

Heritage Citation



Keating's Bread Factory (former)

Key details

Also known as	Thomas Keating Ltd
Addresses	At 36 Warry Street, Fortitude Valley, Queensland 4006
Type of place	Factory
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Style	Free Classical
Lot plan	L2_RP221701
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — October 2014
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Face brick

People/associations	J. Best (Builder); Thomas Ramsay Hall - Additions (Architect)
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Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (D) Representative; (H) Historical association
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Thomas Keating established his Brisbane bakery in Ann Street in 1878. He moved the business to Warry Street the following year. His bakery developed into one of the major bread making companies in Brisbane. Keating built a new factory in Warry Street in 1907 with additions designed by T.R. Hall added in 1916. The original late 19th century factory was demolished prior to 1924. The bakery premises extended behind the factory to the Kennigo Street frontage where Keating purchased additional land in the mid-1880s, 1919 and 1923. By 1923, the business occupied four and a third acres between Kennigo Street and Warry Street. Keating's bread factory ceased trading by 1945. The factory has since been used for a variety of purposes, however, the general layout of this major bread making complex is still identifiable.

History

This site contains several brick buildings that were formerly part of Thomas Keating's successful bread factory complex in Warry and Kennigo Streets, built in various stages from 1907. The original factory established at 34-36 Warry Street in the late 19th century was demolished prior to 1924.

Born in Ireland in 1853, Thomas Keating migrated to Brisbane with his family in 1863. He became an apprentice baker in Brisbane before moving to Stanthorpe to take up work in a bakery there. Keating worked at the Stanthorpe bakery for nine months before he bought the business and ran it for four years. He returned to Brisbane in 1878 and purchased a bakery in Ann Street. His business was successful and, in 1879, he relocated to new premises in Warry Street, (then considered part of Spring Hill) where his wife, Eliza Keating, had purchased three 13 perch allotments in 1872.

Wishing to expand the business further, Keating purchased two allotments (almost 28 perches) in Kennigo Street at the rear of his premises in 1885 and 1886. By 1888, he had purchased another allotment at the eastern end of Warry Street and his bakery business was described as "one of the largest businesses in Brisbane".

At the Warry Street premises, Keating employed twelve workers to assist with his bakery business and had five horse-drawn carts for bread delivery. He used at least 40 tons of flour a month in 1888, and it was noted that at that time he owned both his own premises and the adjacent bakehouse. Thomas Keating became the Treasurer of the Master Bakers' Association of Queensland. His son, Andrew was also involved in the bakery business and it was in this capacity that, in 1915, Andrew addressed the Queensland Government Committee enquiring into the Supply and Distribution of Wheat and Flour in Queensland.

Keating purchased another two allotments (26 perches) on the eastern end of his Warry Street property in 1902. In 1907, he built a substantial new brick bread factory in Warry Street. It included a flour store, bread room and bakehouse as well as a yeast room, office for clerical staff and breakfast room for carters. The factory was described at length in the Brisbane Courier on 27 July 1907:

The bread house has a storage capacity of 10,000 loaves. Adjoining the bread room is the bakehouse. Here there are many novel and up-to-date appliances, designed both for facilitating the actual work of baking and enabling the men to carry out their various duties under the most approved conditions. The bakehouse is a very spacious apartment and is splendidly ventilated by six ingeniously devised ventilators on the roof as well as by a row of windows with patent fasteners.

Keating purchased another two allotments (26 perches) on the western side of his Warry Street factory in 1914. On 28 April 1916, he applied to the Brisbane Municipal Council to have new brick additions constructed. The architect who designed the additions was Thomas Ramsay Hall of Queen Street in the City and the building contractor was J. Best of Byres Street Newstead. T.R. Hall was a prominent Brisbane architect, the son of another successful architect, John Hall. He worked for a time (1904-07) for his half-brother, the architect Francis Richard Hall before joining George Gray Prentice in 1919 to form the firm of Hall & Prentice who would go on to design Brisbane City Hall (1930).

In 1919, this site was enlarged once more when Thomas Keating Limited purchased another two adjoining allotments (nearly 28 perches) facing Kennigo Street. The houses on these allotments were demolished and by 1924, this land was occupied by a stable building (also since demolished) and a courtyard with access through an opening in the brick wall (See photograph below). The Keating site was now quite large, totalling 55.4 perches, and the Keating Company had a factory that produced bread rather than the small, local bakeries that were more common throughout Brisbane at this time.

Thomas Keating Limited was still delivering its bread by horse-drawn cart in 1927. The company's horses were allowed to graze along the streets of the surrounding areas of Fortitude Valley and Spring Hill, particularly on any vacant land that was available, though the company did switch to bread vans by 1929. The company retained its prominence during the interwar period, with Mrs. W. Keating representing the company at the reception for the Master Bakers' Federal Convention that was held at the Brisbane Botanical Gardens on 15 October 1938. By 1939, the company was known as Thomas Keating Pty Ltd and it continued to trade under this name during World War Two. Thomas Keating Pty Ltd had ceased trading by 1945 and for the next three years, the buildings were leased to Curtis Quality Cakes, a pastry and biscuit manufacturer.

In September 1948, Thomas Keating Pty Ltd sold its bread factory site to the well-known shipping and trading company of Burns Philp. When Burns Philp gained ownership of the site, the company decided to utilise the existing bread factory facilities for its own needs. On 1 December 1948, Burns Philp sought Brisbane City Council permission for conversion of the site into bakehouse amenities and a storage building to be managed by another company, Marberete Ltd.

The smaller brick buildings fronting Kennigo Street, at the back of the site, appear to have been leased out to numerous small businesses. An April 1960 photograph of Kennigo Street shows that these buildings were being used by chemist supplier and wholesaler the Tampico Trading Company, Alf Parker's Hood Upholstery business and the Boardman Shoe Company Pty Ltd. In April 1947, the Boardman Shoe Company had applied to the Council to convert the bread factory into a shoe factory for the production of slippers. Similarly A. Foster sought in May 1948 to reuse the site for the production of fancy goods.

On 26 October 1952, the property was sold to the major department store chain of Penneys Limited. They converted the former bread factory into a warehouse, seeking Council's permission for this conversion in December 1953. The property continued to be used for storage purposes by Penneys until 1972. On 6 October 1972, the property was transferred to the ownership of Science House Pty Ltd, a medical research company. N.M. Gutteridge had already sought Council permission to convert the site into a research centre in August 1972.

The property continued to be used for medical research purposes until March 1988 when it was sold to new owners, Sabina Limited. This company quickly transferred the property to C.T.C. Pty Ltd in August 1988. Then on 20 November 1993, the former Keating's Bread Factory was purchased by the Catholic Church's Society of St Vincent de Paul. This major charity organisation used the property for its St Vincent's Community Services Centre until 2007.

Despite the different post-war uses that the former Keating's Bread Factory has had, a comparison of the 1946 aerial photograph (when it was still in use by Keating Pty Ltd) with the 2011 aerial photograph, shows that the layout of Keating's Bread Factory site remains largely intact.

Today, the site contains the 1907 brick factory in Warry Street with the 1916 additions on either side. The Kennigo Street frontage contains a twin gable fronted brick building with another small section on the eastern side with a horizontal parapet, all of which date from before 1924. The wall of this eastern section was extended slightly during the 1980s. A brick, flat roofed section was added at some time between 1924 and 1946 on the western side of the twin gable building on land purchased in 1923. However, this portion of the building appears to have been subsequently altered both internally and externally and is considered to have less cultural significance than the older, more intact sections.

The 1907 factory with 1916 additions in Warry Street and the brick buildings in Kennigo Street (excluding the 1980s extension) are considered to be the culturally significant sections of the former bakery complex.

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 evidence of manufacturing in Fortitude Valley in the early twentieth century

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 an early twentieth century bread factory which has retained much of its exterior and layout.

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

as the former bread factory from 1907 to the 1940s of Thomas Keating, a successful businessman and Master Baker who was a significant figure in the breadmaking industry in Brisbane.

References

1. Brisbane City Council, *Properties on the Web*, post-1946 building approval cards
2. Brisbane City Council, *Register of New Buildings*, April to May 1916
3. Brisbane City Council, archival photograph, Kennigo Street, Spring Hill, 20 April 1960
4. Brisbane City Council, 1946, 2001 & 2005 aerial photographs
5. Brisbane City Council, Sewerage Map 18 June 1914
6. Brisbane History Group, *Spring Hill Heritage Tour - St Pauls Terrace to Gregory Terrace*, (Brisbane: Brisbane History Group, 1993)
7. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
8. John Oxley Library, photographic collection.
9. John Oxley Library, newspaper clippings files
10. Morrisson. W. Frederick F., *The Aldine History of Queensland, Illustrated, Volume 2*, (Sydney: The Aldine Publishing Company, 1888)
11. *Queensland Post Office Directories*, 1868-1949
12. Donald Watson and Judith McKay, *Queensland Architects of the Nineteenth Century*, South Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1994
13. Watson, Donald and Judith McKay. *A Directory of Queensland Architects to 1940*. (St. Lucia: U of Q Press, 1984)
14. www. <http://fhr.slq.qld.gov.au/comitees2/k.htm>, Persons before Queensland Government committees (1902-1920)
15. *Brisbane Courier*, 27 Jul 1907
16. Brisbane City Council Archives, Surveyor's Notebook sketches for Kennigo and Warry Streets, 1916 and 1924

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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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