusual for Brisbane.

Drinan was first listed at the St. Lucia property in 1936. In 1937 a small article was published in the Courier Mail featuring Mr. Drinan's newly built house at St. Lucia. Entitled "English Influence" the article makes reference to the modern design of the house and its striking setting on the ridge of a hill. It goes on to describe some of the design features and stated: "Green tiles accentuate the high pitch of the roof, which provides a pleasing contrast with the red brick of the chimney and the cream exterior weather board construction. The house is of two storeys in front and three at the rear. Special note should be taken of the windows, which have been so arranged that they provide thorough ventilation for each room."² The striking design of the house epitomised Drinan's ideas on the artistic merit of individualistic architect designed homes. Drinan resided in the house until his death in 1967.

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 self-designed residence of Brisbane architect, Leo Joseph Drinan, which is representative of the trend for professional Brisbane residents to build fashionable houses in the suburb of St. Lucia in the interwar period.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as a striking interwar architect-designed timber house sited on the top of a ridge in St. Lucia.

References

1. *The Courier Mail*, Friday 27 July, p. 25
2. *The Courier Mail* 8 June 1937, p. 20
3. Judy Gale Rechner, *Brisbane House Styles 1880 to 1940: a guide to the affordable house*, Brisbane: Brisbane History Group Studies No. 2, 1998
4. Historic Titles, Department of Environment and Resource Management
5. Queensland Post Office Directories
6. Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Survey Map
7. Queensland Electoral Rolls
8. Apperley, Richard and Robert Irving and Peter Reynolds, *A Pictorial Guild to Identifying Australian Architecture*, Angus and Robertson Publishers, Sydney, 1989
9. Heritage Citation, "University of Queensland, Great Court Complex", Department of Environment and

10. *The Courier Mail*, Friday 21 August 1936, p. 16
 11. *The Courier Mail*, Wednesday 19 August 1936, p. 15
 12. *The Courier Mail*, Wednesday 10 April 1940, p. 3
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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.

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