

## Heritage Citation



### Key details

Addresses	At 768 Brunswick Street, New Farm, Queensland 4005
Type of place	Flat building
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Georgian Revival
Lot plan	L5_RP9111
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — December 2010
Construction	Roof: Terracotta tile; Walls: Masonry
People/associations	Chambers and Ford (Architect)

'Hamel' is a block of flats designed by prominent interwar architects, Chambers and Ford and built in 1930/31 for Sydney Rayner, a well known local butcher. It is an early example of this new type of accommodation which met a growing demand for rental accommodation that was close to the city and public transport. A large number of purpose built flats were constructed in New Farm during the interwar period, many on subdivided large estates. A feature of the masonry building is the brick-capped parapet inscribed with the name 'Hamel' over the central entrance. According to his family, this was to commemorate the World War I battle near the French village of Le Hamel in which Rayner participated as a signaller with the AIF.

## History

The land on which this building stands was one of the earliest subdivisions of the almost fourteen and three quarter acres bought by William Anthony Brown for £46 8s 6d in 1853. The 18.2 perch lot was bought by Louis Uhlman in 1876. Uhlman had a saddlery business between nearby Heal and Annie streets in the nineteenth century. Following Louis' death in 1894, the land passed to Frederick Uhlman who operated as a grocer at this location until the mid-1920s. The land was sold to Sidney Rayner in July 1927. In September 1930 Rayner applied to Council to construct flats on the land, designed by architects Chambers and Ford and costing £3150.

Purpose-built flats were a relatively new phenomenon in Brisbane in 1930. Prior to this, it was more common to convert larger houses to flats or to subdivide large allotments and build smaller houses in response to the housing shortages of the 1920s. The bulk of flats erected in Brisbane in the interwar period were built as rental investments with investors favouring more central locations close to workplaces, shops, entertainment and schools, with easy access to public transport. Brunswick Street in New Farm was an ideal location, being close to the city and the tramlines radiating from it. At this time, many of the old large estates at New Farm were being subdivided for new development, including purpose built flats. Council ordinances adopted in 1926 regulated development of flats stating that if the building was not more than three storeys in height it may occupy two-thirds of the allotment. "As a result, Brisbane's interwar flats rarely exceeded three storeys".<sup>1</sup>

Further controls were introduced during the 1930s in response to concerns about slum development, which excluded flat development in streets less than 50 links wide and restricted site coverage to 50% and buildings to two-storeys unless they were constructed of fire-resistant material such as brick or concrete, when they may be three storeys. Purpose-built flats in the 1930s varied from moderate-rental blocks and bachelor flats to more prestigious luxury flats or apartments. Often the latter were aimed at the long-term rental market and erected in single blocks of two to three storeys of masonry or fibrous cement, comprising six to eight flats.<sup>2</sup>

The architectural firm Chambers and Ford, which designed 'Hamel', was a partnership of Claude William Chambers and Eric Marshall Ford. Chambers and Ford practised in Brisbane from 1920 until 1951 and "were responsible for the design of a number of apartment buildings in Brisbane in the interwar period." Chambers was a highly experienced and notable architect, who worked for a number of prominent Brisbane firms during the nineteenth century and formed several partnerships in the twentieth century, including Chambers and Powell (where E.M. Ford was office manager); Chambers and Ford and Chambers and Hutton. The partnership of Chambers and Ford designed several Brisbane churches notably St Margaret's Church of England, Sandgate

(1927), Woolloongabba Church of England (1930) and St James' Church, Kelvin Grove (1943).<sup>3</sup>

'Hamel' is a modern design incorporating elements of the Interwar Georgian revival style identified in Apperly, Irving and Reynolds (1989). Rayner took out mortgages over the property in 1931 and 1932, possibly to pay for the completion and finishing of the flats. Originally managed by Maurice MacAllum, 'Hamel' flats were owned by Rayner and registered for 13 persons until 1956 when they were converted to tenements by the new owner, Pietro Cremasco. They were resold almost yearly to new owners in the late 1950s, and alterations were made in 1958 returning Hamel to registered flats. The flats have had relatively long term owners since 1975.

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## 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:

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#### Historical

##### CRITERION A

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

as an early purpose-built architect-designed block of flats in New Farm 'Hamel' represents the new form of multiple-family / person dwelling built in response to housing shortages and Council ordinances designed to prevent the creation of slums.

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#### Rarity

##### CRITERION B

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

as one of a surviving number of interwar flats that make a valuable contribution to New Farm's built character, which is undergoing rapid change with increasing high-density development.

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#### Representative

##### CRITERION D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places

as an example of a purpose built block of masonry flats from the interwar period.

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## Supporting images



Brisbane City Council,  
'Shops at 760 Brunswick Street - New Farm - 1961'  
(BCC-B54-15762),  
Brisbane Images Collection, Brisbane City Council  
Library Services.

A view towards the Local heritage place, at right of the  
image, looking east from Brunswick Street towards  
Brown Street, New Farm.

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## References

1. Queensland. 'Julius Street Flats New Farm' 601895. Qld Heritage Register citation.  
<http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/chims/placeDetail.html;jsessionid=7f00000130d72bead3155fcc4a7daabfc8c83e016a58>.  
Accessed 18.01.10
2. *Ibid*
3. Queensland. 'Holy Trinity Church, Woolloongabba. Qld Heritage Register citation  
<http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/chims/placeDetail.html;jsessionid=7f00000130d70ea38bd579134c6c8c7f9cad84868f13>.  
Accessed 18.01.10
4. Apperly, Richard, Robert Irving and Peter Reynolds. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*. North Ryde: Angus & Robertson, 1989
5. Benjamin, G. & Grant, G. *Reflections on New Farm*, New Farm & Districts Historical Society Inc, New Farm, 2008, pp 61-65; 106
6. Bennett, H, 'New Farm from quality street to mixed assortment', *Brisbane Houses, Gardens, Suburbs and Congregations*,

7. Brisbane City Council. Building Registers. 30 Sept 1930
8. Brisbane City Council. Building Cards. 768 Brunswick Street
9. Brisbane City Council, 1946 aerial photographs.
10. Brisbane City Council Surveyor's Notebook, 1925
11. *Brisbane Courier*. 22 Apr 1932, p 12
12. Kennedy, Michael Owen. 'Domestic Architecture in Queensland Between the Wars', Master of the Built Environment (Building Conservation) thesis, University of New South Wales, 1989
13. Queensland Post Office Directories, 1929-30, 1931-32, 1933, 1934, 1935
14. Queensland Certificates of Title
15. Watson, Donald and Judith McKay. *A Directory of Queensland Architects to 1940*. (St. Lucia: U of Q Press, 1984)

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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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